

New Jersey Conservation



Photo by Ray Hennessy

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Illegal off-road vehicles are harming wildlife in the Pine Barrens, but we're working to stop them.
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Instead of a cemetery and mausoleum, North Crosswicks village will keep its rural ambiance.
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Without Governor Byrne, New Jersey's Pine Barrens would not be protected today.



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Michele S. Byers

ON THE COVER

Photo graciously provided by NJ-based photographer Ray Hennessy. This photo shows a long-tailed salamander, a threatened species in New Jersey. Long-tailed salamanders are of particular concern because the proposed PennEast pipeline through western Hunterdon and Mercer counties would cross through their habitat. Last summer, Columbia University graduate student Neha Savant conducted field research and collected DNA samples from long-tailed salamanders along the pipeline route. She is currently analyzing the data and is hoping her research will help protect the salamanders. Read more about the pipeline issue inside.



From Our Executive Director

Michele S. Byers

When asked about New Jersey Conservation Foundation, I say: We preserve land – more than 125,000 acres in almost 60 years.

But that's not all. I talk about advocating for strong land use protections, from the Palisades cliffs along the Hudson River to the fertile farmland of Delaware Bayshore.

In this issue, meet New Jersey Conservation Foundation's policy team, our voice in Trenton, Washington, D.C., and communities in the Garden State. Policy team members work to defend and improve land use laws and policies, and work with elected and appointed officials to make sure our health and quality of life remain priorities.

As a last resort, we take legal action to stop harmful projects, as we did in 2015 when Great Adventure proposed to clear cut 90 acres of Pine Barrens forests to make way for a solar facility to power their Six Flags Great Adventure theme park. We're big advocates of renewable energy, but solar and wind facilities must be built in the right places!

Read about our policy team, why they love their work, our 2018 priorities, and the recent Six Flags Great Adventure settlement, beginning on page 4.

And, as always, thank you for being a friend and supporter of New Jersey Conservation Foundation. Our work is not possible without you, and we're grateful to have you in our corner!

Michele S. Byers

All maps were created by Tanya Nolte, GIS Manager, NJ Conservation



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.





Photo by Sonia Szczesnia



Photo by Bill Scullion



Photo by Sonia Szczesnia



Photo by Sonia Szczesnia

22nd Annual NJ Land Conservation Rally



Photo by Sandra Perry

For more information about the annual
NJ Land Conservation Rally,
visit www.njconservation.org/conservationrally.htm

Four hundred land preservation professionals and volunteers came together on March 2 for the 22nd annual NJ Land Conservation Rally, a one-day educational conference about open space and farmland preservation.

This year's keynote speaker, David Case, described his landmark study "Nature of Americans," finding that people often feel removed from the natural world but they don't want to be!

The conference celebrated conservation connections by initiating a mentor-mentee program, matching masters of conservation with students and emerging professionals new to the field.

Thirty-two non-profit organizations and businesses showcased their programs and services, and the popular farmers market returned where attendees bought fresh honey and other Jersey-grown products.



*P*OLICY TEAM DEFENDS WATER THROUGHOUT



An understory populated with native New Jersey trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants is critical to forest health. Promoting healthy forests throughout the state is a priority for the policy team.

New Jersey Conservation Foundation is known for preserving open space and farmland, but a big part of our work is defending land and natural resources like clean water and wildlife habitat.

The policy team advocates for strong land conservation policies at all levels of government, and forges partnerships with other groups to protect land and natural resources.

Current issues include stopping unneeded pipelines across the state, protecting habitats for rare plants and animals, advocating for funding for open space and farmland preservation, protecting historic views of the Hudson River Palisades, and opposing threats to New Jersey's forests and water supply.

"Our advocacy work takes us all over the state and sometimes to Washington, D.C.," said Alison Mitchell, policy director. "From the forests

of the Highlands to the farms of the Delaware Bay region, from the Hudson River to the Delaware River, we speak out and take action when our natural resources are threatened."

In addition to Alison, the policy team includes Tom Gilbert, campaign director for energy, climate and natural resources; Dr. Emile DeVito, staff biologist and resident expert on wildlife and ecology; Wilma Frey, senior policy manager and Highlands region expert; Amy Hansen, policy analyst with wide-ranging expertise; Laura Szwak, director of outreach & education; Fran Rapa, regional manager, Delaware Bay Watershed; Alix Bacon, regional manager, Western Piedmont; and Jane Gardner, campaign project assistant.

LAND AND NEW JERSEY

TACKLES MAJOR ISSUES:

- PIPELINES
- CLIMATE CHANGE
- CLEAN ENERGY
- OPEN SPACE



"I have spent my career working on land conservation funding and policy to protect special places. I am thrilled to be part of NJ Conservation's policy team, working on energy and climate. Fossil fuels are not only wreaking havoc on our climate, but fossil fuel infrastructure such as pipelines are now one of the most significant threats to preserved lands, water and natural resources."
— TOM GILBERT, CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR FOR ENERGY, CLIMATE, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

"I am a landscape painter. When I moved to New Jersey 25 years ago, I quickly realized that the local landscapes I loved painting were threatened. I became committed to doing whatever I could to preserve and protect them. Working for NJ Conservation has enabled me to do this." — ALIX BACON, REGIONAL MANAGER, WESTERN PIEDMONT



"My early experiences growing up in rural New Jersey and visiting wild places around the country inspired me to dedicate my career to preserving land and other natural resources. There is no more pressing time, and no better place to do this work than New Jersey. It's a diverse coastal state full of special places and many people, and we push to be on the cutting edge of solutions to address climate change, protect drinking water, create vibrant urban parks, and preserve critical habitats."
— ALISON MITCHELL, DIRECTOR OF POLICY

This past year, the policy team focused on education around New Jersey's gubernatorial election. We collaborated on the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters Education Fund's "Environmental Policy Guide" to educate the public and candidates about top environmental challenges facing the state.

After Phil Murphy's election victory in November, we contributed to "Environmental Agenda '18: New Jersey's Conservation Roadmap" – a set of guidelines for the governor-elect and his advisors.

"We were very pleased when Governor Murphy's transition team for the environment and energy incorporated many of Environmental Agenda '18's guidelines, and additional recommendations we made to the transition team, into its own report," said Alison. "We're optimistic that our work will have a major impact in shaping New Jersey's environmental policies over the next four years."

HERE ARE SOME 2018 HIGHLIGHTS:

PIPELINE PROJECTS

Current priorities include defending preserved lands and natural resources from energy infrastructure threats, especially the proposed PennEast pipeline.

On Jan. 19, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) gave conditional approval to PennEast, which would carry fracked shale gas from Northeastern Pennsylvania across the Delaware River and through New Jersey's Hunterdon and Mercer counties.

The pipeline would cross thousands of acres of preserved open space and farmland, including land preserved by NJ Conservation Foundation, and the New Jersey Green Acres and State Farmland Preservation Program. PennEast is seeking to use eminent domain to seize 147 properties in New

Jersey alone, including preserved lands owned by NJ Conservation, the state and others.

PennEast cannot construct the pipeline without permits from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection and the Delaware River Basin Commission. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection has already denied permits for PennEast once and can use its full authority under the federal Clean Water Act and state regulations to stop the project for good if it can't meet New Jersey's strict environmental standards.

"The Murphy Administration has sent a clear message that it will uphold the integrity of lands and the state programs that protect open space, farmland and historic sites for our children and grandchildren," said Michele Byers, executive director. "New Jersey's preserved open spaces were not set aside for unneeded fossil fuel infrastructure, but rather to protect our clean drinking water, air and land that supports the overall quality of life in New Jersey."

CLEAN ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Another policy team priority is advocating for a transition from fossil fuels to clean, renewable sources of energy.

"A Clean Energy Pathway for New Jersey," a groundbreaking study released in the fall by NJ Conservation and ReThink Energy NJ, lays out a scenario detailing how the state can cut carbon emissions from electric power generation in half by 2030. The study found that New Jersey can increase renewable energy and energy efficiency substantially by 2030 without increasing costs to consumers.

A Murphy administration priority is helping New Jersey transition to 100 percent clean energy by 2050. Less than a month after taking office, Governor Murphy took positive steps toward this clean energy future by



"Having parks, trails and natural areas close to my home has been so important to me. These were places where my children grew up – playing and being together as a family outdoors. The NJ Conservation Blueprint shows those neighborhoods with a deficit of nearby 'nature'. Our work preserving natural places that become a part of people's daily lives is most satisfying." – LAURA SZWAK, DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH & EDUCATION (pictured with former intern Felysse Goldman)

"My interest began as a child playing in the woods and creeks near my home not far outside Camden. Watching many rural places become urban places had an especially profound impact on my outlook. That's in large part why I've spent much of my career focused on the protection of natural resources, especially wildlife. Working with NJ Conservation to advance good policy and preserve forests and productive farmland in the Delaware Bay watershed has been an amazing opportunity to help safeguard the character and natural beauty of a truly unique region." – FRANCIS RAPA, REGIONAL MANAGER, DELAWARE BAY WATERSHED



"At my first job out of college, at an animal protection nonprofit, I witnessed the power of "regular people" to make a difference. More than 20 years later, I still get excited about the process. As we work together to fight pipelines and ensure that New Jersey becomes a leader in clean, renewable energy, I revel in each small victory and am buoyed by the people we meet along the way who share their knowledge, passion and conviction." – JANE GARDNER, CAMPAIGN PROJECT ASSISTANT

"Conserving habitats is a never-ending job, and it requires perpetual vigilance. You cannot imagine all the bad things that can happen to habitats that we all think have been conserved in perpetuity. And it will only get worse as we run out of undeveloped land." — EMILE DEVITO, PH.D, MANAGER OF SCIENCE & STEWARDSHIP (pictured with, from left, Dr. Joanna Burger of Rutgers, Natalie DeVito, and Isabel DeVito).



"I attended a one-room school in Michigan and wandered local woodlands, identifying plants and butterflies. At 13, we moved to Europe and I explored picturesque towns and mountain landscapes. A fight to save huge sycamore trees near Harvard from highway construction, testifying before the Massachusetts legislature on land policy issues, and an inspirational Earth Day 1970 talk by League of Conservation Voters founder Marion Edey launched me into the environmental movement, where I have happily been ever since, pursuing my passion for protecting the environment!" — WILMA FREY, SENIOR POLICY MANAGER, HOLDING THE HIGHLANDS REGIONAL MASTER PLAN

"My grandparents and parents were instrumental in my caring for beautiful landscapes and energy conservation, beginning in the 1970s. We all depend on nature every single day for life, clean water, clean air, solace - and it's important to protect it! I care about our children, future generations and those who are already experiencing pain and loss from extreme climate disasters." — AMY HANSEN, POLICY ANALYST



rejoining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, teaming up with three neighboring states in support of a fracking ban in the Delaware River Basin, and pursuing a financing mechanism for offshore wind.

PRESERVING PARKS, FORESTS AND RARE SPECIES

Another priority is improving stewardship of public forest lands. We're calling for a comprehensive and visionary planning process for managing public lands to better protect rare plants, animals and habitats.

We are also supporting efforts of our partners to block the privatization of Liberty State Park and proceed with the proposed Capital City State Park

in Trenton. And we are encouraging the new governor to create additional urban state parks in cities like Camden, Paterson, and Newark.

PROTECTING NEW JERSEY'S SPECIAL PLACES

A critical priority is promoting regional planning policies and boosting protections for the Highlands, Pine Barrens and other special places.

We are collaborating with The Nature Conservancy and Rowan University to identify priority agricultural, ecological, and recreational land remaining in New Jersey by developing the NJ Conservation Blueprint. See these special places at njmap2.org.

Six Flags settlement: LESS FOREST CLEARED, MORE SOLAR IN PARKING LOTS

In 2015, we and five other conservation groups sued Six Flags Theme Parks, KDC Solar and Jackson Township to prevent over 90 acres of Pine Barrens forest at Great Adventure from being clear-cut for a solar facility. While we're all in favor of clean energy, solar facilities must be located in the right places and should not be built at the expense of the forest!

In January, we helped negotiate a settlement with KDC Solar and Six Flags. Under the agreement, less forest will be cleared – 40 acres instead of the original 92 - and many of the

proposed solar panels will be moved to parking lots. In addition, 213 acres of Pine Barrens forest and wetlands next to the theme park will be permanently preserved.

While the settlement outcome was far better than the original proposal, this should not be seen as a precedent for siting of future solar facilities in forests.

The land to be preserved provides critical habitat for northern pine snakes and barred owls, both threatened species, as well as

numerous species of special concern. As part of the settlement, we will partner with KDC Solar and Six Flags to build pine snake hibernation dens along the southern edge of the solar facility.

Partner groups in the litigation included New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Clean Water Action, Environment New Jersey, the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club, Save Barnegat Bay and Crosswicks Doctors Creek-Watershed Association.

Preserving Tewksbury's farmland and open space

Farmer Scott Clucas remembers bicycling with friends through the village of Oldwick in Tewksbury Township, Hunterdon County, as a child.

"We'd get to the end of town and be surrounded by expansive farmland on all sides," recalled Scott, who currently farms thousands of acres in Tewksbury. "I remember thinking how cool it was that the town just ended like that and the farms began, like crossing over some imaginary line."

Much of Tewksbury still looks exactly as it did during Scott's childhood, thanks to a decades-long effort to preserve farmland and open space.

Two more properties totaling 53 acres were permanently preserved by New Jersey Conservation Foundation and its partners, adding to the preserved greenbelt surrounding Oldwick village.

In December, NJ Conservation bought

the development rights on 48 acres of the Finderne House Farm on the outskirts of Oldwick. It will continue to be owned by Philip and Stacy Skalski, but future uses are now limited to agriculture. The easement will be held by Hunterdon County.

We also accepted the donation of a 5-acre conservation easement a few miles to the west from resident Louisa Sargent. The property includes a trail that could eventually connect to the nearby Hill & Dale Preserve, a 295-acre nature preserve open to the public for hiking, horseback riding, bird watching and other passive recreation.

The Sargent property brings the vision for a 10-mile trail circling the village of Oldwick and connecting preserved lands a step closer.

"I'm absolutely thrilled to donate a conservation easement to NJ Conservation Foundation to further support its land conservation work in our beautiful town of Tewksbury," said Sargent. "Hopefully, this trail connector will encourage more people to enjoy our equestrian and hiking trails – and support NJ Conservation's future conservation efforts in our community."

Properties along the 10-mile trail would include Hunterdon County's Cold Brook Preserve just north of Oldwick village, Tewksbury Land Trust's Lance Farm Preserve, Raritan Headwaters' Fox Hill Preserve, the township's Hell Mountain Preserve, New Jersey Conservation Foundation's Hill & Dale Preserve and the township's Whittemore Wildlife Sanctuary.

Finderne House Farm

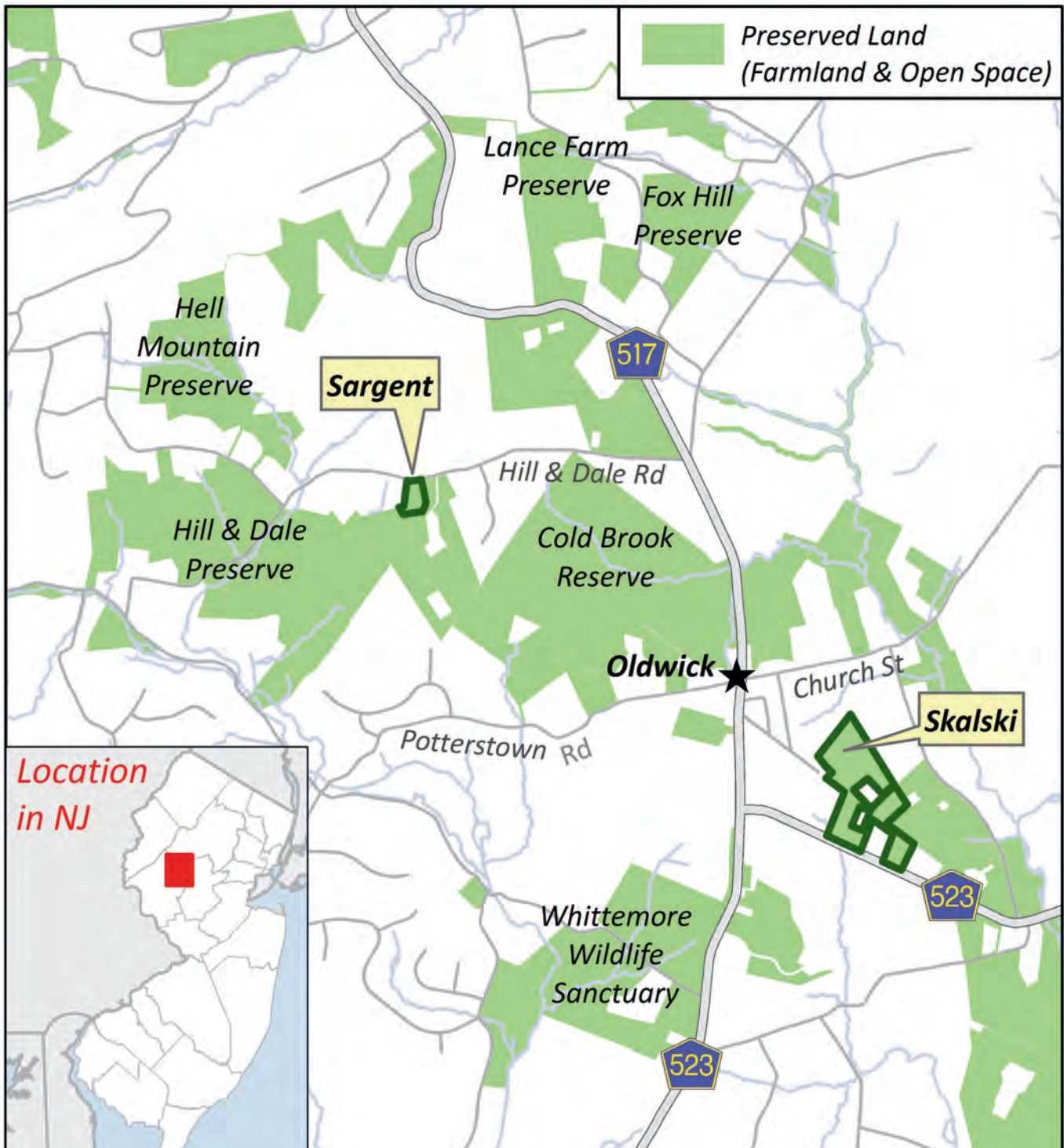
Finderne House Farm, a horse farm that also grows hay and corn, is named for the circa 1740 colonial house at its center. Originally built in the hamlet of Finderne in Bridgewater Township, the house was disassembled, moved and reassembled in Oldwick in 1963 by the late Willie and Hannah Wister.

The farm is located near the Cold Brook, and preserving it helps protect the stream's water quality, as well as wildlife habitat.

Scott Clucas, who farms the property, welcomes the preservation of additional farmland in his hometown. "It's amazing that it (Tewksbury) hasn't really changed all that much – there aren't a lot of towns like that in

New Jersey anymore," he said. "And now it's a step closer to staying like that."

Funding for the purchase of the farm's development rights was provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service, the State Agriculture Development Committee and The 1772 Foundation.



Much of the farmland surrounding Oldwick village in Tewksbury Township, Hunterdon County, has been permanently preserved. Recently, we and our partners preserved 48 acres of the Finderne House Farm.



Tracks in the sand show where off-road vehicles illegally drove along and across a stream in the Candace McKee Ashmun Preserve.



Photo by Michael Hogan

Volunteers plant Atlantic white cedar saplings at the Candace McKee Ashmun Preserve in the Pine Barrens as part of an effort to regenerate forests and prevent encroachment by illegal off-road vehicles.

Inset photo: Pine Barrens tree frog

Stopping illegal “mudders” in the Pine Barrens

Of all the New Jersey lands urgently in need of protection, few are more important than the section of Pine Barrens located immediately west of the Garden State Parkway in Ocean County.

On almost any given weekend, especially in warm weather, this region – called the Forked River Mountains – attracts swarms of uninvited visitors arriving in four-wheel drive vehicles, often trailering quads and off-road motorcycles.

Their destination? Thousands of Pine Barrens acres – including wetlands, streams and forests – preserved by New Jersey Conservation Foundation and others. Their goal? To see how much wet terrain they can drive through, a pursuit known as “mudding.”

“There’s a tremendous amount of damage caused by these off-road vehicles, or ORVs,” said Tim Morris, our director of stewardship. “The ORV riders intentionally drive through wetlands and turn them into racetracks. And they not only drive across streams, but up and down streams.”

New Jersey Conservation Foundation staff and our partners are actively working to curtail ORV access to the Forked River Mountains, including the 4,000-acre Candace McKee Ashmun Preserve.

Thanks to two grants, one from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the other from the New Jersey Green Acres Program, we’ve been blocking trails, sand roads and fire breaks used by ORV riders to get onto ecologically sensitive land. We have

planted 500 Atlantic white cedar trees to reduce vehicle access and reforest the land.

This summer, Tim and his team plan to install sturdy guard rails along one Garden State Parkway exit ramp.

Thousands of acres in the Forked River Mountains have been preserved by NJ Conservation and other groups – including Ocean County, the NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife and The Nature Conservancy – for their conservation value.

The Candace McKee Ashmun Preserve contains the headwaters of three streams – the North, South and Middle branches of the Forked River – which flow directly into Barnegat Bay, a beloved Jersey Shore fishing, swimming and boating destination. When these streams and their tributaries are torn apart by illegal ORV riding, sediment and motor oil wash downstream and into the bay.

Illegal ORV riding also harms rare Pine Barrens animals and plants, like northern pine snakes, Pine Barrens tree frogs and bog asphodels, an endangered plant found only in New Jersey. “There are all kinds of amazing animals that are being killed and whose habitats are being destroyed,” said Tim.

Another problem in the Forked River Mountains is illegal dumping. In addition to ORV riders leaving their litter behind, other

trespassers also dump construction debris, old appliances, tires and other trash.

“It’s all related to illegal vehicle activity,” noted Tim, “because if you’re not driving in there in the first place, there’s not much trash you can leave.” He praised one of our longtime partners, the Forked River Mountain Coalition, for organizing an annual trash cleanup day.

Law enforcement partners are also involved in the effort to protect the land and its resources. An informal task force has formed, consisting of the Lacey Township Police Department, Ocean Township Police Department, Ocean County Sheriff’s Department, NJ State Police and conservation officers from the NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife.

“Illegal access is still a problem,” said Tim, “but it’s more under control than it was before. And once we finish installing the guard rails this summer, enforcement should be much easier.”

For more information about the Candace McKee Ashmun Preserve and the Forked River Mountains, go to <http://njconservation.org/candacemckee.htm>.

2018 GAINING GROUND

New Jersey Conservation Foundation and its partners permanently preserved 568 acres from November 2017 through February 2018. These include family farms that produce local foods, and natural areas that safeguard clean drinking water, provide outstanding wildlife habitat and offer scenic beauty and outdoor recreation.

THANK YOU TO ALL MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERS FOR HELPING TO PRESERVE THESE LANDS!

8 Projects

November 1, 2017 - February 28, 2018

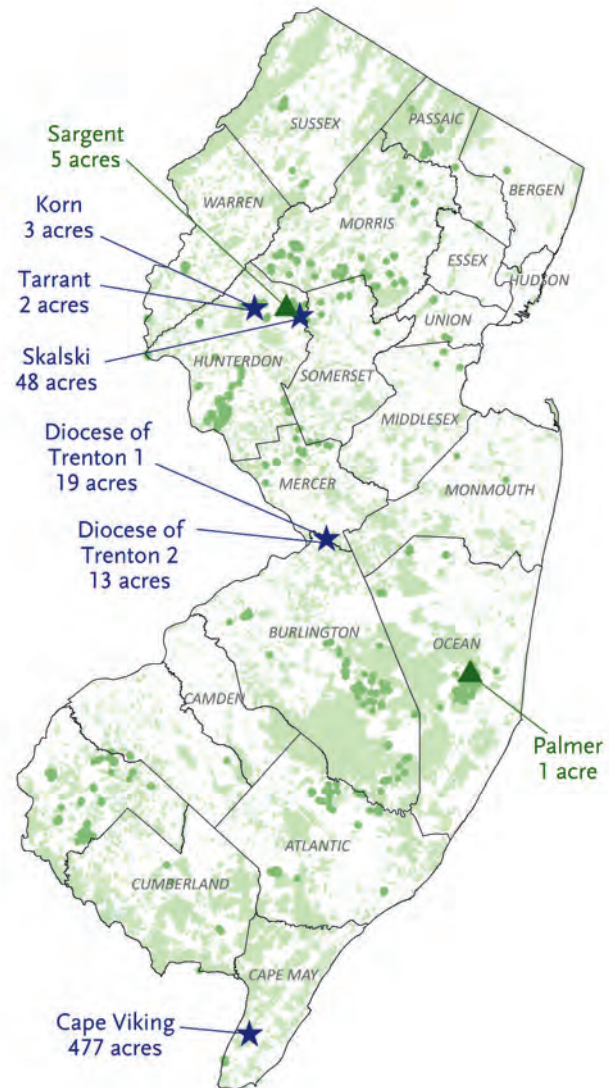
▲ NJ Conservation Owned: 6 acres
(Fee or Easement)

★ Preserved in Partnership: 562 acres

TOTAL: 568 acres

● NJ Conservation Foundation
Owned & Managed Properties
(Fee or Easement)

■ Preserved Land
(Open Space & Farmland)



It's easy to join New Jersey Conservation Foundation online – visit the website at www.njconservation.org

Become a Member Today!





Two rural properties preserved in Hamilton Township

Photo by Tim Brill

Historic North Crosswicks village in Hamilton Township will retain its rural character, thanks to the preservation of a property once proposed for a cemetery and mausoleum.

Nineteen acres at the edge of the North Crosswicks village historic district in Hamilton Township, once proposed for a cemetery and mausoleums, are now permanently preserved open space. New Jersey Conservation Foundation and its partners – Save Hamilton Open Space, North Crosswicks Friends of Open Space, the state Green Acres Program, Mercer County and Hamilton Township – joined together to preserve that property and a nearby 13-acre parcel.



Photo by Robin Horn

The 19-acre property fronts on both South Broad Street and Crosswicks-Hamilton Square Road, and is nearly surrounded by preserved farmland and open space. It will be used for passive public recreation such as hiking, bird watching and nature observation. Agricultural practices that create grassland bird habitat will continue on a section of the property that has been farmed for hundreds of years.

As part of a package deal with the Diocese of Trenton, the purchase includes a nearby 13-acre lot with frontage along Doctors Creek. This property, which has wetlands and steep slopes, is a bald eagle foraging area and will be kept in its natural state to protect wildlife.

In January 2016, the Hamilton Township Zoning Board of Adjustment denied a variance request by the Diocese of Trenton for a cemetery with 5,500 burial plots and three mausoleums. Following the zoning board's decision, NJ Conservation approached the Diocese about selling the land.

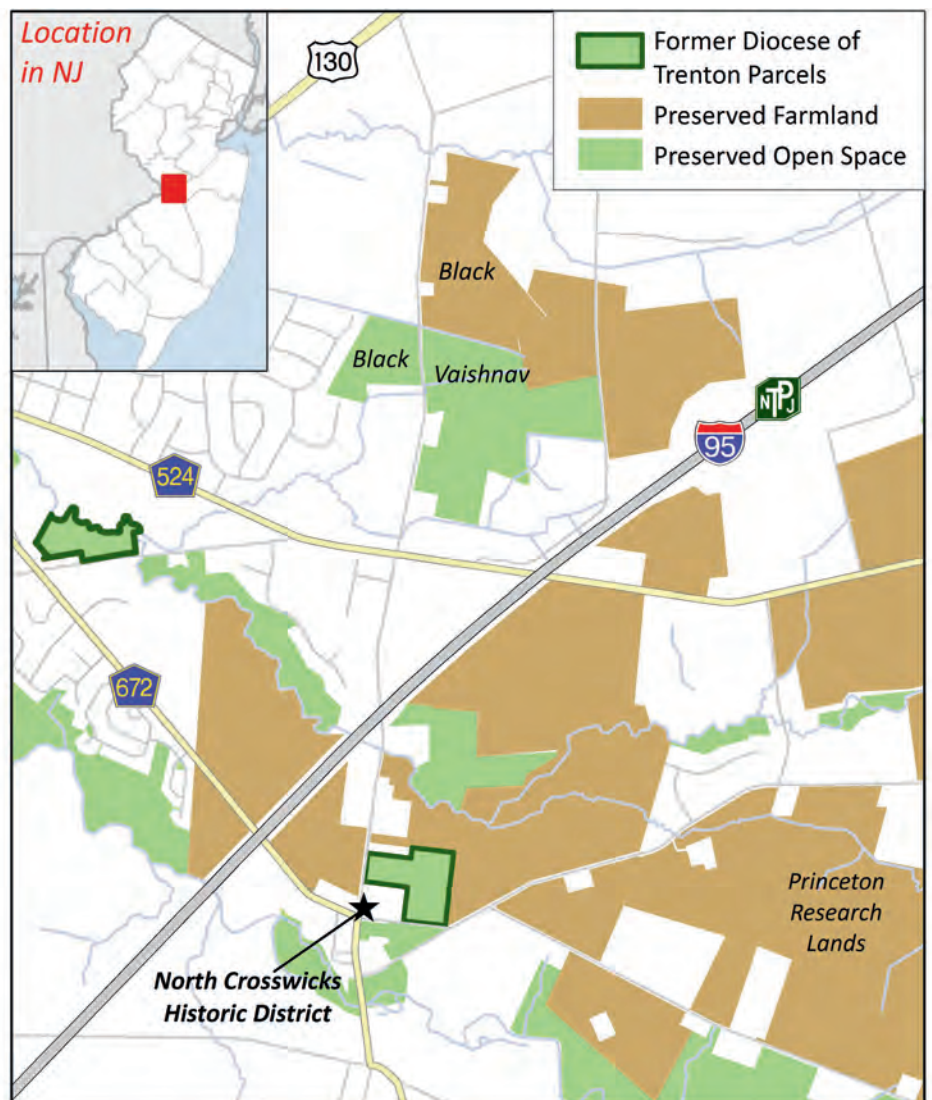
The property proposed for the cemetery is now owned by Save Hamilton Open Space, although plans are for it to be ultimately owned and managed by the North Crosswicks Friends of Open Space. The land along Doctors Creek is now owned and managed by the township.

Funding for the project came from a Green Acres grant to Save Hamilton Open Space, Mercer County, a North Crosswicks Friends of Open Space grant and private donations.

This property, which has wetlands and steep slopes, is a bald eagle foraging area and will be kept in its natural state to protect wildlife.

In recent years, New Jersey Conservation Foundation and its partners, including Hamilton Township, have preserved several properties in the township's rural southeast corner,

including the 149-acre Princeton Research property, the 62-acre Barry Black property, the 58-acre Vaishnav property and the 21-acre Linda Black farm.



Remembering Brendan Byrne, our Honorary Trustee

FORMER GOVERNOR LED THE CHARGE
TO SAVE PINE BARRENS



Governor Brendan Byrne signs the Pinelands Protection Act in 1979.

IN JANUARY 1978, THEN-GOVERNOR BRENDAN BYRNE STOOD BEFORE THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE TO CHAMPION A CAUSE THAT WOULD WIN HIM NO POLITICAL POINTS: THE PRESERVATION OF THE PINE BARRENS.

"It's a politically unpopular issue – trees don't vote," he said in his State of the State address. However, Governor Byrne added, he would not be "dissuaded by the pressures to develop the Pine Barrens."

He kept his promise, and over a million acres of ecologically-sensitive land sitting upon a vast underground freshwater aquifer were safeguarded in 1979 by the Pinelands Protection Act, which also established the Pinelands Commission and Comprehensive Management Plan.

Governor Byrne, who served as an Honorary Trustee for NJ Conservation Foundation, passed away on January 4 at the age of 93. He is remembered for many things but saving the Pine Barrens was his most treasured legacy, the accomplishment of which he was most proud.

"When I had the last word leaving office, they asked me what I wanted to be

remembered for. And I said the Pinelands," Byrne recounted at a Rutgers University forum in 1987.

It all started with a book: "The Pine Barrens" by John McPhee, published in 1968.

"The Pine Barrens" eloquently described the region's history, natural wonders and people – as well as grandiose plans for a large, new city. McPhee was pessimistic about the region remaining a near-wilderness, predicting that it was "headed slowly toward extinction" due to a lack of political will.

Governor Byrne took his message as a challenge. Later, he would recall that the Pinelands Act was "on no political party's agenda."

Preserving the Pinelands was on the agenda of New Jersey conservation groups since 1965. In the early 70s, NJ Conservation Foundation worked with the Pine Barrens Coalition to spearhead efforts that led to the introduction and passage of federal legislation to protect the region in 1978, and to Governor Byrne's groundbreaking achievement. NJ Conservation later helped found the Pinelands Preservation Alliance.

Byrne was thanked for his crusade in 2002, when then-Governor James E. McGreevey renamed Lebanon State Forest in the Pine Barrens in his honor. Brendan T. Byrne State Forest covers 37,242 acres in Burlington and Ocean counties.

"I think he was an extraordinary governor," said McGreevey. "What he did with the Pinelands was the cusp of the environmental movement that swept across the nation."

"Governor Byrne never stopped advocating for the Pinelands in the face of all the challenges and threats he saw over the years, including the current pipeline developments," said Carleton Montgomery, director of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance. "He was

always there for us, and we intend to always be here for him, battling for the Pinelands."

Governor Byrne's environmental legacy spread beyond the Pine Barrens.

Last year, Governor Byrne joined former Governors Kean, Whitman, and Florio, along with former Assemblywoman Maureen Ogden and former Congressman Rush Holt – to promote a set of "Principles to Protect our Public Lands, Water, Air and Wildlife" to encourage the New Jersey Congressional delegation to defend the environment in Washington.

The four former governors also came together in 2015 to prevent a high-rise corporate headquarters from being built along the Hudson River Palisades. Their advocacy helped achieve a compromise with LG Electronics North America for a lower building with less visual impact on the Palisades. The effort also underscored the need for permanent preservation.

"The Palisades are an outstanding national landmark which was at risk," recalls Larry Rockefeller. "Governor Byrne, in perhaps his final conservation ride, mounted up with former Governors Whitman, Florio, and Kean to the rescue of the Palisades."

Everyone hopes their lives will make a difference, but there are few like governor Brendan Byrne whose life created a legacy of great importance.

"Brendan Byrne was one of the state's best governors, who will always be remembered because without him we would not have the Pinelands Preserve," said former Governor Thomas Kean. "I will miss him as a good leader and a great friend."

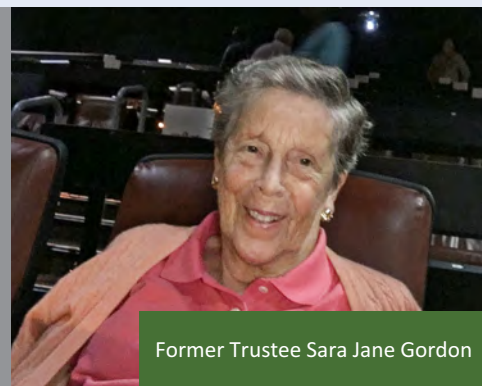
We extend our deepest condolences to Governor Byrne's wife, Ruthie, and the rest of his family.

Brendan Byrne, left, chats with David Moore, our former executive director.



Remembering Former Trustee Sara Jane Gordon

Former New Jersey Conservation Foundation trustee Sara Jane Gordon of Short Hills, a dedicated conservationist and passionate gardener, passed away on Dec. 5, 2017 at the age of 85.



Former Trustee Sara Jane Gordon

SJ, as she was affectionately known, served on our Board of Trustees for over 30 years, including a term as vice president in the early 1980s. She left the board in 2007 but remained active, serving on the committee that organized our 50th anniversary celebration in 2010.

She was part of a land conservation "sister act," serving on the board alongside her sister, Kathryn Porter.

Known for her green thumb, SJ was a past president of the Short Hills Garden Club and served the Garden Clubs of America as

the president of Zone 4. She cultivated gardens of flowers, wildflowers and vegetables and was known for her creative arrangements, particularly of dried wild-flowers. In addition to winning many local, state and national flower show awards, she also served as a judge in many flower shows.

"SJ was one of the most energetic and inspiring human beings I have ever known, and she had a huge love and passion for nature," said Michele Byers, executive director.

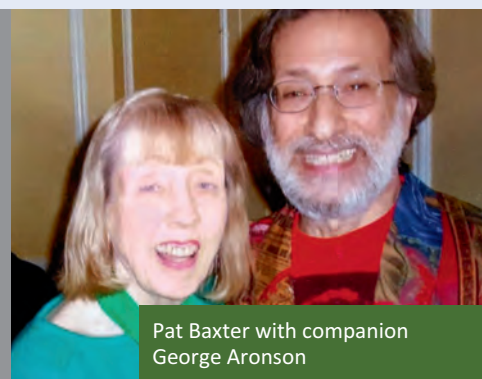
SJ and her husband, Jerry, loved to travel, going all over the world to visit gardens. They often returned from their travels inspired to redo their own landscaping and flower beds, enlisting the help of their children.

She was also a natural and competitive athlete - an avid tennis and paddle tennis player, runner and golfer - as well as an ardent fan of the New York Philharmonic and The Metropolitan Opera.

We extend our deepest condolences to SJ's family and friends, and we will all miss SJ.

Remembering Pat Baxter

Pat Baxter of Madison, who served as New Jersey Conservation's publications editor for over 25 years, passed away on Dec. 1, 2017 at the age of 87.



Pat Baxter with companion George Aronson

Pat came to NJ Conservation in 1972 after working for many years at the Newark News. Among her many assignments were editing "Education for Survival," a social studies and science curriculum we created for the Madison public schools; our newsletter, then known as "Footprints," another publication called the "Environmental Bulletin," as well as annual reports, the weekly "State We're In" column and the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) newsletter.

"Virtually no publication left the office without her editorial scrutiny. She was very nearly perfect as an editor," recalled Dave Moore, former NJ Conservation Foundation executive editor and Pat's boss. "I can recall only one error that made it into print, and

that had nothing to do with content. Plenty of NJCF employees argued for their grammatical or wording point of view, including me, but few succeeded. She kept a newspaper style of writing through her NJ Conservation Foundation tenure, which bothered a few of us, but she was so prolific and had such a capacity for work and perfection that it was overlooked."

Pat retired from NJ Conservation Foundation in 2000, the same year as Dave.

She was interested in opera, music and dance, and became a major force at the Unitarian Fellowship in Morristown, where she ran the Fellowship Saturday Evening Concert Series for 26 years, and was newsletter editor for many years. She was an avid traveler and lover of nature.

Pat also had a love for sports cars, particularly her Karmann Ghia, Dave said. Volkswagen produced the model until 1974, so it was considered a collector's item thereafter. "Her car was winter-stored on blocks in a garage, and driven only in warm weather with no threat of rain," he recalled. "Pat only knew of two speeds for her Ghia, or for that matter any of her other cars: go and stop. And go was as fast as she dared. Consequently, the NJ Conservation staff invariably found a way to avoid having Pat drive them anywhere."

Pat is survived by her longtime companion, George Aronson, a nature photographer whose images graced NJ Conservation publications. Our deepest condolences to George and all of Pat's many friends.

thank you!

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to December 2017)

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Jennifer Jones
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Dates and times are subject to change, and there may be additional programs
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check our website at www.njconservation.org/events

Saturday, April 21
9:30-11:30 a.m. FPP
Forest Bathing in the Pines

Wednesday, May 2
8-10 a.m. BB
Spring Migration Bird Walk:
Meadows & Edges

Wednesday, May 9
8-10 a.m. BB
Spring Migration Bird Walk:
Forest Interior

Wednesday, May 16
8-10 a.m. BB
Spring Migration Bird Walk:
Birding By Ear

Friday, June 22
9:30-11:30 a.m. BB
Early Summer Butterflies with NABA

Friday, July 2
9:30-11:30 a.m. BB
Mid-Summer Butterflies with NABA

Saturday, July 21
8-11 p.m. FPP
Moth Night

Friday, August 10
9:30-11:30 a.m. BB
Late Summer Butterflies with NABA

Wednesday, September 12
8-10 a.m. BB
Autumn Migration Bird Walk:
Wayward Warblers

Wednesday, October 10
8-10 a.m. BB
Autumn Migration Bird Walk:
Heading South

Wednesday, October 17
8-10 a.m. BB
Autumn Migration Bird Walk:
Searching for Sparrows

Saturday, November 17
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. FPP
Wild for a Day! Kids Program

KEY
BB Bamboo Brook Outdoor Education Center
FPP Franklin Parker Preserve
NABA North American Butterfly Association

Volunteer Skye Craig creating research database



Volunteer Skye Craig cares for a flying squirrel at the Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge animal hospital in the Pine Barrens.

At nearly 18 square miles, the Franklin Parker Preserve in the Pine Barrens is a Noah's Ark of biodiversity. The preserve's pristine forests, wetlands, rivers and reservoirs are home to many rare plants and animals.

One "species" often sighted at the preserve is the research scientist! Since the land was preserved 15 years ago, researchers have studied everything from insects to rare plants to endangered snakes to the effects of prescribed fires.

Thanks to the efforts of volunteer Skye Craig, we're now getting a comprehensive database of scientific studies conducted at the preserve. Skye, 24, a resident of Shamong Township and a recent graduate of Wilmington College, has been contacting research

scientists who have studied the preserve to procure copies of their work for our permanent archives.

"We are trying to compile an organized folder of all the wonderful work done at Franklin Parker Preserve so that it may be accessible and presentable for everyone to see," explained Skye.

Skye currently works as an associate at a mental health facility and an evidence clerk at a police department, but her true passion is the environment. "In my free time I enjoy just being out in nature and enjoying all that it has to offer," she said.

In addition to volunteering for New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Skye also volunteers with Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge to help rehabilitate injured animals, and is helping the Creek Springhill Brook Watershed Association with grant proposals.

Thank you, Skye!

Welcome New Trustees

Finn Caspersen and Lee Yeash

New Jersey Conservation Foundation welcomes Finn M.W. Caspersen Jr. of Bedminster and Lee Yeash of Lumberton to the Board of Trustees. Both are longtime conservationists who enjoy the outdoors.

Finn grew up playing in the woods and fields of his family's farm in Andover, Sussex County. He has always loved to hike, starting with boyhood trips to New Hampshire and continuing more recently with his wife, Emily, and their four children.

He credits his interest in conservation to his maternal grandmother, Eleanor Morris, founder of a land trust in Pennsylvania. In addition, his mother, Barbara Caspersen, and uncle, Cooper Morris, served on the NJ Conservation board in the 1980s and early 1990s.



Finn M.W. Caspersen Jr.

While serving on the Bedminster Township Committee, Finn was active in preserving open space and farmland – frequently in partnership with NJ Conservation. He was also a strong proponent of Bedminster's open space tax, used to fund land acquisition.

Lee, an avid hiker, kayak paddler and camper, works as a naturalist and educator at the Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge and Hospital in Medford, teaching the public about the native plants and animals of the Pine Barrens. A former registered nurse and preschool teacher, she began volunteering six years ago to help sick and injured animals at the refuge's hospital. Her volunteer work led to a paid educator position.

When she's not teaching, Lee enjoys hiking with her husband, John, and their black lab at NJ Conservation's preserves, especially the Franklin Parker Preserve and Michael Huber Prairie Warbler Preserve in the Pine Barrens. Lee and John are the parents of four grown children.

Lee's love of hiking also led her to volunteer with the Pinelands Preservation Alliance to clean up trash and litter in Pine Barrens forests, and work to put a stop to illegal off-road vehicle use.



Lee Yeash with Apollo the turkey vulture, an "animal ambassador" at the Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge

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