

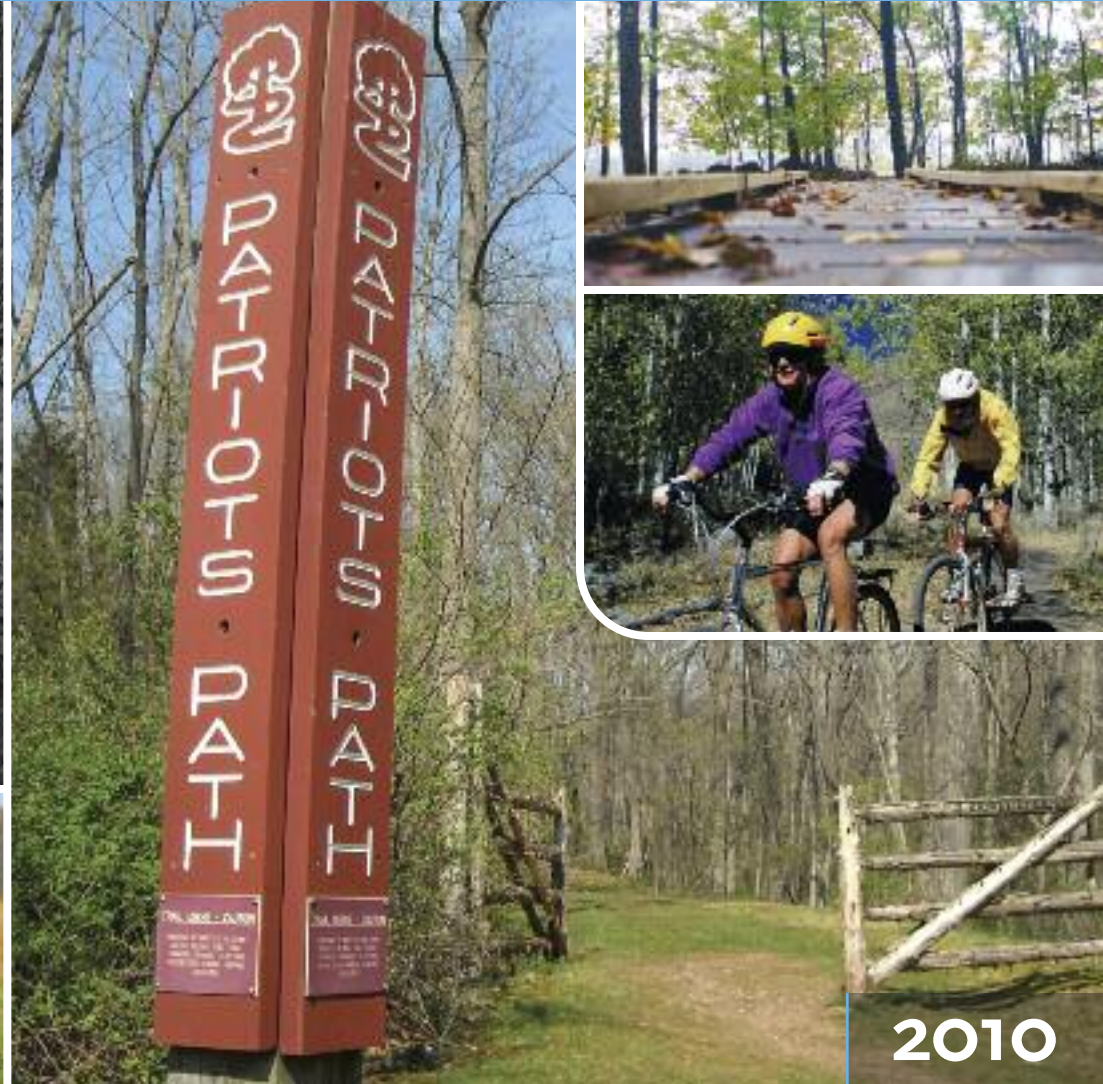
NEW JERSEY CONSERVATION

1968



Patriots' Path: *A vision is realized*

Patriots' Path, which stretches across Morris County and connects dozens of parks, natural areas and historic sites, was one of New Jersey Conservation Foundation's earliest projects, starting in the 1960s. See story on page 7.



2010

From Our Executive Director

CELEBRATING **50** YEARS

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In the spring of 1970, the North Jersey Conservation Foundation (as we were then known) was eagerly anticipating the first Earth Day and a new surge of activism.

The inaugural Earth Day was a rousing success, but Charles DeBevoise, our president, wondered afterward about the event's future.

"The age of ecology is upon us – I must say it's about time. The current wave of public interest is gratifying for those of us who have fought battle after battle; the former lunatic fringe has suddenly become sanctified. Yet, I am concerned about the future," he said.

"Earth Day took place April 22, 1970. Now what? Will the storm blow over? What will happen when the militancy predicted by some authors begins to have an impact, if it indeed takes place? I do not know the answers to these questions, but whatever the course of the environmental crisis, the North Jersey Conservation Foundation will be both

ready and willing, and with support will be able to meet the demand placed upon it."

As we know now, the storm didn't blow over. The federal Environmental Protection Agency was established and the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Acts were passed. In New Jersey, the Department of Environmental Protection was created and many of the state's major pieces of environmental legislation were enacted – due, in large part, to advocacy efforts led by New Jersey Conservation Foundation and our partners.

Earth Day turned 40 this year. The students who attended the first Earth Day events are now middle-aged and then some. They've taught their children about the importance of caring for our environment, and those children may now be teaching their own children!

And Charlie DeBevoise was right about some things not changing: Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, New Jersey Conservation Foundation remains ready,



willing and able to fight for the environment and our quality of life in the Garden State.

We hope you will join us as we celebrate our 50th anniversary this year. We have a full calendar of events planned at properties we helped preserve – nature walks, hikes, a canoe trip, picnics, a windsurfing demonstration and more – culminating with a celebration dinner on Oct. 23.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michele S. Byers".

MICHELE S. BYERS
Executive Director

About our cover

The black and white photo in our cover collage was taken by Molly Adams in 1968 on a press tour to promote the concept of Patriots' Path, which would span Morris County. In the photo, from left, are Hellie Stowell, unidentified, reporter Walter Waggoner of the New York Times, Hugh Stearns of the Morristown Rotary Club, Bernard Daly, administrator of the state Green Acres Program; Helen Fenske, director of the North Jersey Conservation Foundation and Karl Klotz of Morris County Soil Conservation District.

Growing Up in the Great Swamp

By Rand Wentworth

When I was growing up in the 1960s, my father would take me hiking in the Great Swamp after church on Sundays. I remember getting out of the car in the early spring and hearing the red-winged black birds calling a welcome. Walking down the soft, moist trail, I could smell the rich brew of earth and plants coming back to life. I saw green skunk cabbages unfurling themselves out of the black earth and orange salamanders picking their way through the ground pine.

As a kid, I remember talk about building a massive regional jetport in the Great Swamp. The engineers said it was “just” a swamp, but we kids knew it was a special place. Fortunately for all of us, the founders of New Jersey Conservation Foundation convinced the federal government to make the Great Swamp into a National Wildlife Refuge. If they had not taken action, a big part of New Jersey’s remaining natural lands would now be hotels, gas stations, and fast food restaurants. Although NJCF has gone on to protect many beautiful places, I will always be grateful that they started with my favorite place.

I had a chance to pay back NJCF in 1970 when I volunteered as an intern drafting an environmental curriculum guide. NJCF understood that children were the key to our future, and they saw the potential of incorporating environmental education in

the public schools. The problem was that there were no books to help the teachers get started. Under the leadership of David Moore, NJCF created one of the first curriculum guides, “Education for Survival,” to be used in public schools. I believe that the unsung heroes of the environmental movement are the thousands of public school teachers who have taught the next generation about the threats to our natural world.

I was lucky to grow up in a neighborhood where we could play in a nearby patch of woods. We would build forts, play hide-and-go-seek and watch minnows in a stream. I believe that this kind of unstructured play in nature is a fundamental part of becoming fully human, and every child deserves to have this kind of experience. I have been amazed to watch city kids come alive when they come to the woods for the first time.



Rand Wentworth is president of the Land Trust Alliance. Prior to joining the Alliance in 2002, he was vice president of the Trust for Public Land and founding director of its Atlanta office. A native of Madison, N.J., and a graduate of Yale University, Rand holds an MBA in finance from Cornell University.

They say they feel *happy*. If you think about it, this is just common sense. Our species evolved in an intimate relationship with nature. We knew the smell of fresh water, the tracks of wildlife, and the cycles of the moon. Our DNA has not changed just because one generation of our species has stayed indoors watching a computer screen.

My involvement in NJCF inspired me to make a lifetime commitment to land conservation, and I now serve as president of the Land Trust Alliance, the national leader of land trusts throughout the country.

Table of Contents

- 6** **Our second decade:**
The 1970s were a time of environmental advocacy and an expanded mission
- 11** **A conservation ‘first’**
First New Jersey nonprofit to preserve land using military funds
- 15** **The Ecology College**
Building a modern-day Noah’s Ark for native forest species

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 protected over 120,000 acres of the state’s farmland, forests, parks, wetlands, water resources and special places.

For membership information, please call us at 1-888-LAND-SAVE (1-888-526-3728), e-mail us at info@njconservation.org, or visit our website at www.njconservation.org. Our mailing address is 170 Longview Road, Far Hills, NJ, 07931.

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Although it started by protecting just one place, NJCF is now working for the day when every child can grow up within ten minutes of a park, trail or natural area. After 50 years, its work is more important than ever.

Landmark Forest Stewardship Law Signed by Governor Corzine

After almost 20 years of advocacy by New Jersey Conservation Foundation and its partners, an initiative aimed at improving the health and sustainability of New Jersey's privately-owned forests has become law.

The Forest Stewardship Act was signed into law by former Governor Jon Corzine days before he left office in January. New Jersey Conservation Foundation led the effort to pass this legislation, critical because many of New Jersey's forests are no longer regenerating.

The new law takes effect on January 17, 2011 and allows landowners with at least five forested acres to become eligible for reduced property tax assessments by actively managing their woodlands to promote forest health and sustainability. Previously, the same woodland owners participating in the farmland assessment program were subject to income requirements, which forced them to cut trees for timber and firewood. The practice was not sustainable and resulted in a major loss of forest productivity and biodiversity.

"New Jersey Conservation Foundation would like to thank the Legislature, particularly lead sponsors Senator Bob Smith and Assemblyman John McKeon, and

former Governor Corzine for recognizing that healthy, sustainable forests provide real public benefits such as water filtration, soil stabilization and flood control," said Michele S. Byers, Executive Director. "Healthy forests also provide habitat to a diversity of wildlife species and can mitigate climate change impacts."

Now that the Forest Stewardship Act is law, the next step is the creation of a stewardship committee and rules for implementation by the Department of Environmental Protection.

For more information about enrolling your forestland in the new program, please contact Emile DeVito at 908-432-3419.

Inside this fenced area at the Watchung Reservation is a healthy forest, its leafy understory protected from deer. Outside the fence, in stark contrast, deer have grazed away the understory.





Off-Road Vehicles to be Regulated Under New State Law

Also signed into law by Governor Corzine was the Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) bill, which regulates the operation of all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes, snowmobiles and certain other types of off-road vehicles. For years, New Jersey Conservation Foundation and other environmental advocacy groups had pressed for the passage of this legislation because of the severity of ecological damage to public and private conservation lands caused by illegal ORV use.

The new law requires all ORVs to be registered and tagged, which would help enforcement officials identify illegal riders without having to chase them. The law imposes penalties for illegal riding on public lands, including fines and confiscating vehicles from repeat offenders. Revenue generated by fines will be used for educational programs and

training on the operation of ORVs, and restoring damaged lands. All riders under the age of 18 would have to get safety training certification.

However, implementation of the new ORV regulations has been delayed due to a requirement advocated by ORV riders that the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) first designate a state-owned

site where ORVs may be legally ridden. We are now working with the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association and other partners to identify an appropriate site.

We thank Governor Corzine and the bill's legislative sponsors, including lead sponsors Senator Bob Gordon and Assemblyman Reed Gusciora.

Farm to School Bill is a Win-Win for Garden State

New Jersey Conservation Foundation supports the proposed federal Farm to School Improvements Act (HR 4710), which would simultaneously benefit farms in the Garden State and children who eat school cafeteria lunches.

Introduced by U.S. Representative Rush Holt of New Jersey's 12th Congressional District, the bill would strengthen Farm to School programs that bring locally or regionally grown fresh produce into schools.

At a time when childhood obesity is a growing concern, providing more farm-fresh foods for schools is a win-win for kids and farmers. For many children, school lunch is the most important meal of their day.

In addition to improving nutrition for children participating in school lunch

programs, the program would heighten awareness of the links between farming, food, nutrition and the environment; increase markets for small and medium-sized farms and food producers; and reduce pollution because less energy is used to transport food.



The Cross Estate in Bernardsville, whose gardens are pictured, was preserved by New Jersey Conservation Foundation in 1974 and later turned over to the National Park Service.

Our Second Decade: New Jersey Conservation Foundation in the 1970s

If the 1960s was the decade when New Jersey's environmental conscience was awakened, the 1970s was a time when protecting the Garden State's ecology and open spaces became a statewide priority.

As the decade began, the North Jersey Conservation Foundation was a 10-year-old conservation group with a few spectacular early successes under its belt, the most famous of which was the preservation of the Great Swamp of Morris and Somerset Counties.

David Moore was the Foundation's new executive director in 1970, having taken over seven months earlier from founding director Helen Fenske.

Moore, whose tenure would last 30 years, remembers the 1970s as "an era of

landmarks in both policy and land acquisition." One of New Jersey's most pressing problems at the start of the decade, he said, was the lack of laws and agencies to protect the state's environment.

Moore became part of a "conservation roundtable" that successfully lobbied in 1970 for the establishment of the state Department of Environmental Protection. "After that," he noted, "in fairly rapid succession, the state passed the Soil & Water

Conservation Act, the Pesticide Control Act, the Environmental Education Act, and the Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA). We were involved in all of those."

The North Jersey Conservation Foundation not only advocated for state environmental protection laws, but also introduced its own programs aimed at helping the environment.

One of them was Education for Survival, a pioneering curriculum developed with

the Madison school system to integrate environmental education into the classroom. It was unveiled with great acclaim at an educational convention in San Francisco in 1970.

Looking South

The 1970s will also be remembered as the decade when the North Jersey Conservation Foundation expanded south.

John McPhee's 1967 book, *The Pine Barrens*, had focused attention on this unique ecological resource and the leadership of North Jersey Conservation Foundation became determined to preserve it.

On July 14, 1974, the North Jersey Conservation Foundation officially became the New Jersey Conservation Foundation at a ceremony in Bernardville, Somerset County, to celebrate the preservation of the 165-acre W. Redmond Cross Estate, which was to be turned over to the National Park Service as part of the Jockey Hollow section of the Morristown National Historical Park.

Edward Babbot, the Foundation's then-president (and current trustee), explained the name change: "Our new name describes our current activities, for already we are handling new projects in central and south Jersey, and each week brings more requests for help."

Moore said the Foundation became "a sparkplug" for efforts to protect the Pine Barrens. This was especially important because the Port Authority, after failing to turn the Great Swamp into an airport, began eyeing the Pine Barrens.

The Foundation and others, including New Jersey Audubon, launched a campaign to designate the Pine Barrens as part of the national park system. The result was a federal law, signed by President Jimmy Carter in 1978, creating the Pinelands National Reserve.

But state legislation was needed to implement the federal act. This proved a challenge due to fierce opposition by real estate developers, land speculators, farmers and the casino industry. Because of all-out efforts by the Foundation and its allies, the state Legislature approved the Pinelands Protection Act by a single vote in a dramatic midnight session in 1979.

The year 1979 also saw the preservation of the Celery Farm Natural Area in Bergen County. The borough of Allendale wanted to preserve the former farm and its rich wetlands but could not obtain the money fast enough, so New Jersey Conservation Foundation stepped in, buying the land and later turning it over to the town.

Legacy Project – Patriots' Path

"Take two generous cups of history, one quart of nature at her best, add a dash of bicycle trails, swimming pools, fishing streams and hiking paths. Blend well, then add the Whippany River and its tributaries. Knead thoroughly until everything has a firm, cohesive feeling. Bake over a constant flame for 10 – 15 years and the final product – something more exciting than the separate ingredients – is the Patriots' Path."

This 1973 newspaper "recipe" describes Patriots' Path, a linear park traversing Morris County and one of New Jersey Conservation Foundation's earliest projects. When writer Gayle Samuels penned the recipe, the ingredients had been "cooking" for about eight years.

Believe it or not, the flame has stayed on for 37 years since! Patriots' Path has steadily grown to link natural areas with parks and historic landmarks all over the region. It stretches from the Essex County border on the east to Hunterdon County on the west, with a number of spurs off the main trunk. And the "final product" is still being finished!



Mrs. Merrill Harvey and Hugh Stearns look over acquisition plans for Patriots' Path in Morristown in 1971. Below, Patriots' Path was the cover story of our newsletter, *Footprints*, in February 1967.



Legacy Project – Patriots’ Path continued

“The original section is what’s called the Great Morristown Greenway, and from there it spread out to other areas,” explained Russ Felter, manager of park projects for Morris County. “The main trail is about 45 miles long. We’re only a couple of easements away from being complete, so it’s been a long time coming.”

Patriots’ Path was the 1966 vision of Helen Fenske, New Jersey Conservation Foundation’s first director, Russell Myers the Morris County Parks and Hugh Stearns of the Morristown Rotary Club. Original plans called for a 17-mile trail linking many of Morristown’s parks and colonial and Revolutionary War history sites.

“There were a number of open space projects in the center of Morris County and Morristown that looked like they could be connected,” explained David Moore, who succeeded Fenske as New Jersey Conservation Foundation executive director in 1969. “There were some obvious connections that could be made by putting together a trail system along the Whippany River.” Another obvious link was the abandoned rail bed of the defunct Rockaway Valley Railroad, known as the “Rockabye Baby.”

This ambitious plan captured the imagination of other groups, including the Morristown Junior League. In 1972, a grant from the Junior League enabled the North Jersey Conservation Foundation (as we were then still called) to hire a full-time Patriots’ Path director for two years. The Friends of the Patriots’ Path was formed; it produced a 120-page path plan and a promotional video. Later, Morris County was made the lead agency in acquiring and developing land.

Albert Kent, who retired last fall as Patriots’ Path coordinator for Morris County after more than 20 years, said the project was the right idea at the right time. “It’s a good thing they started when they did, otherwise what’s now open space would be gone,” he said.

Kent, who still helps maintain the path as a volunteer, added that all the towns along the trail were supportive, as were private landowners who allowed the path to cross their properties. “It was an idea that everybody felt very comfortable with,” he said.



Courtesy of the Friends of Frelinghuysen Arboretum



Left, in June 1968 a group of students visited one site where Patriots’ Path would be built. Right, the Frelinghuysen Arboretum is one of the many Morris County landmarks that are connected by the path.

Some parts of Patriots’ Path cut through woods and fields, while others traverse suburban towns. Horses and bicycles are allowed on some sections, while others permit foot traffic only. Among the historic sites along the path are Speedwell Village,

Fosterfields Living Historical Farm, the Morristown National Historical Park (Jockey Hollow), and Cooper Mill.

For more information and online maps, go to www.morrisparks.net.

617 Acres Added to Forked River Mountain Preserve

If preserving the Forked River Mountains of Ocean County can be compared to putting together a jigsaw puzzle, we have just added some key pieces.



George Downs of the Year Round Sportsman's Club, Mickey Coen of the Forked River Mountain Coalition, and Chris Jage of New Jersey Conservation Foundation look at the new property.

In late 2009 we purchased 617 acres of Pine Barrens property in Lacey and Ocean townships, providing critical connections between existing preserved lands.

“We’ve worked for 15 years to add this property to our Forked River Mountain Preserve,” said Chris Jage, assistant director for South Jersey. “We’re thrilled to increase the size of this preserve to nearly 4,000 acres.”

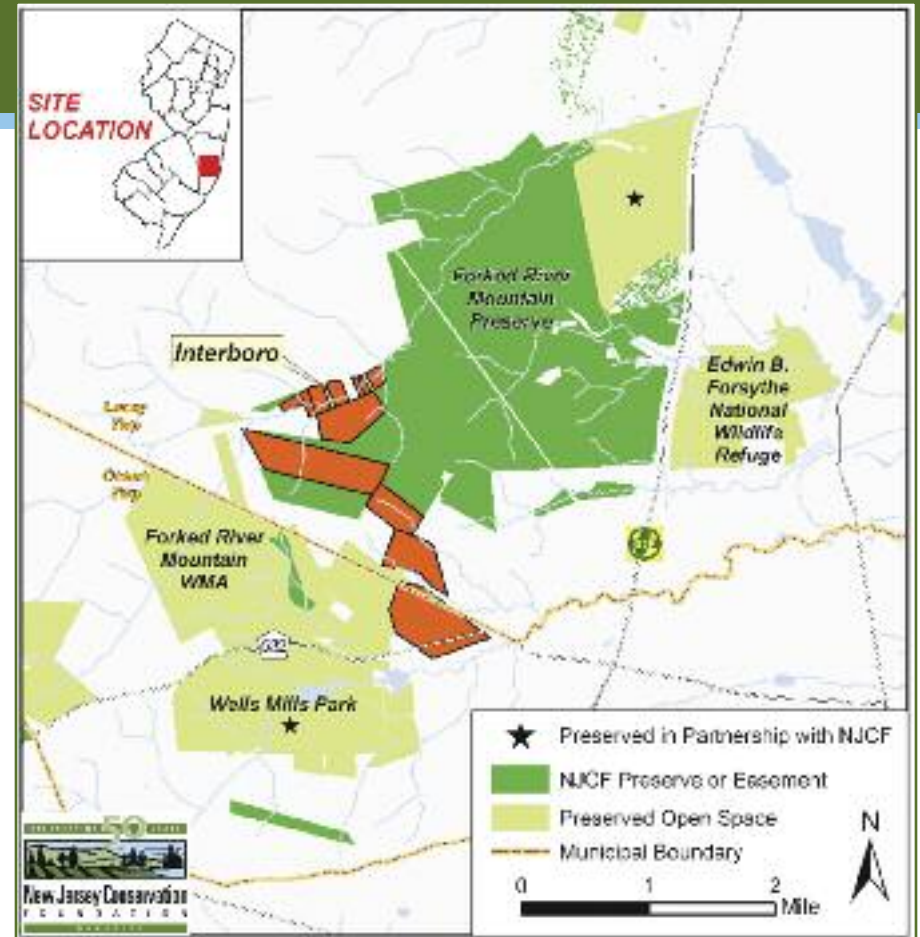
The lands purchased from the Interboro Holding Co. are 13 distinct parcels, intermingled with other New Jersey Conservation Foundation holdings and property preserved by Ocean County and the state.

The Interboro land preservation, and Ocean County’s preservation of a nearby 877-acre property, were jointly celebrated at an event at Wells Mills County Park in December.

“That is a significant swath of open space that will be preserved as natural lands forever,” said Ocean County Freeholder Director John C. Bartlett Jr.

Funding came from the state Green Acres program, the Pinelands Commission’s Pinelands Conservation Fund, the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust, the Victoria Foundation and Conservation Resources Inc.

The Forked River Mountains, two gravelly hills that rise to 180 feet amid otherwise flat terrain, lie at the heart of a vast Pine Barrens wilderness that has remained relatively unchanged due to preservation efforts by the conservation community.



Did You Know?

The Forked River Mountains were once considered as the site for a modern new city and airport to be built in the Pine Barrens. In his 1967 book, *The Pine Barrens*, John McPhee describes standing atop one of the Forked River hills with an urban planner named Herbert Smith, gazing at unbroken acres of pineland. “This is a planner’s dream,” said Smith, envisioning a futuristic central business district.

As history shows, plans for both the airport and the new city were defeated. The land proposed for the airport became Penn and Bass River State Forests, and the area proposed for the city became the Forked River Mountain Preserve.

Land Preservation

Partnering with the Military to Preserve Land

A 107-acre former hunting camp in Burlington County, surrounded by Bass River State Forest and the New Jersey Air National Guard's Warren Grove Gunnery Range, is the first in the state to be preserved by a nonprofit group using funding from the U.S. Department of Defense's Readiness and Environmental Preparedness Initiative (REPI). This federal program funds land preservation surrounding military installations.

New Jersey Conservation Foundation purchased the Oswego Gun Club property in Bass River Township for \$107,000, using funding from REPI, the Pinelands Conservation Fund and the state Green Acres Program.

A conservation easement will be held by the United States Air Force.

"We're proud to be part of this conservation 'first' in New Jersey, and we're looking forward to partnering with the military again soon," said Michele S. Byers, executive

director of New Jersey Conservation Foundation, at a March 23 event at the gunnery range to celebrate the preservation.

Major General Glenn K. Rieth, the state Adjutant General and commander of all National Guard forces in New Jersey, said that the arrangement will serve the taxpayers, environment and the nation's defense. "This is a win for all parties concerned," Rieth said. "The conservation easement ensures this land is managed in the most

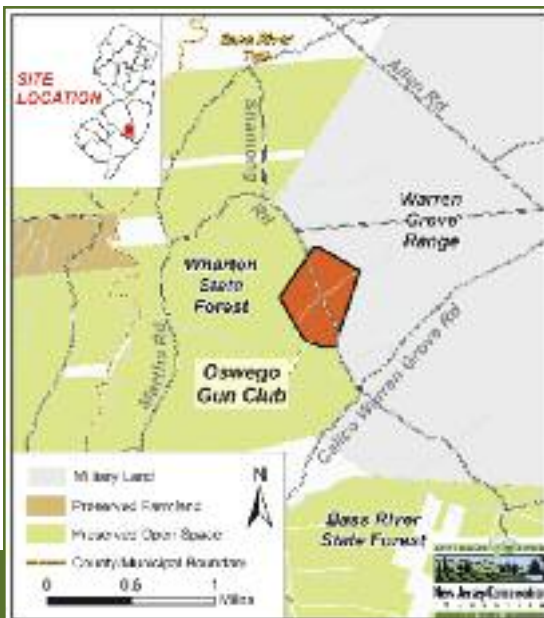


Signing the deed to the Oswego Gun Club property were, from left, Major General Glenn K. Rieth, Michele S. Byers, John Stokes of the Pinelands Commission and Terry Caruso of the state Green Acres program.

cost-effective and environmental friendly way while ensuring the Warren Grove Range is able to continue as a vital East Coast training facility for combat aviation."

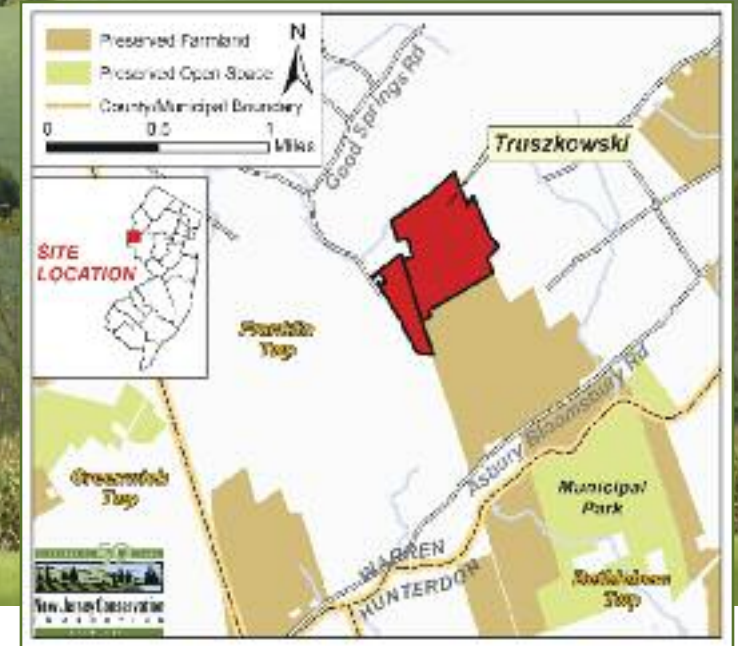
The property is a remote Pine Barrens wilderness crossed by sand roads and a tributary of the Oswego River. It is home to a significant population of timber rattlesnakes, one of the state's most endangered species, as well as Pine Barrens tree frogs.

Chris Jage, New Jersey Conservation Foundation's assistant director for south New Jersey, said the Oswego Gun Club decided to sell the property because its members did not plan to use it much longer and wanted to see it permanently preserved.





Photos by Ingrid Vandegaer



Preservation Helps Family Keep Warren County Farm

After his father died, third-generation farmer Leonard Truskowski didn't know if he could continue running the family's 150-acre dairy farm in the rolling hills of Warren County. His siblings weren't interested in the farm and he wasn't sure if he could afford to buy out them out.

But with the help of New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Truskowski was able to guarantee not only his own future as a farmer, but also that of his 23-year-old son, Scott.

Using federal, state and county funds, New Jersey Conservation Foundation purchased the development rights on 139 acres of the Truskowski farmland, ensuring that it remains in agricultural use forever. The payment allowed Truskowski to buy out his siblings and become the farm's sole owner.

"Now the farm's paid off and we've got a couple of dollars in the bank. Everybody's happy," said Truskowski.

Truskowski said he and his wife, Donna, are pleased that their son will be able to eventually take over the Franklin Township farm. "Scott works seven days a week here. He's a good kid," said Truskowski. "He's the main reason why we did this. We wanted to keep everything in the family and keep it going."

The Truskowskis own a herd of 70 Holstein cows, and also grow corn, soybeans, wheat

and hay. In addition to working their own farmland, they lease another 600 acres nearby.

Leonard Truskowski's father, Raymond, bought the property 32 years ago after growing up farming with his father in

Somerset County. It is part of a green belt of nearly 1,000 acres of preserved land; farms immediately to the north and south have been preserved. Hundreds of additional acres of preserved farmland lie within a few miles.



Cows graze on a hilltop with a view of the surrounding countryside.

'A Little Step Back in Time' Preserved Bedminster Farm Adds to Rural Green Belt

When all is quiet – which is most of the time – the northeastern corner of Bedminster Township, Somerset County, looks much like it did 50 years ago. Roads are unpaved, horses and cows graze in the fields, and houses are few and far between.

Fifty years from now the area shouldn't look very different, thanks to a long-term community effort to preserve hundreds of acres of farmland and forest that give it its rural character.

The latest property preserved is the 86-acre Murphy family farm on Spook Hollow Road, where horses, cows, chickens and hay are raised.

Bedminster Township purchased the development rights to the property, with the assistance of New Jersey Conservation Foundation, the Upper Raritan Watershed Association, Somerset County, the state of New Jersey and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Although the land remains in

private ownership, it is now permanently deed-restricted for agricultural use.

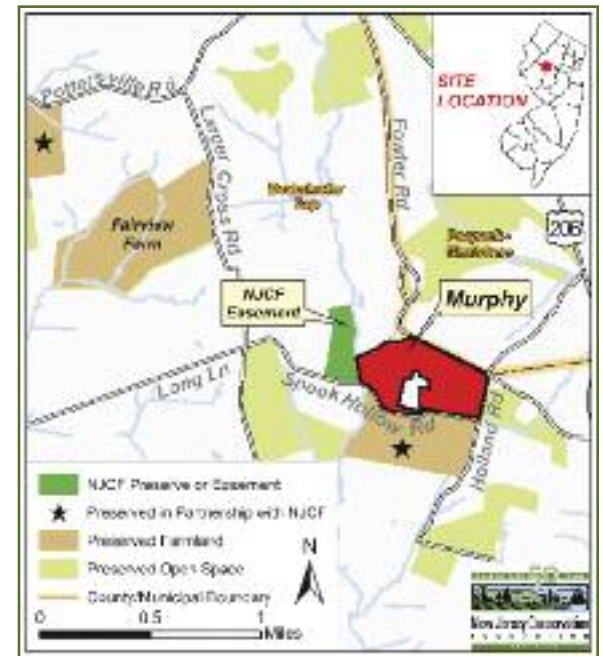
The preservation of the Murphy farm brings the protected green belt in the area to well over 500 acres.

"It's a little step back in time," said Bedminster Mayor Robert Holtaway of the neighborhood. "You get a very peaceful feeling when you're on these back roads. You get the impression that there is some country left, even in New Jersey."

"This is a significant contribution to environmental health, and to a community that treasures its rural landscapes," said Michele S. Byers, executive director of New Jersey Conservation Foundation. "It seems

like every day, familiar landscapes are disappearing. This is one that will remain forever."

The Murphy farm is bounded on one side by the Middle Brook, which feeds into the North Branch of the Raritan River, an important drinking water source. "Preserving the Murphy farm not only protects water quality in the Middle Brook; open land is critical to filtering rainwater and recharging the underground aquifer," noted Cindy Ehrenclou, executive director of the Upper Raritan Watershed Association, a partner in preserving the farm.



Preservation Tops Off 20 Years of Work on Salem County Farm



Photo by Pat Huizing

Horse pastures and a restored barn at the Cianfrani farm in Salem County.

Jack and Deborah Cianfrani spent more than 20 years fixing up the Salem County farm they bought in 1988 – rebuilding the farmhouse, renovating old barns, mending fences and reseeded fallow pastures.

The final step came recently, when they permanently preserved 60.5 acres of farmland surrounding their Alloway Township home.

Using state and federal funding, New Jersey Conservation Foundation purchased development rights to the Cianfrani farm, which straddles Quaker Neck Road. Although the Cianfranis continue to own

the property, it is now permanently deed-restricted for agricultural use.

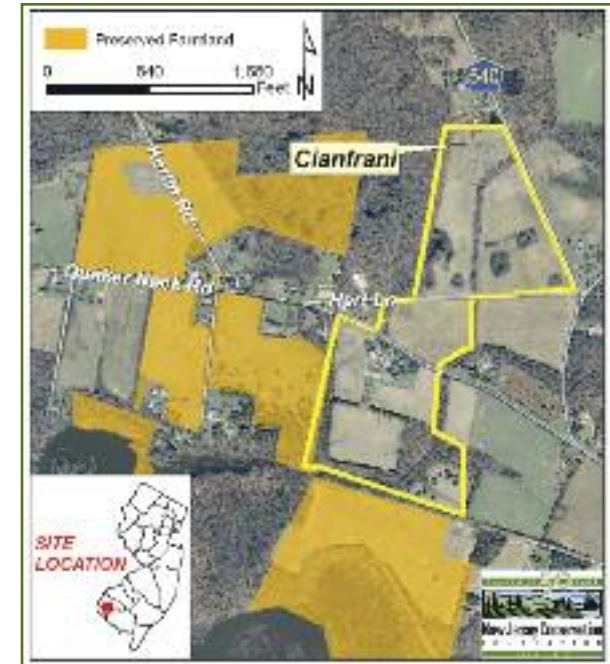
“We’d wanted to do this for a long time,” said Jack Cianfrani, an attorney. “Salem County has a lot of preserved land, and that makes it a very nice place to live.”

Cianfrani and his wife graze horses and grow hay crops on one section of the farm.

A neighboring farmer uses another for growing crops like corn, sorghum and soybeans, and occasionally brings his cows there.

In addition to the farmland, a wooded 10-acre section of the Cianfrani property adds to its high conservation value. It contains wetlands and a headwaters tributary of the Alloway Creek, and is near the Salem River Greenway and Burden Hill Forest.

The easement on the Cianfrani farm – which is bordered on two sides by preserved farmland - was purchased with funding



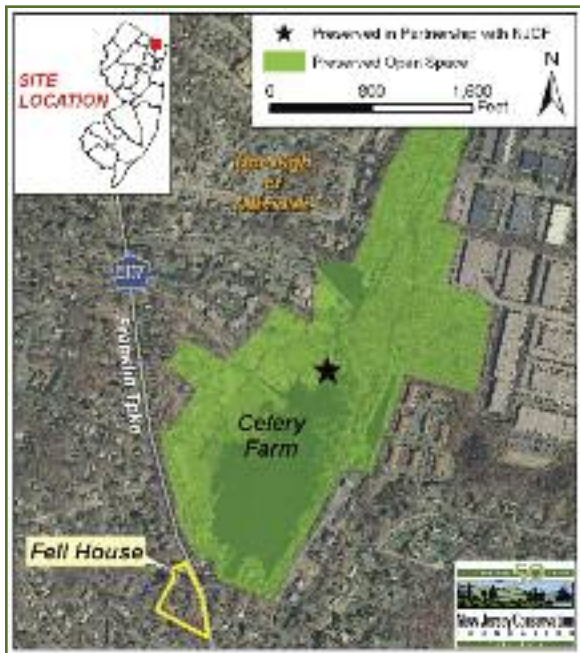
from the State Agriculture Development Committee and the federal Farm and Ranch Lands Preservation Program.

“Salem County already has more than 200 preserved farms, and we’re thrilled to be able to add the Cianfrani property,” said Janet Eisenhauer, project manager for the Delaware Bay Watershed. “We hope this will encourage nearby property owners to consider permanently preserving their farms and woods.”

Then and Now – NJCF Returns to Bergen County to Save Historic House and Land

Thirty years after preserving the 100-acre Celery Farm Natural Area in densely-populated Bergen County, New Jersey Conservation Foundation recently assisted a local citizens group in saving an historic building and important wetlands.

The 2.8-acre Fell House property in Allendale, once the home of Founding Father and Revolutionary War hero John Fell, was proposed for 11 townhouses when New Jersey Conservation Foundation was contacted by nearby residents opposed to the project.



Emile DeVito, our manager of science and stewardship, made environmental arguments for preservation and arranged for legal assistance. Ingrid Vandegaer, Highlands project manager, helped members of the Concerned Citizens of Allendale apply for county and state open space funds to purchase the property.

“We’re thrilled,” said Pat Finn, president of Concerned Citizens, after finally purchasing the 22-room mansion in early March. “It’s a wonderful place and we came so close to losing it.”

The original 18th Century portion of the Fell House was built in the 1750s. A second wing was added around 1832, and a third in 1912. In addition to the historic significance, the land surrounding the house contains exceptional wetlands that are home to threatened species like the wood turtle. The land is connected by its hydrology to the Celery Farm, which is across the street.



The home of Revolutionary War hero John Fell has been preserved by the Concerned Citizens of Allendale, with the help of New Jersey Conservation Foundation.

“We see it as kind of an extension of the Celery Farm,” said Finn, whose group would like to restore the house to its former grandeur. “Our idea is to have it become a meeting place – an educational, historical and cultural meeting place.”

The Fell House is across Franklin Turnpike from the Celery Farm, which New Jersey Conservation Foundation purchased in 1979 and subsequently transferred to the borough. Now a much loved and visited nature preserve, the Celery Farm is managed by the Fyke Nature Association.

The Ecology College:

By Emile D. DeVito, Ph.D.,
New Jersey Conservation Foundation
Manager of Science & Stewardship

Building a Modern Day Noah's Ark for Native Forest Species

The South Mountain Reservation was set aside in the 19th century to preserve forests and protect headwater streams and reservoirs along the First Watchung Mountain. The burgeoning Essex County cities and suburbs have benefitted from the close proximity of this tranquil and beautiful forest reserve for as long as anyone can remember. So why has Essex County embarked on a nearly one million dollar forest restoration project, in a forest that has been protected for over 100 years?

White-tailed deer were eliminated by colonial society before the Civil War, and didn't return to the South Mountain Reservation until after World War II. Deer didn't become a problem for the South Mountain forest until about 1980, when the population density overshot the ecological carrying capacity of the forest. By 2008, deer had eaten every last vestige of native forest vegetation other than the tall trees, even though the deer themselves were fine – kept fat and healthy by all the landscape plantings in residential areas surrounding the reservation.

Now, Essex County has embarked on an ambitious plan to reverse the trend of forest degradation and species loss. Led by Dan Bernier, who has nearly two decades of experience managing a safe and effective

yearly hunt to reduce and manage the deer population down the Watchung Ridge in Union County, Essex County wants to create an environment where a forest can thrive once again.

The Essex County Park System, partnering with the non-profit South Mountain Conservancy, has embarked on an \$830,000 native plant restoration project!

Essex County has set up one large 14-acre deer "enclosure," and 41 smaller enclosures totaling 11 acres – virtual Noah's Arks scattered throughout the 2,110-acre reservation, and has begun returning many of the native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers that have been lost.

One can already see seedling oaks, gums, and maples in the two-year-old large



Deer "enclosures" are a key part of an ambitious native plant restoration project launched by the Essex County Park System.

enclosure, where a native tree seedling hasn't survived for 20 years! Fifty thousand native forest plants have been planted within the fenced areas by expert horticulturists, and in a few years the fenced areas will be impenetrable warehouses of native plants and animals, and seed sources for the expansion of native plant populations.

The deer herd will have to be brought way down and held to a density where native species can survive outside the fenced enclosures! That will be hard work, unpopular to those who like to see deer every time they drive through the reservation. For the South Mountain Reservation to be a healthy forest once again, deer will need to be uncommon and wary of humans.

But the massive ecological benefits will outweigh the loss of the "safari park" atmosphere. The forest will re-grow a new generation of trees so that the forest can adjust to climate change; re-accumulate lost biological diversity of birds, butterflies, shrubs, and wildflowers; sequester carbon in new roots, shoots, and a deepening, healthy organic soil layer; and absorb, purify, and hold rainwater and snowmelt to lessen flash flooding in the valley.

And in 2025, when a visitor skillfully and stealthily spots a majestic white-tailed deer pruning a healthy cherry-leaf Viburnum shrub in a forest treefall gap, it will once again be a meaningful observation of the natural world, like it was for Native Americans in the primeval forest centuries ago.

Events – Join Our Year-long 50th Anniversary Celebration



Left, poets Lois Harrod and Juditha Dowd talk about Poetry in Nature at a February workshop. Right, organic farmer Mark Canright provides tips to gardeners at a workshop in March.

2010 Step Into Nature New Jersey Conservation Foundation Walks, Talks and Hikes

Unless otherwise specified, contact Carol Banhart at carol@njconservation.org or 908-234-1225 for information and reservations.

Saturday, May 15
8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

COOPER RIVER CANOE TRIP

Enjoy a tour of the Cooper River by canoe. See areas where we have been working with other groups to preserve open space in Camden since 1984. You'll be amazed at how wild an urban river can be!

Saturday, May 15
6 – 11 p.m.

ANNUAL BARN DANCE – “BARN 54”

See back cover for more information.

Saturday, May 15
6 – 11:30 p.m.

SPRING SKY TOUR

Join us for stargazing at the Franklin Parker Preserve, Chatsworth, Burlington County, under some of New Jersey's darkest skies. Contact Chris Jage at 609-567-2112 or chris@njconservation.org.

Saturday, May 22
9 a.m. – Noon

WORKING IN THE WOODS

Join us for a walk to weed out invasive plant species growing in wild areas at the Bamboo

Brook Outdoor Education Center, Chester Township, Morris County. Bring clippers, gloves and friends! A representative of the Morris County Park Commission will give a short presentation and supervise the work.

Saturday, May 22
Noon – 3 p.m.

COLD BROOK PRESERVE PICNIC

Explore the Cold Brook Preserve in Tewksbury Township, Hunterdon County, and enjoy a picnic lunch. This beautiful farmland was preserved in 1984 by New Jersey Conservation Foundation and the Hunterdon County Park Commission. The land is currently farmed, and its meandering public trails are home to songbirds, hawks, foxes, deer, coyotes, rabbits and more. Bring a picnic blanket, and we'll supply food, drinks and stories about this wonderful property.

Saturday, June 5
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY HIKE AT APSHAWA PRESERVE

Celebrate National Trails Day with a moderately strenuous hike over rugged terrain to a picturesque reservoir in the heart of the

New Jersey Highlands. Rocky outcrops, a tumbling brook and panoramic views await hikers. This land was preserved by Passaic County and New Jersey Conservation Foundation in 2002. Meet at the trailhead of the Apschawa Preserve, West Milford, Passaic County.

Saturday, June 26
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

A DAY ON THE FARM

Celebrate 50 years of farmland preservation with a day on the preserved Pettit Farm in South Harrison, Gloucester County. Enjoy live music, local foods and strolls through fields and woodlands. This 100-acre farm was preserved by New Jersey Conservation Foundation in 2008 and is located along Oldmans Creek. Bring a picnic blanket, and we'll supply food and music.

Saturday, July 17
Noon – 4 p.m.

LAKES BAY BBQ

Interested in kite sailing or wind surfing? Join us for a barbecue at the Lakes Bay Preserve, a 24-acre point of land jutting into Lakes Bay, located near Atlantic City in Pleasantville, Atlantic County. A favorite spot for windsurfers and kayakers, the preserve, acquired by New Jersey Conservation

Foundation in 1989, is co-managed with the Lakes Bay Recreation Association (LBRA). Kite sailing demonstrations... wind permitting.

Saturday, July 31
9 a.m. – Noon

BUTTERFLY WALK

Search for colorful butterflies in summer meadows along Patriot's Path at Bamboo Brook Outdoor Education Center in Chester Township. Dr. Emile DeVito, staff biologist at New Jersey Conservation Foundation, will teach children and adults how to identify butterflies and entertain them with fun facts about these beautiful creatures. He will also offer tips on creating gardens at home to attract butterflies.

Saturday, September 18,
9 a.m. – Noon

KIDS DAY

Bring the kids out for a fun and educational day at the Bamboo Brook Education Center in Chester Township. The Mercer County Wildlife Center will present a wilderness education program, including live animals. A nature scavenger hunt will be held in the wild areas of the park. Other activities include pumpkin painting and crafts. Members \$5 per child; Non-members \$10 per child. Maximum charge of \$15 per family.

Welcome Five New Trustees

New Jersey Conservation Foundation kicked off its 50th anniversary year by welcoming five new members, including the grandson of a founding trustee, to its Board of Trustees.

Kenneth H. Klipstein Jr. of Tewksbury Township – grandson of Kenneth H. Klipstein, who served as a trustee and president during the 1960s – was elected to the board. Also joining the board were **Jack Cimprich** of Upper Pittsgrove Township, **Catherine “Cary” Bacon Winslow** of Far Hills, **S. Bradley Mell** of Bedminster and returning trustee **Lawrence S. Fox** of Harding Township.

“These are five very accomplished individuals who will add great depth of experience to New Jersey Conservation Foundation,” said Board President L. Keith Reed.

Klipstein serves as Director of Watershed Protection Programs for the New Jersey Water Supply Authority, and previously was employed for more than 20 years by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. He lives in Tewksbury with his wife, Lee, and has served on many municipal boards.

Cimprich has served on the Upper Pittsgrove Township (Salem County) Committee for 15 years and as mayor for 14 years. A retired Rowan University computer science professor, he and his wife own and operate a 317-acre farm, most of which has been permanently preserved. He has

been a member and vice-chairman of the Salem County Agricultural Development Board.

Fox, a returning board member, previously served for nine years. He is president of Fox Valve Development Corp. of Dover, a high technology engineering and manufacturing firm. He currently serves as vice-president of the Student 2 Science Foundation, is a 2004 graduate of Leadership New Jersey, and recently completed a term on the Small Business Council of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Mell is president and chief executive officer of W.H. Mell Associates Inc. of Summit, and is founder of Gulfstream Capital Management LLC. A graduate of Boston University, he has served on the Board

of Trustees of Far Hills Country Day School. A pilot, he started Aero Care Flight Inc., a nonprofit that supports Angel Flight’s mission of providing free air transportation to medical treatment centers for people in need, and transporting rescue personnel to disaster areas. He and his wife, Kim, have three children.

Winslow, who has spent her career in business and finance, served as president, chief executive officer and treasurer of Quantitative Technologies Inc. of Whitehouse before the company was sold in 2007. She and her husband, Paul, founded the Student 2 Science Foundation. She received a bachelor’s degree in chemistry and math from the University of Vermont, and an MBA in marketing and finance from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.



Our new trustees are, from left, Kenneth H. Klipstein Jr., Jack Cimprich, Lawrence S. Fox, S. Bradley Mell and Catherine “Cary” Bacon Winslow.

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Land Stewards Ray Steingall and Louis Cantafio check the scenery at the Franklin Parker Preserve in the Pine Barrens through a new telescope mounted on an observation platform. Several old pump houses from the property's earlier days as a cranberry farm are getting viewing platforms on top.

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BARN 54

SATURDAY, MAY 15

6 - 11 PM

BROOK HOLLOW FARM, SERGEANTSVILLE, NJ

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DRESS THEMATICALLY!

DISCO NEVER DIED.
IT WAS JUST RESTING
UP FOR THIS.

