

Dear _____

The Town of East Hampton is proposing to build a sewage treatment plant on Suffolk County parkland in Hither Woods. The Town would get 14 acres of County parkland in Hither Woods in exchange for land the Town recently purchased (and preserved) on Montauk's East Lake Drive.

I oppose both the land transfers and the development of a sewage treatment plant in the magnificent forest known as Hither Woods. Our East Hampton community has fought very hard since the 1980s to preserve Hither Woods and our environment in general.

Montauk has many unique qualities, especially its protected open space, its astounding views, and the sight, smell, and sound of the ocean and bay. Montauk is an enclave, essentially an Island, attached to the rest of East Hampton via a narrow spit of land, Napeague. The character and charm of Montauk is in large part because we've controlled development and preserved open space, unlike many other communities in the Northeast. We've done this by obtaining and preserving open space as parkland. The charm and beauty of these open spaces, including the still-wild Hither Woods, is the backbone of Montauk's economy.

Hither Woods parkland is a vital resource for our local environment. For one thing, it helps to maintain the purity of Montauk's most important drinking water aquifer. It would be foolish and short-sighted to attempt to clean the water under Downtown Montauk by pumping it into a treatment plant located directly atop the Montauk aquifer.

Montauk is special, not over-developed or urbanized. Hither Woods provides recreational opportunities for many kinds of park users on Montauk, among them hikers, runners, botanists, equestrians, hunters, mountain bikers, cross country skiers, bird watchers, fishermen, and historians. We've worked hard to keep this place special, cognizant of what it takes to maintain our pure environmental character. Montauk is a prime example of what a community can do when it comes together to preserve the environment.

I ask you to refrain from supporting East Hampton Town's ill-conceived proposal to alienate parkland at Hither Woods for the development of a sewage treatment plant. The sewage treatment plant will only begin the downfall of Hither Woods. The Town should be told to prepare an environmental impact statement in order to investigate less harmful and less expensive ways to treat groundwater in Montauk's commercial areas.

Sincerely,