



conservation matters

hunterdon land trust alliance

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Spring 2007

hunterdon land trust alliance plays key role in preservation of 150-acre frenchtown greenbelt

Frenchtown borough is a small, historic town on the banks of the Delaware River. The character of this community is most certainly enhanced by the farms and forests that surround it, but not many people know that there is still undeveloped wilderness in the borough itself.

In December 2006 the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance completed the acquisition of 150 acres of land within the borough of Frenchtown, preserving the last large undeveloped tract in this small community. The preservation of this land will benefit generations of residents and visitors to come and will help ensure that this small town retains its charm and one of its last wild places.

This "Frenchtown Greenbelt Preserve" was zoned for high-density housing; over 100 residences could have been constructed on the site. The Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance recognized the importance of this



Frenchtown mayor Ron Sworen (left front) and Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance executive director Margaret Waldock (right front) lead a group of reporters and local officials on a tour of 150 acres recently preserved in Frenchtown borough. The Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance worked with multiple partners to raise over \$4 million to preserve the property, the last large undeveloped tract in this small community.

property to the local community, the water protection and species habitat it provided, and the recreational opportunities it presented. We worked to cultivate support for the preservation of this property from a variety of critical partners: the State of New Jersey Green Acres Program, the Division of Parks and Forestry, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Frenchtown Borough, Hunterdon County, and the Open Space Institute. At a cost of over \$4 million, the property could not have been preserved without these partners. The land trust coordinated the project from initial communication

with the owners to the closing and contributed nearly \$1.4 million in grant funding awarded to the organization specifically for the Frenchtown project.

The Frenchtown Preserve encompasses 150 acres of open farm fields and a mixture of cedar and hardwood forest, with frontage on State Route 29, the state's very first designated Scenic Byway. The views of the river from the high-elevation fields are breathtaking.

The Nishisakawick Creek and its tributaries criss-cross the property, forming deep ravines. This stream system has the highest state
continued on page 2

What kind of legacy do you wish to leave? Contact the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance for information on how you can preserve your land. Or consider the land trust in your will, and leave a legacy of conservation for generations to come. For more information, contact the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance at 908-237-4582.

Greetings from our executive director

Yes, excitement is in the air as winter's quiet slumber comes to an end. No doubt the gardeners among us are anxious to start their spring planting. As the longer days usher in busier times, don't forget to slow down and enjoy the spring ephemerals, the returning birds, and the early morning sunrise. We've got plenty of offerings to satisfy your spring fever, with trail building activities and a chance to help spruce up the Dvoor Farm in May. Watch for exciting news this summer, as we prepare to launch a farmers' market on the Farm, a chance for consumers to "eat locally" and support local growers. Appreciating and experiencing nature's offerings makes us better stewards of the land. I for one am looking forward to enjoying the bounty of the season to come.

Warmly,
Margaret Waldock



frenchtown – continued from page 1

classification, Category I, which means the water is of the highest quality. The Nishisakawick stream system supports a stocked trout fishery, attracting anglers from far and wide. The land provides an important buffer for public wells, ensuring a clean water supply for residents in the Frenchtown area.

The Lenni-Lenape Indians are known to have established seasonal camps along the banks of the Delaware River. This property and the surrounding farms bear the evidence of those early residents, who fished the streams and river and hunted the *Views from the Frenchtown Preserve stretch across the Delaware River.*



region's woods and fields.

The deep, interior forests of the property provide habitat for an abundance of bird species, such as pileated woodpecker and owls. Black bear have been seen in the area. The high-elevation fields provide the perfect spot to view the resident osprey and their young, as they return to a nearby nest every season.

The Frenchtown Greenbelt Preserve is now part of the D & R Canal State Park, managed by the state park system for passive recreation, such as hiking and cross-country skiing. The Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance will work with the Park to pursue special management projects, including trail development, public education, and species habitat restoration.

We are pleased to have preserved this large tract of land. It's especially gratifying to have brought together a wide range of partners to protect a property that would otherwise have been developed with high-density housing, detrimentally impacting the scenic beauty and natural resources of the river corridor. 🌲

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Many thanks for your invaluable help!

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many activities planned for historic dvoor farmstead

Barn repair and maintenance, site restoration, master planning and fundraising are our areas of focus for the Dvoor Farmstead this year. The 40-acre farm, located on Flemington's Route 12 circle, was preserved in 1999 through the combined efforts of the South Branch Watershed Association, Citizens for Parkland, Raritan Township, and Hunterdon County. The Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance took ownership of the property, and, since then, we have maintained the farm and its 15 buildings much as they were at the time of purchase. More recently, our organizational capacity increased enough to allow us to begin planning for the future uses of the farm. This spring, our planning efforts are starting to bear fruit.

Early last year, we established a Vision for the Future of the Dvoor Farm that is in keeping with its cultural

The future uses of the Dvoor Farmstead will be a major focus for the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance this year.

and historic significance. We wish to utilize this property to its fullest potential as a public education center and demonstration farm to promote sustainable agriculture, natural resource protection, historic preservation, land conservation, cultural outreach and public recreation. Also, last year, an assessment of the condition of the farm's buildings was completed by Pickell Architecture.

We are ready for the next phase of master planning to begin mid-year. This planning phase will include a feasibility study, stakeholder meetings to explore potential uses for the farm, and activities that involve the community.

In early March, the restoration of Dvoor's Walnut Brook, a project led by the New Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council, began its engineering phase with construction planned for 2008.



The project will involve planting trees, shrubs, and native grasses in areas immediately adjacent to the brook to strengthen its banks. It will also include engineering work to change the flow of the stream to mitigate erosion; new wetlands will be created downstream to reduce flooding, thereby restoring natural stream function and improving overall water quality. To learn more about this project, you can attend the Hunterdon County Green Table at 8:00 AM on May 24th at the Farm. For more information call the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance at 908-237-4582.

In April and May, we will paint the barns, the wagon shed complex will be stabilized by a craftsman specializing in historic structures, and volunteers will plant a portion of the front field with sunflowers. The sunflower planting will happen on May 6th, "Clean Up Day" at the Farm, when in addition to the planting, our trustees and community volunteers will help with fence rail replacement, pruning and miscellaneous clean-up. Plans are under way for a farmers' market at Dvoor starting in June. Look for more details soon.

Funding is an essential component in the renewal of the Dvoor Farm. To date, we have received \$85,000 in grants for use at Dvoor. This is a good start toward our goal of \$225,000 for repairs, maintenance, and master planning. We are contacting individuals and community leaders, both public and private, to build awareness and support for the farm.

If you would like more information about this year's activities, or want to contribute to our efforts either through a financial donation or as a volunteer, please call Catherine Suttle at 908-237-4582. 🌲

land trust elects new trustees

The Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance board of trustees recently appointed three new trustees to provide strategic direction for the group's growing land conservation efforts. The new trustees are Jan Holms and Mark Titus, both of Lambertville, and Rose Hanley of Bethlehem Township.

"We had a very productive year in 2006, with over 550 acres of farmland and natural areas preserved," said Margaret Waldo, executive director. "We also benefited from many new members and increased support from our existing members. Our new trustees have a breadth of experience to help guide our conservation efforts."


Rose Hanley is the director of global operational excellence at Merck & Co., Inc., where she has been employed since 1996. Rose has worked on process improvement/redesign and strategic change initiatives for the last six years. Prior to that, she worked in Human Resources for Merck's Information Technology organization. Before joining Merck she was a middle school teacher in Paterson, NJ. Rose holds a BS degree in English and Education from Trenton State College (now The College of New Jersey). She has volunteered for the Hunterdon County Office of Aging for the past four years.

Having lived in Hunterdon since she was three years old, Rose believes "Hunterdon County is a great place to live, and part of the reason is the open space and natural landscapes. I don't want to just sit back and watch our natural areas continue to disappear and regret it later. I want my nieces and nephews, their friends, and others to be able to play in the woods and fields, swim in the ponds, skate on the reservoirs, and ride bikes on the trails and back roads like I did growing up."

Jan Holms wears several hats that

reflect her passions for both the outdoors and music. She presently works for the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission, where she has been for 18 years. She is also Principal Flutist with the Riverside Symphonia, a professional orchestra based in Lambertville. She has served on the board of trustees of the Bucks County Audubon Society, founded and chaired the Nockamixon Environmental Advisory Council, and serves as an advisor for the Friends of the Locktown Stone Church. Jan is an avid birder and especially enjoys birding and walking her dogs on the towpath in Lambertville. "I am honored to be asked to help such a worthy and high-powered organization as the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance. The natural world gives meaning to our lives; its preservation should be a guiding principle within all of us."

Mark Titus has served as Director of the Hunterdon County Library since October 2005. Prior to moving to Lambertville with his wife, Bobbi, in 2006, he served as the chief librarian of the headquarters branch of the Ocean County Library in Toms River, NJ, where he oversaw the expansion and renovation of the library. Mark has also worked as a financial consultant, a professional musician, and a music teacher. He holds a master's degree in library science from the University of Michigan and a BA from Boston University.

Mark's interest in the environment goes back over 30 years when he worked for the Union of Concerned Scientists and was a charter member of the Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group. According to Mark, "I am looking forward to serving as a trustee for the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance, to help preserve the environment of Hunterdon County for future generations." 

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- I am interested in volunteering at the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance.

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we salute our 2006 members and supporters

Thanks to your generous contributions we facilitated the preservation of over 550 acres in 2006. What a wonderful legacy for future generations of Hunterdon County residents and visitors!

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land trust settles into new office

In January the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance moved its offices to 56 Main Street, a beautiful and historic building in Flemington. While we will miss our river view and friends in Frenchtown, we hope our new location in the county seat will allow us to expand our programs and better serve all of the communities of our county. The second floor suite will accommodate our growing staff and provide better access to members, volunteers and services.

On February 23rd we hosted an open house to show off our new space and have a chance to mingle with members and neighbors. Over 50 people attended the event, which included exhibits, a slideshow of preserved properties and past events, and an opportunity to meet staff and trustees. It was wonderful to see so many people interested in what we are up to. We got to visit with old friends and meet some new ones who care about land preservation. We signed up new members and had many people volunteer or show interest in our upcoming events. If you couldn't attend, please feel free to visit anytime.

We are very excited about all the opportunities our new location and growing support present us. We are well positioned to make 2007 our most productive year yet for preserving and protecting Hunterdon County's important farms, forests and fields. 🌲



help renew the garden state preservation trust

The Garden State Preservation Trust, New Jersey's funding mechanism for open space, farmland and historic preservation, will run out of money this year. The Trust has provided millions of dollars for farmland and open space preservation throughout the state, awarding matching funds to municipalities, counties, and nonprofit organizations for preservation efforts. Thousands of acres of Hunterdon County farms and natural areas have been permanently protected thanks to Preservation Trust funding.

Without this funding source, landowners will no longer have an alternative to selling their land for development, and we risk losing productive farmland, clean and plentiful drinking water, and the high quality of life that parks and natural areas provide.

To avoid a gap in funding, the Trust must be replenished by the end of the



Top: Scott Deter (left) and Emmett Steinert (right) at the HLTA open house. Above: Trustee Ken Jagel (left) brings Senator Leonard Lance and former trustee Barbara Wolfe up to date on the organization's activities. Below: HLTA board president Risa Sackman (left) speaks with visitors Linda Helm Krapf, Liz Mitchell and architect Chris Pickell.

year through voter approval on the ballot this November. To achieve a place on the ballot, the Legislature must pass a plan in the near future. **Please join us in our effort to gather support for the renewal of this critical program by contacting your legislators and the governor today.** Use a link on our website to send an electronic letter. See our call for action alert at www.hlta.org. 🌲

hunterdon land trust alliance

to preserve and protect the rural landscapes and natural resources of hunterdon county

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calendar of upcoming events

April 14

Annual Trails Day – volunteers are needed to create the Ralph Peters Trail to link with Mimi’s Trail in the Zega Lockatong Preserve in Delaware Township.

April 21

Earth Day at Deer Path Park in Readington. Stop by the HLTA booth.

April 28

New Jersey Land Conservation Rally in New Brunswick. HLTA will attend and have a display.

May 6

Volunteer clean-up day at the Dvoor Farm.

May 24

Hunterdon County Green Table at Dvoor Farm to learn about stream restoration.

September 22

Day on the Land and Plein Air Painting contest at the Dvoor Farm. Don’t miss this chance to explore, learn and celebrate one of the HLTA’s most prominent properties. Watch landscape painters create beautiful works on the spot. Volunteers needed.

October 20

HLTA Fall Gala
We are excited to announce that our fall event will be hosted by the Hunterdon Art Museum. The evening will feature an auction of the plein air paintings created at the Dvoor Farm in September. Volunteers needed.


November 23-25

Jerry Cable Art Show at Prallsville Mills (www.jerrycablefineart.com). A portion of the proceeds will benefit HLTA.

Visit www.hlta.org for the latest calendar updates.

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