

JANUARY

Mission: To acquire and preserve open space and farmland and conserve natural habitats throughout Monmouth County in support of outdoor recreation, agriculture, clean water, and wildlife for long-term sustainability.

Vision: To lead conservation and education efforts to preserve and protect our natural environment, so all individuals and communities have access to and can benefit from open space and nature for generations to come.



MCF celebrated our 46th anniversary in 2023 and adopted a new three-year **strategic plan** to carry our organization through 2026 and position us for sustainability well into the future. We refined our organizational mission and, for the first time, crafted a vision statement.

FEBRUARY



Photo by Jason Dent on Unsplash

MCF retained our **GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency**, the highest level of recognition offered by the world's largest source of nonprofit information. The Seal demonstrates our commitment to transparency and building confidence among our existing and potential supporters.

MARCH



Photo by Marcella Shook Photography

We kicked off MCF's **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) initiative**, engaging our Board and staff in trainings and discussions with a specialized consultant to initiate strategies around DEIB across our internal operations and external programs to better serve our community.

APRIL



Photo by Jena Cosimo

17 acres in Middletown along the Navesink River were acquired and preserved as an addition to Hartshorne Woods Park. A collaboration of the Monmouth County Commissioners and Board of Recreation Commissioners and MCF, this project took over two decades to come to fruition.

MAY



Photo courtesy of Monmouth County Park System

Swimming River Park opened in Middletown as a new Monmouth County Park, following the decade-long partnership of the Monmouth County Commissioners and Board of Recreation Commissioners and MCF to acquire and remediate the waterfront land with funding support from the Hazardous Discharge Site Relief Fund (HDSRF) through the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA).

JUNE



Photo by Karen Keene

The **Mrs. USA Earth & Son, MCF Earth Day Inaugural Art Contest** winners were announced. Six local students' artwork are featured on limited-edition sustainable tote bags being sold by MCF to support our land preservation work. This project was conceived by 11-year-old Crawford Pennington, son of the reigning Mrs. USA Earth, to encourage others to take small steps daily to invest in our planet.

JULY



Photo courtesy of Sea Girt Conservancy



Photo by Karen Keene

A 9,600-sq.ft. **pollinator garden at Edgemere Park** in Sea Girt was installed, led by the Sea Girt Conservancy with \$15,000 in grant support secured by MCF through the National Philanthropic Trust. The **“Rising Waters”** sculpture construction by Dorsey Lucas began at **Jackson Woods Park** in Long Branch, funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and NJ DEP’s Coastal Management Program in partnership with the NJ State Council on the Arts through a grant secured by MCF. The piece was dedicated in October.

AUGUST



Photo by Gene Madeam

Preserved **122 acres in Millstone** of critical habitat and farmland as an addition to Millstone Park, representing one of the largest remaining, undeveloped tracts of land in the area. The land was acquired via a fee simple purchase in partnership with MCF, the NJ DEP Green Acres Program, Monmouth County, and Millstone Township.

SEPTEMBER



Photo courtesy of Monmouth County Park System

MCF established the **Jim Truncer Memorial Fund** to carry on Jim’s legacy as Director of Monmouth County Park System for 58 years and help to preserve green space and create parks. We raised more than \$237,000 for the Fund at our **Fall for Conservation Cocktail Party**, where we posthumously honored Jim for his commitment to preservation and instrumental role in the founding of MCF.

OCTOBER



Photo by Fred Yahn, Eagle Drone Solutions

Permanently protected **20 acres in Howell** with substantial wildlife habitat and century forest – our pilot project with the US Department of Defense (DOD). This project was led by MCF in partnership with the US Navy, Monmouth County, and Howell Township.

NOVEMBER



Photo by Jena Cosimo

Permanently preserved **235 acres of Colts Neck farmland** through partnership with the US Navy, Monmouth County Commissioners and Board of Recreation Commissioners, Colts Neck Township, and MCF – a substantial amount of farm acreage in our Garden State!

DECEMBER



Photo by Karen Keene

MCF dedicated a new seating area at Swimming River Park in Middletown as a **memorial to Judith Stanley Coleman** (1935 – 2010), MCF’s Co-Founder who served as our president for over thirty years. The memorial was funded by donations to MCF in memory of Stanley Coleman. Shortly after, **0.5 acres to expand Swimming River Park** was acquired, thanks to Monmouth County Commissioners and Board of Recreation Commissioners and MCF working together.