

GREENWAYS

Newsletter of
D&R Greenway Land Trust
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Fall 2018

Land Preservation Update

A new milestone of 300 properties preserved by D&R Greenway, since we were founded in 1989, brings our preservation tally to 20,461 acres of permanently preserved land—an area as large as St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands!

300th Property Preserved Protects Clean Water

From our very beginning, D&R Greenway has been about the life-giving link between land and water. In fact, the connection is embedded in our name. D&R is water—the Delaware & Raritan Canal. Greenway is the land along the water—not just land, but “green” land, land that supports life. Land + water = life.

D&R Greenway was founded in 1989. Who could have imagined back then, that before we’d toasted our 30th anniversary we’d be celebrating the preservation of our 300th property? This major milestone is especially apt because we preserved significant watershed lands.

Preserving the green protects the blue

Our 300th preserved property, Woosamonsa Ridge Preserve, comprises over 146 acres of green forests—much of Pennington Mountain in Hopewell Township, Mercer County. Together with a second, contiguous site, there are now over 175 acres newly preserved.

The Woosamonsa mountain project is a collaborative effort spearheaded by D&R Greenway and accomplished with the help of nonprofit and public partners. Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space brought grant funding to the effort and will co-manage the new preserve with us. The Nature Conservancy provided preservation



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Overlooking Woosamonsa Ridge Preserve

Protecting the Water

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funding, as did the NJ Green Acres Program and Mercer County's Open Space Fund. Hopewell Township contributed funds and partnered with D&R Greenway to buy the adjacent piece located next to open space they already own, expanding protection of the scenic viewscape next to the Harborton historic cemetery.

Rich Goldman, a long-time trustee of D&R Greenway Land Trust, speaks of the vision for preserving the mountain, a goal for many years. The key to getting it done was having willing landowners who cared about preservation. He says of the owners, "Jay and Amy Regan have preserved a unique and invaluable natural resource in perpetuity."

These newly-preserved acres are a vital piece of the Delaware River watershed. Every drop of rain that glazes these green slopes, every bead of sweat fallen from a hiker's brow, every snowflake flicked off a squirrel's tail begins a journey to the Delaware River, just 3 miles west.

A *watershed* is simply the area of land that drains into a particular watercourse, whether a gentle stream, a mighty river or a wide bay. Water flows across the land as surface water, and moves below ground in aquifers.

The Delaware River drains over 14,119 square miles of land—more than 13 million acres—in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware.

Flowing for 330 miles, the Delaware is the longest undammed river east of the Mississippi. It supplies clean drinking water for more than 15 million people—nearly 5% of the population of the United States. The river supports plants, insects, birds, fish and mammals in amazingly diverse and complex communities, all of which depend on clean water. Keeping its water clean and safe for people and wildlife is a matter of making sure that the water that gets into the river is clean. It's a lot less expensive for a community to keep its water clean than to treat dirty water.

And how to keep it clean? The solution starts with watershed land. On its way to the river, water flows across surfaces and soaks into the ground. Plants and soil remove contaminants and hold sediment. Forested land plays a critical role in capturing, filtering and storing fresh water. Just one large tree in a forest can purify up to 36,500 gallons of water annually. But developed land—bereft of permeable soil and with impervious surfaces instead of trees—adds contaminants to water.

Preserving forested land in a watershed keeps the land pristine, and the waters pure.

Jay and Amy Regan's Legacy to the Community

The Woosamonsa Ridge Preserve could not have been accomplished without far-thinking landowners. Jay and Amy Regan, longtime area residents and philanthropists, worked with D&R Greenway to preserve their Pennington Mountain property, in anticipation of moving away to be near their grown children. In addition to the two properties preserved as natural areas, the Regans are protecting a third large parcel that will be conserved as agricultural land.

By preserving the properties, Amy explains, they're paying forward their family's connection to the land. "Our children grew up on this land and our grandchildren love to play in the woods." She continues,

"By ensuring its permanent preservation, it makes it easier for us to move on, knowing that the land is protected and our children and grandchildren can come back and still enjoy it."

Their legacy is one shared by the entire community—everyone who enjoys the environmental benefits of clean air, clean water and open space.

And as if that were not enough, before selling their property to D&R Greenway the Regans transferred their land into their charitable foundation. Through the foundation, proceeds from the sale will benefit charities that do good work in Trenton and beyond, helping to educate people and serve those in need. The Regans have been generous supporters of D&R Greenway projects, including Capital City Farm in Trenton.

Woosamonsa Rocks and Trees

The new Woosamonsa Ridge Preserve spills down the south side of Pennington Mountain. Like its neighbors Baldpate Mountain to the west, Sourland Mountain to the north and Princeton Ridge to the east, Pennington Mountain is a survivor: a remnant of volcanic magma that was



Existing trails will be improved by the New Jersey Trails Association

squeezed up into older sedimentary rocks some 150 million years ago. Cooled and hardened into the igneous black rock called diabase or “trap” rock, it withstood eons of erosion that whittled away the surrounding shale and sandstone, and it now stands sentinel over Hopewell Valley 350 feet below.

“Woosamonsa,” which is the name of the road that traverses the base of the ridge, derives from the name of a Lenape village that was located on or near Pennington Mountain. As described by historian TJ Luce, the Lenape “Wissamonson Path” led to an eponymous settlement on the high ground just east of the mountain.

The word has been interpreted as deriving from “wisaminschi” or “place of yellow-wood trees”; the yellow-wood may refer to the Black Oak (also called Yellow or Dyer’s Oak), whose inner bark was used to make yellow dye. Oaks—black, white, red and chestnut—together with numerous other tree species, abound in this forested paradise. Pennington’s ridge shares with its diabase mountain siblings a diverse woodland ecosystem that arises from the ample presence of *water*.

Pennington Mountain’s rocky terrain holds water in puddles, creating “perched” wetlands that support unique plants and animals. The topography also promotes the creation of vernal pools, ephemeral spring breeding ground for frogs, toads and salamanders. Water seeps slowly through the rocks, forming tiny streams, where aquatic insects and microscopic life forms thrive, feeding larger aquatic and terrestrial species. The acidic rocks give extra zip to soil that favors native wildflowers, shrubs and hardwood trees such as oak and hickory. Many of these trees are large, mature specimens, because the steep mountainside long resisted clearing for agriculture. The extensive unbroken forest is nesting habitat for colorful migrant songbirds. The seeps, ponds, and plants create a positive feedback loop, increasing humidity that enhances the lush, life-giving habitat of the forest.

Dr. Mike van Clef, Stewardship Director for Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space (FoHVOS), comments that the preserve “contains special plants that only occur in high quality forest,



Walking the trails at the new Woosamonsa Ridge Preserve

such as showy orchis,” and that its many seeps may include habitat for rare dragonfly species.

The divide between the Delaware and Raritan River watersheds runs just a thousand feet east of the preserve. Baldwins Creek rises at the base of Pennington Mountain and flows east into Stony Brook. The innumerable seeps and streams arising on Woosamonsa Ridge Preserve’s slopes run the other way. They form the headwaters of Jacob’s Creek, which winds down the mountain, flowing southwest until it ducks under the D&R Canal and empties into the Delaware.

Land for People

If “forest bathing” in leafy woods, singing along to the songs of rocky brooks, and searching out beautiful wildflowers, all while enjoying uncommon views of Hopewell Valley, seems like a terrific way to spend a few hours, you’ll want to visit Woosamonsa Ridge Preserve in the near future. FoHVOS and D&R Greenway plan to

create walking trails on the mountain, in partnership with the New Jersey Trails Association, a group of local volunteers led by D&R Greenway former chair Alan Hershey.

In the meantime, you can take in an altogether different vista at D&R Greenway’s Masquerade Ball this fall. The event will be hosted by the Regans at their magnificent stone barn faced with stones that came from the property, where a sunset view of the permanently protected Pennington Mountain can be enjoyed for the first time.

Land for Life

Every piece of land, everywhere, is part of a watershed. The quality of water in a watershed, whether river-big or stream-small, depends on the quality of land in the watershed. Every preserved acre of land protects the water that flows on, through and under it. With every preserved property, from the first to the 300th, and with each new property to come, D&R Greenway is preserving land for life. ♻️

Sacred Places

The first response in Google says that “Woosamonsa” means “Sacred Place” in Leni-Lenape language. (See page 1 to learn about our new Woosamonsa Ridge Preserve.) Further research into the history of the word and place finds references to “yellow-wood” and to an “Indian town” or “Indian path near a small brook or run.” Whichever it is, the idea of a “Sacred Place” best captures my imagination and sentiment for this massive, green, life-giving land.

When I think of the 300 properties that D&R Greenway has preserved in our almost 30-year history, I am struck by the thought that, indeed, these are all sacred places. They provide critical habitat for breeding birds, and pollinator fields planted with milkweed that gives life to Monarch butterflies. They provide for productive farms where healthy, nourishing food is grown. They protect waterways that ensure clean drinking water and forests that breathe oxygen into the air.

They are places where each of us can go to reflect, to laugh with the flowers, as Ralph Waldo Emerson opined. To borrow words from Wendell Berry, to find “the peace of wild things.”

It is important to me to contribute to saving these sacred places that we all depend on for life itself. There is nothing quite so rewarding as to gaze upon open land knowing it is preserved because you cared enough to help make it happen.

As we approach the giving season of the year, I hope you’ll join me in making the preservation and care of these sacred places a priority in your own annual giving.

Please join me by considering a year-end gift to D&R Greenway Land Trust.

Yours in conservation,



Linda J. Mead
President & CEO

Qualified Charitable Distribution from an IRA

If you are 70 ½ years young or beyond, you qualify for the *permanent* tax provision that allows you to make a gift of all or a portion of your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) to a qualified charity, such as D&R Greenway, directly from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA). For retirees who cannot itemize, this law can be a beneficial way of making a charitable contribution.

- Distribution must be sent from the financial institution that holds the IRA directly to the charity.
- If the distribution first goes to the taxpayer, it will be treated as taxable income and will not count as a charitable distribution.
- If the distribution goes directly to a charity, the amount of the distribution will not be included in the taxpayer’s income.

Source: LAPA fundraising

D&R Greenway does not give tax advice; always check with your tax advisor.

By making your gift to D&R Greenway from an IRA or through any other means (stock transfer, check or credit card), you are helping to save *Sacred Places* for all time. Thank you!

Sacred Places

Lands in the Delaware River Watershed permanently preserved by D&R Greenway Land Trust

These are a sampling of lands in the Delaware River watershed that will remain green thanks to D&R Greenway’s leadership. All were protected in partnership with public funders and nonprofit partners. Some were facilitated into public ownership as State or local parks. Some are preserved with conservation easements and stewarded by private landowners. Many include public trails where people can explore and enjoy the natural world.

Goat Hill Preserve

Goat Hill Preserve provides stunning views of the New Hope-Lambertville wing dam on the Delaware River. A State park with hiking trails, D&R Greenway initiated preservation with a quarry company, enabling the State purchase.

Lambertville Reservoir

This reservoir provides drinking water for residents of the City of Lambertville and West Amwell Township. The surrounding land includes the original trail used by Washington’s army on the Road to Monmouth during the American Revolution.



Goat Hill Preserve



Lambertville Reservoir



Blacks Creek Community Park



Washington's Table Rock



Fiddlers Creek Preserve



Eagle-eye Views

Washington's Table Rock

Sitting high above the Delaware River, this property was visited by General George Washington as he planned the historic Christmas Crossing of 1776. D&R Greenway protected this land with a conservation easement, co-managed by Hunterdon Land Trust.

Eagle-eye Views

With sweeping views across the ridge line into Pennsylvania, this preserved farm has benefitted from habitat restoration by D&R Greenway volunteers. The land drains to a tributary

of Moores Creek. Preservation of the fields and forest help prevent stormwater damage and protect water quality by retaining the land's infiltration capacity.

Fiddlers Creek Preserve

Less than a half mile from the Delaware River, the preserve sits across from Baldpate Mountain. A collaborative partnership, D&R Greenway led its preservation. It is owned by the State and Mercer County. Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space co-manages the property, and NJ Trails volunteers have built trails along scenic Fiddlers Creek that runs through the wooded land.

Blacks Creek Community Park

The tidal, freshwater Blacks Creek flows into the Delaware River in historic Bordentown. It connects to the Abbott Marshlands. Here, D&R Greenway pieced together 7 small properties to create a community park that includes the favorite local fishing hole. Native Americans fished for shad in the Delaware River and laid out their nets to dry in this very location. 🐟

Trenton Wellness Loop Opening this Fall

Lace up your shoes and shift into gear! Beginning this fall, bicyclists can enjoy the new 1.5 mile Trenton Wellness Loop. With design led by the City of Trenton and the Partnership for Healthy Kids, and implementation led by D&R Greenway's Jay Watson, this new trail includes on-street bike lane striping, signage and wayfinding through Trenton's downtown. It is at mile marker zero along the 70-mile D&R Canal State Park "Towpath" that follows the canal from New Brunswick to Trenton, and then up river to Frenchtown.

Truly a dream come true, for nearly two decades the State, Mercer County and the City of Trenton were looking for ways to complete trail connections along the D&R Canal and the Delaware River. Jay Watson's leadership brought the partners together. "Building on our preservation work and close partnership with the City and Mercer County, we were able to bring D&R Greenway's strategic know-how and efficiencies to the table to get this project done," says Jay. D&R Greenway was successful in securing funding from the William Penn Foundation through the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC).

A major feature of the Trenton Wellness Loop is Trenton's Battlefield Monument. Standing tall above Broad Street (Route 206) and Pennington Road (Route 31), this Revolutionary sentinel marks the site of the American victory at the first Battle of Trenton that took place on December 26, 1776. Located in an area known as "Five Points", it was here that the American artillery were placed, preventing the Hessians from organizing a counter attack.

The Loop will connect to a larger trail segment, currently under design, that will reconnect the D&R Canal towpath through Trenton's streets to a section of the D&R Canal in Hamilton Township that was "orphaned" from the larger canal system when the canal was filled by the WPA in the 1930s. That stretch of former canal is now State Highway Rt. 129 and trackage for the RiverLine train.

"The D&R Canal State Park is one of our State's most visited parks. Reconnecting this segment that runs through the Abbott Marshlands to the main trail system creates linkages to the Delaware River Heritage Trail and the Circuit Trail that is currently in creation," says Olivia Glenn, Director of Parks and Forestry for the NJDEP.

The Circuit Trail is a system of connected public trails in the Greater Philadelphia and South/Central New Jersey Region. When complete it will



include 800 miles of multi-use paths for cyclists, walkers, runners, commuters and families for recreation and active transportation. Plans are underway to connect the Tulpehaking Nature Center, Abbott Marshlands and the Lawrence Hopewell Trail to the Circuit network.

It is one of the largest trail networks in the nation. Trenton, near the northernmost end, is an important hub.

New Trenton Mayor Reed Gusciora looks forward to this improvement to the Capital City. "I am very excited about these projects in our city, making bicycling safer for our residents and visitors," said Mayor Gusciora.

"Many of Trenton's residents move around our city by bicycle as their primary mode of transportation. Creating bike lanes to integrate

them into the proper traffic patterns will serve to protect them and inform motorists to share the roadways." New bicycle lanes will be identified along Warren Street, North Broad Street and Assunpink Boulevard.

The Wellness Loop was originally proposed by the Partnership for Healthy Kids. "New Jersey Partnership for Healthy Kids-Trenton partnered with Trenton officials," says Marissa Davis, Senior State Program Manager, New Jersey YMCA State Alliance,

"with a goal to help residents of the city gain active lifestyles and increase physical activity, as well as access to natural environments."

Barry Seymour, Executive Director of the DVRPC concurs, "Our commitment to projects like these is part of DVRPC's vision for the Greater Philadelphia region: a safe and modern transportation system that protects and preserves natural resources while creating healthy communities."

"The Wellness Loop is yet another way D&R Greenway is working to enhance the health of the Capital City," says Jay Watson. D&R Greenway's Capital City Farm provides fresh

produce to residents, as well as jobs and education; D&R Greenway has been working to restore the Natural Area Meadow in Trenton's historic Cadwalader Park; and D&R Greenway has been working with the Trenton Bike Exchange to provide bicycles to Capital City residents. Jay concludes, "In addition to making the streets safer for Trenton's many bicycling commuters, the Wellness Loop is a great way for families to spend time together outdoors, get a cardiovascular workout, see our preserves and reap the health benefits of nature." 🌿



Friends for the Abbott Marshlands, D&R Greenway and Mercer County are partners in protecting this unique resource. For more on nature walks, exhibits and events at the Tulpehaking Nature Center, go to www.abbottmarshlands.org.

Fall into Autumn with Inspiring Art, Poetry 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

Delaware Dreams: Return to the River

Art and Decoy Exhibit

Through November 9, 2018

Closing Reception: Thursday, November 8

Doors open: 6:30 p.m., Talk: 7:00 p.m.

Photographer Frank Sauer explains techniques used to capture the beauty of the Delaware River Watershed's flora.



Lovely as a Tree Juried Exhibition

November 19, 2018 – January 25, 2019

Opening Reception:

Friday, November 30, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

From the state tree, the Northern red oak, to the memorial tree, the flowering dogwood, this exhibit celebrates trees' contribution to cleaner air, higher water quality, and a healthier, happier community.

Olivia Rainbow Gallery

Student Nature Art

*Artists from Princeton Junior School
Through November 21*

Poetry Workshops

Plein Air Poetry Workshop

with Poet Lois Marie Harrod

Tuesday, October 30

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

St. Michaels Farm Preserve

Gather at the barn and walk through the preserve with stops to write poems. Writers, beginning and experienced, are welcome. Bring a notebook, pen or pencil and lunch.

In case of rain, we'll be indoors at the Johnson Education Center.

Lovely as a Tree

*Poetry Workshop with
Poet Maxine Sussman*

Thursday, December 13

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Johnson Education Center

Drawing inspiration from model poems and from the exhibit "Lovely as a Tree," participants will write and share an original poem or short personal essay inspired by the natural world. Beginners to advanced are welcome.

Lecture and Book Signing

"If These Stones Could Talk: African American Presence in the Sourland Mountains"

Tuesday, December 11

Doors open: 6:00 p.m., Program: 6:30 p.m.

Co-Sponsor: Sourlands Conservancy

Authors Elaine Buck and Beverly Mills are former board members of the Stoutsburg Cemetery Association, a cemetery purchased by three black men in the early 19th century to bury Blacks with honor and dignity. Their accumulated

stories consecrate the collected lives of a minority Black community in a predominantly White region. The book provides a unique window to African-Americans in New Jersey previously missing from the historical record.

Beverly Mills is the first African American woman to hold the elected position as Councilwoman in Pennington Borough and Elaine Buck is Church Clerk for the Second Calvary Baptist Church of Hopewell.

Lecture

"An Evolving World"

Tuesday, November 27

Doors open: 6:30 p.m., Program: 7:00 p.m.

Science writer Michael Lemonick will join in a conversation with Sam Guarnaccia, composer of the *Emergent Universe Oratorio*, to discuss our evolving world and human impact on the environment.

Excerpts from the *Emergent Universe Oratorio*:

We are a planet-altering species, a juvenile species
Playing havoc with the air, the climate,
the rivers, the oceans.
We live on a different planet now,
A planet where the human
Profoundly affects the course of
evolution.



"The Universe is holding its breath
Waiting for us to take our place."*
Calling us to responsibility
Reaffirming what we already knew...
What we do the Earth, we do to
ourselves!

* Adapted from: Brian Thomas Swimme
and Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Journey of the
Universe*, Yale University Press, 2011.

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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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Join us at the 2018 Masquerade Ball *Preservation...Piece by Piece*

Hosted by **Jay and Amy Regan** at Deer Run Farm
189 Woosamonsa Road, Pennington, NJ

Saturday, October 27, 2018
6:00 to 11:00 p.m.



- Appreciate Sunset Views of Newly-Preserved Woosamonsa Ridge Preserve and Enjoy a Spirited Happy Hour
- Graze on Farm Fresh Delicacies and Dance the Night Away
- Prizes awarded for Best Costume and Best Mask

Co-Chairs: Julia Benedict, James Fiorentino, Johan Firmenich, Rachel Webster
For tickets, visit www.drgreenway.org

