

New Jersey Conservation



Artwork by Beverley Jones

Season's greenings!

1,500+ acres of New Parks and Preserves

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ON THE COVER

This watercolor of wild turkeys was painted by the late Beverley Jones of Delaware Township. Mrs. Jones and her husband, the late Donald Jones, were known for their love of the outdoors and dedication to land conservation and historic preservation. Every November, New Jersey Conservation holds the Donald and Beverley Jones Memorial Hike in western Hunterdon County to honor their legacy and highlight preserved lands. For the last several years, the hike has also raised awareness of threats posed by the proposed PennEast pipeline, which would impact hundreds of acres of preserved open space and farmland in the Rosemont Valley.



From Our Executive Director

Michele S. Byers

Remember the old song about the “lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer”?

That was not the summer of 2018! This past summer was a beehive of activity as the land acquisition team wrapped up a record number of projects throughout the state.

We and our public and private partners preserved over 1,500 acres of forests, meadows and streams – all open to the public.

The largest, the new Menantico Preserve is 600 scenic acres within the city of Vineland in Cumberland County. Another extraordinary property, 442 acres of a former cranberry farm in the Pine Barrens of Burlington County, is crossed by more than seven miles of streams and tributaries.

These two properties expand New Jersey Conservation’s system of preserves, and are fantastic places to experience nature and wildlife. Trails, signs and parking areas are coming! Permanently preserving these lands also protects drinking water, as they sit above South Jersey’s main water source, the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer.

Several new parks and preserves were acquired in Lebanon Township, Delaware Township, Montgomery Township, Hamilton Township, Hopewell Township and Princeton. And our longstanding farmland preservation work continued full steam with the permanent preservation of seven family farms totaling nearly 300 acres.

Read about this exciting summer season on page 4.

As the year draws to a close, I want to thank YOU, our loyal members and friends, for making our land saving work possible. With your generous support, we will continue to preserve and steward the best of New Jersey’s open space and farmland in 2019!

With best wishes for happy and healthy new year,

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.





Photos courtesy of the Maurice River Historical Society

Protecting the iconic East Point Lighthouse



With its bright red roof and whitewashed brick walls, the East Point Lighthouse has been a landmark at the mouth of the Maurice River in Cumberland County for more than a century and a half. In July, New Jersey Conservation Foundation sold 8.8 acres adjacent to the lighthouse to the State of New Jersey for additional access and buffer to storms and coastal erosion. The state is now researching options to protect the lighthouse, a favorite of visitors to the Delaware Bay area.



PELIO
PROPERTY

MILLNER
PROPERTY

THOMPSON-
WRIGHT
PROPERTY

Season's greenings!

Parks and preserves expand by 1,500+ acres

Over 1,500 acres of new public parks and preserves were created this past summer, as New Jersey Conservation Foundation and its partners acquired several large open space properties that had been in the “preservation pipeline” for years.

“I can’t ever remember a busier summer,” said Assistant Director Greg Romano, whose land acquisition staff worked nonstop during the land preservation blitz.

Among the exciting properties were **600 acres** in Vineland, now the new Menantico Preserve; **442 acres** of a former cranberry farm in Burlington County; **245 acres** in Lebanon Township connecting two existing Hunterdon County parks; **130 acres** in Delaware Township expanding the Wickecheoke Creek Preserve; **64 acres** in Hamilton Township, Mercer County, adding to the township’s open space holdings; **62 acres** in Montgomery Township, Somerset County, for a municipal park; and **11 acres** added to the Mount Rose Preserve in Hopewell Township.

These purchases were made possible by our longtime partnerships with the New Jersey Green Acres Program, county and municipal governments, other land trusts, and charitable foundations with missions to protect land, clean water and wildlife habitat.

We also received the donation of 14 acres in Princeton, adding to the Princeton Ridge Preserve.

Menantico Preserve

The 600-acre property in Vineland, which includes 2.2 miles of the scenic Menantico Creek, was one of the largest remaining pieces of open land in the Upper Menantico watershed.

The new preserve is less than five miles from downtown Vineland and a short distance from downtown Millville. Together, these two cities have a population of nearly 90,000 residents and a need for more public open space.

Thompson-Wright Property

This former 442-acre cranberry farm expanded the 1,227-acre Michael Huber Prairie Warbler Preserve to 1,669 acres. The property was in the same family since the Civil War and includes 5.5 miles of streams, including the pristine Burrs Mill Brook.

The land was purchased from the Thompson and Wright families, which owned the Birches Cranberry Company. The company discontinued cranberry production in 2004, and the land has naturally reverted to wetlands and pitch pine forest. The property is now open to the public for passive recreation, including hiking, birding and nature observation. Sand roads bordering the former cranberry bogs offer stunning views of wetland habitats and will be part of a future trail system.

Pelio Property

Hunterdon County’s newest park – 245 acres of forests and fields connecting the Point Mountain Reservation and Teetertown/Crystal Springs Preserve – was preserved by a partnership spearheaded by New Jersey Conservation and Hunterdon County.

The property adds to northern Hunterdon County’s protected rural vistas, maintains the area’s agricultural character, and provides habitat for wildlife.

Millner Property

Sonia Millner could have sold the Hunterdon County land where she grew up for a housing development. But she and her daughter, Barbara Gellner, made up their minds that they’d rather see their 130-acre property permanently preserved as open space.

“It was something we had always discussed,” Mrs. Millner said. “Rather than having a bunch of houses coming up, we did not want to see it developed.”

The property – fields and forest traversed by the pristine Wickecheoke Creek – is open to the public for passive recreation, although a trail has not yet been built. The Wickecheoke Creek flows into the D&R Canal, an important water supply source.

Lord Property

The 64-acre farm in Hamilton Township, owned by Anna Lord, was actively farmed for many years. However, after Lord passed away her estate looked to sell the farm, which was being eyed for residential development.

New Jersey Conservation approached Hamilton Township officials about preserving the land instead. We helped the township purchase the property using municipal and county open space funds, preserving the rural character of the southeast corner of the township.

Spring Hill Property

With the help of New Jersey Conservation, Montgomery Township preserved 62 acres of forested land in the Sourland Mountains. The site of a former summer camp dating back to the 1930s, the Spring Hill property was targeted for preservation due to its environmental sensitivity and proximity to other preserved lands.

Currently undeveloped except for some old trails, the property contains two tributary streams, wetlands, springs, steeply sloping hills, and mature upland beech, oak and tulip poplar forest.

Mount Rose Preserve

More than three years after the Mount Rose Preserve was created at the site of a former corporate campus, an additional parcel of land within the 320-acre public park has been secured. We purchased 11 acres where a corporate education center once stood, and plan to create a native meadow and hiking trail. The preserve is managed by a partnership with Mercer County, Hopewell Township, and Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space.



Preserving farms Preserving farmers

Photo by Francis Rapa

Living up to the nickname “Garden State” means making sure that farming stays viable, now and in the future.

One of the best ways to retain our state’s farming heritage is to keep farmland in the hands of farmers. That’s why preserving farmland is critical.

During the past several months, New Jersey Conservation helped preserve seven family farms totaling nearly 300 acres, most in Salem County.

When farmland is preserved, the owners sell the development rights on their land. The preserved farms remain in private ownership, but the land is permanently deed restricted for agricultural use.

Revenue from the sale of development rights allow farmers to invest in equipment and improvements, pay off mortgages and buy additional farmland. And when preserved farmland changes hands, the selling price is lower than land with development potential – an enormous help to beginning farmers.

Ray McAlonan’s two farms totaling nearly 42 acres in Alloway Township were preserved last summer.

“This preservation project helps us to reinvest in our farming operations to keep our farms viable. We are fixing old barns and doing other improvements,” explained McAlonan, who grows hay and corn and raises sheep. “These newly preserved properties have been in our family for over 50 years and, thanks to conservation, we can continue to keep our family farming legacy going.”

“I think the farmland preservation program is beneficial to maintaining farming and the rural character of Salem County,” added Joe Robbins, whose 55-acre farm in Alloway Township was

also preserved. “Retaining Salem County’s wide open spaces is a good thing for the county and I want to do my part to help keep it that way.”

More farms preserved:

- **The Byrnes farm**
47 acres in Pilesgrove Township, Salem County
- **The Ostrum farm**
32 acres in Pilesgrove Township, Salem County
- **The Foote 1 farm**
35 acres in Salem and Gloucester counties
- **The Foote 2 farm**
30 acres in Upper Pittsgrove Township, Salem County
- **The historic Craigmar Farm**
45 acres in Tewksbury Township, Hunterdon County

These family farms were preserved in partnership with several funding agencies, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, State Agriculture Development Committee, Salem County, Hunterdon County and municipal governments. Thank you to all our farmland preservation partners!

2018 GAINING GROUND

New Jersey Conservation Foundation and its partners permanently preserved over 1,872 acres from June through October 2018. These lands include family farms, grasslands for grazing horses and cattle, and natural areas that safeguard clean drinking water, protect wildlife habitat and offer scenic beauty and outdoor recreation.

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

18 Projects

June - October 30, 2018

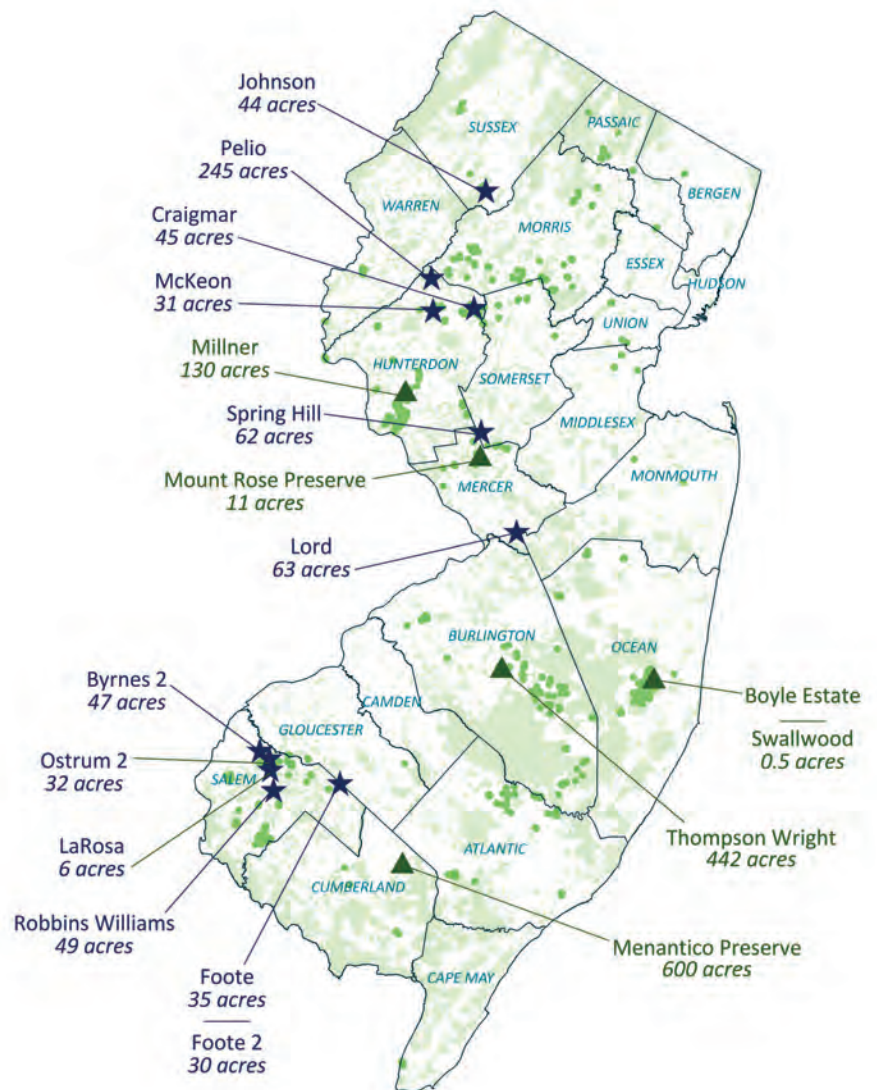
▲ NJ Conservation Owned: 1,183.50 acres
(Fee or Easement)

★ Preserved in Partnership: 689 acres

TOTAL: 1,872.50 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!



The title of a new report on the proposed pipeline, and a new poll, sum it up...

PENNEAST:

A solution in search of a problem

The report, written by Barbara Blumenthal, Ph.D., who directs energy research for New Jersey Conservation and the ReThink Energy NJ campaign, provides data and analysis showing that the pipeline isn't needed under any scenario. According to the report, PennEast wouldn't fill a need for more pipeline capacity, nor would it reduce natural gas prices, ensure reliability or provide a low-cost transition to a clean energy future.

"At this point," the report concludes, "building unnecessary pipelines will only increase costs and take the state in the wrong direction on energy."

The proposed PennEast pipeline would carry gas 118 miles, from the Marcellus Shale fields of Pennsylvania to Mercer County, NJ. The proposed route would run through Hunterdon and Mercer counties, impacting thousands of acres of open space and farmland, scores of pristine streams, and habitat for endangered and threatened species.

Natural gas is methane and is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions in New Jersey. It is used for generating electricity as well as heating and cooling.

The state has a legislative mandate to achieve 80 percent lower emissions by 2050, requiring a major reduction in natural gas consumption. And a new report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned of the urgent need to reduce emissions to prevent the most catastrophic effects of global warming.

Instead of building more gas pipelines like PennEast, the report said, the state should look at a combination of wind, solar, flexible load, storage, and stepped-up energy efficiency. This will heat, cool, and power New Jersey reliably, and also save money and support a vibrant economy.

A new survey of the state's registered voters, conducted by The Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll for ReThink Energy NJ, shows clear opposition to pipelines and

clear support for clean energy.

The poll revealed that three of every four respondents want New Jersey to achieve a goal of 100 percent of energy from renewable sources by 2050. It found that 66 percent do not consider natural gas to be clean.

Seventy-five percent of those surveyed said the state should invest more in renewable energy sources rather than in fossil fuels and pipelines.

Approximately eight out of 10 voters said they are concerned about proposed new gas pipelines, including impacts on natural areas and wildlife habitats (81%), the seizure of private property by energy companies (81%), risks to air and water quality (79%), and the targeting of protected natural areas like the Pine Barrens (78%).

Two-thirds (67%) said the jobs created by pipelines are not worth the environmental and health risks, and the state should instead create jobs through clean, renewable energy projects.

Deputy NJDEP Commissioner Debbie Mans Talks Policy



Debbie Mans, second from left, the Deputy Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, visited New Jersey Conservation's main office this fall to meet with the Policy Committee. Among the issues discussed were offshore wind energy, New Jersey's decision to rejoin the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), water infrastructure, management of state owned natural lands, coastal planning, invasive species, off-road vehicle damage to public lands, and the state's Energy Master Plan. With Mans are board members Ted Chase, Ken Klipstein, and Wendy Mager and staff members Michele Byers, Alison Mitchell, and Dr. Emile DeVito.

Welcome New Staff

We recently welcomed two new staff members: **Julia Raskin** of Philadelphia as Outreach Manager of Camden Parks and Greenways and **Melanie Mason** of Lambertville as Land Steward.



Julia Raskin

Julia will be working closely with Justin Dennis, our Urban Parks Manager, co-leading our efforts to expand parks and greenways in the city of Camden, including Gateway Park along the Cooper River. Julia earned a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from Oberlin College and dual master's degrees in urban planning and natural resources and environmental policy from the University of Michigan. Before joining New Jersey Conservation, she organized campaigns to improve park and recreational access for several groups, including the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Friends of the Wissahickon, San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy and Partnerships for Parks.

Melanie is responsible for management and development of New Jersey Conservation's preserves in the northern region of the state. Her background includes stewardship and monitoring of New Jersey's natural resources for the state Division of Fish and Wildlife and the Morris County Park Commission. Most recently, she administered the Farmland Preservation Program and County Agriculture Development Board for Hunterdon County. She holds a B.S. degree in ecology and natural resources from Rutgers University and a certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) from Penn State University.



Melanie Mason



Bravo!

to over 200 years of service!

New Jersey Conservation Foundation staff members serving 20 or more years were thanked at an appreciation luncheon this fall. Those honored were, from left, **Wilma Frey**, senior policy manager, 28 years; **Ingrid Vandegaer**, Highlands regional manager, 21 years; **Beth Davisson**, Black River Greenway project manager, 23 years; **Alison Mitchell**, policy director, 25 years; **Lisa MacCollum**, assistant director of land acquisition, 25 years; **Karen Richards**, director of finance and administration, 20 years; **Emile DeVito**, manager of science and stewardship, 29 years; and **Michele Byers**, executive director, 36 years.

Mark Your Calendar for Rally 2019!

Members of New Jersey's conservation community will gather on Friday, April 12, 2019 for the 23rd 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 2019 theme is “Conservation Innovations in a Changing World.” The all-day event will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Brunswick.



The Rally offers workshops on conservation-related topics such as mitigating the impacts of climate change, protecting habitat for threatened and endangered wildlife, preserving farmland, creating urban parks, building trails on public open space, careers in conservation and more!

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

Lead 2019 Rally sponsors (as of 11/1/2018) include the Victoria Foundation, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Merrill G. and Emta E. Hastings Foundation, Duke Farms and Monmouth Conservation Foundation.

*thank
you!*

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(from January 2018
through September 2018)

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\$500 and Above Members

(from January 2018
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Anonymous (3)
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New Jersey Conservation Foundation welcomes new members and gratefully acknowledges donors who made contributions between January 2018 and September 2018. With your support, we work hard to preserve and protect New Jersey's lands.

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Mary Pacini

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Natalie London
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Jon and Helene Weiman

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and Brij Patel
Rashea Acquaye
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Vidhi Kapoor
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John Miraglia
Elaine Miraglia

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or wetland, New Jersey Conservation
Foundation protects open spaces
in your towns, cities and the places
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