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. The Trust preserves land primarily by donations of open space through acquisition of title in fee simple or of conservation easements, and manages its properties to conserve endangered species habitat, rare natural features, and significant ecosystems. Access to Trust lands is generally not restricted. The Trust invites passive use by the public for recreational or educational purposes 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.

Index of Preserves Referenced Within the 2003 Annual Report

Atlantic County
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Mankiller Preserve–1
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New Jersey Natural Lands Trust
contact information:
New Jersey Natural Lands Trust
P.O. Box 404, Trenton, NJ 08625-0404
Phone: 609-984-1339
Fax: 609-984-1427
Email: NatLands@dep.state.nj.us.

Cover photo:
Abraitys Pine Stand in Sergeantsville,
New Jersey ...named in honor of
Vincent Abraitys (1915–1983),
a local naturalist and botanist.

Photo credits:
Dennis Briede–page 6 (Beech Ridge)
Robert Cartica–page 3
Martin Rapp–page 7
NJ Green Acres Program–page 8
Marietta Taylor–page 6 (Sylvia Taylor)
Kathleen S. Walz–page 2
Martha Windsch–cover, page 3
(pine forest and cones),
4, 5
In 2003...

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust completed 29 individual closings, bringing 601 additional acres under Trust stewardship. With the addition of this acreage, the Trust is currently responsible for over 17,000 acres throughout the state.

Twenty-one of the Trust’s new holdings were donated directly to the Trust, one was purchased through the Trust’s Moorestown Acquisition Fund, and seven were transferred to the Trust for management through the State’s Green Acres Program.

The Trust’s 2003 land acquisitions ranged in size from 2.7 acres to 104.7 acres. Seventeen of the donations were made possible by the Pinelands Limited Practical Use (LPU) Program, which provides financial relief for certain qualifying owners through the purchase of properties within defined sensitive Pinelands areas. These LPU properties averaged less than 10 acres each and included additions to the following Trust preserves: Bearhead (seven additions), Costa (five additions), Hamilton (one addition), and Mankiller (four additions). Besides the LPU additions, eight of the 2003 closings also represented additions to the following preserves: Hagedorn (NJ Green Acres Program management agreement), Moorestown (see article on page 7), Quarryville Brook (NJ Green Acres Program management agreement), Thompsonstown, Tuckahoe (NJ Green Acres Program management agreement), Wallkill River (one donation and one NJ Green Acres Program management agreement), and Whale Pond Brook (NJ Green Acres Program management agreement).

Four of the 29 closings established new Trust preserves. Green Acres acquisitions established the Straders Pond Preserve and the Abrayits Pine Stand Preserve (see article on page 3), a donation from the New Jersey Department of Treasury established the Soldiers and Sailors Preserve (see article on page 8), and teamwork with the Ridge and Valley Conservancy established the Beech Ridge Preserve (see article on page 6).

Personnel notes:

On July 1, 2003, Thomas F. Breden, the Administrator of the Office of Natural Lands Management (ONLM) and Executive Director of the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust unexpectedly passed away. Tom had been with the ONLM since 1984 when, as Coordinator and Ecologist, he established the Natural Heritage Program (see page 2 for an article in memory of Tom). In July 2003, Robert J. Cartica was appointed Acting Administrator of the ONLM and became the Acting Executive Director of the Trust. Mr. Cartica had previously worked as Supervisor of the ONLM’s Natural Areas Program.

The Handbook of Landowner’s Options
A Guide to Land Protection in New Jersey

The Handbook of Landowner’s Options—A Guide to Land Protection in New Jersey published The Handbook of Landowner’s Options—A Guide to Land Protection in New Jersey. The handbook describes the options available to landowners who wish to preserve the natural attributes of their property. It illustrates how property owners can work together with private organizations, nonprofit conservation organizations, and government agencies to preserve open space through a variety of methods tailored to their individual needs.

The Handbook is available on the World Wide Web at the site of the New Jersey Environmental Digital Library. The link to the document is http://njedl.rutgers.edu/ftp/PDFs/2116.pdf.

To receive hard copy(s) of this document (the first copy is free, additional copies are $1 each), contact the Trust at 609-984-1339 or email NatLands@dep.state.nj.us. If requesting more than one copy, make your check payable to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, and send your request, including the name and address for mailing, to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, P.O. Box 404, Trenton, NJ 08625-0404.
In Memory of...

Thomas F. Breden
Administrator of the Office of Natural Lands Management

“No one worked harder than Tom did for the cause of conservation and natural diversity, and no one did it with more enthusiasm or more good will towards others in the fight. The good he did—the creative ideas he had—the dedication he showed—will always be part of the program he created and part of everyone who knew him.”

—from Reflections, the Web site In Memory of Tom Breden, www.hometown.aol.com/janbreden/myhomepage/heritage.html.

The Trust wishes to express a sad farewell to Thomas F. Breden who passed away suddenly on Tuesday July 1, 2003.

After obtaining his Bachelors degree in Forest Biology from Syracuse University and his Masters degree in Botany from Rutgers University, Tom was employed with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry, for 19 years. He worked first as Coordinator/Ecologist of the Natural Heritage Program and, beginning in 2001, as Administrator of the Office of Natural Lands Management.

Tom was also a founding member of the board of directors of NatureServe, an international network of biological inventories comprising 74 independent centers operating in all 50 U.S. states, Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean. He served as NatureServe’s board chairman and led NatureServe as it became an independent organization. Tom worked selflessly to advance the NatureServe network. He fostered communication and cooperation among his colleagues and challenged them to focus on long-term goals. Tom had a firm belief in the importance of NatureServe’s mission to create a vibrant, influential network of natural heritage programs and conservation data centers. These programs are key in state and national efforts to raise awareness, share knowledge, and influence society for the protection of the environment and our endangered biodiversity resources.

Through his work with the Office of Natural Lands Management and his work with NatureServe, Tom used his passion for the natural world to protect the “places where butterflies live... Tom felt that preserving things natural was the right thing to do. And, he did it with a steady, even keel... He didn’t create problems, he tried to seek solutions. He thought positively... And, he worked very, very hard... He did not squander any of his time here.”


During 2004, the New Jersey Nature Lands Trust and the New Jersey Field Office of The Nature Conservancy voted to dedicate the Milford Bluffs Preserve to his memory. The preserve will be named the “Thomas F. Breden Preserve at Milford Bluffs.” The Trust is also planning a table mountain pine restoration at the Trust’s Abraitys Pine Stand Preserve in Tom’s name (see article on page 3). In addition, Tom’s family and friends have created a fund at NatureServe to honor his memory and his dedication to protecting the natural world. Contributions to the fund will continue in perpetuity and will be matched by The Nature Conservancy. To make a gift to the Tom Breden Legacy Fund, visit NatureServe on the web at www.natureserve.org/supportUs/tombredenlegacyfund.jsp.
On January 28, 1968, Vincent Abraitys, a self-taught naturalist and botanist from Hunterdon County, New Jersey, revisited a stand of the State endangered table mountain pine that he had earlier discovered in Sergeantsville. This Sergeantsville pine stand is of interest to botanists and ecologists because it is the only site containing table mountain pine in New Jersey, and also the northernmost location in the range of this rare species.

Today, this stand of table mountain pines is named “Abraitys Pine Stand” in honor of Vincent Abraitys (1915–1983). “Vincent Abraitys was a simple man, unpretentious and direct. He was a man of quiet wit and unending enthusiasm. His seemingly infinite knowledge of all things natural was a continuous source of amazement and inspiration to all those who walked the waysides with him. ...His systematic exploration and documentation of New Jersey’s flora began ...when he was in his early forties. Despite his late start, Vince was responsible for an impressive number of noteworthy botanical discoveries.” David B. Snyder, Bartonia No. 50: 54–56, 1984.

On May 1, 2003, the Trust received a management assignment of 29.6 acres of hayfield and forest from the NJDEP Green Acres Program. The preserve was named the Abraitys Pine Stand Preserve because the forest contains approximately one-quarter of the table mountain pines within a larger Natural Heritage Priority Site. Natural Heritage Priority sites identify some of the best remaining habitats for rare species and ecological communities in New Jersey. The table mountain pines at this site are mixed with hardwoods, such as maple and ash, as well as pitch pine with which it often grows.

Table mountain pine (Pinus pungens) is endemic to the Appalachian Mountains where it occupies xeric mountainous sites. It is frequently found on the rocky ridges and slopes of the steep gorges that dissect the Blue Ridge Mountains. Unevenly distributed, it ranges from the Northern Appalachians in central Pennsylvania to eastern West Virginia and southward into the Southern Appalachians of North Carolina and east Tennessee. The common name “table mountain pine” is due to the fact that it was first collected around 1794 near Tablerock Mountain in Burke County, North Carolina. It is also commonly called mountain pine, hickory pine, or prickly pine. It often appears small in stature, poor in form, and exceedingly limby. Its pine cones often remain closed; also known as serotinous cones.

In New Jersey’s outlying population of table mountain pines, the majority of the pines are old and some appear stressed and weak. No table mountain pine seedlings were seen at the site. In recognition of Trust Executive Director Tom Breden’s interest in preserving this
Trust Volunteer Program Update for 2003

In 2003, volunteers continued to assist the Trust in numerous ways. Overall, volunteers contributed 1,278 hours. Volunteers spent 280 hours on management projects such as major preserve cleanups, 32 hours volunteering in the Trust’s office, and 94 volunteer preserve monitors spent 966 hours keeping an eye on 52 Trust preserves and also picking up light trash.

Office volunteers were involved in Trust Web site design, data entry, contributing to the volunteer renewal mailing, and making volunteer appreciation gifts. Groups that participated in office projects included Mercer County Community Options, Inc., who spent the day creating mailings, and the Byram Township Intermediate School Environmental Club, who helped make the gifts, which this year included Trust magnets. Various individuals were also involved as office volunteers.

The Trust currently has nearly 400 volunteers registered to be notified when management projects become available. These volunteers have indicated which areas of the State they are available to contribute their volunteer effort. Management projects in 2003 included trail maintenance and removal of rubble, consisting of tons of dumped concrete, at the Crossley Preserve; gathering and disposing over 1,000...
tires at the Penny Pot Preserve; cleaning up items dumped by remodelers, landscapers, and ATV riders at Tilton’s Creek Preserve; and removing varied debris at the Flemer Preserve. Groups involved in Trust clean-ups include Lacey Township Cub Scout Pack 156, a volunteer group from Merrill Lynch, Jamesburg Field and Stream Hunt Club, Ocean County Community Options, Inc., and the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife. Various other individuals, including hunters, Scouts, students, and volunteer monitors also participated in Trust preserve workdays.

At the 2003 New Jersey Land Conservation Rally held on March 29 at the Lafayette Yard Marriott in Trenton, Trust Volunteer Coordinator Martha Windisch teamed up with Steve Yergeau, Watershed Assessment Specialist, Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, and Mary Beth Cooney, Stewardship Director, Morris Land Conservancy, to present “Using Community Volunteers for Your Stewardship Needs.” Attendees learned how to establish programs that retain local citizens as preserve monitors, and how to build lasting partnerships with community service groups from corporations, schools, senior citizens, and scouting programs to accomplish preserve enhancement projects.

On May 3, 2003, Trust volunteers who had given 10 or more hours of volunteer service to the Trust were invited to the New Jersey Division of Parks and Forestry Volunteer Recognition Ceremony held at Cheesequake State Park. Volunteers with 10 to 25 hours of service received a Trust mug and volunteers with over 25 hours received a Trust shirt.

The Trust wishes to publicly thank everyone who volunteered in 2003. Our gratitude goes out to all who took time from their busy schedules to care for and gain a deeper appreciation for our preserves.

If you are interested in becoming a Trust volunteer monitor or being listed as a management project volunteer, please contact Martha Windisch at 609-984-1339 or email Martha at Martha.Windisch@dep.state.nj.us. To learn of Trust preserve volunteer monitoring opportunities or Trust preserve workdays, visit the Volunteer Match website at VolunteerMatch.org and search in the “environment” category. ☂️

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2003 List of Donors

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust gratefully extends its thanks to those who have donated land or funds to the Trust in 2003 to help preserve and protect New Jersey’s natural heritage.

• Backes Group, LLC
• David Devischer
• Edward and Elizabeth Klimcsak
• Mays Landing Sportsmen’s Club
• Morris Land Conservancy
• Evelyn Nathanson
• NJ Department of Human Services
• Ridge and Valley Conservancy

The Trust accepts gifts, legacies, bequests, and endowments of land and/or funds for use in accordance with the Trust’s purpose. For more information about how you can make a donation to further the Trust’s mission to acquire, preserve, and manage natural lands for the protection of natural diversity, call 609-984-1339.

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust financial report is available upon request.

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Individuals who gave 10 or more hours of volunteer service to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust in 2003.

| John Borum | Jill Halkin |
| Marian Brovero | Bill Hall |
| Bob Campana | Vince Kugler |
| Wendy Chase | Teryl Lebkuecher |
| Ray Chassier | Rocco Passerini |
| Charles Fee | Tom Puzio |
| Craig Fiamingo | Thomas Ryan |
| Kris Gordon | Mike Voorhees |

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miles donate their time on a rainy day to clean up...
Sylvia Taylor—1916–2003

The Trust wishes to note the passing of Sylvia Taylor, an organic farmer, dedicated conservationist, and contributor to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust. She died at her home in Cinnaminson at the age of 87. Sylvia moved with her husband, Joseph, to his family’s Riverside Homestead farm in 1948 where she was instrumental in its daily operation and in its eventual preservation as the last surviving farm on the Delaware River between Camden and Trenton. The Taylors further protected the natural portions of the farm in 1975 when they donated an 89-acre conservation easement to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust. The Taylors, being good farmers and land stewards, always strove to share their land ethic with others. This was further accomplished when they opened up the farm to daytime visitation. They constructed a self-guided interpretative trail so others could learn about the farm’s history, its freshwater wetlands, the Delaware River bank and floodplain, and the wildlife that finds sanctuary there.

Many remember Sylvia Taylor for her commitment to the natural wonders of the Riverside Homestead Farm. She is remembered for her daily walks on the Taylor Wildlife Preserve’s trails through which she kept in touch with the land, keenly observed its resident plants and animals, and reported the preserve’s seasonal changes to family, friends, and acquaintances. Through her determination, a property adjacent to the preserve, the Harbour Reef property, was protected by the Green Acres Program and is now managed by the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust and the Friends of the Taylor Wildlife Preserve, a citizens group that volunteers at the preserve. Sylvia left us with the opportunity to continue to enjoy the natural world that she greatly appreciated.

Beech Ridge Preserve—The Trust Partners with Ridge and Valley Conservancy

In 2003, the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust and the Ridge and Valley Conservancy forged a partnership to preserve 64 acres of mature hardwood forest, wetlands, and stream corridors at the new Beech Ridge Preserve in Blairstown, Warren County. The preserve is approximately a mile upstream from the Trust’s Limestone Ridge Marsh Preserve. The Ridge and Valley Conservancy, a nonprofit corporation established to protect and preserve natural areas within the Kittatinny Ridge and Valley Region of New Jersey, acquired the site using grants from the State Green Acres Program, the Warren County Open Space Trust Fund, and the New Jersey Conservation Foundation. A 50 percent interest in the property was donated to the Trust to ensure that the property is properly cared for in the future. The preserve, which has not been logged for at least 50 years, hosts a diverse mixed hardwood forest highlighted by a healthy assemblage of American beech. Numerous springs emerge from the site’s uplands, feeding wetlands and headwater streams. An Eagle Scout has constructed a hiking trail making the preserve accessible for passive recreation from a trailhead on Belcher Road.
In 2003, helping to complete the Moorestown Preserve puzzle, the Trust increased its holdings in its Moorestown Project Area by approximately 10 percent, adding 6.5 acres to the preserve.

The Trust’s Moorestown Preserve and project area, called the South Valley Woods by locals, is a natural landscape of birches, trails and streams. It is an important area because the approximately 100 acres includes one of the largest remaining forest stands and freshwater wetlands within the Township. These forested wetlands provide habitat for wildlife such as the state endangered red-shouldered hawk, the state threatened red-headed woodpecker, as well as woodcock and deer. The South Valley Elementary School is located at the northern edge of these woods, offering school students the opportunity to use the Moorestown Preserve as a living laboratory.

In 1929, South Valley Woods was initially proposed as a housing development. Zoning restrictions and the presence of wetlands made almost all of the lots unfit for development. Now, 75 years later, only one or two houses have been developed along the periphery of the proposed development. Through gifts and tax defaults, Moorestown Township acquired approximately 180 of the parcels, most of which have been transferred to the Trust’s Moorestown Preserve.

In 1992, the Trust was charged with acquiring the remaining parcels through donation or purchase using its Moorestown Acquisition Fund. This Fund was established due to a Stream Encroachment permit condition that required Bell Atlantic Properties Inc. to provide the Trust with $200,000 for costs related to acquisition of lands within the Moorestown Project Area. Because every acquisition helps to fill in the missing pieces within the Project Area, the Trust, with help from a local citizen’s group, “Save the Environment of Moorestown” (STEM), periodically contacts the remaining property owners in the project area to determine whether they are interested in donating or selling their property to the Trust. By doing so, the property owners can avoid paying property taxes on land that cannot be developed.

In 2003, the Trust again contacted Moorestown property owners to make sure they were aware of the Moorestown Acquisition Fund and the Trust’s interest in preserving their property. Due to this contact, the Trust was able acquire the 6.5 acres consisting of 47 separate parcels interspersed throughout the project area, which consists of more than 400 parcels. With this acquisition, the Trust now owns approximately 290 of these parcels, and its interests in the project area are much better consolidated.

The 47 parcels were all acquired from Robert and Madelon Paglee. The Paglees acquired these properties throughout the 60’s and 70’s with the intent to develop their property into professional office buildings. The Paglees graciously agreed to sell all parcels to the Trust for preservation at assessed value, or $25,000. As part of this same transaction, the Paglees generously donated 25 acres to the State in Shamong Township. These parcels were inholdings within Parks and Forestry’s Wharton State Forest. In addition, the Paglees agreed to sell the State another 29 acres within the Trust’s Bear Swamp at Red Lion Preserve. The preservation of these ecologically significant lands will be an investment in the future of New Jersey’s natural diversity.
In 2003, the Trust created a new, urban passive recreation and wildlife preserve known as the “Soldiers and Sailors Preserve” in Edison and Woodbridge Townships, Middlesex County.

This 71-acre preserve, at the headwaters of the South Branch of the Rahway River, is comprised mostly of forested wetlands, providing a critical urban wildlife refuge. Based on a study by the New Jersey Audubon Society for the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, this area was designated a “priority wetland” by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It was also identified by the New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program as a high priority acquisition within the Arthur Kill watershed. It is of critical importance to migrating songbirds, with 20 warblers among the more than 90 bird species documented by the “Arthur Kill Wildlife and Habitat Inventory.” The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency determined that in addition to being an important migratory feeding area within the Atlantic Flyway, the wetlands provide other critical functions including significant flood storage.

The creation of the Soldiers and Sailors Preserve is the result of a committed partnership of state government, local government, nonprofits, concerned citizens and legislators. Much of the area was formerly slated for commercial development. For more than two decades, concerned citizens relentlessly opposed this development. Finally, in 2000 legislation was enacted to authorize the transfer of a 54-acre property commonly referred to as the “Alfieri” tract from the New Jersey Department of Treasury to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust to ensure that it would be preserved in perpetuity rather than developed into an office park. The preserve also includes a 17-acre parcel that was acquired in 2003 by the Green Acres Program and the New Jersey Conservation Foundation for $2 million. The Trust is currently working with Treasury to preserve an additional 3.8 acres of State-owned property as part of the preserve.

On October 24, 2003, the Coalition for Conservation, along with Senator Joseph Vitale, NJDEP Commissioner Bradley M. Campbell, Trust Chair Michael Catania, and Edison Mayor George Spadoro, sponsored an event at the Soldiers and Sailors Preserve as part of the successful campaign to promote funding for community parks since it is located in a densely developed area, offering inhabitants of this urban community a simple oasis—a breathing space. The preserve also provides close linkage to more than 250 acres of additional open space in the area, including Edison State Park and Roosevelt County Park. This greenway provides a pathway for people and improves the quality of life in the surrounding area. Oddly enough, the surrounding extensive development actually has isolated and buffered this forest from invasion by non-indigenous species and overabundant deer, which plague so many of New Jersey’s remaining forest tracts. In a sense, the Soldiers and Sailors Preserve is a “time capsule” of what mature forests in northern New Jersey were like in the 1960’s, before rural forests began to be ravaged by herbivory and invasive species.

Abraitys Pine Stand (continued from page 3)

outlying population of table mountain pines, the Trust is planning on taking an active role in its restoration and propagation.

Studies have shown table mountain pine to be shade intolerant, sensitive to shrub stratum competition, and to need site disturbance, light, and heat for successful regeneration. Thus, the Trust is considering various pine regeneration techniques such as thinning selected hardwoods to provide more light for the pine’s seed germination and survival, limited prescribed burning to improve seed dispersal, and planting of pine seedlings. Once the table mountain pine restoration and propagation project is completed, a sign will be installed at the site in memory of Thomas F. Breden (1955–2003).
An eleven-member Board of Trustees sets policy for the Trust. Six members are appointed by the Governor from the recommendations of a nominating caucus of conservation organizations and five members are State officials.

Michael Catania, \textit{(Chairperson)}, President, Conservation Resources Inc.

Emile DeVito, Director of Conservation Biology, New Jersey Conservation Foundation.

Thomas Gilmore, President, New Jersey Audubon Society.

Ernest Hahn, Assistant Commissioner, Land Use Management, NJ Department of Environmental Protection.

Adrienne Kreipke, Manager, Office of Management & Budget, NJ Department of Treasury.

Theresa Lettman, \textit{(Secretary/Treasurer)}, Pinelands Preservation Alliance.

Marc A. Matsil, Assistant Commissioner, Natural and Historic Resources, NJ Department of Environmental Protection.

Leigh Rae, \textit{(Vice Chairperson)}, Director, The Trust for Public Land, New Jersey Field Office.

John S. Watson, Jr., Administrator, Green Acres Program, NJ Department of Environmental Protection.

Vacant—position to be appointed by the Governor from the recommendations of a nominating caucus of conservation organizations.

Vacant—Statehouse Commission Member

\textbf{Staff}

Thomas F. Breden, Executive Director, January 1, 2003–July 1, 2003


Cari Wild, Real Estate Coordinator

Martin Rapp, Ecologist

Martha Windisch, Volunteer/Outreach Coordinator

Alyssa Pearlman Wolfe, Counsel

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