

# *The Daily Record*

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## **Open space can help combat climate change**

On Nov. 6, voters will be asked to approve the Green Acres, Farmland, Blue Acres, and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 2007.

You are probably hearing many good reasons for voting yes -- the measure will provide the funds needed to keep our water and beaches clean and help preserve open space.

Another reason you may not be hearing about is how ballot question No. 3 will help in the fight against global warming.

Plants, especially trees, absorb enormous amounts of carbon from the air as they grow. Large tracts of forested land provide the bulk of the benefit, and we are fast losing this natural resource to development in New Jersey. But often overlooked is the need for more open space in urban areas. Large areas of pavement create a local effect called "heat islands," which spikes the use of electricity by increasing the need for air conditioners.

Many of the power plants producing that electricity continue to be a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Urban parks -- large and small -- and tree-lined streets can significantly reduce this heat island effect.

Protecting open space through proper planning and zoning can also preserve farming in New Jersey, which means trucks don't have to drive in from Pennsylvania to bring us food. This reduces the emissions from trucks -- and helps to reduce air pollution and improve the quality of life for everyone in the state.

Think globally, and then vote locally.

**Jordan Friedberg and Denise Barricklow**

*Jordan Friedberg is a planner with PlanSmart NJ, a land use research and advocacy nonprofit based in Trenton. Denise Barricklow is director of Communications for PlanSmart NJ.*