



Hunterdon Land Trust
PROTECTING THE PLACES YOU LOVE

Conservation Matters 2026

Recent addition to Horseshoe Bend Park, Kingwood Township.

Building a Legacy of Preserved Lands

For the past 30 years, we at Hunterdon Land Trust (HLT) have been building a legacy of land preservation one property at a time.

One of our earliest victories came in 1999 with the purchase of the 40-acre Dvoor Farm. More than just a preserved property, Dvoor Farm became our headquarters and a symbol of our commitment to conservation and community.

In 2003, we reached another milestone in its history by acquiring Zega-Lockatong Preserve in Delaware Township. This achievement marked the beginning of a new chapter in stewardship and commitment to owning and managing public preserves. Just two years later, we doubled the size of the preserve through an additional land acquisition, demonstrating our long-term vision of creating larger, more connected landscapes.

These early successes laid the foundation for something much greater. Individual protected parcels gradually became expansive public parks, contiguous greenways, preserved stream corridors, and connected farmland that benefit both people and wildlife. With every new acquisition, we strengthened the region's natural resources while creating more opportunities for recreation, education, farming, and outdoor exploration.

Today, HLT's conservation legacy can be seen across our region. From Wescott Preserve in Delaware Township and the O'sakame Preserve in Holland Township to Crystal Springs Preserve in Lebanon Township and the Frenchtown Preserve, we have helped to create and expand remarkable public spaces that residents and visitors enjoy throughout the year.

One of the latest examples of this ongoing commitment is the addition of 55 acres to Horseshoe Bend Park in Kingwood Township. HLT has played an instrumental role in transforming Horseshoe Bend into the exceptional park it is today. Over the past decade alone, we have added 270 acres through five separate land...

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Hunterdon Land Trust is entering a new era with strong momentum.

Adding more preserved land to greenway corridors that we have been expanding for decades, one parcel at a time.

Boosting the ecosystem health of our preserves through thoughtful strategy and the efforts of volunteers who have offered more and more of their time and expertise.

Growing our community and fostering a conservation ethic by offering more free educational programs than ever before.

Approaching completion of the Dvoor Farm barn rehabilitation project that has been years in the making.

Now in our 30th anniversary year, we at HLT have three decades of building momentum upon which we continue to expand our impact. We are proud to have grown from a small group of determined residents to a professional, accredited land trust that has preserved 12,800 acres of open space and farmland in our region.

We have no intention of resting on these accomplishments. We know that preserving land is just as vital now as it was in 1996, and that the long-term resilience and health of our region is dependent upon protecting and stewarding spaces that promote clean water, mitigate flooding, provide habitat for native species, and promote local agriculture. Perhaps just as importantly, we value providing opportunities for our community to connect with and learn about the natural world.

As you read this 2026 issue of Conservation Matters, I hope you will feel inspired to join us. Whether you choose to contribute financially, volunteer your time, or preserve your own land – we welcome you to help us carry this momentum into the next 30 years and beyond.

With gratitude,



Emily Dunn, Executive Director



HLT Staff (L to R): Catherine Suttle, Laura Orbine, Emily Dunn, Jacqueline Middleton, Sarah Crosby, Robert Reid, Heather Mulvey.



Gathering attendees (L to R): Emily Dunn, Executive Director; Nancy Cunningham, Board President; Martin Rapp; Marie Newell; Catherine Suttle, Director of Capital Projects; Margaret Waldock; Barbara Wolfe; Roger Harris; Julia Allen; Bill Rawlyk; Alix Bacon; Alison Mitchell; Patti Ruby; Howard Parker (not pictured).

30 Years of Conservation: Celebrating Our Founders

Thirty years ago, a small group of Hunterdon County residents shared a simple but ambitious vision: to protect the farms, forests, and natural landscapes that define this region. Their belief that conservation should be driven by the community laid the foundation for what would become Hunterdon Land Trust.

To celebrate our 30th anniversary, we welcomed many of those founders and former executive directors back to Dvoor Farm. We are honored to share a few reflections from our founders and early leaders who helped shape HLT.

"Our first gathering was in the Delaware Township Town Hall, and the energy was palpable. For the year leading up to our incorporation, we were meeting every two weeks. It was a whirlwind of energy and excitement. HLT was born a real grassroots organization; the most tangible thing we had was a P.O. Box in Sergeantsville, proudly displayed on our first stationery."

- Roger Harris, HLT Founding President

"Serving as the first executive director of the Hunterdon Land Trust was one of the great privileges of my early career. From the beginning, HLT was built on a deep love of place and a belief that protecting land, supporting local agriculture, and connecting people to the landscape could strengthen the whole community. Thirty years later, it is wonderful to see how that vision has grown—through the dedication of so many board members, staff, volunteers, landowners, partners, and supporters. The

preservation and stewardship of vital environmental and cultural assets across the county, such as the Dvoor Farm, are powerful expressions of that legacy. I am enormously proud to have been part of HLT's beginnings and deeply grateful to everyone who has carried the work forward."

**- Margaret Waldock, First HLT Executive Director,
Executive Director of Duke Farms**

"Thirty years ago, this small group had the foresight to imagine a sustainable future for the county and put it into action. I can't forget the unfailing courage displayed by HLT trustees and staff at several risky points in our history that enabled our current success. Our direction has always been forward, but with eyes open, recognizing the risks, work, and commitment required."

**- Bill Rawlyk, HLT Founding Vice President & Current
Trustee, Senior Mid-Atlantic Program Manager of Open
Space Institute**

"It's been incredible to watch Hunterdon Land Trust grow from a small group of people with a shared vision for preserving our region into a thriving organization that has helped protect thousands of acres of open space and farmland through conservation and partnerships. We are fortunate to live in one of the most beautiful parts of the country, and it's deeply gratifying to know that so much of its natural beauty and agricultural heritage will be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Happy 30th Birthday, Hunterdon Land Trust! Here's to celebrating all we've achieved and to the next 30 years of protecting the places we love."

- Marie Newell, HLT Founding Member



We invite you to join us to celebrate 30 years! Visit HLT's Community Day at our Dvoor Farm headquarters during the Hunterdon Community Farmers Market on Sunday, September 20th from 9 AM to 1 PM for free nature programs, house and barn tours, and more!

Growing Community Through Stewardship

Stewardship is, at its core, a relationship. Humans have always shaped the landscapes around us, and our actions have the power to influence ecosystems in lasting ways. Through thoughtful stewardship, we help improve habitat, increase biodiversity, and build more resilient landscapes. In return, these healthy ecosystems provide opportunities for discovery, recreation, and a deeper appreciation of the places we love.

At Hunterdon Land Trust, stewardship is guided by three core principles: community involvement, adaptive management, and education.

Our preserves are shared community spaces, and successful stewardship depends on engaging volunteers not only in hands-on restoration, but also in understanding the motivation behind our work. When people connect with the landscape and the purpose of stewardship, they become long-term partners in conservation.

Adaptive management is equally important. Every stewardship action is an opportunity to learn. Whether removing invasive shrubs or restoring native meadows, we monitor ecological responses and adjust our methods based on what the landscape tells us. Restoration is an ongoing process,

and thoughtful observation helps ensure our work is effective over time.

Education extends the impact of stewardship beyond our preserve boundaries. Nearly half of New Jersey's forests are privately owned, making conservation a shared responsibility. Each of our stewardship events incorporates practical lessons—from native plant identification to invasive species management and ecological principles—so participants can utilize what they learn in their own communities. By growing knowledge, we strengthen lifelong connections between people and the natural world.

Stewardship in Action

Dvoor Farm: Restoring Native Meadows

Much of Dvoor Farm's meadows reflect their history as cattle pasture and contain many non-native cool-season grasses. We are enhancing these meadows through winter seedings, spring plantings, and various techniques including spring mowing, solarization, and hand removal of invasive species. By monitoring the results of each approach, we will refine future management strategies. Native species benefiting from this work include narrow-leaf mountain mint, bee balm, and rough-stemmed goldenrod.



Volunteers at Dvoor Farm gather monthly to enhance the meadows, thanks to support from American Water Charitable Foundation.



Volunteers fill deer exclosures with native trees and shrubs at Idell Preserve.

Idell Preserve: Supporting Forest Regeneration

Historic access roads at Idell Preserve created highly disturbed areas that became dense invasive shrub thickets, preventing forest regeneration. These sites have been restored with native trees and shrubs protected by deer exclosures. Unlike traditional tree tubes, these fenced areas safeguard both young trees and the surrounding herbaceous plants, allowing wildflowers to flourish. As the plantings mature, their shade will naturally suppress invasive shrubs. Featured native species include highbush blueberry, black gum, and swamp white oak.

Zega-Lockatong Preserve: Protecting an Old-Growth Forest

Zega-Lockatong Preserve is especially unique as it contains old-growth forest, dominated by American beech and sugar maple. Today, this forest faces the challenge of beech leaf disease. To support future forest health, we are removing invasive shrubs beneath affected beech trees and protecting native tree seedlings from deer browse. Regular monitoring and maintenance help ensure successful regeneration of the next forest canopy. Native species being supported include white oak, flowering dogwood, and sycamore.

Whether you're looking to learn, volunteer, or simply spend more time outdoors, we invite you to join us at an upcoming stewardship or educational event. Check out our fall calendar (right) or contact Stewardship Coordinator Sarah Crosby at sarah@hunterdonlandtrust.org to learn more.

Fall Programs

September 17

Volunteer Thursday at Dvoor Farm

September 19

Stewardship Saturday at Zega-Lockatong Preserve

September 20

Nature Programs at HLT Community Day

September 26

Monarch Tagging & Native Seed Collection at Dvoor Farm

October 1

Volunteer Thursday at Zega-Lockatong Preserve

October 15

Volunteer Thursday at Dvoor Farm

October 16

Tree Planting at Dvoor Farm

October 17

Stewardship Saturday at Holland Highlands Preserve

October 18

Bird Walk at Hunterdon Community Farmers Market

October 24

Fall Fest: Migration & Foliage at Zega Lockatong Preserve

November 5

Volunteer Thursday at Zega-Lockatong Preserve

November 19

Volunteer Thursday at Dvoor Farm

November 21

Stewardship Saturday at Idell Preserve

November 22

Bird Walk at Hunterdon Community Farmers Market

Visit www.hunterdonlandtrust.org/events
to learn more and register!



Volunteers cage native saplings at Zega-Lockatong Preserve.



HLT Board Secretary Lynn Becker preserved her 32-acre farm in Raritan Township earlier this year.

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acquisitions, creating a larger, more connected landscape for recreation, wildlife, and conservation.

Every acre preserved has contributed to a healthier environment and a stronger future, but there is much more to do. New Jersey is approaching functional build-out, the point at which nearly all land will be either conserved or developed. As development pressure continues to grow, the need for land preservation has never been greater. The choices we make today will shape the landscape of the Hunterdon County region for generations to come.

Looking back over three decades, our story is one of steady growth, strong partnerships, and lasting impact. What began with preserving individual properties has evolved into a countywide effort to connect landscapes, protect critical habitats, preserve productive farmland, safeguard streams and waterways, reduce flooding, and build more resilient communities – now totaling 12,800 acres preserved across our region.

As HLT celebrates its 30th anniversary, we also look ahead. By continuing to protect the most important natural lands, we are ensuring that future generations will enjoy the parks, farms, forests, and trails that define the beauty, character, and quality of life in the Hunterdon County region.

Together, we can grow this legacy. Please support Hunterdon Land Trust so we can protect more of the places you love.



Ways To Give

Your gift to Hunterdon Land Trust is an investment in the permanent protection and stewardship of land in the Hunterdon County region. EIN: 22-3477465

Platinum
Transparency
2026

Candid.

Donate



- By mail
- Online at 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.

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! Check with your employer to maximize your impact.

Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)

Support Hunterdon Land Trust with a QCD from your IRA. Starting at age 70½, a QCD is a direct transfer of money from your IRA provider, payable to a qualified charity. QCDs can be counted toward satisfying your required minimum distribution for the year, when applicable. Please consult your tax advisor.

Planned Giving

Make a bequest to Hunterdon Land Trust to ensure land, water, and wildlife are protected in perpetuity:

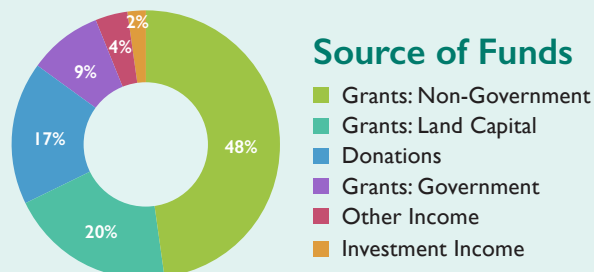
- Include a bequest to Hunterdon Land Trust in your will or revocable trust
- Designate Hunterdon Land Trust as a beneficiary of your retirement account
- Name Hunterdon Land Trust as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy

Business Sponsorship

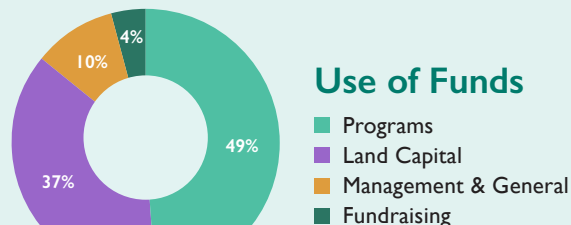
Partners in Preservation offers your business the opportunity to align with the mission of preserving open space and farmland, stewardship of natural resources, and cultivation of Dvoor Farm. Visit hunterdonlandtrust.org/partners-in-preservation to learn more!

Financial Results (10/1/24-9/30/25)

Source of Funds



Use of Funds



Thank You to Our Partners in Preservation



HLT is grateful to the Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River Program for their support of our efforts in the Lower Delaware watershed.

Caring for the Dvoor Farm

As we prepare for the final phase of construction for the rehabilitation of the historic Bank Barn at Dvoor Farm, we're taking a moment to reflect on more than 25 years of care for this special property. Since acquiring the farm in 1999, HLT has worked to preserve its historic character, restore its natural resources, and create a welcoming place for the community.

Listed on both the National and New Jersey Registers of Historic Places since 2009, Dvoor Farm is an important piece of Hunterdon County's heritage. Every preservation project undertaken on the historic buildings is completed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for

the Treatment of Historic Properties, ensuring protection of the site's historic integrity while positioning it to serve future generations.

Every project has brought us one step closer to our long-term vision for Dvoor Farm as a vibrant community gathering place where history, agriculture, education, and conservation come together.

As we enter the final phase of the Bank Barn rehabilitation and site improvements, we are grateful for the support of our partners, including the New Jersey Historic Trust, Hunterdon County, Raritan Township, the River Branch Foundation, and many generous individual donors who have helped make this project possible. We look forward to continuing the care of Dvoor Farm and bringing our vision for this special place to life for generations to come.



Hunterdon Land Trust

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Visit us at our Historic Dvoor Farm headquarters: 111 Mine Street, Flemington, NJ 08822
Follow us on social media @HunterdonLandTrust