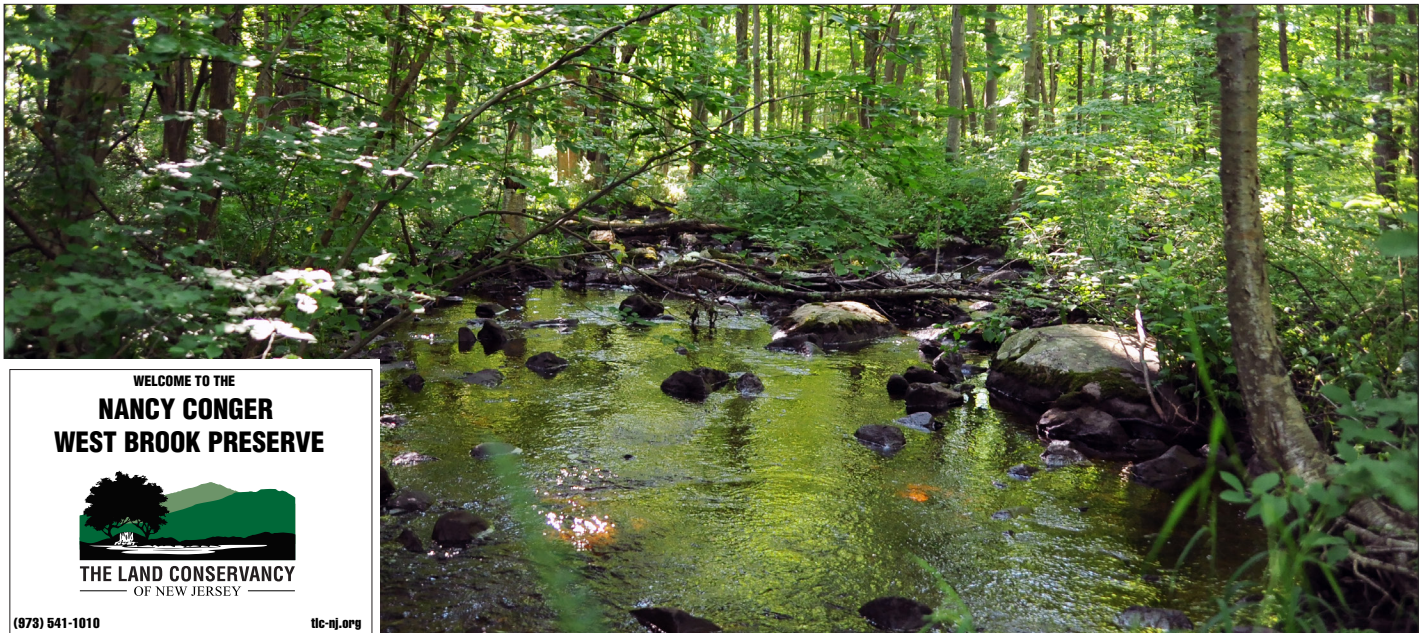


THE LAND CONSERVANCY OF NEW JERSEY

OUTDOOR ISSUES

SUMMER 2019

WEST BROOK PRESERVE NAMED IN HONOR OF NANCY CONGER



West Brook Preserve, West Milford

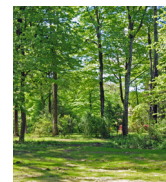
The Land Conservancy of New Jersey is pleased to announce that it has named its West Brook Preserve in West Milford in honor of our late Board Chair Nancy Conger. Nancy was a Land Conservancy supporter for more than two decades.

She was elected to the Board of Trustees in 2013, served as Chair of the Governance Committee, and Chair of the Board. Her passion for The Land Conservancy and its critical work has inspired countless supporters to do more to help preserve New Jersey's majestic, natural spaces. Nancy passed away in early July after a brief but remarkably brave battle with cancer. She was a fearless leader and she succeeded in making The Land Conservancy a better organization. She will be deeply

missed by all of us who were fortunate enough to know her.

The 198-acre Preserve was established in 2017 to protect the headwaters of the West Brook, a major source of clean water for Wanaque Reservoir, where two million New Jersey residents get their drinking water. We are set to embark on a major restoration project for a portion of the West Brook that was diverted into a ditch. The ditch will be plugged and a small dam and five culverts will be removed to restore water flows into the original stream bed. The restoration project will provide more water for the reservoir in dry times, reduce erosion, remove invasive plant species, and rehabilitate the habitat of the imperiled Eastern Brook Trout.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



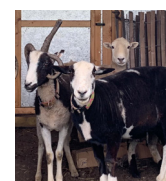
Truman Field
Expansion
Update



2019 World
Series of
Birding



Madison Trails
Ribbon Cutting
Ceremony



Our Chew
Crew is back at
South Branch
Preserve



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OF NEW JERSEY

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



*The Narrows
Zion National Park, Utah*

In June, Governor Murphy signed legislation dedicating a portion of the Corporate Business Tax (CBT) to fund Green Acres, farmland and historic preservation! This legislation increases overall conservation funding by 70% to \$189 million annually and will last until New Jersey residents vote to change the state constitution.

New Jersey was the second state in the nation to adopt state open space funding when voters approved the first Green Acres bond referendum in 1961. There were 9 subsequent bond referendums approved through 1995, providing more than \$1.7 billion in funding. In 1997 the conservation community came together to advocate for approval of the Garden State Preservation Trust (GSPT) to provide conservation funding for the next decade. After voters overwhelmingly approved the GSPT referendum in 1998, I was one of five public members appointed by the legislature to oversee the distribution of \$1.7 billion over 10 years.

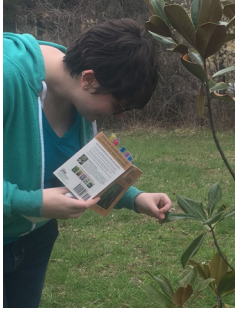
After the GSPT funds were exhausted in 2006, the conservation community formed the Keep It Green Coalition (KIG) to lobby for new state preservation funding. The Land Conservancy was a co-founder of this effort and I served as Treasurer raising \$350,000 to help campaign for approval of the 2007 and 2009 bond referendums, resulting in \$600 million in new public open space preservation funding.

In 2012, KIG began advocating for a permanent source of public funding for open space preservation. The Land Conservancy again served as Treasurer and helped raise \$1.6 million for the campaign. The CBT referendum was approved by voters in November 2014, but follow up legislation was necessary to implement the referendum. The CBT implementing legislation was approved by the legislature, but vetoed twice by Governor Christie. KIG campaigned for approval of the implementing legislation for more than a year, finally generating enough legislative support to override the Governor's veto. In June 2016 the Governor finally signed the legislation implementing the CBT for four years. Governor Murphy's recent action means that these funds are now likely in place for the rest of our lifetimes.

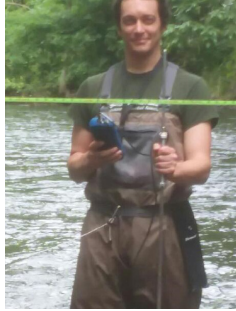
I want to thank each of you who have joined us to make this historic occasion possible. Your contributions, calls to legislators and patient work with The Land Conservancy over the past 22 years has led to this remarkable result. This is a monumental conservation achievement that has not been duplicated in any other state in the nation. We all have a lot to be proud of!

David Epstein, President

SCHOLARSHIPS PROVIDE A GREEN FUTURE



Xena Itzkowitz



Michael Allers

The Land Conservancy of New Jersey continues to prioritize support for the next generation of New Jersey environmental leaders as we offer two scholarships each year to deserving college students from New Jersey who are planning environmental careers in their home state.

A graduate of Freehold Township High School, Xena Itzkowitz is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Natural Resources and Sustainable Development from The United Nations University for Peace while simultaneously completing a Master of Arts in International Relations from American University.

A Phi Beta Kappa inductee, Xena is also a certified LEED Green Associate and previously served as

President of American University's Beekeeping Society. While her research and studies have taken her abroad to both Costa Rica and Norway, Xena is a lifelong resident of New Jersey and hopes to positively impact New Jersey's environment through a career in science communication.

A Rutgers University and Raritan Valley Community College student, Michael Allers first established himself as a small business owner after graduating from Hunterdon Central Regional High School in Flemington. As the operator of Rain Fed Gardens, Michael designed rain-catchment systems for residential clients working to conserve water and build healthy soils. "As a restoration ecologist my goal will be to return wetlands, estuaries, and coastal systems to a healthy equilibrium to sustain our native organisms and provide ecological benefits to residents of and visitors to our state." While majoring in Environmental Studies at Rutgers Michael hopes to complete scientific SCUBA diving courses that will enable him to perform valuable assessments for dam removal and coastal restoration projects.

JANET ROSS FUND BEQUEST CHALLENGE

We are currently running an exciting fundraising initiative —the Janet Ross Fund Bequest Challenge! We designed this campaign to inspire our supporters to make bequest commitments for the future and, in return, help us earn much-needed challenge grant dollars for use today. For every supporter who names The Land Conservancy in their will or informs us we are already named, The Land Conservancy will receive

\$1,000 from the Janet Ross Fund. Help us secure immediate funding today and leave a legacy to ensure we will continue to preserve land for years to come. We also want to take this opportunity to thank the Janet Ross Fund for providing us with this generous matching grant!

For more information visit
www.tlc-nj.org/planned_giving

WORLD SERIES OF BIRDING

The 2019 World Series of Birding "Big Day" was on May 11! Organized each year by the New Jersey Audubon Society, The World Series of Birding is a contest where skilled birders compete as teams to see who can record the most species of birds while raising thousands of dollars for conservation organizations and taking a critical inventory of migratory bird species.

Our World Series of Birding (WSB) team spotted 140 different species of birds on May 11th. The team prepared for the day by going to sleep at 4:30pm on Friday. They visited Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Newark Watershed, Waterwheel Farm, Hyper Humus Wildlife Management Area, Stokes State Forest, Flat Brook Roy WMA, High Point State Park – Kuser Bog. Some interesting birds seen were a king rail, which has not been reported at WSB in 10 years. They saw a whet owl at midnight, a sandhill crane at Liberty Marshes and an American bittern. They also saw a least bittern, which is considered rare and possibly endangered.

The event helped us raise over \$15,000!



THE LAND CONSERVANCY 2019 SUMMER INTERNS

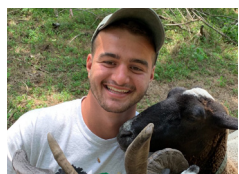
The Land Conservancy provides hands-on work where interns learn the fundamentals of planning, conservation, development and land stewardship while growing professionally and personally. They represent a diverse range of talents, abilities, backgrounds, interests, and fields of study with a shared enthusiasm for environmental well-being.



ALVIN CHIN, PLANNING

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, MASTER'S DEGREE IN REGIONAL AND CITY PLANNING

Alvin assists with land conservation planning and interacts with regional and municipal entities. He works on Open Space and Recreation Plans for townships in Essex, Sussex, and Morris counties, and a habitat plan for a borough in the Highlands.



JEFF WEAR, STEWARDSHIP

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENTAL & SUSTAINABILITY SCIENCE

Jeff helps manage The Land Conservancy Preserves and chose to intern here because he felt the program offered great introductory experience. He hopes to pursue a career in hydrology and soil science.



JARED BAZARAL, STEWARDSHIP

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY, EARTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Jared has been busy removing invasive plants such as mugwort and mile a minute weed at our Preserves. He will use his skills learned this summer to help teach the next generation about the importance of land conservation and animal reservation.



JESSICA SCHOTTANES, PLANNING

SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY, SCIENCE

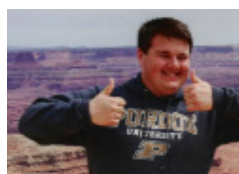
Jessica spent the summer with The Land Conservancy's planning department where she had the opportunity to utilize and further her knowledge and skills in geology, environmental science, GIS, sustainability, conservation, and graphic design.



BILLY CLARK, STEWARDSHIP

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Billy's been working on Project Chew with the goats, taking care of the Community Garden, eliminating invasive plants, and general lawn maintenance for South Branch Preserve. He is also a member of the Boonton Fire Department.



JAKE BUTLER, DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS, PLANNING

Jake has put together a video in honor of our president David Epstein's 25th Anniversary, planned the Land Conservancy's first Enviro Day, and visits the Community Garden to evaluate what work needs to be done.

TRUMAN FIELD EXPANSION CONTINUES IN OAKLAND



Truman Field Expansion

Following the devastating flooding from Hurricane Irene, Oakland Borough and The Land Conservancy initiated the Truman Field Expansion project to purchase and remove homes along the Ramapo River. Ten homes damaged from the flooding have been purchased with the intention of being permanently removed from harm's way. This much needed project is creating a continuous buffer along the Ramapo

River for Truman Field Park and will provide flood mitigation for the immediate area. Starting in 2015 with six homes purchased for demolition, the expansion project is now in the second phase, with four homes purchased and eight homes cleared and the parcels seeded. The Borough is exploring many different uses for this new park, including river access for fishing, a walking path, native vegetation, and rain gardens.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO PETER'S TRACT IN BERNARDSVILLE



The Land Conservancy of New Jersey is excited to have assisted Bernardsville with preserving the property located at Claremont Road. This piece of land creates public access to the beautiful 30-acre green space in Bernardsville, known as “Peters Tract”. This land has been untouched for more than a century and is not accessible to

the public. Peters Tract is home to a diverse array of trees, plants, and wildlife, and has been previously inaccessible due to the layout of the surrounding area. Formerly owned by Walter and Susan Makoc, the Claremont Road property will be open for the public to enjoy and provide additional space for parking and recreation.

SHOEMAKER FARMS PRESERVED



Shoemaker Farm

Two Shoemaker Farms, owned by Butch and Myrna Shoemaker at a combined 123 acres, were recently preserved by The Land Conservancy in partnership with Warren County, representing a wonderful win for citizens of the Township and the state as a whole.

As local farm historians, the Shoemakers are proud to have purchased, cleared, and preserved these two tracts of farmland in perpetuity. Butch Shoemaker remembers farming this land with his father, and noted, “We are incredibly thrilled that these farms were able to be preserved. We’ve been working on getting this done for a while. Before he passed away, our neighbor and dear friend expressed that

he would love for us to help preserve the smaller tract as it had belonged to his father-in-law at one time.”

“The Land Conservancy is very pleased to have been able to assist the Shoemakers in preserving these farms. Butch Shoemaker has been very kind to share his knowledge and photos of farming history in Warren County with The Land Conservancy and we could not be happier to assist him in preserving the land he farmed with his father. This is a very meaningful farmland preservation project and we are so glad to see the Shoemakers' dream to preserve their memories and their land succeed!” noted Sandy Uργο, Vice President of Land Preservation.

MADISON TRAIL UPDATE



Trails Committee Tom Salaki, Councilwoman Maureen Byrne, Open Space Committee Cathie Coultas, Councilwoman Astri Baillie, County Planning Director Christine Marion, Mayor Robert Conley and Councilwoman Debra Coen

The Land Conservancy worked with Madison Borough to design a loop trail in Summerhill Park to highlight its beautiful natural features and historic past. We worked closely with the Engineer, Council, Administrator and volunteers on the design of the trails and grant application. The trail was opened with a ribbon cutting ceremony in time for National Trails Day in June.

“We are excited to have opened the Summerhill Park Trails,” said Mayor Robert H. Conley. “These trails were made possible thanks to a generous grant from the Morris County Planning and Preservation Trail Construction Grant Program, and we look forward to Madison residents, young and old, to enjoy these trails for years to come. We also look forward to expanding and continuing with the creation of more trails within Summerhill Park,” continued Conley.

APPALACHIAN TRAIL BUFFER PRESERVED

The Land Conservancy has completed our first ever land preservation project that will become part of the National Park system. Together with the National Park Service, The Conservation Fund, The Appalachian Trail Conservancy, The Land Conservancy preserved the 129-acre Vernon Township property in early July.

This preserved greenspace will act as a buffer to protect the view from the Appalachian Trail in Vernon. This beautiful and heavily forested property abuts Wawayanda State Park and sits less than half a mile from the Appalachian Trail. It provides important wildlife habitat for a number of endangered species including the Northern Long Eared Bat, Northern Goshawk, Bobcat, Barred Owl and Wood Turtle. In addition, the preserved tract will protect water quality and drinking water in the New Jersey Highlands, with 30% of the property given an "A" ranking for its ground water recharge capabilities.



BUTTERFLY FIELDS SET TO BLOOM

In 2017 The Land Conservancy established the 31-acre Butterfly Fields at South Branch Preserve by planting native grasses and removing invasive plants on the fields adjacent to Route 46. This spring, we partnered with Paul Steinbeiser Inc. - experts in meadow restoration and management - to replant the four former farm fields with wildflower seeds to support the monarch butterfly population.

Planted in the spring, the fields are beginning to grow and by next summer will begin flowering, creating habitat for native pollinator populations, including bees, hummingbirds, and monarch butterflies. A trail will be constructed through the meadow and interpretive materials will be developed for further enjoyment of this beautiful and wild greenspace!



South Branch Preserve, Mt. Olive

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION A SUCCESS

The Land Conservancy of New Jersey hosted its annual Earth Day celebration at South Branch Preserve on Saturday, April 27. Attendees enjoyed a guided hike, scavenger hunt, seed planting, arts and crafts, and educational demonstrations about

to clear invasive plant species from the Preserve. We've been

hosting Earth Day events since 2014, and are proud to join 193 countries around the world in bringing attention to the important work of preserving our natural open spaces,



Volunteer, Ann Duddy, holds Mr. Bojangles from Antler Ridge

composting and gardening. One of the highlights was a meet-and-greet with the Chew Crew goats of Antler Ridge Animal Sanctuary, who are working

animal habitats, clean water sources while educating and inspiring the next generation of conservationists.

LATEST PROJECTS AT SOUTH BRANCH PRESERVE



City Green Farms at South Branch Preserve



The Chew Crew

Some of the most important work The Land Conservancy does centers around land stewardship, helping to ensure a plentiful supply of safe, clean drinking water, productive land for agriculture, and sustainable land for wildlife and forests to thrive. The centerpiece of our recent land management program is the 405-acre South Branch Preserve, located at the headwaters of the South Branch of the Raritan

River in Mt. Olive. We have some exciting updates to share on the work being done at South Branch Preserve.

Now in its second year, Project Chew brings a smile to every member and volunteer of The Land Conservancy. This restoration project is using the adorable goats and sheep from Antler Ridge Wildlife Sanctuary to help eradicate invasive plants in a 4-acre area of the Preserve, between the reforestation areas and the river, without the use of chemical sprays. Invasive plant species being targeted include mile-a-minute weed, mugwort, Autumn olive, multiflora rose, and oriental bittersweet. The goal is that after five years of support from our Chew Crew goats, these invasive plants will be largely decimated. Eventually, we will begin planting native

species which, once established, will shade out any new invasive plants.

Another project we are excited about is our partnership with City Green, an urban farming and environmental education non-profit organization based in Clifton. Last November, we celebrated the opening of City Green Farms at South Branch Preserve. This 12-acre farm will be used to cultivate organic food for low-income residents in Morris and Passaic Counties, who do not have direct access to fresh and locally grown organic produce. The Farm will also provide 1,000 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables annually to Mount Olive Township food pantries. Food production at the Farm has already begun and we are eager to share the results of this year's harvest later this year.



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