

MEADOWLANDS CONSERVATION TRUST



2012 ANNUAL REPORT

Message from the Chairman and the CEO



Chairman
Captain Bill Sheehan



Chief Executive Officer
Bernard M. Nangle

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Meadowlands Conservation Trust (MCT), we are pleased to present to you our 2012 Annual Report. The Trust was founded to preserve environmentally sensitive open space within the Hackensack River watershed, an absolutely vital mission in the most developed region of the most densely populated state in the nation. The watershed includes 51 towns in Bergen and Hudson Counties.

The preservation of open spaces and natural areas for perpetuity provides tremendous benefits for people, wildlife and the environment. Natural areas are essential to a healthy ecosystem, providing critical habitats for many animal species. Their pervious surfaces absorb rainwater and runoff, which reduces flooding and absorbs contaminants, stemming the flow of harmful chemicals like pesticides into the Hackensack River. The scenic vistas and opportunities for passive recreation afforded by protected open space along the river, and a cleaner watershed, add greatly to the quality of life in Northern New Jersey.

We are excited to report that in 2012 the MCT created a three-year Strategic Plan that will enhance our capabilities to advance and bolster our mission. The plan outlines major objectives that include building a stronger identity, forming a volunteer network and raising environmental awareness about the benefits of land preservation. These goals will be achieved in part by a strong community outreach campaign to increase the Trust's visibility in the community regarding our available programs and activities, as well as the important role that the MCT serves in protecting and improving the Hackensack River watershed.

Best Regards,

Captain Bill Sheehan, Chairman
Bernard M. Nangle, Chief Executive Officer



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Meadowlands Conservation Trust Board of Trustees



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(Save the Watershed
Action Network)*



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Development of MCT Strategic Plan

The Board of Trustees in 2012 tasked staff with developing an MCT Strategic Plan. Two public visioning sessions were convened to formulate goals and strategies to be included in the plan and to set priorities. Staff researched missions, visions and core values of land trusts in New Jersey and around the United States to provide the board with valuable baseline information. Staff also reviewed the functions that other land trusts assumed as part of their operations in order to meet their land acquisition and maintenance objectives. The Board of Trustees approved the MCT 2013-2016 Strategic Plan in February 2013.

MCT Overview

The Meadowlands Conservation Trust was established by an act of the New Jersey State Legislature in 1999 and empowered to obtain land through fee simple acquisitions and conservation easements for the purpose of permanently preserving wetlands, waterways and environmentally sensitive open space in the Hackensack River watershed. Land acquired by the MCT is preserved in perpetuity so that New Jersey residents may benefit from the many advantages that such ecologically sensitive tracts offer, including flood storage capacity, clean water, wildlife habitat and passive recreation.

The Trust's focus area is located within New Jersey's portion of the Hackensack River watershed, whose headwaters flow from Rockland County, N.Y. south to Newark Bay. New Jersey's portion of the river is 31 miles long. The Hackensack River watershed encompasses approximately 85 square miles. In the southern section of the watershed, the New Jersey Meadowlands contains more than 8,400 acres of urban wetlands, waterways and open space less than 10 miles from New York City. Many species of flora and fauna can be seen in the watershed. That includes more than 280 bird species, 34 of these birds are listed on New Jersey's threatened, endangered and species of special concern lists.

Preserving land to enhance the quality of the property for the health and enjoyment of the people who live there now and in the future is of the utmost importance. Support from all levels of government has been crucial in making the Trust and its assets a reality. To fund land preservation in the watershed, the MCT may apply for grants, receive donations (money and land), and generate other forms of revenue, including the sales and renewals of Meadowlands Conservation license plates sold by the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission.

The MCT Strategic Plan should be viewed as a guide for staff and board members to help meet stated goals and to fulfill tasks that are in alignment with the Trust's mission. This Strategic Plan was created in a manner that identifies specific actions or strategies that will help the MCT achieve the plan's goals over a three year time period. The plan should be considered flexible and can be easily modified.



Mission

To protect and preserve environmentally sensitive land in the Hackensack River watershed and Meadowlands region.

Vision

Preserve land in perpetuity for purposes of natural resource conservation and enhancement including wetlands mitigation sites and banks, open space and scenic vistas that are safe and accessible to the general public, and passive outdoor recreation in close proximity to where people live and work.

MCT Properties



Emerson Woods, Emerson.



Skeetkill Marsh, Ridgefield.



Norwood Central Woods, Norwood.

Name of Property	Municipality	Acreage	Fee Simple (FS) Conservation Easement (CE)	Date Acquired
Emerson Woods	Emerson	19	CE	Prior to 12/2003
Richard P. Kane Natural Area	Carlstadt & South Hackensack	587	FS	3/25/2005
Environmental Education Pavilion at River Barge Park	Carlstadt		Part of Richard P. Kane Natural Area	
Demarest Clarke	Demarest	3	CE	10/28/2005
Demarest Pine Hills Terrace	Demarest	18	CE	12/8/2008
Norwood Central Woods	Norwood	100	CE	9/11/2006
Norwood Fox Hill West	Norwood	65	CE	10/24/2007
Skeetkill Creek Marsh	Ridgefield	15.9	FS	9/12/2008
Teaneck Pomander Walk	Teaneck	> 1	CE	10/20/2009

Richard P. Kane Wetland Mitigation Bank

The Richard P. Kane Wetland Mitigation Bank has been established to restore environmentally sensitive wetlands that had previously been threatened by development and subject to degradation. Its establishment, use, operation and maintenance enhance and conserve these wetlands by re-establishing the marsh’s wildlife and plant habitats. Restoration also improves the wetlands ability to absorb flood waters and filter contaminated sediments.

After being cut off from the tidal influence of the Hackensack River for nearly a century, hydrologic flow to the marsh plain was permanently re-established in August 2012. The restoration has resulted in approximately 240 acres of tidal emergent marsh, streams, mudflats, freshwater forested wetlands and an open water ecosystem comprised of native Spartina-dominated plant communities that have replaced the invasive common reed Phragmites. The restored wetlands provide habitat for a wide variety of wetland-dependent and terrestrial wildlife species, including fish, crabs, insects

and birds. The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), New Jersey Transit Corporation (NJ Transit), New Jersey Turnpike Authority (NJ Turnpike) and the Port Authority of NY & NJ (PANYNJ) can buy wetland mitigation credits from the mitigation bank that can be used to compensate for authorized wetland impacts for necessary transportation-related projects in the New Jersey Meadowlands District.

The Kane Wetland Mitigation Bank was made possible through a public/private partnership between Kane Mitigation, LLC, a member of the EnviroFinance® Group of companies, and the Meadowlands Conservation Trust, without the use of any taxpayer funds.

For more information about the Kane Wetland Mitigation Bank, please contact the Bank Sponsor at 916-326-5225 or kaneinfo@efg-bp.com, or the Meadowlands Conservation Trust at 201-777-2410.

Environmental Education Pavilion

The Robert Ceberio Environmental Education Pavilion is located on

property owned by the MCT in Carlstadt, adjacent to the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission’s River Barge Park. The 635-square-foot, open-air structure features a thatched roof made of New Jersey Phragmites and provides an outdoor classroom whose setting demonstrates first-hand the importance of environmental preservation. Mr. Ceberio, the NJMC’s former executive director, retired in 2010. The pavilion honors his commitment to public service and education during his 30-year career with the Commission. Mr. Ceberio was also a longtime MCT board member.

River Barge Park’s construction incorporated and repurposed many existing elements from the property’s former use as the iconic Barge Club restaurant. Vintage wood timbers were salvaged from three turn-of-the-century barges and used as framing in the park’s educational pavilion and as site furnishings, wheel stops and sign posts. Nautical artifacts including bollards, channel markers and anchors from the Barge Club restaurant were restored to keep history alive and to give the park its special power of place. A series of sign panels was designed to highlight the site’s colorful cultural and ecological history.





Working with Volunteers

Creation of Friends of MCT, a volunteer network

The Friends of MCT network of volunteers is being created to recruit dedicated volunteers with an interest in environmental stewardship who may be called upon to assist with events, site clean-ups, outreach projects and other Trust tasks. With a limited staff, a robust volunteer program is a wonderful asset to add to the MCT's operation.

Skeetkill Creek Marsh Clean-Ups

Several times a year, crews of local volunteers don their waterproof boots and jeans and pitch in to clear debris from the water's edge at Skeetkill Creek Marsh in Ridgefield. The park is an oasis for employees of neighboring warehouse and industrial facilities to enjoy their lunch or an afternoon break. Staff of companies like Genzyme Corporation have offered their assistance for clean-up days. Local civic and environmental organizations like the Ridgefield Environmental Commission, Hackensack Riverkeeper, Bergen County Audubon Society, and the Boys and Girl Scouts put out the call for volunteers for MCT site clean-ups. The old proverb, many hands makes light work, is so true. The MCT is very grateful to those who volunteer their time and we look forward to working with our new Friends of MCT network.

Photo courtesy of LightHawk.



Working with Scouts

Volunteer efforts led by Eagle Scout candidates from the local area have provided a positive impact at a number of locations throughout the Hackensack River watershed, including MCT properties. Scouts have worked with MCT staff and Trustees, contributing their time and resources to produce site enhancements as well as much needed new bird shelters.

Eagle Scout candidate Adam Baczynskyj from Troop 104 of Wayne managed the construction of 82 new Tree Swallow boxes between April and June 2012. He pursued donations for supplies and employed the manpower of local scouts and volunteers to build the bird boxes. The nesting boxes will be used to replace our aging supply at MCT and New Jersey Meadowlands Commission locations throughout the Hackensack River watershed. To date, 45 of Adam's Tree Swallow boxes have been placed in the marsh.

Eagle Scout candidate John Benducci of Dumont's Troop 1345 installed tree swallow boxes at Hackensack River County Park in Teaneck. John also conducted a beautification project at the park location. Captain Bill Sheehan, Chair of the MCT Board of Trustees, mentored John on his project.



Financial Information

REVENUES

Sale of Mitigation Rights	\$1,378,156
NJDMV - License Plate Sales	20,147
Grant Revenue	36,000
Interest Income	7,084
Total Revenues	\$1,441,387

EXPENDITURES

Fringe Benefits	\$12,043
Services	48,091
Repairs and Maintenance	12,697
Supplies	200
Total Expenditures	\$73,031



Meadowlands Conservation Trust License Plate

The Hackensack River watershed, one of the most important urban watershed systems in the nation, is undergoing dramatic recovery after centuries of pollution and unregulated waste disposal. The river, with its extensive coastal ecosystem, supports more than 280 bird species and a wide variety of other wildlife and offers a range of recreation opportunities. But there is still much to be accomplished.

Your purchase of a Meadowlands Conservation Trust license plate will help fund acquisitions and preservation of valuable open space and enhance the environment in the Meadowlands District and the entire Hackensack River watershed.

Meadowlands Conservation Trust license plates cost \$50. A portion of the yearly renewal charge for the plates supports the Trust's preservation efforts. Since 2004 through December 2012, the plate has earned \$206,494.00 for the Trust.



Show your support!

Purchase these plates to help preserve, protect, and enhance environmentally sensitive land in the Meadowlands.

Purchasing Meadowlands Conservation plates is easy.

- Buy them over the counter at any Motor Vehicle Commission office;
- Order online at <http://www.nj.gov/mvc>;
- Call 888-486-3339.

The MCT would like to thank the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission for its continued support and assistance.

ALPINE • BERGENFIELD • BOGOTA
CARLSTADT • CLIFFSIDE PARK • CLOSTER • CRESSKILL
DEMAREST • DUMONT • EAST RUTHERFORD • EMERSON
ENGLEWOOD • FAIRVIEW • FORT LEE • GUTTENBERG
HACKENSACK • HARRINGTON PARK • HASBROUCK HEIGHTS
HAWORTH • HILLSDALE • JERSEY CITY • KEARNY • LEONIA
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PARAMUS • PARK RIDGE • RIDGEFIELD
RIDGEFIELD PARK • RIVER EDGE • RIVER VALE
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TEANECK • TENAFLY • TETERBORO • UNION CITY
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP • WEST NEW YORK

If you would like more information on how you can help
preserve land in the Hackensack Meadowlands Watershed,
please contact the:

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