



# The New Jersey NATURAL LANDS TRUST

## 1990 Annual Report

### LAND CONSERVATION

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With the continued development of land in New Jersey, the demand placed on the remaining open space intensifies. In 1990, the Trust continued its mission of conserving natural land for the preservation of natural diversity and for public enjoyment. In addition to acquiring both large and small tracts during the year, thus increasing its inventory of undeveloped property, the Trust began to develop long-range plans to protect significant tracts of land bordering existing Trust managed property or state, county, or municipally managed property. Larger parcels of land generally support a greater biological diversity than smaller parcels and provide extensive open space for passive recreation for the people of New Jersey.

All regions of New Jersey were represented in the 1990 land acquisitions, including a 147-acre tract that is an excellent representative of a southern New Jersey oak/pine forest. Efforts to protect land in Moorestown were continued by a citizens' group, Citizens Advocating Responsible and Equitable Zoning (CAREZ), which is



concentrating on acquiring properties within a 170-acre area. Land negotiations are conducted by CAREZ, and titles are transferred to the Trust. Land protection proceeded at the Congleton Wildlife Sanctuary in Sussex County, where the Trust currently owns 79 acres of wetlands and steep slopes and holds conservation easements on several adjacent properties.

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

*The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust was created in 1968 by the New Jersey State Legislature to preserve land in its natural state for the protection of natural diversity and for the enjoyment of the public. The Trust acquires open land through donations and, occasionally, through purchase. As a State-funded agency in but not of the Division of Parks and Forestry in the Department of Environmental Protection, the Trust is able to protect the land it manages from condemnation. The Trust is free to respond to land preservation opportunities as they arise and to accept land and endowments. An appropriation from the State allows for a small operating budget including salaries for three staff members. All land donations to the Trust and all policy must be approved by the Board of Trustees, which is composed of six members from the private sector and five from state government.*

## The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust Board of Trustees

*Policy for the Trust is set by an eleven-member Board of Trustees. Six members are appointed by the Governor from the recommendations of a nominating caucus of conservation organizations. Five members are State officials.*

**Chairman:** James J. Truncer  
**Vice Chairman:** John Weingart,  
*Director of Coastal Resources - DEP*

Edward F. Babbott  
Geoffrey Cromarty for DEP  
Nicholas Conover English  
Harvey Fisher for State Treasurer  
Douglas Berman  
James Hall for DEP  
Commissioner Scott A. Weiner  
Honorable Walter Kavanaugh,  
*Assemblyman, State House*  
*Commission Representative*  
Frank Leary  
Newton LeVine

**Secretary/Treasurer:** David F. Moore

## Staff

Thomas F. Hampton, *Executive Director*  
Beverly Mazzella, *Real Estate*  
*Coordinator*  
Judeth Piccinini, *Counsel*  
Martin Rapp, *Ecologist*  
JoAnne Ruscio, *Management Assistant*

## FINANCIAL REPORT

The Trust received a \$90,000 appropriation in the State budget to cover normal operating costs. Cash assets represent those liquid funds used for normal operating expenses. These assets are expected to decrease over the first six months of 1991. State appropriations for operating expenses are received in July. Private donations also were received for uses specified by the donor or dedicated by the Board. Detailed copies of the 1990 Financial Report for the Trust are available upon request.

### BALANCE SHEET - GENERAL OPERATING

CURRENT ASSETS	DECEMBER 1990
Cash - Checking	\$ 50,497.86
Cash - State Accounts	40,400.06
General Investment Funds	263,891.45
Shorebird Fund Value	994,988.38
Receivable - Lakehurst/Earle	.00
Receivable - Coastal Zone Management	10,000.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,359,777.75</b>
CURRENT LIABILITIES	DECEMBER 1990
Donor Dedicated Funds	
Hovnanian Management Fund	\$ 16,999.49
Congleton Management Fund	17,432.51
Hamilton Preserve Acquisition Fund	16,713.61
Wetland Acquisition Fund	95,820.62
Board Dedicated Funds	
Land Management Fund	59,379.81
Hiss Acquisition	2,724.47
FY 91 Operating Budget	5,487.56
Public Awareness Fund	2,079.39
Shorebird Dedicated Fund	
Encumbered Shorebird Funds	624,702.03
Unencumbered Shorebird Funds	370,286.35
Nondedicated Investment Funds	47,253.99
General Net Worth	100,897.92
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$1,359,777.75</b>

## DONORS

*The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust gratefully extends its thanks to those who have donated land or funds to the Trust in 1990 to help preserve and protect New Jersey's natural heritage.*

Charles and Margaret Aitken  
Edward and Marie Ambrose  
William and Margaret Atwood  
Ralph and Johanna Brunson  
CAREZ Association  
Committee for a Clean America  
Fred and Rosemary DiMarco  
Albert G. Driver  
Katherine Gabber  
DeWitt B. Griffiths

Hamilton 330 Associates  
Edward and Diane Heckendorn  
Irene and Howard Heemsath  
William and Winifred Hill  
Hovsons Inc.  
Joel Jacovites  
Harry and Estelle Katz  
George Korn  
David and Mary Lampe  
John and Joan McKeon

Claire Parker  
Cheryl Richardson  
Richard and Linda Schefflen  
Joseph Summonte  
Ralph Thulin  
Fred and Sandra Vineyard  
James and Rhonda Vinson  
John and Theresa Viola  
Errico and Joanne Violante



# STEWARDSHIP

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## Management

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust currently is responsible for the care and protection of over 3,500 acres of wetlands, forests, river corridors, and meadows supporting a wide diversity of habitat for species native to New Jersey. When land is received by the Trust, the staff compiles a natural resource inventory of the property and develops a management plan that maximizes the appropriate use for the benefit of nature and people.

To aid in land management, the Trust has developed a program that enlists the help of volunteers, including local residents and officials, land donors, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and members of conservation organizations. These volunteers aid in trail management, boundary posting, trash clean-up, wildlife surveys, and habitat management. In 1990, over 300 volunteer hours and an incalculable amount of energy and enthusiasm were contributed to the Trust's land-management program. This figure does not include the many hours devoted by volunteers to the monitoring of these areas to watch for the existing or potential abuse of the land. The expertise of the volunteers ranges from the construction of houses for purple martins to conducting nature walks through the preserves.

With funding from the Trust, the Endangered and Nongame Species Program, in the New Jersey Division of Fish, Game & Wildlife, conducted research along the shores of the Delaware Bay to compile a list of priority sites for acquisition that would help protect areas used for

feeding and resting by the shorebirds migrating from South America to the Arctic tundra. Research included aerial surveys of beaches and marshes, banding of birds, and radio tracking to determine habitat use.

Under the direction of the New Jersey Audubon Society, shorebird wardens were stationed at important beaches in Cape May County and Cumberland County where they talked with over 1,900 people about the significance of the shorebird feeding and the necessity of not disturbing the shorebirds on the beach.

## Education

To encourage protection of the environment through the preservation of natural lands, the Trust sponsored several educational events at various preserves for school children during Environmental Education Week in April. Trust volunteers led walks through the Crossley Preserve in Ocean County and the Taylor Wildlife Preserve in Burlington County, identifying plants and wildlife as well as providing some local history. In the spring and fall, Trust volunteers also led nature walks for adults at several preserves.

During the past year, the Trust office served as a resource for individuals interested in starting local land trusts. A list of publications and conservation organizations are available from the office for local residents who are considering organizing land protection efforts in their communities.

## LAND PROTECTION PUBLICATIONS

To promote the protection of land in New Jersey, the Trust has published a brochure, **Conservation Easements**, that explains how land held in private ownership can be protected. The brochure presents an overview of the conservation easement and gives illustrated examples of three conservation easements held by the Trust. Copies of the brochure are available from the Trust office.

Also available from the Trust office is **The Landowner's Options Handbook**, published in 1989 by The Nature Conservancy and the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust. The handbook outlines a series of options for landowners who would like to preserve the natural attributes of their land. It illustrates how property owners can work together with private nonprofit conservation organizations and government agencies to preserve open space through a variety of methods that can be tailored to individual needs. Over 2,000 handbooks were distributed to the public in 1990.



# CAN WE KEEP NEW JERSEY A GARDEN STATE?

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by Frank Leary

We should perhaps be asking ourselves if the designation "The Garden State" is becoming too ironic for us to continue to use it.

Open land is essential to the physical and spiritual well-being of humankind, and it is the open spaces of New Jersey that first earned the state its accustomed nickname. But pressures to consume open land have caused the state to lose a measure of its garden-freshness, and the loss rate, although momentarily slowed, still is accelerating.

Public policy toward open space is diffused by conflicting goals. The idea that growth is a good thing, a necessary thing, has the status almost of a religious principle, not only among politicians, but also among the people they represent. Growth has become a goal that cannot be questioned. Yet the primacy of the goal of growth at the heart of public policy threatens any coherent open-space policy or program.

Economic realities, of course, would appear to favor growth, if considered in isolation from other human factors. Political realities work against rational open space policies, too: the votes are in the cities, open lands are not, and urbanites do not always understand the wisdom of maintaining lands in a natural state. To preserve open, natural land requires the ability to see beyond current realities into the long future, where people can be perceived either in balance with the rest of the natural world or in conflict with it and, in destroying significant portions of the natural world, destroying themselves.

There are mechanisms by which land can be retained in its natural state, even in this once garden-like Garden State. And although the conventional mechanism is public ownership, it is important to note that the public body does not

have to own the land to ensure that it is kept open and free.

Land, after all, differs from other property in that ownership is not absolute: it involves, rather, a cluster of rights which may be subject to limitation in the public interest. This interest can be served by allocation of some of those rights without purchase of the property by the public body.

Regulation is a useful tool to conserve open space and is now being used to conserve some natural areas. Steep slopes, stream corridors, flood-hazard areas, wetlands, and habitats of rare species instantly come to mind. The "taking" issue continues to dilute the effectiveness of some modes of regulation.

Market solutions, which involve changes in tax policy, deserve a more comprehensive trial. The essential need here is to educate municipal, county, and state government to understand the importance of open land, and thus persuade them to impose taxes on developments or improvements, while drastically relieving the tax burden on undeveloped or unimproved land. As it stands now, holding land in an undeveloped state is an expensive luxury for many people who, if their tax burden were relieved, would be moved to continue to leave their property undeveloped, to hold moderate and large tracts in their natural state.

In this most densely populated state in the Union, the preservation of natural land, of open space, should be a high priority element of public policy. Government at all levels should recognize the significance of the protection of open space with regard to most other aspects of government action. If New Jersey loses its garden-freshness, growth and other measures of progress will lose their meaning.

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*Frank Leary has served as a member of the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust Board of Trustees since 1984. He has been involved in environmental affairs in New Jersey for over 20 years and currently works as an environmental consultant.*



**The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust**

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