

NEW JERSEY CONSERVATION



Colorful Reflections

The male wood duck's iridescent colors and ornate patterns make it one of New Jersey's most beautiful waterfowl.

This drake was photographed in the Great Swamp by Blaine Rothausen.



From Our Executive Director

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New Jersey: Garden State or Flooded State?

In a year characterized by extreme weather across our nation, this past August and September set a new record as the wettest two-month period since New Jersey began keeping track of rainfall back in 1895. Hurricane Irene and subsequent storms swelled rivers, streams, creeks and brooks across the state, spilling over roads and flooding homes and businesses.

Given the cost in dollars and human suffering, there's no question the Garden State must act to prevent future flooding.

What would it take to truly solve New Jersey's flood problem?

First – preserve! Preserved open space, forests in particular, play a critical role in flood prevention. Forests, wetlands and other natural lands perform many “ecological services,” including flood control. Plants, trees and soil catch and hold rainwater, slowly releasing it into groundwater and rivers and preventing volumes of raging waters from racing downstream.

Continued open space funding with a buyout component for repeatedly flooded properties, “Blue Acres,” is a must! Although expensive in the short run, this solution is the only one guaranteed to stop property damage in floodplains. It is much more cost-effective than pouring our money into rebuilding homes and buildings that will only flood again and again!

Keep our environmental protections in place. Our state has made great strides in the past 30 years in protecting freshwater wetlands and buffers, preserving significant forests and stream corridors, and keeping new development out of wetlands and floodplains. These programs must be maintained and strengthened, not relaxed in the name of jobs and the economy. Because watersheds cross political boundaries, strong regional planning and land use controls – like those in the Highlands and Pinelands – are essential to the future of our state.



Restore! We should take every opportunity to restore wetlands and floodplains back to their natural state. That will be our best bet, providing flood control at a much reduced cost.

No one solution will fix all of New Jersey's flooding problems. But if we listen to what our land is telling us and work with its natural flood control processes, we will stand the best chance of preventing flooding. That's far better than fighting against powerful Mother Nature!

MICHELE S. BYERS
Executive Director

A Dedication to the Environment, Today and Tomorrow



Steve Gruber helps plant Atlantic white cedar seedlings at the Franklin Parker Preserve in Burlington County as part of a massive wetlands restoration project.

Photo by Louis Cantarfo

Met Stephen Gruber, “volunteer extraordinaire.” Retired after a career as a pharmaceutical chemist, he now devotes himself almost full-time to doing whatever outdoor tasks are needed – from building hiking trails in nature preserves, to patrolling the Passaic River by boat to spot illegal dumping, to assisting efforts to restore oyster beds in Raritan Bay.

“I like being outdoors and helping out,” said the Millington resident, who also enjoys hiking and working in his backyard garden.

But Steve’s passion for the environment and the outdoors goes well beyond the physical tasks he so willingly takes on whenever asked. He also intends to leave his estate to New Jersey Conservation Foundation and several other nonprofits to help continue their shared goal of protecting New Jersey’s environment.

He explained that his wife is deceased and they never had children, so he decided his will should “spread my funds among the groups that I’m active with. I’ve been donating to all these groups for 30 years or so,” he said, so it made sense to plan ahead for supporting them after his passing.

Steve’s foresight and generosity make him a charter member of New Jersey Conservation Foundation’s new Red Oak Society, formed to recognize those who plan to give to NJCF

through various philanthropic approaches. These approaches include wills, living trusts, IRAs, insurance funds, charitable gift annuities and retirement plans.

“We are incredibly grateful to people like Steve who are so committed to helping us continue to preserve and protect New Jersey land,” said Pam Palumbo, New Jersey Conservation Foundation’s director of development.

The Red Oak Society was launched at the annual President’s Reception in September and includes nearly 100 supporters, living and deceased, whose generosity will enhance our land acquisition and stewardship efforts for generations to come.

For more information about the Red Oak Society, or how to include New Jersey Conservation Foundation in your estate planning, please contact Kathleen Thayne, Planned Giving Manager, at 908-234-1225 or kathleen@njconservation.org.

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After a decade of negotiations, the preservation of 313 acres of open space and farmland in Kingwood finally becomes reality.

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New Jersey Conservation Foundation wins an award for preventing an invasive Asian carp from spreading into the Delaware River.

New Jersey Conservation Foundation is a private, non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve land and natural resources throughout New Jersey for the benefit of all. We protect strategic lands through acquisition and stewardship, promote strong land use policies, and forge partnerships to achieve conservation goals. Since 1960, we have worked to protect the state’s farmland, forests, parks, wetlands, water resources and special places.

For membership information, please visit our website at www.njconservation.org or call us at 1-888-LANDSAVE. Our mailing address is 170 Longview Road, Far Hills, NJ 07931.

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Correction

Credit lines for two photographs by Scott Jacobs on the back cover of our Summer 2011 newsletter were inadvertently omitted. We regret the error, and are grateful to Scott for his generous donation of photography at the annual Barn Dance.

New Preserves Become a Reality: Hill & Dale and Princeton Ridge

New Jersey Conservation Foundation and its partners had two magnificent reasons to celebrate this fall: the acquisition of new preserves in Tewksbury Township, Hunterdon County, and Princeton Township, Mercer County.

Within a two-week period in August, we closed on the 115-acre Hill & Dale property in Tewksbury and the 14-acre Princeton Ridge parcel in Princeton – both of which are now public preserves linking to existing and/or future open space preserves.

The Hill & Dale acquisition was celebrated on Sept. 18 at a dedication ceremony attended by nearly 200 community members and featuring hikes, hay rides and congratulatory toasts to the partnerships and hard work that made it possible. The Princeton Ridge acquisition was celebrated by 75 supporters at an on-site dedication ceremony and reception on Oct. 2.

Hill & Dale Preserve

Located on the side of Hell Mountain, the newly-acquired Hill & Dale property is the first phase of a larger open space project. An adjoining 40-acre parcel is expected to be added to the preserve in 2012.

The property – part of the landmark 310-acre Hill and Dale Farm – consists mostly of woods and agricultural fields. A stretch of the pristine Rockaway Creek and two of its tributaries run through the land.

“Acquisition of the Hill & Dale property creates new opportunities for passive recreation such as hiking, horseback riding, fishing and nature observation,” noted Michele S. Byers, executive director. “It also protects water supplies and preserves the area’s agricultural heritage.”

The new preserve is contiguous to the township’s 113-acre Hell Mountain Preserve and an additional 150 acres of farmland that the owner is preserving.

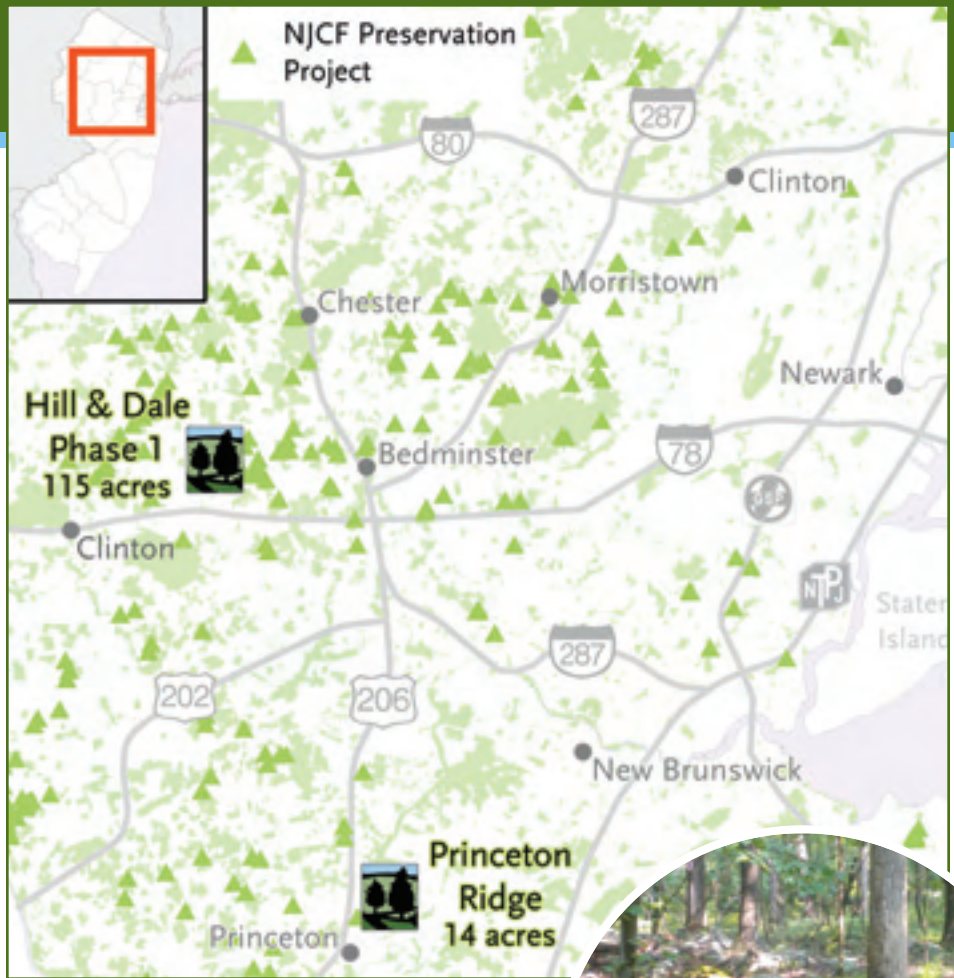
The Hill & Dale project was made possible through a complex funding package developed by NJCF in cooperation with several public agencies and three nonprofit partners – the Upper Raritan Watershed Association, Tewksbury Land Trust and Lamington Conservancy.

Public agency funding partners include the state Green Acres Program, the New Jersey Office of Natural Resource Damages, Tewksbury Township, Hunterdon County and the New Jersey Water Supply Authority.

In addition, 80 private donors from the community contributed nearly \$240,000 to fill a funding gap that could have jeopardized the project. A portion of these donations will be used to purchase the adjoining parcel next year.



Above left, hundreds of well-wishers gathered outside the Hill & Dale barns on Sept. 18 to celebrate the preservation of the first 115 acres. Above right, Princeton Township Mayor Kurt Goerner and Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes snip the ribbon to officially dedicate the Princeton Ridge Preserve.



Princeton Ridge Preserve

Located on the ecologically-sensitive Princeton Ridge in northern Mercer County, the former Ricciardi property consists of 14 wooded acres that could have been developed for up to 47 homes. Its preservation catalyzes a growing greenway of forested lands along the Ridge.

The property's mature forests provide habitat for several endangered and threatened species, including the wood turtle, eastern box turtle, Cooper's hawk and barred owl. The forests also preserve local water quality and prevent flooding.

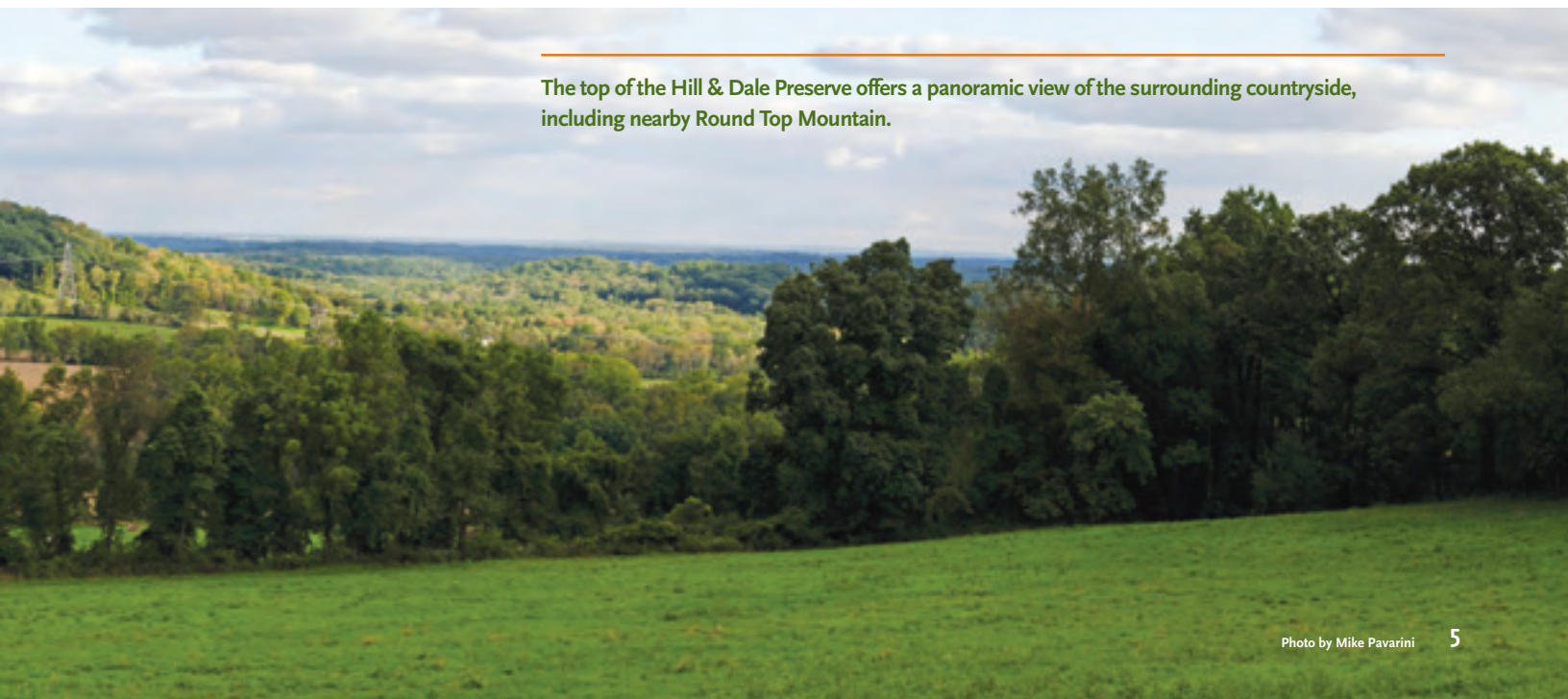
The Ricciardi property is a keystone of the new Princeton Ridge Preserve, connecting two adjacent properties: the 35-acre All Saints Church property, which was just acquired by the D&R Greenway Land Trust and the Friends of Princeton Open Space; and 17 acres of the former Lowe property, to be donated by J. Robert Hillier.

These lands will form a nucleus of forest linking to other open lands, including Herrontown Woods, Hilltop Park and Autumn Hill Reservation. Plans call for a network of interconnected walking trails.

The property was preserved by a partnership of public agencies and four nonprofits – New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Friends of Princeton Open Space, Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association and Kingston Greenways Association. Public agency funding partners include the state Green Acres Program, Mercer County and Princeton Township.



The top of the Hill & Dale Preserve offers a panoramic view of the surrounding countryside, including nearby Round Top Mountain.



NJCF Thanks

A heartfelt “thank you” to everyone who contributed to the Hill & Dale and Princeton Ridge land acquisition projects. Without the generous support of community members, it would not be possible to preserve these properties!

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Preservation Bond Funds Released, but Long-term Solution Still Needed



Photo by Tim Larsen/Governor's Office

Governor Chris Christie visits a preserved farm in Princeton in August to sign legislation providing \$90.6 million to preserve farmland across the state.

This year marked the 50th anniversary of the state's Green Acres Program and the 30th anniversary of its Farmland Preservation Program. As these milestones were celebrated, open space and farmland preservation funds approved by voters in November 2009 began to flow. In a show of broad, bipartisan support, the state Legislature and Governor Christie appropriated the first half of the \$400 million bond act to pay for critical preservation initiatives around the state.

The release of these funds was a success for New Jersey Conservation Foundation, and its partner groups in the Keep it Green campaign.

Despite this success, however, New Jersey has only one more year of preservation funding at a time when demand for these programs is high because of a sluggish economy and a slow real estate market. Because of lower prices, it's a great time to preserve land.

Now is the time for Governor Christie and our legislative leaders to adopt a long-term, dedicated funding source for open space, farmland and historic preservation. This will allow New Jersey to continue the tremendous work of preserving our landscapes and the animals and plants that depend on them, protecting our drinking water, preserving the farmland that produces our food, and retaining and restoring our historic treasures.

Natural Gas "Fracking" Moratorium Imposed in New Jersey



Hydraulic fracturing for natural gas could have significant impacts on the Delaware River watershed.

With natural gas drilling coming under increasing scrutiny, the New Jersey Legislature passed a bill this summer to prohibit the practice of hydraulic fracturing for natural gas in New Jersey. This practice, known as "fracking," is causing extensive damage to natural resources in Pennsylvania and other states.

Most significant are the consequences for local and regional water supplies, which can be contaminated by toxic fracking

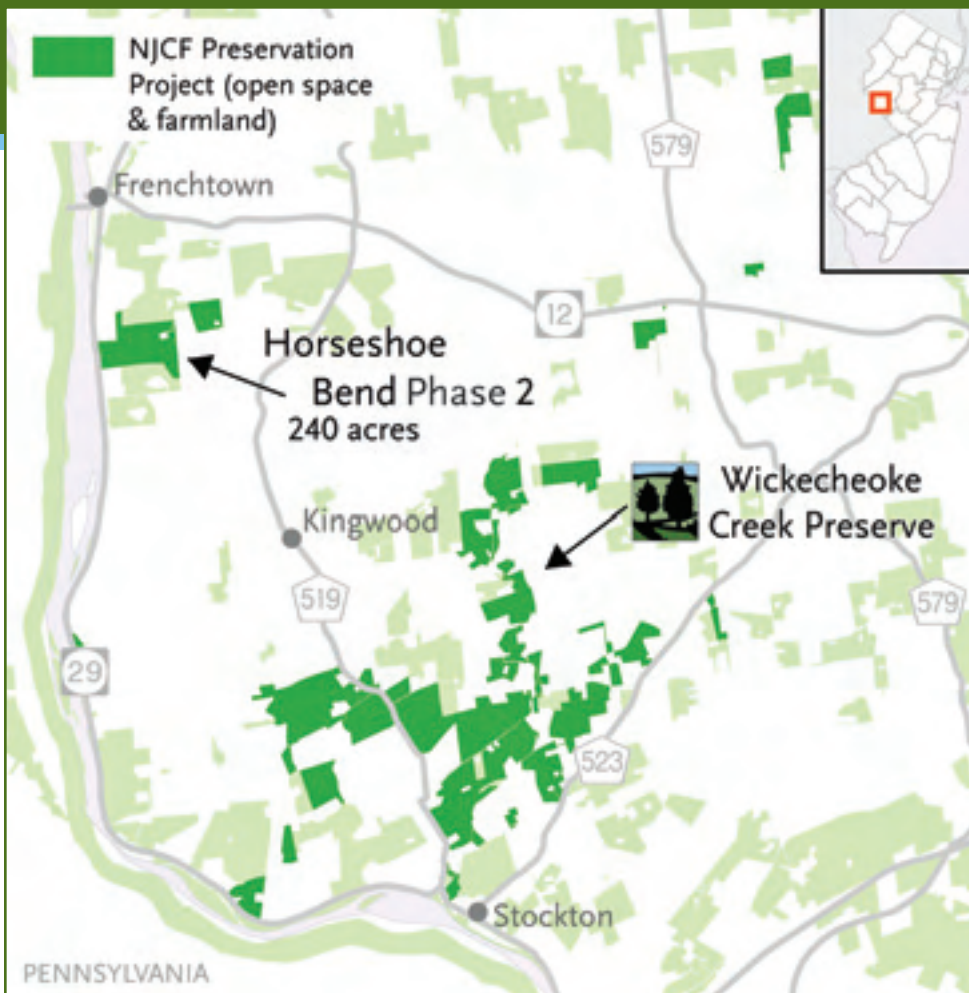
chemicals, with far-reaching ecological and health-related consequences. Given the current state of knowledge and technology, allowing fracking to go forward in New Jersey would pose unacceptable costs and risks to the health of its residents – and the land, air, and water on which they depend. Although New Jersey does not have extensive deposits of Marcellus Shale – where fracking is currently focused – the state does have deeper deposits that could be the next target for drilling.

We joined the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and many other organizations in supporting this ban, and advocating that the bill go further in protecting New Jersey's waterways. Those steps include a ban on allowing New Jersey landfills to accept solids from fracking operations, and a prohibition on treating wastewater from these operations at New Jersey wastewater treatment facilities. The Governor conditionally vetoed the bill, instituting a one-year moratorium instead of a permanent ban on the practice.

NJCF Opposes Commercial-Scale Wind Turbines on Preserved Farms

Wind energy can be a great resource – if it is in the right place. A bill that would allow commercial-scale wind turbines up to 500 feet tall on preserved farmland is making its way through the New Jersey Legislature. New Jersey Conservation Foundation strongly opposes this bill, which threatens the integrity of the state's Farmland Preservation Program.

Under the proposal, farms preserved with public funds could host commercial wind turbines without undergoing even the standard municipal approval process.



313 Acres of Open Space and Farmland Celebrated in Kingwood

A decade-long effort to preserve open space and farmland in Kingwood Township, Hunterdon County, came to a happy conclusion this past summer, providing a new place for hikers, horseback riders, mountain bikers, bird watchers to enjoy the outdoors.

A 240-acre property along Horseshoe Bend Road – a former equestrian facility that includes more than seven miles of existing trails – was preserved in June. It is adjacent to 73 acres of farmland and open space that NJCF helped save a year earlier.

Dozens of local residents and representatives of Kingwood Township, the state Green Acres program, Hunterdon Land Trust, New Jersey Conservation Foundation and U.S. Department of Agriculture gathered at the new “Horseshoe Bend Park” in July to celebrate both phases of the preservation.

“This property is a local jewel, and we’re so thankful that we and our partners were able to work together to successfully preserve it,” said Kingwood Mayor Phillip Lubitz.

The newly-preserved property is one of the most beautiful in western Hunterdon County, with rolling hills, lush forested ravines, and sweeping vistas of the Delaware River Valley. Its high meadows are home to meadowlarks, bobolinks and redwing blackbirds, and bald eagles and hawks are believed to nest there. The Copper Creek and other small streams run through the property on their way to the Delaware River.

New Jersey Conservation Foundation and Hunterdon Land Trust first became interested in preserving the property 10 years ago, but were unable to reach an agreement with the landowner at the time.

The property was subdivided into 58 lots in 2006, but the subsequent recession and real estate downturn prompted the owner to opt for selling the land for preservation. A public-private partnership was forged to put together a funding package.

The Horseshoe Bend property is a short distance from New Jersey Conservation Foundation’s Wickecheoke Creek Preserve.

A large crowd arrived at the new Horseshoe Bend Park on foot, bicycle and horseback for the official ribbon-cutting in July.



Students Assist in Plant Inventory at Apshawa Preserve

A group of high school students helped New Jersey Conservation Foundation launch a long-term study this past summer to measure the progress of a native plant restoration project within a 300-acre deer “exclosure” at the Apshawa Preserve in West Milford, Passaic County.



Helpers from the Student Conservation Association learned how to inventory plants during a daylong project at the Apshawa Preserve.

Guided by biologists, about 40 members of the Student Conservation Association inventoried plants in dozens of plots inside and outside the deer fence. Armed with rulers, clipboards, plant guides and even hula hoops (for circular plots), they examined, measured, identified and cataloged every plant within each plot.

“It was painstaking work, but necessary,” said Emile DeVito, NJCF’s staff biologist. “We counted every little sprout and established baseline conditions before anything changes.”

The deer fence was built last fall, and a drive was held to push deer out of the exclosure. Based on a deer census taken during the drive, DeVito estimated that the Apshawa Preserve had 75 deer per square mile – 10 times more than would allow the forest understory to heal itself.

Over the next 10 to 20 years, DeVito said, scientists and volunteers will return to the same plots to see which plants are flourishing and which are not. If the deer fence is effective, he said, the plots within the exclosure will have more – and healthier – native plant species than those plots outside the fence.

Preventing Spread of Invasive Asian Carp Wins Award

New Jersey Conservation Foundation has been recognized for successfully removing invasive bighead carp at a preserve in Hunterdon County – which led to the fortunate discovery of an invasive freshwater mussel that might otherwise have gone undetected.

The Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species chose New Jersey Conservation Foundation to receive its annual Rachel Carson Award, named for the conservationist and author who wrote *Silent Spring*.

“We believe we have prevented a potentially devastating invasive fish from entering the Delaware River ecosystem,” said Tim Morris, stewardship director for NJCF.

More than 900 bighead carp were removed in June 2010 from nine man-made ponds at the Huey property in Franklin Township, a former commercial fish farm that was purchased by NJCF in 2007. The property

contains a headwaters tributary of the Delaware River.

Originally from Asia, bighead carp have escaped into numerous water bodies throughout the United States, especially in the Mississippi River basin. Enormous efforts to prevent their spread into the Great Lakes are under way.

Bighead carp are considered a serious threat because of their size and appetite. They can weigh up to 100 pounds, eat up to 40 percent of their body weight each day, and compete for same food that native fish depend on.

During the carp elimination – which involved lowering pond levels and treating the water with rotenone, a naturally derived plant substance found in the roots of a tropical plant in the bean family – NJCF staff members discovered a large clam-like mollusk known as the Chinese pond mussel. It was the first known occurrence of this invasive species in North America.



233 Acres of Farmland and Open Space Preserved

93 acres in Warren County

A 93-acre farm in Greenwich Township, Warren County, which was targeted for commercial development, will remain farmland forever. New Jersey Conservation Foundation purchased an agricultural easement on the Dumont Road property, permanently extinguishing the farm's development rights.

The farm is adjacent to an elementary school and hundreds of acres of farmland connecting to other preserved lands. Funding for the preservation project came from the federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program, State Agriculture Development Committee, Warren County and Greenwich Township.

50 acres in Burlington County

As part of our ongoing partnership with the New Jersey Air National Guard, we purchased the 50-acre Kaltman property in

Bass River Township, Burlington County, near the Warren Grove Gunnery Range. The property is surrounded by Bass River State Forest, and consists mainly of pitch pine upland forest. Funding came from the state Green Acres Program and the U.S. Department of Defense's Readiness and Environmental Preparedness Initiative (REPI) program, which provides funds to preserve land surrounding military installations.

20 acres in Hunterdon County

The green belt surrounding the bucolic village of Sergeantsville in Delaware Township, Hunterdon County, just got greener with the preservation of the 20-acre Gilde farm. The property consists of open fields that are potential wood turtle habitat. A farmland easement was purchased using funds from the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program, State Agriculture

Development Committee, and Hunterdon County. Beautiful views of Sergeantsville, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, are part of the result!

70 acres in Mercer County

Hopewell Township – Mercer County's leading municipality in productive farmland – just increased its preserved farmland inventory by 70 acres, with the addition of a family-owned farm that raises field crops and grass-fed cattle. New Jersey Conservation Foundation purchased the development rights on the Lovero family farm, bringing Hopewell Township's preserved farmland total to more than 2,720 acres. The land will remain in private ownership, with its future use permanently restricted to agriculture. Funding came from the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program and State Agriculture Development Committee. In addition, Hopewell Township contributed funding to help defray our ancillary expenses.



We want you for "Conservation U"

2012 New Jersey Land Conservation Rally

Saturday, March 10, 2012 | Brookdale Community College, Monmouth County

Join us for a full day of educational workshops and networking opportunities.

Keynote speaker: Lawrence A. Selzer, president and CEO of The Conservation Fund, a national conservation nonprofit headquartered in Washington, D.C.

Online registration will begin January 1 at

njconservation.org/rally

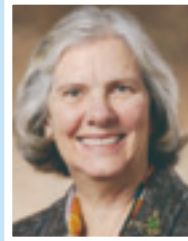
Welcome New Trustees

Two new trustees recently joined the board of New Jersey Conservation Foundation: Louise Currey Wilson of the Skillman section of Montgomery Township and Dr. Rosina “Nina” Dixon of Bernardsville.



A former Montgomery Township mayor, Township Committee and Planning Board member, Louise also served on the State Planning Commission and as president

of the League of Municipalities Educational Foundation. She served as finance director for Congressman Rush Holt’s 2010 campaign and was previously employed as an independent researcher and public affairs consultant, and as director of communications and public affairs for the Rutgers University – Cook College/New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station.



Nina has been employed in the pharmaceutical field for nearly 40 years, currently serving as senior director of pharmacovigilance and epidemiology at Sanofi-Aventis

in Bridgewater. She is on the board of directors at Church & Dwight of Princeton and the Cambrex Corporation of East Rutherford. She also serves as a board member at Daytop New Jersey in Mendham, a nonprofit substance abuse treatment and education program for adolescents; and is a member of the advisory board off the Silberman College of Business at Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Conservation Trailblazer: Dr. Joan Ehrenfeld

Dr. Joan Ehrenfeld, 63, a former New Jersey Conservation Foundation trustee and one of the state’s leading voices on plant ecology, passed away on June 25 after a battle with leukemia.

Born in New York City, Dr. Ehrenfeld earned a bachelor’s degree, magna cum laude, in biology from Barnard College in 1969, followed by a master’s degree from Harvard University in 1970 and a Ph.D. from the City University of New York in 1975.

She spent her 35-year career as a Rutgers University professor of ecology, researching plant communities across New Jersey, ranging from the Pine Barrens to the urban wetlands of Rahway.

Her career was marked by boundless curiosity and a wide range of professional interests. She received numerous scientific awards, and delivered lectures around the world.

Joan served on New Jersey Conservation Foundation’s board of trustees from 1981 to 2000, and later as a member of the Advisory Council.

“Joan Ehrenfeld was one of those rare scientists who was able to move between pure ecology, applied ecology, and involving a range of stakeholders in addressing questions that both allow us to understand how ecosystems work, and figure out how to manage and restore these systems,” said Dr. Joanna Burger, one of Joan’s Rutgers University colleagues.

“She had the wonderful quality of collaborating openly with students, faculty, other scientists, conservation organizations, regulators and state personnel, and the general public,” added Burger. “She truly made a difference in the fields of ecology, evolution and conservation, and we will all miss her.”



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- Amy Hansen** – Policy Analyst
- Maria Hauser** – Executive Assistant/Personnel Manager
- Steve Jack** – Associate Land Steward
- Chris Jage** – Assistant Director, South Jersey
- Russell Juelg** – Land Steward
- Lisa MacCollum** – Assistant Director, Acquisition
- Alison E. Mitchell** – Director of Policy
- Tim Morris** – Director of Stewardship
- Marie K. Newell** – Project Coordinator, Acquisition
- Tanya Nolte** – GIS Manager
- Pam Palumbo, MPA, CFRE** – Director of Development
- Sandy Stuart Perry** – Communications Manager
- Susan Quitzau** – Office Manager
- Lauren Ramos** – Development & Outreach Coordinator
- Francis Rapa** – Regional Manager, Delaware Bay Watershed
- Meredith Reeves** – Marketing & Events Manager
- Karen Richards, CPA** – Director of Finance & Administration
- Greg Romano** – Assistant Director & Director of Statewide Land Acquisition
- Susan Schmidt** – Administrative Assistant/Receptionist
- Raymond Steingall** – Land Steward
- Laura Szwak** – Director of Education & Outreach
- Kathleen Thayne** – Major Gifts Manager
- Maria Tranguch** – Regional Manager, South Jersey Metro
- Ingrid B. Vandegaer** – Regional Manager, Highlands



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