



New Jersey Conservation
FOUNDATION

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

protecting

NEW JERSEY'S

biodiversity



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ABOUT THE COVER

Our cover collage illustrates the beauty and diversity of New Jersey's rare animals and plants. Clockwise from upper left are red-headed woodpecker, Io moth, Indiana bats, Pickering's morning glory, long-tailed salamander, bobcat and Pine Barrens tree frog. In the center are Hessel's hairstreak butterfly, left, and American kestrel. Many thanks to the contributing photographers, including Blaine Rothauser, Stephen Mason, Neha Savant, Tom Halliwell and Ashley Tubbs.

MISSION

New Jersey Conservation Foundation is a private, nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve land and natural resources throughout New Jersey for the benefit of all.

Through acquisition and stewardship, we protect strategic lands from the Highlands to the Pine Barrens to the Delaware Bayshore. We promote strong land conservation policies at the local, state and federal levels, forge partnerships to achieve conservation goals, and provide support and technical assistance to partner groups. Since 1960, we have helped protect more than 125,000 acres of natural areas, farms, parks and water resources.

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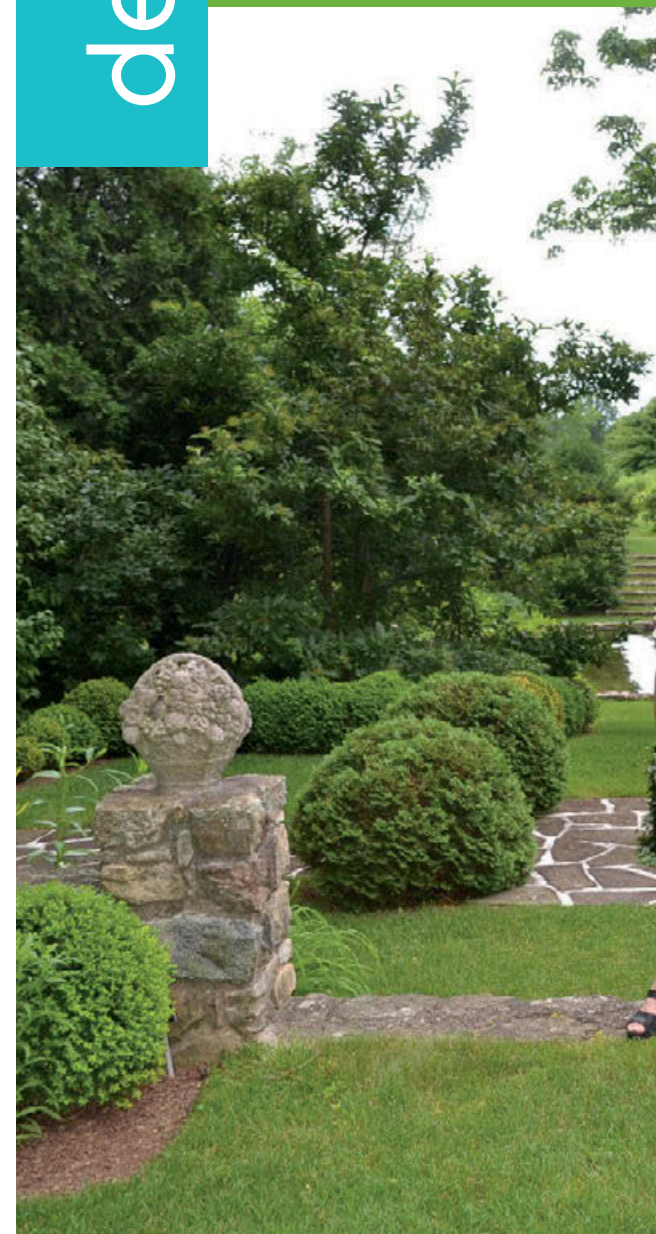
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FROM NEW JERSEY C

dear

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New Jersey has amazing biological diversity. Our distinct geological regions – everything from mountains to beaches – provide a richness of native animal and plant species exceeding many states much larger in size.

But some of these species are struggling. Due to habitat loss, climate change, forest fragmentation, competition from invasive species, diseases, and other factors, many species have slipped from common to rare. Those listed by the state as “endangered” are in jeopardy of vanishing from New Jersey.

But there’s hope.

That hope lies in preserving lands that support wildlife habitat, restoring damaged habitats and adopting policies that include strong protections for endangered and threatened species.

For nearly 60 years, New Jersey Conservation Foundation has preserved lands throughout New Jersey, stewarding land wisely, and advocating for policies at all levels of government that protect wildlife and rare species.

At the 11,500 acre Franklin Parker Preserve in the heart of the Pine Barrens – a former cranberry farm – we restored 1,100 acres of Atlantic white cedar forest.

Why is this important? One reason is Hessel’s hairstreak, a tiny, beautiful butterfly whose caterpillars feed exclusively on Atlantic white cedar.

Hessel’s hairstreak butterflies have disappeared in many places. But they’re thriving at the Franklin Parker Preserve and on other preserved lands in the Pine Barrens.

We’ll introduce you to a sampling of the animals and plants considered endangered, threatened or special concern species in our state.

With your help, New Jersey Conservation will continue to preserve and restore habitats for these rare animals and plants.

Thank you so much for your generosity over the years! Without our members, friends and partners, our work saving land and protecting native species would not be possible.

Michele S. Byers

MICHELE S. BYERS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kenneth H. Klipstein II

KENNETH H. KLIPSTEIN II
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New Jersey is a small state that packs a big biological diversity punch. Thanks to a remarkably varied landscape and temperate climate, plant and animal diversity rivals states many times our size.

From the rugged Highlands to sandy ocean beaches, from Pine Barrens forests to Delaware Bay tidal marshes, thousands of plant and animal species call New Jersey home.

They include 415 mammals, breeding birds, reptiles, amphibians and freshwater fish; 500 migratory birds, marine mammals, and saltwater fish; and tens of thousands of invertebrates. More than 2,100 native plants grow here, including several species found nowhere else in the world.

New Jersey's native plants and animals face many threats, including loss of habitat, competition from invasive species, degradation to overabundant deer, land disturbance, contamination and climate change.

Eighty-six New Jersey animals are considered endangered or threatened. Endangered species are those whose prospects for survival in New Jersey are in immediate jeopardy, while threatened species are those that could become endangered if populations continue to decline.

A total 818 plants are either endangered or "species of concern." The species of concern designation means these plants need monitoring because they are declining and could become endangered.

New Jersey Conservation Foundation protects New Jersey's biodiversity – especially endangered and threatened species – by preserving land with outstanding wildlife habitat, restoring damaged habitat, and advocating for the responsible stewardship of natural lands throughout the state.

In 2016, we and our partners – the New Jersey chapter of The Nature Conservancy, Rowan University and the William Penn Foundation – introduced Conservation Blueprint, an innovative digital mapping tool to help pinpoint the most important conservation lands to preserve.

"Conservation Blueprint will help us preserve as much biodiversity as we can, while we can," said Dr. Emile DeVito, our staff biologist.

"One thing we can do is save large ecosystems from fragmentation," DeVito added. "We need to preserve large, intact pieces of land that are the most pristine."

Preserving and protecting large swaths of open land will also help New Jersey adapt as much as possible to a warming climate.

Northern New Jersey is most at risk because species cannot adapt or move as quickly as the climate changes. Conversely, the New Jersey Pine Barren uplands are less susceptible to the impacts of climate change because they lie at the northern end of the country's southern ecosystems.

In the following pages, read about some of New Jersey's rare animals and plants – and what New Jersey Conservation Foundation and our partners are doing to help ensure their survival.

Two of the state's rarest plants, bog asphodel and Pickering's morning glory, are both found in the Pine Barrens where our largest preserve – the Franklin Parker Preserve – is located. You'll also learn about butterfly and moth research in the Pine Barrens, as well as the region's unofficial mascot, the Pine Barrens tree frog.

Two of the state's rare birds highlighted in this report are kestrels, which are nesting on preserved land in western Hunterdon County, and red-headed woodpeckers, which have established a large breeding population at the Michael Huber Prairie Warbler Preserve in the Pine Barrens.

Some species are faring better than others. Encouraging news includes bobcats, which are making a comeback after being effectively wiped out in New Jersey. Bats, however, are still struggling to rebound after being devastated by a disease known as White-nose Syndrome.

For more information, visit www.njconservation.org

From the rugged Highlands to sandy ocean beaches, from Pine Barrens forests to Delaware Bay tidal marshes, thousands of plant and animal species call New Jersey home.

A bog turtle, considered endangered in New Jersey, climbs over pitcher plants in the northwest corner of the state.



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Photo by Neha Savant

IMPACT OF PROPOSED PIPELINE ON THREATENED **salamanders**

As their name suggests, long-tailed salamanders are mostly tail. Accounting for two-thirds of their body length, these long tails easily break off when grabbed by a predator, allowing the salamanders to escape. Tails regenerate in a few months.

Since 1970, long-tailed salamanders have been considered threatened in New Jersey. The range of these brightly colored salamanders extends across the northern half of the state, and their habitats are closely tied to the geology of the landscape, especially streams and ponds.

In western Hunterdon and Mercer counties, the area threatened by the proposed PennEast pipeline, long-tailed salamanders are being studied to see how they would be impacted.

Neha Gajendra Savant, a graduate student in the conservation biology program at Columbia University, is conducting field research and collecting DNA samples of these salamanders. The DNA will be used to determine the “genetic connectivity” of salamanders: that is, how populations are related to one another.

Savant hopes to take DNA samples of 300 long-tailed salamanders by the end of summer and analyze them over the fall and winter. Her study is expected to be completed by May 2018.



THE LAST OF THE **bog asphodels**

With its bright yellow clusters of star-shaped flowers, bog asphodel (*Narthecium americanum*) is one of the state's rarest plants – found nowhere on Earth but the Pine Barrens of New Jersey.

Historically, populations of bog asphodel existed in North Carolina, South Carolina and Delaware. But due to changes in habitat, those populations haven't been seen in years and are believed lost forever.

Today, a 20-by-30-mile area of the Pine Barrens – spanning parts of Burlington, Ocean and Atlantic counties, where the Wading, Oswego, Batsto and Atsion rivers flow – is the last remaining stronghold of the bog asphodel.

This small geographic area includes the 11,379-acre Franklin Parker Preserve, where bog asphodel populations can be seen along stream corridors, open savannas and openings in cedar swamps.

"The places where you find bog asphodel are some of the most scenic and beautiful places in the Pine Barrens," said Russell Juelg, New Jersey Conservation Foundation's Pine Barrens senior land steward. "It's a real treat to go out and see this plant when it's in flower. Wherever you find bog asphodel, you almost always find a variety of other characteristic plants of the Pine Barrens, including sundews, pitcher plants and yellow eyed grasses."

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ATLANTIC WHITE CEDAR FORESTS PROTECT RARE butterfly

Among New Jersey's rare butterflies, Hessel's hairstreak (*Callophrys hesseli*) is one of the most beautiful, its emerald green wings accented with brown and white patterning.

"It used to be super common on the East Coast, but 90 percent of its range has been obliterated," said Stephen Mason, a Drexel University doctoral student who studies insects at the Franklin Parker Preserve in the Pine Barrens.

Why has this tiny butterfly's range declined so precipitously? Because Hessel's hairstreak caterpillars are "specialists," feeding exclusively on a single plant – the Atlantic white cedar tree – said Mason.

Unfortunately for the Hessel's hairstreak, lumber made from Atlantic white cedars has been highly prized for centuries for its durability and resistance to rot. The earliest European settlers clear cut most of the east's once-abundant Atlantic white cedar forests.

The good news is that several years ago, New Jersey Conservation Foundation completed an extensive Atlantic white cedar restoration including the planting of over 25,000 trees on 1,100 acres. At the Franklin Parker Preserve and other preserved lands with Atlantic white cedar forests, the Hessel's hairstreak will always have plentiful habitat.

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'WARBLER PRESERVE' HOSTS RED-HEADED woodpeckers

Don't let the name of the Michael Huber Prairie Warbler Preserve fool you. This 1,227-acre preserve in the Pine Barrens has plenty of prairie warblers and much more!

The Huber Preserve is also home to a large breeding population of red-headed woodpeckers (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*), which are considered threatened in New Jersey.

Red-headed woodpeckers are easy to identify by their spectacular coloring: brilliant red heads, white underparts, and black backs with large white patches on their wings.

Once common in the east, red-headed woodpeckers have severely declined over the past 50 years due to wildfire suppression, competition with European starlings for nesting sites, and road mortality.

Like other woodpeckers, red-headed woodpeckers drill into trees for insects. But unlike most others, they also catch insects in flight and hunt for them on the ground, and will eat acorns and beech nuts. They'll also stash food in tree crevices and under bark to eat later.

Their preferred habitat is open oak or pine forest with scattered dead trees and plentiful sunlight on the grounds, a habitat type created by wildfires at the Michael Huber Prairie Warbler Preserve and other sites in the New Jersey Pine Barrens.





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ELUSIVE **bobcats** REBOUNDED IN NEW JERSEY

Among New Jersey's native wild animals, few are more shy and elusive than bobcats (*Lynx rufus*). Even wildlife biologists constantly looking for bobcats consider themselves lucky to spot one.

New Jersey's only native wildcat, bobcats essentially vanished from New Jersey by the 1970s due to habitat loss from deforestation, development and changes in farming practices.

Efforts to bring back bobcats began in the late 1970s, when state wildlife officials trapped cats in Maine and brought them to New Jersey. From 1978 to 1982, 24 bobcats were released in sections of Warren, Sussex and Morris counties north of Interstate 80.

Bobcats are considered endangered in New Jersey, but their numbers appear to be increasing and their range expanding. Recently, a bobcat was photographed on the proposed route of the PennEast pipeline in Hunterdon and Mercer counties.

Bobcats are two to three times the size of a housecat, with a distinctive short "bobbed" tail, markings that range from spotted patterns to tabby stripes, and many have black tufts on the tips of their ears.



SAVING RARE **morning glories**

Unlike the showy “garden variety” of morning glory, the tiny wildflower known as Pickering’s morning glory has a subtle beauty in keeping with its mysterious Pine Barrens home. Its long vines trail almost unnoticed along the sandy ground, and its delicate star-shaped white flowers blossom in the early summer.

Pickering’s morning glory is one of the rarest flowers of the Pine Barrens, with many of its historic populations damaged – or completely wiped out – by illegal off-road vehicles, dumping of construction debris, and lack of wildfires.

Emile DeVito, our staff biologist, has been working for years to save Pickering’s morning glory from extinction in New Jersey.

In 2009, he and other researchers surveyed Pickering’s morning glory populations throughout the Pine Barrens. Of 22 previously documented populations, nine had completely disappeared and another four were on the brink of extinction. In 2015, they discovered a previously unknown population while radio-tracking a female pine snake to her nest burrow – right in the middle of a morning glory patch!

DeVito and New Jersey Conservation Foundation are taking measures to save the remaining Pickering’s morning glories, including building barriers around plant populations, removing alien weeds like Chinese bush clover, advocating for stronger off-road vehicle laws and better enforcement, and erecting signage near roadside plants so that work crews won’t accidentally mow them over.

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PINE BARRENS tree frogs

One of the most iconic sounds of the New Jersey Pine Barrens is the rapid, nasal “quonk-quonk-quonk” mating call of Pine Barrens tree frogs (*Hyla andersonii*) on warm spring evenings.

These tiny tree frogs, among the state’s most beautiful amphibians, are less than two inches long, with vibrant green skin and bold markings.

Pine Barrens tree frogs prefer acidic habitats like Atlantic white cedar swamps and pitch pine lowlands carpeted with sphagnum moss. Cranberry bogs and seepage areas along Pine Barrens rivers and streams also serve as breeding habitat. Pine Barrens tree frogs’ adaptation for acidic water allows them to outcompete other frogs that can’t tolerate the low pH.

The greatest threat to Pine Barrens tree frogs comes from degradation due to water pollution from farming and development. New Jersey Conservation Foundation’s Pine Barrens preserves, like the Franklin Parker Preserve in Burlington County, serve as strongholds for Pine Barrens tree frog populations.

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NEW JERSEY **bats** DEVASTATED BY WHITE-NOSE DISEASE

The Indiana bat is New Jersey's only federally endangered bat. But due to the devastating white-nose disease, four other bat species are struggling for survival and are recommended for inclusion on the state's endangered species list.

Ten years ago, white-nose appeared in New Jersey's bat populations. The disease is caused by a European fungus that found its way into winter hibernation caves. The disease attacks bats' delicate wing membranes and harms their ability to fly and feed. It also disrupts their deep hibernation sleep, waking them up. They then fly outside in winter cold, depleting their energy reserves and risk starving or freezing to death.

The state's Endangered and Nongame Species Program estimates that 90 percent of New Jersey's pre-white nose population of bats was wiped out. The state completed a status review of mammals and recommended that the little brown bat, eastern small-footed Myotis, tri-colored bat and Northern Myotis be added to the endangered list. An additional four bat species – big brown bat, hoary bat, red bat, and silver-haired bat – were recommended as "Species of Special Concern."

Adding those eight would mean that all of New Jersey's nine bat species – six year-round and three migratory – would be considered endangered or special concern. The good news is that survival rates of bats may slowly be returning to normal levels, possibly because the offspring of bats that didn't succumb to white-nose may have an inherited immunity. However, because bats give birth to only one "pup" per year, it will take decades for populations to rebound – if the positive trends continue.





SHEDDING LIGHT ON MYSTERIOUS **moths**

Long after most people are asleep, Blaine Rothauser and his fellow citizen scientists watch a brightly lit screen at the Franklin Parker Preserve.

No, it's not movie night. They're looking for moths found in New Jersey's Pine Barrens. Moths are attracted by light and will land on the illuminated screen.

Over the past four years, Rothauser and fellow moth experts, Bernie Knaupp and Ann Marie Woods, have spent hundreds of hours conducting moth surveys with the goal of filling a glaring information gap.

"Right now there are no threatened and endangered moth species," explained Rothauser, a conservation biologist with GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. This is because not enough is known about them to tell if populations are stable, increasing or declining.

"It's hard to get a handle on the population dynamics because so few people are doing these types of surveys with moths," he said.

So far, the moth project at Franklin Parker Preserve has yielded lots of data.

"We have a list of over 600 species that we've found just in the preserve!," said Rothauser. "Nothing screams diversity like these moth species, many of which are unique to the Pine Barrens."



Photo by Blaine Rothauser

Io Moth



Photo by Blaine Rothauser

Cecropia Moth

One positive sign, said Rothauser, is that many "obligate" Pine Barrens species – that is, those that can't live anywhere else – seem to be thriving. They include the pine-devil, violet dart moth, pine underwing, jack pine tube moth, imperial moth, short leaf pine cone borer, northern pine sphinx, and the beautifully marked major sallow.

Some "extreme specialists" of the Pine Barrens – moths that rely on a single, specific food source – have been documented at the preserve. Those include the crimson sallow, gray banded zale, northern pine looper, and fringed dart.

Rothauser and his team also found many "absolutely beautiful moths" that are not exclusively associated with the Pine Barrens but always a treat to see. They include the pink prominent, striped oakworm moth, rosy maple moth, Virginia creeper sphinx, Promethea, and the large and spectacular Polyphemus moth.

"When you have a large sample size and you're looking at all species, you can get a picture of the ecological health of the place you're surveying," Rothauser said. And in the case of the Franklin Parker Preserve, the ecological health looks great.



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Those who donated in 2017 will be included in next year's annual report, so stay tuned!
Share your thoughts and questions with Kathleen Ward, Director of Development and
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For 57 years, New Jersey Conservation Foundation has been dedicated to strategically and steadfastly conserving New Jersey's special places. But there is much more to do! That's why we launched the Campaign for Conservation: Your Land, Your Water, Your Food, Your Future in November 2015 to secure \$30 million in private and public funds to preserve key properties throughout New Jersey. We have raised \$9,948,034 in private funds from 261 donors and organizations and over \$20 million in public funds. Through the Campaign, donors saved 13 signature properties across New Jersey. Thank you!

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Erica L. Johanson and James V. Powers

Barbara Johnson
Betty W. Johnson
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Z. Duke
Mr. Maitland Jones and Ms. Susan Hockaday
Gery Juleff
Caroline Katmann
Mr. and Mrs. Stanley N. Katz
Steve Kazakoff
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Kellogg
Ryan Kennedy
Robert W. Kent*
Nan and Robert Keohane
Michael W. Klein
Carol M. Kleis and Rex A. Parker
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth H. Klipstein, II
The Koven Foundation
Richard Kraeuter
Kevin and Leslie Kuchinski
Anton and Alison Lahnston
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel W. Lambert, III
Ms. Janet K. Laughlin
Lawrence Township Conservation
Foundation, Inc.
Mary Ann and John Leahy
The Leavens Foundation, Inc.
Ms. Elizabeth Lempert and Mr. Kenneth Norman



Virginia and Clark Lennon
Harvey Lester
Richard Levandowski
Gordon and Katja Lewis
Carol Lipson
Andrew and Anya Littauer
Cate and James Litvack
Andrew and Karin Lloyd
Losam Fund
Andrew and Cynthia Love
Andy Dobson and Annarie Lyles
Lisa and Marty MacCollum
Peter Macholdt and Kathy Fedorko
Wendy Mager and Eric Monberg
Roger Martindell
Helen & William Mazer Foundation
David H. McAlpin, Jr.
Frank and Martha McDougald
Jennifer and John McGahren
Elizabeth McGrail
Charlotte and George McLaughlin
James and Patricia McPherson
Scott and Hella McVay
Herman Melton
Susan Michniewski
Sally and David Mikkelsen

Jane Miller
Mr. and Mrs. Bradford Mills
Joan and Sandy Millspaugh
Ms. Alison E. Mitchell and Mr. Chris Keep
Avril Moore
Liza Morehouse
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Mount
Holly Muller
Drs. Lauri and John Mulvey
Elise W. Murray
Music Together, LLC
Prof. Jim Myers
Suzanne Nash
Ned and Greenie Neuburg
Lee and Sydney Neuwirth
Mr. and Mrs. John T. Newell
Beth Nichols
The Hon. Maureen Ogden
Thomas Ogren
Judy and Oye Olukotun
Open Space Institute
Scot D. Pannepacker and Heidi S. Wilenius
Tari Pantaleo
Michael Paul
The William Penn Foundation
Tim and Sandra Perkins

Elwood and Jacqueline Phares
Virginia and Robert Pierson
Ralph and Jane Porpora
Kathryn A. and James M. Porter
Leslie Potter
Frances L. Preston
Hilary Prouty
Ralph and Laura Pugliese
Mr. Martin J. Rapp
Joan and Robert Rechnitz
L. Keith and Lisa Reed
Amy and Jay Regan
The Reynolds Family Fund
Karen A. Richards
River Branch Foundation
Robert Wood Johnson 1962 Charitable Trust
Mr. and Mrs. William S. Roebing
Mr. William H. Rolls
Greg and Carol Romano
Barbara Rose
Bill Carmean and Nancy Ross
Samantha Rothman and John Hankin
Teresa Sanchez-Lazet
Vanessa Sandom and Carl Seiden
Jamie and John Sapoch
Daniel and Lori Saporito

Scott Schaub
Brian Schmult and Barbara Goun
Lorraine Shiarappa
Grace Sinden
The John Ben Snow Memorial Trust
Julia Snyder
Mr. Richard Speedy
Robert and Lisa Stockman
Hunt and Margaret Stockwell
Jacqueline Strigl
Russell and Lois Swanson
Richard and Laura Szwak
Mr. and Mrs. Pete Taft
Taft Communications
Alexandra Tatnall
Becky Taylor
Ted and Penny Thomas
Elizabeth Thompson
Lise Thompson
James and Barbara Tiesi
Kathryn Trenner
Mr. and Mrs. Adrian D. Trevisan
James and Susan Trowbridge
Mr. and Mrs. Eric Turnquist
Dr. Lynda Gail Tussey
Adrienne Tymiak and David Ackerman

Kyle L. Van Arsdale
Victoria Foundation, Inc.
Jeanne Walden
Mr. and Mrs. John D. Wallace
Kathleen Ward
William C. Ward, Jr.
John Watson
Barbara and James Webb
Fred and Elizabeth Weber
Rachel Webster
Caron Wendell
Peter Wester
Ginny, Todd, & Emily Whitaker
Clarissa and Alan Willemssen
Harry and Joannah Wilmerding
Louise and Cliff Wilson
Susan Wilson
The Winslow Foundation
Bob and Barbara Wolfe
William and Elizabeth Wolfe
Glenda S. Yu
Mr. Jerome Zeldis and Mrs. Sharon Stamm
William Zick
Ali and Waldburg Zomorodi

*Denotes deceased member



HELPING AMERICAN **kestrels** THRIVE

North America's smallest falcon, the American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) hunts for insects, mice and other small prey in open fields. Once common in New Jersey, kestrel populations have declined in recent years and are considered a threatened species in the state.

In the Wickecheoke Creek region of western Hunterdon County, where New Jersey Conservation Foundation has preserved over 4,000 acres of open space and farmland, volunteer Kathy Klink is dedicated to helping kestrels rebound.

In the spring and summer, Kathy monitors 14 kestrel nesting boxes. This year, nesting pairs occupied 10 of the boxes, hatching 33 chicks.

"My goal is to get 100 percent occupancy," says Kathy, who seeks new locations for boxes that don't attract kestrel pairs. "Overall, the kestrels are doing very well in this area. We're lucky here – we have a lot of preserved farmland and open space that's never going to be developed."

The kestrel boxes are equipped with predator guards to keep raccoons, snakes and other animals from getting to the eggs and chicks. The state Division of Fish & Wildlife visits the nesting boxes to weigh, measure and band adults and chicks, maintaining the data to track their movements in the future.



2016

GAINING GROUND

MORE THAN 3,200 ACRES PRESERVED THROUGHOUT THE

■ BURLINGTON COUNTY

CIPRIANI

0.5 acres, Woodland Township

Located in the village of Chatsworth, adjacent to the Franklin Parker Preserve, this property was donated as part of an estate. In keeping with the original intent of the donors, in 2016 the property was sold to a private owner, with the proceeds used for land preservation and stewardship.

ZEMEL PEMBERTON

811 acres, Pemberton Township

NJ Conservation's new preserve – to be dedicated in the fall of 2017 – is surrounded by Brendan Byrne State Forest. It includes pitch pine uplands, nearly two miles of the pristine Mount Misery Brook, and wetlands that served as an important fresh water resource for the earliest Pine Barrens inhabitants. The property was purchased from the Zemel family with the help of several partners, including the New Jersey Green Acres Program, The William Penn Foundation, Open Space Institute, Rancocas Conservancy, John Ben Snow Memorial Trust and philanthropists Joan and Robert Rechnitz.

ZEMEL WOODLAND

1,101 acres, Woodland Township

This purchase expanded the Franklin Parker Preserve to 11,379 acres – nearly 18 square miles – increasing recreation opportunities while protecting the preserve's water resources and wildlife habitat. We purchased the land from the Zemel family, which had owned it since the 1950s. Funding partners

include the New Jersey Green Acres Program, The William Penn Foundation, Open Space Institute and philanthropists Joan and Robert Rechnitz.

■ CAMDEN COUNTY

GATEWAY PARK 1 & 2

8 acres, City of Camden

These two properties along Admiral Wilson Boulevard were transferred to the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority (CCMUA) from the Delaware River Port Authority to become part of Gateway Park along the Cooper River. Additional parcels in Gateway Park are pending preservation. The soon-to-be 25-acre park will be jointly managed by NJ Conservation and CCMUA, offering outdoor recreation, environmental education, river access, wildlife habitat and scenic enjoyment.

■ CUMBERLAND COUNTY

CASPER

29 acres, Stow Creek Township

We assisted in the preservation of the Casper Family Farm. The farm is composed of 100 percent prime soils, the highest classification for agricultural soil quality, and is near other preserved properties.

WATSON

51 acres, Hopewell Township

We assisted in the preservation of this farm in the township's Dutch Neck neighborhood, which includes

a mosaic of agricultural lands and marshes within a wide bend of the Cohansey River. It is near several other preserved farms that we and our partners preserved, and close to the state's Cohansey River Wildlife Management Area.

WILLIS

75 acres, Hopewell Township

NJ Conservation assisted in the preservation of this farm, which contains excellent agricultural land and wildlife habitat near the Cohansey River. Like the Watson farm, it is located in the township's Dutch Neck neighborhood, a landscape dominated by farms and marshland.

SUNSET LAKE 100

123 acres, Upper Deerfield Township

This property was proposed for a 374-home residential development. Upper Deerfield Township preserved the land in partnership with Cumberland County, New Jersey Green Acres Program, Natural Lands, Open Space Institute, Frank H. Stewart Trust, and The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

■ GLOUCESTER COUNTY

MACCARONE

126 acres, Woolwich Township

We assisted the State Agriculture Development Committee and Woolwich Township with the preservation of this vegetable farm along the tidal Oldmans Creek.



STATE

HUNTERDON COUNTY

HILL & DALE 4

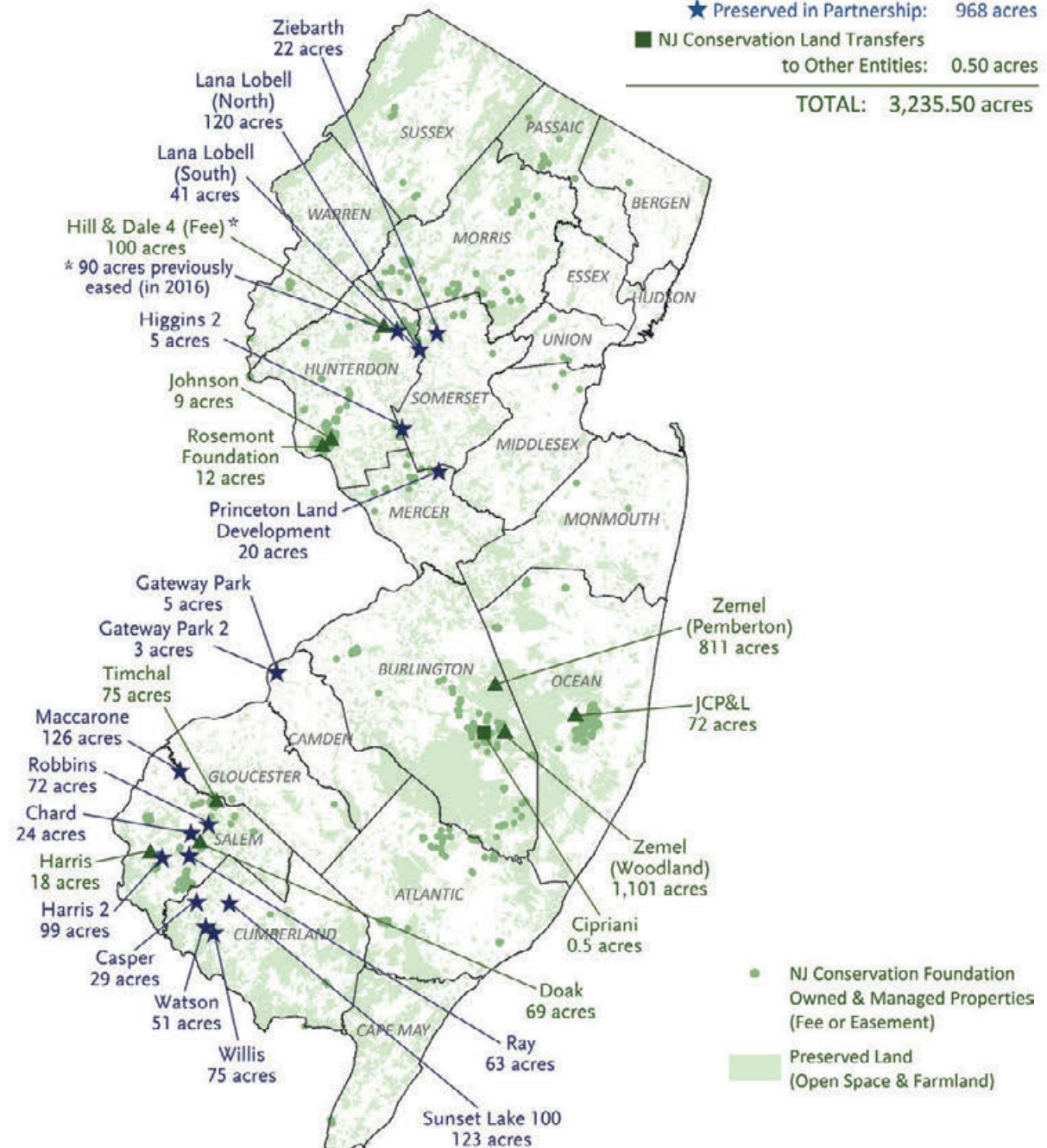
100 acres (Fee & Easement), Tewksbury Township

The Hill & Dale Preserve was expanded to nearly 300 acres in late December with the purchase of 100 acres of gently rolling farmland. Earlier in the year, an easement was placed on 90 acres of the land to permanently restrict it to agriculture. Funding for the purchase was provided by River Branch Foundation, Hunterdon County, Victoria Foundation, Tewksbury Land Trust, The 1772 Foundation and numerous private donors. The easement was acquired with funding from Hunterdon County, the State Agriculture Development Committee and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

JOHNSON

9 acres, Delaware Township

Since 2000, the Johnson family of Sergeantsville has preserved more than 80 acres near the Wickecheoke Creek, including land next to the Green Sergeant's Covered Bridge, a local landmark and New Jersey's last remaining original covered bridge. In early 2016, family matriarch Rosa Johnson preserved 9 additional acres, connecting two previously preserved properties to allow a trail connection to the covered bridge.





2016

GAINING GROUND continued

ROSEMONT FOUNDATION

12 acres, Delaware Township

This property has a tributary of the Lockatong Creek and sweeping views of the scenic Rosemont Valley. It will be used for hiking, nature observation and other passive recreation. The Rosemont Foundation acquired it in 2011 to ensure its eventual preservation. NJ Conservation purchased it with funding from Hunterdon County and Delaware Township, with assistance from the New Jersey Water Supply Authority.

■ **MERCER COUNTY****PRINCETON LAND DEVELOPMENT**

20 acres, Princeton

This property is adjacent to the previously-preserved Klepper property and expands the environmentally sensitive Princeton Ridge Preserve. The land was originally part of an approved subdivision, but NJ Conservation assisted the town with the purchase. The property consists of forest, mature trees, boulder fields and sensitive wetlands. It is near the Ricciardi property, preserved in 2011.

■ **OCEAN COUNTY****JCP&L**

72 acres, Lacey Township

This long, narrow property – the former rail bed of the defunct Tuckerton Railroad – bisects the 4,000-acre Candace McKee Ashmun Preserve in the Pine Barrens. By acquiring a permanent open space easement on the property, access to the Preserve can now be controlled to prevent illegal dumping and off-road vehicle use. JCP&L donated the easement as part of a Natural Resource Damages settlement.

■ **SALEM COUNTY****CHARD**

24 acres, Alloway Township

Brown Swiss dairy cows are known for their rugged constitution and rich milk, which is perfect for cheese making. This family-run farm raises Brown Swiss breeding stock, used to supply cows to dairy farms all over the world. NJ Conservation partnered with the State Agriculture Development Committee, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, Salem County and Alloway Township to preserve the farm.

DOAK

69 acres, Alloway Township

When a local farmer borrowed money several years ago to add 69 acres to his farm, it was both an opportunity and a financial strain. Selling the development rights helped the farmer reduce his debt and keep his farm. The farm was preserved by NJ Conservation using funds from the State Agriculture Development Committee and grant funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

HARRIS

118 acres, Quinton Township

A unique public-private partnership preserved nearly 100 acres of farmland at Mill Hollow Farms, plus a forested riparian buffer of about 18 acres. The farm is located near Keasbey's Creek, which runs into the Salem River and the Mannington Meadows tidal complex, whose marshes and wetlands are nationally significant habitats for bald eagle, numerous waterfowl and migratory birds. NJ Conservation partnered with the State Agriculture Development Committee, Open Space Institute and The William Penn Foundation.

RAY

63 acres, Alloway Township

NJ Conservation helped preserve this family-owned horse and goat farm, a priority target farm in Alloway Township's Farmland Preservation Plan. Partners included Alloway Township, Salem County, the State Agriculture Development Committee and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

ROBBINS

72 acres, Pilesgrove Township

This farm has been in the same family for 80 years and has gently rolling fields, high-quality soils and a tributary of the Salem River. It is adjacent to another preserved farm and is located in a township where over 5,000 acres of farmland has been preserved. NJ Conservation assisted with the preservation of the farm with our partners: Pilesgrove Township, Salem County, the State Agriculture Development Committee and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

TIMCHAL

75 acres, Pilesgrove Township

Located on gently rolling terrain, this farm grows corn, wheat, soybeans and hay. One hundred percent of its soils are classified as "prime" and "statewide importance," the top quality for growing a variety of crops. The farm is crossed by the Indian Run, a tributary of Oldmans Creek - a river system recognized as a stronghold for federally protected bog turtles and endangered freshwater mussel species. Beyond the agricultural fields are woodlands that protect the stream and provide habitat for wildlife. We helped preserve the farm in partnership with the State Agriculture Development Committee, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service and Pilesgrove Township.



■ SOMERSET COUNTY

HIGGINS 2

5 acres, Hillsborough Township

NJ Conservation assisted Somerset County and Hillsborough Township in preserving this land in the Sourland Mountains, which will become part of a new preserve of over 1,000 acres.

LANA LOBELL NORTH & SOUTH

161 acres, Bedminster Township

The Lana Lobell horse farm has been a local landmark since its days as a breeder of champion harness racehorses. The property – which includes a mile of frontage along the Lamington River – was approved in 2007 for a subdivision of nine estate homes. The land was preserved by a partnership that included New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Bedminster Township, Somerset County, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service and the State Agriculture Development Committee.



The 811-acre Zemel property in Pemberton Township includes these beautiful freshwater wetlands, believed to be a source of drinking water for the area's earliest inhabitants.

2016 PUBLIC FUNDING PARTNERS

Alloway Township
 Bedminster Township
 Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority (CCMUA)
 Cumberland County
 Delaware Township
 East Amwell Township
 Hopewell Township (Cumberland County)
 Hunterdon County
 Mercer County
 NJ Water Supply Authority

NJDEP Green Acres Program
 NJDEP Office of Natural Resource Damages
 Pilesgrove Township
 Princeton
 Salem County
 Somerset County
 State Agriculture Development Committee
 Upper Deerfield Township
 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
 Woolwich Township



2016

POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

POLICY TEAM PRIORITIES – WINS AND LOSSES



WINS

OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

The best conservation news of the year was the passage of legislation allocating state funding for preserving parks, natural areas, farmland and historic sites after two years of being mired in dispute. In November 2014, voters overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment permanently dedicating a portion of New Jersey's corporate business tax revenues to land preservation. But the Legislature and the Governor still needed to act. In June 2016, after two vetoes by Governor Christie, a compromise was reached – and funding is now flowing to preservation projects.

NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGES

Another win in 2016 was the Legislature's passage of a ballot question to create a "lockbox" to ensure that money received by the state in compensation for environmental damages could not be diverted for other purposes. The legislation was prompted by cases like the \$225 million ExxonMobil settlement, of which only \$50 million was targeted to the cleanup of the Passaic River. The rest went into the state's general fund. Voters will have the opportunity this November to vote for a constitutional amendment that would ensure that future natural resources damages settlements are allocated toward restoring and protecting natural resources and paying the costs of pursuing the settlements.

FEDERAL ENERGY BILL

New Jersey Conservation worked with national partners to stop a federal energy bill that included harmful provisions for public lands management and measures that would have made it faster and easier for gas pipelines and other energy infrastructure to cross preserved land and other environmentally sensitive areas. Sections of that bill have been re-proposed this year, so the fight isn't over yet!



LOSSES

SOUTH JERSEY GAS PIPELINE

The Pinelands Commission approved the South Jersey Gas Pipeline despite strong evidence that it is not consistent with the Pinelands Comprehensive Master Plan. The decision has been appealed by the Pinelands Preservation Alliance.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE PLANNING

New Jersey continues to face challenges in protecting natural resources on public lands, as evidenced by the tremendous damage to precious Pine Barrens habitats from illegal off-road vehicle use. Unfortunately, in 2016 the state scrapped a plan to control off-road vehicle use in Wharton State Forest.

GARDEN STATE EXPANSION PROJECT

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service allowed trees to be cleared on the site of the proposed Garden State Expansion Project in Chesterfield, despite evidence of nesting birds identified by NJ Conservation Foundation. Project approvals are under appeal.

ONGOING ISSUES

FORESTRY ON PUBLIC LANDS

We advocated for improvements to the state's forestry plan at the Sparta Mountain Wildlife Management Area. We advocated for the protection of mature interior forest habitats, as well as other public values including water quality and supply, recreation and scenic resources. In response to widespread concern, the state agreed to revise the plan, but it still does not consider the larger context and threats to our public forests. We are urging the state to undertake a broader public planning process and develop a comprehensive approach to stewarding and protecting New Jersey's public forestlands.

SIX FLAGS SOLAR PLAN

NJ Conservation and partners continued legal challenges to Great Adventure's plans to remove nearly 70 acres of

forest to build a solar facility. Legal action became necessary when efforts to convince the company to locate the facility over an existing parking lot or other open area – rather than removing the forest – were unsuccessful.

HIGHLANDS DEP RULE ROLLBACK: SEPTIC SYSTEM DENSITY STANDARDS

In May 2016, the NJDEP proposed amending the New Jersey Highlands Act Rules – Septic System Density Standards to permit six times as much residential development on large, mostly forested parcels in the Highlands Preservation Area. The proposed rule would permit increased impervious cover, leading to less groundwater replenishment, dry streams in droughts, increased flooding, reduced water quality and impacts on biodiversity. The NJ Senate and Assembly held hearings on the proposal, and in June 2017, passed Concurrent Resolution SCR 148/ACR 192 that “determines that DEP’s proposal to amend septic system density standards ... is inconsistent with legislative intent.” The vote triggered 30 days during which the DEP must amend or withdraw the rule. Final action awaits the fall 2017 legislative session.

PENNEAST PIPELINE PROPOSAL

The proposed PennEast pipeline is significantly delayed. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has yet to give final approval, and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection and the Delaware River Basin Commission have not begun their reviews. The project faces stiff opposition in New Jersey.



Alison Mitchell, Director of Policy for NJ Conservation Foundation, joins Congressman Pallone, Senator Booker, Senator Menendez and partner groups in a call to uphold hard-won environmental protections in Washington.

STAFF

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Alix Bacon, *Regional Manager, Western Piedmont*

Mark Barrick, *Information Technology /
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Tim Brill, *Central Jersey Project Manager*

Beth Davisson, *Project Manager,
Black River Greenway*

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Kathleen Ward, *Director of Development
& Communications*

Allison Williams, *Easement Steward*



2016

GRANT AWARDS

FRANKLIN PARKER CONSERVATION EXCELLENCE GRANTS

The Franklin Parker Conservation Excellence Grants provide funding for nonprofit conservation organizations working in New Jersey. The grants are designed to enhance proficiency in land conservation, develop long-term viable programs, and support creative, innovative projects that can serve as models for other communities and projects. Since its inception in 1989, the Franklin Parker Conservation Excellence Grants Program, previously administered by Conservation Resources Inc., has awarded more than \$1,676,746 for 428 nonprofit conservation projects throughout the Garden State. Funding for the grants is provided by Victoria Foundation and Mary Reinhart Stackhouse Foundation.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF VINELAND \$5,000 Creating a Pizza Garden!

The project will help underserved youth learn not only about beautifying a lot next to their clubhouse by developing a community garden, but also about soil, fertilizers, starting seeds, composting, food preparation and healthy eating.

CONSERVE WILDLIFE FOUNDATION OF NJ \$4,000 Learning Even More about NJ Bats

With the help of a 2015 Franklin Parker grant, Conserve Wildlife Foundation coordinated a summer mist-netting and radio-telemetry project in north New Jersey to learn more about distribution and summer roosting behaviors of the state's bat species. They will complete the survey focusing on lands in South Jersey with 2016 funding.

D&R GREENWAY LAND TRUST \$1,040 Reforesting Wooden Lane Preserve

D&R Greenway used a 2014 grant to clear invasive plants, erect enclosures and plant deer-resistant trees in their Wooden

Land Preserve. The funding in 2016 will establish a shrub layer in these re-forested areas.

FRIENDS OF BLACK RIVER RUN \$5,000 Enhancing Habitat and Trails in Black Run Preserve

The Friends of Black Run Preserve, located in Evesham Township 14 miles from Philadelphia, will transform a sand road into a trail and detention basins into natural habitat by planting native species. The Friends, established in 2012, will engage middle school students to help with the planting.

FRIENDS OF HOPEWELL VALLEY OPEN SPACE \$2,000 Educating the Public about Deer Management

The Friends will develop a 15-minute film ("The Deer Stand") as well as a short course titled "Conservation Deer Hunting" to educate the public and hunters about deer impacts and the environmental importance of managing deer.

FRIENDS OF PRINCETON OPEN SPACE \$1,000 Restoring Native Plant Communities and Forest

Friends of Princeton Open Space will continue their work to protect and promote the restoration and distribution of native plant communities in their Mountain Lakes Preserve. Interns will monitor the deer enclosure areas to ensure only native growth occurs.

GREAT SWAMP WATERSHED ASSOCIATION (GSWA) \$2,500

Applying for Accreditation

The GSWA is seeking Accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance and intends to use the Franklin Parker Grant towards the application fee (\$6,990 in total) and a fireproof cabinet. They will submit their application in 2017.

HARDING LAND TRUST \$2,000 Establishing a Wildflower Meadow

The land trust's staff attended the Land Trust Network roundtable on "Meadows Management" earlier this year. The

organization then hired the presenter (Tama Matsuoka) to help create a "pocket meadow" within one of its highly visible preserved properties.

HUNTERDON LAND TRUST \$2,225 Improving Public Access at Dvoor Farm

The Land Trust will develop a trail with directional and interpretive signage that will improve public access and knowledge about the natural and cultural resources of Dvoor Farm in partnership with Raritan Township.

ISLES, INC. \$1,000 Cleaning & Greening Vacant Lots and Parks in Trenton

With a 2015 Franklin Parker grant, Isles cleaned up four permanently preserved parks and 150 vacant lots in Trenton's West Ward, with labor supplied by neighborhood volunteers. In 2016, Isles intends to revisit some of the lots to add features, such as plantings, and other amenities to encourage keeping the areas free of litter.

MUSCONETCONG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION AND NORTH JERSEY RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT \$1,000

Collaborating to Promote Organizational Health

The two organizations have developed an Affiliation Agreement that defines how they will collaborate. The groups are not merging; they are retaining their own identity but are collaborating on administrative functions. They plan to create the following shared documents: employee manual, bylaws and finance/bookkeeping system.

NEW JERSEY AUDUBON SOCIETY \$2,500 Attracting Migratory Birds

NJ Audubon will remove invasive plants and replant native species attractive to birds, especially migratory species and pollinators, within an acre property at the Norwood Center in Cape May Point. These land stewardship activities will serve as a model for small-scale wildlife habitat enhancements.



NJ INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM

\$4,000

Containing Kudzu!

The Team has identified 22 sites in South Jersey containing kudzu, a terrifyingly invasive vine that has “eaten the southern US.” To curtail its growth in South Jersey, the Team is partnering with NJ Audubon Society to eradicate known emerging populations.

NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY BAYKEEPER

\$4,500

Teaming Up to Improve Cheesequake State Park

In partnership with state park personnel, Old Bridge Environmental Commission and Old Bridge High School, the Baykeeper will establish a native plant garden and build and maintain trails in this popular state park. This project will provide a good model for land trust cooperation with public agencies.

PASSAIC RIVER COALITION

\$4,000

Preserving Lands in the Passaic River Basin

With a 2015 Franklin Parker grant, the Passaic River Coalition conveyed 14 properties to public land-managing entities. The Coalition plans to transfer another 16 properties over the next year. The Coalition is improving its organizational fitness by divesting these properties.

RIDGE AND VALLEY CONSERVANCY

\$1,000

Implementing Management Plans to Control Invasives

The Ridge and Valley Conservancy used the Franklin Parker grant in 2015 to map and identify invasive species and their densities on five of their preserves and incorporated the information in the preserves' management plans. In 2016, they will begin to implement strategies to control invasive plants in four of these preserves.

SOURLAND CONSERVANCY

\$4,000

Restoring American Woodcock Habitat

The Conservancy is partnering with the Borough of Hopewell, Mercer County Park Commission, Friends of Hopewell Valley



Photo by Christopher J. Volker

The Boys & Girls Club in Vineland planted a pizza garden – and enjoyed the delicious products, thanks to Franklin Parker grant that funded the seeds and soil.

Open Space, and the US Fish & Wildlife Service to restore the old-growth fields at a Borough Park to create habitat for shrub-land breeding birds, such as the American woodcock. The Conservancy is using its Sourland Stewards, supported with a 2015 grant, to do the field work.

STONY BROOK-MILLSTONE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

\$4,000

Acquiring 19 Acres on Mt. Rose Ridge

The property is adjacent to the 930-acre Watershed Preserve and contains habitats recognized by the Township of Hopewell to be among the most environmentally sensitive and biologically diverse in the municipality. The area contains a healthy forest ecosystem with few non-native plants. The property is under contract.

TEWKSBURY LAND TRUST

\$1,500

Filling a Link in the 10-Mile Trail System

The land trust is acquiring a trail easement that will connect two preserved properties, filling a gap in a ten-mile trail system in Tewksbury. The trail will be available for nonmotorized trail uses, including equestrian use.

INTERNS

Eva Ryan

March 2016

Rutgers University, Douglass College extern

Project: NJ LAND CONSERVATION RALLY

Catherine Dillon

January 2016

Rutgers University, Douglass College extern

Project: NJ LAND CONSERVATION RALLY

Steven Dondoro

January 2016

Centenary College

Project: GENERAL CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE

Mia Wong

Summer 2016

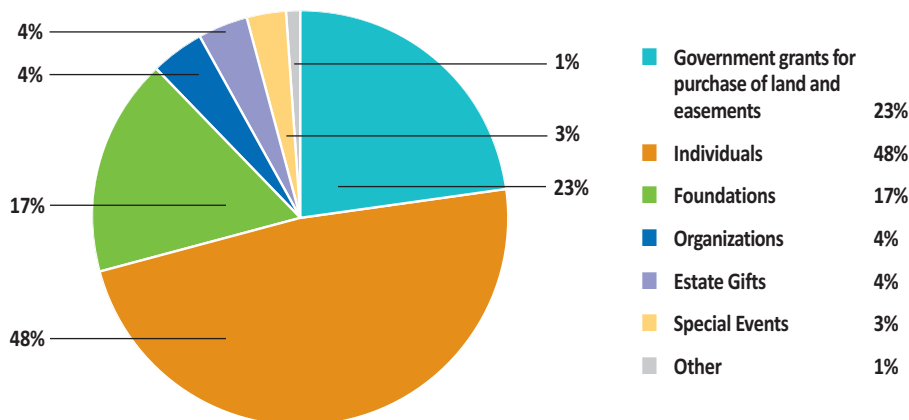
State University of New York

Project: STEWARDSHIP

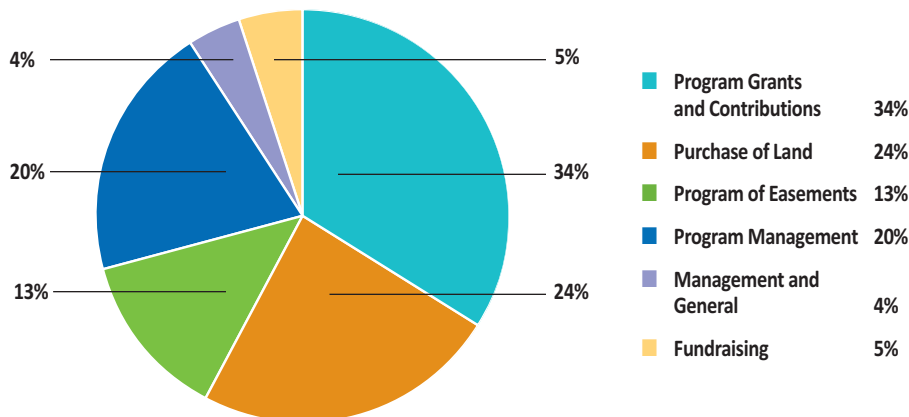


2016 FINANCIAL POSITION

2016 Support and Revenue \$12,485,943*



2016 Expenses and Land Purchases \$12,736,558*



*2016 information is unaudited.

To receive a copy of the complete financial statements and notes, please send a request to info@njconservation.org

*DECEMBER 31
2016

DECEMBER 31
2015

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$2,821,873	\$3,522,640
Investments, at Market Value	10,449,752	9,781,017
Unconditional Promises to Give	838,469	463,429
Note Receivable	100,000	150,000
Beneficial Interest in Split Interest Agreements	201,709	179,731
Land and Easements	35,579,940	32,418,672
Other Assets	120,651	443,605
Total Assets	\$50,112,394	\$46,959,094

Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	290,363	\$177,424
Refundable Advances		207,500
Notes Payable		
Total Liabilities	\$290,363	\$384,924

Net Assets

Unrestricted	42,999,805	39,816,874
Temporarily Restricted	6,715,952	6,651,022
Permanently Restricted	106,274	106,274
Total Net Assets	49,822,031	46,574,170

Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$50,112,394	\$46,959,094
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LEAVING A LEGACY for future generations

The Red Oak Society was founded in 2011 to recognize those who donate to New Jersey Conservation Foundation through planned giving strategies. We thank the conservation-minded supporters of the Red Oak Society who are preserving New Jersey's natural resources and lands for future generations.

To become a member of the Red Oak Society, please let us know if you wish to support New Jersey Conservation Foundation's mission through:

- Giving through your will or charitable trust
- Giving through IRAs, qualified retirement plans, insurance or donor advised funds
- Gifts of conservation easements, cash, securities and real estate

To discuss how your planned gift will help ensure the permanence of preservation, contact Kathleen Ward, Development Director, at 908-997-0723 or kathleen@njconservation.org.

While it is not necessary to advise us in advance that you have included New Jersey Conservation Foundation in your estate planning, we encourage you to let us know of your plans so that we may thank you and learn more about your interests. If you wish to add us in your will or estate plan, please use the following listing: New Jersey Conservation Foundation /170 Longview Road / Far Hills, NJ 07931. Our tax identification number is 22-6065456.



2016 Members of the Red Oak Society

Fredrick A. Allis*	Sarah P. Fiske*	Robert Pierson*
Eveyln Arcuni*	Barbara Galli*	Virginia Pierson
Carl Austin	Elizabeth K. Gardner*	Elizabeth Potter*
Edward F. Babbott	Margaret Gardner*	Joann S. Ramos
Ira H. Beckman*	Ruth Gleason*	Elizabeth B. Reed
Louis C. Bodenheimer*	Alfred R. Gnam*	L. Keith and Lisa Reed
David Bolger	Joan C. Gilson	Allen Reese &
Andrea Bonette	Elsie B. Grove*	Joseph M. Hengel
Louise Bossert*	Stephen C. Gruber	Timothy C. Riegert
JoAnn Bowman	Eleanor Gural*	Gregory Romano
Rose M. Bracco*	Thomas B. Harvey	David Rutherford*
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C. Austin Buck*	Harold Healy*	Walter and Patricia Savage*
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Michele S. Byers	John S. Hirschhoff*	Susan Schmidt
Ogden B. Carter*	Donald and Beverley Jones*	Diane P. Schwarz*
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Sophia Chroscinski*	Evangeline MacKay H.	E. Esty and Helen Stowell*
Tillie Chwat*	Keasbey*	Mark Thomas
Jack and Ronnie Cimprich	Larry and Barbara Keller*	Ted and Penny Thomas
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Eleanor English	Sigrid S. Nagle*	
Nicholas English*	Maureen Ogden	
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Dorothy Stewart Evert*	Cyril dos Passos*	
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“

It is that range of biodiversity that we must care for – the whole thing – rather than just one or two stars.”

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

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