



**Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE HUNTERDON LAND TRUST HOSTS A *DAY ON THE LAND*  
JUNE 12 AT THE FRENCHTOWN PRESERVE**

Flemington, NJ — The Hunterdon Land Trust invites you to a *Day on the Land*, a free community event to welcome visitors to the Frenchtown Preserve. Get a guided tour of the Frenchtown Preserve located on Trenton Avenue (Route 29) just south of Frenchtown, either at 9 am for a bird watching walk, or at 11 am for an ecology walk.

Learn about the birds that make their homes on the property starting at 9 AM. The walk will be guided by Jan Holms, a board member of the Hunterdon Land Trust and seasoned birdwatcher. The second walk begins at 11:00 AM will be led by Leslie Sauer, local naturalist and well known landscape architect. Leslie will discuss the ecology of the preserve and outline future plans for its management. Space is limited, and pre-registration is required by emailing [info@hlta.org](mailto:info@hlta.org) or calling the Hunterdon Land Trust at 908-237-4582. Guided walks are moderately vigorous. Bring a water bottle and binoculars for bird watching. We recommend wearing hiking shoes and dressing in long pants.

The Frenchtown Preserve was created in 2006 when The Hunterdon Land Trust recognized the importance of this property to the local community, the water protection and species habitat it provided, as well as the recreational opportunities it presented. The land trust cultivated support for the preservation of this property from a variety of critical partners including the State of New Jersey Green Acres Program, New Jersey Division of Parks and Forestry, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Frenchtown Borough, Hunterdon County, and the Open Space Institute. With a cost of more than \$4,000,000 the property could not have been preserved without all of these partners working together. The Hunterdon Land Trust coordinated the project from initial communication with the owners through the closing, and contributed over \$2,000,000 in grant funding awarded to it for this project specifically.

Covering 150 acres of farm fields and a mixture of cedar and hard wood forest, the property was the last large, undeveloped tract in the small community of Frenchtown and was zoned for high density housing. It was estimated that more than 100 homes could have been built on the site. Margaret Waldock, the Executive Director of the Hunterdon Land Trust says “I am especially excited to welcome people to this special place. Getting the chance to see firsthand the natural beauty and resident wildlife of a place that has been saved from development is one of the best ways to understand the importance of land preservation.”

The Hunterdon Land Trust *Day on the Land* is being underwritten by a grant from the Merck Company Foundation. “We are very grateful for the support of Merck in helping us welcome the community to the Frenchtown Preserve to get an appreciation of the land and wealth of resources that were protected here,” commented Ms. Waldock.

The Frenchtown Preserve is now part of the nearby Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, owned and managed by the New Jersey Department of Parks and Forestry for recreational activities such as hiking, birding and horseback riding. The Hunterdon Land Trust works with the New Jersey Department of Parks and Forestry and Frenchtown Borough to develop trails and public education programs, and on species habitat restoration.

The Hunterdon Land Trust is Hunterdon County, New Jersey's only countywide land trust. Incorporated as a 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization in 1996, the land trust is committed to preserving and protecting the rural landscapes and natural resources of Hunterdon County. To learn more about the Hunterdon Land Trust, please visit their website at [www.hlta.org](http://www.hlta.org).

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Horseback riders enjoy the Frenchtown Preserve



Volunteers clear a fallen tree from a trail on the Frenchtown Preserve in preparation for the "Day on the Land," a free event scheduled for 9 am to noon on Saturday, June 12. For more information visit [www.hlta.org](http://www.hlta.org).

Photos by Kate Buttolph