

CHAPTER IV

INVENTORY OF LAND AREAS, FUNDING, PARTNERS, AND ACQUISITION METHODS

LAND AREAS:

In order to establish a basis for developing open space and recreation areas, an inventory of all existing federal, state, county, municipal and private open space and recreation areas was made. The location of all public, non-profit, and private open space is found on Map 1 Open Space Inventory. Table I titled Amount of Open Space in Public, Non Profit, Private and other Ownership is provided on the following page.

Federal Open Space

The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is the only federal land reserve in Warren County and contains the Appalachian Trail. In Warren County, the DWGNRA contains 10,749 acres which is the Pahaquarry section of Hardwick Township, and includes the northern portions of Blirstown and Knowlton Townships. In total the DWGNRA is over 67,000 acres along 40 miles of the Delaware River in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Allowable activities include hiking, biking, boating, rock climbing, fishing, back country camping.

State Open Space

State owned open space areas can be classified into two major categories Wildlife Management Areas, and Parks and Forests. State owned open space in Warren County increased from 13,797 acres in 1999 to 28,595 acres in 2007 due mostly to the expansion of existing wildlife management areas and parks and forests and the through the establishment of new WMA's.

TABLE I - AMOUNT OF OPEN SPACE ACREAGE IN PUBLIC, NON-PROFIT, PRIVATE AND OTHER OWNERSHIP

Municipality	Federal	State	County	Municipal Open and Recreation Space	*Actual Amount of School Rec. Space Provided (2002)	Non-Profit Preserved	Sub-Total Open Space Preserved	Non-Profit Not Preserved	Semi Public	*Private and other non-government non-profit	Sub-total Open Space not Preserved	Grand Total
Northern Region												
Blairstown township	426	1,501	0.0	50	25.0	179	2,181	436	1,200	151	1,787	3,968
Frelinghuysen township	0	807	0.0	12	5.0	868	1,692	0	0	457	457	2,149
Hardwick township	9,352	6,451	386.0	9	0.0	1,080	17,278	623	0	0	623	17,901
Hope township	0	1,660	0.0	120	1.0	0	1,781	101	0	20	121	1,902
Knowlton township	971	1,843	0.0	62	3.0	0	2,879	36	0	52	88	2,967
Regional total (Acres)	10,749	12,262	386	253	34	2,127	25,811	1,196	1,200	680	3,076	28,887
Percent of Total	100.0%	43.6%	23.6%	6.4%	13.2%	79.1%	54.5%	85.0%	30.0%	43.4%	44.1%	53.1%
Central Region												
Allamuchy township	0	4,662	0.0	744	6.0	205	5,617	0	0	106	106	5,723
Belvidere town	0	34	4.0	46	23.0	0	107	0	0	4	4	111
Hackettstown town	0	327	6.0	67	55.0	0	455	0	0	40	40	495
Independence township	0	615	32.0	219	8.0	175	1,049	85	0	5	90	1,139
Liberty township	0	1,653	0.0	50	5.0	0	1,708	0	0	9	9	1,717
Mansfield township	0	3,159	97.0	196	10.0	0	3,462	37	0	25	62	3,524
Oxford township	0	727	170.0	495	3.0	0	1,395	0	0	18	18	1,413
Washington borough	0	0	0.0	24	18.0	0	42	0	0	0	0	42
Washington township	0	259	305.0	878	38.0	0	1,480	0	0	224	224	1,704
White township	0	2,459	0.0	128	5.0	0	2,592	0	0	88	88	2,680
Regional (Acres)	0	13,895	614	2,847	171	380	17,907	122	0	519	641	18,548
Percent of Total	0.0%	49.4%	37.5%	72.3%	66.5%	14.1%	37.8%	8.7%	0.0%	33.1%	9.2%	34.1%
Southern Region												
Alpha borough	0	0	0.0	97	2.0	0	99	0	0	0	0	99
Franklin township	0	235	195.0	17	5.0	0	452	47	0	5	52	504
Greenwich township	0	0	84.0	266	5.0	0	355	0	0	20	20	375
Harmony township	0	1,345	142.0	101	7.0	0	1,595	37	2,800	150	2,987	4,582
Lopatcong township	0	62	217.0	114	6.0	0	399	5	0	172	177	576
Phillipsburg town	0	6	0.0	30	24.0	0	60	0	0	16	16	76
Pohatcong township	0	308	0.0	211	3.0	181	703	0	0	4	4	707
Regional total (Acres)	0	1,956	638	836	52	181	3,663	89	2,800	367	3,256	6,919
Percent of Total	0.0%	7.0%	38.9%	21.2%	20.2%	6.7%	7.7%	6.3%	70.0%	23.4%	46.7%	12.7%
Total Municipal Warren County	10,749	28,113	1,638.0	3,936.0	257.0	2,688	47,381	1,407	4,000	1,566	6,973	54,354

Prepared by Warren County Planning Department 11/20/07

* From the 2002 NJDEP Land Use Coverage Date

* Includes ballfields, golf courses, and common areas that may be owned by homeowner associations, religious institutions, non-profit organizations.

NJ WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

New Jersey's Wildlife Management Area System is administered by the Division of Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Land Management that preserves and enhances a diversity of fish and wildlife habitats as well as providing a variety of compatible recreational and educational opportunities for New Jersey residents and visitors. Statewide WMA's range in size from the .68 acre Delaware River Fishing Access Site in Pennsauken to the 30,000-acre Greenwood Forest Tract in Burlington and Ocean counties. WMA acreage represents more than 44% of New Jersey's state-owned public open space.

In Warren County the Wildlife Management Areas are the following:

WMA 1/NP 11. Alpha Grasslands Preserve in Pohatcong Township, 128 acres, the state has a 44% interest in the site. The balance is owned by the Phillipsburg Riverview Organization

WMA 2. Beaver Brook Wildlife Management Area in White and Knowlton Township, 606 acres

WMA 3. Belvidere Boat access with 7.02 acres in Town of Belvidere,

WMA 4. Buckhorn Creek Wildlife Management Area 711 acres in White and Washington Townships,

WMA 5. Columbia Lake Wildlife Management Area with 1,260 acres in Knowlton,

WMA 6. Hackettstown State Fish Hatchery, Hackettstown, 235 acres

WMA 7. Harmony Access Points (north and south on Delaware River) 26 acres in Harmony Township

WMA 8. Honey Run Wildlife Management Area, 79 acres in Hope Township,

WMA 9. Hummers Beach Access (Delaware River) 3.20 acres in Lopatcong Township,

WMA 10. Knowlton access (car top only) 12 acres in Knowlton Township,

WMA 11. Musconetcong River Wildlife Management Area in Mansfield, Washington Township, Franklin and Pohatcong Townships in Warren County and areas in Hunterdon and Morris County for a total of 1,332 acres.

WMA 12. Pequest Wildlife Management Area (east and west), 4,609 acres in Liberty, Mansfield and White Townships. The WMA contains programs about the raising of trout and the importance of natural resources, self-guided tours, and group programs are held by arrangement. The center offers an ongoing series of educational programs and special events.

WMA 13. Pohatcong Creek Wildlife Management Area (north and south) 129 acres in

Pohatcong Township

WMA 14. Rockport Wildlife Management Area, 1,062 acres, Mansfield Township, NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife facility where 50,000+ pheasants are raised for stocking on publicly accessible lands each year. Also features pens of exotic fowl, a section of the historic Morris Canal, and a short hiking loop.

WMA 15. Ratzman access with 7.42 acres in White Township.

WMA 16. White Lake Wildlife Management Area, total 923 acres in Hardwick Twp and Frelinghuysen Twp. The County of Warren owns 397 acres of the WMA in Hardwick Township.

NJ PARKS AND FORESTS

Statewide the Division of Parks & Forestry provides for the operation, management, maintenance and protection for 40 state parks, 11 state forests, three state recreation areas, 42 natural areas, four state marinas and more than 50 historic sites. Together, these sites total over 403,000 acres and are a critical component of New Jersey's open space and recreation infrastructure. Over 66 million people visited state park system facilities between FY 2003 and FY 2006, an average of close to 17 million a year. In FY 2006, the state park attendance was 17.8 million people (draft SCORP).

In Warren County the State Parks and Forests are:

SPF 1. Allamuchy Mountain State Park accounts for a total of 8,683 acres of open space in Warren, Sussex and Morris Counties. 3,390 acres are located in Allamuchy Township. Allowable activities include boating, hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, mountain biking, horseback riding trails, nature trails, birding, cross-country skiing, rock climbing area. The park includes the Allamuchy Natural Area, historic Waterloo Village and Saxton Falls, with remnants of the Morris Canal.

SPF 2. Stephens State Park contains 327 acres in Hackettstown and extends into Morris County. The total size of the park is 805 acres. Picnic areas, picnic shelter, playgrounds, fishing, boating/kayaking, hiking, biking, mountain biking, horseback riding trails, nature trails, birding, camping, cross-country skiing, seasonal nature programs. The Wild and Scenic Musconetcong River runs through the park.

SPF 3. Jenny Jump State Forest totals 4,288 acres on various tracts of land located in the Townships of Frelinghuysen, Independence, Hope, Liberty, and White. Allowable activities include picnic area, playground, overlook/viewing points, fishing, boating, hiking, mountain biking, nature trails, and camping.

SPF 4. Worthington State Forest is in Hardwick, Blirstown and Knowlton Townships. The forest covers 6,584 acres and is within the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. It contains picnic areas, playgrounds, overlook/viewing points, boating/boat launch, fishing, hiking, camping.

SPF 5. Paulinskill State Park in Knowlton Township, with 92 acres and functions as the trail head to the Paulinskill Valley Trail.

SPF 6. The Paulinskill Valley Trail traverses the Townships of Knowlton, Hardwick, Frelinghuysen, and Blairstown and continues into Sussex County. This is part of what was once the route of the New York, Susquehanna, and Western Railroad. The trail is conducive to multiple uses. It has a flat, cinder base and can be used safely for various trail uses, such as hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, and bicycling. It also provides access for fishing, canoeing, and individuals in wheelchairs.

County Open Space

Since 1999 County-owned open space increased from 670 acres to over 1,600 acres today. Until 1990, the County owned approximately four acres of open space, which is the County Courthouse Park in the Town of Belvidere.

From 1990 to 1995, the Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders have on the recommendation of the Board of Recreation Commissioners acquired 4,181 feet of the historic Morris Canal in Franklin, Greenwich, and Independence Townships on properties totaling nine acres. From 1995 to 1999, the Warren County Board of Freeholders based on the recommendation of the Board of Recreation Commissioners acquired 568 acres of open space lands and 57 acres of the historic Morris Canal totaling 11,229 feet or 2.13 miles. From 1999, when the last Open Space Plan was adopted, through 2006, the County acquired an additional 1,174 acres of Warren Trail and Morris Canal property, 14,179 feet or 2.69 miles of the Morris Canal were acquired during this time period. Of the 1600 acres acquired by the county 384 acres were for the Morris Canal Greenway, 797 acres were for the Warren Trail. A total of 31,250 feet or 5.9 miles of the Morris Canal are in county ownership currently. A comprehensive inventory of the properties acquired by the county since 1824 including the municipality, location, year acquired and cost, and held for public open space is found in Appendix E. Photographs of county open space properties are found in Appendix N.

The major land areas owned currently by the County of Warren include:

WMA 16 White Lake in Hardwick Township, contains unimproved hiking trails, car-top boat access, a 386-acre tract including a 69-acre glacial lake and adjoins 276 acres owned by New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife. The Warren County owned portion is managed by the Nature Conservancy in accordance with the White Lake Management Plan. The White Lake tracts are envisioned to be links in the Ridge and Valley Trail that would link the Paulinskill Trail to the Appalachian Trail. White Lake Natural Resource Area is characterized by rocky fertile farm fields, rocky exposures of the Kittatinny Limestone, sinkhole ponds, deciduous hardwood forest, and mature hemlock forest. The shores of White Lake are known to be home to as many as eight endangered plant species listed by the state and globally imperiled wetland plant community. The clarity of the water reveals the chalky “marl” bottom, which is an accumulation of shelled organisms and clay. These calcium-rich white clay marls give the lake its identity. The lake itself is a large, prolific, pristine, spring fed, limestone lake. These springs produce such large quantities of water that there

are no visible inlets that recharge the lake. Because of this quality and quantity of water, the whole area is classified as a trout maintenance watershed.

This site also offers historical and cultural resources. Found on the site is the stone wall remnants of a building used in the processing of marl into fertilizer for soils deficient in lime. Marl, a mineral more commonly known as calcium carbonate or dolomite, is a loose or crumbling earthy deposit of sand, silt, or clay. The lake was also used for ice harvesting, which was used for refrigeration in the early 1900's. Both commodities were shipped out of the area via railroad spur linked to the New York-Western-Susquehanna Railroad, now the Paulinskill Trail.

Warren Trail properties consisting of:

WT 1. Marble Hill in Harmony and Lopatcong Townships contains 272 acres of unimproved hiking trails and overlook/viewing points. These properties provide watershed protection to the Delaware River and because its contiguous forested areas provide coverage for neo-tropical song birds and other migratory song birds that use the Delaware River as a flyway during migration. The site also offers a wide biodiversity of upland deciduous forests, along with a major buffer for the Delaware River corridor. The site is also rich with cultural resources. It offers a glimpse of early iron ore exploration and houses one of the last two remaining steam engines of its size in the Northern Hemisphere.

These properties provide for approximately 2.25 miles of the Warren Trail which includes land areas owned by Lopatcong Township and the State. A trail head can be provided at the Delaware River at the pump house property.

WT 1.1 Pumphouse

The pumphouse property contains a 1913 Allis Chambers steam engine that supplied power to pump potable water to Phillipsburg and surrounding areas. The Friends of the NJ Railroad and Transportation Museum occupy the area and use it as an interim storage area of various types of transportation vehicles and equipment for placement at a future site of the NJ Transportation Museum. The Friends have cleaned and restored the pumphouse and steam engine and open the property to the public once per year.

WT 2. West Oxford Mountain

West Oxford Mountain in Oxford and Washington Townships, contains 428 acres of unimproved hiking trails, and overlook/viewing points. These properties provide for approximately 2.5 miles of the Warren Trail. The site offers a view of unique geological features, mature woodlands, note-worthy plant and wildlife habitats. Historical research has shown that the site was once used for mining and remnants of the operations remain. There are no existing structures or buildings of any sort remaining on the parcel except for the remains of an old school building lost in a fire, old mining roads and railroads, a circular stone-walled reservoir and an abandoned wood water tank adjacent to Mine Hill Road, once used to supply water to the Town of Oxford. The properties can be tied into the Historic Village of Oxford, enabling those visiting the village to venture to the W. Oxford Mountain properties and see the remnants of Oxford's historic past.

Morris Canal Greenway Properties consisting of :

MC 1. Lopatcong – Greenwich Area contains 5,356 feet of continuous preserved Morris Canal from Rt. 22 to Rt. 519. From Rt. 519 to N. Main Street in Stewartsville there is 3,080 feet of fee simple ownership and an additional 4,189 feet in a conservation easement with right to public access from the Hamlen tract to N. Main Street. In accordance with the easement public access to the easement area shall only occur once a park program has been established by the county in order to oversee the usage of the easement area by the public. A copy of the easements are included in the Appendix F.

Notable features on this segment include 20 acres of the 60-acre Hamlen farm in Greenwich that contains the Lopatcong Creek Stream Corridor, Inclined Plane #9, and a waste weir.

MC 1.1 Inclined Plane #9 West

The Morris Canal Incline Plane 9 West is approximately a 4-acre parcel located on the Greenwich Township – Lopatcong Township boundary line. It is designated Block 23, Lot 6 in Greenwich Township and Block 98, Lot 2.01 in Lopatcong Township.

The acquisition of the site was initiated as part of the Morris Canal Greenway Project proposed in the Warren County Open Space Plan. In 1994, the property was purchased by the County of Warren from Mr. James S. Lee and his wife. The land was purchased with the help of a matching grant from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Green Acres Program.

The site's boundary delineates the limits of the historic plane site and defines a 200 foot-wide band centered on the plane. Toward the west end of the district, the boundaries expand to a 500 foot-wide band to include the archeological sites of the plane's bypass and tailrace channel. Included on the property are the extensive archeological components of the plane in addition to the sites of structures that were associated with the plane. The only extant canal related building is the plane tender's house, which still serves as a dwelling. The old Morris Canal bridge site at the foot of Plane 9 West and just east of Warren County Route 519, forms the western boundary of the plane site.

Morris Canal Incline Plane 9 West was the highest and longest plane on the Morris Canal and was one of three planes with a double set of tracks.

MC 2. Greater Breadlock Park in Franklin Township. Contains 3,960 feet of the Morris Canal with properties totaling 250 acres.

MC 2.1 Bread Lock Park

The Bread Lock Park is a 17-acre parcel located on the south side of Route 57 about 2300 feet east of the Greenwich-Franklin Township boundary line in Franklin Township, Warren County, New Jersey. The subject site is designated Block 39, Lots 1.01, 2.01& 3.05. The street address is 2627 Route 57.

The acquisition of the site was initiated as part of the Morris Canal Greenway Project proposed in the Warren County Open Space Plan. In 1999, the property known as Bread Lock Park was purchased by the County of Warren. The land was purchased with the help of a matching grant from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Green Acres Program.

Morris Canal Lock 7 West was constructed to enable the canal to overcome an elevation change of 10 feet. Initially built in 1831, the lock was known as “Gardener’s Lock”, its name became the “Bread Lock” because a store on the site, run by the lock keeper’s wife, was known for its homemade pies and bread.

Future projects on this property are to restore the lock, rehabilitate the two barns, stabilize the remaining historic features, and rehabilitate the canal’s prism and towpath. There is a former cabinet shop that will be utilized as a site-specific museum for that area, with offices for county administration and to relocate the non-profit group called the Highlands Project into this facility.

MC 3. New Village Property contains a canal property consisting of 2.4 acres totaling 1,080 feet in length.

MC 4. Fancy Farm - Franklin Township contains 74.4 acres and 2,010 feet of Morris Canal

MC 5. Mohawk/Sams Properties, in Mansfield Township consisting of 83 acres and 2,180 feet of the Canal

MC 6. Port Murray Properties, contains 9.5 acres and 1,050 feet of the canal. In addition the property features a 1,500 access easement from Port Murray Road to the county owned properties. The Port Murray Boat Basin is located here, however the county does not own it.

MC 7. Florence Kuipers Memorial Park , Independence and Hackettstown, contains 6,857 feet of the canal. The park is dedicated to the memory of Florence Kuipers, an Independence Township resident and active member of the Morris Canal Committee, who was fatally injured in a horseback riding incident in December 1999. She often rode her horse on this stretch of the Canal.

MC 8. Towpath/Payne properties contains 2,570 feet in county ownership and an additional 2,020 feet in easement around the Towpath Apartments property. These properties provide a connection from CR 517 to over 1,500 feet beyond Bilby Road.

Municipal Open Space

Municipal-owned land often serve multiple uses. Intensely used small parks, such as playgrounds, playing fields, and picnic areas, are combined and closely linked with the community.

Many Warren County municipalities have combined open space and recreation facilities with local Boards of Education or a state sponsored program like Green Acres. In 1999, 957 acres were in municipal open space. As shown in Table I, currently, there are approximately 3,936 acres in municipal owned space that includes passive open space, athletic fields, and other recreational lands. Some of the land areas include municipal building properties and other vacant properties. A more

detailed review of the property listing should take place to determine how much of the land area is for public recreation and conservation. Local public schools have an additional 257 acres available for athletic fields

Semi-Public and Non Profit Open Space

These areas are owned by private entities or non profit agencies but make the lands available for public use. The largest areas of semi public and non-profit open space in Warren County are:

SP1. The Merrill Creek Reservoir and Environmental Resource Center in Harmony and Franklin Townships. The site encompasses 2,800 acres, including a 650-acre reservoir located atop Scotts Mountain in Harmony Township. Boating, fishing, nature study, and hiking are permitted on the 290-acre wildlife preserve. The visitors center includes displays on area history, mammals, birds and fish found in the area, and offers educational programs.

SP2. Yards Creek Station Recreation Area in Blirstown Township. There are 700 acres of open space and another 500 acres of water (associated with this site).

NP1. Blair Creek Greenway in Hardwick was purchased by the Ridge and Valley Conservancy using funds from the Municipal and Charitable Conservancy in 2004 and contains 124 acres. It is adjacent to Camp NoBeBosCo.

NP2. The YMCA Camp Ralph C. Mason in Hardwick was expanded using money from the Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund committee in 2002 and contains 97 acres. It is available for passive recreation.

NP3. Limestone Forest Preserve in Hardwick was purchased by the Ridge and Valley Conservancy in 2001 using funds from the MCCTF and contains 380 acres.

NP4. Hardwick Meadows Preserve in Hardwick was acquired by the Nature Conservancy and contains 142 acres.

NP5. Johnsonburg Swamp Preserve and Mud Pond was acquired by the Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Preservation, Inc. and a land donation in Frelinghuysen Township consisting of 610 acres.

NP6. The Ridge and Valley Conservancy acquired 42 acres in Frelinghuysen.

NP7. Beech Ridge Reserve in Blirstown consisting of 64 acres was acquired in 2003 with funding from the MCCTF.

NP8. Bear Creek Greenway in Frelinghuysen and Allamuchy contains 262 acres was acquired by the Ridge and Valley Conservancy. A portion of it was acquired using MCCTF funds in 1999.

NP9. Tranquility Farms, the Nature Conservancy acquired 127 acres in Allamuchy

Township. Tranquility was acquired through partnerships with Allamuchy Township, Allamuchy School, the Ridge and Valley Conservancy and the County.

NP10. The New Jersey Audubon Society was deeded two properties in Independence Township of approximately 175 acres. The site is located along Water Street and Ryan Road. The purpose of the donation is to ensure that a resting place for migrating birds and a suitable habitat for wild birds and other wildlife is preserved in perpetuity. A segment of the Bacon Run Creek flows through this site. Public access along nature trails for bird watching and passive recreation is planned for the site. An additional site was acquired by the NJ Audubon Society consisting of 32 acres in Allamuchy Township on Cat Swamp Road.

NP11/WMA 1. Phillipsburg Riverview Organization, owns 140± acres in Pohatcong as part of the grasslands acquisition.

NP12. The Phillipsburg Riverview Organization the New Jersey Conservation Foundation have access and management responsibilities on property consisting of 47 acres containing 15 lime kilns via a conservation easement. The lime kilns are visible from the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River, and the Black River and Western excursion train run that passes below.

NP13. The Hariton Sanctuary in Harmony Township is owned by the NJ Audubon Society.

Private Open Space

Private open space in Warren County are those places where people pay to recreate or are available only to those who belong to the organization that owns the property. These areas are the private campgrounds found in Knowlton Township, the boy scout camps in Blairstown and Hardwick Townships, the Warren County ARC campground in Knowlton Township, and Camp Merry Heart in Mansfield. Many of these places are not preserved as permanent open space but are listed in the plan as part of the inventory.

P1. Camp NoBeBosCo, Hardwick Township, contains 286 acres and is adjacent to the Delaware River Water Gap National Recreation Area and Blair Creek Greenway acquired by the Ridge and Valley Conservancy.

P2. Ralph C. Mason YMCA camp in Hardwick contains 226 acres of which 97 acres were preserved using funding from the MCCTFC.

P3. Yards Creek/ Central NJ Boy Scout Camp in Blairstown Township contains 436 acres.

P4. Princeton Blairstown Center containing 164 acres.

P5. Happiness is Camping, Hardwick contains 45 acres. An additional 110 acres were preserved using funding from the MCCTF.

P6. Spring Valley Church, Hardwick Township, one acre.

- P7. Roman Catholic Church, Frelinghuysen, contains 118 acres
- P8. Camp Taylor, Knowlton Township 154.5 acres
- P9. Camp Hope Conference and Renewal Center, Hope Township contains 95 acres.
- P10. Presbyterian Camp and Conference Center in Frelinghuysen contains 339 acres
- P11. Triplebrook Campground, Knowlton Township, 81.5 acres
- P12. Delaware River Family Campgrounds, Knowlton Township 40.3 acres
- P13. Warren County ARC, Knowlton Township contains 36 acres.
- P14. Camp Merry Heart of the Easter Seals in Independence and Mansfield Township contains 122 acres.
- P15. Warren County Fair Association, Harmony Township contains 37 acres.
- P16. Lawrenceville School Campgrounds in Franklin contains 47 acres.
- P17. Camp Mohican, Hardwick Township is located within the Delaware Water National Recreation Area and is operated by the Appalachian Trail Group.
- P18. Johnsonburg Swamp/Mud Pond, Frelinghuysen contains a 610 acres of which 144 acres are owned by Wildlife Preservation, Inc. The balance is owned by the Nature Conservancy.

Farmland Preservation

While land acquired by the county, state, and municipality for farmland preservation are not considered “public open space” as defined in this plan, the preserved farms are mapped in this plan. Preserved farmland is not open to the public and the farmer still retains many of the rights conveyed upon private property owners except that the right to develop the property has been acquired by the government. Nevertheless preserved farmland is important to open space preservation inasmuch as preserved farmland provides a permanent buffer to land development and maintains scenic landscapes. In addition, preserved farmland can provide for linkages in the greenway and trail acquisition efforts. Cooperation and coordination with the state, county and local farmland preservation programs is essential to ensuring that a publicly assessable open space network is created.

The location of preserved farmland is shown on the Open Space Inventory map. According to the September 2007 draft County Farmland Preservation Plan, 15,125 acres of farmland have been preserved permanently. Allamuchy contains the most preserved farmland with over 2,000 acres preserved. Regionally, the south has the most farmland preserved with 5,565 acres. The north and central contain 4,825 and 4,734 acres respectively.

FUNDING:

In order to establish a basis for funding open space and recreation areas, an inventory and description of existing county, municipal, federal, state, and private funding sources is provided.

A. Warren County Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund

In the November 1993 election, a non-binding referendum was placed on the ballot to provide dedicated revenue for land acquisitions. It polled the residents of Warren County on their sentiment for the creation of an Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund. Warren County voters approved this referendum by a 2 to 1 ratio. Initially, the fund began collecting revenue by raising the property tax by a rate of \$.02 per \$100 of total county equalized real property valuation. This equates to a dedicated tax of \$20 for every \$100,000 of property value. The non-binding referendum gave the elected officials of Warren County the opportunity to enact a system for:

- Protecting wetlands, stream corridors, aquifers and aquifer recharge areas.
- Protecting existing park lands and provide outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Protecting and/or preserve areas of scenic, historic, and cultural value.
- Preserving prime farmland, including small operations, which receive low priority from the present state program.

Twenty-five percent of the trust fund was set aside for the Warren County Board of Recreation Commissioners to acquire lands in accordance with the open space plan. Annually, \$280,000 was raised for county acquisition of open space lands when the trust fund was established in 1995.

In 1997, the official name of the trust fund was changed to the Warren County Open Space, Recreation and Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund in accordance with the State Statute.

In the 1999 ballot referendum, the citizens voted to increase the amount of tax money collected from two cents (\$.02) to four cents (\$.04) per one hundred dollars (\$100) of total county equalized real property valuation. In addition to the existing approved purposes, historic preservation was approved as an eligible expense.

In 2002, the citizens voted to increase the amount of money collected from \$.04 to \$.06 to fund farmland, open space, and historic preservation, maintenance, and debt service.

Table II shows the amount of revenue that was anticipated each year for each purpose according to the allocation formula as provided for in the adopted rules and procedures from 2000 through 2006. Table III shows the actual expenditures and reimbursements to the Trust Fund for 2000 through 2007.

1. Procedures and Rules

To balance the needs of farmland, open space, and historic preservation, and to provide an understandable and predictable means to administer the Trust Fund, the Board of Chosen Freeholders adopted a set of Procedures and Rules on June 26, 1996. The Procedures were revised several times with the last revision occurring on November 22, 2005. The revisions were adopted to reflect changes in the Trust Fund statutes, to add purposes, to increase the rate of taxation, to revise the allocation percentages for the purposes, and to clarify county procedures. Any changes to the established procedures must take place via Freeholder resolution.

2. Allocation of Funding

By Freeholder resolution and effective January 1, 2003, the funding allocation was changed to 55% Farmland Preservation through the County Agriculture Development Board (CADB), 25% for projects recommended by the Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee (MCCTF), and 20% Open Space through the Board of Recreation Commissioners (BRC). In 2008, approximately \$1.6 million should be available for the acquisition of properties defined in the County Open Space Plan through the BRC.

Board of Recreation Commissioners

The BRC may recommend appropriations in any amount up to 20% of the total annual projected trust fund revenues for the acquisition of land for recreation and conservation purposes, the maintenance of those lands, for historic preservation, and debt service on funds and other loans initiated to acquire lands sooner. The current portion of debt service obligations due and payable during the year, property maintenance cost and program staff salaries and administrative costs shall be deducted from the amount available for these purposes. The balance of the BRC's allocation may be used for recommending additional acquisitions and new projects.

The BRC shall be permitted to recommend expenditures for the maintenance of county lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes. The Open Space Trust Fund appropriation for annual property maintenance cost may not exceed 10% of the total Open Space Tax Revenue collected.

TABLE II - Open Space Tax Allocation per Trust Fund Rules & Procedures

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Farmland Pres. (CADB)	\$937,640	\$1,002,403	\$1,097,223	\$2,683,412	\$3,035,387
MCCTF	\$625,093	\$668,269	\$731,482	\$1,219,733	\$1,379,721
Open Sp. (Bd. Of Rec.)	\$937,640	\$1,002,403	\$1,097,223	\$975,786	\$1,103,777
TOTAL	\$2,500,373	\$2,673,075	\$2,925,928	\$4,878,931	\$5,518,885

	2005	2006	2007	00 - 07 Total
Farmland Pres. (CADB)	\$3,408,867	\$3,871,078	\$4,309,727	\$20,345,737
MCCTF	\$1,549,485	\$1,759,581	\$1,958,967	\$9,892,331
Open Sp. (Bd. Of Rec.)	\$1,239,588	\$1,407,665	\$1,567,173	\$9,331,255
TOTAL	\$6,197,940	\$7,038,324	\$7,835,867	\$39,569,323

TABLE III - Open Space Trust Fund Expenditures

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	00 - 07 Total
Farmland Pres. (CADB)									
Acquisition & Other Soft Costs	\$1,836,257	\$998,782	\$173,489	\$935,467	\$1,391,191	\$253,824	\$2,688,193	\$2,624,088	\$10,901,291
MCCTF									
Acquisition - Land	\$0	\$587,620	\$406,600	\$92,500	\$1,380,934	\$899,375	\$2,010,590	\$550,000	\$5,927,619
Historic Preservation	\$0	\$36,875	\$87,876	\$220,294	\$426,999	\$518,467	\$305,545	\$351,761	\$1,947,817
Open Sp. (Brd. Of Rec.)									
Maintenance	\$30,007	\$49,932	\$55,054	\$48,492	\$64,580	\$63,464	\$146,819	\$128,176	\$586,524
Acquisition	\$1,123,458	\$826,753	\$1,379,447	\$1,046,040	\$29,173	\$20,543	\$378,505	\$40,188	\$4,844,107
Debt Service & Related Expenses	\$166,156	\$459,812	\$626,757	\$579,692	\$1,306,999	\$1,022,020	\$1,016,611	\$1,005,630	\$6,183,677
Overhead Expenses									
Salaries, etc.	\$48,894	\$107,226	\$116,572	\$161,030	\$211,617	\$209,846	\$217,608	\$197,401	\$1,270,194
TOTAL	\$3,204,772	\$3,067,000	\$2,845,795	\$3,083,515	\$4,811,493	\$2,987,539	\$6,763,871	\$4,897,244	\$31,661,229

Reimbursements to Trust Fund

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	00 - 07 Total
Reimbursement to Trust Fund									
Recreation Commission	\$0	\$870,972	\$916,630	\$916,630	\$127,215	\$250,000	\$0	\$0	\$3,081,447
Farmland	\$0	\$112,364	\$1,088,811	\$1,088,811	\$5,257,703	\$1,234,200	\$2,976,591	\$1,856,586	\$13,615,066
Local Units	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$540,447	\$582,000	\$1,122,447
TOTAL	\$0	\$983,336	\$2,005,441	\$2,005,441	\$5,384,918	\$1,484,200	\$3,517,038	\$2,438,586	\$17,818,960

Acquisition costs may include surveys, appraisals, and other professional fees.

Maintenance costs include grass cutting, brush clearing, snow plowing, building repair etc.

Debt Service and Related Expenses include the repayment of principal and interest on bonds/notes issued by the County and on repayment of loans issued by other state agencies, down payments on debt, and other short & long term financing arrangements.

Reimbursements to the Trust Fund include those from the Green Acres program, State Agriculture and Development Committee, and municipal governments.

The Board of Recreation Commissioners contains seven members as appointed by the Board of Chosen Freeholders. The Board's responsibilities are to recommend land areas for acquisition in accordance with the county's Open Space Plan, and recommend policies and plans for the use and improvement of county owned lands, and facilitate the cooperation of agencies at the local and state levels.

The current county owned open space inventory totals 1,638 acres for a total cost \$8,714,431 million with a total county cost of \$5,744,315. The county cost averages to \$3,656 per acre.

County Agriculture Development Board

The County Agriculture Development Board may recommend appropriations in any amount up to 55% of the total projected trust fund revenues for the acquisition of land or development easements for farmland preservation purposes. The current portion of debt service obligations due and payable during the year and program staff salaries and administrative costs shall be deducted from the amount available for these purposes. The balance of the CADB's allocation may be used to recommend new projects. The CADB is composed of seven members and five associate members including the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Agricultural Agent, U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service, County Planning, and representative from the County Planning Board and Freeholder Board.

In addition to the State Agriculture Development Committee traditional program where the SADC funds approximately 70% of the acquisition costs, the CADB assists municipalities in providing up to one half of the difference between the state match and the total cost through the municipal Planning Incentive Grant program.

According to the Draft Farmland Preservation Plan being prepared for the County Agriculture Development Board, 15,125 acres of farmland have been acquired through July 2007 through all programs that the CADB has provided funding. The total cost of the acquisitions totaled \$69 million with a total county cost of \$18.6 million. The county cost averages to \$4,559 per acre.

Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee

To assist in providing funding to municipalities and charitable conservancies, the Warren County Board of Chosen Freeholders set aside 25 percent of the County Open Space, Recreation and Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund for use by municipalities and charitable conservancies. A Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee (MCCTF) consisting of 12 members was established by the

Board of Chosen Freeholders to review and recommend applications from municipalities and charitable conservancies for funding land acquisition.

In accordance with the Warren County Open Space, Recreation, Farmland, and Historic Preservation Trust Fund Procedures and Rules, the MCCTFC may recommend appropriations in any amount up to 25% of the total projected trust fund revenues for the acquisition of land for recreation and conservation purposes, historic preservation, and farmland preservation.

Historic preservation projects are limited to the acquisition, stabilization, and/or renovation of historic properties. Applicants for stabilization and renovation money must either own or have a long-term lease or other legal interest in the property to be eligible for funding.

Since its inception the MCCTF has recommended the funding of projects for acquisition totaling 3,094 acres. In addition, 12 historic sites were approved for acquisition, stabilization, or renovation. The total cost of all of the projects totaled \$23,906,710 with the county cost amounting to \$7,862,188. The county cost for acquisition amounted to \$6,206,868 averaging \$2006 per acre.

Table IV shows the amount of county open space trust fund tax collected from 1995 through 2007 by municipality. Table V shows the net amount of county open space trust fund, bond proceeds, and general funds spent in each county preservation program in each municipality. All municipalities are encouraged to apply to the MCCTF for funding for open space acquisition and historic preservation projects. To expand eligibility for the developed municipalities, consideration may be given to including “development” costs as eligible expenses for the county trust fund.

B. County Bond Funds

In 2001 the County bonded for farmland preservation projects. In 2003 the County bonded for \$5.5 million to facilitate open space acquisition on properties that were ready for acquisition. The debt service on the bond is paid using revenues from the Open Space Trust Fund. The bond ordinance was amended twice to add and delete properties. Map 2 depicts the location of the properties and the status of each

C. Municipal Open Space Trust Funds

Currently, all municipalities have a dedicated open space trust fund tax except for Belvidere, Hackettstown, Independence, Oxford, Phillipsburg, and Washington Borough. In 2007, over \$2.46 million was anticipated to be raised through the local open space tax levy. In some programs including the State Green Acres program additional weight is given to municipal applications that have a dedicated source of funding for open space. It is recommended that all municipalities establish open space tax and continue those that already have it.

Also, it is noted that under state statute, trust fund money may be used for the maintenance and development of parklands. Municipalities may consider putting the question to the voters to

establish a dedicated source of revenue for maintenance and development purposes.

TABLE IV - COUNTY OPEN SPACE TAX COLLECTED BY MUNICIPALITY 1995 - 2007

Municipality	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Sub Total 1995-1999
Allamuchy	\$55,397	\$56,179	\$56,794	\$58,023	\$60,957	\$287,350
Alpha	\$23,032	\$23,933	\$23,597	\$24,546	\$24,753	\$119,861
Belvidere	\$29,730	\$29,925	\$28,741	\$29,281	\$29,738	\$147,415
Blairstown	\$76,030	\$77,974	\$80,291	\$81,296	\$83,442	\$399,033
Franklin	\$36,173	\$37,765	\$37,349	\$38,292	\$38,179	\$187,758
Frelinghuysen	\$27,451	\$28,307	\$29,900	\$29,728	\$30,354	\$145,740
Greenwich	\$33,346	\$37,147	\$41,560	\$47,299	\$54,639	\$213,991
Hackettstown	\$91,658	\$93,594	\$92,549	\$92,549	\$93,154	\$463,504
Hardwick	\$18,318	\$19,961	\$20,668	\$21,059	\$20,753	\$100,759
Harmony	\$67,180	\$70,519	\$73,645	\$74,464	\$73,875	\$359,683
Hope	\$24,334	\$25,694	\$25,290	\$24,913	\$26,009	\$126,240
Independence	\$55,910	\$58,400	\$58,854	\$61,015	\$61,961	\$296,140
Knowlton	\$33,821	\$34,564	\$34,599	\$35,939	\$36,400	\$175,323
Liberty	\$29,299	\$29,698	\$31,226	\$30,645	\$31,788	\$152,656
Lopatcong	\$64,378	\$65,065	\$66,809	\$67,695	\$70,500	\$334,447
Mansfield	\$66,519	\$69,809	\$68,126	\$71,363	\$72,440	\$348,257
Oxford	\$16,769	\$16,722	\$16,074	\$18,180	\$18,907	\$86,652
Pahaquarry	\$111	\$110	\$107	\$0	\$0	\$328
Phillipsburg	\$109,551	\$109,655	\$111,403	\$108,608	\$106,561	\$545,778
Pohatcong	\$46,051	\$46,642	\$46,623	\$46,632	\$49,996	\$235,944
Washington Borough	\$60,095	\$57,557	\$55,721	\$55,458	\$56,068	\$284,899
Washington Twp.	\$78,018	\$77,212	\$78,983	\$78,762	\$79,526	\$392,501
White	\$62,995	\$65,413	\$64,023	\$68,875	\$71,256	\$332,562
TOTAL	\$1,106,166	\$1,131,845	\$1,142,932	\$1,164,622	\$1,191,256	\$5,736,821

Municipality	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Allamuchy	\$126,569	\$134,450	\$148,534	\$244,836	\$279,007	\$309,846
Alpha	\$49,859	\$50,083	\$52,250	\$85,138	\$94,574	\$110,318
Belvidere	\$60,732	\$61,083	\$62,457	\$100,732	\$109,813	\$123,796
Blairstown	\$172,613	\$181,310	\$200,753	\$325,778	\$370,165	\$420,388
Franklin	\$83,748	\$82,632	\$101,493	\$174,660	\$209,468	\$225,690
Frelinghuysen	\$63,057	\$65,750	\$71,494	\$117,737	\$133,941	\$151,506
Greenwich	\$127,096	\$152,510	\$179,894	\$329,513	\$356,102	\$394,071
Hackettstown	\$191,735	\$202,285	\$224,497	\$376,709	\$418,877	\$463,622
Hardwick	\$44,760	\$48,196	\$51,906	\$89,392	\$101,570	\$117,007
Harmony	\$151,134	\$165,886	\$172,811	\$284,367	\$313,591	\$341,446
Hope	\$52,416	\$56,409	\$60,556	\$99,235	\$114,944	\$132,348
Independence	\$128,808	\$139,564	\$153,956	\$264,417	\$304,021	\$344,389
Knowlton	\$77,390	\$79,379	\$85,279	\$143,589	\$161,243	\$184,415
Liberty	\$65,885	\$70,830	\$76,584	\$125,951	\$145,015	\$166,051
Lopatcong	\$149,047	\$165,169	\$196,751	\$346,306	\$393,171	\$456,991
Mansfield	\$154,616	\$172,800	\$192,655	\$311,104	\$389,568	\$426,365
Oxford	\$43,223	\$47,307	\$51,962	\$86,083	\$98,542	\$110,533
Pahaquarry	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Phillipsburg	\$225,609	\$231,770	\$237,129	\$363,855	\$396,610	\$451,531
Pohatcong	\$104,171	\$109,700	\$113,322	\$180,154	\$201,113	\$227,635
Washington Borough	\$114,378	\$116,153	\$130,373	\$207,676	\$241,793	\$273,711
Washington Twp.	\$163,867	\$182,061	\$194,540	\$321,139	\$368,310	\$410,081
White	\$149,662	\$157,746	\$166,735	\$300,560	\$317,446	\$356,199
TOTAL	\$2,500,374	\$2,517,329	\$2,761,196	\$4,580,374	\$5,203,442	\$5,843,746

Municipality	2006	2007	Sub Total 2000-2007	Grand Total 1995-2007
Allamuchy	\$353,263	\$398,224	\$1,994,729	\$2,282,079
Alpha	\$122,888	\$138,491	\$703,600	\$823,461
Belvidere	\$137,944	\$159,251	\$815,807	\$963,222
Blairstown	\$475,575	\$536,030	\$2,682,611	\$3,081,644
Franklin	\$248,949	\$277,457	\$1,404,097	\$1,591,855
Frelinghuysen	\$166,770	\$188,470	\$958,726	\$1,104,466
Greenwich	\$458,617	\$486,373	\$2,484,175	\$2,698,166
Hackettstown	\$517,040	\$591,178	\$2,985,943	\$3,449,447
Hardwick	\$128,633	\$141,396	\$722,860	\$823,619
Harmony	\$414,007	\$409,876	\$2,253,118	\$2,612,801
Hope	\$149,854	\$171,162	\$836,923	\$963,163
Independence	\$393,475	\$436,843	\$2,165,474	\$2,461,614
Knowlton	\$206,113	\$235,904	\$1,173,312	\$1,348,635
Liberty	\$190,255	\$207,089	\$1,047,661	\$1,200,317
Lopatcong	\$529,345	\$586,972	\$2,823,752	\$3,158,199
Mansfield	\$485,789	\$525,723	\$2,658,620	\$3,006,877
Oxford	\$124,269	\$138,748	\$700,666	\$787,318
Pahaquarry	\$0	\$0	0	\$328
Phillipsburg	\$524,181	\$612,781	\$3,043,465	\$3,589,243
Pohatcong	\$245,606	\$276,481	\$1,458,181	\$1,694,125
Washington Borough	\$306,614	\$345,521	\$1,736,219	\$2,021,118
Washington Twp.	\$464,866	\$521,387	\$2,626,252	\$3,018,753
White	\$394,268	\$450,511	\$2,293,127	\$2,625,689
TOTAL	\$7,038,321	\$7,835,868	\$39,569,321	\$45,306,139

TABLE V - WARREN COUNTY OPEN SPACE TRUST FUND COLLECTED AND SPENT BY CADB, BRC, MCCTF BY MUNICIPALITY

Municipality	Total County Trust Fund Tax Collected 1995 thru 2007	Net County Expenditure Farmland Preservation	Net County Expenditure County Open Space	Net County Expenditure MCCTF Projects	TOTAL Trust Fund Spent
Allamuchy	\$2,282,079	\$3,108,687	\$0	\$217,840	\$3,326,527
Alpha	\$823,461	\$218,584	\$0	\$0	\$218,584
Belvidere	\$963,222	\$5,198	\$0	\$0	\$5,198
Blairstown	\$3,081,644	\$1,659,100	\$0	\$1,217,915	\$2,877,015
Franklin	\$1,591,855	\$2,619,786	\$589,077	\$0	\$3,208,863
Frelinghuysen	\$1,104,466	\$1,959,464	\$0	\$249,500	\$2,208,964
Greenwich	\$2,698,166	\$1,526,960	\$387,375	\$694,375	\$2,608,710
Hackettstown	\$3,449,447	\$0	\$155,943	\$557,629	\$713,572
Hardwick	\$823,619	\$420,845	\$1,125,000	\$1,494,350	\$3,040,195
Harmony	\$2,612,801	\$860,709	\$344,922	\$764,222	\$1,969,853
Hope	\$963,163	\$603,107	\$0	\$69,594	\$672,701
Independence	\$2,461,614	\$614,687	\$464,551	\$0	\$1,079,238
Knowlton	\$1,348,635	\$825,564	\$0	\$362,608	\$1,188,172
Liberty	\$1,200,317	\$0	\$0	\$450,000	\$450,000
Lopatcong	\$3,158,199	\$0	\$975,246	\$0	\$975,246
Mansfield	\$3,006,877	\$270,167	\$537,888	\$950,000	\$1,758,055
Oxford	\$787,318	\$0	\$627,192	\$725,000	\$1,352,192
Pahaquarry	\$328	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Phillipsburg	\$3,589,243	\$0	\$0	\$476,155	\$476,155
Pohatcong	\$1,694,125	\$1,811,018	\$0	\$0	\$1,811,018
Washington Boro	\$2,021,118	\$0	\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000
Washington Twp	\$3,018,753	\$1,691,272	\$727,117	\$484,118	\$2,902,507
White	\$2,625,689	\$559,117	\$0	\$70,000	\$629,117
TOTAL	\$45,306,139	\$18,754,265	\$5,934,311	\$9,033,306	\$33,721,882

Source: Department of Land Preservation 2007 Annual Report 8/1/06 – 7/31/07

D. State and Federal Programs

On November 3, 1998, the voters of New Jersey voted for one of the most resounding open space and farmland preservation referendums that mandate amending the state's constitution to provide \$98 million per year in dedicated funding through 2008 to be used for land protection efforts.

In June 2007 S-3005, entitled the “Green Acres, Farmland, Blue Acres, and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 2007”, was introduced as a measure to keep the state funding in place in the short term. The voters approved this ballot question on November 6, 2007. It will authorize the issuance of \$200 million in State general obligation bonds for acquiring and developing lands for recreation and conservation purposes, preserving farmland, and funding historic preservation projects and “Blue Acres” projects. Of the total sum authorized: (1) \$109 million will be used for acquiring and developing lands for public recreation and conservation purposes; (2) \$73 million will be used for farmland preservation purposes; (3) \$12 million will be used to fund a new “Blue Acres” bond program by which the State may purchase from willing sellers, for recreation and conservation purposes, properties in the Delaware River, Passaic River, and Raritan River basin floodways that are prone to or have incurred flood or storm damage; and (4) \$6 million will be used for historic preservation purposes.

1. Green Acres (from website)

The Green Acres Program serves as the real estate agent for the Department of Environmental Protection. It acquires land offered for sale by property owners that becomes part of the system of state parks, forests, natural areas, and wildlife management areas. Green Acres works with the DEP's divisions of Parks and Forestry, Fish and Wildlife, and the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust to determine which lands should be preserved. Green Acres does not own the land it acquires; instead land is assigned to the divisions for management.

Green Acres provides low interest (2%) loans and grants to municipal and county governments for acquisition development of outdoor recreation facilities. Green Acres also provides matching grants to nonprofit organizations for the acquisition of land for public recreation and conservation purposes.

The Planning Incentive Program provides grant and loan funding to local governments that have enacted an open space tax and have adopted an open space and recreation plan.

Green Acres administers the \$15 million The Coastal Blue Acres funds. Designated municipalities and counties can receive grants and loans from Green Acres to acquire land for storm protection and recreation purposes in New Jersey coastal areas that have been damaged by storms, are prone to storm damage, or buffer or protect other lands from storm damage.

Green Acres also administers the Tax Exemption Program, which provides exemption from local property taxes to eligible nonprofit organizations that own recreation or conservation lands and permit public use of their private lands. The Tax Exemption Program has protected over 38,000 acres of private lands

2. New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust (from website)

The New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust provides low-cost financing for the construction of environmental infrastructure projects that enhance and protect ground and surface water resources, ensure the safety of drinking water supplies, and make possible responsible and sustainable economic development. The acquisition of open space is an eligible project under this program.

3. New Jersey Natural Lands Trust (from website)

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust was created in 1968 by the Legislature as an independent agency with the mission to preserve land in its natural state to conserve endangered species habitat, rare features, and significant ecosystems for public and educational use when it will not adversely affect natural communities and biological diversity.

4. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (from website)

Created by Congress in 1964, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides up to \$900 million to federal, state and local governments to acquire land, water and conservation easements on land and water for the benefit of all Americans. The funding may be used for recreation, scenic landscapes and trails, wildlife habitat, clean water and quality of life.

Lands are purchased from willing sellers at fair-market value or through partial or outright donations of property. Landowners can also sell or donate easements on their property that restrict commercial development while keeping the land in private ownership.

Each year, four federal agencies—the USDA Forest Service, USDI's, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management—identify important properties available for purchase. The funding for these purchases comes primarily from revenues received from offshore oil and gas drilling.

E. Non-Profit Organizations

1. Trust for Public Land (from website)

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a national, nonprofit, land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, community gardens, historic sites, rural lands, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come.

TPL helps agencies and communities identify and raise funds for conservation from federal, state, local, and philanthropic sources and structure, negotiate, and complete land transactions that create parks, playgrounds, and protected natural areas.

2. New Jersey Conservation Foundation (from website)

Through acquisition and stewardship, NJCF protects strategic lands; promotes strong land use policies; and forges partnerships to achieve conservation goals. Since 1960, NJCF has protected tens of thousands of acres of open space statewide.

3. Conservation Resources Inc. (from website)

Conservation Resources Inc. features and markets New Jersey's exemplary land conservation and stewardship projects in seven Geographic Funds representing the entire Garden State. These Featured Projects provide a means for philanthropic individuals, foundations, and corporations to efficiently spend charitable capital on conservation projects. CRI pre-screens Featured Projects and provides project oversight and technical assistance to the sponsoring conservation organizations. In addition to technical assistance, CRI helps to administer the NJ Conservation Loan Program, which provides critical bridge financing to non-profit conservation organizations for land conservation projects.

4. Land Trust Alliance (from website)

The Land Trust Alliance is the national organization that promotes voluntary land conservation and strengthens the land trust movement by providing leadership, information, skills, and resources to its members.

5. Morris Land Conservancy (from website)

Land Preservation is the primary focus of Morris Land Conservancy's work. Faced with the quickening pace of development, the MLC set a goal of preserving 26,000 acres over the next decade to help win the race for open space. The Conservancy is taking a lead role in the efforts to preserve the Highlands, a region that includes almost all of Morris County and parts of Sussex, Passaic, Warren, Hunterdon, and Somerset Counties. Other priorities include land critical to protect clean drinking water, diverse plant and wildlife habitat, scenic and historic farmland and woodlands, and important recreation areas throughout northern New Jersey. These natural lands and special places define the quality of life in the region.

6. Heritage Conservancy (from website)

Heritage Conservancy preserves the open spaces and historic places that are essential to the region's quality of life by working with citizens, community groups, private landowners, municipalities, and state and federal agencies to promote and implement open space and natural resource protection, green urban planning, agricultural land protection,

innovative sustainable land use practices, preservation and/or adaptive re-use of historic structures, wildlife habitat restoration and best land management practices

7. The Ridge and Valley Conservancy (from website)

The Ridge and Valley Conservancy was formed to protect and preserve natural areas, including woodlands, meadows, farmlands, wetlands, marshes, ponds, watercourses, and historic sites that constitute the rural character of the Kittatinny Valley and Ridge Region of New Jersey. The Conservancy may acquire important lands by purchase or donation, manage land uses for the benefit of the public, assist in stewardship for public lands and easements, and advise in environmentally sound land development for public or private use.

8. Wildlife Preservation Inc.

Wildlife Preservation Inc. is dedicated to the preservation of natural areas and open space for conservation, education, and research. The land is open to the public for passive recreational use. Hunting, trapping, fishing, dumping and off road vehicles are prohibited on Wildlife Preserves lands. Threatened and endangered flora and fauna exist on every Wildlife Preserve held in the State. In addition to casual strollers and tourists, amateur and professional naturalists, grade school to graduate level students, and scouting organizations use the sites. All land is accessible by foot and parking is available.

ACQUISITION METHODS

A listing and brief description of various alternative methods of land acquisition and open space preservation are presented below.

Fee Simple

Probably the most commonly used technique for acquisition is outright purchase with fee simple ownership. In recent years, counties and municipalities in New Jersey have been assisted financially in such acquisition by the State Green Acres Program and other open space programs. In many instances, these programs have provided as much as 100 percent of the cost of acquisition; however, the amount of land required for open space and the mounting land costs makes public purchase of all needed land financially impractical. Many times, acquisition costs are spread out over a period of time and debt is incurred. The advantage is that more land can be purchased immediately rather than waiting for cash build up to pay all costs outright.

Fee Simple Installment Buying/Action Agreement Plan

This is a variation of fee simple, except that full title is not taken immediately; instead, the land is obtained in blocks of predetermined acreage over a fixed number of years. This approach avoids large public expenditures in any one year while, at the same time, reserving the entire area.

The landowner benefits by spreading capital gains over a period of years.

Installment Purchase

Land is acquired through a payment plan that provides payments to the landowner over time. Receiving the income from the sale in installments may provide the landowner with financial management and/or tax advantages.

Less Than Fair Market Value

Some landowners are willing to sell their land at less than fair market value. The difference between an agreed upon sale price and the higher market value can be deducted as a charitable contribution on the seller's federal income tax. For the buyer, the advantage is the reduced cost of acquiring land for open space.

Lease Back Agreement

This method can be an effective tool for land acquisition when the land is not needed for immediate use. An agency purchases a parcel of land and then leases it to either the original owner or someone else. This method has two benefits to the public – the partial reimbursement of the purchase price through rental fee and the reduction or elimination of maintenance costs, since the renter takes care of the property.

Lease/Rental of Private Land

Government agencies and private conservation groups may choose to lease or rent private land. This may be less desirable than ownership, but depending on circumstances, may be beneficial. If a landowner has agreed to sell, or if they have agreed to donate the land to an agency, a lease agreement can be arranged until the transaction is finalized.

Donation and Bequest

The most simple and certainly one of the least expensive methods of acquiring land is by donation. Either individuals or large corporations will donate land to a public body; usually for either philanthropic reasons or for tax incentives offered by the Internal Revenue Service. The recipient of the property is usually obligated only for legal and engineering costs. Of course, the public agency cannot be assured of receiving gifts of land nor would it have a choice of time and location. Some landowners may bequest property through their wills. These methods should be promoted whenever possible.

Pre-Emptive Purchasing

This method involves acquisition, usually by a private group, to reserve land for later public purchase when it becomes financially feasible. It could also involve acquisition in advance of actual need in order to avoid rampant speculation. Under either approach, cost is lower to the public body

than it normally would be. The more common approach is by a private tax-exempt group established for the purpose of holding land in trust for later sale to the public body. It allows for the establishment of a revolving fund so that when resold, funds can be used for purchase of other properties.

Eminent Domain

Eminent domain is the power of government to acquire private property from a landowner who is unwilling to sell. The property must be used in the interest of the public health and welfare. When it is determined that a parcel should be taken, the government agency must obtain appraisals of the fair market value of the property and any structures involved in the taking and the courts through an appointed condemnation commission to determine the price to be paid to the owner. Substantial additional costs arise from the legal fees involved in the process of condemnation. Care and forethought should be used prior of invoking acquisition of property through eminent domain.

Deed Restrictions

Restrictions guiding the future use of property may be placed in the deed at the time the property is transferred. At this time, the landowner may impose practically any restriction they consider necessary or significant. These restrictions, when placed into the deed, become binding upon future owners of that property.

Easements

Owning land is similar to owning a bundle of rights. With easements, the landowner gives away or sells some of the rights, such as the right to subdivide, to cut down trees, or to build on the property, in order to protect the natural aspects of the land. An easement enables the landowner to protect the land in perpetuity while retaining ownership. If an easement is placed on land, the owner may continue to use the property just as in the past, as long as the use does not conflict with the terms of the easement.

Easements are created to suit the needs of the parties involved. Easements protect land and allow activities that are desirable, and can cover a few acres to several thousand acres.

There are two categories of easements, affirmative or negative. An affirmative easement is when the landowner grants limited use of this property to another. For example, Warren County may obtain an easement permitting public access across a section of privately owned property containing a section of the historic Morris Canal. A negative easement takes some of the landowner's rights to use the property away from him. An example of this type of easement is to protect a view shed by purchasing the landowner's right to build a multi-story structure. Farmland preservation is another example of a negative easement.

Stream Encroachment and Wetland Permits

Stream encroachment and wetland permits issued by New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection have helped to control adverse impacts to a stream or waterway from

development. A consistent effort to enforce compliance with this permitting process enhances a municipality 's ability to preserve open space along streams when incorporated into a municipal ordinance requiring stream corridor buffer zones.

Clustering

The cluster concept permits reduction in residential lot size from that normally required in a given zone district, while maintaining the same density or number of lots that would normally be permitted. The land remaining after the development of reduced size lots would be reserved as permanent open space, either through dedication to the municipality, the establishment of an organization or homeowner's association to ensure maintenance, or the lease or sale to a non-profit conservancy or farmer.

The most practical use of the cluster design is when it is applied to large lot areas (one acre or more) and lots size reduction of fifty percent or more. Cluster zoning offers advantages to the developer and the municipality, as well as to the homeowner. The developer benefits through reduced road and utility improvements. The municipality saves on road and utility maintenance costs and can gain needed open space for recreation. Land less suitable for development, such as flood prone areas, steep slopes or other environmentally sensitive areas is preserved. Homeowners enjoy smaller lots to maintain convenience to recreation facilities and nearness to an open space environment.

Planned Unit Development

A Planned Unit Development or PUD can assume a variety of forms, but usually it involves the planning and development of a large tract of land on a comprehensive basis rather than the common practice of lot by lot development. Planned Unit Development usually exhibits the following characteristics: large tract development, mixed uses of land (residential, commercial land, light industry), varying residential types and densities, clustering of development and large amounts of open space.

Because of the large area involved, it is possible to provide a full range of services and utilities in a PUD. Although a higher density than normally allowed is usually involved, it is possible to create large areas of open space and to use the land in the most appropriate way based on natural or physical limitations.

Transfer of Development Rights

This concept requires that a municipality identifies areas of open space and then prohibits development with the permission of the landowners. Although the landowners lose the right to develop the land, ownership is retained. The development rights of the landowners are then treated as a commodity, permitting the owner the opportunity to profit from the sale of what can be called the development potential of the land or development rights. This development potential is transferred to another area in the municipality where construction can occur at a higher density according to the master plan and development regulations. Only the buyer of the development rights can build at this higher density. The buyer of the development rights benefits from the increased

savings attributed to higher density development. The total density of the municipality is kept the same as planned, and large open space reserves can be retained.

In 2003 the legislature authorized the State Agriculture Development Committee to establish a program for the statewide transfer of development rights. The Office of Smart Growth and others have been actively promoting the concept although no meaningful statewide program has been established yet.

Similarly, by way of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act a TDR program is to be established for all municipalities located in counties in the Highlands Region. The counties are Warren, Sussex, Hunterdon, Morris, Bergen, Passaic, and Somerset. No program has been established yet.

Clustering on Non-Contiguous Parcels

The Legislature amended the Municipal Land Use Law in 1996 to allow clustering on non-contiguous parcels of land. Prior to this amendment, clustering projects were required to be contiguous with one another. In effect, the new statute allows transfer of development rights within a municipality provided that the master plan and an appropriate ordinance are adopted. A landowner must own both the open space parcel and the parcel receiving the increased density that is transferred from the sending or open space parcel.

Purchase of Development Rights

The Farmland Preservation Program is funded by the NJ Department of Agriculture. Under general guidelines established at the state level, county and local agricultural retention programs are established. These county level agricultural boards, working in conjunction with municipalities, are responsible for planning, and implementing a series of land use techniques to preserve farmland and enhance agricultural operations. One technique used is the purchase of development rights. Landowners that are in a farmland preservation program may voluntarily apply to a county agricultural development board to sell a development easement of their property.

Once a development easement has been purchased, a restriction is attached to the deed, which permanently prohibits any non-agricultural development from occurring on these lands. This deed restriction runs with the land and is binding upon every successor.

Permanently retaining lands in agricultural use will benefit all New Jersey citizens by providing a local food source and retaining agricultural tax paying, privately-owned open space. Although the farmland preservation program uses Purchase of Development Rights, the method can also be used to protect forested areas, stream corridors, scenic views or even air rights to limit the height of buildings.

Sheriff Sales

Sometimes, open space properties may become available at a public sale because of a

foreclosure on a mortgage, unpaid taxes, or judgment. Properties may be acquired at a lower cost if the amount being sought is for unpaid taxes or the balance of a mortgage.

Bank Foreclosure

Sometimes, open space properties may become available at a bank foreclosure. By putting the local banks on notice, properties may be acquired at a lower cost if the amount being sought is for unpaid taxes or the balance of a mortgage.

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