



# The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust



1993  
Annual  
Report

## Statement of Purpose

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust was created in 1968 by the Legislature as an independent agency with the mission to preserve land in its natural state for enjoyment by the public and to protect natural diversity through the acquisition of open space. Land is preserved primarily by donations of open space through acquisition of title in fee simple or of conservation easements and is managed to conserve endangered species habitat, rare natural features, and significant ecosystems. Access to Trust lands is generally not restricted. Passive use by the public for recreational or educational purposes is



invited wherever such use will not adversely affect natural communities and biological diversity. The Trust also recognizes that ownership and management alone are not enough to achieve its mission. Public education is an integral function of protecting natural

diversity. The Trust distributes printed information and sponsors interpretive programs and seminars designed to convey a conservation ethic for the protection of open space and its natural values.

## The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust Board of Trustees

Policy for the Trust is set by an eleven-member Board of Trustees. Six members are appointed by the Governor from the recommendations of a nominating caucus of conservation organizations. Five members are state officials.

**Newton LeVine** (Chairperson), Professor of Architecture & Urban Design at Ramapo State College. Resides in Glen Ridge Township, Essex County.

**Michael Catania**, Executive Director of New Jersey Field Office of The Nature Conservancy. Resides in Mendham Borough, Morris County.

**Emile DeVito**, Director of Conservation Biology, New Jersey Conservation Foundation. Resides in South Plainfield Borough, Middlesex County.

**Sally Dudley**, Executive Director, Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions. Resides in Harding Township, Morris County.

**Thomas Gilmore**, Executive Director, New Jersey Audubon Society. Resides in Franklin Lakes Borough, Bergen County.

**James Hall** (Vice Chairperson), Assistant Commissioner for Natural and Historic Resources, Department of Environmental Protection; representing the Commissioner of DEP. Resides in North Hanover Township, Burlington County.

**Frank Leary**, Environmental Consultant with J. H. Crow Company. Resides in Pohatcong Township, Warren County.

**Honorable John A. Lynch**, Senator District 17, and member of the State House Commission. Resides in New Brunswick Township, Middlesex County.

**Robert A. Preston**, Supervisor, Capital Commission on the Budget; representing the State Treasurer. Resides in Medford Township, Burlington County.

**John Weingart**, Assistant Commissioner for Environmental Regulation, Department of

Environmental Protection. Resides in Stockton Borough, Hunterdon County.

**Thomas Wells**, Administrator, Green Acres Program, Department of Environmental Protection. Resides in Mendham Borough, Morris County.

## Staff

David F. Moore, Secretary/Treasurer  
Thomas F. Hampton, Executive Director  
Beverly Mazzella, Real Estate Coordinator  
Judeth Piccinini, Counsel  
Martin Rapp, Ecologist



## Changes . . .

In 1993, a number of new appointments and reappointments were made by the Governor to the Board of Trustees. In February, Dr. Emile DeVito, Director of Conservation Biology for the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, replaced Nicholas English, a member of the Board since 1984. Board veteran Edward Babbott, first appointed to the Natural Lands Trust in 1979, was

succeeded by Sally Dudley, Executive Director of the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions. Thomas Gilmore, Executive Director of the New Jersey Audubon Society was appointed to replace Jim Truncer, who sat as a member of the Board since 1988. A vacancy on the Trust was filled by Michael Catania, Executive Director of New Jersey's Chapter of The Nature Conservancy.

Both Michael Catania and Sally Dudley are no strangers to the Trust. Both have served on the Board ex officio as employees of the Department of Environmental Protection.

The veterans will be missed for their dedication and the knowledge they brought to each meeting, but they have been replaced by outstanding citizens of the environmental community.

## Donors

William & Gloria Verrochi  
Joseph R. & Rosemary Todino  
GI Partners  
Guy Tunney  
Collings Lakes Civic Association  
Marian T. Waldhaussen  
The Nature Conservancy  
Audrey Shavick

James M. Shavick  
Lawrence & Sandra Kelman  
Bernard and Ruth C. Feigen  
Morton A. and Adele Epstein  
KSK Associates  
New Jersey Conservation Foundation  
Pope John High School Endowment, Inc.  
Eugene & Jean Wolf

Monmouth Conservation Foundation  
Kenneth J. Posey  
Fanwood Foundation  
Jersey Central Power & Light  
K. Hovnanian at Jersey City I, Inc.  
Bellemead Development Corporation

## Mitigating Wetland Losses

Two agencies with similar goals may tend to duplicate activities and, at times, may even be in competition with each other. While not competing, the

Trust and the Wetlands Mitigation Council have similar goals. The Council was established through the Freshwater Wetlands Act in 1987 and

has primary responsibilities that include, where permit approvals by DEP create the requirement: financing wetland mitigation projects, purchasing land to restore degraded wetlands, purchasing land to preserve wetlands and transition areas determined to be of critical importance, and providing funds for research to enhance the practice of mitigation. The Trust, while having somewhat broader objectives, has undertaken similar activities within wetlands of the state in the past. Duplication of activities has been avoided through a formal cooperative agreement signed this past year.

When the DEP approves a freshwater wetlands permit, mitiga-

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## Mitigating Wetland Losses

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tion of environmental impacts may be required of the applicant. This mitigation may take the form of land donation, creation of wetlands, restoration of degraded wetlands, or donation of funds to accomplish these activities. In June, the Trust accepted the responsibility to receive monies on behalf of the Council, and

created a Wetlands Mitigation Fund for their deposit. This fund will be used only when a decision is made by the Council for the use. Under the agreement, the Trust may also be asked to accept title to lands offered to the Council and manage them, as well as acting on the Council's behalf to directly purchase properties. The

Council will be able to accomplish its goals through the Trust without establishing a monetary fund or hiring personnel for land acquisition and management, thereby avoiding duplication. At the end of the year, the fund amounted to almost \$54,000 with additional payments anticipated in early 1994.

## Trust Properties Grow

As in past years, the Trust has sought to expand the size of existing landholdings where resource values and management concerns dictate. A number of smaller land donations have been accepted in the past with the understanding that staff will seek to enlarge these holdings for easier management or to provide protection for an ecological boundary that does not recognize municipal lot lines. This past year, the Trust was able to expand the boundaries of four existing properties by the addition of more than 450 acres of open space. Many of these lands provide protection to habitat in the Elwood Corridor, an important, undeveloped expanse that links large public holdings in the northern and southern Pinelands.

The donation of 11 acres of stream corridor and associated wetlands, together with adjacent uplands, contributed to the expansion of the Richard Buhlman Preserve in Fairfield Township, Cumberland County. Donated by Bernard and Ruth Feigen, and Morton and Adele Epstein, this irregularly shaped parcel, abutting the existing Trust holding, provides

protection to the stream corridor and wetlands along Rattlesnake Run. The steep slopes, rising to an upland oak forest, provide access to the preserve from Ramah Road. Already, adjacent neighbors have offered assistance to monitor and manage the site.

Three separate parcels of land located in Folsom Borough, Atlantic County, provide additions to nearby Trust property, collectively known as the Collings Pines Preserve. A 46-acre parcel donated by the Collings

Lakes Civic Association is located on the Hospitality Branch immediately downstream of Cushmans Lake and adjacent to Albert Lake.

This area may actually be a long abandoned cranberry bog where young white cedar trees are in vigorous succession. Two additional parcels along the Great Egg Harbor River provide continuous protection to over 2,700 feet of forested wetlands along this designated National Wild and Scenic River.

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## Trust Properties Grow

(cont'd from page 4)

As in past years, the Trust continued the expansion of the Costa Preserve in Hamilton Township, Atlantic County, by accepting the donation of 336 acres of land from co-owners James Shavick, Audrey Shavick and The Nature Conservancy. The site is mostly white oak forest, portions blending into an oak/pitch pine community. It embodies several small ponds created from past sand mining operations. The shallower ponds support populations of Pine Barrens treefrog

and tiger salamanders, both endangered species in the state. The site provides protection for the headwaters of Mares Run, a tributary of the Great Egg Harbor River.

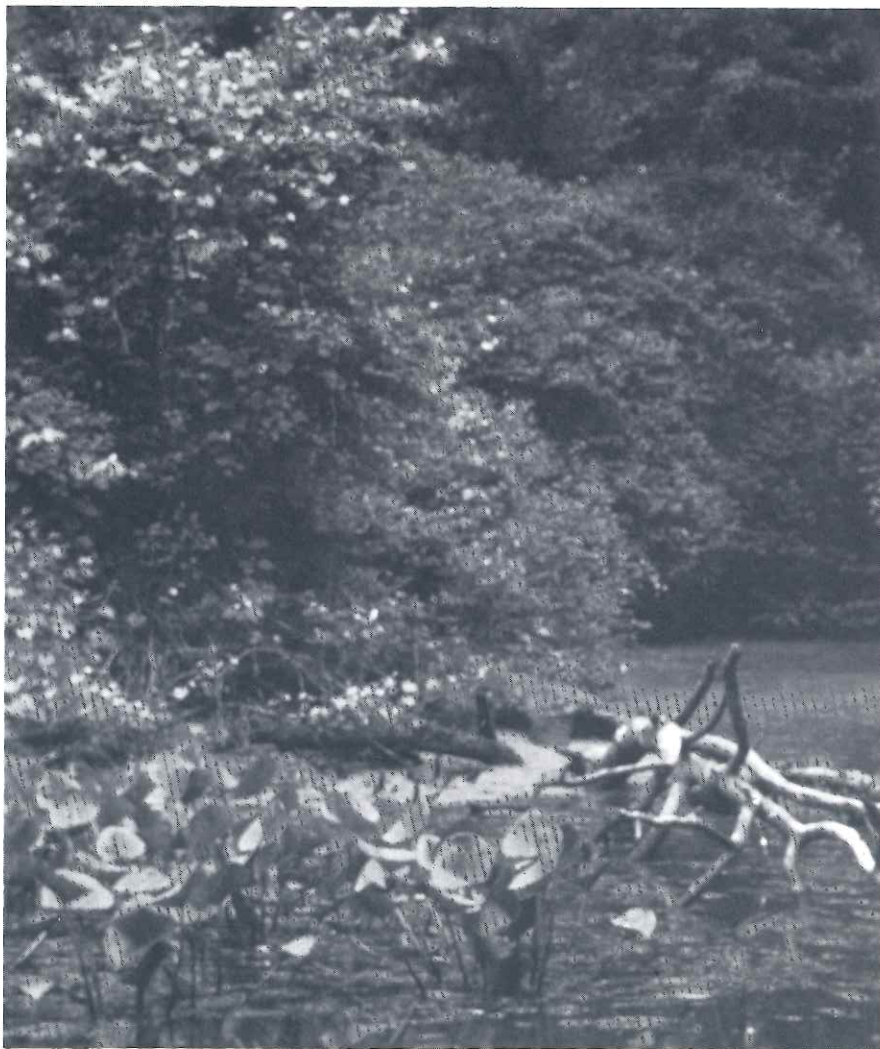
State and federal fish and wildlife agencies have recognized the importance of the Wallkill River in Sussex County as a critical habitat for woodcock, mallard, teal and wood duck. In 1987, the Trust acquired a 10-acre parcel of wetlands along the river in Sparta Township. In 1993, an additional 44 acres were protected

as a result of a donation from Pope John High School Endowment, Inc. Working with the DEP Green Acres Program, the corporation was able to donate title to the land in return for Green Acres payment of back taxes to the municipality. While a portion of the site was once farmed, over 85% of the land is bulrushes, sedges and cattails in a wetland complex along 1,000 feet of the Wallkill River.

## Over the Years...

How much land has the Trust acquired over the years? There have been good times and bad. During some of the earlier years, the Trust existed in name only and neither staff nor an operating budget were available. In those years, between 1969 and 1982, the Trust was still able to acquire slightly over 600 acres. In 1983, the Trust received its first full-time employee and a minimal operating budget that grew the next year. From 1984 through 1993, the Trust increased its stewardship by almost 5,200 acres, acquiring 1,200 acres during 1993.

The tax-assessed value of Trust landholdings, at the time of closing, totals almost \$12 million. The actual value of the land, if appraised and updated over the years, could add up to substantially more. Obviously, a price tag cannot be placed on the value of the open space for the public good.





## From Wetlands to Shorebird

Working together with other organizations or individuals requires a great deal of coordination but often results in accomplishing not only the goals of the Trust but those of others. Two such examples of this cooperation during 1993 involved the Trust working with the Wetlands Mitigation Council to provide protection to a portion of Black Meadows in Morris County, and coordination with the New Jersey Conservation Foundation for preservation of shore-bird habitat along the Delaware Bay.

This past year, the Trust entered into an agreement with the Wetlands Mitigation Council enabling the Trust to receive title to lands made available to the public as a result of mitigation required for permit approval (see related story). Upon approval of the agreement, the Trust accepted title to 146 acres of land in Hanover Township, Morris County, as the first project under this agreement. GI Partners had received a wetland permit from DEP for a development project that included the destruction of six-tenths of an acre of wetlands.

Creation of wetlands, as mitigation, was ruled impractical. Given the opportunity, GI Partners compensated for the lost resource by donating land to the Trust. The Black Meadows Preserve is part of the Central Passaic Basin wetland complex which includes areas such as Great Swamp, Great Piece Meadows and Troy Meadows. The property is bordered by the Whippany River and Black Brook, with various community types including forested wetland, scrub-shrub wetland, emergent marsh and upland forest.

Since the mid-1980s, the New

Jersey Natural Lands Trust, as well as a number of non-profit environmental organizations, have been working with the New Jersey Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife and the Endangered and Non-game Species Program, to protect and manage shorebird habitat along the Delaware Bay shore.

rich meal for the migrating birds.

The New Jersey Conservation Foundation previously acquired almost one mile of beach in Lower Township, known as the Tolz and Skill beaches.

This year, in an effort to provide the added protection of state agency ownership, the Foundation trans-



Shorebirds migrating from their winter home in South America, to their breeding grounds in the Arctic, stop for several weeks each May to feed and replenish body fat used in their long journey. Initial protection efforts were focused on the sandy beaches where horseshoe crab eggs provide a

ferred title of these lands to the Trust. The Foundation, which has conducted environmental education programs each year during shorebird migration, will continue the programs and cooperate in the management of the land under Trust ownership.



## Local Pride

This past November, the Trust co-sponsored a trash removal project with the Hamilton Township Environmental Office at the Trust's Costa Preserve in Atlantic County. This was the fourth annual "Community Pride Cleanup" for the Township, but the first working (in cooperation) with Trust staff. Not only was trash removed to make the area more presentable for public use, but Trust Ecologist Martin Rapp took the opportunity to promote the goals of the Trust and provide environmental education about the Pine Barrens and the Costa Preserve.

With more than 430 wooded acres, including scattered ponds and wetland areas, the selection of sites on which to focus litter removal was based on public access and past neglect. Approximately 75 local residents, including members of hunting clubs, Hamilton Township Police Explorers, Audubon Society, and the Forest Fire Service, gave up their Sunday to pick up more than 25 tons of trash. Tires and recyclable bottles, cans and scrap metal were separated



and then removed using township-owned vehicles. "Our experience working with Hamilton Township was an enjoyable one, with the Trust, the Township and the general public all benefiting", said Trust Executive Director Tom Hampton.

Boy Scout Troop 66 of Barnegat continues to help manage their "adopted" preserve in Ocean County. This year, the boys constructed a loop nature trail through

the Trust's Lin-Lee Preserve, which they have been managing under staff direction for the past several years. Approximately 1.5 miles long, the trail is a pleasant winding walk through hardwood uplands and groves of pitch pines, looking over a wetland of mountain laurels and azalea. In the last two years, the Scouts have undertaken three stream-cleaning projects and are eagerly waiting to begin an erosion-control program.

## Crossley Stewardship and Use

Crossley Preserve in Berkeley Township, Ocean County, is one of the most heavily used Trust properties, primarily because it provides wilderness experience for a large local population. Access to a variety of Pine Barrens habitats was greatly improved several years ago by the construction of an interpretive loop trail through the preserve. Local volunteers always stand ready to lend

assistance to ensure continued use.

This past year, local residents faced more than trimming vegetation along the 1.5-mile loop trail. Early spring rains raised local water levels, pushing high volumes of water through narrow branches and creeks. An old clay pipe under a disused narrow-gauge railroad bed, now a part of the loop trail, separated under the pressure, and running water began to wash away sand

and undermine the trail. A large hole began to widen with each new rainfall and, without repair, the continuity of the entire loop trail was threatened.

With help from personnel at Island Beach State Park and Double Trouble State Park, together with Trust staff and local volunteers, the old clay pipe was removed. After much hand digging and prying, a new pipe was installed and, with the know-

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## Crossley Stewardship and Use

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how of Forest Fire Service tractor operator Richard Lecuyer, the area was graded and the trail was again safe for passage.

Individuals and groups are encouraged to hike along the trails, and use of the trails has increased. Again this year, the spring and fall monthly Crestwood Strolls were

continued, guided by local volunteer Lois Morris.

Additional organized hikes were sponsored by the Ocean County Nature Club and the Ocean County Park Commission. A special visit to Crossley was made by the Common Wealth of New Jersey, Inc., a nonprofit organization promoting

environmental education and protection of the state's natural and cultural resources. The group's bus tour, focusing on Barnegat Bay, ventured inland to visit Crossley Preserve because of its unique ecology and its protection for the headwaters of the Toms River.

## A Special Place

Through the generous donation of Marian T. Waldhaussen, 266 acres of uplands and wetlands, partially fronting on the Great Egg Harbor River, were transferred to Trust ownership. The gift included three separate tracts, two in Folsom Borough and one in Hamilton Township, all in Atlantic County. Upstream and adjacent to the recent additions to the Collings Pines Preserve, these three tracts of forested wetlands along the Great Egg Harbor River will be managed by the Trust with other properties totalling over 2,700 feet of river frontage. A second acquisition, encompassing almost 60 acres, is located a short distance from the Collings Pines Preserve and includes a small bluff overlooking the Hospitality Branch. A classic pitch pine uplands community covers the rolling landscape.

The largest parcel donated by Ms. Waldhaussen, over 200 acres of land along the Great Egg Harbor River, came to the Trust with significant natural and cultural resources as well as many fond personal memories. The property was originally left to Ms. Waldhaussen's father, Dr. John

Henry Trescher, by a grateful patient. As a child, Ms. Waldhaussen spent much of several summer vacations at the mansion and the gate house. She cherishes memories of lazy summer afternoons spent on the family's dock on this scenic stretch of the Great Egg Harbor River.

The buildings, no longer standing, were associated with the old Weymouth Furnace, located on adjacent property. The property was eventually transferred to Ms. Waldhaussen, who used it for vacation enjoyment with her own children, even after the family moved to the Pennsylvania Dutch country. Because of her pleasant childhood memories and an appreciation of the natural beauty of the site, Ms.

Waldhaussen, with the support of her family, wanted to see the property remain as open space; however, the management responsibilities began to weigh heavily on the family. The option of a donation of the majority of the lands to an

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## A Special Place

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independent state agency appealed to the Waldhausen family. The preservation of the property will be enhanced by the benefits related to government ownership and, at the same time,

management of the land will be governed by selected deed restrictions and the Trust's autonomous Board. The Waldhausen family likes to canoe and hike, and plans to visit the Trust

property, to be known as "John's Woods", after the original family owner, Dr. John Henry Trescher.

## Partnerships

As in most endeavors, working with others leads to greater accomplishments than could normally be attained by the same number of people working alone. This adage is even more appropriate when it comes to the land management responsibilities of the Trust. With the ever-increasing amount of acreage to oversee and only one ecologist on staff, it becomes vital to enlist the interest of local organizations to assist with monitoring and management of the land and its natural diversity.

The Edison Township Environmental Commission in Middlesex County has been working hard to protect one of the last large open-space tracts in that area. The Environmental Commission was granted title to the Stevens Wildlife Preserve in 1982, with a conservation easement held by the New Jersey Conservation Foundation. That easement was passed to the Trust in 1987 to provide the benefits of state ownership and protection. Over the last several years, the Commission has been actively involved defending the integrity of the land against a development proposal that would use the site to receive storm water from the adjacent development.

To increase public awareness of the value of the 56-acre Preserve, the

Environmental Commission sponsored a nature walk last March, assisted by the Trust Ecologist. More than 25 local residents attended to learn about the natural diversity on this valuable piece of open space.

The Crooked Swamp Preserve, also known as the Breathing Cave System, located in Lafayette Township, Sussex County, was one of the first properties acquired by the Trust. The tract was established not only to

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## Partnerships

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protect natural resources above ground, but to also maintain the longest cave in the state while allowing safe access for educational and recreational purposes. To accomplish all this requires not only the knowledge of what to do, but the ability to implement the management tasks and control access.

Since 1984, this has been accomplished by the New Jersey Caves Management Committee, formed for the purpose of cave management from the membership of the Central New Jersey Grotto and the Northern New Jersey Grotto, two cave exploring organizations.

During the past year, a management plan, prepared by committee members, was approved by the Trust.

The plan provides an inventory of above and below-ground resources and identifies management tasks that need to be implemented as well as criteria for public access to the cave system.

The Trust and the New Jersey Caves Management Committee signed a 5-year agreement in 1993, whereby the committee will assume responsibility for management, much of which involves controlling access by maintaining entrance gates and serving as guides for cave exploring.

Moving further south in the state, the Trust finalized a partnership with the Township of Franklin, Somerset County, for the management of the Flemer Preserve along the Delaware and Raritan Canal.

Working with the township, the Trust adopted a management plan for this preserve in 1992. The 9-acre linear park property serves as a vital link for hikers along the National Recreational Trail known as the D&R Canal. Because of the many benefits to the local residents of Franklin, as well as the general public, the township has agreed to be responsible for the daily maintenance, including security, trash removal, installation of benches and signs, and protection of natural features. Under the agreement, a stewardship committee of township officials and a representative of the Trust has responsibility for implementing the management identified in the adopted plan.

## Protecting Water Resources

Weighing a number of factors, the Board of Trustees decides each meeting which properties should be accepted and which must be passed over. It is not an easy task to reject an offer of land as a donation. In addition to the issues of acreage, management problems and threats to natural resources from possible development, the Board also examines the values of natural diversity that the land will provide to the public if it is accepted into the portfolio of lands managed by the Trust. A number of properties acquired by the Trust this past year protect headwaters and stream corridors, which are vital not only to wildlife, but to human life as well, in

the surrounding area and downstream.

In the heavily developed Township of Brick, Ocean County, every square yard of open space is valuable and, in 1993, the Trust acquired a 20-acre donation from Joseph and Rosemary Todino to protect portions of the headwaters of the North Branch of Beaver Dam Creek. The property is nearly all wetlands, with Atlantic white cedar forest as the dominant community type. The Beaver Dam Preserve is a small part of a much larger wetland complex surrounded by single-family homes and zoned for high-density development.

Vernal ponds, or pingoes, which are depressions that hold water during the wetter times of the year and dry out

completely during the summer, are rare natural communities in New Jersey.

This unusual habitat type often harbors rare plant species that have adapted to the extreme changes in water levels. When he offered to donate 5 acres of land in Hamilton Township, Atlantic County, Guy A. Tunney was unaware of the vernal pond on the adjacent property. Mr. Tunney's parcel of pine/oak forested uplands provides a buffer of protection to an important vernal pond and efforts are underway to contact the owner of this precious natural community.

Lawrence and Sandra Kelman have previously given land to the Trust. This year they offered to

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## Protecting Water Resources

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donate 57 acres in Hamilton Township, Atlantic County. The property includes portions of two streams; Man Killer Branch and Babcock Creek, the latter a tributary of the Great Egg Harbor River, which is designated as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System.

The two stream corridors and associated wetlands are predominately pitch-pine lowlands, with some red maple/ black gum swamp. Atlantic white cedars covered much of these wetlands before logging was

done decades ago. Today, cedars account for a narrow band along portions of Man Killer Branch. Uplands between the streams are oak-dominated with a huckleberry understory. While inspecting the site, a federal-and state-listed endangered plant was discovered on the adjacent property; with additional searching, the plant may be found on the Kelman donation.

In 1992, KSK Associates offered the Trust 252 acres of wetlands and uplands in Buena Vista Township,

Atlantic County. During the initial site inspection, Trust staff noted the occurrence of the endangered Pine Barrens treefrog and nesting red-shouldered hawk, and recognized the importance of protecting these headwaters of the Deep Run. After protracted negotiations, complicated by the fact that the owner was comprised of five partners located in different parts of the country, a transfer of the lands was successfully completed in 1993.



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