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The Lockatong and Wickecheoke Creeks Natural Resource Inventory and Management Plan

Congratulations to HLTA trustees Alix Bacon and Bill Rawlyk, who recently completed the **Lockatong and Wickecheoke Planning Project**. In 1999 this initiative was honored with an award from the Hunterdon County Planning Board, which cited the project's significance as a model for regional watershed planning. The project created a partnership of representatives of Raritan, Kingwood, Franklin and Delaware township environmental commissions, the

county planning board and several nonprofit organizations* that worked together to educate citizens and policy-makers on how to protect the remarkable natural resource values of the Lockatong and Wickecheoke Creeks. HLTA served as the project coordinator and "host" of grant funding obtained by each of the townships from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection.** The project, initiated in 1998, had distinct educational, scientific, and planning components.

Natural Resource Inventory and Management Plan

The culmination of this work is the **Lockatong and Wickecheoke Watershed Based Natural Resource Inventory and Management Plan**. The plan includes an explanation of some of the general principles of watershed planning, an inventory of current conditions within the watersheds, and a water stewardship action plan. There are geographic information system (GIS) maps of

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Annual Autumn Dinner and Art Auction

Deborah Woodard and John Mathieu have made several positive changes to this year's Autumn Dinner and Art Auction, and we hope you'll be a part of what promises to be an entertaining and successful event. We'll gather on **Sunday, October 27th** from 5-8 p.m. at the beautiful and historic Prallsville Mills in Stockton. There will be food stations featuring delicious offerings from several of the area's best restaurants. In addition, Dick Phillips of Phillips Fine Wine in Stockton will provide a variety of wines for our enjoyment.

This year's annual fundraiser will also feature both silent and live auctions devoted to arts and crafts. Suzanne Perrault of the Rago-Perrault Gallery in Lambertville has committed her experience and expertise to help organize this event, and she'll be our auctioneer. We've had a great response from the arts community who clearly wish to support the work of HLTA. Hunterdon County has long been celebrated in art, and its natural beauty is a source of inspiration for many artists.

Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance depends on you, our loyal supporters, to help make this event a success. If you would like extra invitations sent to your friends and neighbors, or would be willing to help with setup or clean up, please call Mimi Upmeyer at the HLTA office (908-996-4421).



Tim's Barn by Ty Hodanish.

Ty Hodanish is one of the many artists and crafts persons who are contributing to the auction.

President's Message

Were in land preservation for the long haul. That means that HLTA, like many other land trusts around the country, will be increasingly focusing on stewardship of the land we've worked so hard to protect. In times like these, with increasingly constrained government budgets, public agencies become concerned about the commitment involved in holding and managing preserved land, and in some cases are reluctant to take on these responsibilities. As open space becomes more scarce – and expensive – preserved land also understandably becomes attractive for other, competing uses such as schools, firehouses, etc. And land preserved for its natural beauty and wildlife habitat can be threatened by the need for sites for active recreational uses which are often incompatible with

protecting the natural resources of a given site. Finally, future owners of land preserved through conservation easements may not understand or appreciate the intent and importance of the permanent restrictions on their property, which can lead to easement violations that are costly to resolve.

HLTA is meeting the challenge of watching over land that we and other agencies are preserving in Hunterdon today in a number of ways. We are taking on management responsibility for land held by the State – in some cases as co-owners of the land – helping to share the responsibility for management but also securing HLTA's voice in the future use of the land. We are establishing baselines and a monitoring program for the properties we've been entrusted to manage so we can quickly catch and resolve any problems that may arise.

We are building a fund for easement and land management and defense, largely funded by cash contributions from landowners with whom we've worked, to ensure we have adequate resources to address future management needs and to defend the integrity of the land we've preserved. These measures together make up a type of "insurance policy" for the investment we all are making in land preservation in Hunterdon. As always, thank you for your investment in this important work. ●

ALISON MITCHELL



Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance

To Preserve and Protect the Rural Landscape of Hunterdon County

Membership Tear-off form

Name _____

Address _____

Municipality _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

- \$25-49 Contributor
- \$50-99 Supporter
- \$100+ Steward
- \$500+ Protector
- \$1,000+ Leadership

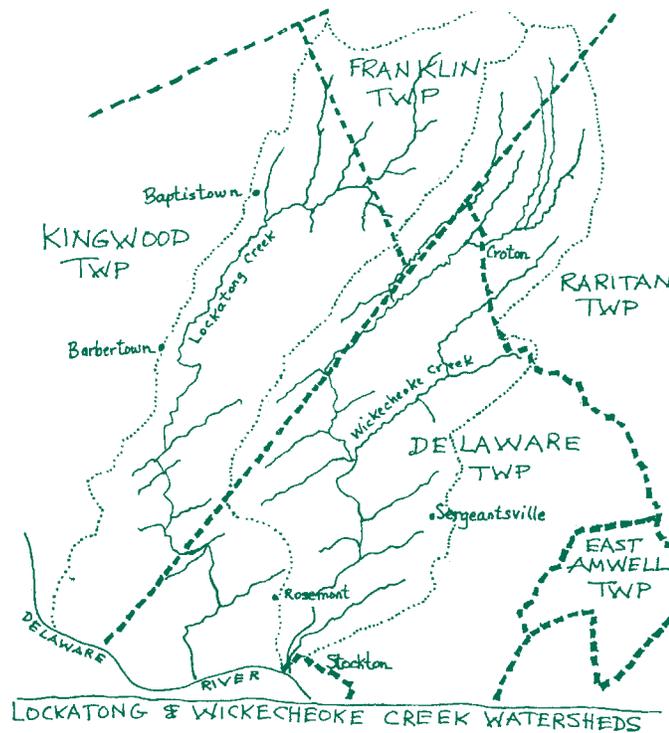
- Please check this box if you would like to learn about volunteer opportunities on our land acquisition, fundraising or public outreach committees. Whether you are a beginner, an expert, or somewhere in between, HLTA could use your help.

Make checks payable to:

Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance
PO Box 143
Sergeantsville, NJ 08557

A remarkable variety of animals live in the Lockatong and Wickecheoke watersheds. Among them are:

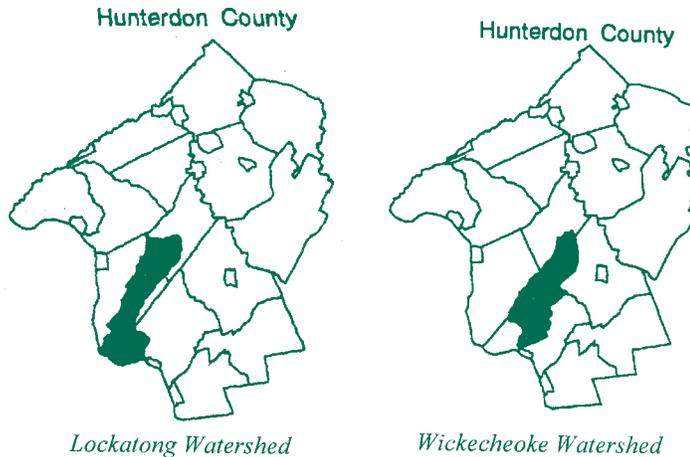
- Beaver
- Black-tailed jack rabbit
- Cliff Swallow
- Long-eared owl
- Short-eared owl
- Worm-eating warbler
- Bobolink
- Grasshopper sparrow
- Barred owl
- Wood turtle
- Red-eared turtle
- Saw whet owl
- Great horned owl
- Goshawk
- Spotted salamander
- Long-tailed salamander
- Northern red salamander



Natural Resource Inventory

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geology, aquifers, critical habitats, preserved lands and priority acquisition areas. Citizens and local officials working for protection of these two beautiful streams can find a wealth of information, including model ordinances, studies and scientific data in the plan. A copy of the plan is available at the HLTA office.



Collection of Scientific Data

Project managers collected chemical, bacterial and macroinvertebrate data over a period of three years on each creek. Noted naturalists inventoried species and biodiversity in the watersheds, and existing records of species, critical habitats and natural communities were improved and updated.

The Lockatong Creek watershed is one of HLTA's priority preservation areas. Properties preserved to date are The Milltown Road Preserve and a six-acre easement just east of Route 29.

The Wickecheoke Creek has long been a focus of the NJ Conservation Foundation.

Maps: Hunterdon County Planning Board

Community and landowner outreach

Mailings to watershed residents, government agencies and conservation organizations included information on land preservation, and invited creekside landowners and the public to a lecture series. The talks, held at the Prallsville Mills in Stockton,

attracted over 300 people, and included presentations by professional naturalists on: local plants, birds, reptiles and amphibians; ways to protect water quality; and information on the economic and environmental benefits of land preservation. A "virtual computer tour" for the two

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watersheds, complete with interactive contour and featuremaps, photographs, monitoring data and conservation options for landowners was a highlight of the presentations. ●

* Partners included the Hunterdon County Planning Board, the D & R Canal Commission, South Branch Watershed Association, HLTA and the NJ Conservation Foundation.

**This project relied on several sources of funding. Initial funding came through a grant from the William Penn Foundation to the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) to support regional watershed planning in New Jersey. Kingwood Township obtained a Lower Delaware River Wild and Scenic River Study Municipal Incentive grant. The Environmental Endowment for New Jersey contributed funding for water quality monitoring in the creeks.



Lockatong Creek
Photo: Joel Coyne

Volunteer Profile

Ken Jagel, vice president of HLTA, and his wife, Milly, grew up on Long Island in Hollis (Queens) on the eastern edge of New York City. His family lived in that community for at least five generations and witnessed its transition from a rural to an urban environment. After finishing his doctorate in chemical engineering at Columbia University, Ken and Milly decided to follow the classic advice to “go west” and got as far as New Jersey, living most of the time on small farmsteads, keeping sheep and horses and raising hay. Their last move was to Stanton in Readington Township where they have lived for more than thirty years.



Ken Jagel

Most of Ken’s professional career was spent at Mobil, Engelhard and in his own consulting practice where he was involved in the development and commercialization of the automotive catalytic converter and the development of processes for the manufacture of this product.

In addition to his position as HLTA vice president, Ken serves on the land acquisition and executive committees. He also chairs the Dvoor Farm subcommittee of the land stewardship committee. Ken gives his time and expertise to several important county organizations. He is chairman of the Hunterdon County Library Commission, treasurer of the South Branch Watershed Association, and secretary of Hunterdon Regional Community Health.

Much of Ken’s interest in land conservation follows from working on the Readington Township Greenways Study Group, which developed a plan for greenways along four of the tributaries of the Raritan River that flow through the township. This plan was ultimately included in Readington’s master plan. Ken is currently a member of the environmental commission and the agricultural advisory committee. He also serves as the township liaison to the County Agricultural Development Board.

When the Jagels first moved to Stanton, there were no houses on the other side of the road facing their house – just a breath-taking expanse of about 400 acres of farmland consisting of two farms. In the thirty-one years they have been here, four houses have been built but more than three hundred acres of farmland have been permanently preserved and are now actively farmed. Continuing this conservation progress is a major personal goal. ●

SANDY MADON

Monitoring the Diamond Creek Farm Easement

In the land preservation business, it's tempting to focus on the amount of acreage saved as the key measure of success; however there are other aspects of this endeavor that are equally important, stewardship chief among them. HLTA is committed to ensuring that the preserved lands we're responsible for are managed in accordance with the conservation practices that were agreed upon at the time the lands were permanently protected.

With that in mind, project manager Rob Eberhardt and trustees Martin Rapp and Joyce Koch visited Helen Ringus' Diamond Creek Farm this summer to review this successful preservation effort. Using maps, photographs, and field notes taken by Martin Rapp during his previous visit – during which he established “baseline” conditions of the property – the group verified that site conditions remain unchanged and meet the conditions of the conservation easement that HLTA holds.

The visit was also a chance to see Ms. Ringus and to discuss with her any concerns she might have and any future plans for the site. Land trusts can avoid future problems, such as easement violations, by establishing a good relationship with the owners. ●



Project Manager Rob Eberhardt and trustees Joyce Koch and Martin Rapp review maps while visiting Diamond Creek Farm.



Diamond Creek Farm

HLTA Supporters Make a Difference

Thank you to trustee Howard Parker and his Hot Take-Out Band for donating the proceeds from sales of the band's CDs at a recent performance to HLTA. Howard says he'll donate the earnings from the sale of his CD through our office. He described his music as "folk with New Orleans influences." If you're interested, the CD is \$10 plus postage. Call HLTA at 908-996-4421.

And thanks to the Covered Bridge Trail Association for its donation of \$1,000 to HLTA in recognition of our ongoing commitment to serving our community. The Association runs a Hunter Pace event that serves as a fundraiser for local organizations.

Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance

To Preserve and Protect the Rural Landscape of Hunterdon County

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Sergeantsville, NJ 08557

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Presentation Available

If you know of a civic or community group that would like to schedule a slide presentation about land preservation and HLTA's role, please call the office at 908-996-4421.

Web Site

There's a "protected lands" feature on the HLTA website. Check it out at www.hlta.org.

To Reach HLTA

Web: www.hlta.org

Email: hlta@earthlink.net

Phone: 908-996-4421

Fax: 908-996-2552

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 143,
Sergeantsville, NJ 08557

Location: 3037 Route 29,
Frenchtown, NJ

Janet Finley Joins HLTA Board

We are delighted to report that Janet Finley, former president of the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, has joined the board of trustees of Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance. Janet has several connections to HLTA. She organized the Hunterdon County Arts and Culture Alliance (HACA), and is working with the Raritan Township task force to determine if the Dvoor Farm can be developed into a cultural facility. Since Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance owns the Dvoor Farm, Janet's work with the cultural task force to seek an appropriate use for the property will provide a useful link between the two organizations.

Janet lives in the Woodcrest townhouse development up the hill in Lambertville, right next to the Dondero Farm, which is a property that HLTA, together with Green Acres and the D & R Greenway, preserved. And Janet chairs the board of Artsbridge, an organization of artists that is assisting HLTA by publicizing our arts auction among its members.

Janet has been active in many other Hunterdon County organizations, including the Hunterdon Helpline and the United Way. She and her husband, Mike Forney, have a great knowledge of and interest in Hunterdon County. ●



Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance

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