



**Hunterdon Land Trust**  
PROTECTING THE PLACES YOU LOVE

# Conservation Matters 2025

*Idell Preserve, Kingwood Township*

## More to Explore: Idell Preserve Expands and Improves

If you haven't visited Hunterdon Land Trust's Idell Preserve recently, much has changed. The preserve itself is larger – now up to 72 acres thanks to the recent addition of 15 acres of forest that HLT purchased in fall 2024. With over 300 acres of connected, preserved land between Barbertown Idell Road and Byram Kingwood Road, Idell Preserve is a crucial piece in the puzzle of a greenway corridor that promotes safe wildlife movement and environmental resilience.

When Jacqueline Middleton, Senior Director of Land Acquisition and Stewardship, learned from fellow staff member Laura Orbine that land adjacent to the Idell

Preserve was listed for sale by owner, she immediately contacted the property owner. "It is rare that vacant land becomes available that would allow us to expand one of our preserves," Middleton explained. "We did everything possible to ensure that we could acquire this property, and from the time we signed the contract to closing, it took less than five months. As always, we needed our partners to get this done so efficiently, and we want to thank Kingwood Township, Hunterdon County, and the New Jersey Green Acres Program."

Acquiring land is the first step. Once we own the land, our stewardship efforts begin. These include providing safe, inviting spaces for our community to enjoy the natural world, while also improving the ecosystem health of our preserves so they will continue to provide benefits to our region for generations to come.

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Sound Finances  
Ethical Conduct  
Responsible Governance  
Lasting Stewardship



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**Jacqueline Middleton**,  
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**Emily Dunn**, Director of  
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**Laura Orbine**, Director of  
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**Heather Mulvey**,  
Director of Development

**Robert Reid**, Facilities Manager

# Passing the Torch: The Next Chapter for Hunterdon Land Trust



Emily Dunn & Catherine Suttle

Hunterdon Land Trust will be celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2026, and with this milestone comes a new chapter of leadership for the organization. Executive Director Catherine Suttle will be transitioning into a familiar role as Director of Capital Projects in the new year. Emily Dunn, currently Director of Stewardship & Digital Media, will become the Executive Director.

“It has been a privilege to serve as Executive Director and lead such a passionate and talented team,” said Suttle. “I am excited to continue to work towards the completion of the Dvoor Farm Rehabilitation Project, an undertaking that has been important to the organization for as long as I have been with HLT.”

Suttle has played a pivotal role in HLT’s strategic growth and success during the almost two decades she has served the organization. Her foresight for the potential of the Dvoor Farm headquarters as a community resource has driven her efforts to spearhead capital improvements and public enjoyment of the property, all within the lens of historic preservation and responsible stewardship. With the development of HLT’s new strategic plan last year, she charted a thoughtful and ambitious course forward for the organization.

“We are so grateful for Catherine’s tireless efforts and steady leadership,” said Nancy Cunningham, HLT’s Board President. “There is no one more qualified to guide the Dvoor Farm Rehabilitation Project to its completion, and we thank her for her steadfast commitment to our organization’s success. The selection of Emily as HLT’s next Executive Director was a natural choice for our Board of Trustees, thanks to her versatility and demonstrated capacity for leadership.”

In addition to spearheading the organization’s stewardship work for nearly four years, Dunn has managed HLT’s communications, oversaw its recent national accreditation renewal process, and worked alongside Suttle and the Board of Trustees on the development of last year’s strategic plan. Dunn joined HLT after working at the prestigious Longwood Gardens, as well as spending five years at an accredited

land trust in Florida where she worked in stewardship, outreach, and community engagement. She holds a B.S. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from University of Rochester as well as an M.S. in Wildlife Ecology from University of Delaware.

“Emily’s passion for land preservation, deep understanding of our work, and devotion to the organization are evident, and I know that she will lead HLT to continued success and growth,” said Suttle. “I am passing my responsibilities on with confidence that the organization is in excellent hands.”

This transition comes at an exciting time for HLT, as Phase II of the Dvoor Farm Rehabilitation Project is set to break ground in the coming months, an ever-growing volunteer base works to enhance its preserves, and land preservation efforts are expanding greenways throughout the region.

“I am honored to take the helm at such a pivotal moment in the growth of our organization,” said Dunn. “With our motivated and highly qualified staff and board, I am certain that we will continue to expand our impact to ensure that environmental values and enjoyment of the natural world are safeguarded, now and for future generations.”

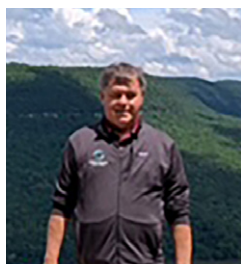
## Welcome to the New Members of the Board of Trustees



**Arleen Buchanan**, who had several careers in publishing, telecommunications, and technical recruiting, held her most beloved position as Administrator of HLT for nearly 6 years from 2008 to 2014. With little knowledge of land

preservation, she became a passionate supporter of its mission. Her duties at HLT evolved over the years, and she helped with the first accreditation process, assisted with development, and touched nearly all our administrative activities. Her great joy was serving as a first point of contact for donors, grantors, and other constituents.

Recently her volunteer activities have been primarily based in Cape May Point, but having a new home closer to HLT she is eager to refresh her roots in the area. When time permits, she is an avid quilter and enjoys all the needle arts. Her degree is in Theater Arts, and she spent many happy years doing local theater.



**Bill Rawlyk** has been a lifetime resident and farmer in Kingwood Township, Hunterdon County. Bill was one of the original members who created the vision for HLT, later helping establish it as a nonprofit in 1996 and serving on

its initial Board. Currently, Bill is the Senior Mid-Atlantic Program Manager at the Open Space Institute in New York City, aiding in the protection of over 50,000 acres of land.

Previously, Bill was Director of Land Preservation for D&R Greenway Land Trust in Princeton, NJ, Chair of the Kingwood Township Environmental Commission, and convened a team that designed an award-winning Regional Watershed Management Plan for Kingwood, Delaware, and Raritan Townships. Bill is a lifetime naturalist with a B.S. in Marine Biology from Fairleigh Dickinson University. In his spare time, Bill advises watershed associations and land trusts on conservation projects, gardens, fly fishes, and travels to explore natural landscapes in the US and abroad.



**Marnie Stetson** grew up on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and witnessed first-hand the pressure development brings to a rural area. Inspired to protect these kinds of places, Marnie worked as an environmental lawyer and later served on the Planning Board of East Amwell and as the Chair of the township’s Environmental Commission. Marnie and her husband live in East Amwell, where Marnie owns and operates Cool Breeze Farm, a horse and flower farm devoted to sustainable production of cut flowers.



# A Big Year in Land Preservation for HLT!

Since our last annual newsletter, Hunterdon Land Trust has preserved ten properties totaling 426 acres throughout Hunterdon County, spanning multiple municipalities and critical watersheds. Each property is unique, but all were prioritized for their exceptional natural resource values including forests, productive soils, wildlife habitat, and connectivity to other preserved land. These preservation efforts represent a significant investment in the health, resilience, and quality of life for our community and the region.

Three of these preserved properties have been protected as active farms, ensuring the continuation of Hunterdon's agricultural heritage. In partnership with the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service, HLT secured \$113,930 of funding through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program to use towards the preservation of two out of the three farms preserved: a 22-acre farm in Holland Township in the Hakiwok Creek watershed and a 24-acre farm in Kingwood Township in the Nishisakawick



*Farm in Kingwood Township*

Creek watershed. All of our farmland preservation projects were made possible thanks to the generous support of the New Jersey State Agriculture Development Committee, Hunterdon County, and the respective townships.

HLT also helped to preserve seven properties that are now public preserves and parks. While we have only highlighted a few of the projects in this article, all of the additions expand vital greenway corridors and increase opportunities for recreation.

Key partners in this effort included Hunterdon County, local municipalities, and the New Jersey Green Acres Program. Kerry Lynn Owen from the NJ Green Acres Program shared, "Hunterdon Land Trust is a critical partner in the protection of land throughout Hunterdon County. This year alone, Hunterdon Land Trust has acquired land which expanded their own Idell Preserve in Kingwood Township, assisted with successful acquisitions of land in neighboring municipalities and has provided interested landowners with information about selling or donating their land to NJDEP through the Green Acres' State Land Acquisition Program. By preserving and protecting natural spaces, Hunterdon Land Trust has invested in the community, benefiting the health and well-being of those who live, work, and play in the County's open spaces. Preserving wetlands and stream corridor areas



*Open space in Raritan Township*



will help to protect high-quality surface water for drinking, fishing, and playing. Preserving land may reserve flood storage areas or provide for critical habitat for threatened or endangered plant and animal species.”

A notable project in Bethlehem Township was HLT’s preservation of 177 acres of forested land along Route 78 in the Musconetcong River watershed, conserving a critical green corridor for wildlife and a natural buffer along this busy thoroughfare. This ecologically rich site—largely untouched by agriculture—contains streams, groundwater seeps, and a diverse understory of native ferns, sedges, and mayapples beneath a hardwood canopy.



*Open space in Bethlehem Township*

Two properties were preserved on Johanna Farms Road in Raritan Township, both within the Neshanic River watershed. These sites contain wetlands and headwater streams that are important for water quality protection and flood mitigation. Amy Greene, Chair of the Raritan Township Open Space Advisory Committee, remarked, “The properties are within the Neshanic River watershed, just upstream of where significant flooding resulted in loss of life in Raritan Township as a result of Hurricane Ida. Preventing development and appropriate stewardship of these properties can mitigate future flooding.”

HLT also acquired 15 acres to expand its Idell Preserve, creating a connected corridor of more than 300 acres of open space and farmland between Barbertown Idell Road and Byram Kingwood Road. This addition enhances the ecological value and public enjoyment of the preserve.

Reflecting on this past year, Jacqueline Middleton, HLT’s Senior Director of Land Acquisition and Stewardship said, “We are deeply proud of our accomplishments and grateful to the community whose support makes this work possible. As we look ahead, we remain committed to identifying and protecting lands that foster connected greenways, promote local agriculture, reduce flood risks, enhance water quality, and strengthen local ecosystems.”

**To support our land preservation efforts,  
you can make a contribution to HLT at  
[www.hunterdonlandtrust.org/ways-to-give](http://www.hunterdonlandtrust.org/ways-to-give).**



*Farm in Holland Township*





**All are welcome to attend a volunteer day and lend their talents to support our stewardship team – from weeding to photography and more, there are ways for everyone to contribute. Reach out to [emily@hunterdonlandtrust.org](mailto:emily@hunterdonlandtrust.org) to get involved.**

*Tree planting volunteers, April 2025*

*(Continued from Page 1)*

To enhance public experience, we have significantly expanded the length of the trail over the past few years, and incorporated strategies to ensure a dry path through a notoriously muddy preserve. Visitors can enjoy a hike weaving through a deciduous woodland, peppered with vernal pools that, in the spring, provide a medley of amphibian calls as a variety of species - from tiny spring peepers to charismatic spotted salamanders - congregate to lay eggs.

One of our highest stewardship priorities is invasive species control. Removing these unwelcome species increases the success of native plants and boosts biodiversity. Thanks to support from Washington Crossing Audubon Society and the National Park Service Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Program, we have removed large swaths of autumn olive and multiflora rose along the trail that were crowding out native ferns and wildflowers. With reduced invasive competition, these native plants have returned. In addition, we are working towards restoring the wetland near the trailhead that historically has been dominated by invasive phragmites.

Since 2023, HLT staff and volunteers have planted 400 native trees and shrubs at Idell, reforesting canopy gaps and providing food and habitat for local wildlife. While the long-term impacts of tree plantings take time to be fully realized,

the benefits are already evident from the fruits growing on young highbush blueberry plants in summer and the trout lilies thriving within exclosures that protect them from the threat of deer browse.

At Idell Preserve, we are dedicated to protecting natural resources while providing meaningful opportunities for the community to explore, learn, and connect with nature. Interpretive signs offer insights into the local flora and fauna and help visitors understand the importance of land preservation. For an even more engaging experience, please join us at our seasonal naturalist walks, led by expert naturalist Juanita Hummel, who brings the landscape to life with her knowledge and passion for the outdoors.

“As I reflect on the accomplishments and ongoing efforts at Idell Preserve, I am continually inspired by the incredible impact of our volunteers,” said Emily Dunn, Director of Stewardship & Digital Media. “None of this work would be possible without the enthusiasm and engagement of a growing volunteer community, who share our commitment to care for and improve these natural spaces.”

**To support our stewardship efforts, please make a contribution to HLT at [www.hunterdonlandtrust.org/ways-to-give](http://www.hunterdonlandtrust.org/ways-to-give).**

# Ways To Give

Your tax-deductible gift to Hunterdon Land Trust is an investment in the permanent protection and stewardship of land in the Hunterdon County region.

Platinum  
Transparency  
2025

Candid.

## Donate



- By mail
- Online at [hunterdonlandtrust.org/ways-to-give](https://hunterdonlandtrust.org/ways-to-give)
- By scanning the QR code

## Monthly Donations

**Evergreen Partners** is our monthly giving program made up of dedicated members who provide a continuous level of funding that sustains our work. Monthly giving can be selected on our online donation form at [hunterdonlandtrust.org/ways-to-give](https://hunterdonlandtrust.org/ways-to-give) or via the QR code.

## Matching Gifts

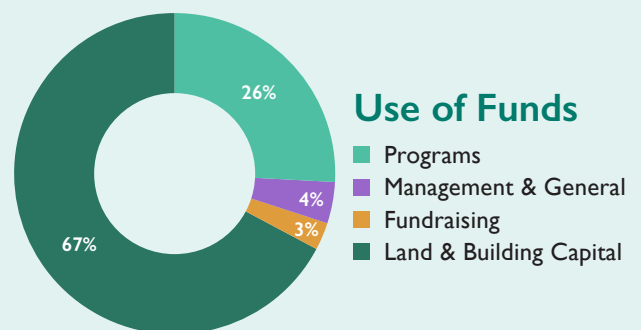
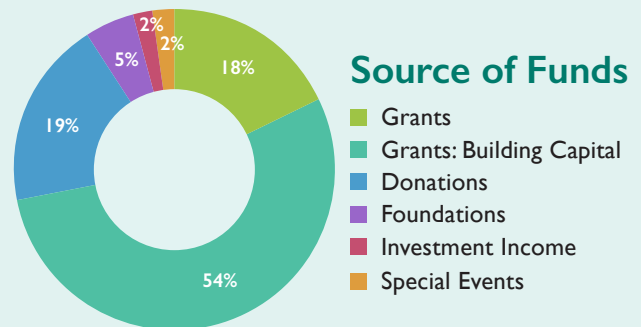
Employee match programs are a benefit that companies offer to encourage and reward giving among their staff. Most companies will match an employee's gift to a charity one-to-one, but others match gifts two-to-one, and some even match donations three-to-one! This means that your gift to a charity can be worth two to four times as much as you donate. Check with your employer to maximize your impact!

## Partners In Preservation

Show the public that you care about the preservation of forests, farms, and waterways in our region. Your sponsorship offers your business the opportunity to align with our mission of preserving open space and farmland, stewardship of natural resources, and cultivation of Dvoor Farm as a center for inspiration, education, and connection. Visit [hunterdonlandtrust.org/partners-in-preservation](https://hunterdonlandtrust.org/partners-in-preservation) to learn more!

Contact Heather Mulvey, Director of Development, at [heather@hunterdonlandtrust.org](mailto:heather@hunterdonlandtrust.org) for more information about Ways to Give.

## Financial Results (10/1/23-9/30/24)



## Thank You to Our Partners in Preservation



Clarke Caton Hintz



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BY HAND, WITH HEART



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Pickell Architecture, LLC  
113 Main Street  
Flemington, NJ 08822  
Phone: 908.788.0018





# Moving Ahead at Dvoor Farm

The activities this year at Hunterdon Land Trust's headquarters, Dvoor Farm, demonstrate meaningful progress towards the organization's vision of a region that has clean air and water, connected and resilient landscapes for native flora and fauna, thriving local agriculture, and spaces for our community to enjoy its natural and cultural resources.

With the first phase of the rehabilitation complete, HLT has already held two events on the ground floor of the bank barn. Thanks to new funding, the second phase of construction will begin in the coming months.

The Dvoor Farm Project capital campaign is fundraising for "last dollars" needed to complete the transformation of the barn complex into a community resource. These final funds will help establish site amenities, improve site access, and enhance the visitor experience.

In addition to advancing this major capital project, regular maintenance efforts continue on our other buildings. Last fall, two facades of the historic farmhouse were re-pointed. If funding is available, the remaining sections will be re-pointed in the spring of 2026.



*Wine and Art at the Farm, June 2025*



*Hunterdon Community Farmers Market*

After 18 seasons, HLT passed the reins of its farmers market to a newly formed nonprofit called the Hunterdon Community Farmers Market. The market is thriving and continues to be held at Dvoor Farm on Sundays from 9 AM to 1 PM. The farm has been busy with a variety of other activities, including day camps and nature classes that introduce children to the importance of water quality and wildlife habitat along the Walnut Brook that bisects the farm. Yoga classes are held in the restored wagon house, and historic barn tours are held several times a year.

On the other 30+ acres of the farm, hundreds of young trees and shrubs planted along the Walnut Brook in 2023 were cared for by volunteers during stewardship workdays – many are flourishing despite last year's drought. A walking trail is open between the farmstead and Mine Brook Park, and another meandering path invites visitors through the back field located along Shields Avenue.

We are grateful to the many funders and volunteers who are making it possible for Dvoor Farm to become a center for inspiration, education, and connection including the NJ Historic Trust that provided a multi-phase grant award, Hunterdon County, Raritan Township, NJ Cultural Trust, the River Branch Foundation, the Hunterdon Community Farmers Market, and many generous individual donors.

**To support our efforts at Dvoor Farm, please make a contribution to HLT at [www.hunterdonlandtrust.org/dvoor-farm-rehabilitation](http://www.hunterdonlandtrust.org/dvoor-farm-rehabilitation).**

## Hunterdon Land Trust

info@hunterdonlandtrust.org | (908) 237-4582 | [www.hunterdonlandtrust.org](http://www.hunterdonlandtrust.org)  
Visit us at our Historic Dvoor Farm headquarters: 111 Mine Street, Flemington, NJ 08822  
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