



TABLE OF CONTENTS

BROADENING MCF'S SCOPE 1

MCF 2014 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS 2

NEW BOARD MEMBERS 3

KEEP IT GREEN INITIATIVE 4

KIDS FOR CONSERVATION 5

UPCOMING MCF EVENTS 6

MCF BROADENING SCOPE ADDS COASTAL AND URBAN PROJECTS TO 2014 PROJECT MIX

Monmouth Conservation Foundation has achieved extraordinary success over its 37-year history, creating “a permanent, county-wide legacy of open space, parks and protected natural resources,” an invaluable legacy for our children and future generations, wrote MCF President Bill Marraccini in our 2013 annual report.

2014 promises to be as successful and includes significant new conservation projects aligned with that mission. “In the past, we’ve concentrated on preserving open space for passive and active recreation and on farmland preservation,” says MCF Executive Director Bill Kastning. “This year, we’re continuing to do those types of projects, while strategically extending our work to include coastal and urban projects—also an important aspect of our original mission which MCF steadfastly adheres to.”

It is Monmouth County’s changing character that demands this expanded focus. “Our county’s population is growing, so there are more urban areas, and more need for urban parks,” explains Kastning. “There’s also more development on and near our coasts, so there is more need to protect our vulnerable shores.” Hurricane Sandy underscored the urgent need for preserving natural coastal buffers against future flooding, while development in rural parts of the county points up the ongoing need for farmland preservation.

MCF has a vital role to play in these new coastal, urban and farmland preservation projects, says Spence Wickham, Chief of Land Acquisition and Design with the Monmouth County Park System. “Many times the Foundation, being a private entity, can move faster than a public agency can—negotiating and when necessary, temporarily acquiring a property and holding it for the county, doing the survey, appraisal, title search and environmental work. That is an invaluable service for us.”

As new open space preservation opportunities continue to arise, MCF will continue to serve the public by adding to our county’s open space legacy. ■

2014 MCF PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

A PARTIAL PREVIEW OF 2014 PROJECTS
REFLECTS MCF'S DIVERSE CONSERVATION MISSION:

FRENEAU WOODS: A COUNTY PARK WHERE THERE WAS NONE

One of this year's most exciting projects will create an entirely new 200+ acre county park serving the highly populated Aberdeen and Marlboro area with hiking and other recreation. MCF is partnering with the Monmouth County Park System, NY-NJ Baykeeper, the state, and local municipalities to protect the 89-acre Aberdeen Wilson Associates property in Aberdeen and the 68-acre Fariello property in both Aberdeen and Marlboro to create this new park. **Freneau Woods** includes expansive wetlands, vernal pools, upland forest, varied wildlife habitat and scenic vistas of Lake Lefferts. Plans are to connect it to the popular 24-mile Henry Hudson Trail. "Located on upper Matawan Creek, the park has great ecological value and conserves an important natural stream corridor as a buffer against estuary flooding," notes NY-NJ Baykeeper Conservation Director Greg Remaud.



CHRIS'S LANDING PARK PHOTO BY TINA COLELLA

CHRIS'S LANDING PARK: WATER ACCESS ON THE SWIMMING AND NAVESINK RIVERS

Waterfront public access has been woefully inadequate in the Red Bank area, especially for low- and moderate-income families. This is changing, thanks to a partnership between MCF and the Monmouth County Park System. The 12-acre **Chris's Landing Park** will offer access to the Navesink River and Swimming River (with its many protected upstream natural areas), as well as to Sandy Hook and Raritan Bay. The park will be strategically located on the water at the corner of Hubbard Ave. and West Front St. in Middletown. Chris's Landing will include ample parking, a picnic grove, boat launch, and small amphitheater. The park will permanently provide free coastal access in an area once zoned and slated for townhouses.



TURKEY SWAMP PARK
COURTESY OF MONMOUTH
COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

TURKEY SWAMP INHOLDING PROTECTED IN FREEHOLD TOWNSHIP

Acquisition of this long sought 14-acre parcel—surrounded on all sides by county parkland—helps protect significant natural habitat inside one of Monmouth County's most beloved parks.

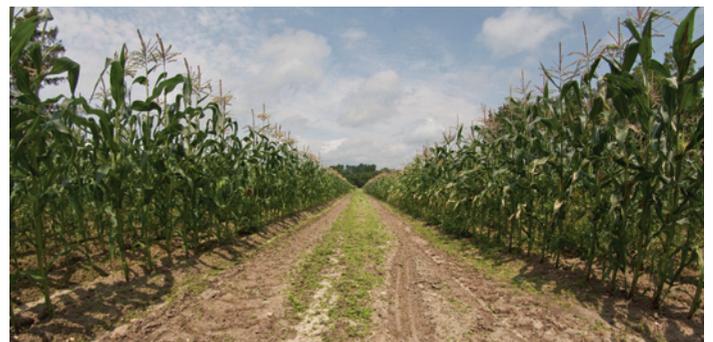
SPRINGWOOD AVENUE PARK: OPEN SPACE FOR UNDERSERVED ASBURY PARK

When Interfaith Neighbors, Inc., an Asbury Park non-profit community development group, asked MCF to help transform a 1.3-acre vacant lot into an urban pocket park, the Foundation jumped at the opportunity. "It's a terrific project!" declares Interfaith Neighbors Associate Executive Director Paul McEvily. "This will be the first public park on the West Side in the city's history." The new park will include a playground, a recreational lawn, an outdoor performance space, and a walking and running path. "This park is a truly collaborative effort, involving the city, county, MCF and other funders, all working with community stakeholders," concludes McEvily. It is also part of a bigger West Side revitalization plan that includes several hundred new residential units, commercial space, and an arts center.

WALL TOWNSHIP FARMLAND PRESERVATION UNDERWAY

With few remaining farms in Wall Township, the recent acquisition of an agriculture easement on the 35-acre **Conover Farm**, and the pending easement acquisition on the contiguous 14-acre **Conover Christmas Tree Farm**, will ensure the preservation of Monmouth County's dwindling farming heritage and natural resources. The Conover family has farmed this land for generations and is excited to see their heritage remain as "forever farmland."

A partnership between MCF, the State Agriculture Development Committee, the Monmouth County Agriculture Board and Wall Township guarantees this land is always farmed. Maintaining these agricultural operations will help sustain the environmental integrity of the area for generations to come, as each piece of preserved farmland protects and supports the quality of life in Monmouth County. ■



CONOVER FARM PHOTO BY TINA COLELLA

YOUR SUPPORT OF NJ KEEP IT GREEN INITIATIVE IS VITAL TO THE STATE'S OPEN SPACE FUTURE

Imagine your county without these beloved places: Take away Holmdel Park and Historic Longstreet Farm. Erase Huber Woods in Middletown, Turkey Swamp in Freehold, the Crosswicks Creek Greenway in Upper Freehold, and Sea Watch Beach in Manasquan.

None of these parks would exist today without the open space funding provided by the state of New Jersey for five decades. Unfortunately, the state is currently providing no new money to create new parklands, do farmland preservation, or protect wetlands, aquifers, and coastal areas.

Two years ago, MCF joined with the Keep It Green Initiative—a coalition of 185 organizations—to ensure continued state funding for land preservation. Working beside such groups as the New Jersey Audubon Society, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, the Trust for Public Land, we are committed to ensuring sustainable funding for open space preservation.

A recent survey of voters found that an overwhelming 75 percent support the dedication of \$200 million per year for 30 years to open space, farmland and historic preservation. The current bills in the NJ Senate calls for exactly that: a state constitutional amendment that will set aside a small portion of revenues to fully fund open space preservation for thirty years. Unfortunately, the NJ Assembly is considering a less effective, short-term approach, an open space bond issue that will need to be renewed periodically. (It was the expiration of a similar bond issue in 2009 that leaves us without state conservation funds today.)

The Keep It Green Initiative is working to pass one of the Senate bills. Super majority passage by the legislature will bring the referendum up for a vote by the electorate in November 2014. It's important to note that NJ Governor Christie has no role to play in the decision. It's up to our legislature and voters to decide.

The legislature needs to move this bill forward now so voters can have their say, contends NJ Keep It Green Chairman Tom Gilbert: "Investing in open space is a wise decision that is critical to protecting the quality of life in the most densely populated state in the nation, and essential to maintaining the viability of key industries including agriculture, tourism, and outdoor recreation." ■

MCF ACHIEVES PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL LAND TRUST ACCREDITATION

On February 26, 2014, the Foundation achieved a significant milestone: land trust accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the national Land Trust Alliance.

MCF is the only New Jersey land trust receiving accreditation this year, and only the fourth ever in our state's history. MCF also is the first county-focused NJ land trust to be accredited—the others were larger, statewide or regional groups. Nationally only 1.4% of the 1,723 land trusts have been accredited.

"Monmouth Conservation Foundation's accredited status demonstrates our profound commitment to ensuring a permanent legacy of land conservation throughout Monmouth County," says MCF President Bill Marraccini. "Our land trust is an even stronger organization today having gone through the rigorous accreditation program." The accreditation process is challenging. The commission conducts an 8 to 10 month review of each land trust's application, and uses the process as a tool to help the applying organization fine tune its policies and streamline its operations to enhance performance.



HUBER WOODS PHOTO BY TINA COLELLA

KEEP NEW JERSEY & MONMOUTH COUNTY GREEN!

New Jersey still has 1.8 million acres of open space that urgently need protection. That won't happen without your help. NJ Keep It Green is calling for a November 2014 ballot question to establish a stable, long-term source of funding for the Garden State's preservation programs.

Protect the green future of your state and county by contacting NJ General Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto and your State Assembly representatives. Let them know that you support a state constitutional amendment dedicating \$200 million per year for 30 years to open space, farmland and historic preservation. Please do it today!

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YOUR ASSEMBLY LEGISLATOR:

[www.njleg.state.nj.us/
members/legsearch.asp](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/members/legsearch.asp)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

AND THE WINNERS ARE... **KIDS FOR CONSERVATION** CELEBRATES ITS FIRST YEAR

What with title searches, surveys and appraisals, it's easy for MCF to view land conservation as very serious business, but one 2013 program reminded us of the sheer joy found in the natural places we protect.

MCF's **KIDS FOR CONSERVATION** was embraced by a dozen Monmouth County schools last fall, where preschoolers and kindergarteners were invited to draw a picture or take a photo of something that intrigued and inspired them in nature. The young artists' work was then displayed on our **KIDS FOR CONSERVATION** Facebook page, where family and friends voted for their favorites, and three winners were selected.

"This project is a hands-on way of engaging children with nature at a very young age, helping them to explore and see all the wonders of nature, while ultimately creating an ongoing appreciation of it," says Lisa McKean, MCF's Managing Director of Marketing and Development.

The program was a big hit at the Ivy Hill Preschool in Middletown, says School Director Ika Noche: "The children had fun with it, and it was a great way to teach science—a subject that can be hard to teach in preschool. **KIDS FOR CONSERVATION** really worked for us, and the children want to do it again!"

Plans are in place—provided funding can be found—to build on the success of last year's **KIDS FOR CONSERVATION**. In fall 2014, MCF hopes to once again invite young students throughout Monmouth County to participate in the **KIDS FOR CONSERVATION** project.

In his book, *Last Child in the Woods*, Richard Louv warns of a younger generation lost in video games and deprived of nature. He writes: "Passion is lifted from the earth itself by the muddy hands of the young; it travels along grass-stained sleeves to the heart. If we are going to save environmentalism and the environment, we must also save an endangered indicator species: the child in nature."

The goal of **KIDS FOR CONSERVATION** is to directly involve children with nature in Monmouth County. "If we involve young families, and make nature a significant part of children's lives today, we are creating the land stewards of tomorrow," says McKean. ■

MCF ACHIEVES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

MCF now joins a prestigious group of just 254 accredited land trusts in the nation. They are authorized to display a seal indicating that they meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that their conservation efforts are permanent.

"Since its founding, Monmouth Conservation Foundation has been steadfast in its overall land preservation mission. Accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission is an important validation of that mission, and of those who have supported MCF," says Bill Kastning, MCF Executive Director. ■

“IF WE INVOLVE YOUNG FAMILIES, AND MAKE NATURE A SIGNIFICANT PART OF CHILDREN’S LIVES TODAY, WE ARE CREATING THE LAND STEWARDS OF TOMORROW!”

– LISA MCKEAN



Katherine, ABC Spectrum Preschool



Jonah, King of Kings School



Adrianna, Ivy Hill Preschool

MCF HONORED WITH 2013 PLANNING MERIT AWARD

MONMOUTH CONSERVATION FOUNDATION has been recognized by the Monmouth County Planning Board with its annual Planning Merit Award. The 2013 award came in recognition of MCF's more than 36 years as "a vital and vibrant leader in the preservation of more than 6,500 acres of land in Monmouth County," says Planning Board Chairman Vince Domidion. "This award recognizes MCF's responsible contributions and partnerships that help keep Monmouth County green." The award goes annually to those who positively influence planning in Monmouth County. ■

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1977-2010

COVER PHOTO COURTESY OF
MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM
NEWSLETTER DESIGNED BY JANICE HAHN

www.monmouthconservation.org

MCF WELCOMES *NEW* BOARD MEMBERS



ELIZABETH FORDI

Elizabeth Fordi spent nearly twenty years planning and executing conferences abroad for the publishing and pharmaceutical industries. So she was very happy to finally settle down in Middletown, “a place to breathe, contemplate, and plant a garden,” she writes. Monmouth County is “protected from the powerful tide of New York sprawl; near enough to the city’s pulsing heart, yet mercifully just out of its reach—for now.” She looks forward to helping protect our county’s dwindling green spaces. She and her fiancé, their dog, and their chickens live on protected land.



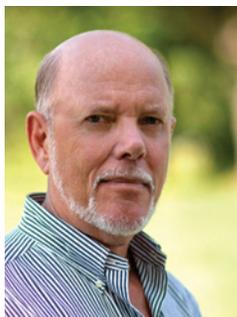
RON KLEIN

Ron Klein lives in Little Silver, NJ with his wife and three children. His 38-year retail career saw him rise from trainee to Chairman, as he moved from Bloomingdales, to Saks Fifth Avenue, and other retailers. For the last 13 years, Ron was Chairman of three separate operating divisions within Federated Department stores that subsequently became Macy’s. Under his tenure, Macy’s achieved sales in excess of \$22 billion. As an MCF board member, Ron hopes to utilize his experience and insight into the American consumer, and as a leader of a major national corporation.



ANDREW SAFRAN

Andrew Safran is Vice Chairman of Investment Banking at Deutsche Bank, serving clients in the global energy sector. Prior to 2012, he was Vice Chairman of Global Banking at Citigroup and Chairman of Citi’s Global Energy, Power and Chemical Group. Mr. Safran helped develop the Master Limited Partnership structure, which transformed North America’s energy landscape, resulting in a \$300 billion market to finance energy infrastructure. Andy is a Trustee of Tufts University, and on the boards of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and the New York Botanical Garden.



RICHARD O. VENINO, JR.

Richard O. Venino, Jr. is an attorney at law of the State of New Jersey, with offices in Sea Girt. A solo practitioner since his admission to the New Jersey bar in 1976, he specializes in title law. Mr. Venino is regularly consulted by attorneys and title companies for his expert opinions and has testified as a title expert in numerous court proceedings, and acted as co-counsel for the General Board of Proprietors of the Eastern Division of New Jersey. He also engages in genealogical research and the tracing of missing heirs, travelling internationally in this effort.

PHOTOS ABOVE BY
TINA COLELLA

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JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST!

Our goal is to both preserve open space and to correspond with our supporters and members in the most efficient and environmentally friendly manner.

If you would like to be updated on **Monmouth Conservation Foundation's** news, events, alerts and programs, please send your email address to: info@monmouthconservation.org or call: 732.671.7000.

THANK YOU!

Monmouth Conservation Foundation is steadfastly dedicated to ensuring a permanent legacy of open space and natural resources throughout Monmouth County.



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SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES PLEASE CONTACT:
CHRIS HORRIGAN 732.671.7000 OR EMAIL
CHORRIGAN@MONMOUTHCONSERVATION.ORG

SAVE THESE DATES

MONMOUTH CONSERVATION FOUNDATION'S

UPCOMING EVENTS:

*Celebrating
the Year of
the Horse*

Sunday . April 6th

Run for the Hills!

25th Indian Trails Footrace

Title Sponsor: J.M. Huber Corp.

Saturday . September 27th

37th Annual Fall Fête

Saturday . October 11th

A spooktacular afternoon

of Hayrides, Pumpkins, Tricks & Treats with
a Halloween Parade and Prizes, too!

Thursday . December 4th

Holiday Style Luncheon & Shopping Spree

