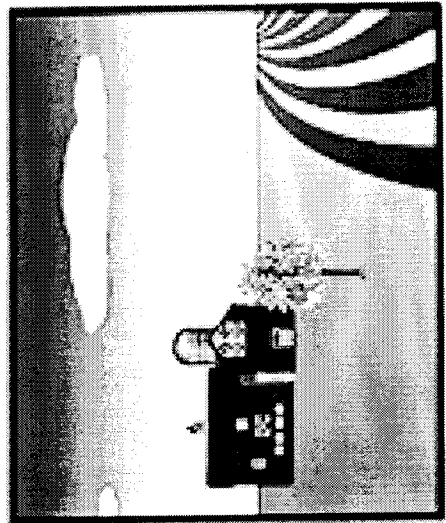
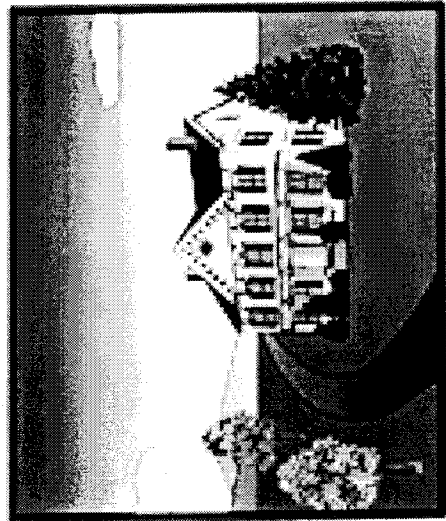
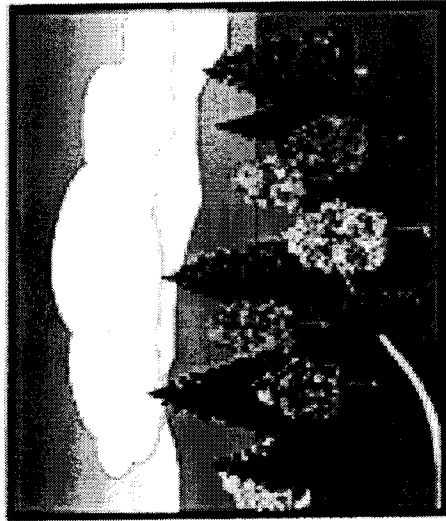
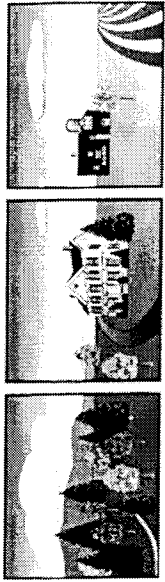


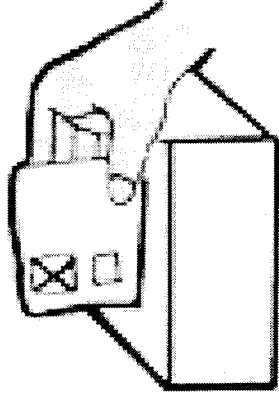
Garden State Preservation Trust



Saving New Jersey's Open Spaces, Historic Places and Farmland



\$98 Million Annual Sales Tax Dedication



*Voters approved on
November 3, 1998*

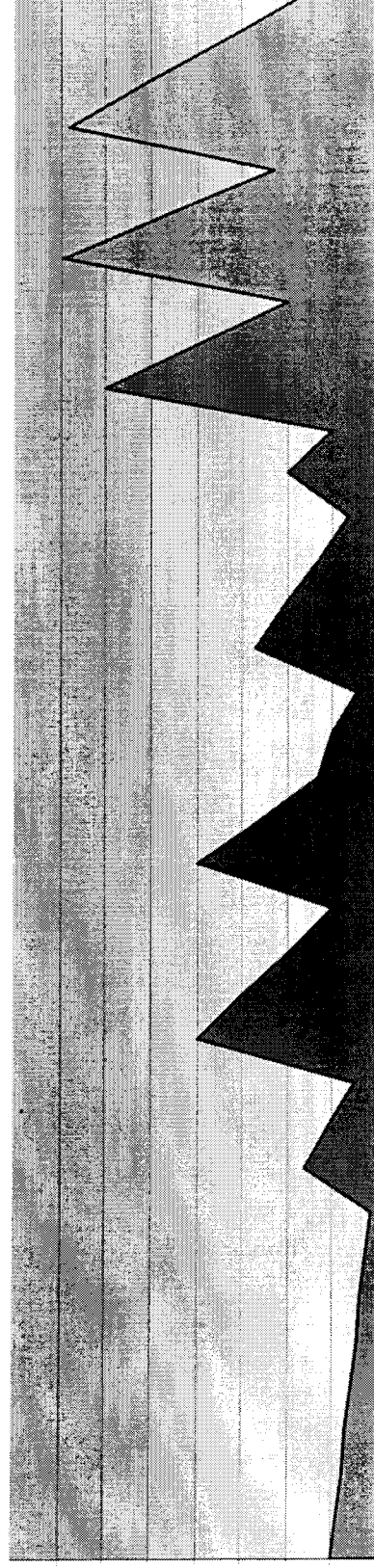
*a constitutional amendment to dedicate
\$98 million
annually from 1999 through 2029
for a 10-year
land preservation program*

Since 1961 New Jersey had been bouncing from
ballot referendum to ballot referendum...

From bond issue to bond issue...

Annual fund levels were inconsistent ...

\$400
\$350
\$300
\$250
\$200
\$150
\$100
\$50
\$0



1961

1971

1978

1983

1989

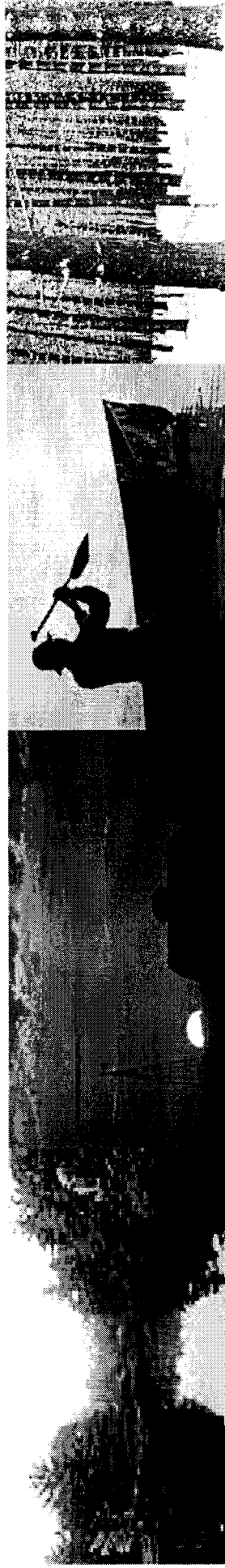
1992

1995

Average Annual Available Funds 1961-1998

A new program was developed that would be

- ✓ more consistently financed
- ✓ more ambitious
- ✓ more timely





GSPT Presentation

Garden State Preservation Trust

- 10-year program
- \$98 million a year
- \$1.22 billion in bond funds
- \$2 billion total funding





GSPT Presentation

*Meanwhile, our taxpayers know exactly
the annual cost to future budgets*



CASH FOR PROJECTS OR DEBT SERVICE

FY 2000	\$98 million
FY 2001	\$98 million
FY 2002	\$98 million
FY 2003	\$98 million
FY 2004	\$98 million
FY 2005	\$98 million
FY 2006	\$98 million
FY 2007	\$98 million
FY 2008	\$98 million
FY 2009	\$98 million

\$980 million

CASH FOR DEBT SERVICE

FY 2010	\$98 million
FY 2011	\$98 million
FY 2012	\$98 million
FY 2013	\$98 million
FY 2014	\$98 million
FY 2015	\$98 million
FY 2016	\$98 million
FY 2017	\$98 million
FY 2018	\$98 million
FY 2019	\$98 million
FY 2020	\$98 million
FY 2021	\$98 million
FY 2022	\$98 million
FY 2023	\$98 million
FY 2024	\$98 million
FY 2025	\$98 million
FY 2026	\$98 million
FY 2027	\$98 million
FY 2028	\$98 million
FY 2029	\$98 million



GSPT: Where Do We Stand?

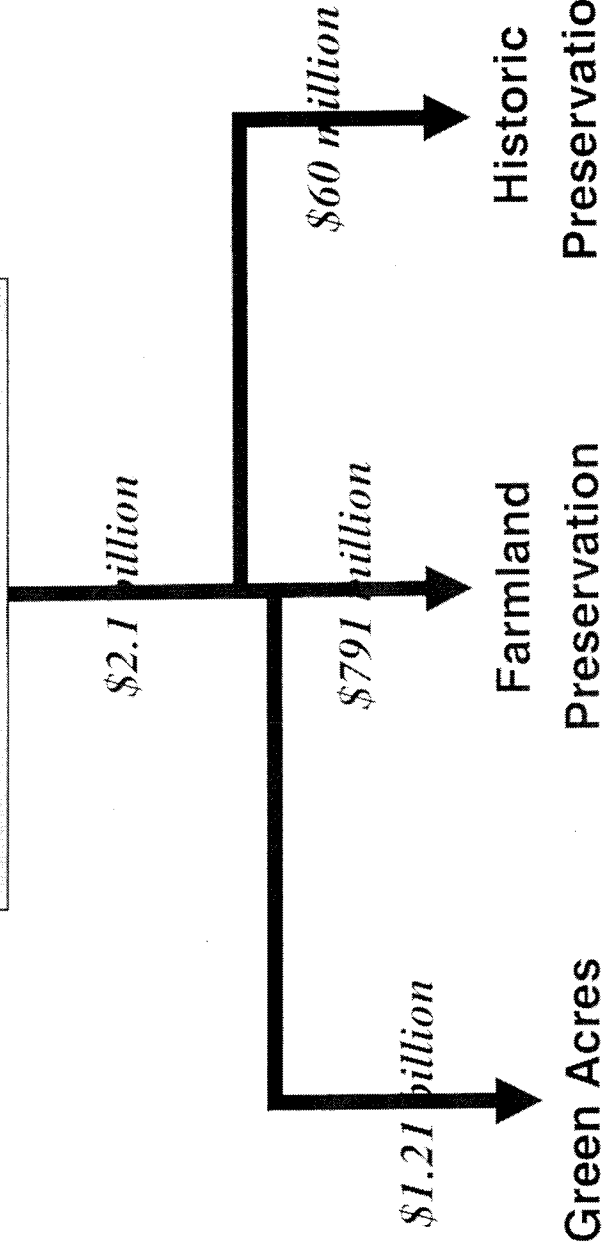
Dedicated Cash - \$98 million



Bond Funds - \$1.22 billion



*Garden State
Preservation Trust*

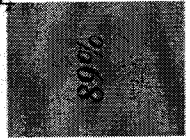


REMAINING

\$87 million

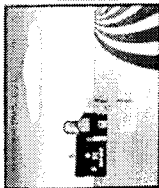


\$85 million



\$21 million





GSPT: Where Do We Stand?

Original 1999 Promise

\$1.5 billion for preservation

FY2029

\$2.94 billion

\$1.44 billion
interest payments

\$98 million
per year
x 30 years

\$500 million
dedicated cash

\$1 billion
bond financing

FY2000

Current 2007 Outcome

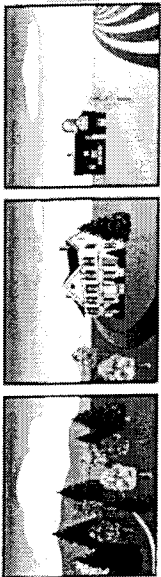
\$2.1 billion for preservation

\$867 million
interest payments

\$853 million
dedicated cash

\$1.22 billion
bond financing

FY2000



GSPT: Where Do We Stand?

Original 1999 Promise

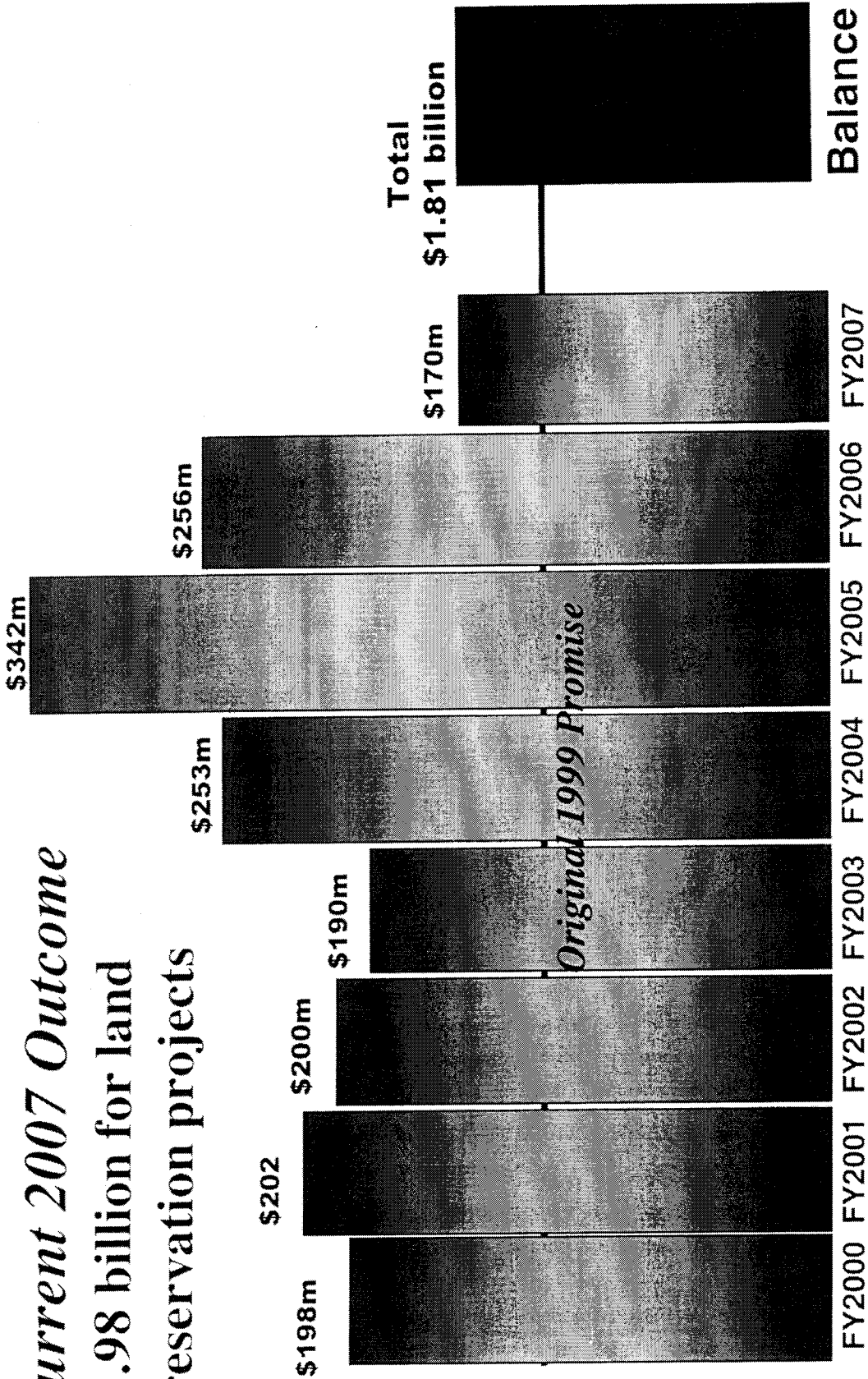
\$1.4 billion for land preservation projects

\$140m	\$140m	\$140m	\$140m	\$140m	\$140m	\$140m	\$140m	\$140m	\$140m	FY2000	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
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GSPT: Where Do We Stand?

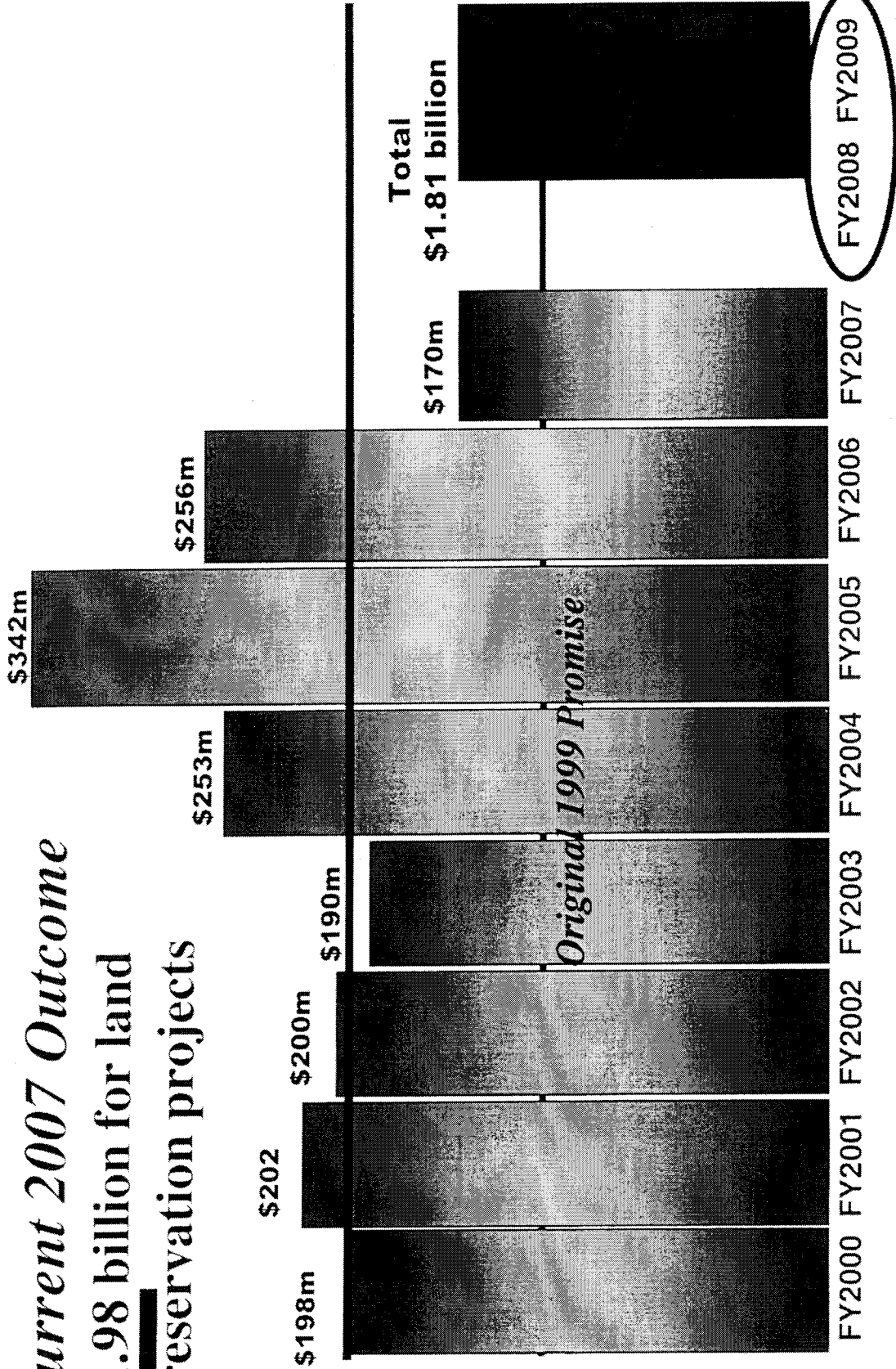
Current 2007 Outcome \$1.98 billion for land preservation projects





GSPT: Where Do We Stand?

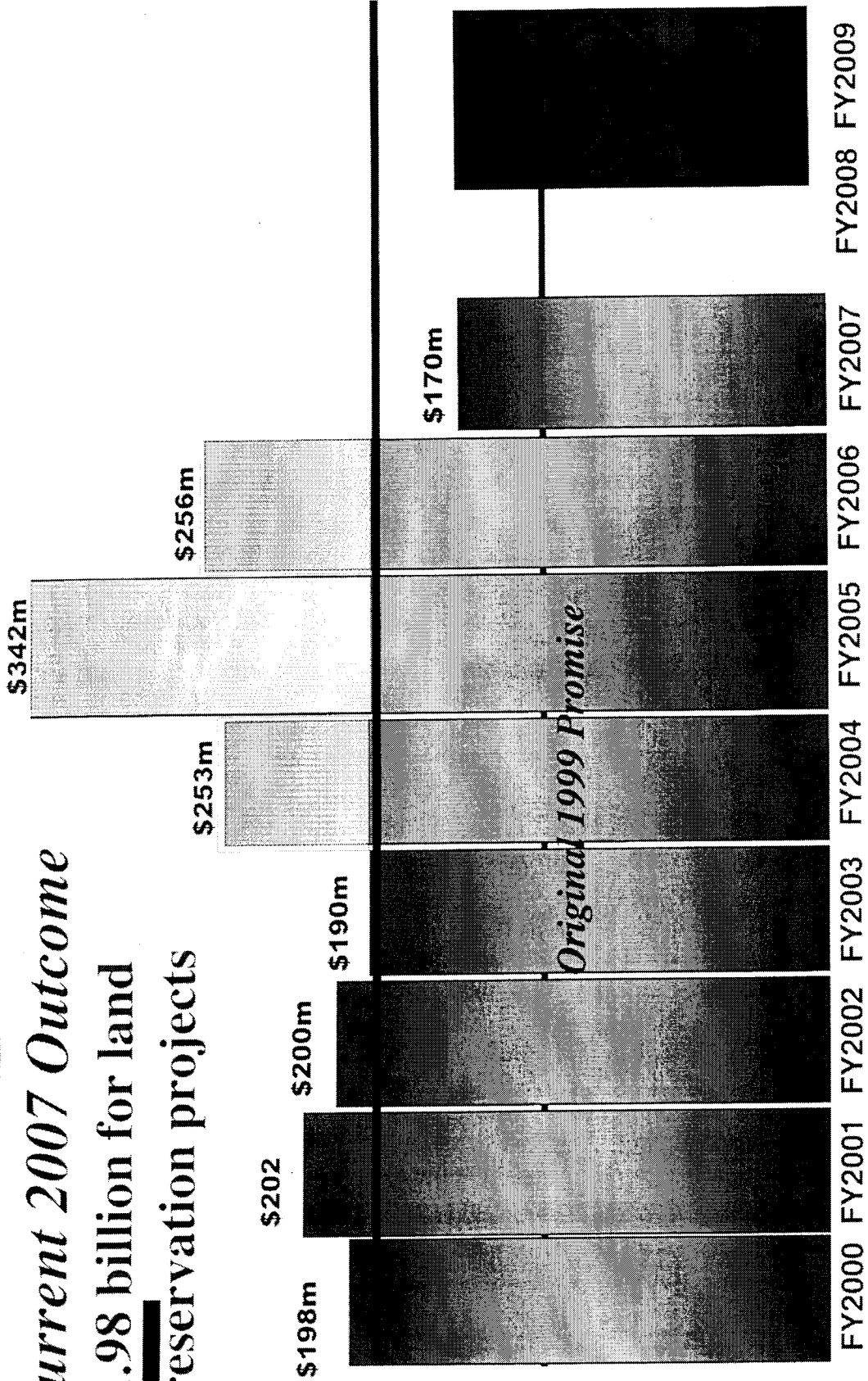
Current 2007 Outcome \$1.98 billion for land preservation projects





GSPT: Where Do We Stand?

Current 2007 Outcome **\$1.98 billion for land preservation projects**

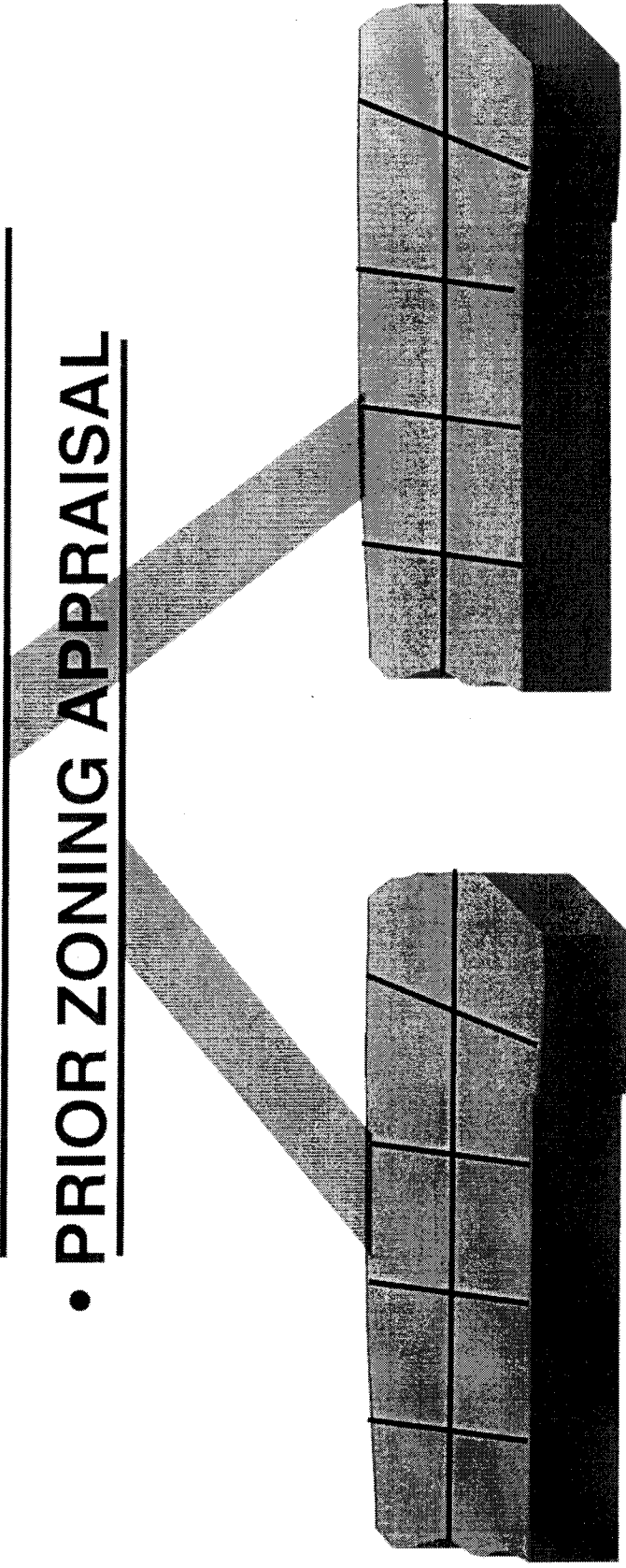




GSPT Presentation

Garden State Preservation Trust Act 1999

- CURRENT ZONING APPRAISAL
- PRIOR ZONING APPRAISAL



1998

2004



GSPT Presentation

Highlands Water Protection & Planning Act 2004

- CURRENT ZONING APPRAISAL
- PRIOR ZONING APPRAISAL



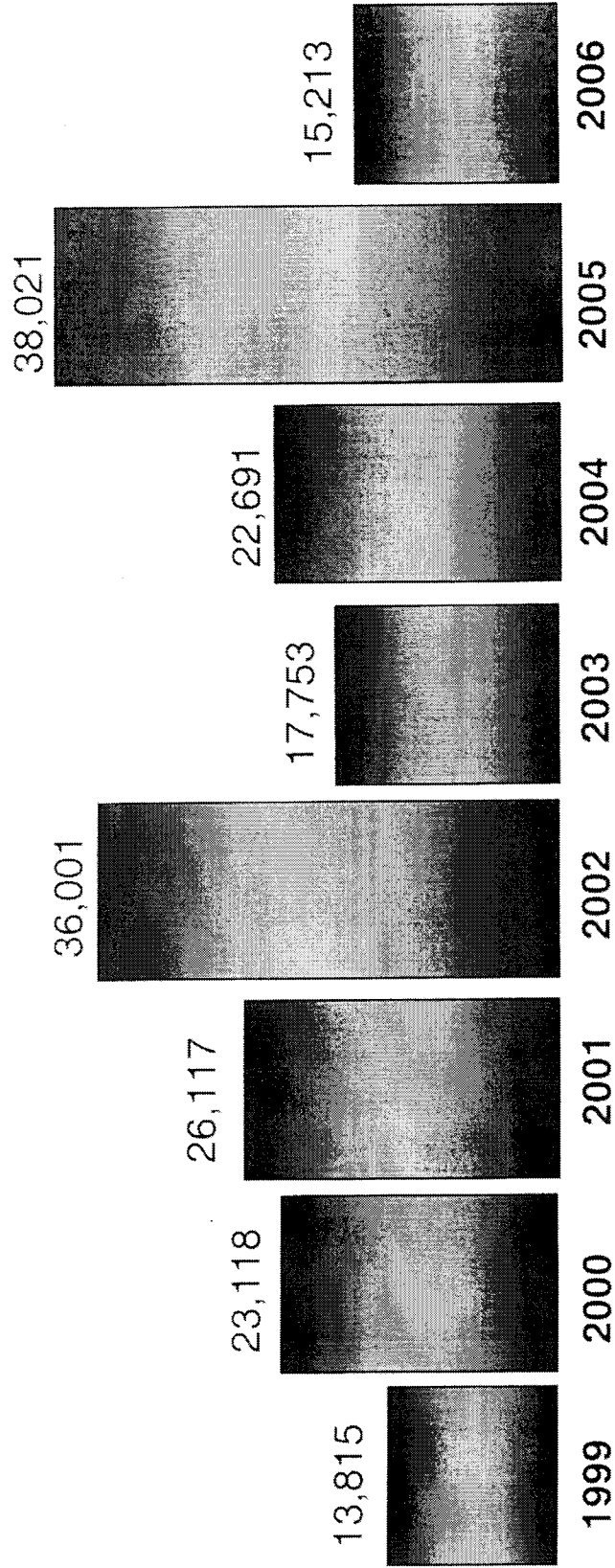
2004

2009



GSPT: Where Do We Stand?

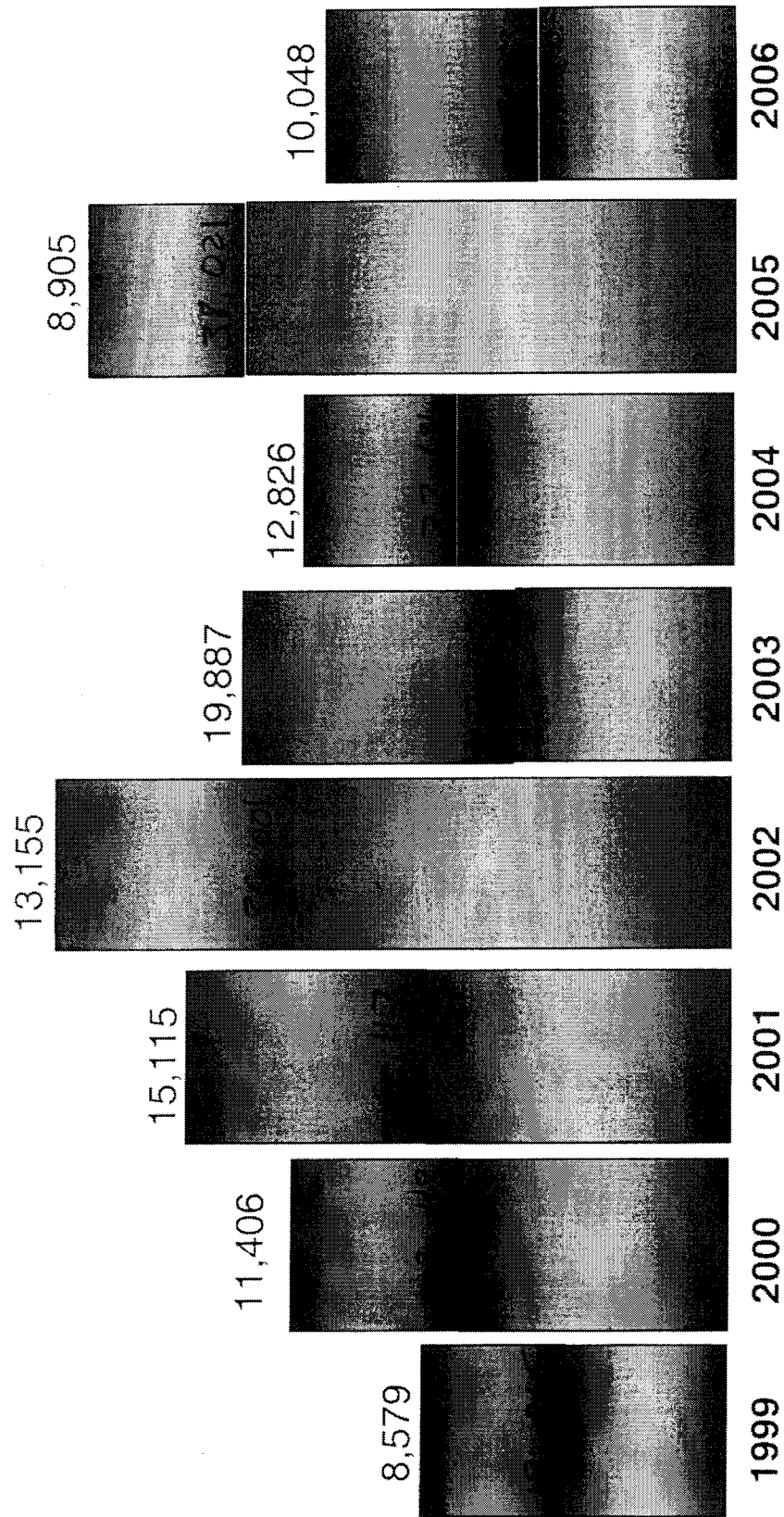
Land Preserved in Acres: Green Acres Program

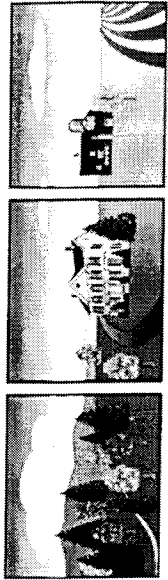




GSPT: Where Do We Stand?

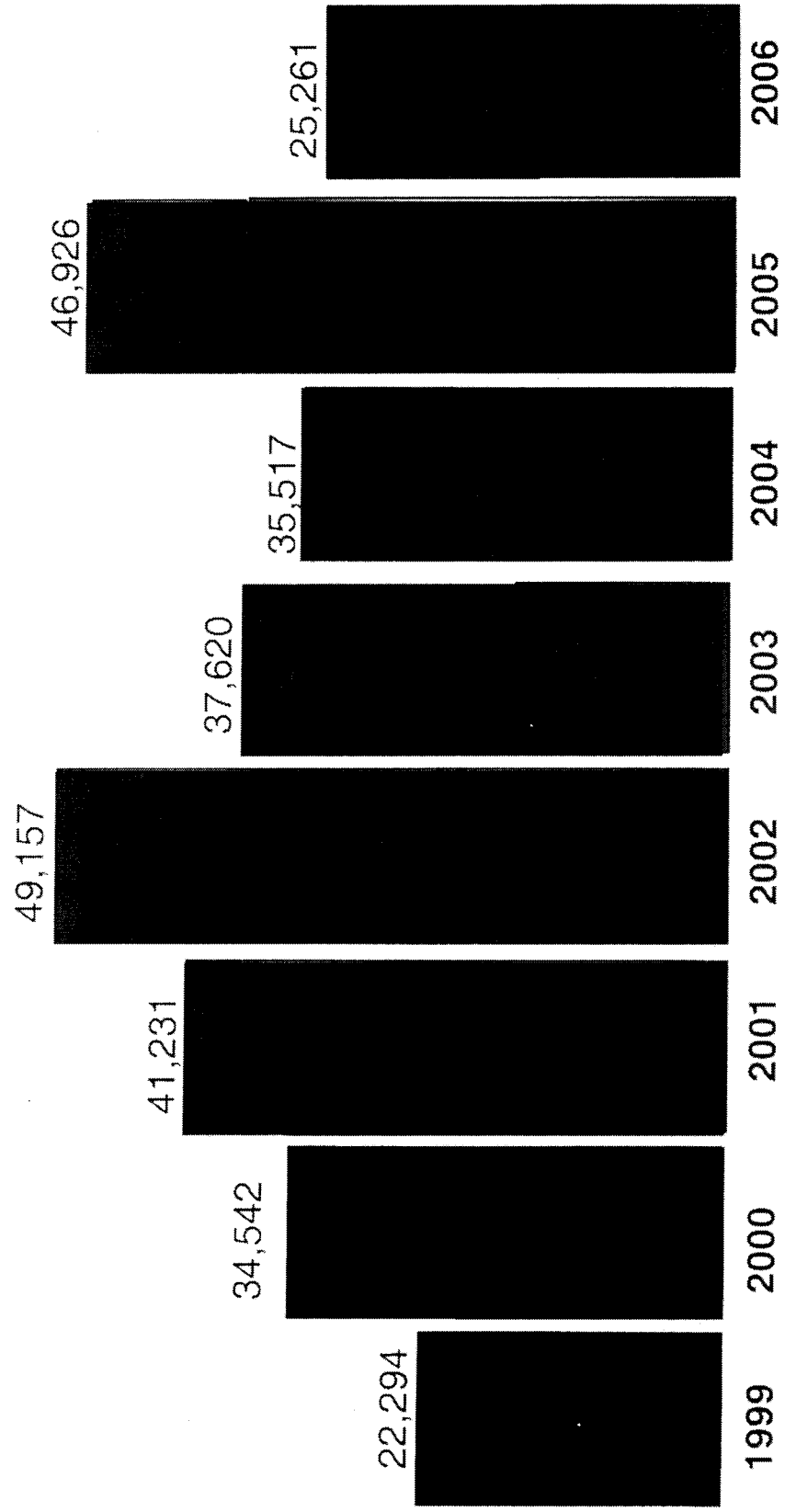
Land Preserved in Acres: Farmland Preservation Program





GSPT: *Where Do We Stand?*

Land Preserved in Acres: Garden State Preservation Trust





GSPT: Where Do We Stand?

Land Preserved in Acres: Garden State Preservation Trust

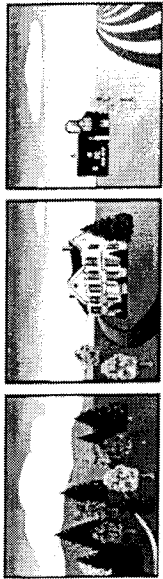
Green Acres: 192,729 acres
Farmland Preservation: 99,921 acres
GSPT Period Total: 292,650 acres
GSPT Appropriated: 120,000 acres



GSPT: *Where Do We Stand?*

Land Preserved in Acres: Garden State Preservation Trust

GSPT Forecast Total: 412,650 acres

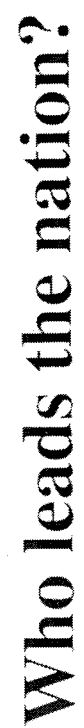


GSPT: *Where Do We Stand?*

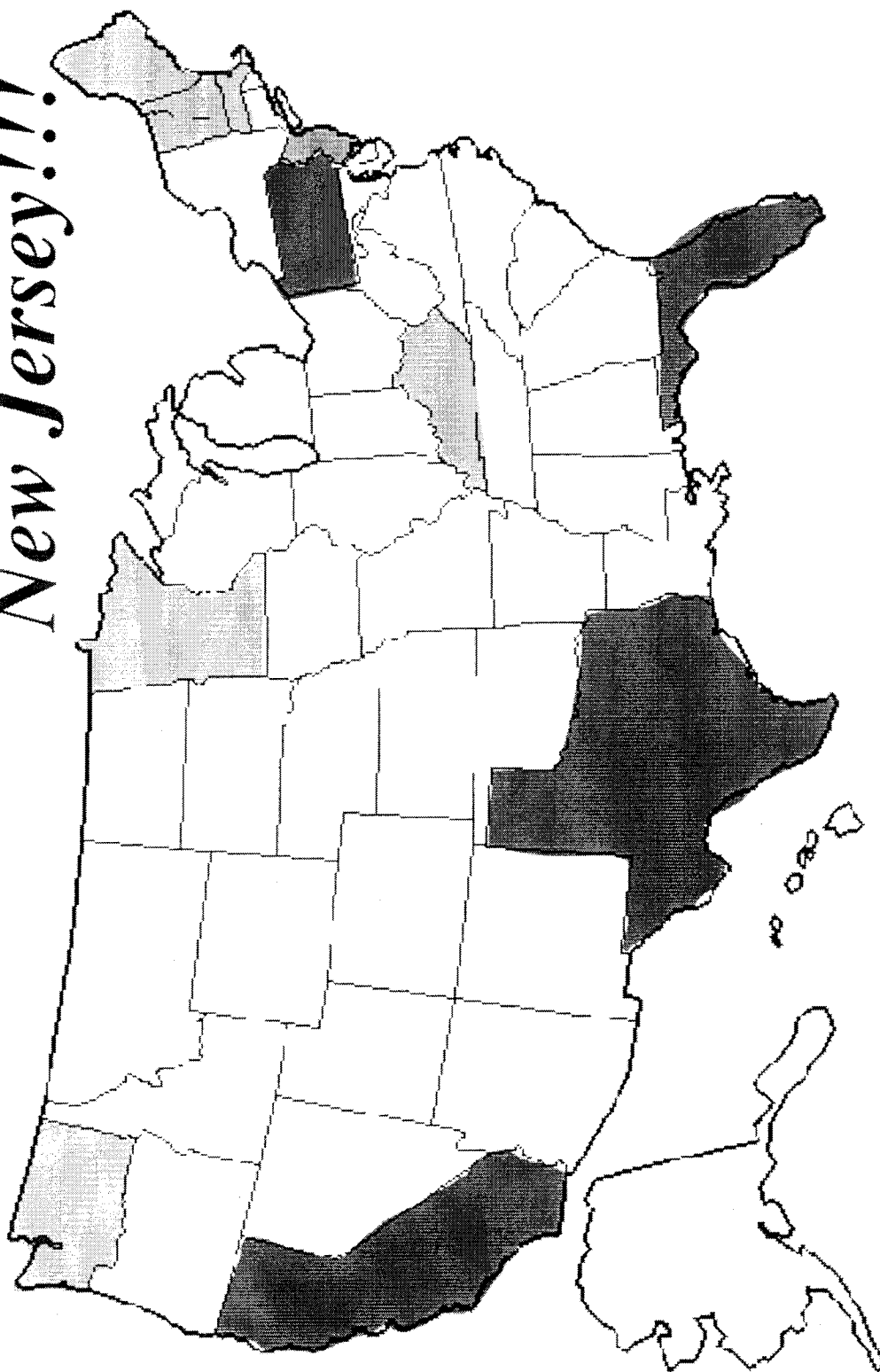
Garden State Preservation Trust

FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
\$264,000	\$196,000	\$195,000	\$185,500

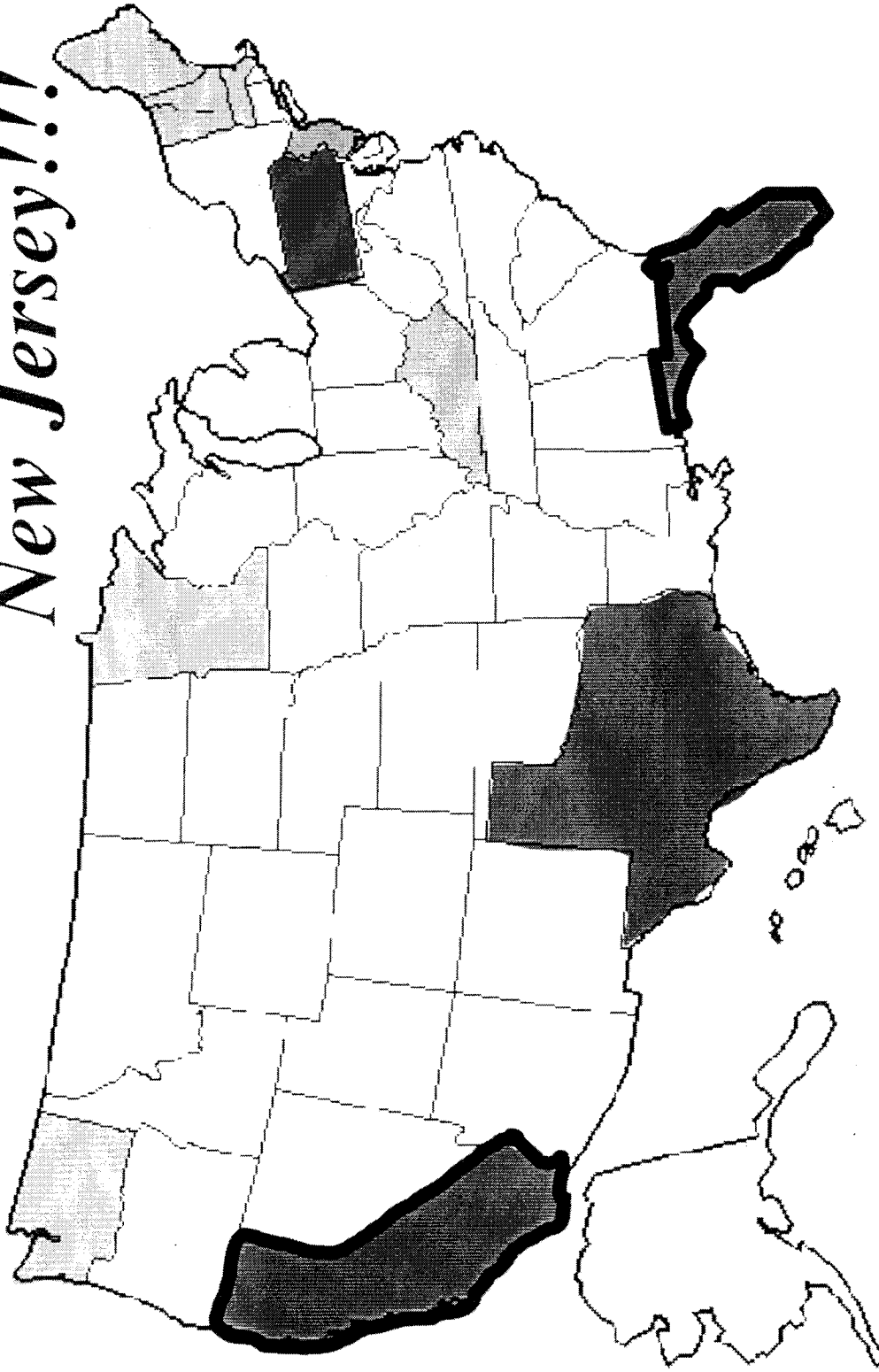
- \$264 million in closings over 52 weeks
- \$5.1 million in closings each & every week
- On average, a \$1 million land deal every day
(leveraged roughly 2-to-1 with local funds)



New Jersey!!!



New Jersey!!!

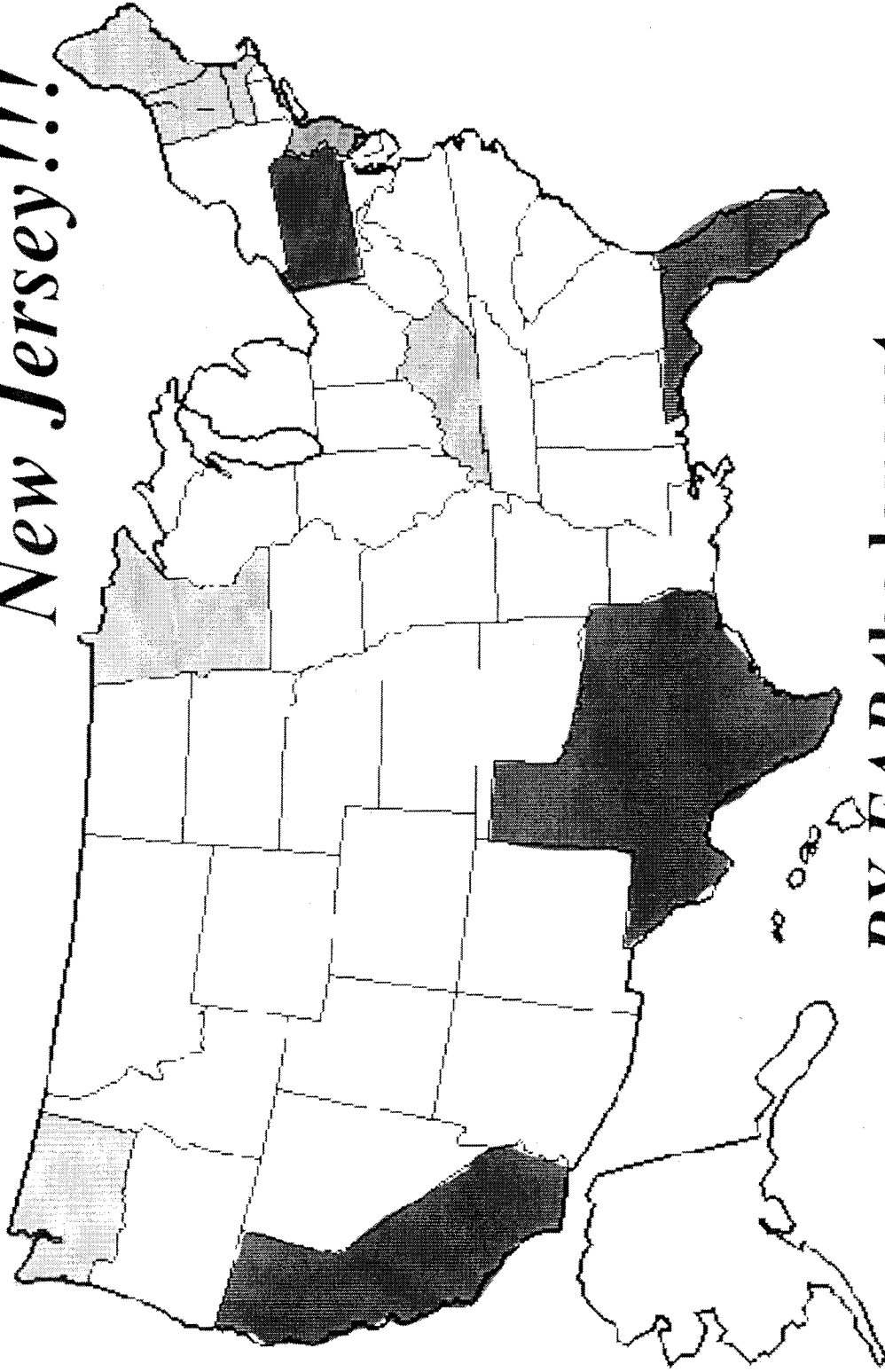


**The largest land preservation program in
the nation next to Florida & California**

New Jersey!!!

24x

New Jersey!!!



BY FAR the largest

land preservation program in the nation
for a geographic area of this size

Garden State Preservation Trust

New Jersey is tenth in population but with only 7,400 square miles it is the fifth smallest state in land area. This means the Garden State is the most densely populated state and faces a tremendous challenge to contain sprawl, preserve a good quality of life and maintain a viable agricultural industry.

Development is consuming our remaining open land, changing our communities, and placing our historic sites in jeopardy. Known as the Crossroads of Revolution, New Jersey is also a cradle of invention that has given us a historical heritage of national importance. As a result, New Jersey faces a challenge to preserve:

- our historical heritage
- our natural lands
- our parks
- our working farms

This mission has never been more crucial, difficult or expensive as real estate costs escalate daily and landowners face mounting pressures. Preserving land is a challenge in planning and a challenge in public finance that is the responsibility of all New Jerseyans.

The Garden State Preservation Trust is the *financing authority* that provides the funds to preserve forests and meadows, watersheds and wildlife habitats, parks and sports fields, working farms, agricultural landscapes and historic structures. Since the 1960s, New Jersey voters approved nine bond issues to preserve land. In 1998, voters did something better by approving an annual dedication of \$98 million from the sales tax.

The Garden State Preservation Trust leverages this \$98 million in constitutionally dedicated funds to issue bonds and to make the maximum dollars available:

- \$500 million bond issue – March 2003
- \$500 million forward delivery bond issue – May 2004
- \$150 million forward delivery bond issue – September 2004

Prudent planning and ambitious financing will provide \$2 billion for land preservation and \$60 million for historic sites over 10 years – more than in the previous four decades combined.

Today, New Jersey has the largest preservation program in the nation for a geographic area of this size. It is financed with Garden State Preservation Trust funds through three partnering agencies:

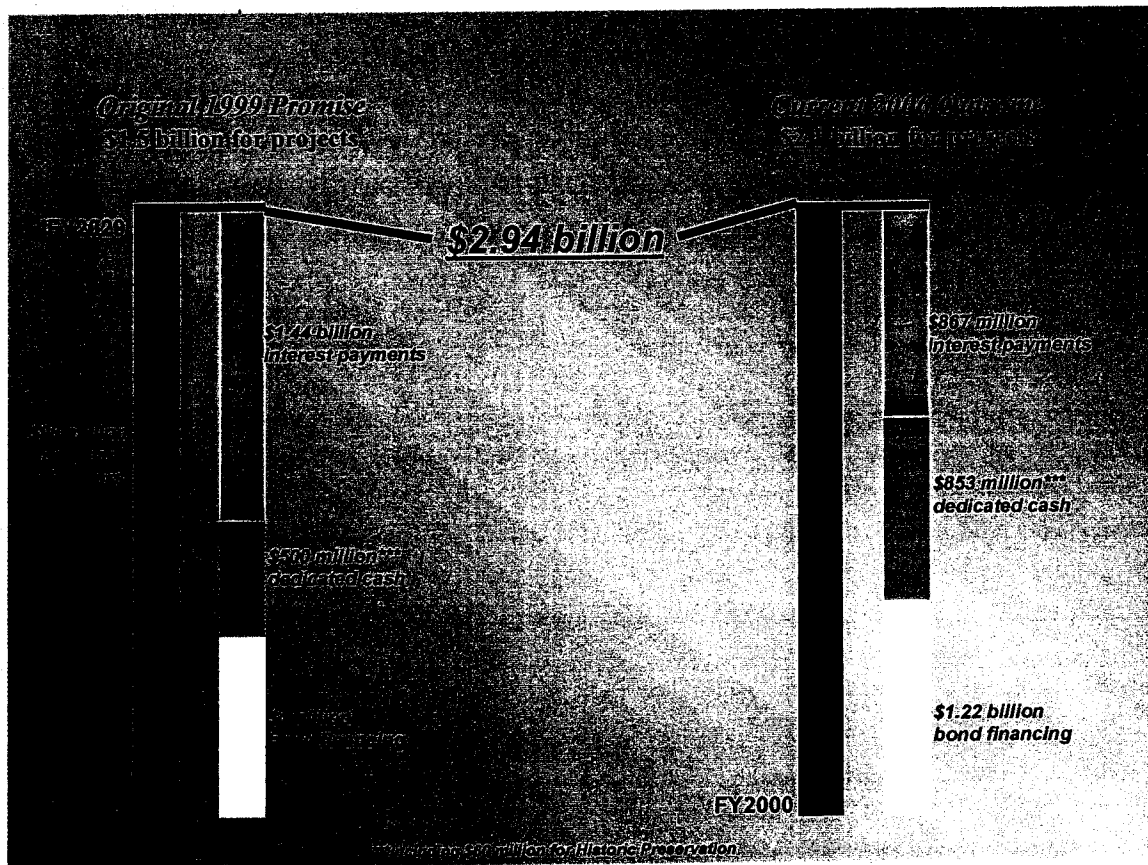
- The Green Acres Program, a division of the Department of Environmental Protection to *preserve natural lands and recreational parks.*
- The Farmland Preservation Program, administered by the Independent State Agriculture Development Committee to *acquire the development rights on privately owned farmland.*
- Historic Preservation, administered by the independent New Jersey Historic Trust to *provide matching grants to save important historic buildings.*

In partnership with county governments, municipalities and non-profit preservation trusts, these agencies are using GSPT funds to preserve acreage at a rate *three times faster* than land is being lost to development. To keep this momentum going, the GSPT in the past two years has approved a record \$770 million for Green Acres and Farmland Preservation.



Garden State Preservation Trust

GSPT Financing



The Garden State Preservation Trust leverages this \$98 million in constitutionally dedicated funds to issue bonds and to make the maximum dollars available:

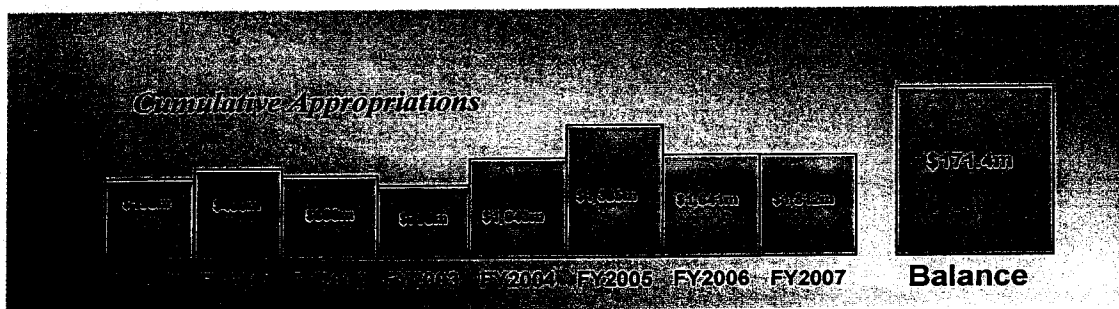
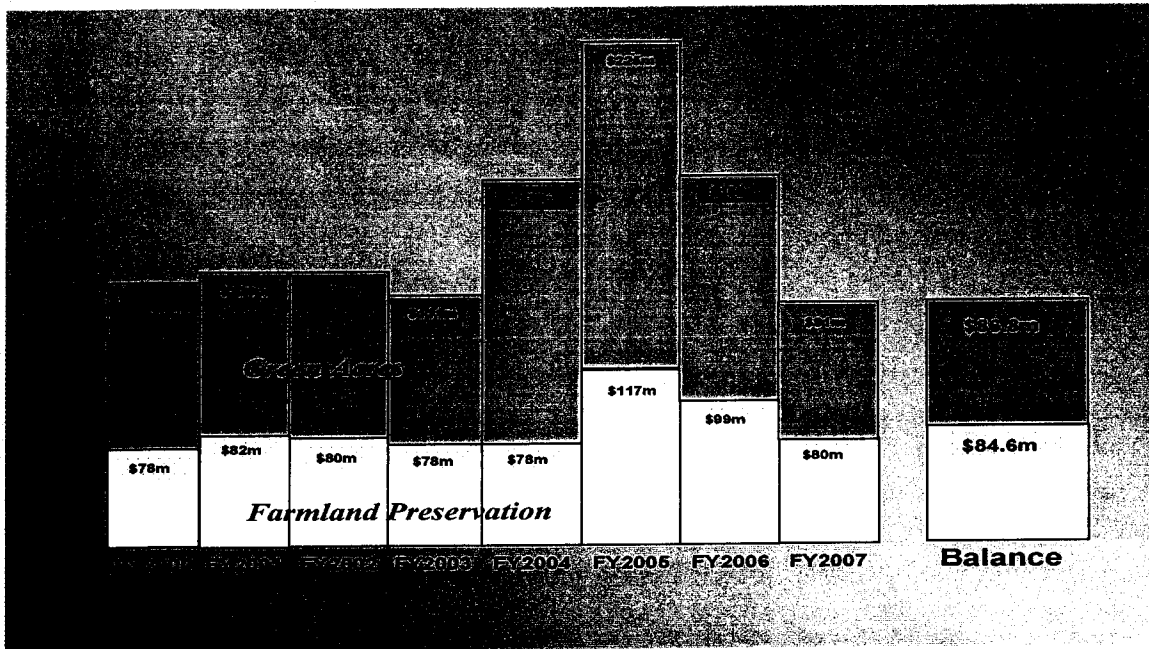
- \$500 million bond issue – March 2003
- \$500 million forward delivery bond issue – May 2004
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Prudent planning and ambitious financing will provide \$2 billion for land preservation and \$60 million for historic sites over 10 years – more than in the previous four decades combined.



Garden State Preservation Trust

GSPT Appropriations



Today, New Jersey has the largest land preservation program in the nation for a geographic area of its size. It is financed with Garden State Preservation Trust funds through two partnering agencies:

- The Green Acres Program, a division of the Department of Environmental Protection to *preserve natural lands and recreational parks.*
- The Farmland Preservation Program, administered by the independent State Agriculture Development Committee to *acquire the development rights on privately owned farmland.*

In partnership with county governments, municipalities and non-profit preservation trusts, these agencies are using GSPT funds to preserve acreage at a rate **three times faster** than land is being lost to development. To keep this momentum going, the GSPT in the past three years has approved a record \$770 million for Green Acres and Farmland Preservation.

**Testimony of the NJ State Agriculture Development
Committee to the
Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
Public Hearing
6 p.m., Tuesday, February 27, 2007
Gloucester County Government Services Complex,
Department of Public Works Government Services Building
Auditorium, Clayton**

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the State Agriculture Development Committee's Farmland Preservation Program.

The preservation of our farmland helps ensure a stable land base will be available to support a strong and viable agricultural industry – an industry that realizes \$866 million in annual farm gate receipts, accounts for a \$1.5 billion agricultural sector and is the foundation for the state's \$82 billion total agriculture and food complex.

In addition to ensuring these continued economic benefits, the preservation of our farmland protects rural and open landscapes, provides access to fresh, local produce and other farm products, and protects wildlife habitat and air and water quality – all factors that contribute to the quality of life we enjoy in the Garden State.

Farmland preservation also is an important tool for towns to avoid some of the unwanted impacts of sprawl, including negative fiscal impacts, traffic congestion and loss of community character.

Finally, preserving farmland helps towns hold the line on local property taxes down by keeping privately owned, taxpaying farmland on the local tax rolls. As municipalities across the state well know, farmland contributes far more in property taxes than it requires in services.

The N.J. Department of Agriculture projects that New Jersey will need a stable land base of approximately 600,000 acres to support a strong and viable agricultural industry into the future.

Approximately 150,000 acres of farmland have been permanently preserved to date. By the time existing Garden State Preservation Trust funding runs out, we expect an additional 50,000 acres will be preserved, for a total of 200,000 preserved acres

That represents a tremendous amount of progress, considering that, prior to FY 1999 and the inception of the GSPT, only about 48,000 acres of farmland had been preserved over the previous 14 years of program acquisitions.

As a result of the stable source of GSPT funding, an average of 160 farms have entered the program annually over the past five years, as opposed to only about 40 per year in the five years prior to GSPT.

To keep up with increasing demand for the program, we've proposed new rules that will streamline the farmland preservation process and reduce the timeframe from landowner application to closing by about six months for most applicants.

The stable source of funding also has encouraged financial participation in farmland preservation by a number of other partners. Local farmland and open space trust funds established by county and municipal governments, as well as funding from nonprofit organizations, leverage state dollars and contribute a third of total acquisition costs.

But as much progress as we've made, we're nowhere near the finish line.

The preservation of 200,000 acres by the close of GSPT funding still leaves another 400,000 acres in need of permanent protection if we are to realize our goal of preserving an adequate land base for agriculture's future.

Over the past four years, we've appropriated an average of \$130 million annually for farmland preservation, and that still doesn't meet current demand. This fiscal year, we had more than \$100 million in unmet needs.

The cost to preserve an additional 400,000 acres would total \$4 billion at today's average current acquisition cost of \$10,000 per acre, and as much as \$6 billion at a projected cost of \$15,000 per acre.

It is clear that New Jersey cannot afford to preserve all of those 400,000 acres through purchase of development rights under the Farmland Preservation Program.

Therefore, the State Agriculture Development Committee's goal is to preserve another 200,000 acres through the Farmland Preservation Program while encouraging the aggressive pursuit of transfer of development rights and other tools to secure permanent protection of the remaining 200,000 acres.

All the farmland that ultimately will be preserved in New Jersey will likely be preserved in most of our lifetimes.

The SADC looks forward to working with advocates and the Legislature to identify a sustainable funding source for the renewal of GSPT at a level that -- at a minimum -- supports the momentum of the program that has been achieved through the strong partnership among all levels of government, the nonprofit community, and of course, farm landowners themselves.

The Garden State Preservation Trust Act provided New Jersey with a tremendous opportunity to protect the farmland that is so critical to maintaining our quality of life and a strong agricultural industry.

We have made a great deal of progress but there is still much more to do. We look forward to working with you to ensure that we continue the momentum of our farmland preservation efforts and that we keep New Jersey green and growing for generations to come.

S:\GARDEN STATE TRUST\GSPT
II\needstestimony022707revised.doc

My name is Ken Atkinson and I am the Director for the Gloucester County Office of Land Preservation, and on behalf of Gloucester County Freeholder Director Stephen M. Sweeney and Deputy Director Robert M. Damming, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address the committee tonight to provide testimony on this important matter.

In addition to my post as Director, I also oversee the County's Farmland Preservation Program, and in cooperation with Vicki Snyder, who serves as Open Space Coordinator, and the rest of our staff our, office has compiled an impressive record of accomplishments in the preservation of Gloucester County's rapidly diminishing agricultural areas and open space. Since the inception of Gloucester County's Land Preservation Program, we have been successful in the preservation of more than 14,000 acres, with approximately 11,700 acres preserved as farmland and 2,400 preserved as open space. These numbers encompass properties in 19 of Gloucester County's 24 municipalities. In fact, since 2003 alone Gloucester County has preserved more than 4,330 acres of farmland and open space on 80 different properties. We believe that this amount is the largest number in the State of New Jersey over this time period.

Through this program we have been able to acquire eleven new dedicated municipal parks and expand other existing municipal parks and greenways. We have also been able to enlarge four of the County's own five parks and also to help move the County bike path forward with a key acquisition. In just the area surrounding the County Golf Course we have added four additional properties and are currently in negotiations on two others. Our office is also working on five new municipal parks and presently has more than 20 applications pending for the farmland preservation program.

It goes without saying that a large portion of these accomplishments would not have been possible without the funding that the County has received from the Garden State Preservation Trust over the years. Since 2003, Gloucester County has received almost \$15 million in funding from the GSPT. Gloucester County also relies on a 4-cent Farmland and Open Space Tax to help supplement our efforts. In addition, our Freeholders have taken the proactive step of issuing a series bond measures over the years to provide additional funds. However, even with these measures our efforts to preserve farmland and open space in Gloucester County would have been significantly impacted without the funds received from the GSPT.

Gloucester County is not alone in this position, and I am sure that over the course of your hearings you will hear testimony from a plethora of State, County and municipal representatives echoing these sentiments. You know better than most the constant struggles that New Jersey faces as the nation's most densely populated state. To this end, since its inception the GSPT has been one of the most successful tools that New Jersey has utilized to help alleviate sprawl and help reduce the costs associated with unabated residential growth that all levels of government experience.

Based on these examples, the Gloucester County Office of Land Preservation, in cooperation with our Board of Freeholders, fully endorses the renewal of the GSPT. We believe that the residents of New Jersey will also support this stance, and we request that the State ensure that they have the opportunity to do so by placing the renewal of the GSPT on the ballot in November. We would also request that the current disbursement allocations remain the same. Finally, we feel that Assembly Bill ACR-10, which concerns the Constitutional dedication of portions of the State Sales and Use Tax for open space, farmland, and historic preservation, would be an effective tool to ensure the continued success of Gloucester

County's and New Jersey's Farmland and Open Space Preservation efforts.

Gloucester County has long been labeled as one of the fastest growing counties in New Jersey, and some of our individual municipalities have even been identified as some of the fastest growing in the nation. Even with these obstacles, Gloucester County's Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program has been a resounding success. Tracts of pristine County farmland that stretch as far as the eye can see are now permanently preserved and acres of open space have been secured for residents to enjoy as County and municipal parks. However, we cannot continue our aggressive efforts without the State's assistance. To this end, we believe that it is essential that the GSPT be renewed. With your help, the Office of Land Preservation, in cooperation with the Board of Chosen Freeholders can endeavor to ensure that Gloucester County safeguards its pastoral legacy and provides ample parcels of land for our citizen's recreational needs, both now and in the years to come.



NEW JERSEY
AUDUBON
SOCIETY

Department of Conservation

142 West State Street, Trenton, New Jersey 08608 Tel: (609) 392-1181 Fax: (609) 392-1182
E-mail: joanna.wolaver@njudubon.org Web site: <http://www.njudubon.org/conservation>

February 27, 2007

Re: **Testimony in support of ACR10**

Dear Chairman and Members of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee:

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of New Jersey Audubon Society and the New Jersey – Keep It Green Campaign in support of ACR10. NJAS is a non-profit corporation with over 23,000 members statewide, whose mission includes the protection of New Jersey's plants and wildlife and our land and water resources. The Keep It Green Campaign is a coalition of over 90 organizations working to renew and strengthen the Garden State Preservation Trust this year. (Please refer to the attached list of coalition members.)

We appreciate your leadership in taking on this issue of such great importance to our citizens and the future of our state. Since its creation in 1998, the Trust has enabled the State of New Jersey, its local governments, and non-profits to acquire over 432,000 acres of parks, open space and farmland. **However, as you know, the Trust will run out of money this year and funds for grants to local governments have already been exhausted.** At the same time, our state continues to face intense development pressure and is expected to reach full built out in less than 25 years. And even the parks, natural areas and historic sites that are protected have suffered due to chronic under funding, particularly in urban areas.

For this reason, NJAS and the coalition strongly supports this legislation. In particular, we are encouraged by the increase in total funding for GSPT and the inclusion of funds for operations and maintenance as well as acquisition and capital projects.

Unfortunately, the need across our state is so great that in order to adequately meet acquisition, capital and operation needs in our communities, the total dedicated amount must be increased from \$175 million to \$206 million a year. (Please refer to attached document, which includes our funding request and information about this need.) Funding in addition to this amount would be necessary to adequately meet the needs of important programs beyond acquisition, capital and operations, such as Blue Acres.

While the GSPT has been a tremendous success, the need still vastly outstrips the available dollars, even if the GSPT is renewed at higher levels. For example, well over \$450 million in municipal and non-profit Green Acres applications have gone unfunded; and only one-third of the farmland identified by the State Department of Agriculture as critical to the retention of farming as a viable industry in New Jersey has been preserved.

We urge you to support this legislation and the recommended increase in funding as a critical investment in the quality of life in our communities and our economy. Protecting open spaces stabilizes local property taxes. The acquisition of open space, unlike new developments, does not burden the municipal tax role. These areas quickly pay for themselves, and then provide long-term savings and substantial economic and environmental benefits to communities.

2/27

These areas also support the growth of our state and local economies by increasing retail and tourism activity and attracting new industries and skilled workers to communities across New Jersey. In addition, they create a high quality of life that attracts taxpaying businesses and residents and redirects growth back into urban areas.

Funding for continued protection of open space also safeguards air and drinking water quality and provides important habitat for wildlife in all communities. These areas reduce air and water pollution impacts on public health and associated costs for health care and drinking water treatment. Open spaces also provide opportunities for hiking, jogging and other physical activity, which increases fitness and reduces obesity.

In addition, the Trust provides a vital match for the dedicated local open space taxes collected annually by all 21 counties and more than 225 municipalities. In order for local governments to continue receiving Green Acres and State Agriculture Development Committee (or SADC) grants, the GSPT must be replenished this year.

For these reasons, we encourage the Committee to support this legislation and to increase the total dedicated amount as a critical investment in the well-being of our economy and the quality of life in communities across the state.

Thank you for your consideration. If New Jersey Audubon Society or the Keep It Green Campaign can be of any further assistance, please feel free to contact me at (609) 392-1181.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joanna L. Wolaver', written over a horizontal line.

Joanna L. Wolaver
Conservation Project Coordinator

New Jersey – Keep It Green Campaign Partners

Access New Jersey
American Littoral Society
Association of NJ Environmental Commissions
Assoc. of NJ Rifle & Pistol Clubs, Inc.
Audubon Wildlife Society
Bayshore Discovery Project
Bayshore Saltwater Flyrodders
Camden Greenways
Cape May County Zoological Society
Capital to the Coast Bike Trail
Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries, Inc.
Clean Ocean Action
Coalition for Affordable Housing and the Environment
Coalition for Conservation
Cohansey Area River Preservation
Conservation Resources, Inc.
Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ
D&R Canal Watch
Delaware River Greenway Partnership
Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Elizabeth River/Arthur Kill Watershed Assoc
Environment New Jersey
Friends of Hopewell Valley
Friends of Island Beach State Park
Friends of Liberty State Park
Friends of Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge
Future City, Inc.
Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association
Great Swamp Watershed Association
Greater Newark Conservancy
GreenFaith
Hackensack Riverkeeper, Inc.
Hunterdon Coalition
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance
Ironbound Community Corporation
Isles, Inc.
Jersey Coast Anglers Association
Lucky 13 Hunt Club
Monmouth Conservation Foundation
Monmouth County Audubon Society
Morris Land Conservancy
NABA - North Jersey Butterfly Club
New Jersey Audubon Society
New Jersey Audubon Society's Nature Center of Cape May
New Jersey Beach Buggy Association
New Jersey Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation
New Jersey Conservation Foundation
New Jersey Conservation Officers' Association
New Jersey Division Society of American Foresters
New Jersey Environmental Federation

New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance
New Jersey Environmental Lobby
New Jersey Forestry Association
New Jersey Highlands Coalition
New Jersey Public Interest Research Group (NJPIRG)
New Jersey Recreation and Park Association
New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs
New Jersey Trout Unlimited
New Jersey Work Environment Council
New York/New Jersey Baykeeper
New York/New Jersey Trail Conference
North Byram Concerned Citizens
Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Inc.
Parvin State Park Appreciation Committee
Passaic River Coalition
Pinelands Preservation Alliance
Preservation New Jersey
Rahway River Association
Regional Plan Association
Sierra Club, New Jersey Chapter
Skylands CLEAN, Inc.
Somerset Horse & Pony Association
South Branch Watershed Association
South Jersey Land & Water Trust
Stony Brook Watershed Association
Surfrider Foundation – Jersey Shore Chapter
The Nature Conservancy in New Jersey
The Wildlife Society - New Jersey Chapter
Trust for Public Land
United Bowhunters of NJ
Upper Raritan Watershed Association
Washington Crossing Audubon Society
Weequahic Park Association

Supporters

Bowers Wildlife Art
Canal Tours & More
Ironwood Outdoor Center
Mindy Lighthipe – Studio 16
Ramsey Outdoor Stores
South Jersey Tourism Corporation

Necessary Funding Levels for the Renewal of GSPT

New Jersey – Keep It Green Campaign

New Jersey has been a national leader in preserving open space, historic sites and farmland over the past decade. However, the fund that makes New Jersey that leader – the Garden State Preservation Trust – is running out of money. Already the most densely populated state, New Jersey continues to face intense development pressure, and even the parks, natural areas and historic sites that are protected have suffered due to chronic under funding, especially in urban areas.

Therefore, we call on the State Legislature and the Governor to ensure passage of legislation by the end of March 2007 to result in a November 2007 ballot referendum to renew and strengthen the Garden State Preservation Trust (GSPT).

We must make this wise and necessary investment in order to ensure a high quality of life in New Jersey and our children's futures! More specifically, the renewal and strengthening of GSPT must:

- Create a stable source of constitutionally-dedicated funds for the preservation of open space, farmland and historic sites, as well as for operations and capital projects on these lands;
- Provide funding for the State as well as matching grants for local governments and nonprofits;
- Ensure parity for urban, suburban and rural communities across the state; and
- Provide funding at the following levels:

Category	Necessary Funding Level
<i>Acquisition</i>	\$225 million a year
<i>Capital Projects</i>	\$100 million a year <i>(This amount is in addition to the \$35 million a year provided by passage of Ballot Question #2 and should include matching grants for local governments.)</i>
<i>Operations</i>	\$56 million a year <i>(This amount is in addition to the \$48 million in the FY07 budget and includes \$36 million a year for the State and \$20 million a year in matching grants for local governments.)</i>
<i>Total</i>	\$381 million a year <i>(The acquisition and capital funds could be provided by bonding an annual dedicated stream of approximately \$150 million.)</i>

The renewal and strengthening of GSPT must be guided by the following financial principles:

- 1) GSPT should be renewed and strengthened to provide sufficient funding for acquisition and capital projects for at least ten years.
- 2) The funding source used must be socially just and result in no adverse environmental impacts.
- 3) Any park, natural area and historic site fees, related licenses, farmland assessment rollbacks and other similar funding sources should be used to directly benefit open spaces, farmlands and historic sites.
- 4) Matching grants should be provided and partnerships should be encouraged to maximize the leveraging ability of State funds.
- 5) Funding for operations should not be bonded and should be ongoing.
- 6) In addition to the stable source of funding, diverse strategies should be used to meet additional acquisition, capital and stewardship needs, including Transfer of Development Rights, non-contiguous clustering, regulatory protections, and corporate and individual donations.

For more information, please contact Joanna Wolaver, New Jersey Audubon Society at joanna.wolaver@njaudubon.org or (609) 392-1181.

New Jersey – Keep It Green

Investment in Our Communities: Renew and Strengthen GSPT Today

The Garden State Preservation Trust (GSPT), New Jersey's funding mechanism for open space, farmland and historic preservation, will run out of money in early 2007. At the same time, our state continues to face intense development pressure, and even the parks, natural areas and historic sites that are protected have suffered due to chronic under funding, particularly in urban areas.

The Garden State Preservation Trust: A Vital Program

- Already the most densely populated state, New Jersey will reach full build out in less than 25 years. We must protect our valuable open spaces, farmland and historic sites before it is too late.
- Protecting these areas is vital to the long-term health of our state's economy.
- Our cities rely on well-maintained green areas for livable neighborhoods and a high quality of life.
- Preserving open space safeguards our public water supply and water quality in our rivers and streams.
- Every New Jersey resident deserves high-quality, accessible neighborhood parks, natural areas and historic sites to enjoy with their families.

Running Out of Funds for Land Acquisition and Capital Projects

Since its creation in 1998, the GSPT has enabled the State of New Jersey, its local governments, and non-profits to acquire over 432,000 acres of parks, open space and farmland. While the GSPT has been a tremendous success, the need still vastly outstrips the available dollars, even if the GSPT is renewed at higher levels.

- Well over \$450 million in municipal and non-profit Green Acres applications have gone unfunded.
- Acquisition costs in the Highlands alone could run to more than \$1 billion.
- The New Jersey Historic Trust has received capital and planning grant requests totaling more than 3 times the \$6 million in grant funds available each year.
- There is an estimated \$250 million backlog in capital repairs and improvements at State parks alone. Many millions more are needed for improvements at county and local parks.
- Only one-third of the farmland identified by the State Department of Agriculture as critical to the retention of farming as a viable industry in New Jersey has been preserved.

Steady Decline in Services and Maintenance

- Additional funding for operations, maintenance and stewardship within the Trust is critical to ensuring safe, accessible and well-maintained beaches, parks, natural areas and historic sites in communities across the state.
- The inability to maintain our parks has led to the closure of portions of these areas for long periods of time. For example, Bulls Island State Park campgrounds are closed indefinitely due to Delaware River flooding.
- The continuation of current funding trends could lead to the closure of various park facilities and the loss of urban fishing and derby programs that serve thousands of children throughout the state.
- Ensuring well-maintained and staffed natural areas is critical to our state and local economies.
 - Each year, wildlife-related recreation, including fishing, hunting and wildlife watching, generates approximately \$3.9 billion, creates over 37,000 jobs and brings in nearly \$150 million in sales tax revenue to New Jersey.

Steady Decline in Services and Maintenance, Cont.

- **Lack of funding has resulted in severe staffing shortages.**
 - Despite increasing the State's open space acquisitions by 350,000 acres, or 1/3 of the total amount in the last decade, the Division of Parks and Forestry staffing fell by 1/3 from 550 to 418 over the same period with more retirements expected.
 - More specifically, due to insufficient funding, the State Park Service has been unable to fill approximately 130 vacant superintendent, State park police officer, maintenance staff, interpretive specialist and others positions.
 - This lack of funding has also resulted in the inability of the State Forestry Service to fill approximately 13 vacant forest fire warden, forest fire equipment maintenance staff, foresters and others positions.
 - The staff employed by the Division of Fish and Wildlife under the Hunter and Anglers account is significantly less than any other time in the history of the agency. In the 1980's, there were approximately 225 staff members; now there are only approximately 190.

Urban Areas Shortchanged

Numerous studies have determined that urban green areas increase property values, support neighborhood revitalization, and promote healthy lifestyles, particularly for children, who are especially susceptible to childhood asthma and obesity. However, New Jersey's cities lag woefully behind their counterparts elsewhere in the country in terms of available open space.

- Newark has the lowest ratio of open space to population of any major American city.
- Hudson County has identified hundreds of millions of dollars of acquisition needs.

For more information, please contact Joanna Wolaver, New Jersey Audubon Society at joanna.wolaver@njudubon.org or (609) 392-1181.



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Shiloh

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Upper Deerfield

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Randy Dickinson
Stow Creek

November 3, 2006

Governor Jon Corzine

PO Box 001

Trenton, NJ 08625

RE: Fair and Dedicated Funding for Municipalities and Counties Where a Significant Amount of Land Has Been Removed from the Tax Rolls for Open Space Preservation

Dear Governor Corzine:

After reading about the approval of legislation appropriating \$80 million from the Garden State Green Acres Preservation Trust Fund to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for the acquisition or development of lands for recreation and conservation, Deputy Mayor Chester Riland of Downe Township and Committeeman George Garrison of Commercial Township asked that the Cumberland Development Corporation (CDC) Board discuss this matter at its September meeting.

Mayor Harry Wilson of Downe Township and Mayor Ronald Sutton of Commercial Township joined them in expressing concern because some of the targeted areas included many Cumberland County communities who already have a large amount of permanently preserved and non-taxable land but there is still no fair and permanent payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) system for these communities. As an example, Downe Township has a current tax rate of \$3.81 per hundred. If an acre of open space was assessed at a low figure of \$1,000, the taxes collected would equal \$38. Under the current PILOT formula they currently receive \$20 per acre, which is nearly a 50% loss of revenue. Additionally, nearly 70% of the land in Downe Township is currently tax exempt.

According to the State's news release, the funding would include \$9 million for the Delaware Bay Watershed Greenway, \$9 million for a Delaware River Watershed Greenway and \$4 million for Pinelands areas, all of which could further impact area municipalities and the County.

The Board of Directors of CDC, which includes the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, representing all of the Township Committee and Borough Council members from ten of Cumberland County's fourteen municipalities, unanimously approved a motion by Mayor Wilson, seconded by Mayor Sutton, asking CDC to seek your support for the efforts of several of our Townships, the County of Cumberland and other counties and municipalities to develop and implement a fair system of PILOT to municipalities and

We want to make it clear that we value our unique quality of life, in part provided by our vast amounts of open space and preserved lands. We also believe that these resources are of value to the State of New Jersey and all of its municipalities, counties and people.

What we seek is a permanent, adjustable funding source for PILOT for the affected municipalities and counties and one that fairly compensates them for the loss of tax base and for hosting and providing services for the open space that benefits the entire State.

We also believe that every new bill or bond issue that funds the purchase of land for open space preservation, recreation and other preservation purposes or provides funds for development, access or maintenance of those lands, should dedicate a percentage of the funding to compensation of towns and counties who have lost tax revenue and must still provide services.

We are willing to work with our legislators from Districts One and Three as well as others from other affected regions, pertinent state departments and agencies and your office to find a fair solution to this growing problem of significant loss of tax base in many municipalities in our region and elsewhere.

To this end, we suggest and would be willing to arrange a meeting of all parties concerned with this matter to begin to find a viable solution and to draft legislation and/or regulations that will help us reach a solution to this problem as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Anthony Stanzone
Executive Director

Cc: CDC Board of Directors
Governing Bodies of Downe, Commercial, Deerfield, Fairfield, Greenwich, Hopewell,
Lawrence, Maurice River, Shiloh, Stow Creek and Upper Deerfield.
NJ Legislators from Districts One and Three
Cumberland County Board of Freeholders
Salem County Board of Freeholders
Cape May County Board of Freeholders
Atlantic County Board of Freeholders
New Jersey State League of Municipalities
New Jersey Conference of Mayors
Southern NJ Freeholders Association





CAHE

Coalition for Affordable Housing & the Environment

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Testimony of Paul Chrystie, Executive Director
On ACR-10
February 27, 2007

The Coalition for Affordable Housing and the Environment is comprised of nearly forty organizations who share the goals of revitalized cities, a clean environment, and adequate affordable housing for New Jersey residents. I am pleased to be here today to support ACR-10.

The Garden State Preservation Trust has been a tremendous success, but it must be replenished because we still have critical needs to address. Open space, farmland and historic preservation in New Jersey requires an annual investment of at least \$206 million. That amount would provide \$150 million a year for acquisition and capital projects -- which bonding could increase to \$325 million a year -- and \$56 million a year to fund operations and maintenance needs that have been overlooked for far too long.

We must also ensure that urban areas participate equitably in the program this time. Numerous studies have shown that green spaces in urban communities not only provide critically-needed habitat resources, but also increase property values, support neighborhood revitalization, and promote healthy lifestyles, especially for children.

The Coalition applauds the sponsors for raising the issue of "Blue Acres" needs. However, we believe that these needs should be met in addition to, and not in competition with, the other important components of ACR-10, and we look forward to discussing this issue with you as the bill moves forward.

Renewing and strengthening the Garden State Preservation Trust will protect our environment and, if done equitably, promote urban revitalization. We support ACR-10 and we look forward to working with the sponsors to improve it and put this important question before the voters this year.

*League of Municipalities - Submitted to Govt (GREENE
FROM GEORGE GARRISON
COMMERCIAL TWP.*

**APPROVED BY THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE, November 14, 2006
Conference Resolution No. 2006 - 03**

**Resolution to Establish a Permanent PILOT Program and Establish a Formula to Increase
PILOT Payments as Property Values Increase**

WHEREAS, in order to further broad State policy goals, the Legislature has granted property tax exemptions, based on the use to which the property is put; and

WHEREAS, such exemptions, absent other funding, shift the burden of supporting local government services and programs from the owners of such properties and to all other property owners in a municipality; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of this, and based on the principle of State Pay for State Mandate, the Legislature has enacted programs that provide some relief to those who must bear the burden shifted from tax exempt properties, in the form of Payments In Lieu Of Taxes, or PILOT, funding; and

WHEREAS, many municipalities rely on PILOT funding to offset the loss of tax ratables that results from such State mandated tax exemptions; and

WHEREAS, in regards to the PILOT funding for preserved lands, the Commissioner of DEP determines PILOT levels for each affected municipality; and

WHEREAS, there has been no adjustment in PILOT funding levels since the program began, despite the increased costs associated with municipal programs and services and despite increasing property values;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a permanent PILOT program be established with additional percentage increments of compensation and that a formula be created to keep PILOT payments on par with increasing property values;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that properties that are granted tax exempt status will remain preserved in perpetuity and any property currently in conservation/preservation status and granted tax exemption, if sold to any non tax exempt entity, will pay back to the municipality the actual taxes lost from the time the exemption was granted for a period of 20 years;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a committee be appointed to hear appeals if a municipality opposes the granting of tax exemption and the Commissioner of DEP overrides that opposition.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection and the Governor of the State of New Jersey.