



New Jersey  
**NATURAL LANDS TRUST**

**AGENDA**

**NATURAL LANDS TRUST MEETING**

**September 29, 2023**

**Location: Via Video and Teleconference**

**Please contact [NatLands@dep.nj.gov](mailto:NatLands@dep.nj.gov) for teleconference information  
1:00 PM**

- I. Statement of Open Public Meetings Act**
- II. General Public Comment**
- III. Financial Report**
  - First and Second Quarter 2023 Financial Statements, for decision
- IV. Minutes**
  - March 24, 2023 Minutes, for decision
- V. Unfinished Business**
  - Petty's Island, Pennsauken Township, Camden County, status update (no enclosure)
- VI. New Business**
  - Parnassus Preserve/Project Area, Montague Township, Sussex County, for decision
- VII. Adjourn**

THE NEW JERSEY NATURAL LANDS TRUST  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
MARCH 31, 2023

Statement 1

(See Accountant's Review Report)

	Without Donor Restrictions General Fund	With Donor Restrictions										
	With Donor Restrictions General Fund	Hyponex	Petty's Island	Petty's Island Cultural	Shorebird	TGP Acquisition	TGP Animals	TGP Plants	Wetlands Acquisition	Wetlands Mitigation	TOTAL	
ASSETS												
Current Assets												
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 2,735,819	\$ -	\$ 64,871	\$ 1,755,329	\$ 1,222,352	\$ 7,442	\$ 662,049	\$ 1,031,573	\$ 1,211,241	\$ 16,885	\$ 2,769,623	\$ 11,477,184
Tenants Escrow	3,046	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,046
Due to Bennett Bogs Endowment	-	10,625	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,625
Due to Hirst Pond Endowment	-	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,000
Due to Hainesville Wood Endowment	-	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,000
Due to Mackenzie'sBog/Montague	-	48,800	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,800
Due to Moorestown Acq Endowment	-	168,344	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	168,344
Due to Statewide Capital Projects	-	560,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	560,000
Due to Stevens Endowment	-	5,603	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,603
Due to Tree Frog Pond	-	559	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	559
Accrued Interest Receivable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total Current Assets	2,738,865	843,931	64,871	1,755,329	1,222,352	7,442	662,049	1,031,573	1,211,241	16,885	2,769,623	12,324,161
Fixed Assets												
Land	-	36,020,829	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36,020,829
Equipment	-	2,364	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,364
Vehicles	-	15,544	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15,544
Accumulated Depreciation	-	(17,908)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(17,908)
Total Fixed Assets	-	36,020,829	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36,020,829
Other Assets												
Investments-Long Term (FMV)	-	-	-	-	-	20,459	-	-	-	-	-	20,459
Due From Related Fund	-	-	-	13,930	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,930
Total Other Assets	-	-	-	13,930	-	20,459	-	-	-	-	-	34,389
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 2,738,865	\$ 36,864,760	\$ 64,871	\$ 1,769,259	\$ 1,222,352	\$ 27,901	\$ 662,049	\$ 1,031,573	\$ 1,211,241	\$ 16,885	\$ 2,769,623	\$ 48,379,379
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS												
Liabilities												
Due To Related Fund	\$ 573,930	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 573,930.00
Due to Endowment Account	283,931	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	283,931
Security Deposits Payable	2,792	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,792
Total Liabilities	860,653	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	860,653
Net Assets												
Without Donor Restrictions	1,878,212	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,878,212
With Donor Restrictions	-	36,864,760	64,871	1,769,259	1,222,352	30,751	662,049	1,031,573	1,211,241	16,885	2,769,623	45,643,364
Unrealized Gain/Loss	-	-	-	-	-	(2,850)	-	-	-	-	-	(2,850)
Total Net Assets	1,878,212	36,864,760	64,871	1,769,259	1,222,352	27,901	662,049	1,031,573	1,211,241	16,885	2,769,623	47,518,726
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$ 2,738,865	\$ 36,864,760	\$ 64,871	\$ 1,769,259	\$ 1,222,352	\$ 27,901	\$ 662,049	\$ 1,031,573	\$ 1,211,241	\$ 16,885	\$ 2,769,623	\$ 48,379,379

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

THE NEW JERSEY NATURAL LANDS TRUST  
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND NET ASSETS  
FOR THE THREE MONTH PERIOD ENDED  
MARCH 31, 2023

Statement 2

(See Accountant's Review Report)

	With Donor Restrictions											TOTAL
	Without Donor Restrictions General Fund	With Donor Restrictions General Fund	Hyponex	Petty's Island	Petty's Island Cultural	Shorebird	TGP Acquisition	TGP Animals	TGP Plants	Wetlands Acquisition	Wetlands Mitigation	
<b>Revenue (Restricted)</b>												
Contribution Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 147,280	\$ 147,280
<b>Expense</b>												
Materials and Supplies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Services	5,381	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,381
Maintenance	10,319	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,319
Annual Report	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subaccount Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Authorized Expenditures	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43,373	43,373
Depreciation Expense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenses</b>	15,700	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43,373	59,073
<b>Other Income</b>												
Rent Income	7,150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,150
Interest/Dividend Income	28,572	-	707	19,121	13,316	228	7,212	11,237	13,194	184	29,320	123,091
Miscellaneous Income	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NonRecurring Land Sale	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Other Income</b>	35,722	-	707	19,121	13,316	228	7,212	11,237	13,194	184	29,320	130,241
<b>Excess Revenues Over Expenses/ Excess (Expenses) Over Revenues</b>	\$ 20,022	\$ -	\$ 707	\$ 19,121	\$ 13,316	\$ 228	\$ 7,212	\$ 11,237	\$ 13,194	\$ 184	\$ 133,227	\$ 218,448
<b>Net Asset Balance January 1, 2023</b>	\$ 1,858,190	\$ 36,864,760	\$ 64,164	\$ 1,750,138	\$ 1,209,036	\$ 27,358	\$ 654,837	\$ 1,020,336	\$ 1,198,047	\$ 16,701	\$ 2,636,396	\$ 47,299,963
Land Acquisition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unrealized Loss/Gain	-	-	-	-	-	315	-	-	-	-	-	315
Inter Fund Transfer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Asset Balance Mar 31, 2023</b>	<u>\$ 1,878,212</u>	<u>\$ 36,864,760</u>	<u>\$ 64,871</u>	<u>\$ 1,769,259</u>	<u>\$ 1,222,352</u>	<u>\$ 27,901</u>	<u>\$ 662,049</u>	<u>\$ 1,031,573</u>	<u>\$ 1,211,241</u>	<u>\$ 16,885</u>	<u>\$ 2,769,623</u>	<u>\$ 47,518,726</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

THE NEW JERSEY NATURAL LANDS TRUST  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
JUNE 30, 2023

Statement 1

(See Accountant's Review Report)

	Without Donor Restrictions General Fund	With Donor Restrictions										
	With Donor Restrictions General Fund	Hyponex	Petty's Island	Petty's Island Cultural	Shorebird	TGP Acquisition	TGP Animals	TGP Plants	Wetlands Acquisition	Wetlands Mitigation	TOTAL	
ASSETS												
Current Assets												
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 2,762,167	\$ -	\$ 65,672	\$ 1,777,011	\$ 1,237,450	\$ 7,533	\$ 670,226	\$ 1,044,315	\$ 1,226,202	\$ 17,094	\$ 2,862,612	\$ 11,670,282
Tenants Escrow	3,046	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,046
Due to Bennett Bogs Endowment	-	10,625	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,625
Due to Hirst Pond Endowment	-	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,000
Due to Hainesville Wood Endowment	-	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,000
Due to Mackenzie'sBog/Montague	-	48,800	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,800
Due to Moorestown Acq Endowment	-	168,344	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	168,344
Due to Statewide Capital Projects	-	560,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	560,000
Due to Stevens Endowment	-	5,603	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,603
Due to Tree Frog Pond	-	559	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	559
Accrued Interest Receivable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total Current Assets	2,765,213	843,931	65,672	1,777,011	1,237,450	7,533	670,226	1,044,315	1,226,202	17,094	2,862,612	12,517,259
Fixed Assets												
Land	-	36,020,829	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36,020,829
Equipment	-	2,364	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,364
Vehicles	-	15,544	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15,544
Accumulated Depreciation	-	(17,908)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(17,908)
Total Fixed Assets	-	36,020,829	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36,020,829
Other Assets												
Investments-Long Term (FMV)	-	-	-	-	-	20,299	-	-	-	-	-	20,299
Due From Related Fund	-	-	-	4,880	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,880
Total Other Assets	-	-	-	4,880	-	20,299	-	-	-	-	-	25,179
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 2,765,213	\$ 36,864,760	\$ 65,672	\$ 1,781,891	\$ 1,237,450	\$ 27,832	\$ 670,226	\$ 1,044,315	\$ 1,226,202	\$ 17,094	\$ 2,862,612	\$ 48,563,267
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS												
Liabilities												
Due To Related Fund	\$ 573,930	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 573,930.00
Due to Endowment Account	274,881	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	274,881
Security Deposits Payable	2,792	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,792
Total Liabilities	851,603	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	851,603
Net Assets												
Without Donor Restrictions	1,913,610	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,913,610
With Donor Restrictions	-	36,864,760	65,672	1,781,891	1,237,450	31,009	670,226	1,044,315	1,226,202	17,094	2,862,612	45,801,231
Unrealized Gain/Loss	-	-	-	-	-	(3,177)	-	-	-	-	-	(3,177)
Total Net Assets	1,913,610	36,864,760	65,672	1,781,891	1,237,450	27,832	670,226	1,044,315	1,226,202	17,094	2,862,612	47,711,664
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$ 2,765,213	\$ 36,864,760	\$ 65,672	\$ 1,781,891	\$ 1,237,450	\$ 27,832	\$ 670,226	\$ 1,044,315	\$ 1,226,202	\$ 17,094	\$ 2,862,612	\$ 48,563,267

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

THE NEW JERSEY NATURAL LANDS TRUST  
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND NET ASSETS  
FOR THE SIX MONTH PERIOD ENDED  
JUNE 30, 2023

Statement 2

(See Accountant's Review Report)

	With Donor Restrictions											TOTAL
	Without Donor Restrictions General Fund	With Donor Restrictions General Fund	Hyponex	Petty's Island	Petty's Island Cultural	Shorebird	TGP Acquisition	TGP Animals	TGP Plants	Wetlands Acquisition	Wetlands Mitigation	
<b>Revenue (Restricted)</b>												
Contribution Income	\$ 20	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 387,567	\$ 387,587
<b>Expense</b>												
Materials and Supplies	762	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	762
Services	6,837	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,837
Maintenance	18,480	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18,480
Annual Report	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subaccount Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Authorized Expenditures	-	-	-	9,050	-	-	-	-	-	-	224,175	233,225
Depreciation Expense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenses</b>	26,079	-	-	9,050	-	-	-	-	-	-	224,175	259,304
<b>Other Income</b>												
Rent Income	13,600	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,600
Interest/Dividend Income	60,967	-	1,508	40,803	28,414	478	15,389	23,979	28,155	393	62,824	262,910
Miscellaneous Income	6,912	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,912
NonRecurring Land Sale	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Other Income</b>	81,479	-	1,508	40,803	28,414	478	15,389	23,979	28,155	393	62,824	283,422
<b>Excess Revenues Over Expenses/ Excess (Expenses) Over Revenues</b>	\$ 55,420	\$ -	\$ 1,508	\$ 31,753	\$ 28,414	\$ 478	\$ 15,389	\$ 23,979	\$ 28,155	\$ 393	\$ 226,216	\$ 411,705
<b>Net Asset Balance January 1, 2023</b>	\$ 1,858,190	\$ 36,864,760	\$ 64,164	\$ 1,750,138	\$ 1,209,036	\$ 27,358	\$ 654,837	\$ 1,020,336	\$ 1,198,047	\$ 16,701	\$ 2,636,396	\$ 47,299,963
Land Acquisition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unrealized Loss/Gain	-	-	-	-	-	(4)	-	-	-	-	-	(4)
Inter Fund Transfer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Asset Balance June 30, 2023</b>	<u>\$ 1,913,610</u>	<u>\$ 36,864,760</u>	<u>\$ 65,672</u>	<u>\$ 1,781,891</u>	<u>\$ 1,237,450</u>	<u>\$ 27,832</u>	<u>\$ 670,226</u>	<u>\$ 1,044,315</u>	<u>\$ 1,226,202</u>	<u>\$ 17,094</u>	<u>\$ 2,862,612</u>	<u>\$ 47,711,664</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

**MINUTES OF THE  
NATURAL LANDS TRUST MEETING  
March 24, 2023  
12:00 PM  
Via Video and Teleconference**

Chairman Catania called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM. A quorum of trustees was present. At least one of the trustees was a state governmental representative.

The Open Public Meetings Act notice was provided as follows: Notice of the date, time, location, and agenda, to the extent known, was forwarded to three newspapers of general circulation, and provided to the Secretary of State in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. In addition, notice was provided on the Trust's website in compliance with the Act requiring State, regional, and local authorities, boards, and commissions to establish a website providing specific information to facilitate transparency in government.

*In attendance were:*

Michael Catania, Chairperson  
Anne Heasley, Vice Chairperson  
Senator Bob Smith, State House

Commission representative, Trustee  
Judeth Yeany, DEP Trustee  
Larry Torok, DEP Trustee  
Emile DeVito, Trustee  
Margaret Waldock, Trustee

Eileen Murphy, Trustee  
Hannah Good, Trustee representative for the  
State Treasurer  
Robert Jackson, Trustee  
Robert J. Cartica, Executive Director  
Jason Hafstad, Trust Staff  
Terry Schmidt, Trust Staff  
Cari Wild, Secretary/Treasurer

*Absent:* Trustee representative for the DEP  
Commissioner

*Guests:*

Kris Schantz, DEP  
Fred Akers, Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association  
Brooke Handley, Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association  
Jason Howell, Pinelands Preservation Alliance  
Mike Kaliss

**General Public Comment:**

Ms. Handley and Mr. Akers reported on efforts by the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association to help steward the Trust's Hamilton Preserve including plans to install guard rails to impede ATV trespassing and work on watershed-wide municipal ordinances to strengthen policies against ATVs. For example, on March 20, 2023, Hamilton Township, Atlantic County adopted an ordinance authorizing police to confiscate illegally ridden ATVs and dirt bikes. The Trust's Board thanked them for their efforts and support.

Mr. Howell advised the Trust about an opportunity to acquire lands adjacent to the Pomona Woods Preserve.

**Financial Report:** Mr. Cartica outlined the Financial Statements for the quarters ending September 30 and December 31, 2022. Senator Smith motioned to approve the Financial Statements. Ms. Waldock seconded the motion, and the Financial Statements were unanimously approved by a vote of 10 to 0.

The **September 16, 2022 Minutes** were reviewed. Mr. DeVito motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Torok seconded the motion, and the minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 10 to 0.

### **Unfinished Business:**

Mr. Catania and Ms. Wild provided the Board with a **Petty's Island, Pennsauken Township, Camden County Status Report**. Since 2015, the William Penn Foundation has provided grant funding for environmental educational programming at Petty's Island, which we used to hire our current programming provider, the Center for Aquatic Sciences (CAS). The current grant expires on April 30, 2023. The Trust has applied for a new grant in the amount of \$109,000 which would cover an additional two years of CAS programming as well as community engagement activities through a new hourly employee, Linda Cairnes, who was formerly with CAS.

The DEP has been insisting on remediation to ecological standards after deeming the island's uplands an ecologically sensitive natural resource (ESNR). CITGO's Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP) has proposed remedial action(s) based upon non-residential or alternate-based (recreational) standards. Recently, however, CITGO feels it has been able to moot the issue of huge areas of the island being considered as ENSRs by mowing down lots of phragmites and other vegetation to create "lawn." Apparently, lawn qualifies as an exemption from the ESNR designation while still preserving the habitat and retaining the option of allowing these areas to become fields or forests at a later date.

CITGO recently completed additional soil and sediment sampling in the former oil storage tank impoundments, as well as along the perimeter of the island, and is optimistic that these sampling results will not result in any significant expansion of remediation.

Based on all of this, CITGO seems more optimistic than ever that they will be successful in getting DEP approval of the cleanup plan proposed by its LSRP and the possibility of CITGO completing the cleanup and conveying the island to the Trust sometime in the next 2-3 years or so.

Ms. Waldock, Chair of the Petty's Island Committee, held a meeting on October 21, 2022 to discuss the challenges and future vision of the island. Future meetings will be scheduled.

### **New Business:**

**Introduction:** Mr. Cartica introduced the Trust's new Land Manager, Jason Hafstad.

Mr. Cartica presented the **Spending Authorization for Calendar Year 2023**. This year's authorization includes several species- or habitat-specific inventories as well as land management projects, including those to limit illegal ATV access. Mr. Jackson motioned to approve the Spending Authorization for Calendar Year 2023. Senator Smith seconded the motion, and the 2023 Spending Authorization was unanimously approved by a vote of 10 to 0. Senator Smith noted his intention to seek funding for the Trust in the state budget to hire a Volunteer Coordinator to supplement the Trust's work to protect New Jersey's biodiversity.

Mr. Cartica presented the Board with the **Tennessee Gas Pipeline (TGP) Plant Fund-2023 Work Plan**. Trustees were advised that use of this funding is mostly at the discretion of State Parks, Forests & Historic Sites even if trustees feel the proposed work is unnecessary. It was noted that the budget includes funding of a deer enclosure fencing pilot project in a location within High Point State Park yet to be determined. Mr. Catania, Mr. DeVito, and Ms. Waldock noted examples of successful deer enclosures at the Watchung Reservation and Duke Farms in New Jersey. Mr. DeVito motioned to approve the TGP Plant Fund-2023 Work Plan. Mr. Torok seconded the motion, and the 2023 Work Plan was unanimously approved by a vote of 10 to 0.

Mr. Cartica presented the Board with the **Tennessee Gas Pipeline (TGP) Animal Fund-Timber Rattlesnake and Eastern Copperhead Multi-Year Work Plan**. The Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP) has submitted a request and supporting documents (per our MOU with NJ Fish & Wildlife) for the release of \$870,000 from the TGP Animal Fund being held in trust by the Natural Lands Trust. The request proposes that the ENSP will use a maximum of \$500,000 for one or more grants focused on eastern copperhead (formerly northern copperhead) and an additional \$370,000 for a contract with Rutgers University. According to our MOU, the ENSP must submit approved meeting minutes from the Endangered and Nongame Species Advisory Committee (ENSAC) regarding the use of these funds. ENSP has provided documentation that ENSAC was presented with and approved the objectives of the projects and the total available funds to be used. Mr. Torok noted that if eastern copperhead is federally listed as threatened, as expected, it will be regulated, and knowledge of its habitat will be critical to maintaining and protecting this species in New Jersey. Mr. Torok motioned to approve the TGP Timber Rattlesnake and Eastern Copperhead Multi-Year Work Plan. Mr. DeVito seconded the motion, and the Multi-Year Work Plan was unanimously approved by a vote of 10 to 0.

Ms. Wild presented the **Draft 2022 Annual Report** text, highlighting the Trust's success during 2022 in designating two Trust preserves to the Old Growth Forest Network, a national network of old-growth, native forests throughout the U.S. that are protected from logging and are open to the public. It was requested that the Board provide any comments/changes on the draft report within the next thirty days. Ms. Waldock motioned to approve the draft report subject to Board members and staff having the flexibility to incorporate changes. Mr. Jackson seconded the motion, and the 2022 Annual Report was unanimously approved by a vote of 10 to 0.

Ms. Yeany presented the **Nominating Committee (Mr. Catania and Ms. Yeany) Recommendations** for Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary/Treasurer Officers and motioned for their approval. Nominated for Chairperson was Margaret Waldock, Vice Chairperson was Anne Heasley, and Secretary-Treasurer was Cari Wild. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 10 to 0. Senator Smith expressed his gratitude to Mr. Catania



for all of his contributions to the Trust, DEP, and numerous environmental organizations throughout his career.

The currently scheduled dates for 2023 Board meetings are June 9, September 22, and December 1, 2023.

Mr. Catania motioned for the meeting to be adjourned. Mr. DeVito seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:09 PM by a unanimous vote of 10 to 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Cari Wild  
Secretary/Treasurer



PARNASSUS PROJECT AREA  
Montague Township, Sussex County  
September 29, 2023

## Description of Project Area

The approximately 608-acre Parnassus Project Area is in Montague Township, Sussex County and includes a recent approximately 28-acre land offering to the Green Acres Program.

Acquisition of this property will result in a new Trust preserve called the Parnassus Preserve.

The purpose of establishing a Project Area is to facilitate Green Acres' acquisition of the current property offering as well as surrounding vacant properties that include important habitat for the plant and animal species discussed below. Although the recent offering includes a house and numerous outbuildings and other structures, Green Acres will acquire only vacant land within the existing tax parcel through what is known as a partial acquisition. Green Acres' acquisition of just a portion of the property effects a subdivision of the existing tax parcel without having to proceed with the formal subdivision process.



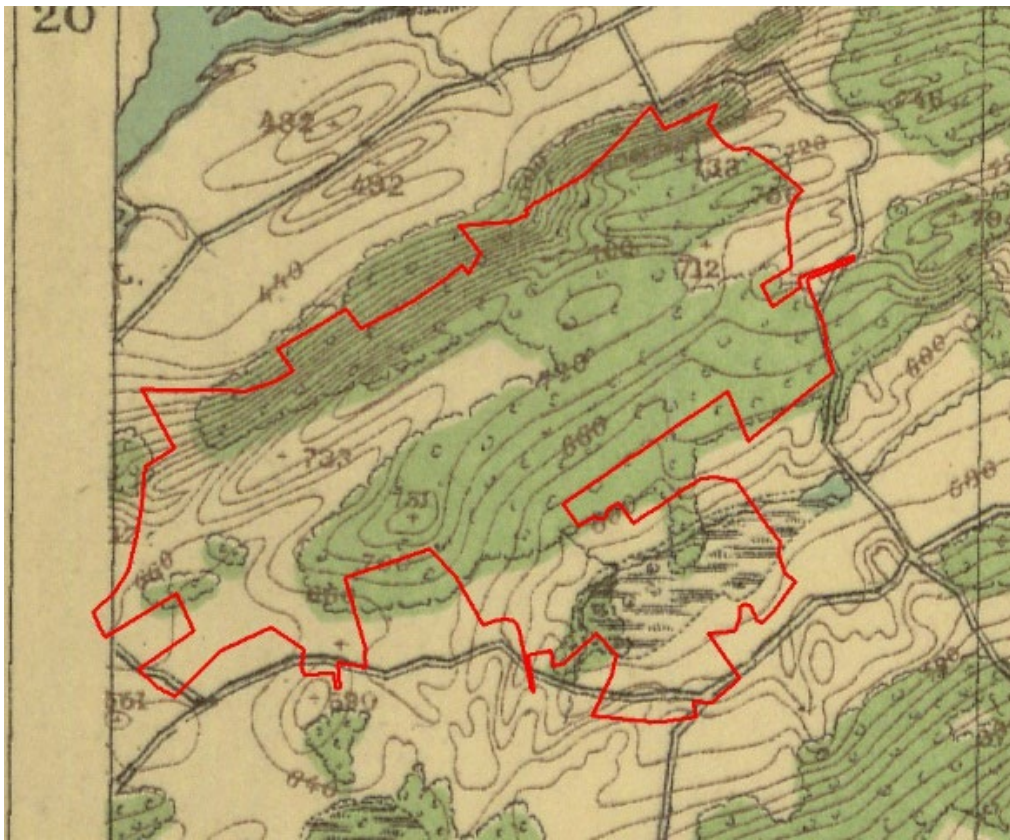
*Figure 1. Proposed partial fee acquisition lines.*

The Project Area boundary has been drawn to include all of the parcels that include important habitat within the area bounded by River, New Mashipacong, Clove, and Weider roads. This Project Area includes lands owned by 26 separate owners, many with residences and other structures. Any acquisition of developed land within the Project Area would involve a partial acquisition of vacant land only and not include residences or structures.

## Ecological Description

The approximately 28-acre Green Acres offering is mostly high-quality wetland habitat mapped Landscape 5 as habitat for endangered and threatened animal species including bog turtle (E), bobcat (E), and barred owl (T). The offered parcel is composed of approximately 12 acres of upland and 16 acres of wetlands, including a globally rare ecological community called a calcareous fen. The fen supports populations of two rare plant species, American woollyfruit Sedge (Plant Species of Concern - SC) and prairie sedge (SC). There is also a diversity of native plants without many signs of invasive plant species.

The majority of the 608-acre Project Area is upland forest. Approximately 300 acres is shown as forested on the 1880s Vermeule maps, with no signs of logging on imagery from 1930 through present day. This suggests much of the forest is older growth of high ecological integrity.



*Figure 2. 1880s Vermeule Mapping*

Additionally, species distribution modeling for the federally threatened small whorled pogonia (E) shows a high probability of there being habitat in this area. Preserved land in this project area would also be critical to creating an ecological corridor between the northern end of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and High Point State Park. Tributaries to the Shimer's Brook and Mill Brook flow within the Project Area. With the exception of the developed pockets, the entire Project Area is mapped either Landscape 4 or 5, as habitat for either federally- or state-listed endangered animal species.





*Figure 3. Landscape mapping.*

### **Management Issues and Concerns**

This will be a brand new preserve. Adding a new preserve to the Trust's system of over 100 preserves results in additional management issues but this habitat is so important that the added burden is justified. Management may become easier if surrounding vacant land is eventually added to the preserve to provide better public access and parking. The Project Area will facilitate these future acquisitions.

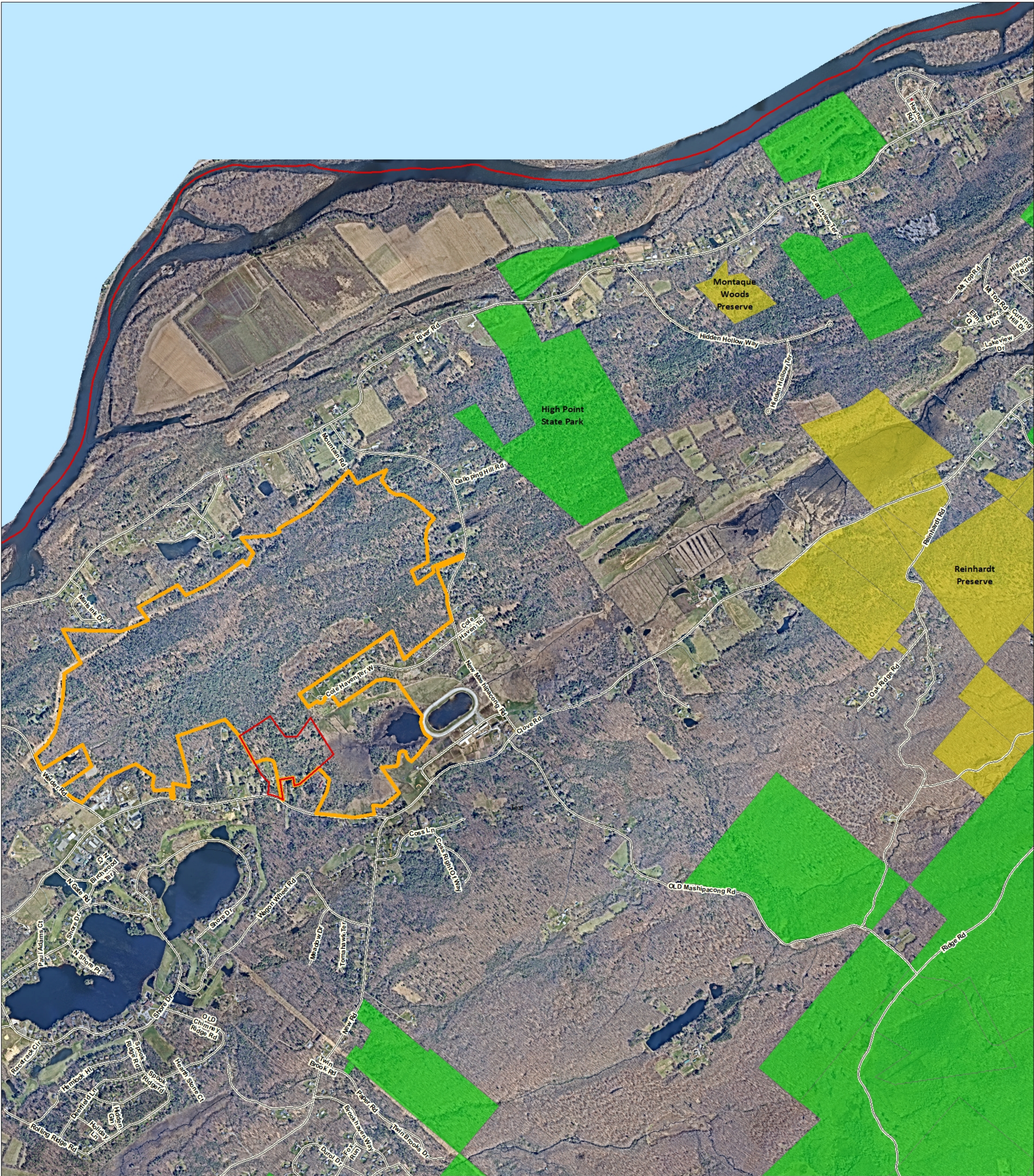
### **Acquisition Criteria**

Properties within this Project Area meet the acquisition criteria for Endangered Species Habitat since they include habitat for a state or federally listed plant or animal species or suitable buffers to protect such species.

### **Staff Recommendations**

Staff recommends the Board's approval of the Parnassus Preserve as well as a surrounding Project Area to facilitate Green Acres' acquisition of properties in the area. As required by the Trust's Guidelines for Land Acquisition, lands within the Project Area that would present management concerns, such as structures, improvements, or contamination, or that would require the expenditure of Trust funds, would be brought to the Board for specific approval before acquisition.





New Jersey Natural Lands Trust  
Parnassus Project Area  
Montague, Sussex County, NJ  
Approximately 608 acres

**Legend**

- Parnassus Preserve Project Area
- Land Offering
- Parks and Forestry
- Natural Lands Trust

