



Your Land & Water

A Joint Newsletter of
the Federation of Gloucester County Watersheds and
the South Jersey Land Trust



Spring 2005

"Tell me, I'll forget. Show me, I may remember. Involve me, I'll understand." - Unknown

CONGRESS PROPOSES ELIMINATING TAX BENEFIT FOR DONATING LAND

A recent report of Congress's Joint Committee on Taxation (the committee that reconciles any differences between the Senate and House versions of the budget bill) has recommended eliminating tax deductions for landowners who volunteer to conserve their land through donation. This program has been in place for more than 25 years and is critical to private and public conservation efforts. It has led to conservation of more than 34 million acres of agricultural lands, forests, wildlife habitats, historic landscapes, and parklands.

Currently, landowners who are willing to protect important resources on their property can donate their land or sell it for less than its value and qualify for a tax deduction for the donated value or value reduction. They can also donate a conservation easement,

which protects the resources forever, but allows families to continue to live on and farm the land, and pass on the property to their heirs. They receive a tax deduction for the value of the development rights they give up.

The Joint Committee proposal includes:

- Limiting deductions to the price the landowner originally paid for the property (their "basis"), rather than its market value
- Allowing the donor to deduct only 1/3 the value of their conservation easement donation
- Forbidding any deduction for donating an easement if the landowner continues to live on the land.

Given the offers that developers will make for land on which to build, these proposals would effectively eliminate nearly all land and easement donations. Without incentives, land trusts and municipalities would have to preserve land through direct acquisition at full value – the most expensive method of preservation.

The primary reason that these proposals were put forth is that there have been some abuses of existing conservation easement laws resulting in improper tax



deductions. But, instead of identifying abusers or modifying the laws to prevent abuse, the proposals destroy private, voluntary conservation totally. That's throwing the baby out with the bathwater!

[This article is based on a Fact sheet issued by the Lands Trust Alliance.]

INSIDE
FGCW & SJLT NEWS
VOLUNTEER
OPPORTUNITIES
UPDATE ON FAST TRACK
STREAM CLEAN-UP
SPECIAL REGONITION
FEATURED CREATURE

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- 1) Contact your US Senators and Representatives via telephone, fax or email. www.congress.org
- 2) Alert friends and colleagues in key Congressional members' districts about the issue. To see a list and sample letter go to www.lta.org/publicpolicy/ppc_letter.htm.

FEDERATION OF GLOUCESTER COUNTY WATERSHEDS

OFFICERS

Suzanne McCarthy
President
Richard Thomas
Vice-President
Belinda Irizarry
Secretary
Stanley Hershey
Treasurer

TRUSTEES

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William Coughlin
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Paul Greger
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Domenic Lanciano
Jay Mounier
Patrick Mulligan
Robert Scolpino
Paul R. Seavy
Wayne C. Streitz
Carolyn Toy
Janet Webekind

STAFF

Christine Nolan
Outreach Coordinator

The mission of the Federation is to promote the preservation and protection of water resources within the watersheds of Gloucester County and adjoining areas. This is accomplished through education, advocacy, and land preservation.

SOUTH JERSEY LAND TRUST

OFFICERS

Rick Parenteau
President
Roger Asselta
Vice-President
Jay Mounier
Treasurer
Janet Eisenhauer
Secretary

TRUSTEES

Domenic Lanciano
Theresa Lettman
Suzanne McCarthy
Pat Mulligan
Rob Reid
Clay Sutton

The South Jersey Land Trust works to preserve significant areas of open space and natural resources in Southern New Jersey. Through direct acquisition, conservation easements, conservation planning assistance, promotion of ecotourism, and land preservation education.

**Thank You
Coniglio
Chiropractic Center**

1144 Mantua Pike
Mantua, NJ 08051
(856) 468-4200
www.greatspine.com

For making the
FGCW
Charity of the Month

**Hazardous Waste
2005 Drop-off Days:**

Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Rain or Shine
Gloucester County Solid Waste
Complex, South Harrison

**July 16
September 10
October 1**

**A Teacher's Guide to the
Watersheds of Gloucester
County**

is available at [www.dvrpc.org/
planning/environmental/water/
watershed/teachers.htm](http://www.dvrpc.org/planning/environmental/water/watershed/teachers.htm)

Gardening for Wildlife

The workshop was a great success. We would like to thank our speakers Jill Taylor, Scotland Run Naturalist, Lorraine Keifer, Triple Oaks Nursery owner, John DiOrio, Heislerville Nursery, and Jane Nogaki, of the NJ Environmental Federation.

For a list of nurseries (links, addresses & phone #'s) that support the Federation go to [www.sjwatersheds.org/contributors/
nurseries.htm](http://www.sjwatersheds.org/contributors/nurseries.htm)



Katie Cannizzaro holds here birdseed pinecone

To attract wildlife in your backyard:

- Provide food (plants), water & shelter
- Use native plants – they will do better and require less water
- Allow a portion of your lawn to grow – see what naturally comes up

OILED WILDLIFE

As water temperatures rise through spring and into summer watch for oil spots. Warmer temperatures may bring oil to the water surface. If you see oiled wildlife, please call the Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research at 302-737-9543. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service asks that you do not assume someone else has called. If you see large amounts of oil or debris that needs to be addressed immediately, contact Delaware Riverkeeper Network so we can alert Coast Guard officials at 610-291-1403 or e-mail at faith@delawareriverkeeper.org.

**Are you receiving our
e-mail alerts?**

**To sign-up send your
e-mail to**

questions@sjwatersheds.org

UPDATE ON FAST TRACK LEGISLATION - *By Suzanne McCarthy*

A grassroots effort to repeal the New Jersey Fast Track legislation that passed last summer is underway and is gaining adherents. To date, 34 municipalities, 44 state legislators, and numerous environmental and other organizations (including the Federation) have signed on to the repeal effort. Towns have passed resolutions opposing Fast Track, legislators have signed onto the repeal bill (S-2157), and organizations have added their names to letters and petitions.

This legislation to streamline state permits for projects located in urban and suburban areas is considered by many to be one of the worst environmental laws ever passed. Its intention was to reduce the time for review and issuance of certain environ-

mental and other permits in designated "smart growth" areas, to facilitate development where growth is desired. Unfortunately, one of its main provisions allows for automatic approvals, if permit review is not completed within 45 days. This unreasonably short time period undermines protection of public health and the environment. It also restricts public input, weakens home rule authority in planning decisions, and may violate federal statutes.

Proposals to amend the existing law have been put forward, but those signing on to the repeal effort feel that the legislation is too flawed. Perhaps new legislation will allow for a public debate of the issues being addressed. That's something that didn't happen last summer when

the Fast Track law was rushed through the legislature in a matter of days.

Useful Websites

On Open Space:

Brandywine Conservancy, PA
www.brandwineconservancy.org

NJ Conservation Foundation
www.njconservation.org

Natural Lands Trust (Media, PA)
www.nlt.org

On Fast Track legislation:

Save NJ Coalition
www.savenj.net

Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC)
www.anjec.org

FGCW EVENTS

OLDMAN'S CREEK ROAD AND STREAM CLEANUP

The Road and Stream clean up on the Oldman's Creek/Pedricktown Marsh was a great success. A total of 30 volunteers (adults and children) met at the parking lot on Pedricktown-Center Square Road next to Oldman's Creek on Sat April 9th at 9AM and worked very hard collecting a variety of items. Thanks to all who participated!



Stan Hershey, event coordinator, stands with pile of trash, recyclables, and tires

FINAL COUNT

34 bags of recyclables

32 bags of trash

62 tires

miscellaneous metal & plastic items including:

washing machine

street signs

welding tank

old truck engine head

basket ball ring stand

a battery and a door

MANY HANDS LIGHTEN THE LOAD - Rich Thomas

Every day, across the United States, countless numbers of people from all walks of life — as individuals or in groups — spend hours in service to others. Volunteering is, for some, a way of returning to the community some benefit received. For others, it is an ineffable experience that makes the volunteer “feel good.” And for still others, it can be a transforming experience — changing one’s perspective on people, on community and on society.

During the last year, the Federation has placed a strong emphasis on increasing our membership, with excellent results. Since you are getting a copy of this newsletter you are possibly a new member and we are reaching out especially to you to share your skills & knowledge to make our organization stronger. In the year 2005 we will continue our current focus and be moving into some new areas. **We need your assistance to continue the Federation’s success.**

Again this year a key will be our presence with a display booth at community days to spread the word on the environment and the critical protection of our shrinking resources of water and land. It would be a great help to have members assisting at the booth at their own community day. You know the area well, which can be a large advantage when discussing protection of resources with community members. You would not be alone; there would always be a seasoned member of the organization with you to teach you the ropes.

Do you have a **craft or hobby** that you would share with people as a program or at an event table? At a recent event we had a person who made birdhouses out of old political signs and some nails. What an attraction for both children and parents alike!

Is there a **talent for fundraising** or do you have a **business connection** to share? We are about to embark on a major donor program reaching out to the community and visiting major businesses. We need contacts as well as people willing to explain our goals and objectives to a business. Again you would not be alone. We always work in teams.

Do you have skills with a camera, to help with rolling out our Municipal Stormwater Assistance program? Do you have accounting skills, handy man skills, or other basic skills that you will share?

Please consider sharing your time, energy, and talents.

2005 Community Days & Festivals

Harrison Twp. Day
Sat., May 14th

East Greenwich Day & Deptford Day Parade
Sat., May 21st

Clayton Day, Mantua Day, & Monroe Day
Sat., June 4th

WaterFest
Sun., June 5th

Westville Day
Sat., June 25th

4-H Fair
Thurs. – Sun., July 28th – 31st

Contact Christine Nolan, Outreach Coordinator, at (609) 501-1741 and volunteer. It make you and the organization stronger and will benefit your community!

WATER FEST 2005

Sunday, June 5th

11 AM - 4 PM

Scotland Run Park

Academy St., Clayton

Plant Auction
Flowering plants,
bushes & hanging
baskets

LIVE ANIMALS - Eagles, Falcons, Hawks, & Owls

Crafts, Food, Music, Exhibits, Natural history programs,
Canoeing, Kayaking & Face painting

Presented by: The Federation of Gloucester County Watersheds &
Gloucester County Dept. of Parks & Recreation

A FAREWELL AND THANK YOU TO PAUL GREGER

Gloucester County is losing Paul Greger, Federation Board member since 1998, Project Engineer for the South Jersey Land Trust, and valued member of the Washington Township Environmental Commission. Paul is moving to Pennsylvania, so he won't be out of our reach, but his many skills and high level of service will be greatly missed in this area. In honor of all his contributions, including organization of its Earth Day event each

year, Washington Township presented Paul with a Proclamation of Recognition at both the April 25 Earth Day event and at the subsequent Town Council meeting. The Federation was pleased to be part of the Earth Day celebration and added its own Special Recognition gift and words of praise. As "engineer extraordinaire," imaginative thinker, and ardent conservationist, Paul's guidance and hard work have been invaluable to the



Paul Greger center receiving award

Federation and to all our communities!

FEATURED CREATURE

OPOSSUM

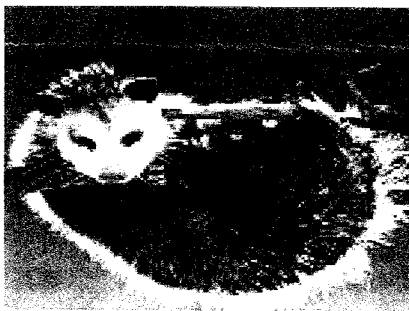
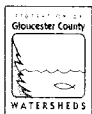


Photo courtesy of the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley

The opossum is the only marsupial mammal in North America. Marsupials are animals whose young is born at a "pre-mature" stage and finish their development within the mother's marsupium (pouch) where they fasten onto a nipple and nurse. For opossums, this developmental stage is between 2 and 3 months long and there can be as many as 13 babies. Once they leave the pouch, the young travel on the mother's back. These animals

travel alone and are usually slow moving. When frightened and unable to flee they fall into a shock-like state ("playing 'possum.") While the opossum is often depicted as hanging from a tree by its tail, it rarely does this. It uses its prehensile tail to stabilize its body while climbing. Few opossums live beyond 1 year, though they can live up to 10 years in captivity. Motorists and many animal predators including dogs, cats, and owls kill them.

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP?



Federation of Gloucester County Watersheds

- New
- Basic - \$15
- Member
- Contributor - \$35
- Renewal
- Sponsor - \$100
- I would like to volunteer

Send this form along with your check to:
Federation of Gloucester County Watersheds
PO Box 233, Glassboro, NJ 08028

Your contribution is tax-deductible.



South Jersey Land Trust

- New Member
- Basic - \$15
- Renewal
- Contributor - \$35
- Sponsor - \$100
- I would like to volunteer

Send this form along with your check to:
South Jersey Land Trust
229 Lake Ave., Pitman NJ 08071

Your contribution is tax-deductible.

SAVE THE DATE

Regular Meetings

(Call to Confirm)

South Jersey Land Trust

3rd Thursday of the month, 7 pm

Pitman Public Library

Call 856-589-2049

Gloucester County Nature Club

2nd Thursday of the month, 7pm

EIRC, Washington Twp.

Call 856-468-9272 or email Brian or Paula

Hayes at pnbhayes@aol.com

Federation of Gloucester

County Watersheds

4th Thursday of the month, 7 pm

Scotland Run Nature Center

Call: 856-694-3681

Bird Walks

1st Saturday of the month

Scotland Run Nature Center

For info on this and other programs, call

856-881-0845

www.sjwatersheds.org

New Jersey Canoe & Kayak Trips

Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River
& NJ Natural Land Trust

Explore the waterways of Southern NJ

For more info on dates and launch sites call

Steve Eisenhauer: (856) 447-3425

www.natlands.org

Volunteer Workday at the Game

Branch Preserve

New Jersey Natural Lands Trust

May 21st, Penns Grove

Contact Martha - (609) 292-3661

Canoeing Wilson Lake

Sat. May 21st, 11 AM

Canoes & Kayaks will be provided or bring
your own. Naturalist will be on hand to
answer questions.

Please register (856) 881-0845

Forum on the Future of Southern New Jersey

Wed. May 25th 8 AM - 3 PM

Rowan University, Student Center Ballroom
A public forum focusing on issues affecting
New Jersey's eight southern counties.

Watershed Educators Conference

June 28th & 29th

Rutgers EcoComplex, Burlington County

Explore NJ's dynamic watersheds and
connect with other educators, regional
resources, curriculum material, and much
more. For more info: www.wpnj.org

6th Annual Pinelands Summer Teacher Institute

Pinelands Preservation Alliance

July 11th - 15th Mon. - Fri, 8:30am - 4:30 pm

Program on the history, ecology, and public
policy issues involving the Pinelands and an
opportunity to gather curricula and teaching
resources. For more info: (609) 859-8860
or www.pinelandsalliance.org

Delaware Estuary Watershed Teacher Workshop

July 11th - 15th Mon. - Fri.

Join other educators in laboratory and field
experiences with the watershed. For more
info: (215) 299-1057

www.greentreks.org/delawareestuary/