

New Jersey Conservation



Photo by Jason Howell

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Volunteers counted animals and plants at the Mount Rose Preserve "Bioblitz".
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Three farms owned by families for generations are preserved.
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Policy team member Wilma Frey is honored by NJ Highlands Coalition.



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ON THE COVER

Our cover photo may look like an environmental catastrophe; it's anything but. Jason Howell, a wildlife photographer and cinematographer, captured this striking image during a prescribed burn at Franklin Parker Preserve. The burn helps renew Pine Barrens habitat and reduces the risk of wildfires. Jason serves as stewardship coordinator for the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, and is a Master Naturalist, Wilderness First Responder, and volunteer with Mid-Atlantic Search and Rescue.



From Our Executive Director

Michele S. Byers

It's always great to open a brand new nature preserve, as we did recently with the Mount Rose Preserve in Hopewell Township, Mercer County, and the Rechnitz Pine Barrens Preserve in Pemberton Township, Burlington County. We love cutting the ribbon on beautiful new places where people can hike, bike, bird-watch and relax in nature!

But long before dedication ceremonies are held, a special group of people – our land stewardship team – is busy at work.

Land stewards are the unsung heroes of conservation. They spend months transforming natural areas into inviting destinations for outdoor recreation. They clean up the properties, map and blaze new trails, build information kiosks, design and print trail maps, build parking areas and put up signs.

We invite you to meet New Jersey Conservation Foundation's stewardship team. They've had a busy year in 2017. In addition to creating the two new preserves, they care for 25,000 acres of conservation lands owned by NJ Conservation Foundation across the state.

A non-routine task this year was working with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service to conduct prescribed burns on about 1,800 acres at the Franklin Parker Preserve in the heart of the Pine Barrens. The prescribed burns reduce the risk of wildfires and serve to renew the native Pine Barrens ecosystem.

Read about the stewardship team and the prescribed burns on pages 4-7, and read about the new Mount Rose and Rechnitz preserves on pages 8 and 9.

As 2017 draws to a close, I thank our members and supporters for making this land preservation, stewardship and advocacy work possible. I can't express how much we appreciate your membership, support and generosity ... we can't do it without you!

Best wishes to you and your family for a healthy and happy 2018!

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.





HITTING THE TRAILS

22ND ANNUAL TEWKSBURY TRAIL PACE



The 22nd annual Tewksbury Trail Pace took place at New Jersey Conservation Foundation's Hill and Dale Preserve on September 17. Horses and riders explored the trails, which weave through farmland and forest, and took in beautiful views of the nearly 300-acre preserve and surrounding area.

Some of the fields of Hill and Dale Preserve are actively farmed by a local family that has grown grains and hay on the land for over 50 years.

Proceeds from the event were donated to New Jersey Conservation Foundation.



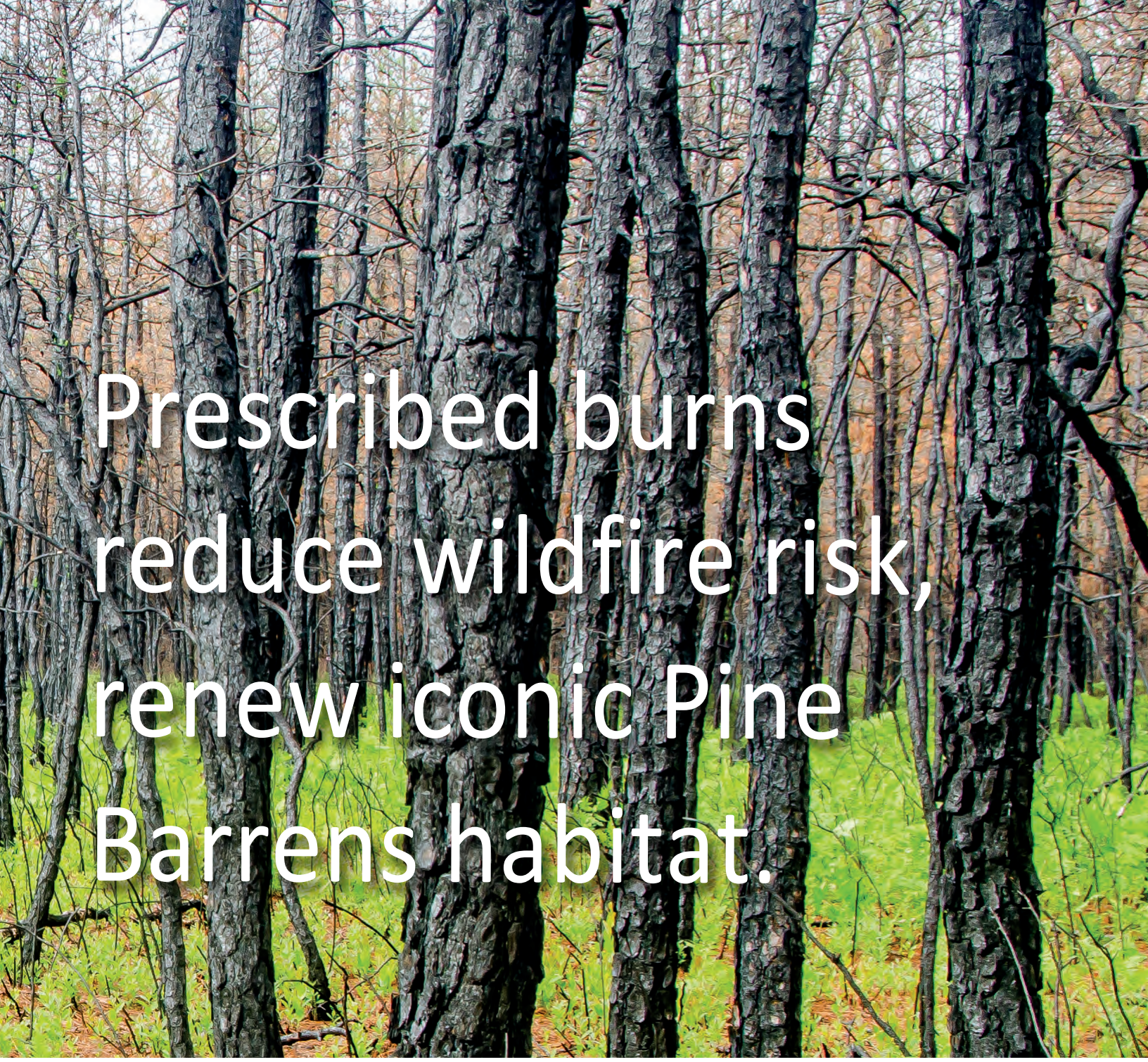
Photo by Blakey Dwyer

ABOVE:
Dr. Emile DeVito, staff biologist,
stands amid charred pine trunks
and bright green shoots coming
up from the forest floor.

RIGHT:
The stewardship staff of
NJ Conservation Foundation
gathers at one of the prescribed
burns at Franklin Parker
Preserve last winter.



Photo by Jason Howell



Prescribed burns
reduce wildfire risk,
renew iconic Pine
Barrens habitat.

A fire that scorches hundreds of acres of forest in a Pine Barrens
nature preserve may sound like an ecological catastrophe.

But it's just the opposite ...

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



"It can be overwhelming, doing the physical work we need to do to protect and enhance our ecosystems. I try to remind myself that I'm not alone in this. I've seen some amazing groups clean up MANY tons of dumped garbage, protect almost a dozen Pine Barrens tree frog breeding sites from off-road vehicles, remove invasive plants, and protect some beautiful, rare orchids from various threats, including lawn mowers!"

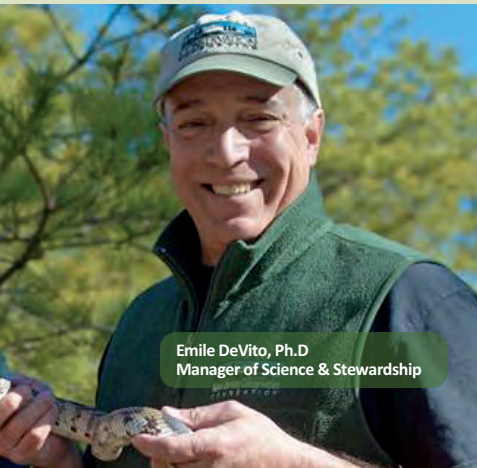


Bill Scullion, Land Steward

"Not only do I get to work in some of the most beautiful open spaces in the world, but I get to meet and work with the most amazing people. Being able to connect people to their natural surroundings is by far the most exciting part of this job."



Allison Williams, Easement Steward



Emile DeVito, Ph.D
Manager of Science & Stewardship

"Being part of the stewardship team puts me in very direct contact with many of our preserves and the people who visit them. I constantly learn new things about these lands and get to know students, teachers, researchers, and experts such as fire-fighters, ornithologists, herpetologists, entomologists, dedicated public servants, as well as all the interesting and enthusiastic people just out for a pleasant outing."



Russell Juelg, Senior Land Steward, right.

Steven Jack, Land Steward, left.

"Thirty years ago, folks at the University of Wisconsin thought I was nuts – wanting to do my doctoral research in New Jersey! They just couldn't believe me when I explained that "Joisey" contained some of the most critical natural and ecologically unique habitats in the temperate zone! I have studied the forest here all my life. I love New Jersey, from High Point to Cape May, especially our one-of-a-kind Pine Barrens. The ecological wonders of our natural lands are astounding – you just have to immerse yourself."

"I started as a hunter on a former cranberry farm in the Pine Barrens, and became a volunteer after NJ Conservation Foundation bought the land. I volunteered every chance I had and soon was given a chance to become an employee. I was blessed with the opportunity to learn a different way to look at the world: How fragile it could be and the things I could now do to make it better. It's been about 13 years, and I can honestly say I've loved every minute of it."



Justin Dennis, Camden Land Steward

"When I first entered college, I wanted to become a doctor so that I could help people. As I worked through college and began discovering my own strengths and weaknesses, I realized that environmental work is where my passions and talents lie. Now, every day when I come to work, I learn more and more that providing public access is helping people, especially in an urban center, and for that I am extremely grateful."



Tim Morris, Director of Stewardship

"I've always wanted to help threatened and endangered wildlife. But after a few years of working in wildlife research and management, I realized that since habitat loss is the most common threat to wildlife, I could make the most impact by working to preserve land. I also love creating opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors. It's so gratifying to see people visiting our preserves and hiking on our trails."

Prescribed burns

continued from previous page

This past February and March, the NJ Conservation stewardship team collaborated with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service to conduct three prescribed burns on 1,800 acres of the Franklin Parker Preserve in Burlington County. Additional burns on up to 2,600 acres are planned for this coming winter.

Prescribed burns protect villages like Chatsworth – which is surrounded by the Preserve – from the risk of wildfires while renewing iconic Pine Barrens habitat. Burning off “fuel” on the forest floor like dried leaves and pine needles reduces wildfire while opening new patches of bare soil to sunlight.

“Fire is an essential ingredient in keeping the Pine Barrens what they have been for thousands of years,” explained Russell Juelg, senior Pine Barrens land steward and educator.

The Pine Barrens ecosystem is dominated by pitch pines: trees uniquely suited to survive in wildfire conditions. Thick bark protects them from serious fire damage, and they can generate new shoots out of fire-blackened trunks.

Without fires, the Pine Barrens’ ecological balance would eventually tip toward oaks, altering the character of the region and making habitats unsuitable for rare and characteristic species. Hot-burning fires kill more oaks than pitch pines, helping to maintain the Pine Barrens forest as a pine-dominated system.

When the prescribed burns swept through designated sections of the 11,379-acre preserve, flames charred the trunks and crowns of pitch pines and oak trees, and consumed upper portions of understory plants like huckleberries and shrubby oaks.

But the damage was temporary.

Within months, pitch pines sprouted new branches, and shrub-like blackjack and scrub oaks – which have thick, tuberous root systems unaffected by fire – sent out vigorous new shoots. These shrub-form oaks, in contrast with the tree-form oaks, are characteristic Pine Barrens species. Huckleberries and ferns also re-sprouted quickly.

A multitude of other Pine Barrens plants benefited from increased sunlight and soil enriched by ashes. They include turkey beard, Pine Barrens gentian, sedges and little blue stem.

One pleasant surprise observed over the summer was the emergence of populations of rare Pine Barrens gentian – a beautiful, native



New growth sprouts through a trail blaze painted on a pine tree at the Franklin Parker Preserve.

flower that blooms in rich shades of blue and purple – in places not seen before.

“We think they had been semi-dormant because of a lack of sunlight and nutrients,” said Russell. “This is their opportunity to get some extra nutrients and sunshine.”

The pitch pine/scrub oak forests of the Franklin Parker Preserve are globally rare, and the fires enhanced their value for all kinds of birds, including northern towhees, prairie warblers and a host of other species whose mid-Atlantic stronghold is in the New Jersey Pine Barrens.

The Franklin Parker Preserve serves as a living laboratory for botanists and researchers studying the effects of fire. One researcher, Steve Mason from Drexel University, is conducting a study of how insects respond to fires in the Pine Barrens. Dr. Nicholas Skowronski of the U.S. Forest Service Northern Research Station brought a team of international climate scientists to study the burn, including researchers from Germany, Venezuela and Great Britain. Dr. Daniela Shebitz, from Kean University, is studying turkey beard and its response to fire.

Ryan Rebozo, Diretor of Conservation Science at Pinelands Preservation Alliance, worked with Russell this summer and fall gathering baseline information on plants in the areas targeted for the next prescribed burns. “We hope to gain a more scientific understanding of how fire affects plant communities,” Russell explained.

With climate change leading to more frequent droughts and other weather extremes, prescribed burns will continue to be an important management tool.



Photo by Lisa MacCollum

REASONS TO CELEBRATE: New Preserves

We're thrilled to announce two new preserves: the Mount Rose Preserve in Hopewell Township, Mercer County, and the Rechnitz Pine Barrens Preserve in Pemberton Township, Burlington County.

Mount Rose Preserve

The Mount Rose Preserve dedication in June celebrated a successful effort by more than a dozen partner organizations to preserve 386 acres of meadows and forest. Miles of new trails allow visitors to enjoy hiking, bicycling, bird-watching and other outdoor activities.

The Mount Rose Forest Trail winds through mature woods in a meandering two-mile loop. A second new trail connects the parking area and information kiosk to the Lawrence Hopewell Trail, a regional multi-use trail that is being extended on other parts of the preserve.

Mount Rose's history as a corporate park makes it unique among New Jersey's preserves. In 1958, the property straddling rural Carter Road became the nation's first corporate campus. It served as the major research and education facility for Western Electric, and later AT&T.

The open land around the office buildings was preserved in 2015 after a long legal battle over development proposals that would have brought significant traffic to the area.

Mount Rose Preserve is owned and managed by New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space, Hopewell Township and Mercer County.

In addition to those four partners, the property was preserved in partnership with Hopewell Valley Citizen's Group Inc., NJ Green Acres Program, Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, Hopewell Borough, Pennington Borough, Friends of Princeton Open Space, D&R Greenway Land Trust, Lawrence Township and Princeton.

Rechnitz Pine Barrens Preserve

The Rechnitz Pine Barrens Preserve is comprised of 811 acres of pristine Pine Barrens habitat, including a vast tract of globally-rare

LEFT: The information kiosk at the new Mount Rose Preserve is officially unveiled at a dedication ceremony in June.

pitch pine scrub oak upland forest, riparian Atlantic white cedar forest, and unique wetlands features. Two new trails are being established within the Preserve.

The preserve is named for philanthropists Joan and Bob Rechnitz of Red Bank, whose generous support helped preserve three Pine Barrens properties totaling 2,386 acres.

Along the Preserve's southern boundary run nearly two miles of the Mount Misery Brook, one of the most pristine tributaries of the Rancocas Creek. Upwellings of clear water from the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer create springs and seeps along the brook, resulting in exceptional wetland habitats and providing consistent flow even in drought.

Species found at the Rechnitz Pine Barrens Preserve include carnivorous pitcher plants, Eastern whip-poor-wills, rough green snakes and many rare butterflies and moths.

In addition to Joan and Bob Rechnitz, other key partners in the land preservation project

included the NJ Green Acres Program, Pinelands Commission, Victoria Foundation, William Penn Foundation, Open Space Institute, Rancocas Conservancy, Nora Hayes, Helen & William Mazer Foundation, and John Ben Snow Memorial Trust.

Gateway Park

The past several months have ushered in exciting progress on Gateway Park along the Cooper River in the City of Camden. Several former commercial lots – now vacant – along Admiral Wilson Boulevard, one of Camden's main highways, were cleaned up and transferred to the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority.

We are partnering with the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority to develop and manage recreation facilities like bike and hiking trails, along with pedestrian and vehicle access points. Gateway Park's bike paths will become part of the 750-mile Circuit Trail network on both sides of the Delaware River.

in Mercer and Burlington Counties



LEFT: Pitch pine and oak forest at the new Rechnitz Pine Barrens Preserve in Pemberton Township.

ABOVE: The rough green snake, a common species in the Pine Barrens, is a good climber and feeds on spiders, grasshoppers, caterpillars and other insects.



SPOTTING SPECIES

Expert naturalists led ten hikes through Mount Rose Preserve on Saturday, May 20, hoping to identify as many plant and animal species as possible. The hikes focused on birds, fungi, invasive plants, reptiles, amphibians, insects, and more!



2017 GAINING GROUND

New Jersey Conservation Foundation and its partners permanently preserved 1,098 acres from January 2017 through October 2017. These include preserved 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!

12 Projects

January - October 31, 2017

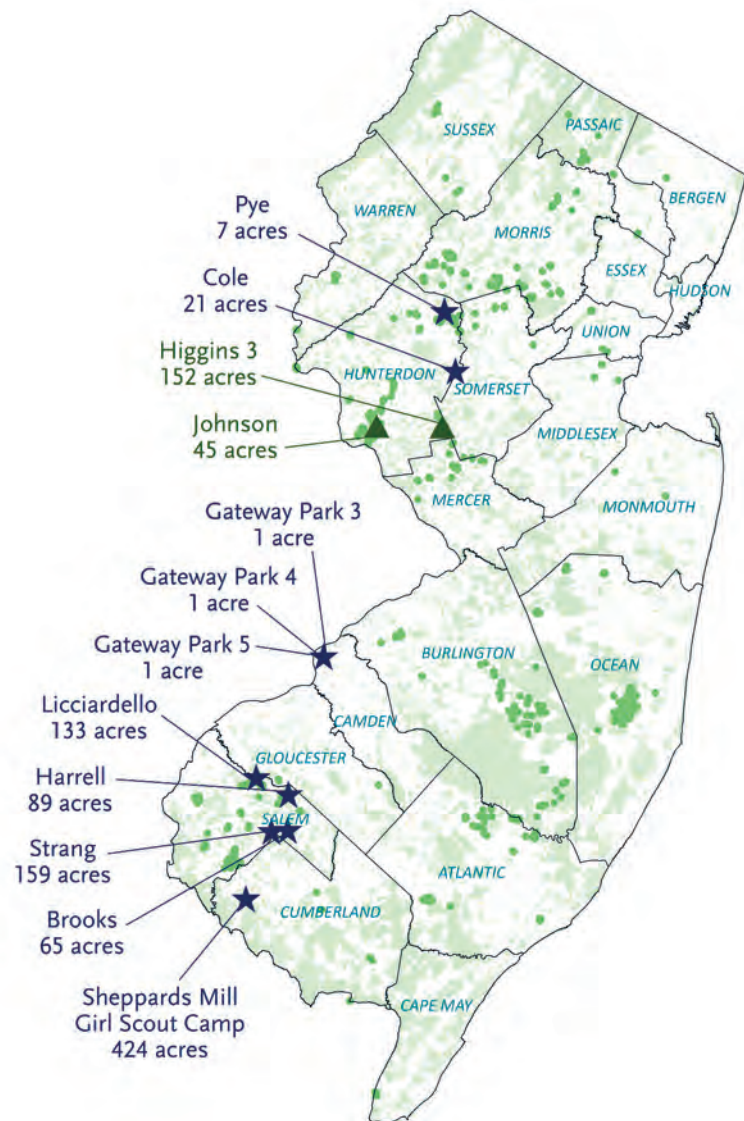
▲ NJ Conservation Owned: 197 acres
(Fee or Easement)

★ Preserved in Partnership: 901 acres

TOTAL: 1,098 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/donate.htm

Become a Member Today!





Farm family preserves Hunterdon farmland as open space

At age 90, Grover Johnson is among the last of the old-time farmers in the western Hunterdon County community of Delaware Township.

One of six children, Grover was born in 1926 in a farmhouse his parents rented from a local family. He and his three brothers grew up farming, using a horse-drawn plow. In 1953, he and his older brother Jacob purchased the house and 69 acres and started their own farm. They raised dairy cows, chickens, ducks and pigs; and grew corn, oats, wheat, soy and hay.

"I've been farming almost all my life," said Grover. "It wasn't easy but it was a good life. I wouldn't trade it ... I wouldn't want the city."

Most of the family's farming operations ended in the 1990s, although they still grow hay in the fields. And thanks to Grover and his sister-in-law, Alice (Jacob's widow), 45 acres of the farm are now preserved as open space.

This past summer, Grover and Alice Johnson sold the land to New Jersey Conservation Foundation. It is now part of the Wickecheoke Creek Preserve, an ever-growing patchwork of

more than 1,100 acres of preserved open space and farmland. The land provides a critical link between two previously preserved properties.

"They thought it was a great idea to sell the property for conservation," said Patty Eckard, Alice Johnson's daughter. She explained that since nobody else in the family wanted to take over the farm, her mother and uncle were happy to see the property remain undeveloped and available to the public for walking and hiking.

New Jersey Conservation will lease the Johnson hayfields to a local farmer and develop a trail system that will eventually connect the landmark Green Sergeant's covered bridge to other preserved open space.

Funding for the purchase came from New Jersey Green Acres and Hunterdon County grants to New Jersey Conservation Foundation. In addition, the New Jersey

Water Supply Authority covered a portion of the ancillary costs.

At its peak, the Johnson family farm had about 20 dairy cows, 200 laying hens, 100 chicks, plus ducks and pigs. Milk was sold to dairy companies in Lebanon and Philadelphia, and eggs were sold at the Flemington egg auction and to neighbors. Many of the field crops, like hay and corn, helped feed the animals.

"It was a lot of hard work but it was a good life," said Grover, whose favorite part of running the farm was "getting up early and working late" to take care of the animals. He rarely traveled far from the farm because of his responsibilities.

Grover, Alice, Patty and other family members still live in houses that were part of the farm; the homes were not part of the open space acquisition. "This was a nice place to grow up - and living here is still great," said Patty.

Preserving family farms for future generations

Back in the late 1700s, a German indentured servant named Casper Berger repaid his debt and became a free man. “He was a mason by trade, and he was required to build three homes,” said Robert Cole, Berger’s descendant. “He built them, earned his freedom and settled in the village of Readington.”

Eight generations later, Casper Berger’s farm in Readington Township, Hunterdon County, is still in the family. Now that the land is permanently preserved, it’s likely to remain a farm.

Cole said he and his wife, Janet, felt strongly about preserving the 21-acre farm. “When we walk on the land, we can feel the history,” he said. “It’s a special place, and we feel that we’re being stewards of our family heritage. It felt like the right thing to do.”

Preserving the farm will make it easier for future generations – including Robert and Janet’s son and daughter – to continue to own and farm it.

The Cole farm is one of several family farms New Jersey Conservation Foundation preserved this year with the help of our partners.

The **BROOKS FAMILY FARM** in Salem County is another.

Farming is a way of life for Michael Brooks, passed down to him by seven earlier generations who tilled family land in Salem County since the late 1700s.

The original 156-acre family farm is located in Elmer, but in recent years the Brooks family expanded its agricultural operation – known as Dusty Lane Farms – nearly tenfold through land purchases and leases.

Michael continued a family tradition by permanently preserving 65 acres of farmland

straddling Upper Pittsgrove and Pittsgrove townships this year. “We farm about 1,500 acres, and with the preservation of this property, almost all the land we farm is preserved,” he said.

He believes this will make it easier for family members to continue farming. “The way I grew up is the way I want to raise my kids,” said Michael. “The reason we’re preserving the farm is to save it for future generations.”

The **HARRELL FAMILY FARM** in Salem County has also been farmed by multiple generations.

We recently helped Salem County purchase the development rights on the 90-acre vegetable and grain farm from brothers Robert and George Kenneth Harrell, ensuring that it will remain farmland forever. It has been in the Harrell family for nearly a century.

“We can sell it to another farmer but we can’t sell it for building lots. I didn’t want to do that anyway,” said Robert Harrell, who has fond memories of growing up on the farm purchased in 1922 by his grandfather, Tilson Harrell, and later taken over by his father, Henry Grady Harrell.

About 39 of the Harrell farm’s acres are wooded, including a riparian forest at the start of Kettle Run, a pristine headwater tributary to Oldmans Creek. The forest canopy provides habitat for migrating songbirds.

We’re extremely grateful to all our partners who made the preservation of these three farms possible. The State Agriculture Development Committee and U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service contributed to the preservation of all three. Other partners included Readington Township, Salem County, Upper Pittsgrove Township and Pittsgrove Township.



Photo by Francis Rapa

OPPOSITE PAGE: This hayfield in Delaware Township is part of the 45-acre property NJ Conservation purchased from Grover Johnson and his sister-in-law, Alice Johnson.

ABOVE: Rows of tomato plants grow at the Harrell farm, which also produces watermelons, sweet corn, cantaloupes and wheat.

LEFT: Sixty-five acres of the Brooks family’s Dusty Lane Farms in Salem County was recently preserved, bringing their preserved farmland total to nearly 1,500 acres.



Photo courtesy of Dusty Lane Farms



MARK YOUR CALENDAR Rally 2018!



Members of New Jersey's conservation community will gather on Friday, March 2, 2018 for the 22nd annual New Jersey Land Conservation Conference – better known as the “Rally.”

The Rally is an educational and networking conference about preserving open space and farmland in New Jersey, and the 2018 theme is “Conservation Connections.” The all-day event will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Brunswick.

Keynote speaker will be David Case, lead author of “The Nature of Americans,”

a groundbreaking national study on Americans’ relationship with the outdoors and nature. The study’s findings reveal an alarming disconnection, but also widespread opportunities for reconnecting. The results are prompting nature conservation, environmental education and outdoor recreation leaders to rethink how to connect people with nature.

The Rally offers workshops on conservation-related topics such as climate change, farmland preservation, urban conservation, research on NJ’s forests, environmental justice, and health impact assessments.

The conference is geared toward professionals and volunteers in New Jersey’s land conservation community, as well as students in environmental programs. However, anyone interested in learning about land conservation is invited.

For more information, a schedule of workshops, and online registration, go to www.njconservation.org/conservation_rally.htm or google NJ Land Rally!

Lead 2018 Rally sponsors include Victoria Foundation, The Nature Conservancy and New Jersey Conservation Foundation.



Connor (above) and Brint (below)



Thank you to our interns!

This fall, New Jersey Conservation Foundation welcomed interns Connor Stone and Brint Barker to our staff to assist with the annual New Jersey Land Conservation Rally, Somerset County’s open space plan, NJ Land Trust Network programs and land stewardship projects.

Connor, a resident of Hackettstown, earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy from Moravian College in 2014 and a master’s degree in biobehavioral health from Pennsylvania State University in 2016. During his internship, he’s inventorying municipal open space plans in Somerset County and interviewing key municipal and nonprofit managers about their open space program, goals and initiatives in the county. He’s also assisting with Land Trust Network planning, including an educational program about keeping farmers on farmland in New Jersey. During his college years, he interned in Costa Rica surveying wildlife and creating habitat for dragonflies and damselflies. He also worked as a teaching assistant at Penn State.

Brint, a resident of Willingboro, is a biology major at Georgian Court University and a graduate of Holy Cross High School in Delran. During his internship, he’s inventorying recreation facilities for the Somerset County open space plan, assisting with social media for the Rally, and helping maintain trails at the Evert Trail Preserve in Pemberton. In addition to his internship, he works as a data analyst at Georgian Court University, performing field work that includes plant collection and measurement, and researching plant compounds. He also cares for plants at the Rarefind Nursery in Jackson.

Thank you, Brint and Connor!



Clean Energy Pathway for New Jersey – Achievable, Affordable, Essential

New Jersey's global Warming Response Act calls for an 80 percent reduction in heat-trapping greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. But the state does not have a plan to get there.

This fall, NJ Conservation and ReThink Energy NJ released a groundbreaking study detailing how New Jersey can cut harmful carbon emissions from electric power generation in half by 2030. The study found that New Jersey can increase renewable energy and energy efficiency without increasing the cost of electricity.

"A Clean Energy Pathway for New Jersey" was conducted by a team of energy experts. It details an affordable approach to reduce harmful emissions through continued growth of solar energy, development of offshore wind, and gains in energy efficiency. Reliance on natural gas – the primary source of emissions from the electric sector – would be reduced.

"There is broad public support for moving to clean, renewable energy, and this report provides achievable, affordable, and essential steps we can take to realize that future much sooner than many people think," said Tom Gilbert, Campaign Director – Energy, Climate and

Natural Resources for NJ Conservation and ReThink Energy NJ. "The only question is, what are we waiting for?"

"Many people assume that there are no viable, affordable alternatives to harmful fossil fuels, but this research shows that there are," added Barb Blumenthal, Ph.D., research consultant to NJ Conservation.

Look for more details in a future issue of this newsletter. Find the full report at <http://rethinkenergynj.org/cleanenergypathway/>



"A Clean Energy Pathway for New Jersey" was announced in September. From left are Alison Mitchell, Michele Byers, Tom Gilbert, Patty Cronheim, Elena Krieger, Boris Lukanov, Arjun Makhijani, Barb Blumenthal and Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker.

PRINCIPLES FOR PROTECTING LAND, WATER, AIR AND WILDLIFE

A bipartisan group of former governors and elected officials, widely known for their environmental advocacy and legacies, is leading an effort to ensure the protection of public lands, water, air and wildlife.

Former Governors Brendan Byrne, Tom Kean, James Florio and Christine Todd Whitman, together with former Congressman Rush Holt and former Assemblywoman Maureen Ogden, are calling on

New Jersey's congressional delegation to sign and defend a set of "Principles to Protect our Public Lands, Water, Air and Wildlife."

"We acknowledge that clean water, clean air, parks, forests, and farms are fundamental to the economic success and vitality of the State of New Jersey and the United States of America," according to the Principles. "Moreover, the quality of our environment is fundamental to our health, well-being and quality of life. We acknowledge that environmental protection must remain a bipartisan matter."

Those who signed the Principles pledged to support and defend environmental laws, and to:

- Protect and defend public lands and support continued public funding for land preservation;
- Promote renewable energy and energy conservation;
- Demand that all federal agencies, policies and laws be grounded in sound science; and
- Work to address the critical and impending threat of man-made climate change.

Elected officials who have signed the Principles to date include U.S. Senators Cory Booker and Robert Menendez, and Representatives Leonard Lance, Frank Pallone, Bonnie Watson Coleman, Bill Pascrell, Donald Norcross and Donald M. Payne Jr. Reach out to these elected officials and say "thanks" for their support.



U.S. Senator Cory Booker, center, signs the "Principles" at a ceremony in April. Surrounding him are, from left, Elliott Ruga of the NJ Highlands Coalition, Amy Hansen and Alison Mitchell of NJ Conservation Foundation, Ed Potosnak of the NJ League of Conservation Voters, former NJ Assemblywoman Maureen Ogden, Mike Pisaurro of the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, Tom Gilbert of NJ Conservation Foundation and Bill Kastning of Monmouth Conservation Foundation.



Photos by Christie Greening

A Day of Paddling on the Cooper River

These beautiful wooden canoes were built by youth in the Urban Trekkers' "Urban BoatWorks" program. In partnership with the Camden Shipyard and Maritime Museum, Urban BoatWorks seeks to build character and skills through the craft of wooden boat building. Since the program's beginning in 2009, middle and high school youth have been handcrafting canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards and launching them on local waterways.

Wilderness is everywhere, even along the Cooper River in the city of Camden. NJ Conservation Camden staff hosted a paddling event on the Cooper River on Sept. 30, in partnership with the Urban Trekkers, a group whose mission is to bring outdoor, hands-on education to youth in Camden. The event brought together paddlers of all ages and ability levels, with the goal of providing an ecological and historical interpretation of the Cooper River and demonstrating why the opening of Gateway Park along the river is important to Camden's revitalization efforts.

Why does open space matter?

NJ Conservation conducted an online poll about New Jersey's environment this summer. Nearly 800 people told us why nature and open space is important to them, including Rose (right), who wrote, "I believe that all people deserve access to natural land to recreate, enjoy the beauty, de-stress, and discover nature. I also think we have a responsibility to protect our natural species and ecosystems."

Matt talks about the experience of his son Max (inset) at NJ Conservation's Bioblitz event this spring, "The netting insects program was the perfect hike for my 2 year old. He loved walking through the grass, sweeping the net back and forth, and seeing all the different kinds of 'buggies' he could catch. Emile Devito (NJ Conservation's Director of Science and Stewardship) was great in helping the kids identify the spiders, meadow plant bugs, and other insects we discovered."



Remembering Sandy Millspaugh

The year was 2002, and New Jersey Conservation Foundation's board of trustees faced a tough decision. The owner of a nearly 10,000-acre cranberry farm in the Pine Barrens was getting out of the business. He wanted to know if NJ Conservation would buy his property for \$12.5 million and turn it into a nature preserve.

The opportunity was incredible. The land was surrounded on all sides by public forest and parkland, and this 10,000 acres came to be known as both the "hole in the doughnut" and "the heart of the Pine Barrens." But the board was divided over the daunting prospect of raising so much money, which could potentially detract from land preservation efforts elsewhere in the state.

That's when Gordon "Sandy" Millspaugh spoke up and reminded his fellow trustees of the organization's core mission to preserve land and natural resources throughout the Garden State. "If we don't do it, what are we here for?" he asked.

That clinched the vote, and the rest is history.

The property is now known as the Franklin Parker Preserve, and it's a true ecological treasure. Without Sandy Millspaugh's voice of reason and responsibility, this amazing public preserve might not exist today.

Gordon Alexander "Sandy" Millspaugh passed away on September 12 at the age of 83. He was a champion of land conservation, the environment, and humanity. He was known for his intelligence, integrity, kindness and generosity.

"Sandy Millspaugh was one of those special people who not only cared deeply about his community, but was willing to dedicate all his free time to making the world around him a better place," reflected former New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman. "He will be deeply missed by all who knew him."

Sandy was a tax and estate attorney and devoted a substantial amount of his time to nonprofit and charitable organizations. He was a board member at New Jersey Conservation Foundation for over 20 years, including two terms as president and several years as honorary trustee. He was instrumental in establishing the Red Oak Society to promote planned giving.



The late Gordon "Sandy" Millspaugh enjoys the 2012 Field & Fashion fundraiser with fellow NJ Conservation Foundation trustee Maureen Ogden, left, and Executive Director Michele Byers.

He was a trustee at the Victoria Foundation, a Newark-based philanthropic organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and families in need, protecting water resources and preserving open space.

He served for two decades as trustee and counsel to the Upper Raritan Watershed Association (now Raritan Headwaters), was a charter trustee of the New Jersey Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and a member of the NJ Hazardous Waste Commission. He was also a trustee at the Matheny School in Peapack, which serves children with disabilities.

Even as his health declined, Sandy remained active in causes close to his heart. Last winter, he attended a Bernardsville town council meeting to speak out in favor of a proposed law to protect underground aquifers. "I strongly believe you can't take water for granted," Sandy told the council.

After Sandy's passing, accolades poured in.

Ken Klipstein, current NJ Conservation president, described him as a "kind, generous and an inspiring leader." Chris Daggett, president of the Geraldine R. Dodge

Foundation, remembered him as "a great person – down-to-earth, thoughtful, smart, insightful, kind, and a good guy to have on your side." Tom Wells, director of government relations for The Nature Conservancy, described him as "a kind-spirited human being ... in the same mold as Frank Parker, Ed Babbott, and so many other past NJ Conservation trustees."

"Sandy was an outstanding president of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation board," said David Moore, our former executive director. "Sandy's calm insight and acumen were major assets to the organization, and he was always ready to lend a helping hand to the board and employees. We got to be friends over the half-century of our mutual involvement with NJ Conservation and I will miss him, and our talk of old times."

Sandy is already missed, but those of us lucky enough to know him will never forget him.

We extend our deepest condolences to Sandy's wife, Joan, and his children and grandchildren.

Thank you!

New Members

(from January 2017 through August 2017)

Ed Adams
George and Meghan Anderson
Carol A. Banks
Elizabeth Byrnes
Ralph Celebre and Susan Haase
Paul Clark
Mary Ellen Coiro
Scott Conchar
Blake Cook and William Fitts
Susan Covert
Angela De Sapio
Amy Doliner
Geraldyn Downey
Sandra M. Dudek
Tatiana Eichmann
Kelly Evans
Diane S. Falk
Eva Zacharias Feke
Naomi Goldman
Mary Ann Hannum
Courtney Hartnett
Dennis Heller
Ellen and Stuart Hochberger
Eleanor V. Horne
Bart and Lorraine Jackson
The Johnson Family
Sarah Katzenbach
Kathy Kopec
Jean G. Kuhn
Judith Lamb
William Lang
Stephen C. Leibrock
Valerie Marks
James R. Matarazzo, Jr.
Barbara McDevitt
Tom and Ellen Measday
Cheryl G. Mercier
Thomas Joseph Miles
Ellie Milewski
Bruce L. Miller
Frank Miller
Paul Mizak
Francesca Mundrick
Bishoi Nageh
Mr. Michael Palmieri
Mary and Geoff Penney
Marc and Kelly Popp
Barbara Prince
Harmony Reed
Dr. George Reskakis
Richard and Marianne Riabko
Garth Ringheim
Frederick D. Roberts and
Bonnie J. Roberts
Mary E. Roberts
Barbara A. Rogers
Joseph and Cindy Romano
Mr. and Ms. Jeffrey Schroeder
Glenn Schweizer
Daniel Schwendeman
Eugene Shkarupa
Horace Arthur Somes, Jr.
Danielle Sonye-Reising

Richard Stahl
Adam Stepien
Tamas Tamas and Marie Tamas
Mayor Paul H. Tomasko
Jennifer Trojan
Sue Underwood
Jenna Volosin
Fred Weber
Philip A. Welter
Margaret Williams
Stephen Williams
Michael S. Wills and
Agnes M. Toccket
Tracy Young
Geraldine Zelencik
Dr. Christopher Zevitas
Doratheia Zoppo

\$500 and Above Members

(from January 2017 through August 2017)

The 1772 Foundation, Inc.
Mr. and Mrs. Philip D. Allen
Penelope Ayers
Catherine Bacon and Paul Winslow
Chris and James Besanceney
John and Rosanne Bornholdt
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company
Margot Brubaker
Roger Byrom
Mrs. Catherine A. M. Cavanaugh
Ruth Charnes
Dr. Theodore Chase and
Mrs. Victory Chase
Jack and Ronnie Cimprich
Larry & Judy Cohen Foundation, Inc.
Dr. Richard H. Colby
Linda Winsor Delap and
Robert J. Delap
Delaware Township Offices
The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
Anna Drago
Landis and Peter Eaton
Joanne Elliott
Antonio Osato Elmaleh
Robert L. Foester
The Fund for New Jersey
Frederick and Gael W. Gardner
Summer Gerard Foundation
Marfy Goodspeed and
Richard Zimmer
Mr. Neil Grossman and Nancy Wolff
The Merrill G. & Emita Hastings
Foundation
Gates and Mary Ellen Hawn
Doug and Susan Haynes
Michael E. Heenehan
Environmental Consultant
Holly R. Hegener and Jon Cummings
Richard and Catherine Herbst
Jeffrey and Dawn Howell
Caroline P. Huber
Investors Foundation, Inc.
The Johnson Family
The Honorable Thomas Kean

Peter R. and Cynthia K. Kellogg
Foundation
The Kirk Kellogg Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth H. Klipstein, II
Sybil Kramer
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel W. Lambert, III
Land Trust Alliance
Peggy McDonnell Walsh
Sally and David Mikkelsen
Thomas Joseph Miles
Vanessa F. Mitchell and
Jonathan R. Tarlin
Paul Mizak
MKM Foundation
Monmouth Conservation Foundation
The Nature Conservancy
New Jersey Audubon Society
New Jersey Highlands Council
New Jersey League of Conservation
North Crosswicks Friends
of Open Space
Nelson Obus and Eve Coulson
The Hon. Maureen Ogden
Mrs. Langdon Palmer
Tari Pantaleo
The William Penn Foundation
Edward Pfeiffer
Pheasant Hill Foundation
Princeton Area
Community Foundation

Raritan Headwaters Association
REI
Robert Wood Johnson
1962 Charitable Trust
Samantha Rothman and
John Hankin
Ryan Automotive, LLC
Ms. Leslie Jones Sauer and
Mr. Gill Smith
James and Sharon Schwarz
Short Hills Garden Club
Nancy Squier
Stone Foundation of New Jersey
Jacqueline Strigl
Suez Water New Jersey
Susan and Thompson Swayne
Taft Communications
Marianne Teetsel and Robert Jacobs
The Thomas & Agnes Carvel
Foundation
Michael Dawson and Robert Tomaselli
Mayor Paul H. Tomasko
The Robert L. and Jane B. Wallace
Foundation
Margaret Wartens
Washington Crossing
Audubon Society
Louise and Cliff Wilson
The Winslow Foundation
Bob and Barbara Wolfe

Memorials

(from January 2017 through August 2017)

C. Austin Buck
Anne Tilney
Frederick Jessel and Judy Jessel
Janet C. Jessel
Eileen Marie Reiss
Violet Gillies
Lynn M. Lipsey
Charles Post
Maureen and Dan Vellucci

Tributes

(from January 2017 through August 2017)

Peter and Cynthia Kellogg
Michael and Shelden Pisani
Maureen Ogden
Michael and Shelden Pisani

John Dana returns to Board of Trustees

When it comes to a love of the outdoors and a strong conservation ethic, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

John Dana of Bernardsville was recently elected to New Jersey Conservation Foundation's Board of Trustees for a second time, filling a seat once occupied by his father, the late Bill Dana.

"This interest in conservation has been in my family for as long as I can remember," John said. "We're all avid fly fisherman, and the idea of protecting land and water – particularly rivers and streams – is important to us."

"The opportunity to save land forever is pretty compelling," noted John, who enjoys fishing, skiing, hiking, golf and tennis.

John is a retired property and casualty insurance broker, having specialized in managing insurance programs for



nonprofit organizations, private schools, and clubs. He most recently worked for Arthur J. Gallagher, and previously served at O'Gorman & Young Inc. and Bollinger Fowler Inc.

A graduate of Middlebury College in Vermont, he previously served on the New Jersey Conservation Foundation board for about six years in the 1990s.

John hopes to spend more time visiting and evaluating properties being considered for preservation. "If I can be part of saving beautiful places in New Jersey, that's a rewarding thing to do," he said.

Welcome New Staff



This past summer, we welcomed Kelly Martin as development associate. She assists with fundraising strategies and membership outreach. Previously, she worked for five years at Great Swamp Watershed Association, most recently as director of communications. She has also worked as an environmental educator and reptile keeper, teaching the younger generations about the importance of environmental conservation. She holds a B.S. degree from Temple University in Philadelphia.

Staff

Michele S. Byers, *Executive Director*

Erica Arles, *Administrative Assistant, Land Acquisition & Stewardship*

Alix Bacon, *Regional Manager, Western Piedmont*

Mark Barrick, *Information Technology/Office Manager*

Tim Brill, *Central Jersey Project Manager*

Beth Davisson, *Project Manager, Black River Greenway*

Justin Dennis, *Camden Land Steward*

Emile DeVito, Ph.D., *Manager of Science & Stewardship*

Wilma Frey, *Senior Policy Manager*

Jane Gardner, *Campaign Project Assistant*

Tom Gilbert, *Campaign Director – Energy, Climate & Natural Resources*

Olivia Glenn, *South Jersey Regional Manager*

Amy Hansen, *Policy Analyst*

Maria Hauser, *Personnel Manager/Executive Assistant*

Steven Jack, *Associate Land Steward*

Russell Jeulg, *Senior Land Steward*

William Lynch, *Assistant Director, Education Programs & Communications*

Lisa MacCollum, *Assistant Director of Land Acquisition*

Kelly Martin, *Development Associate*

Alison Mitchell, *Director of Policy*

Stephanie Monahan, *Pine Barrens Regional Manager*

Timothy Morris, *Director of Stewardship*

Marie Newell, *Project Coordinator, Acquisition*

Tanya Nolte, *GIS Manager*

Sandy Stuart Perry, *Staff Writer*

Lauren Ramos, *Development & Outreach Coordinator*

Francis Rapa, *Regional Manager, Delaware Bay Watershed*

Karen Richards, CPA, *Director of Finance & Administration*

Heidi Marie Roldan, *Corporate & Foundation Relations Manager*

Greg Romano, *Assistant Director & Director of Statewide Land Acquisition*

Gerard Sauchelli, *Associate Land Steward*

Susan Schmidt, *Administrative Assistant/Receptionist*

Bill Scullion, *Land Steward, South Jersey*

Laura Szwak, *Director of Outreach & Education*

Ingrid Vandegaer, *Manager, Highlands Region*

Kathleen Ward, *Director of Development & Communications*

Allison Williams, *Easement Steward*

Wilma Frey Honored with Capstone Award



Wilma Frey, our senior policy manager, received the Capstone Award at the Oct. 11 NJ Highlands Coalition meeting.

With Wilma are, from left, Alison Mitchell and Michele Byers of NJ Conservation and Julia Somers of the NJ Highlands Coalition.

Wilma Frey, Senior Policy Manager and staff member since 1990, was honored by the New Jersey Highlands Coalition on October 11 for her years of dedicated work to preserve and protect the Highlands region.

Highlands Coalition Executive Director Julia Somers presented Wilma with the Capstone Award in recognition of her “tenacious, uncompromising and continuing commitment to the long-term protection of the New Jersey Highlands region.”

Wilma has been “essential and extraordinary for the success of the Highlands Act,” Julia added.

Three of Wilma’s New Jersey Conservation Foundation colleagues – Executive Director Michele Byers, Policy Director Alison Mitchell and Manager of Science & Stewardship Dr. Emile DeVito – praised her contributions.

Wilma is known for her passion for safeguarding forests, wildlife, and scenic and historic places, as well as her willingness to work long hours – including nights and weekends.

“Wilma is the truest, most dedicated conservationist I’ve ever known,” said Michele,

describing Wilma as “an inspiration” and “a great role model for new, emerging conservation leaders.” She noted that Wilma has the rare ability to read through 800 pages of proposed federal legislation “and pull out the most cogent pieces that we need to know about.”

“When it comes to analyzing (a bill) and finding all the nuances, there’s no one like Wilma,” agreed Emile. “She’s my hero, she’s just incredible.” Many of the public lands in the Highlands were protected due in large part to Wilma’s efforts, he added.

Alison said that, in the nearly 30 years she’s known Wilma, “There was never a project too big or too small that involved preservation.” Wilma’s ability to look at the larger picture as well as the tiny details, she added, has been an enormous asset to NJ Conservation’s policy work.

This isn’t the first time Wilma has been honored by the Highlands Coalition. In 2012, the Coalition established the “Wilma Frey New Jersey Highlands Volunteer Award,” given annually to those who have made extraordinary volunteer efforts to preserve the environment and quality of life in the Highlands.



NEW JERSEY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

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www.njconservation.org



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