





This newly-preserved property near Flemington, the former Huey fish farm, served as a beautiful backdrop for a picnic on a warm October day.

Area residents Jody Scarlata and daughter Charlotte relax with Claudia Grey and sons Cole and Connor.

PLEASE SEE STORY ON PAGE 8.



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New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) is a private, non-profit organization. We rely on private philanthropic support and grants from a variety of public and private sector organizations. NJCF's mission is to preserve New Jersey's land and natural resources for the benefit of all. As a leading innovator and catalyst for saving land, NJCF protects strategic lands through acquisition and stewardship; promotes strong land use policies; and forges partnerships to achieve conservation goals. Since 1960, NJCF has worked to protect the state's farmland, forests, urban parks, wetlands, water quality and special places.

For information about becoming a member or to request a change of address, please contact 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.

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From Our Executive Director

After years of debate, there's not much doubt that our planet is heating up. An international panel of experts has determined that it is "very likely" that human-generated emissions of heat-trapping gases are the cause of increased globally-averaged temperatures.

Global warming is not a pleasant topic. The horrifying effects we've all heard about include higher temperature and humidity, melting polar ice caps, rising sea levels, the devastation of coastal areas, increased extreme weather patterns, and the loss of habitat for many plant and animal species. Many folks feel helpless at the thought of this slow-motion ecological disaster. After all, what can one person, one town, one group, one state or even one nation do to change the course of a global event?

Both good news and bad news about climate change came out of the Land Trust Alliance's annual meeting in Denver this fall. More than 2,100 land conservationists from across the nation came together to discuss land preservation.

First, the good news: groups like New Jersey Conservation Foundation, by their very nature, are poised to help in enormous ways. Simply put, the more land that remains preserved and forested, the better off our planet will be. Every time we permanently protect a chunk of forest, a stream corridor or a wetland, we help mitigate the impacts of global climate change. A single tree absorbs one ton of carbon dioxide from the air over its lifetime!

The bad news out of Denver is that the actions we take today, such as reducing emissions and planting new forests, won't have any mitigating effect for 40 to 50 years. The warming rate we're seeing is sort of like an ocean liner steaming across the sea – stops and turns cannot be made quickly. However, we can't allow that to discourage us.

Remember that we've faced huge challenges before and have proven that improvement is possible. Rachel Carson, who published "Silent Spring" in 1962, helped bring about



the ban on the pesticide DDT and ultimately institutions like the Environmental Protection Agency. Early conservationists Gifford Pinchot and Aldo Leopold are credited, respectively, with saving hundreds of thousands of acres of American forest and shining light on soil erosion and protection at the turn of the 20th century.

Here in New Jersey, a small but dedicated group of conservationists successfully fought off a major airport in the middle of the Great Swamp in the early 1960s. The property eventually became a national wildlife refuge and the group of activists, of course, eventually became the New Jersey Conservation Foundation.

NJCF, its members and partners can take on the challenge of global climate change by doing what we do best: permanently preserving land, reforesting and enhancing ecological functions, and advocating for sound environmental policy in Trenton and in Washington, D.C. We can also encourage our members, supporters and staff to take individual actions to reduce their own "carbon footprints." We must all conserve energy, looking two to three generations ahead and planning for a time that many of us will never see.

Michele S. Byers

Executive Director

NJCF Trustees Welcome New President

Keith Reed has always been an outdoorsman – someone who appreciates

a pristine trout stream, an open meadow, a verdant forest or a well-tended farm.

"I've been interested in outdoor activities forever," said Reed, a resident of Bedminster, Somerset County, who is retired after a career in the sporting goods business.

Reed's love of the outdoors makes him a natural as the new president of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) board of trustees. He was elected to the top position in April, taking the reins from longtime president Gordon "Sandy" Millspaugh Jr. of Bernardsville.

Reed is already busy working to raise NJCF's public profile in all parts of the Garden State as the organization approaches its 50th anniversary in 2010. He admits it's a challenge in a state as geographically, politically and socio-economically diverse as New Jersey.

"Somebody living in Camden doesn't necessarily care what's going on in the Highlands," he said, "and I don't know that people in the northeast care what's going on along the Delaware Bay. But, as our mission statement says, we're preserving land for the benefit of all."

Among Reed's objectives as president are expanding NJCF's membership base, attracting more corporate support and continuing mutually beneficial partnerships with other organizations. "If they need help we can certainly offer assistance, and vice versa," he commented.

Reed joined the NJCF board two and a half years ago. "I like the philosophy of this organization," said Reed. "I was really interested in NJCF specifically because of its work in New Jersey. This organization has just done such great work over the years; I want to perpetuate the legacy.



"It's a fun organization to be involved with," he added. "I'm just amazed at the dedication and depth of knowledge of the people who work here."

A native of Lake Forest, Ill., a suburb north of Chicago, Reed moved to the East Coast after college to work for the now-defunct Herman's World of Sporting Goods. He continued in the field, eventually owning a small New Jersey-based sporting goods business known as PAW Distributors, a wholesaler of items like baseball caps and hockey jerseys. He sold the business and retired three years ago, allowing him more time to spend on hobbies and volunteer work.

Serving as a trustee on a non-profit is nothing new for Reed. In the 1980s he sat on the board of the Berkshire School in Massachusetts and later became a trustee at Far Hills Country Day School (FHCDS). He also sits on the board of the Friends of the Jacobus Vanderveer House in Bedminster, which is working to convert a significant Revolutionary War era home into a local history museum.

Reed and his wife, Lisa, are the parents of two children, Will, 21, and Molly, 18.



- A Nurturing Mother Nature:
 Former cranberry bogs
 at the Franklin Parker
 Preserve in the Pine
 Barrens are being restored
 to wetland habitats.
- Down the homestretch:
 Now is the final chance to comment on a draft master plan for the Highlands region, the source of drinking water for more than 5 million residents.
- Landing a good one:

 NJCF's purchase of a
 51-acre fish farm in
 Hunterdon County
 enhances our Wickecheoke
 Creek Preserve.
- Jersey Shore preservation:
 A unique partnership
 is taking care of a
 favorite windsurfing
 and kiteboarding spot
 outside Atlantic City.
- Away from their desks:
 Volunteers from two
 corporations get
 their hands dirty
 while helping NJCF
 and the environment.

Wetlands Restoration Nurtures Nature in Pine Barrens

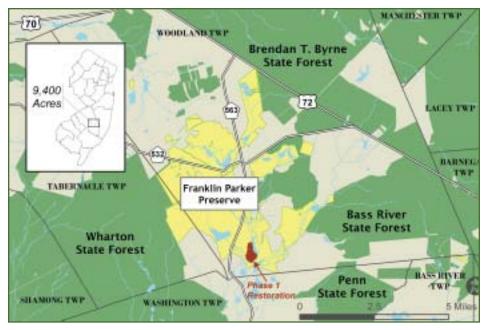
The sight and sound of heavy machinery tearing up the earth at one of New Jersey's most serene places was incongruous and jarring. But the noisy excavation that took place in September at the Franklin Parker Preserve in Chatsworth was all for a greater cause: restoring wetlands that had been converted many decades earlier to a commercial cranberry farm.

In what is believed to be the largest freshwater wetlands restoration project in the northeastern United States, New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) is removing man-made dikes and irrigation canals from about 1,100 acres of the 14-square-mile nature preserve in Burlington County, in the heart of New Jersey's Pine Barrens.

The first phase of the project, returning nearly 100 acres of cranberry bog in the southern end of the preserve to original wetlands conditions, was completed in November at a cost of over \$100,000. "Fall was chosen because it is dry, and because it wouldn't interfere with the breeding season of wildlife at the preserve," explained Tim Morris, director of stewardship for NJCF. The work will allow nature to once again take its course along the West Branch of the Wading River.

In addition to breaching dikes that had allowed bogs to be flooded for fall cranberry harvests, the squadron of earth-movers ripped through the fields. On land that had been densely compacted and tabletop-flat, the contractor was directed to create mounds and depressions to encourage a variety of plant growth. "We don't want it all to turn into red maple swamp, we want diversity," explained Morris.

Betsy Clarke, who oversaw the project for the federal Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), which is funding the restoration, said





An aerial view of the wetlands restoration at the Franklin Parker Preserve shows sand dikes breached to allow free water flow and former cranberry bogs roughed up to create hummocks and pools for a diversity of wildlife.

she was pleased with the resulting pools and hummocks of varying sizes. "Before, the land was flat like a parking lot," she noted.

Soon, Clarke predicted, vegetation suited to each hummock's elevation and hydrology will begin to grow, providing habitat for a diversity of animal species. "We'll have turtles on the hummocks, snakes on the hummocks," she said. The restored pools and streams, meanwhile, will attract a variety of wading birds.

The next step is to re-forest the site with Atlantic White Cedar trees, once abundant in the Pinelands but harvested extensively by the colonial-era shipbuilding industry because of natural resistance to rot. Louis Cantafio, senior land steward for NJCF, said Atlantic White Cedar trees will be planted on the former cranberry bogs this coming spring. "We want to create a cedar savannah habitat," he said.

The second phase of the project, targeted for the autumn of 2008 or 2009, will return another 800 acres of cranberry bogs and 200 acres of blueberry fields to wetlands. Funding for the project will again come from the NRCS.

The net effect of the wetlands restoration will be better habitat for the indigenous plants and wildlife of the Pine Barrens, a UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) biosphere reserve.

Among the rare, threatened and endangered species that will benefit are the Pine Barrens tree frog, timber rattlesnake, bald eagle, barred owl, pied-billed grebe, American bittern, marsh hawk and Pine Barrens gentian.

"We're creating a kind of disturbance that promotes Pine Barrens rare flora and fauna," explained Dr. Emile DeVito, NJCF's biologist. "We think that in a few decades, it's going to be chock full of endangered species habitat."

The wetlands restoration will also protect the underlying Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer that provides pure drinking water to much of southern New Jersey, and reduce water runoff that could cause flash-flooding of the Wading River during storms.

Visitors to the Franklin Parker Preserve needn't worry about bogs and berry fields being eradicated: There are enough cranberry vines and blueberry bushes growing wild on the preserve to satisfy recreational berry-pickers.

"There will always be cranberries and blueberries growing here," said Clarke, pointing out some bright-red berries peeking through the vegetation during a late September inspection of the site. "Cranberries and blueberries are native plants to the Pine Barrens."



Enterprises cranberry farm in late 2003, New Jersey's largest private land conservation acquisition at the time. The following year, NRCS paid \$4.4 million for an easement to take the property out of agricultural use and restore it to its natural state.

The property is significant for its strategic location, providing a link between Brendan Byrne State Forest to the north, Wharton State Forest to the south, and Bass River State Forest and Penn State Forest to the east. Franklin Parker Preserve is open to the public for passive recreational activities such as hiking, bicycling, kayaking and fishing.

The beautiful blue Pine Barrens gentian is one of many rare and endangered species thriving at the Franklin Parker Preserve.

For more information about the wetlands restoration at the Franklin Parker Preserve, please contact Tim Morris, NJCF Director of Stewardship, at Tim@njconservation.org or 1-888-LAND-SAVE (1-888-526-3728).

NJCF Awarded \$1.6 Million to Preserve Land in Pine Barrens

ew Jersey Conservation Foundation has been chosen to receive nearly \$1.6 million in state and federal grants to preserve land at several locations in the Pine Barrens.

The New Jersey Pinelands Commission agreed in September to give NJCF and its conservation partners more than \$1.3 million to protect land in Ocean and Atlantic counties.

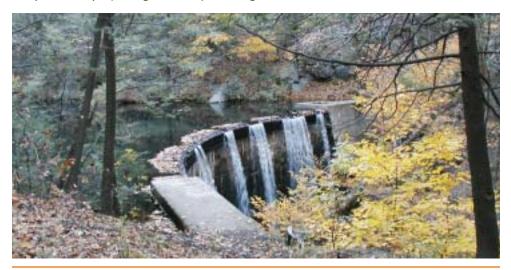
- NJCF was awarded more than \$1 million to preserve critical land in the Forked River Mountain area, including the 622-acre Interboro property in Lacey Township, Ocean County. Once preserved, the property will be added to NJCF's 3,200-acre Forked River Mountain Preserve. Flowing through the preserve are the headwater streams of the Forked River
- and the Oyster Creek. Stately stands of Atlantic white cedar, sour gum and red maple grow along the streams and provide habitat for beaver, gray fox and white-tailed deer. Many threatened and endangered species are also found there, including plants like Pine Barrens reedgrass, bog asphodel and curly grass fern; and animals like the pine snake, timber rattlesnake and elusive Pine Barrens treefrog.
- NJCF was also chosen to receive a \$300,000 grant to help preserve the historic 593-acre Amatol property in the Elwood Corridor of Mullica Township,

Atlantic County. The property, now entirely forested, was once site of the factory town of Amatol, which was built in 1918 during World War I but was abandoned after the Armistice and completely dismantled by 1921.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Defense has awarded a \$253,000 grant to the New Jersey Air National Guard, in partnership with NJCF, to preserve several properties buffering the guard's Warren Grove Gunnery Range in Burlington County. The sites, totaling more than 330 acres, are located in Bass River Township. The proposed green buffer around the range will improve public safety through better and more cohesive land management.

Highlands Regional Master Plan Heads for Homestretch

By Wilma Frey, NJCF Highlands Project Manager



Autumn colors at the Apshawa Reservoir Dam, Passaic County

Master plan for the Highlands region of New Jersey's seven northwestern counties is finally heading down the homestretch, three years after the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act of 2004 was signed into law. Several important dates are coming up, and members and supporters of NJCF and the NJ Highlands Coalition can help by submitting comments endorsing this historic effort to save the water supply for more than 5 million New Jerseyans.

Among the important issues addressed in the revised draft Regional Master Plan (RMP) are protecting large areas of contiguous forestland; ensuring current and future water availability for human and ecological use; restricting inappropriate development from

steep slopes; safeguarding critical wildlife habitat and vernal pools; protecting and enhancing agriculture, including important farmland soils; and protecting the region's historic, cultural, archaeological and scenic resources. Other major issues include the provision of safe and reasonable transportation to residents and visitors; redevelopment and "smart growth;" affordable housing; "landowner fairness;" the creation of a transferable development rights (TDR) program; and sustainable economic development, including the expansion of tourism and recreation, innovative technology and small entreprenurial businesses.

- Forest protection: Highlands forests are vitally important to every aspect of the Highlands Region. Forests protect drinking water supplies, providing the most effective land cover for recharging ground water aquifers, as well as filtering the surface water that fills Highlands reservoirs. Forests constitute a majority of the critical habitat in the Highlands and are essential to maintain New Jersey's biodiversity. Forests provide essential ecosystem functions including carbon segustration to combat global warming, air purification, climate moderation and soil creation. Forests prevent erosion and mitigate flooding. NJCF supports the strong RMP policies and standards that protect Highlands forests.
- Water availability: Council studies have determined that many Highlands watersheds are already "in deficit," withdrawing more water than is recharged.

Vote Is Good News for Open Space

n a show of support for open space, farmland and historic preservation, New Jersey voters approved Ballot Question #3 on Election Day, Nov. 6. Approval of Question #3 authorizes the state to issue \$200 million in bonds to keep the New Jersey's popular preservation programs running for another year, while legislators and Gov. Corzine debate a more permanent funding source for the Garden State Preservation Trust (GSPT).

The GSPT is the financing entity for the state's preservation programs. With preservation funds rapidly dwindling, NJCF co-led the "Keep it Green" campaign – a broad coalition formed to support the ballot measure and a more stable source of preservation funding – to educate voters about the pressing need to secure this one year of critical stopgap funding. With this victory behind us, the Keep it Green Campaign has shifted its focus to renewing the stable source of funding which has allowed NJ's preservation efforts to flourish since the GSPT was established in 1998.

In such cases, eventually groundwater tables drop, groundwater aquifers become depleted, the wells on which Highlands residents depend are no longer dependable, stream flows decline and provide less water to replenish reservoirs. NJCF is working to ensure that the RMP does not allow further unsustainable development in the Highlands.

- Conservation (agricultural) Zone policies: The goals of the Highlands Act and the draft RMP are to protect and enhance agriculture. Non-agricultural development in the Agriculture Resource Area is incompatible with these goals. The RMP's Conservation Zone comprises less than 18 percent of the Highlands region, but contains irreplaceable important farmland soils, provides local food production close to population centers, thus reducing transportation and energy use, and offers great agri-tourism and recreational opportunities. Further reduction and fragmentation of Highlands farmland by continued residential development should not be permitted by the RMP.
- Scenic and historic resources protection: Largely due to NJCF's advocacy, scenic protection has received increased attention by the Council, including a proposed process for nomination of scenic resources, and the development of minimum standards of protection in the RMP.
- Vernal pools: The RMP assigns a habitat protection buffer of 1,000 feet around these vulnerable seasonal wetlands that are irreplaceable breeding habitat for as salamanders and frogs. Adjustments to this buffer requirement are currently the subject of discussion.

NJCF will review the draft RMP after its release on Nov. 19 and prepare an information sheet to help interested citizens understand its implications and submit comments to the Council. You can help NJCF and the NJ Highlands Coalition support a strong RMP by attending the Dec. 13 public hearing or commenting on the Highlands Council website at www.highlands.state.nj.us. Written comments can also be mailed to the Council at 100 North Road, Chester, NJ 07930.

For more information, please contact NJCF Highlands Project Manager Wilma Frey at wilma@njconservation.org or by calling 1-888-LAND-SAVE (1-888-526-3728).

Candace Ashmun Discusses Highlands Plan

Candace Ashmun, a consultant to NJCF, has been a New Jersey Pinelands commissioner since 1979. She was also a member of the State Planning Commission and the first executive director of the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC). We asked her to share insights on the Highlands planning process.

- Q: How does the writing of the Highlands Regional Master Plan compare with the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan process you went through many years ago?
- A: The Highlands Council has more sophisticated data gathering tools, and new technologies such as GIS that the Pinelands Commission didn't have. But the process is similar: the Council and staff still have to do all the hard work developing policies and programs. The Pinelands Commissioners worked two full days every week for at least six months so the Plan was completed in 18 months.
- Q: What advice do you have for municipalities in the Highlands?
- A: Get involved in the process and be informed. We need some towns to step up and put in the work needed to opt in; they will be good models for those who follow. Towns who opt into the Highlands Regional Master Plan will enjoy the benefit of strong legal protection against challenges to the Act.
- Q: What are some of the other benefits that the Highlands Act has to offer?

A: Landowners can use the January 2004 appraisal value when they preserve their land. Also, the Transfer of Development Rights program that is currently being developed will provide landowners with a wider real estate market.

Q: Any other advice for Highlands landowners?

A: Over time, the value of Pinelands Development Credits has increased dramatically. The economic monitoring that has been done in the Pinelands continues to show that property taxes remain lower than outside the area, and land values haven't decreased. In the beginning of a regional plan, there are apparent changes in land uses and land values that may seem onerous, but land values in the Highlands will certainly hold their 2004 value and over time they will increase. People like to live on or near protected land! Patience is needed; these plans are not built in stone, and, as new data or inequities appear and monitoring is done, appropriate changes will be made to the Plan.

Q: Why do you support regional planning?

A: I'm an advocate for regional planning. I think it works. It's not an easy job to get it right, but the benefits outweigh the pain. Regional planning provides stability and predictability for property owners and all concerned. States like New Jersey that have locally-based land use controls, often suffer with the result of pitting one town against the other. Regional planning has turned out to be the best solution.

Former Hunterdon County Fish Farm Preserved

ne of Hunterdon County's more unusual farms, a 51-acre parcel in Franklin Township on which carp were raised for sale to Asian markets, has been preserved as open space by the New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) and its funding partners.

The acquisition was celebrated Tuesday, Oct. 16, at a reception attended by more than 50 neighbors, NJCF members, and state, county and local officials. Among the speakers were State Sen. Leonard Lance, Assemblywoman Marcia Karrow, Deputy Commissioner Jay Watson of the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Hunterdon County Freeholder Ron Sworen and Franklin Township Open Space Committee Chairman John DeMarrais.

NJCF bought the property from retired fish farmer Thomas Huey, adding it to thousands of preserved acres in the scenic Wickecheoke Creek Preserve. Located off Joe Ent Road, the property has eight spring-fed ponds and two finger tributaries of the Wickecheoke.

"This is a wonderful farm to preserve, because it's at the headwaters of the Wickecheoke Creek," explained Marie Newell, NJCF Project Manager. "It also abuts two preserved parcels and is across the road from seven more, for a total of over 600 acres."

Sworen praised the cooperative effort that made the purchase possible, adding that he hopes Hunterdon will preserve more in the coming months. "We have the opportunity, the land is never going to be any cheaper, so the time to do it is now."

NJCF plans to manage the property for passive recreation, including hiking, bird-watching, fishing, picnicking and nature study. A network of marked trails has already been blazed through the property's fields and woods.

For 35 years, the land was used for aquaculture by Huey, the first farmer in America to raise white amur, also known as grass carp. Several newspapers, including the New York Times, published stories on Huey's farm in the early 1970s, when he first began importing carp fingerlings from his native China to raise in the hills of Hunterdon.

After successfully harvesting up to 20,000 fish per year to sell to wholesalers in New York's Chinatown, Huey decided to sell his farm because he wanted to retire and none of his four adult children were interested in carrying on the family business.

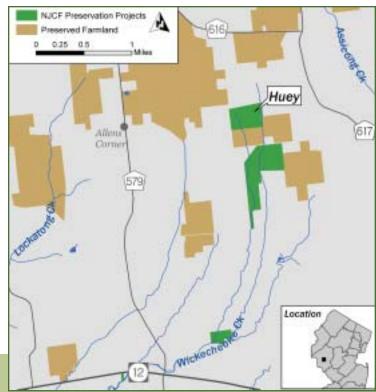
"It's a beautiful piece of property," said Huey, 72, a resident of Montgomery Township, just outside Princeton. "I hate to sell it, but my kids don't want to do that kind of work."

Huey said he was pleased when NJCF representatives approached him about preserving the land as open space. NJCF staff was able to arrange for a funding partnership between NJCF, Franklin Township and Hunterdon County.

Under that arrangement, NJCF contributed \$245,188 it had obtained through a state Green Acres grant, Hunterdon County added



Thomas and Gloria Huey hoist a white amur, or grass carp, out of one of the ponds on the Hunterdon County property they recently sold to NJCF.



Among those who gathered on Oct. 16 to celebrate the preservation of the former Huey farm were, from left, Eve Huey Rosario, Thomas Huey, State Senator Leonard Lance, NJCF Executive Director Michele Byers, Assemblywoman Marcia Karrow, Jay Watson, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, Hunterdon County Freeholder Ron Sworen and Gloria Huey.

\$163,603 from its open space trust fund, and Franklin Township provided \$245,000 from its own open space trust fund, plus \$163,459 from a Green Acres grant.

Eve Huey Rosario, daughter of Thomas and Gloria Huey, said she has wonderful memories of spending childhood summers making weekly trips to net fish on the property. "Sometimes it was hard, mostly it was fun, and it was what we did – as a family," she recalled.

Selling the property "was not an easy decision," Roasrio added, "but it's a decision that my parents peacefully accept, knowing that this land will be preserved and shared with others in perpetuity. We hope it will be appreciated and enjoyed by all."

Watson said he was impressed by the large amount of open space and farmland that had been preserved in the Wickecheoke Creek corridor near the former Huey farm. "This has just been a remarkable project and this

greenway has been very fruitful," he said.
"Open space improves our lives and we
know New Jersey residents want more of it."

DeMarrais, an avid birder for over 50 years, said he welcomes the new preserve as a place to observe swimming and wading birds. He said he drove past the property many times over the years but never pulled in the driveway for a closer look. "I just did that for the first time – it was wonderful," he said. Among the avian species found on the property, he added, are great blue heron, double crested cormorant, pintail duck, green wing teal and hooded merganser.



Huey said he and his wife, Gloria, started their aquaculture business by raising carp in a pond behind their home. When they discovered that Chinese carp could live in New Jersey's climate, they bought the Franklin Township property and set to work digging the ponds. The fish thrived, as did the Hueys' business.

The Huey farm addition enlarges the Wickecheoke Creek Preserve. The Wickecheoke starts on the Croton Plateau and flows through Franklin, Raritan, Kingwood and Delaware Townships before joining the Delaware River at the Prallsville Mill in Stockton. For more than 20 years, NJCF has been working to preserve the Wickecheoke Creek and its watershed.

Other Land Preservation Success Stories

From the Arthur Kill in the northeast to the Delaware Bay in the southwest, New Jersey Conservation Foundation has also helped preserve three other significant properties totaling 383 acres during the past several months:

In July, NJCF successfully helped to protect a 22-acre property in Edison Township, Middlesex County, as a permanent nature preserve at the headwaters of Robinson's Branch of the Rahway River. NJCF provided a \$240,000 matching grant to preserve lands located north of Inman Avenue that are part of the larger Ashbrook Swamp straddling the Middlesex-Union County line. The importance of the Edison site first came to light in 1992, when NJCF published "Greenways to the Arthur Kill," which listed more than 500 plant and animal species on the site.

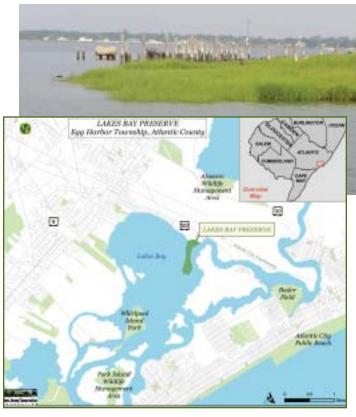
The 135-acre Ostrum family farm, located in Pilesgrove Township, Salem County, was preserved this past summer with NJCF's assistance and a partnership of federal, state, county and municipal farmland preservation funds. To permanently protect the Ostrum farm through a \$2.6 million easement purchase, NJCF provided a 20 percent grant it had obtained through the Federal Farm and Ranchland Program. The Ostrum farm was the second Pilesgrove farm preserved by NJCF this year; in March the Foundation completed the preservation of the 86-acre Caltabiano farm.

NJCF and its partners are currently working to preserve three additional farms in Pilesgrove, totaling nearly 350 acres.

In August, NJCF partnered with the Rancocas Conservancy to preserve 226 acres in the Pine Barrens of Tabernacle Township, Burlington County. The property contains the headwaters of Friendship Creek, a tributary of the South Branch of the Rancocas Creek. The newly-named Friendship Creek Preserve is open to the public, and is jointly owned by NJCF and the Rancocas Conservancy. The Conservancy paid \$338,000 for the property, using a state Green Acres grant, proceeds from a Natural Resource Damage settlement provided by Conservation Resources Inc. fund and private contributions.

Lakes Bay Now Managed as Windsurfing Haven

A 24-acre point of land jutting into Lakes Bay near Atlantic City is now a haven for windsurfing and other non-motorized water sports, due to a partnership between the New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) and a newly-formed recreational group that has pledged to maintain the land as a clean and safe preserve.



NJCF owns the property in Egg Harbor Township, and has agreed to allow the new Lakes Bay Recreation Association to manage it. The property once was the site of the Ventnor Boatworks – a builder of PT (patrol torpedo) boats during World War II.

"This is fantastic," said Stanley "Jake" Glassey, deputy mayor of Egg Harbor Township, who envisions walking trails as well as a small windsurfing and kayaking beach. "It's a great place to enjoy nature without motors."

Tim Morris, Director of Stewardship for NJCF, noted that Windsurfing magazine recently named Lakes Bay as one of the 10 best windsurfing spots in the United States because of its strong, steady winds. On a sunny summer day, Morris said, the bay is filled with windsurfers, kiteboarders and kayakers.

Laurie Walters, one of the key organizers of the LBRA, said her group is excited about becoming caretakers of the land. "I think it's totally a win-win situation for

everyone," commented Walters, a high school environmental science teacher who also plans to bring student groups to the preserve for research and periodic cleanups.

Glassey agrees. "We're all sailors and we're all environmentalists, so this goes hand-in-hand," he said. The deputy mayor added that he is grateful to NJCF for allowing the property to be turned into a passive recreation preserve. "We're going to make this something to be proud of," he pledged.

Lakes Bay Recreation Association, recently incorporated as a non-profit organization is working with NJCF on an agreement to protect "Kite Point." According to the

group's mission statement, the LBRA is "a community of people who enjoy non-motorized water sports. Our goal is to advocate continued safe, clean access to Lakes Bay and local waters, encouraging a deeper community appreciation for these natural resources."

The uplands of the property will provide non-motorized water sport enthusiasts a place to drop off their boards, boats and other equipment, and to launch their crafts into the bay. The marshy lower portion of the property, home to species such as osprey, great blue heron, brown pelican, raccoon, fox, muskrat, sandpiper and fiddler crabs, will be preserved as a natural area.

The property is located just south of the Route 40 causeway that connects Egg Harbor Township with Atlantic City. NJCF acquired it at an Atlantic County sheriff's sale in 1998 after the failure of a development project. NJCF made no changes to the site until approached earlier this year by Egg Harbor officials and a group of windsurfing enthusiasts, now formed as the LBRA, who wanted to prevent littering and inappropriate uses of the land.

Members of the new LBRA removed 5.1 tons of litter from the site during Egg Harbor Township's 10th annual Community Pride Day in June. NJCF installed a gate at the entrance to the property to ensure proper use of the site. In addition, a security camera has been mounted on an office building on a neighboring tract to allow 24-hour monitoring by officers at Egg Harbor Township police headquarters. The Lakes Bay Preserve site is open to the public from dawn to dusk.

For more information about the Lakes Bay Preserve, contact NJCF Director of Stewardship Tim Morris at Tim@njconservation.org or call 1-888-LAND-SAVE (1-888-526-3728). To learn more about joining the Lakes Bay Recreation Association, visit the group's website at www.lakesbayrec.org.

THE ECOLOGY COLLEGE:

"Don't robins fly south for the winter?"



American robin eating fruits of hybrid European holly. Robins disperse seeds and spread this invasive ornamental, especially in the Pacific Northwest.

any New Jerseyans are puzzled, even worried, when they look out their windows on a chilly winter day and see robins on the lawn. Aren't these red-breasted birds supposed to fly south for the winter? Aren't they supposed to be harbingers of spring, returning only when warm weather arrives?

The answer is that the American robin doesn't really migrate as far as people may think, as long as there's a plentiful food supply.

New Jersey's coastal forests and freshwater swamp forests produce a tremendous crop of late fall ripening fruit, especially from members of the holly family. Early successional forests on dunes and old fields, as well as floodplain forests along major rivers, produce huge quantities of wax-covered fruits (poison ivy and bayberry) or cones (junipers), that are dry and rot resistant.

What's so important about these forest fruits that are still "hanging around"

well into winter? They are the mainstay of nomadic flocks of American robins, flickers and cedar waxwings, as well as mockingbirds, chickadees, titmice, and all the small woodpeckers.

Most of our winter resident birds are finches, like white-throated sparrows, cardinals, goldfinches, and dark eyed juncos. Whether they live in the same neighborhood year round, or whether they arrive from the north woods to spend October to May, they depend mostly on dry seeds, not fruit.

But, the winter fruit-eaters (frugivores) have evolved in symmetry with native trees, shrubs, and vines that have persistent,

rot-resistant winter fruit or waxy cones. Winter fruit-eaters tend to form flocks in the autumn, because clusters of fruit are often huge but far apart. Nomadic flocks search far and wide to discover large quantities of holly: the familiar American holly, two species of deciduous winterberry, inkberry in the Pine Barrens, or even imported, potentially-invasive ornamental hollies. Nomadic fruit-eaters like robins, waxwings, flickers, and even blue jays, are short-distance migrants. They may come from as far as New England or as close as the next town, forming flocks that search for the fruit stores hiding in the nearest patch of forest habitat.

Over the holiday season, visit NJCF's Evert Nature Trail on Buddtown-Ong's Hat Road in Pemberton, Burlington County, and you'll see giant flocks of American robins feeding in a mature maple-gum forest with abundant American holly. Or visit Sandy Hook, to see robins and cedar waxwings devouring holly and poison ivy berries, and juniper cones. To fruit-eating birds, wax is digestible and has a higher energy content per gram than sugar, because the fruits are not hydrated (watery)!

So, the next time somebody mentions robins going south for the winter, remind them that the robins travel only as far as the Jersey Shore! That's why they arrive back on your lawn with the first thaw of March – they were never far away to begin with.

Next time in The Ecology College, we'll look at co-evolution between birds and fruit from the point of view of the seeds!

Editor's note: The Ecology College is returning as a regular feature of this newsletter after appearing occasionally during the past few years.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



n a warm morning in late July, Nels Anderson eased his blue pickup truck slowly along the sand roads of the Franklin Parker Preserve in the heart of the New Jersey Pine Barrens, careful not to run over any crossing turtles or sunning snakes.

At regular intervals he stopped the truck to inspect each of the 40 birdhouses he built and erected on critter-proof poles. It was a familiar routine. As he opened one box and peered inside, a smile lit his face. "Four bluebird chicks," he reported.

In another box, Anderson spotted a solitary bluebird egg in a nest that one week earlier had none. "The female lays one every morning, so when I come back next week there should be more," he explained. In other boxes he found signs of nesting tree swallows and chickadees. And in some there were wasps, whose papery nests he removed gingerly to avoid being stung.

Back in his truck, Anderson meticulously logged the results of his weekly bird box inspections into a spiral notebook. Hours later, when he returned to his home in Indian Mills, Burlington County, he entered the data into a computer spreadsheet he uses to track the March-through-September nesting season at the Franklin Parker Preserve.

A Friend to Bluebirds in the Pinelands

Anderson, 67, retired in April after a career as a General Electric plastics field engineer and is now one of NJCF's more unusual volunteers. A bluebird lover, he began building, installing and monitoring boxes in nearby Wharton State Forest about 10 years ago after inheriting the job from another volunteer. In early 2007, he sought and received NJCF permission to do the same in the 14-square-mile Franklin Parker Preserve in Chatsworth.

Using donated lumber, Anderson builds bird boxes according to his own time-tested design to make sure their occupants are well ventilated, yet protected from rain and predators. When choosing where to install the birdhouses, he picks open areas with tall trees nearby. "Location is everything," he said, repeating a real estate adage more often applied to humans. "Bluebirds like a tree nearby."

The result of Anderson's firstyear effort was an upsurge in the number of bluebirds at the preserve. As of the end of the season, a total of 81 bluebirds, 45 tree swallows and 17 chickadees were fledged from his bird boxes.

"That's a huge accomplishment, a huge number of babies successfully leaving the nest," said Dr. Emile DeVito, NJCF's Manager of Science and Stewardship. "Nels has probably doubled our population in one year. He's an incredible volunteer – a hard worker, dedicated, totally committed to making a difference."

According to DeVito, bluebirds were once common in New Jersey but became "very scarce" in the late 1960s and early 1970s due to pesticide use, changes in

agricultural practices and competition from starlings and other birds.

Thanks to the work of nature lovers like Anderson, bluebirds are rebounding in many parts of the state. DeVito said the Franklin Parker Preserve is now producing a surplus of young bluebirds, allowing the population to expand outward to surrounding areas.

In addition to the satisfaction he gets from helping bluebirds, Anderson relishes the solitude he finds during his three-hour weekly excursions to the Franklin Parker Preserve. "Generally I'm here all alone," he said. "It's so nice, so peaceful."

Although open to the public for hiking, fishing, kayaking and nature study, the Franklin Parker Preserve is closed to motor vehicles other than those driven by NJCF staff and volunteers working on land management and research projects.









Corporate Volunteers Get Their Hands Dirty for Nature

Foundation preserves, thanks to the hard work of volunteers from the HSBC-North America financial services company and the Novartis pharmaceutical firm.

Some 70 HSBC employees joined forces with NJCF staff in August to advance a major ecological restoration project at the 9,400-acre Franklin Parker Preserve in Chatsworth, Burlington County and in October, about 30 Novartis employees pitched in to re-forest an acre of property along the banks of the Wickecheoke Creek in Delaware Township, Hunterdon County.

The HSBC volunteers, all employees of the corporation's HFC and Beneficial consumer lending branches throughout New Jersey, planted red chokeberry bushes to create habitat for an extremely rare moth. HSBC also contributed \$10,000 to the project, which was used to purchase and erect deer fencing to protect the newly-planted vegetation.

"As HSBC has continued to grow as an organization so, too has our commitment to improving our communities and preserving natural resources," said Kathryn Madison,

Managing Director of HFC and Beneficial's Branch Retail Operations. "We embrace this opportunity to work at the Franklin Parker Preserve, where our employees and the organization can champion change for the betterment of the environment. Plus, some of our most rewarding work comes from hands-on projects in which we are able to get involved and make a meaningful difference."

The Novartis employees are from the firm's offices in East Hanover and were equally enthused about their work, which included planting more than a thousand oak trees and native shrubs to bolster the forested corridor along the scenic Wickecheoke Creek. The volunteers also built a fence around the property to protect it from deer.

"We do this kind of volunteer work every year as part of our Community Partnership Day," explained Michele Gysen, a Novartis senior clinical research scientist who served as "captain" of the volunteers. Last year, Novartis employees blazed over six miles of hiking trails at NJCF's Apshawa Preserve in Passaic County.

"It's nice to get out of the office and do something for the community," agreed Novartis volunteer Graeme Clark, who found wielding a shovel and watering bucket a refreshing change from his regular responsibilities of developing information technologies.

The federal Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provided funding for the Wickecheoke re-forestation project, a sum that was stretched with generous donations from the Pinelands Nursery of Columbus and Paul Steinbeiser, a landscaper and native plant grower in Frenchtown.

Corporations interested in setting up volunteer work days at New Jersey Conservation Foundation preserves may contact Carol Banhart, Senior Coordinator of Development and Outreach, by e-mailing Carol@njconservation.org or calling 1-888-LAND-SAVE (1-888-526-3728).

NJCF Thanks

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Mark Your Calendars

New Jersey's 12th Annual Land Conservation Rally

The state's largest educational opportunity focused on land conservation.

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The Annual Land Conservation Rally, sponsored by NJCF and New Jersey's land conservation community, is a daylong event offering over 25 workshops, plenary sessions and networking opportunities. More than 300 conservationists attend each year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Stephanie Monahan at 908-234-1225, ext. 106 or visit our website at www.njconservation.org.

NJCF Welcomes New Staff Members

Three new staff members joined NJCF this summer – GIS Manager Tanya Nolte, Land Steward Ray Steingall and Communications Manager Sandy Stuart Perry.

Tanya is responsible for all aspects of NJCF's GIS mapping program. Before coming to NJCF, Tanya worked as a grant writer and publications manager at Reeves-Reed Arboretum in Summit. For seven years before that, she was the GIS Director at Morris Land Conservancy. Tanya has a Bachelor of Arts degree in geography and politics from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, where she was born and raised. She is now a permanent resident of the U.S. and lives in Morristown, Morris County.

Ray manages all of NJCF's properties in the northern half of New Jersey. He came to NJCF after retiring from a 35-year career as a steel worker. Ray brings with him a wide array of practical skills, including carpentry, welding, electrical work and operation of heavy equipment. He is a longtime outdoorsman with a great appreciation



New staff members are, from left, Sandy Stuart Perry, Ray Steingall and Tanya Nolte.

of the natural world. Ray lives in Washington, Warren County, with his wife, three children and two dogs.

Sandy manages NJCF's communications and public relations program. She holds a bachelor's degree in communications/journalism from the University of Bridgeport, Conn., and previously worked for more than 25 years as a newspaper reporter and editor and occasional photographer. She is a resident of Bedminster, Somerset County.

Fall Fun at NJCF's Kids Day



Rebecca Canright and Jamie Cummings create pinecone birdfeeders at NJCF's first-ever Kids Day held on Saturday, Sept. 22.



Little Ava Caffaro of Long Valley tries her hand at painting a pumpkin at NJCF's Kids Day event.



NJCF's Beth Davisson and daughter Emily Pardilla prepare to paint.

NJCF Staff

Michele S. Byers - Executive Director

Russell Adams - Associate Land Steward

Kraig Adams - Associate Land Steward

Erica Arles — Administrative Assistant, Land & Stewardship

Alix Bacon – Regional Manager, Western Piedmont

Carol Banhart – Sr. Coordinator, Development & Outreach

Louis Cantafio. Ph.D. – Senior Land Steward

Aria (Beth) Davisson – Project Manager, Black River Greenway

Emile D. DeVito, Ph.D. – Manager, Science & Stewardship

Janet Eisenhauer – Regional Manager, Delaware Bayshore

Wilma E. Frey – Project Manager, Highlands

Amy Hansen - Policy Analyst

Maria Hauser – Executive Assistant/Personnel Manager

Steve Jack - Associate Land Steward

Chris Jage - Assistant Director, South Jersey

Peter Kroll, Ph.D. – Project Manager, Camden Greenway

Lisa MacCollum – Assistant Director, Acquisition

Alison E. Mitchell - Director of Policy

Stephanie Monahan – Director of Development & Outreach

Tim Morris – Director of Stewardship

Marie K. Newell – Project Coordinator, Acquisition

Tanya Nolte - GIS Manager

Sandra Stuart Perry – Communications Manager

Susan Quitzau - Office Manager

Lauren Ramos – Development & Outreach Coordinator

Francis Rapa – Project Manager, Delaware Bay Watershed

Karen Richards, CPA – Director of Finance & Administration

Greg Romano – Assistant Director & Director of Statewide Land Acquisition

Raymond Steingall – Land Steward

Susan Schmidt— Administrative
Assistant/Receptionist

Laura Szwak - Statewide Greenways Director

Ingrid B. Vandegaer – Regional Manager, Highlands

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www.njconservation.org



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Are you looking for a creative holiday gift, or a way to thank someone, celebrate a birthday, honor or memorialize a family member, friend or mentor? There are several ways to recognize someone special:

Gift Memberships

A gift membership to NJCF of \$35 or more is a great holiday gift for kids to give school teachers or grandparents while sharing our mission to protect New Jersey's land and natural resources for the benefit of all. The recipient of the membership gift will receive a letter announcing your gift and introducing them to NJCF.

In Honor

Donations can be made to celebrate a special milestone, accomplishment or just to let someone know you are thinking about them. Both the donor and the honoree will be recognized in our newsletter.

In Memory

These gifts allow you to honor the memory of a family member, friend or other loved one. Both the donor and the person memorialized will be included in the newsletter.

A Gift for Future Generations

Charitable gift annuities offer you a guaranteed income for life, tax benefits and the satisfaction of knowing that your gift will benefit New Jersey's threatened wildlife and natural areas, leaving a legacy for future generations.

A gift annuity is a simple, contractual agreement between you and our non-profit partner, the Community Foundation of New Jersey, in which you transfer assets to them in exchange for a promise from the Community Foundation to pay you and another individual, if you choose, guaranteed payments for life. The amount you receive will depend on your age and whether you include a second beneficiary. The Community Foundation will transfer the remaining annuity principal to the New Jersey Conservation Foundation on your behalf.

To discuss these or other giving options, please contact NJCF Development Director Stephanie Monahan at 1-888-LAND-SAVE (1-888-526-3728) or Stephanie@njconservation.org.

Visit New Jersey Conservation Foundation online at: WWW.niconservation.org



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