

GREENWAYS

14
Newsletter of
Delaware & Raritan Greenway, Inc.
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In Perpetuity

Visions of Green

Preserving land never happens in a vacuum. New land conservation initiatives are often influenced by a diversity of challenges, threats and opportunities. Conceived through a 'vision of green' typically articulated by one, given birth through the efforts of a tireless few, these new initiatives struggle to gain momentum until the groundswell of public opinion catches up with them, giving them the wings to soar.

D&R Greenway has been blessed to work with many 'green visionaries'. There is no doubt that success favors the prepared, and those with a plan are much more prepared to carry out their vision than those without one.

In 1970, shortly after Pete Cantu moved to Plainsboro, there were more cows than people living there. As a matter of fact, more cows were milked on *one* farm in Plainsboro than there were people living in this bucolic setting.

But life in this quiet farm community was about to change dramatically. A massive zoning re-alignment was approved that ultimately allowed the development of 6,500 housing units plus additional office and commercial facilities. With no master plan and little understanding of what this kind of growth would mean to their community, Plainsboro was ill-prepared for growth.

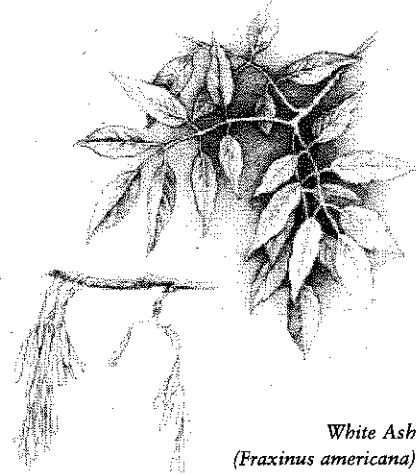
Fortunately, Plainsboro had a vocal proponent of sound planning and open space preservation in Pete Cantu. Believing that Plainsboro has some of the finest farmland in the state and that this farmland could continue to be productive and an asset to the community, Mayor Cantu was able to lead his community in land use planning, accelerating the master planning process and managing the pressures of growth.

Today, this small municipality is the fastest growing community in the State, yet it has preserved nearly forty percent of its total acreage. Earlier this year Mayor Cantu talked with Greenway's Executive Director Linda Mead and Trustee Ted Stiles about establishing a nonprofit land trust in Plainsboro. Mayor Cantu's vision has indeed become a reality, a legacy for the future.

Mayor Jack Rafferty of Hamilton Township, grew up playing with his boyhood buddies in the wildness of the Hamilton/Trenton Marsh. The colorful memories of his childhood adventures, exploration and play have fostered in him a great fondness for the marsh—and continually kindle his interest in working to preserve this regional treasure.

He shares a vision of green to permanently protect the miles of water-

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White Ash
(*Fraxinus americana*)

Inside

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Foundation Awards Grant

The William Penn Foundation recently made the second payment of a two-year grant to D&R Greenway for the Hamilton/Trenton Marsh Project. Since the project's inception, The William Penn Foundation has taken a leadership role and provided vital financial support for this successful project. In 1996, the Foundation awarded Greenway a two-year grant of \$203,500 to support our work to develop a coordinated management plan to permanently protect and preserve the marsh.

Greenway Receives Grant

D&R Greenway received a \$10,000 grant from the J. Seward Johnson, Sr. Charitable Trust. The grant supports Greenway's efforts to preserve environmentally sensitive lands in the watershed of the D&R Canal and provide outreach programs to landowners, municipal leaders, and residents.

Volunteers Needed!!

Interested in assisting with land conservation? Could you spare a few hours a month? We need your help with newsletter mailings, event preparation, outreach efforts and a variety of other delightful and important office duties. Call Lauren Bonica at (609) 924-4646 and let us know when you can help.

Happy Holidays

May the magic of the holiday season fill your hearts with joy and peace the whole year through! ❁

Common Ground

The Missing Link

D&R Greenway is partnering with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) to develop a greenway along the Assunpink Creek. From its headwaters in Monmouth County, the Assunpink travels through a wide range of land uses including a wildlife management area, a protected riparian corridor surrounded by agriculture, a recreational county park, swampland, suburban development, and a heavily urbanized setting.

Funded with a Green Links grant from Mercer, Somerset, Middlesex Regional Planning Council (MSM) earlier this year, the greenway plan will focus on environmental protection and trail development along the Assunpink in Hamilton and Lawrence Townships.

Establishing a greenway through these two municipalities will complete the 'missing' green link from the creek's headwaters in the Assunpink Wildlife Management Area to its mouth at the Delaware River. The study area extends west from Mercer County Park to the border of the City of Trenton. Establishing a green link in this area presents a unique opportunity to develop a trail connecting the state capitol and the county park/community college. This trail could be used for recreation and as an alternative means of commuting to work and school.

The goals of the plan are to:

- promote public education and develop community support for the plan,
- protect the fragile creek environment,
- enhance recreation along the creek, and
- facilitate cooperation and coordination among levels of government and the public and private sectors.

D&R Greenway is serving as the local advisor, assisting with identifying and coordinating grassroots organizations and public agencies who will participate on the planning team. With this greenway plan in

hand, we will seek to expand protection of environmentally sensitive lands along the Assunpink.

Don't miss this opportunity to get involved! Call Patti Elkis of DVRPC at (215) 592-1800 to let us know if you would like to participate.

American Beech
(*Fagus grandifolia*)



The River Runs Wild

Jim Amon, Executive Director of the D&R Canal Commission and advisor to D&R Greenway, has been leading the charge for designation of the Lower Delaware as a National Wild & Scenic River. Over the past three years, hundreds of local residents and community leaders have participated in a study which identified the key natural, historical, scenic and recreational resources along the Delaware from the Water Gap to the Rancocas Creek in Burlington County.

As one landowner so aptly put it, "Scenic beauty, wildlife habitat and overall atmosphere of the region are the three most important qualities of the area." As a matter of fact, a survey of local residents who live directly along the river revealed that 88 percent of the respondents support an overall river conservation plan.

The Lower Delaware River Management Plan, the result of this process, was recently mailed to all riverside municipalities asking for their endorsement of its six goals.

Linda Mead, Executive Director

of D&R Greenway, traveled to Washington D.C. in December with Jim Amon and Bob Stokes of NJ DEP Green Acres to inform our congressional representatives about the goals and benefits of the Plan. The Management Plan's goals are consistent with Greenway's mission to protect lands along the canal and local waterways.

To find out how you can support this effort, call Bill Sharp at the National Park Service, (215) 597-1655.

Forum Planned for Marsh

During the early months of 1998, D&R Greenway will host a forum to gather together the region's leaders, experts and interested community members to develop a coordinated management plan that will determine the future of the Hamilton/Trenton Marsh. The forum will be held on Friday, March 6, 1998 at Rider University.

Through the efforts of the task forces during the past three years, five community goals have been identified and will be addressed in the coordinated management plan. These are to:

- permanently protect the critical environmental habitats, historic resources and conservation values of the marsh,
- maintain the integrity of the natural and cultural resources of the marsh through good stewardship practices following resource management guidelines,
- provide for the enjoyment and recreational use of the marsh by the public,
- educate local citizens, schoolchildren, property owners, business leaders and others about the unique resources of the marsh and their value to the environment and to the community, and
- encourage activities that will enhance economic viability of the region while protecting the unique resources of the marsh.

Watch the next issue of *Greenways* for more information about the important initiative. The planning process and plan implementation are key to protecting this incredible resource. ■

Northern Stony Brook Preserve Spruced Up!

During the past several months, Greenway staff and volunteers have been hard at work at the Northern Stony Brook Preserve on Mountain Road. The three trails on the 484-acre preserve were freshly groomed and newly blazed. A small section that ran through wetlands was also rerouted to a dryer area.

Gordon Smith brush-hogged the fields of wildflowers after they had gone to seed. Jim Irish of Irish Tree Service, cleared logs from across the trails, and removed dangerous dead trees and broken tree tops to prevent injury to trail users. Other volunteers groomed the parking area and trimmed trails.

Staff members, Lauren Bonica and Kaelyn Stiles redesigned and updated the kiosk. In addition to a map of the trails and regulations for the preserve, the kiosk also features Kaelyn's art work in an interpretive piece about woodland creatures found on the preserve during the winter months.

Thanks to everyone for all of their efforts!

If you don't have the opportunity to visit the preserve within the next

few weeks, plan to join us on January 24, for our guided nature walk. For more details and to register, see upcoming events on page 4. ■



Kaelyn Stiles, land management assistant with Greenway, stands by the new kiosk at the Northern Stony Brook Preserve.

PSE&G Continues Leadership Role at Marsh

Public Service, Electric and Gas Company continued their leadership role with a recent grant of \$10,000 to D&R Greenway to

support the permanent protection of the Hamilton/Trenton Marsh.

Their generous gift provides important support for the develop-

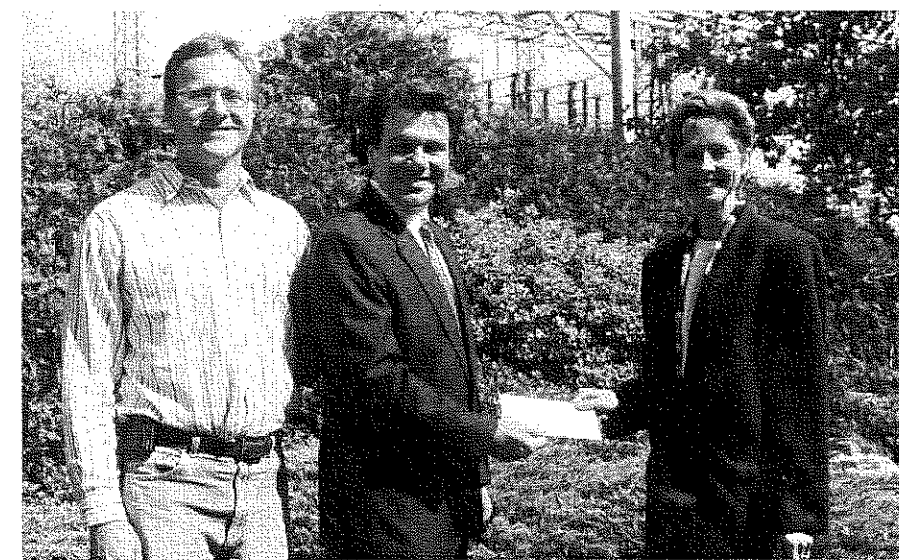
ment of the coordinated management plan for the marsh.

PSE&G has been a long time supporter of the project. During the past several years, the company has provided generous financial support for the education and outreach program at the marsh. Company representatives have served on the task forces to develop guidelines for public access and protection of resources at the marsh.

The company also generously supported the enhancement project at John Roebling Memorial Park. PSE&G designed, manufactured and installed the entrance gates to the park and provided funds for the access and interpretive signs.

They also provided resources for several scout projects including the wood duck nest box project and the refurbishing of the Watson woods Picnic Area.

Employees have also been involved in a variety of community service projects. Each year a team of PSE&G employees participates in the annual trash stash at the marsh. Additionally, employees have participated in the water monitoring program and the nest box project. ■



Don Tretola, regional public affairs manager for Mercer County presents check to Patricia Shapella, Greenway's director of development, as Joe Oakley, senior environmental engineer with PSE&G looks on.

Wild Wanderings – Join Us!

D&R Greenway is sponsoring several winter adventures that you won't want to miss.

Events are open to the public. The fee, unless otherwise noted, is \$3/person (\$5/family) for members; \$5/person (\$10/family) for nonmembers. Registration is required at least one week prior to the program and will be confirmed. A full refund will be made if notice of cancellation is received at least 72 hours prior to the program. Call (609) 924-4646 to cancel. No refunds will be given after that time. For more information or to register, use the coupon on page 5 or call the Greenway Hotline at (609) 452-0525.

Winter Woodland Walk along the Northern Stony Brook

Sat., January 24, 10:00 a.m. – noon

Join us to learn about winter habitats and ecology. Learn how animals adapt to this cold season and how to read the stories left in the tracks dotting the forest floor. Don Freiday, Chief Naturalist for Hunterdon County Park System, will lead this walk along trails traversing some of the 360 preserved acres in the Northern Stony Brook Greenway.

Wild Romance at the Institute Woods

Sat., February 7, 10:00 a.m. – noon

Cold-toed lovers and preservers of the Institute Woods are invited to join us on a harmonic habitat walk! Learn how the creatures of the woods blissfully enjoy life's simple pleasures. Sit back and relax while a Native American tale is told on an enchanted swinging bridge. And discover a bit about the heart felt efforts that went into the conservation of the Institute Woods.

Greenway staff members, Lauren Bonica and Patti Quinby, will be our guides.

Up-Close with Nature: Shoot It With Your Camera

Sat., February 28, 10:00 a.m. – noon

Don't miss this great opportunity to view and photograph wild birds of prey up-close. Professionals and amateur photographers are welcome

as Donald & Karen Bonica of Toms River Avian Care and published photographer, Bob Birdsall, offer a unique opportunity to learn about, view and photograph live wild birds of prey.

Our stars for the day include a red-tailed hawk, barred owl, barn owl, and a screech owl. A short workshop on photography technique and habitat preservation will be provided. Birds will be set up in a natural outdoor environment.

This is an intimate photography shoot and enrollment is limited to 15 people. The cost for this event is \$80 for members and \$90 for nonmembers.

Hamilton/Trenton Marsh Trash Stash

Sat., March 14, 9:00 a.m. – noon

Calling all trash stashers. It's that time again! Greenway partner, NJ Community Water Watch will be taking the reigns and hosting the 3rd annual Hamilton/Trenton Marsh Trash Stash. NJ Community Water Watch is a statewide project of NJPIRG Law and Policy Center. The

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ways and surrounding uplands that harbor a rich diversity of wildlife and an amazing story of human history dating back more than 6000 years. The vision of green includes a multitude of possibilities—protecting and restoring the historic homes along the bluffs of the marshlands, creating a biking/hiking trail linking these wild lands to the Waterfront area and the proposed Heritage Trail, and perhaps creating a model Native American village site at the marsh.

During the past three years, Mayor Rafferty has played a vital role as a partner with D&R Greenway in the initiative to permanently protect these valuable wetlands. He has been a leader on the task forces that laid the groundwork for the coordinated management plan to be developed



Red-tailed hawk
(*Buteo jamaicensis*)

project places AmeriCorps members in urban areas to focus communities with the tools they need to make an impact on the waterways. In our area, NJ Community Water Watch is headquartered at ISLES, INC.

Enthusiastic volunteers are needed to pick up trash, staff registration/food tables, assist with publicity and more. If you can help or want more info, call Jennifer Rehbein or Linda Dunn at NJ Community Water Watch (609) 393-5656 ext. 27. 🍂

over the course of the next year. Under his leadership, Hamilton Township generously provided materials and labor for the enhancement of Roebling Park, and through the Septemberfest bike race, a substantial cash contribution to the preservation effort. The Marsh remains a viable and significant resource in this community thanks to Mayor Rafferty's visionary foresight.

A few months ago, Peg VanPatton of the Open Space Committee in Hillsborough Township, Somerset County, approached D&R Greenway to request our assistance in negotiating open space deals in the township. Township leaders have already developed an open space plan and identified critical parcels to be preserved. With a dedicated tax fund and Green Acres grant in place to supply the funding for land preservation, the township

Continued on next page

Event Registration

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone (day) _____ (evening) _____

Please register me (us) for the events indicated below.

Winter Woodland Walk along the Northern Stony Brook

Sat., January 24, 10:00 a.m. – noon

Number attending: _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____

Wild Romance at the Institute Woods

Sat., February 7, 10:00 a.m. – noon

Number attending: _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____

Up-Close with Nature: Shoot It With Your Camera

Sat., February 28, 10:00 a.m. – noon

Number attending: _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____

Hamilton/Trenton Marsh Trash Stash

Sat., March 14, 9:00 a.m. – noon

Number attending: _____ Free _____

Please make check payable to D&R Greenway and mail to:

Delaware & Raritan Greenway Events
570 Mercer Road, Princeton, NJ 08540

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is prepared to implement a vision of green for their community. Greenway has agreed to provide help with land-owner contact, negotiations and assistance in structuring the land acquisition deals.

In a project initiated by ANJEC last spring, the Environmental Commissions from Delaware, Kingwood, Franklin and Raritan townships have come together to create a regional watershed protection plan for the Lockatong and Wickecheoke Creeks. The partnership includes the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance, a newly formed land conservancy facilitated by Greenway last year, the South Branch Watershed Association, representatives from the D&R Canal Commission, and the New Jersey Conservation Foundation. Funded with a grant from The William Penn Foundation, the partnership is developing a plan that will

include a resource inventory with computerized GIS mapping, management strategies and priorities for land acquisition.

Earlier this year, Greenway worked with a small group of green visionaries to preserve the Ingersoll Rand property in Montgomery Township. The Institute Lands were preserved by another group of green visionaries who understand the value of these lands and worked to raise funds and negotiate the arrangements needed to bring the deal to fruition.

All of these conservation initiatives illustrate the wave of the future in preserving the unique quality of our central New Jersey environment: *visions of green implemented through partnership.*

Greenway applauds the visionaries and partners who are turing their visions into reality. We are proud to be a part of these efforts to support new conservation achievements. 🍂

Give a gift membership

and your gift will keep on giving the whole year through! Members receive advance notice and discounts to nature walks, canoe trips and lectures, and our quarterly newsletter *Greenways*. Your contribution also helps to preserve vital stream corridors and wetlands throughout central New Jersey.

- \$2,500 Greenway Donor
- \$1,000 Headwater Donor
- \$500 Tributary Donor
- \$250 Woodland Donor
- \$150 Trail Donor
- \$100 Wildflower Donor
- \$50 Maple Leaf Donor
- \$40 Family Membership
- \$35 Individual Membership
- \$20 Senior Citizen/Student
- Other \$ _____
- My company will match my gift. Enclosed is the matching gift form.

Also enclosed is a gift towards D&R Greenway's:

- Land Acquisition Fund \$ _____
- Management & Monitoring Fund \$ _____

I'd also like information about:

- preserving my stream corridor lands
- D&R Greenway trails
- volunteer opportunities



Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Tel (area code) _____

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Delaware & Raritan Greenway, Inc.
570 Mercer Road, Princeton, NJ 08540

