



Your Land & Water

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



Fall 2004

"Like music and art, love of nature is a common language that can transcend political or social boundaries."

Jimmy Carter, An Outdoor Journal

STOP ANTI-OPEN SPACE BILL

In this most densely populated state in the nation, New Jersey voters have consistently supported State funding for land preservation. Open space tax referendums have been approved in every county. Now a misguided bill - A2923, threatens to stop these efforts. Also known as the Fisher bill after its sponsor, Assemblyman Fisher, this bill essentially gives towns the right to block state and nonprofit preservation projects if more than 35% of its land is preserved.

If passed, this bill will allow local politicians to end the preservation of the State's most environmentally critical regions. Since the bill exempts the Pinelands and the Highlands, it will focus on southern New Jersey's Delaware Bay Watershed, one of the last unprotected bastions of forests and farmland.

In these rural communities, some local officials are under the misconception that more development and less preservation means more money for their towns to collect in property taxes. This misguided plan for economic stability has been consistently proven to be a plan for economic disaster, resulting in increased taxes for longtime residents who will be required to cover the costs of services required by the influx of new residents. Increased demands for municipal services such as new schools, roads, and police, are

inevitable in growth areas. Development of rural communities also typically results in loss of a community's rural heritage and character, loss of rural industries like farming, and loss of the State's natural resources.

Don't allow a few misguided politicians, with the false promise of economic benefits, end the preservation of our region's natural heritage.

VOTE YES - FOR OPEN SPACE ON NOV. 2nd

There are referendum questions on the November 2 ballot this year that are very important for preserving open space in our area. Gloucester County is asking residents to approve an increase in the county farmland preservation and open space & recreation tax from 1¢ per \$100 of assessed property value to 3¢. This increase will generate \$3.4 million dollars in much-needed revenue. With the current funding, Gloucester County cannot afford to acquire even a quarter of the lands that are important for habitat protection and recreation. Nor can it fund acquisition of development rights on all the farms that have applied for preservation, let alone on any additional ones. This increase is imperative, especially because Gloucester County is one of the fastest-growing counties in the entire U.S.

Four Gloucester municipali-

**PLEASE CONTACT
YOUR STATE
ASSEMBLY
REPRESENTATIVES
AND ASK THEM TO
STOP A2923**

**FIND YOUR
REPRESENTATIVE**

WWW.NJLEG.STATE.NJ.US

ties have land preservation trust initiatives on the ballot, too. Deptford Township is hoping that voters will approve the establishment of an open space & recreation tax. Three Gloucester townships are seeking increases. Franklin Township is asking voters to approve a 2¢ increase, for example. With revenues of only about \$75,000/year at the 1¢ level, a modest increase such as this will enable Franklin to promote open space and farmland preservation in a proactive manner. That's true for Mantua and Harrison Townships, which also have proposals on the ballot.

Please vote "yes" for both the Gloucester County increase and any establishment or increase of the funding in your municipality. Our towns and county are in a race to preserve land and cannot compete without adequate funding!

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COUNTY WATERSHEDS**

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Calendar of Events

NJ Landscape Project
Friday, Nov. 5th, 1-3pm
NJ Fish & Wildlife training
session on the endangered and
threatened species habitats.
Cumberland Co College
[www.njfishandwildlife.com/
ensphome.htm](http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/ensphome.htm)

All About Owls:
Workshop & Field Trip
Saturdays Nov. 6th & Dec. 4th,
12-5pm
Center for Research &
Education in Goshen
Spaces are limited
(609) 861-0700 ext. 11

Explore Cape May National
Wildlife Refuge
Sunday, Nov. 7th, 9-1pm
Cape May Bird Observatory
Advance registration is required
(609) 861-0700 ext. 11

Herb Society of America &
Country Garden Club
Scholarship Dinner & Garden
Program
Sunday, Nov. 7th
Massos Catering, Glassboro
Lorraine@tripleoaks.com
856-694-3693

Down Jersey - Celebrating
Our Sense of Place
curriculum guide & resource kit
of Southern NJ's Delaware
Bayshore
Friday, Nov. 12th 9-3pm
Cumberland County Improve-
ment Authority, Millville
Space is limited
crabeatbay@comcast.net
732-262-8624

Celebration of John
McPhee's: The Pine Barrens
Tuesday, Nov. 16th, 7pm
Pinelands Preservation Alliance
Millville Public Library

Restoration of Urban/
Suburban Green Space
Wednesday, Nov. 18th
Society for Ecological
Restoration/Schuylkill
Center for
Environmental Education
215-482-7300x11

Federation of Gloucester
County Watersheds
4th Thursday, 7 pm
Scotland Run Nature Center
Call: 856-694-3681
www.sjwatersheds.org

South Jersey Land Trust
3rd Thursday, 7 pm
Scotland Run Nature Center
Call 856-589-2049

**FEDERATION & SJLT
Annual Meeting**

Thursday, Nov. 11th, 7 PM

EIRC, Delsea Drive & Hollydell Ave.,
Washington Twp.
856-478-2264

**WHO'S LIVING IN OUR STREAMS
AND LAKES?**

THE FASCINATION OF FISH

What exactly is a minnow? Is there really a differ-
ence in mouth size between a large-mouth and a
small-mouth bass? What's been documented about
the fishes of our region and state, and what is yet to
be discovered?

This program by Stockton University Profes-
sor and Vertebrate Zoologist, Rudolf Arndt, will ac-
quaint you with the interesting fish species that are
part of New Jersey's aquatic biodiversity, introduce
you to their habitats, habits, and characteristics and,
as fishermen already know, convince you that fishes
are fascinating!

For more info www.sjwatersheds.org
(856) 358-8960

**Your Local
Nature Center**

We highly recommend a visit to
Scotland Run Nature Center, on
Academy Ave. at Fries Mill Rd. in
Clayton. It's beautiful year-round,
but especially in the fall. Members
of the Federation and SJLT had the
pleasure of a special tour of the park led by naturalist Jill Taylor
as part of the Membership Dessert Party on Au-
gust 26th. This experience was followed by a feast of
desserts contributed by members, lots of good conversa-
tion and good fun all around. Call 881-0845 for park
information and a schedule of special programs.

naturalist Jill Taylor

The Federation is mailing informa-
tion to area businesses as a way to
introduce ourselves. Do you have a
business contact to share with us?

WATERSHED INSTITUTE GRANT AWARDED! - Rich Thomas

It is a pleasure to report that the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association has awarded a second-year grant to the Federation of Gloucester County Watersheds and its member watershed associations. This \$10,000 funding is from the Stony Brook-Millstone's Watershed Institute Grants Program. This second grant will help to sustain the successes that were achieved in membership growth, community recognition, and educational outreach during the previous year.

The current grant will fund

a project entitled *Stepping Up Watershed Protection in Gloucester County*. The project includes increased educational programming through presentations of the new *Teacher's Guide to the Watersheds of Gloucester County* in classrooms and at conferences. The grant also assists the Federation's community events program by continuing to fund the part-time Outreach Coordinator position. In addition, the Federation and its member watershed groups are at an important crossroads regarding long-term stability and growth. A

portion of the grant funds will help pay for a consultant in strategic planning so that the organizations can review current structure, determine program priorities, and decide upon their long-term future. At the conclusion of the grant project, the Federation and its members will have additional capacity to develop programs that improve the health of the environment around us and that provide greater opportunities for partnerships with other stakeholders throughout Gloucester County.

AN EVENING TO SATISFY ALL TASTES - Janet Webeckind

The first annual Wine & Cheese Tasting at Heritage Winery on October 2 was a smashing success. Favorable comments were heard from many who attended. There were at least six different types of wine to taste, delicious cheese from DeBruno's, and fruit and desserts to sample in combination with the wine. The raffle baskets were admired by all. Filled with contributed items and gift certificates from businesses, res-

taurants, and other sources (listed below), the baskets were organized by themes such as birds, pets, gardening, seashore, wine, tea, coffee, sports, holiday, museums, children & family, hair & beauty, and cooking & dining. The silent art auction was big hit, too. Attendees bid on some wonderful contributed artwork including pottery, pen & ink drawings, and photographs by Robert Baum, Annie Smith, Jimi Black, Steve

Eisenhauer, Michael Hogan, and Susan Morgan. Stay tuned for next year's date and join in with other Federation members at the second annual Wine & Cheese Tasting.



We would like to thank all the donors to the raffle baskets and silent auction.

A complete list of addresses is available at www.sjwatersheds.org

Adelphia Restaurant
Applebee's
Artists' Gallery
Atlantic Coast Gymnastics
BBS Photography
B.J.'s Wholesale Club
The Barbershop
Bartram's Garden
Big Daddy's Famous Crab Cakes
Blaise's Deli
Bottino's Supermarket
Brunswick Zone Bowling
Carrabba's Italian Grill
Coniglio Chiropractor
Curves
Déjà vu Antique & Gifts Gallery

DeBears & Co.
Dick's Sporting Goods
Don's Bagels
East End Salon
Eleven East Café & Evergreen Book Store
Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge
Franklinville Inn
Garden State Discovery Museum
Hair It Is!
Hair Sensations
Harrison House
Heart In Hand Pottery Studio
Historic Cold Springs Village
Hunan East Chinese
Jake's Italian Restaurant

Joanne's Hallmark
Kangaroo's Pouch
Leaming's Run Gardens
Linder's Valley Essentials for Bath, Body and Soul
Mirenda's Bakery
Morris Arboretum
Mozzarella Grill
Mullica Hill Floral Company
Oak Room Restaurant
Total Family Hair Care
Outback Steakhouse
Pasta Pomodoro
Pegasus Restaurant
Penelope's Tea Room
Pep Boys
Pet Place
Picture Perfect Framing

Piney Hollow Creations
Pizza Hut
Please Touch Museum
Powerhouse Gym
Red Lobster
Ruth's Hallmark
Scott Arboretum
Starbucks Coffee
Super G
Talluto's
Taylor's Salon
Tomasello Winery
Val's Seafood
Village Bagels
Wheaton Village
White Oaks Country Club
Wild Birds Unlimited
Winterthur Museum

NEWLY PUBLISHED TEACHER'S GUIDE

The Federation is proud to announce the publication of *A Teacher's Guide to the Watersheds of Gloucester County*. This free resource guide for teachers was produced for the Federation and Rowan University by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). Both Rowan and the Federation received grant funding for the *Teacher's Guide*. For the Federation, this was part of the 2003-04 Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association's Watershed Institute grant. Additional support came from the Tri-County Water Quality Management Board of DVRPC.

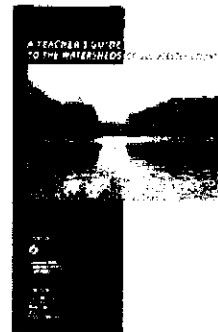
Contents of the 130-page, full-color *Teacher's Guide* include descriptions and maps of all of

Gloucester's watersheds, brief natural and human history sections, a chapter on sources of drinking water, a detailed explanation of the threats to both surface and ground water, a section on what students (and citizens) can do to protect the watersheds, extensive teacher resource information, and a glossary. The Appendix includes eight lessons and activities for the classroom.

Members of the Advisory Committee for the project and members of the Federation will be helping to distribute the *Guide* through conference presentations and interaction with specific schools. Rowan University and the Federation both have scheduled some in-class programs to introduce the *Guide* directly

to teachers and their students in Gloucester County.

The *Teacher's Guide* was developed for teachers of upper elementary and middle school classes, especially teachers of 4th through 8th grades, although the information in the *Guide* will be useful at all grade levels, including high school. The printed *Guide* is free to Gloucester County teachers. It is also available online and may be downloaded free of charge from the DVRPC website at www.dvrpc.org.



The Bald Eagle was officially declared the National Emblem of the United States by the Second Continental Congress in 1782. Bald Eagles are about 29 to 42 inches long and have a wing span of 6 to 8 feet, which makes them one of the largest birds in North America. They live near large bodies of water such as lakes, marshes, seacoast, and rivers where there are plenty of fish to eat and tall trees for nesting and roosting. Bald eagles feed on fish but also eat small animals such as ducks, rats, muskrats, turtles, rabbits, snakes, and occasionally carrion (dead animals). Bald Eagles can fly at speeds of about 65 mph and up to 150 mph in a dive.

The female, who is larger

THE BALD EAGLE

than the male in size, lays 1 to 3 eggs in the springtime. Duties are shared by both parents until the young are strong enough to fly at about 12 weeks of age. The feathers of newly hatched bald eaglets are light gray and turn dark brown before they leave the nest. The distinctive white head and tail feathers do not appear until the eagles are about 4 to 5 years old. Their beak and eyes turn yellow during the fourth or fifth year. Like most raptors, eggs hatch in sequence instead of altogether as with smaller birds. This helps to assure that at least one chick – the first hatched – will survive if it is not a good feeding year, since that chick will be able to take most of the limited food. In a good year, the second and third hatching chicks can get enough food and may also survive.

At one time, the bald eagle bred extensively over North America.

It began to decline during the 20th century due to habitat loss and hunting. After World War II, bald eagles in the lower 48 states slid close to extinction due to the use of the pesticide called DDT. This chemical caused thinning of raptor egg shells and breakage during incubation. With the elimination of DDT and the active restoration efforts of fish and wildlife programs during the past 30 years, the bald eagle has made an excellent recovery. It was upgraded from endangered to threatened status in 1995 and has been named as one of 25 candidates that may be removed from the endangered/threatened list in the next year.

Bald Eagles are found nesting in a number of areas in Gloucester County and can be seen hunting near all the rivers and streams in the county. Keep watching and you will certainly see one.

In the summer of 2004 the State Legislature passed the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (P.L. 2004, C. 120), heralded as one of the most significant environmental laws enacted in the last 25 years. Soon thereafter the legislature passed the "Fast Track" bill. This bill - (P.L.2004. C. 89), widely considered the most regressive environmental legislation in New Jersey in the last 25 years - expedites state agency permitting in large areas of the state without adequate standards, public input, or opportunities for appeal.

tion as a zoning map to designate land areas suitable for development. Fast Track makes it much easier to get permits to build in the defined growth areas by establishing a pro-development state policy for these areas, by reducing the time for state review of often-complicated applications, and in some cases by bypassing municipal authority. The 45-day deadline means that the approval process short changes the normal public process. It becomes almost impossible to inform the public, and opportunities for public notice and comment are ex-

of the law will be spelled out in future regulations. The environmental community has mounted a spirited and multifaceted attack on the bill, first urging the governor to veto the measure - an effort that failed - then taking legal action and urging legislative and regulatory remedies by the state to repeal the law or modify its effects.

The Rutgers Environmental Law clinic is preparing a challenge to the legislation on behalf of the environmental community and environmental organizations are working at the state agency level to soften the impact of this misguided law as the State adopts implementing regulations. There is also a strong grass roots effort to get the law repealed or amended. Call your state legislator to complain and to ask that this law be repealed! And stay tuned. If you want more detailed information go to the Save New Jersey web site at www.savenj.net.

"the most regressive environmental legislation in New Jersey in the last 25 years"

Before going into some of the more egregious provisions of the legislation, it's appropriate to note that the permitting processes of state agencies could use review and streamlining. But there is no way this can be done effectively in the six days it took to pass the Fast Track law. Fast Track says that if a technically complete application for a permit (such as a wetlands or stream encroachment permit, sewer or water main extension, road widening, and many others) in a "growth area" is not acted upon by the State within 45 days, it is deemed automatically approved.

tremely limited.

One section of Fast Track will create Divisions of Smart Growth in the Department of Environmental Protection, Community Affairs and Transportation. These departments will certify "professionally qualified" private individuals with the power to determine that an application is complete, and in some instances to grant permits. This is a brazen bypass of the state's regulatory review process, putting it in the hands of private professionals working for the same developers whose project they are certifying.

The act establishes a "Smart Growth Ombudsman" appointed by the Governor who has veto power over all state agency's rules and regulations. This means that if the Ombudsman objects to the contemplated new regulations on endangered species, for example, he/she has the power to veto them.

This description of Fast Track covers only a few of its provisions. It is a complicated and multi-faceted law. The intricacies

Unfortunately, the definition of a "growth area" is a major problem. The legislation defines "growth areas" as State Plan Planning Areas one and two (PA-1, PA-2), "growth areas" under the Pinelands Protection Act, "Centers" designated under the State Plan, "redevelopment areas," plus other smaller areas.

The State Plan is a planning document, not a regulatory one. It was not designed or intended to func-

State Plan Map

Can be downloaded at www.nj.gov/dca/osg/

