# GREENWAYS

Newsletter of D&R Greenway Land Trust Volume 27, Number 1 Spring 2018

### Land Preservation Update

Since 1989 D&R Greenway has permanently preserved 299 properties, approximately 20,295 acres valued over \$400 million dollars. Stretched into a four-foot wide footpath, D&R Greenway preserved land would be longer than the Appalachian Trail!

## Trenton Terminal Woods: From Idle Industrial Site to Conservation Asset

wice a day, the Delaware River's tidal waters wash into and out of the Abbott Marshlands in a complex process that cleanses the wetlands of contaminants and depleted resources while introducing the seeds of new life.

The latest addition to the Abbott Marshlands was preserved in just as complex a process.

A 6.5-acre wooded portion of the former Trenton Terminal oil depot will be reborn as a pedestrian gateway to the Delaware River thanks to a partnership between D&R Greenway Land Trust and ExxonMobil.

"This urban repurposing of a former industrial site was a challenge that D&R Greenway was happy to facilitate," shares Linda Mead, President & CEO

of D&R Greenway Land Trust. "Its acquisition provides a substantial public benefit for recreation and environmental protection. ExxonMobil was enthusiastic to partner with us and we wanted to ensure this opportunity would not be lost."

The site is located where Lamberton Road ends at Duck Island, a 94-acre constructed wetlands. Technically eight islands surrounded by two miles of serpentine channels, Duck Island was created in 1994 to mitigate for construction of I-295.

The D&R Canal towpath runs through the Abbott Marshlands, paralleling the River Line between Bordentown City and Roebling Park, and will extend to Trenton's Battle Continued on following page



### Inside

- 2017 Donors, Business Partners, and Volunteers
- Transformation of a Cow Pasture to a Wetlands Meadow
- Newly Preserved Land in the Sourlands
- Spring into Summer with Inspiring Art, Poetry Walks, and Talks
- Strange Inheritance



Duck Island on left with access corridor leading from D&R Canal towpath (below image) to the Delaware River (photo: Jay Watson)

## Trenton Terminal Woods

Continued from page 1

Monument. The trail "ducks" under I-295 just above Duck Island.

Preserving the Trenton Terminal woods will enable people to walk from the towpath through the woods and down a spur trail to the river. Interpretive signs are planned to provide context about the area's natural and industrial history.

The preserved site is entirely second-growth woods that nature has reclaimed from human disturbance. "If anything, this site has benefitted from the lack of attention it's gotten over the years," comments Dr. Mary Leck, Rider University Biology Professor Emeritus and renowned Abbott Marshlands researcher.

Like much of the riverine wetlands south of Trenton, the area that became the Terminal was first cleared and drained for agriculture, then later converted to industrial use. This portion of the Terminal was left undisturbed long enough that woods grew up. The site includes more than a few impressive cottonwood trees and provides nesting habitat for Red-tailed hawks and Warbling vireos. Among other species observed here, Dr. Leck notes, is the

Saving this site, and with it the diverse wildlife that depend on it, was ExxonMobil's objective. The company partnered with D&R Greenway to make that happen.



Harvester butterfly (Feniseca tarquinius)



Red-tailed Hawk (Buteo jamaicensis)

striking orange Harvester butterfly. Unique among North American butterflies, it is carnivorous: the caterpillars eat woolly aphids and scale insects, while the adults feed on aphid honeydew rather than flower nectar.

Saving this site, and with it the diverse wildlife that depends on it, was ExxonMobil's objective. The company partnered with D&R Greenway to make that happen. Laura Napoli, Environmental Science Associate, explains that ExxonMobil works with accredited land trusts when "a site to be divested has conservation attributes that we want to preserve." ExxonMobil joined the Land Trust Alliance about 10 years ago to establish such partnerships with their member land trusts. Ms. Napoli relates that the company has since preserved approximately half a dozen former industrial tracts, including two on Long Island that it helped restore to maritime grasslands and one on Virginia's Rappahannock River that conserves the riparian viewshed from George Washington's birth farm located on the opposite shore.

Trenton Terminal's industrial history complicated the preservation process, but created an opportunity for D&R Greenway to facilitate a project for which public agencies lacked sufficient flexibility and risk-exposure capacity. D&R Greenway could move swiftly while pursuing the due diligence

necessary to assess the property's risks.

"ExxonMobil staff worked with us every step of the way to make sure that we were getting full disclosure on the environmental issues," notes Jay Watson. ExxonMobil typically conveys a property to a land trust only after all remediation has been completed, with the exception in some instances of long term monitoring of the site. D&R Greenway worked with an environmental remediation specialist who concluded that passive recreation on a walking trail would be a safe public use. Jay adds, "ExxonMobil removed all solid waste debris and provided funding for stewardship to set the stage for transfer to state ownership at the appropriate time."

It takes expertise and creativity to view non-operating, surplus industrial sites not as permanent blots on the landscape but as candidates for preservation to enhance habitat and recreation. Land trusts are especially equipped to make reasonable assessments and find solutions to transition these sites to create a public benefit. Equally idled sites exist elsewhere along the river, including the decommissioned PSEG Mercer Generating Station.

As D&R Greenway continues to widen the scope of preservation potential, the possibilities for restoring our landscape become as wide and deep as the Delaware itself.

### The Taplin Circle

 $\Gamma$ rank Taplin was a well-known and respected philanthropist who was an early advocate for land preservation. His vision and leadership resulted in the permanent protection of two signature Princeton landscapes, the Institute Woods and Coventry Farm.

In 2004, D&R Greenway honored Frank Taplin's memory by creating the Taplin Circle that recognizes individuals who share Frank's commitment to preserving and caring for land by contributing \$1,000 or more to our annual fund. We express our deepest thanks to these individuals for their leadership in supporting the work of D&R Greenway Land Trust.

All members of the Taplin Circle are invited to a special reception annually where they hear about the accomplishments that their support made possible and learn about upcoming projects before they are publicly announced.

Please note that Taplin Circle members who have made a multi-year pledge are listed here at their most recent payment level. Multi-year pledges in effect in 2017 are noted on page 8.

To request a correction to this donor list, please call D&R Greenway at 609-924-4646.

### Donations Received January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017

+ First time donor

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### The EverGreen Circle

People who make a planned gift to D&R Greenway are recognized in our Evergreen Circle. This important group of foresighted individuals and couples have thought about how they can have an impact on their community long after they are gone.

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### Land for Life — Acre by Acre

We are grateful to all who contributed to D&R Greenway's successful LAND FOR LIFE – Acre by Acre campaign. Thank you for sharing our vision of green places for people and nature, farms for food and clean water and fresh air.

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Enjoying a summer shower at the Volunteer Picnic at St. Michaels Farm Preserve

Through Land for Life, D&R Greenway has secured the future of our work and established a Revolving Land Fund that will continue to grow in the future to support protection of important conservation lands, farms and community preserves.

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The historic Schwinn family farm, 116-acres permanently preserved in the Sourlands (photo: Jay Watson)

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Capital City Farm in Trenton (photo: Jay Watson)



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D&R Greenway's staff donned their protective glasses to marvel at the first total solar eclipse to unfold in the U.S. in nearly a century. (photo: Jay Watson)

We especially want to thank those who joined us in the early years for seeding what has become one of the leading land trusts in New Jersey — D&R Greenway Land Trust.

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Phyllis Marchand, Chair of the Board, joined thousands of local residents who met at the Johnson Education Center on April 29, 2017 to Walk for our World's Green Future. The walk demonstrated solidarity and support for the environment and took place the same day as the national Climate March in Washington D.C. (photo: Jay Watson)

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We are grateful to the following supporters who have pledged a significant gift over two or more years, demonstrating their confidence in D&R Greenway Land Trust's critical work. Donors who have made a multi-year pledge are listed in this annual report at their most recent payment level.

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NRG Energy's employees were a great help in repotting plants for the Native Plant Nursery. (photo: Emily Blackman)

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### 2017 Volunteers

**D**&R Greenway Land Trust thanks each of our volunteers for their unique partnership in our mission.

Capital City Farm: Volunteers at Trenton's first urban farm plant crops and flowers, maintain and improve the landscape, and distribute produce and flowers to schools, senior centers, and hospitals.

CITIZEN SCIENTISTS: D&R Greenway is fortunate to have expert ornithologists who regularly identify and count bird species on D&R Greenway preserves. This data is submitted to eBird.org at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, a rich data source for basic information on bird abundance and distribution.

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERS: Sustainable companies and organizations offer "volunteer workdays" to employees in lieu of time in the workplace. These employees volunteer their time to remove invasive plants, clear trails, mulch soil, assist with the Native Plant Nursery and gardens at Capital City Farm.

GUIDED WALK LEADERS: Walks outdoors in nature inspire a conservation ethic by connecting people with the land. Volunteer leaders share expertise in science, culture and history.

NATIVE PLANT NURSERY: Volunteers plant and care for more than fifty species of native plants. They assist with spring and fall plant sales and Friday sales throughout the summer.

New Jersey Trails: Led by former Board Chair Alan Hershey, volunteers from age 16 to 80+ move boulders, clear brush and build charming pedestrian bridges to create special places for people to connect with the land. See www.njtrails.org.

STEWARDSHIP: Volunteers enjoy community spirit as they ensure this important work gets done. They remove invasive species, restore habitats with native plants, and maintain trails.

WILLING HANDS: Volunteers inspire a conservation ethic by assisting with education and art events at the Johnson Education Center, mailings, and community days that spread the word about D&R Greenway.

To learn about volunteer opportunities with D&R Greenway call (609) 924-4646 or visit www.drgreenway.org.

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### Restored Wetland Meadow Completes Preservation of Powell Property in Princeton Ridge Conservation Area

Former cow pasture is now a restored wetland that contributes to a landscape-scale initiative to preserve lands in the Princeton Ridge Conservation Area. Two lots along Snowden Lane and Herrontown Lane in Princeton have been acquired from John and Janet Powell for permanent preservation.

"Landowners often ask how large a property has to be for preservation," says Linda Mead, D&R Greenway President & CEO. "This property provides the answer. We assess every property for its conservation value, and sometimes even small properties can be meaningful, especially when they add to surrounding protected lands."

The Powell lots totaled 4.3 acres and are located directly adjacent to Mercer County's Herrontown Woods Preserve: 142 acres of forest that is part of the 590 acres within the Princeton Ridge Conservation Area.

The properties were used as pasture land for grazing cows for many years. When the landowners were ready to move to a retirement community, the couple decided to sell the two undeveloped lots for preservation. Through their attorney, they made a connection to D&R Greenway.

"We prioritized this property for conservation in order to create a natural



Wetland transition area recently restored by grading and seeding with native grasses (photo: Jay Watson)

transition to the larger wooded tract. We are working with Mercer County and Princeton to ensure that the former Powell property is managed as meadow to scrub/shrub to forest as a natural edge," says D&R Greenway Vice President Jay Watson.

The first of the two lots was acquired in 2016. D&R Greenway has just announced completion of the preservation project with acquisition of the second lot.

During the year between the acquisitions, D&R Greenway worked with the Powells and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to create a restoration plan for part of a former cow pasture composed of filled wetlands. The land was regraded to a pre-fill level, and a meadow mix of wetlands grasses was planted. D&R Greenway has taken on responsibility to monitor the success of the reestablishment of the wetland, and report on progress to the NJDEP annually.

"Again, this illustrates something I often say to landowners and officials," says Linda Mead. She continues, "Preservation is the first step. Stewardship of the land lasts forever."

John Powell was the executor of lands that he helped convert in 2001 to create Barbara Smoyer Park. The Powell addition to Herrontown Woods creates the potential to connect Smoyer Park with expansive open space areas, where many miles of trails wind through mature upland forest. South of Herrontown Woods is D&R Greenway's All Saints' Preserve; to the north is Princeton's Autumn Hill Reservation. The three properties are connected by a trail system. Herrontown Woods also includes the historic Veblen House and cottage.



John Powell on the tractor he generously donated to D&R Greenway (photo: Jay Watson)

### A Harbinger of Spring in the Sourland Mountains

Skunk cabbage, trout lilies, salamanders and birdsong herald spring in the Sourlands. More than 70 species of neotropical birds use the Delaware River flyway on their way north from Central and South America, stopping at the Sourland ridge to nest and breed, ensuring continuation of their species.

This year, when migrating birds find their way back to their summer home, they will find the forest still intact on Ridge Road where a McMansion-type house might have obliterated their breeding grounds.

In late December, D&R Greenway Land Trust announced its major milestone of having preserved over 20,000 acres since its founding in 1989. "Today, we are announcing a new addition to our preserved land with the permanent protection of 19 more acres in the Sourland Mountains," announces D&R Greenway President & CEO Linda Mead.



A trailhead kiosk in the Sourlands marks public access (photo: Jay Watson)

True to our vision of ensuring a permanent network of natural lands and open spaces, D&R Greenway Land Trust has made preservation of the large, contiguous forest in the Sourlands a priority. Our first land acquisition was in the Sourlands, protecting headwaters of the Stony Brook. "We have been creating an assemblage of land in the Sourlands since 1990," says Mead. She continues, "The Sourlands are important for native plant communities,



An aerial view of the Sourland Ecosystem Preserve (photo: Jay Watson)

birds and wildlife, and through preservation have become New Jersey's 'Central Park'."

The Sourland Mountains, projecting 20 miles northeastward from the Delaware River at Lambertville, is the largest intact forest area in central New Jersey, comprising 90 square miles. Newer maps continue to show over 20,000 acres of still-contiguous forest. That continuity explains why the Sourlands are so rich in wildness at every level. The Sourlands are a habitat mosaic encompassing streams and wetlands, early successional and mature forest, boulder fields and surrounding agricultural lands. Woodlands shelter a very rich and diverse native plant community similar to that of the Appalachian Mountains, not equaled in the valleys below. These Sourland forests protect central New Jersey's watersheds and ensure groundwater recharge of the local aquifers.

The newest property preserved in the Sourlands is located along the northerly side of Ridge Road and west of Lindbergh Road. This forested tract was slated to be developed into a single family dwelling that would have cut into the intact forest. D&R Greenway came along just in time.

"One of our preservation objectives is to build onto our existing holdings, particularly in large woodlands, to protect the forest from fragmentation and edge species," says D&R Greenway Vice President Jay Watson. The newly preserved land was purchased from an

investor who had acquired the property to convert it into housing for financial gain. D&R Greenway was able to negotiate a preservation purchase as an alternative to development.

This new property is part of D&R Greenway's Sourlands Ecosystem Preserve, which adjoins lands protected by the land trust with conservation easements, creating a 3,000-acre assemblage of preserved properties. D&R Greenway's recently expanded Cedar Ridge Preserve, Cattail Brook Preserve and fall 2017 preservation of the Schwinn farm nearby the former Lindbergh estate, all add up to create a unique home for birds and wildlife.

"Thanks to our supporters, the NJ Green Acres Program and county and local open space programs," says Mead, "we are able to increase our network of preserved lands so that both wildlife and human life can benefit from being in nature."



Fiddlehead ferns (photo: Jim Amon)

R Greenway Land Trust thanks our Partners in Preservation for their investment in our work. Land preservation is so much more than permanently protecting land from future development. These lands benefit all of us with clean water to drink, fresh air to breathe and fresh, local foods to eat. In addition, green spaces in nature have a positive effect on health including reducing stress, lowering risks from asthma, and lessening health disparities.

Perhaps the most significant benefit of preserving the natural and agricultural landscapes surrounding our cities, towns and villages is that it strengthens these communities by providing, quite literally, "common ground"—a shared continuity of experience with the land that extends across generations.

We would particularly like to welcome first-time donors to our organization. We are also grateful to the families and individuals who have provided steady support for D&R Greenway's work through the years.

See page 6 for acknowledgment of our Steadfast Stewards. We are thankful each and every day for your unfailing generosity.

Kim Haren

Daniel Harris and Jane Buttars

To request a correction to this donor list, please call D&R Greenway at 609-924-4646.

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Capital City Farm receiving NJ Redevelopment Authority's Community Impact Award. (l-r) Honorable Mayor Albert Kelly, City of Bridgeton; Leslie Anderson, Executive Director, NJ Redevelopment Authority; Capital City Farm Staff members, Michael Edens and Derrick Branch; Diana Rogers, City of Trenton; Charles Richman, Commissioner, NJ Department of Community Affairs (photo: courtesy of NJRA)

Continued from page 12

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Vintage photo showing children from St. Michael's Orphanage enjoying the great outdoors on the farm (now St. Michaels Farm Preserve)

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E. Timothy Marshall, American Society of Landscape Architects, spoke about historical park planning with relevance to today's living parks such as Cadwalader Park and Mercer Meadows. (photo: Jay Watson)

Continued from page 15

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## Strange Inheritance Features D&R Greenway Success Story

Fox Business News' popular Strange Inheritance program features Tim and Sandy Perkins and their 93-acre Meadowtree Farm. The property sits on the 10,000th acre preserved in 2007 by D&R Greenway. A magnificent country estate showcases relocated interiors from a demolished brownstone in New York that was owned by the Vanderbilts.

Check Fox Business News' season rerun schedule to view the show, hear about the Perkins' remarkable strange inheritance and D&R Greenway's role in the preservation of this unique property.



D&R Greenway's CEO Linda Mead tells a film crew producing a segment for Strange Inheritance the story of D&R Greenway's role in preserving Meadowtree Farm and the benefits to landowners of preservation.



## A Big Thank You to Our Retiring Trustees

 $D^{\&R}$  Greenway Land Trust celebrates and thanks three trustees who retired from the Board last year:

Margaret Harper David Reynolds Betsy Sands

Their collective years of dedication, service and passion for the environment left an indelible mark on the growth of D&R Greenway. We thank all of our trustees, current and former, for their leadership, vision and guidance.

### Save the Date!



Donna and Christopher DeGrezia had a great time buzzing around the 2017 Masquerade Ball. (photo: Sheila Geisler)

They remind you to Save the Date: Saturday, October 27, 2018, 6 – 11 p.m. for D&R Greenways's 2018 Masquerade Ball at Tim and Sandy Perkin's Meadowtree Farm highlighted on TV's Strange Inheritance.



### Spring into Summer with Inspiring Art, Poetry Walks, and Talks

Events are free to attend unless otherwise indicated. For gallery hours and to RSVP: rsvp@drgreenway.org or call (609) 924-4646

### Art Exhibits

### Soul of a Tree

Through April 20, 2018

Unique wood sculptures, wood on wood, Shinrin-yoku forest bathing photography and views from a treehouse.

### Lavers of the Earth: From Core to Cloud

April 28 - June 15 Reception: Friday, May 18 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Traverse the dimensions of the planet from soil to sky from the perspective of talented artists. Their enchanting works will carry you on a journey of layered textures and topographical transcendence. Artists listed at www.drgreenway.org.

### Return to the River: Ducks, Decoys & the Delaware

Nearly 5 percent of the U.S. population—15,000,000 people—get their drinking water from the Delaware River and its tributaries. Fine art carvings in the Jay Vawter Decoy Gallery teach about ducks & the river habitats they depend on for survival.

### Olivia Rainbow Gallery Student Nature Art

### Eden Institute Student Art

April 2 – May 4 (April is Autism Month)

The Hun School

*May 7 – June 4* 

**Johnson Park School** 

June 5 - July 31

### Public Walks

### The Poetry of Nature

A unique series of nature walks and poetry readings.

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m. – 12 noon Bring a picnic lunch.

April 25 – St. Michaels Farm Preserve

June 13 – Sourlands Ecosystem Preserve

### May 23 – Cedar Ridge Preserve

### Special Exhibit

### **Emergent Universe**

*June* 21 – *July* 25

Reception and Lecture: Thursday, June 21, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Guest speaker: Sam Guarnaccia, Composer of the Emergent Universe Oratorio

Exhibiting Artist: Cameron (Cami) Davis, Senior Lecturer, Department of Art and History, University of Vermont

Cami's paintings explore the natural world—along the edges where perceptions of outer phenomena mingle with intuitive listening. This unique art celebrates the origins of the universe and has been shown throughout the U.S.

### Save the Dates

Wednesday, July 25 An unforgettable Dinner Party under the Stars with Cami and Sam

Saturday, July 28

Cocktails and conversation on a bus trip to Villanova University Church to experience the amazing Emergent Universe Oratorio.

Visit D&R Greenway's new website, www.drgreenway.org for additional information about the dinner, bus trip, and Emergent Universe Oratorio.



Bhramari (Sanskrit: honoring the holy bee breath) acrylic on canvas by Cameron Davis

### Twilight Fly Fishing 101 at the Stony Brook

Thursday, May 10

Co-sponsor, Orvis - Princeton

**Instructor:** Bruce Turner, manager, Princeton Fly Fishing

Meet at the Johnson Education Center and walk to the Stony Brook

\$35 per person. Reservations required.

Registration: 5:30 p.m. Demonstration: 6:00 p.m.

Fly-fishing overview and light meal: 8:00 p.m.

Rods, flies, and food provided. For ages 10 and older.

Proceeds support D&R Greenway's mission to protect land along rivers and streams.

A current fishing license and stamp are required to actively catch fish in the Stonybrook but are *not required* for the demonstration. A fishing license can be purchased and printed out at www.njfishandwildlife.com.







One Preservation Place Princeton, New Jersey 08540 Tel (609) 924-4646, Fax (609) 924-5577 www.drgreenway.org

### D&R Greenway Land Trust, Inc.

D&R Greenway Land Trust, Inc., is a regional, 501(c)(3) nonprofit land conservancy dedicated to preserving and caring for land, and inspiring a conservation ethic.

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2018 DONALD B. JONES AWARD Honoring Ted Thomas

Meredith's Garden for Inspiration at The Johnson Education Center

Garden Party Attire ~ Libations and Hors d'oeuvres



Tickets \$100 per person Sponsorships available www.drgreenway.org