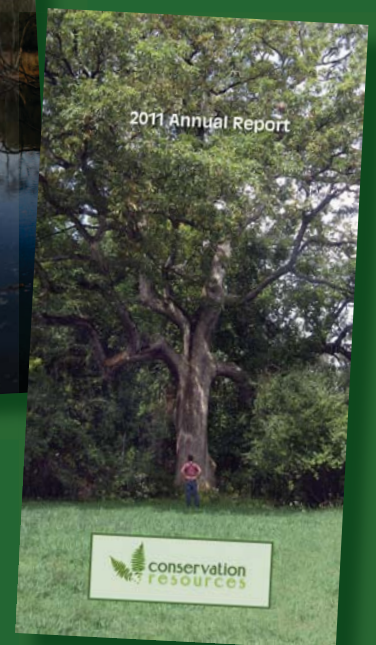


A Ten-Year Journey

Conservation Resources Final Report
2003-2014





August, 2014

Compiling and finalizing this report has been a truly bittersweet experience. On the one hand, we are incredibly proud of the work which Conservation Resources Inc. (CRI) has done over the course of the last decade to identify and develop innovative new resources for conservation projects here in New Jersey, as well as the impressive suite of conservation projects we have been able to support. And while this report will provide details on those successes, it is not without some considerable regret that we cease operations here at CRI, for that will end our direct involvement in so many exemplary conservation projects and with so many wonderful conservation partners.

This report will not only detail the successes in conservation that we have seen in the last ten years, but also highlight some of the lessons we've learned. As one of the nation's first conservation intermediary organizations, we very much hope that the broader conservation community across the country can learn from our challenges and failures, as well as from our opportunities and successes. We have also worked hard to insure that important aspects of CRI's pioneering work will endure. The Open Space Institute has agreed to assume responsibility for *The Conservation Exchange*, and the New Jersey Conservation Foundation will be administering future rounds of the Franklin Parker Small Grants Program. Hopefully, each of these programs will continue to sustain innovative conservation projects for many years to come.

We would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank those who have made our work possible during the last decade. It is worth noting that CRI would never have been launched but for two generous start-up grants from the William Penn Foundation and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. We owe a huge debt of gratitude for the confidence that Feather Houston O'Connor, Geraldine Wang, Andrew Johnson and others at Penn, as well as David Grant and Robert Perry at Dodge, had in our ability to create a useful new organization which could leverage their existing considerable support of conservation. The Penn and Dodge Foundations were a mainstay of support for CRI throughout our history, and were soon joined by the Victoria Foundation, as well as so many other generous funders.

We would also like to acknowledge the handful of farsighted regulators who were open to CRI's role in matching those members of the regulated community who needed to fund a conservation project in order to satisfy a regulatory requirement with a non-profit organization or local government seeking funding for an appropriate project. For their part, the regulated community and their legal advisors and consultants instinctively "got" CRI's role and welcomed this new way to comply with New Jersey's stringent environmental regulatory requirements.

The conservation community of New Jersey includes some amazingly talented and dedicated individuals and organizations. We thank them for their willingness to work with CRI, as well as their vision and dedication in pursuing their respective missions in what is surely the most challenging set of circumstances in the country. We are immensely gratified that the very last funding round for our Franklin Parker Small Grants Program was our largest ever, and that we were able to help provide both seed money and matching funds for so many ambitious and remarkable conservation projects being undertaken by these partners.

Last but not least, CRI’s trustees and staff deserve significant acknowledgement and credit. Under the astute guidance of an amazing Board of Trustees, CRI staff included some remarkably talented individuals who were as familiar with conservation projects and partners as they were dedicated to the cause. Together, we set out to create a new organization which was purposely lean and efficient in terms of overhead and administrative expenses, user-friendly for those who availed themselves of our services, and which was a model employer in terms of progressive and flexible policies that allowed our staff to make a significant contribution while still having the time to be with their families and to pursue the personal interests that keep us all vital and energetic. We take great pride in the fact that, together, we created an amazing organization completely from scratch, and CRI succeeded in each and every one of our objectives. In so doing, our trustees and staff made a demonstrable and lasting difference in conservation matters here in the most densely populated state in the nation.

Sincerely,



Michael Catania
Co-Founder, President and General Counsel

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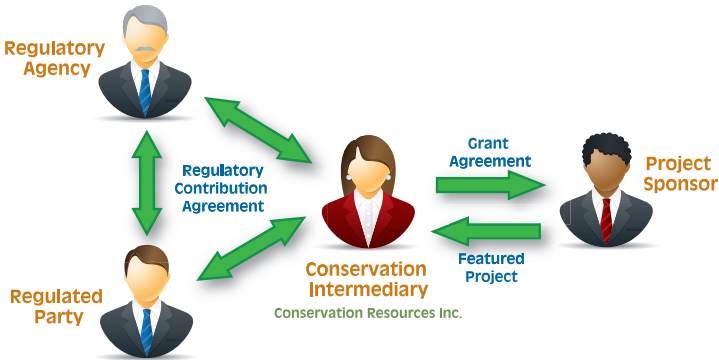
Contents

Conservation Intermediary	5	Richard and Thelma Gardinier Environmental Fund	21
Franklin Parker Small Grants Program	6	Johanette Wallerstein Institute.....	22
List of Franklin Parker Small Grants 2006 – 2013	7	The Raritan Piedmont Wildlife Habitat Partnership (RPWHP).....	22
Lessons Learned: Franklin Parker Small Grant Program.....	11		
Carbon Sequestration Demonstration Grant Program	12		
Special Grants Program	13		
Cause-Related Marketing Initiative	13		
The Back to Nature Fund Program.....	13		
Regulatory Contributions	14		
Natural Resource Damage Settlements.....	14		
Civil Settlements.....	17		
Dispute Resolution Settlements.....	17		
Permit Conditions and Habitat Mitigation Requirements.....	17		
Supplemental Environmental Projects	18		
Lessons Learned: Regulatory Contributions - Natural Resources Damage Settlements; Civil Settlements; Dispute Resolutions and Permit Conditions and Habitat Mitigations; Supplemental Environmental Projects	18		
Philanthropic Contributions	19		
Beneficia Foundation	19		
The Community Foundation of New Jersey	20		
Mary Reinhart Stackhouse Foundation	21		
Mushett Family Foundation	21		
Haines Family Foundation.....	21		
		Consulting	25
		Consulting for Governmental Agencies	25
		The Pinelands Commission	25
		The Highlands Council.....	27
		Consulting for Municipalities	27
		Non-profits.....	27
		Open Space Institute’s NJ Conservation Loan Fund	28
		Private Landowners.....	29
		Mountain Development Corporation.....	29
		Other Technical Assistance	29
		Our Business Model – What Worked, What Didn’t	30
		Geographic Funds.....	30
		Evolution to <i>The Conservation Exchange</i>	31
		New Jersey In Lieu Fee Mitigation	33
		Hallmarks of Conservation Resources	34
		Third Party – Unbiased Approach	34
		Knowledge of the Conservation Community	34
		Identifying Real Projects.....	34
		Keeping Things Simple.....	34
		Informed Risk Taking and Entrepreneurial Flexibility.....	34
		Forging Partnerships – Providing Leverage.....	34
		Conclusion	35

Conservation Intermediary

The goal of CRI was to provide needed technical and financial assistance to the conservation community in New Jersey. We purposely choose not to do conservation projects ourselves, but rather to develop new sources of funding, grant or direct available funds to other organizations, as well as provide technical assistance to ensure that more conservation projects were more effectively completed. This new organizational structure is known as a conservation intermediary. Although there are several other organizations around the country which play this role in one way or another, CRI created perhaps the most comprehensive model of a *conservation intermediary*.

Over the past ten years, we were successful by any measure, and the numbers certainly speak for themselves. Overall, Conservation Resources helped the conservation community in New Jersey to secure some **\$116,225,736** in total financial assistance to preserve, restore, or steward more than **22,500 acres** throughout New Jersey, as



well as helping to directly preserve another **11,500 acres** in New Hampshire. These projects included the small but significant projects in the inner cities and suburbs, as well as larger projects which protected critical wildlife habitats, watersheds and working forests in more rural areas. The financial assistance we provided included **\$7,186,276.64** in direct grants, often utilizing innovative new sources of funding, as well as another **\$109,039,459** in funding which we helped a wide variety of organizations to secure from other sources new and old. Of particular note was the more than **\$5,039,000** in direct grants we made for **20 conservation projects** as a result of **15 separate Natural Resource Damage (NRD) settle-**

ments, which helped to protect more than **1,400 acres**. We also made more than **208 separate Franklin Parker Small grants** totaling **\$796,025**.

Throughout the course of the last decade, we provided technical or financial assistance to almost **100 non-profit organizations**, some **25 local governments**, and **12 state and federal agencies**. Our administration of the Pinelands Conservation Fund under contract to the Pinelands Commission provided **\$8,618,360.69** in **33 grants** to non-profits conservation organizations to help them permanently preserve some **7,257 acres** in the pinelands area. And we helped to create and/or advise more than 25 public/private partnerships to work on complex land acquisition projects throughout the state, while also serving as a clearinghouse to match up more than **36 sellers or donors** of land with an appropriate group to purchase that land or accept a donation.

But perhaps even more important than just the “bucks and acres” numbers, CRI served as a genuine pioneer in the use of regulatory contributions and other innovative ways to fund exemplary conservation projects. We were also one of the few organizations to focus on climate change, by creating a diverse network of carbon sequestration restoration projects to serve as examples and provide essential information to help New Jersey prepare to mitigate and adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change. In all of these ways, we demonstrated a whole new way to obtain new private resources for conservation, something which will become increasingly urgent as the long-available sources of public funding for conservation become ever more scarce and unreliable.

And CRI managed to do all of this at an extremely low overhead cost. Our total overhead for the period from 2003 through 2014 was approximately \$4.2 million, which works out to be an amazingly low overhead rate of approximately 3.5% of the total funding (both direct and indirect grants) we helped provide. These funds were derived from two principal sources: regulatory contributions – from regulated parties seeking to comply with environmental regulatory requirements; and from philanthropic donors – primarily foundations and private individuals. This final report provides detailed information on projects we helped to fund in the past decade using a wide range of new funding sources, and seeks to analyze both our successes and our failures so that others can learn from the unique experiment that was known as Conservation Resources or just CRI.

Franklin Parker Small Grants Program

We are quite proud of the legacy we created through the Franklin Parker Small Grants Program. This Program was named for CRI's founding Chairperson and environmental hero Franklin Parker. The Program has been extremely effective in getting numerous projects off the ground. It provided funding for soft costs such as appraisals, surveys and environmental assessments. Ironically, given the availability of government grants for land preservation, raising the large amount of money to actually acquire and conserve open space has been relatively easier than raising the money for these "soft costs". This is a result of the way the government grant programs are set up in New Jersey. The Green Acres Program, for example, only provides a maximum of 50% of the project soft costs, and most county and local programs, while providing grants to purchase land or easements, don't provide any funding toward the soft costs. Similarly, ecological restoration grants from federal agencies don't fund 100% of project costs. The Franklin Parker Small Grants Program was created to fill these gaps.

In addition to providing funding needed for soft costs, Franklin Parker Small Grants provided seed money to help initiate projects. For example, Franklin Parker Small Grants were awarded if a non-profit needed funding for an appraisal to begin negotiations or a start-up non-profit needed funding for a specific project. In some instances, we were the first grant supporter of organizations. One such organization is Grow it Green Morristown.

In eight years, CRI provided 208 different Franklin Parker Small grants totaling \$796,025.00.

As the list that follows attests, an impressive array of conservation projects were funded that advanced conservation in a very meaningful way of honoring Frank's legacy.



Franklin E. Parker III

On February 1, 2008, the conservation community lost a giant of a man and a true champion with the death of Franklin E. Parker III. A long-time resident of Mendham, New Jersey, Frank's conservation accomplishments were legendary. He served as a leader in the fight to save the Great Swamp in the early 1960s, as a co-founder and

President of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation later in that decade, as trustee of the Natural Resources Defense Council for more than 30 years, as first Chairman of the New Jersey Pinelands Commission from 1979 until 1988, as founder and first President of the Schiff Natural Lands Trust in the 1980s, State Director of the New Jersey Field Office of the Trust for Public Land in the 1990s, and founding trustee and first Chairman of Conservation Resources over the last five years of his life.

But Frank's invaluable contributions transcended the lofty positions he held. He was, quite simply, a prince of a man, and one of the most gracious and humble human beings I have ever known. His kindness and humility were matched only by an unwavering dedication to the cause of conservation, and a tenacity to stay the course no matter how rough things got that allowed him to inspire others to rise above their differences to get the job done.

Appropriately, Frank was born on April 22nd, the day that would later be known as Earth Day. In the decade after the first Earth Day in 1970, as the fledgling environmental movement was spreading, and Frank's long-time legal colleagues were beginning to think about retiring, Frank was just about to launch his second career as a full-time conservationist. This career change would prove fortuitous indeed for current and future residents of the Garden State.

Over the course of the last 30 years, Frank would leave an indelible mark on the progress of conservation here in the Garden State and beyond. As Chair of the Pinelands Commission, he shepherded the adoption of a regional land use plan – which is still regarded today as the national model for regional land use planning – to protect and preserve some 1.1 million acres of the unique Pine Barrens ecosystem which comprises some 20% of the land area of New Jersey. And numerous other landscapes also benefited from Frank's attention, from Barnegat Bay, the Forsythe and Walkkill National Wildlife Refuges, the Highlands of New Jersey and New York, the Buzzards Bay area of Massachusetts, to the inner city of Newark, where Frank helped launch an effort to design and build new parks and playgrounds long after his retirement from the Trust for Public Land.

Frank's legacy can be measured in any number of lasting ways. We conservationists are often quite fond of tallying the "bucks and acres" of conservation achievements and Frank would clearly be elected

on the very first ballot to the Conservation Hall of Fame if those metrics were applied. Yet his biggest contributions are probably the more intangible ones, for Frank served as the inspiration, role model and mentor for several generations of conservationists – as well as numerous conservation organizations – which will carry on his work as his true legacy.

On a personal level, I had the privilege of knowing Franklin Parker for almost 30 years, as a colleague, a friend,

and a mentor. His service as the first Board Chair of Conservation Resources was instrumental in the successful launching of an organization designed to provide technical and financial assistance to the entire conservation community of the Garden State. Like so many others who knew him, I know that we shall not see the likes of this wonderful man for many, many years. I shall miss his gentle but astute guidance and his unfailing good humor terribly.

Franklin Parker Small Grants

Organization Name	Project Name	Year Given	Grant Amount
Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network	River Vale Watershed Buffer	2006	\$5,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	St. Michael's	2006	\$3,000.00
Flat Rock Brook Nature Center	A Walk in the Woods	2006	\$3,000.00
Greater Newark Conservancy	Prudential Outdoor Learning Center	2006	\$5,000.00
Heart of Camden	TreeKeepers Nursery and Eve's Community Greenhouse	2006	\$5,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Frenchtown Greenbelt	2006	\$5,000.00
Musconetcong Watershed Association	Musconetcong River Resource Center	2006	\$5,000.00
Natural Lands Trust - PA	Peek Preserve Visitor Center	2006	\$3,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	Economic Incentives for Grassland Restoration	2006	\$1,200.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	Native Plant Seed Storage Unit	2006	\$2,000.00
Passaic River Coalition	Passaic River Educational Center	2006	\$3,500.00
Rancocas Conservancy	Friendship Creek Preserve	2006	\$5,000.00
Tewksbury Land Trust	Cold Brook Watershed Project	2006	\$4,500.00
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	Codario Farm	2006	\$6,800.00
Weequahic Park Association	Weequahic Lake Restoration	2006	\$3,000.00
Appel Farm Arts and Music Center	Appel Farm Acquisition	2007	\$3,000.00
Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network	Four Towns Watershed Stewardship Project	2007	\$4,000.00
Camden Greenways	Camden Central Gateway Project	2007	\$4,000.00
Congregation Ahvas Sholom	Newton St. School Playground	2007	\$3,000.00
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space	Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team	2007	\$4,000.00
Heart of Camden	TreeKeepers Nursery and Eve's Community Greenhouse	2007	\$3,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Dvoor Farm	2007	\$2,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Delaware River Greenway	2007	\$2,000.00
ISLES	Isles Community Gardens Initiative	2007	\$4,000.00
Musconetcong Watershed Association	Musconetcong River Resource Center	2007	\$2,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	Pinelands Backyard Habitat Brochure and Outreach	2007	\$5,000.00
North Jersey RC&D	Riparian Restoration on Walkill River	2007	\$4,000.00
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey	Dvoor Farm	2007	\$2,000.00
NY/NJ Baykeeper	Waackaack Creek Greenway Acquisitions	2007	\$3,000.00
Passaic River Coalition	Dead River Property	2007	\$3,000.00
Pinelands Preservation Alliance	Pinelands Preservation Alliance Nature Trail	2007	\$4,000.00
Rahway River Association	Brightwood Park	2007	\$4,000.00
Ridge and Valley Conservancy	Hemlock Ridge	2007	\$5,000.00
Saddlers Woods Conservation Association	Saddler's Woods	2007	\$3,000.00
Stem Embankment Coalition	Harsimus Branch Embankment Park and Greenway	2007	\$3,000.00
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	D'Alessandro Farm	2007	\$5,000.00
Weequahic Park Association	Weequahic Lake Restoration	2007	\$3,000.00
Appel Farm Arts and Music Center	Appel Farm Nature Trail	2008	\$2,500.00
Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network	Four Towns Watershed Stewardship Project	2008	\$4,000.00
Branch Brook Park Alliance	Branch Brook Park Waterway Restoration	2008	\$4,000.00
Canal Society of New Jersey	Trailhead Facility for Morris Canal Greenway	2008	\$2,500.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Native Plant Nursery	2008	\$3,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Blacks Creek Urban Waterfront Restoration	2008	\$3,000.00

Organization Name	Project Name	Year Given	Grant Amount
Delaware Riverkeeper Network	DR SWAT	2008	\$3,000.00
Friends of Holmdel Open Space	Lady Slipper Tract	2008	\$2,500.00
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space	Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team	2008	\$2,500.00
Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association	South River Shoreline Stabilization	2008	\$2,500.00
Greater Newark Conservancy	Prudential Outdoor Learning Center	2008	\$2,500.00
Heart of Camden	TreeKeepers Nursery and Eve's Community Greenhouse	2008	\$3,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Palapoli/Clinton	2008	\$2,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Dvoor Farm plan implementation	2008	\$2,000.00
Ironbound Community Corporation	Riverfront Park	2008	\$4,000.00
ISLES	Isles Community Gardens Initiative	2008	\$4,000.00
Monmouth Conservation Foundation	Holly Crest Farm	2008	\$2,000.00
Musconetcong Watershed Association	Musconetcong River Resource Center	2008	\$2,500.00
North Jersey RC&D	Restoration of riparian corridors on agricultural land	2008	\$3,000.00
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey	Dvoor Farm plan implementation	2008	\$2,000.00
NY/NJ Baykeeper	Dismal Swamp	2008	\$2,000.00
Passaic River Coalition	Decker Property	2008	\$2,500.00
Pinelands Preservation Alliance	Pinelands Roadside Flora Conservation Project	2008	\$3,000.00
Rahway River Association	Red Hill Biome	2008	\$3,000.00



Franklin Parker Grant Helps Create Community Garden in Morristown

Grow it Green Morristown, a Morristown based community gardening non-profit was started by three citizens that wanted to convert a vacant lot on Early Street into a community garden. Their mission is to be a catalyst for positive change in the Greater Morristown Community. They do this through landscape-changing projects such as the Early Street Community Garden. In 2009, CRI, through the Franklin Parker Small Grants Program, was one of the first grant funders of Grow It Green.

As Grow it Green was taking on more projects, they created an opportunity to develop the Urban Farm at Lafayette, located on land owned by the Morristown School Board next to their headquarters. This was the most capital intensive project that they created at the time and they were in need of funding to see it completed. The small grant went to paying for fencing around the garden (an absolutely essential element given the high deer densities in the area). The Urban Farm at Lafayette has since flourished and grown and serves as a catalyst for teaching Morristown students and residents about gardening, healthy food choices, and sustainability.

Raritan Headwaters Association	Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team	2008	\$2,500.00
Ridge and Valley Conservancy	Woods Property	2008	\$3,000.00
Saddlers Woods Conservation Association	Saddler's Woods	2008	\$3,000.00
South Jersey Land and Water Trust	MacKannan	2008	\$4,000.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Pike Run Restoration	2008	\$3,000.00
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	Unexpected Wildlife Refuge Nature Center	2008	\$2,500.00
Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network	Rain Barrel/Rain Garden Incentive	2009	\$4,000.00
Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve Association	Bull's Island and Fireman's Eddy Surveys	2009	\$2,000.00
Branch Brook Park Alliance	Stormwater Improvements for Branch Brook Park	2009	\$2,500.00
Camden Greenways	Camden Greenway Land Acquisitions	2009	\$3,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Plum Brook Preserve	2009	\$2,000.00
Delaware Riverkeeper Network	Horseshoe Crab and Shorebird Monitoring	2009	\$3,500.00
Edison Wetlands Association	Dismal Swamp Trail Expansion	2009	\$3,500.00
Friends of Holmdel Open Space	Lady Slipper Preserve	2009	\$1,000.00
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space	Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team	2009	\$3,000.00
Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association	Adams Branch Restoration	2009	\$3,500.00
Great Swamp Watershed Association	Conservation Management Area Stewardship	2009	\$4,000.00
Greater Newark Conservancy	Prudential Outdoor Learning Center	2009	\$2,000.00
Grow It Green Morristown	Urban Farm at Lafayette	2009	\$5,000.00

Organization Name	Project Name	Year Given	Grant Amount
Heart of Camden	Waterfront South Restoration	2009	\$5,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Kuhl Property Acquisition	2009	\$3,500.00
ISLES	Isles Community and School Gardens	2009	\$5,000.00
Monmouth Conservation Foundation	Keris Christmas Tree Farm	2009	\$2,500.00
Musconetcong Watershed Association	Musconetcong River Resource Center	2009	\$4,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	Conservation Innovation Sunflower Project	2009	\$3,500.00
North Jersey RC&D	Save our Open Space - Open Space Management and Stewardship Planning for Municipalities	2009	\$3,000.00
NY/NJ Baykeeper	NY/NJ Harbor Estuary Program Priority Acquisition Sites	2009	\$4,000.00
Passaic River Coalition	Belcher Creek /Stanford Track / Emerald Forest	2009	\$4,000.00
Pinelands Preservation Alliance	Pinelands Rare Plant Management Project	2009	\$3,500.00
Rahway River Association	Design and Implementation of Rahway River Microhabitats	2009	\$1,000.00
Rahway River Association	Donofrio Memorial Park Permitting Fees	2009	\$3,500.00
Raritan Headwaters Association	Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team	2009	\$3,000.00
Saddlers Woods Conservation Association	Saddler's Woods Habitat Restoration Project	2009	\$2,000.00
Schiff Natural Lands Trust	Schiff Stewardship Project	2009	\$4,000.00
Tewksbury Land Trust	Fox Hill Preserve Addition- Devlin Property	2009	\$2,500.00
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	D'Alessandro Farm	2009	\$4,000.00
Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network	Stewardship and Restoration of the Upper Hackensack River Watershed	2010	\$2,500.00
Conserve Wildlife Foundation	Forest Management and Acoustic Surveys for NJ Bats	2010	\$3,500.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Bulk Native Seed Production	2010	\$2,500.00
Delaware Riverkeeper Network	DR SWAT	2010	\$3,500.00
Edison Wetlands Association	Dismal Swamp	2010	\$3,500.00
Elizabeth Conservancy	Bongiovanni Property	2010	\$3,500.00
Forked River Mountain Coalition	Chamberlain Branch Preserve	2010	\$1,000.00
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space	Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team	2010	\$2,500.00
Friends of Princeton Open Space	Stewardship of Mountain Lakes Preserve	2010	\$2,000.00
Great Swamp Watershed Association	Conservation Management Area Stewardship	2010	\$3,500.00
Greater Newark Conservancy	South Ward Playground	2010	\$3,500.00
Grow It Green Morristown	Urban Farm at Lafayette	2010	\$3,500.00
Harding Land Trust	Landowner Conservation Guide	2010	\$3,000.00
Heart of Camden	Waterfront South Restoration	2010	\$3,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Thomas Saeger Preserve	2010	\$3,000.00
ISLES	Isles Community and School Gardens	2010	\$3,500.00
Monmouth Conservation Foundation	Coe Property	2010	\$2,500.00
Musconetcong Watershed Association	Warren Glen and Hughesville Dam Removal Project	2010	\$3,500.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	Elvin Georges Preserve Wetland Restoration	2010	\$3,500.00
North Jersey RC&D	Save our Open Space - Open Space Management and Stewardship Planning for Municipalities	2010	\$3,000.00
Passaic River Coalition	Ponderosa II	2010	\$3,500.00
Raritan Headwaters Association	Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team	2010	\$2,500.00
Ridge and Valley Conservancy	Stony Brook Acquisition	2010	\$3,500.00
Saddlers Woods Conservation Association	Saddler's Woods	2010	\$2,000.00
Schiff Natural Lands Trust	Pleasant Valley Mills Farm	2010	\$3,500.00
South Jersey Land and Water Trust	Stream assessment Mullica River Watershed	2010	\$2,000.00
Stem Embankment Coalition	Harsimus Branch Embankment Park and Greenway	2010	\$3,500.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Thompson Tract	2010	\$3,000.00
YMCA Camp Ockanickon, Inc.	Wollman Property	2010	\$2,500.00
American Littoral Society	Barnegat Bay Oyster Restoration	2011	\$5,000.00
Coastal American Foundation, NJ Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership	Maritime Scrub/Shrub Forest Creation and Fletcher Lake Shoreline Restoration	2011	\$4,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Cranbury Farm Pollinatory Habitat Enhancement	2011	\$3,350.00
Edison Wetlands Association	Dismal Swamp	2011	\$4,000.00

Franklin Parker Small Grants Program

Organization Name	Project Name	Year Given	Grant Amount
Elizabeth Conservancy	Bongiovanni Property	2011	\$2,500.00
Great Swamp Watershed Association	Conservation Management Area Stewardship	2011	\$5,000.00
Greater Newark Conservancy	Greater Newark Conservancy's Urban Environmental Center	2011	\$5,000.00
Grow It Green Morristown	The Gran Fondo Community Garden	2011	\$4,000.00
Heart of Camden	Waterfront South Restoration	2011	\$5,000.00
ISLES	Urban Agriculture for Trenton	2011	\$7,500.00
Monmouth Conservation Foundation	Coe Estate, Middletown, NJ 07748	2011	\$4,000.00
Musconetcong Watershed Association	Finesville Dam Removal	2011	\$4,175.00
New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team	NJISST Southern New Jersey Expansion Project	2011	\$5,000.00
New Jersey Sportsman's Wildlife Foundation	Former Tilcon Site Rehabilitation	2011	\$4,000.00
North Jersey RC&D	Musconetcong River Valley River-Friendly Farm Certification Program	2011	\$5,000.00
NY/NJ Baykeeper	Soft costs for land preservation	2011	\$4,000.00
Ridge and Valley Conservancy	Lightning Bug Hollow	2011	\$4,000.00
Saddlers Woods Conservation Association	Saddler's Woods Habitat Restoration	2011	\$2,500.00
Schiff Natural Lands Trust	Soft costs for preservation of Union Schoolhouse Ravine	2011	\$4,000.00
South Jersey Land and Water Trust	South Jersey Stream assessment work	2011	\$2,000.00
Teaneck Creek Conservancy	Meditative Peace Labrinth Restoration	2011	\$2,500.00
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	Unexpected Wildlife Refuge Nature Center	2011	\$5,000.00
American Littoral Society	Create 2-acre oyster reef in conservation area	2012	\$4,500.00
Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network	Trail Guide for Old Tappan Woods	2012	\$2,000.00
Conserve Wildlife Foundation	For innovative solutions to amphibian road mortality	2012	\$3,500.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Restoration and afforestation of core Sourlands Forest	2012	\$2,500.00
Delaware Riverkeeper Network	Riparian Restoration in the Delaware Watershed	2012	\$3,500.00
Flat Rock Brook Nature Center	Quarry Boadwalk	2012	\$2,500.00
Friends of Princeton Open Space	FOPOS forest restoration project	2012	\$2,500.00
Great Swamp Watershed Association	Conservation Management Area Stewardship and Restoration	2012	\$2,500.00
Greater Newark Conservancy	Acquisition of property adjacent to existing Urban Environmental Center	2012	\$5,000.00
Grow It Green Morristown	Early Street Park	2012	\$3,500.00
Hackensack Riverkeeper	Hackensack Riverkeeper Boat Storage	2012	\$3,500.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Acquisition and accessibility of land in Lockatong Creek Watershed	2012	\$3,500.00
Ironbound Community Corporation	Construction of an Ironbound Community Garden	2012	\$5,000.00
ISLES	Isles' activities support gardening and healthy food access throughout Trenton	2012	\$5,000.00
Musconetcong Watershed Association	Hughesville Dam Feasibility Study/Dam Removal Design and Permitting	2012	\$5,000.00
New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team	A three-year effort to expand Strike Team activities statewide	2012	\$5,000.00
NY/NJ Baykeeper	Acquisition and stewardship of properties along the Raritan Bayshore	2012	\$3,500.00
Passaic River Coalition	Passaic River Property acquisition	2012	\$2,500.00
Ridge and Valley Conservancy	Soft costs for RVC Project	2012	\$3,500.00
Saddlers Woods Conservation Association	Saddler's Woods Habitat Restoration Project	2012	\$2,500.00
Stem Embankment Coalition	For park design for the Harsimus Stem Embankment	2012	\$3,500.00
Teaneck Creek Conservancy	Teaneck Creek Conservancy Labyrinth Outdoor Classroom	2012	\$2,000.00
Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve Association	Plant Stewardship Index Survey for Baldpate Mountain Preserve	2013	\$6,800.00
Conserve Wildlife Foundation	Bats in Buildings: A Resource & Roost Replacement Program	2013	\$6,000.00
Conserve Wildlife Foundation	Survey Privately-Owned Bog Turtle Sites to Determine Population Size	2013	\$5,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Olcott Preserve Grassland Enhancement	2013	\$3,700.00
Delaware Riverkeeper Network	Riparian Buffer Restoration and Stormwater BMP's at the Environmental Center	2013	\$5,000.00
Edison Wetlands Association	Woodbrook Road Trails Restoration Project	2013	\$5,000.00

Organization Name	Project Name	Year Given	Grant Amount
Flat Rock Brook Nature Center	Flat Rock Brook Forest Management Plan	2013	\$2,500.00
Forest Guild	Mitigation and Adaptation to a Changing Climate and Invasive Species for New Jersey's Forests	2013	\$8,000.00
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space	Mercer Meadows Grassland Restoration	2013	\$10,000.00
Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association	Great Egg Harbor Greenway	2013	\$5,750.00
Great Swamp Watershed Association	Expansion of GSWA's Water Quality & Monitoring Program	2013	\$8,000.00
Greater Newark Conservancy	Greater Newark Conservancy's Urban Environmental Center	2013	\$8,000.00
Greenwood Gardens	Pedestrian Access Trail	2013	\$5,000.00
Groundwork Elizabeth	Urban Gardens for Elizabeth and Linden	2013	\$2,500.00
Grow It Green Morristown	Rain Garden & Boardwalk at the Early Street Community Garden	2013	\$7,000.00
Hackensack Riverkeeper	Hackensack Riverkeeper's New Paddling Center at Overpeck County Park	2013	\$5,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Zega Lockatong Stewardship	2013	\$7,000.00
Ironbound Community Corporation	Elm St. Community Center and Community Garden Renovation	2013	\$5,000.00
ISLES	Isles' Urban Agriculture Initiative	2013	\$5,000.00
Lamington Conservancy	Easement Expenses	2013	\$5,000.00
Musconetcong Watershed Association	Hughesville Dam Removal Construction Phase	2013	\$10,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	Restoration and Management of Critical Wildlife Habitat in Northern and Southern New Jersey	2013	\$7,500.00
New Jersey Conservation Foundation	NJCF Mannington Meadows Preserve	2013	\$5,000.00
New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team	Together, We Can Nip Invasive Species in the Bud	2013	\$10,000.00
North Jersey RC&D	Musconetcong River Valley River-Friendly Farm Certification Program	2013	\$5,000.00
NY/NJ Baykeeper	Cheesequake State Park Acquisition and Restoration	2013	\$10,000.00
Passaic River Coalition	Survey Costs for Speciale Property	2013	\$3,500.00
Raritan Headwaters Association	Bird and Butterfly Garden at Fairview Farm	2013	\$5,000.00
Ridge and Valley Conservancy	Walnut Valley Preserve	2013	\$7,500.00
Saddlers Woods Conservation Association	Saddler's Woods Stream Restoration	2013	\$3,000.00
Schiff Natural Lands Trust	Post-Sandy Forest Restoration and Trail Maintenance	2013	\$7,500.00
Stem Embankment Coalition	Harsimus Branch Embankment Greenway	2013	\$3,500.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Removal of Blackwells Mills Dam	2013	\$5,000.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Millstone River Dam Removal Initiative - Weston Causeway Dam	2013	\$5,000.00
Tewksbury Land Trust	Cold Brook Project - Sullivan	2013	\$7,000.00
The Wetlands Institute	Upland Invasive Species Control at the Stone Harbor Bird Sanctuary	2013	\$6,250.00
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	LEED Platinum Headquarters Septic System	2013	\$5,000.00
YMCA Camp Ockanickon, Inc.	iCare Program	2013	\$4,000.00

Lessons Learned: Franklin Parker Small Grant Program

<p>What Worked: Funding New Jersey's small non-profits – providing much needed funds to spur innovative conservation at the local level.</p>	<p>Leveraged substantial matching funds – staff time and capital funds.</p>	<p>Straight forward application, quick review and due diligence with timely grant funds awarded and simple reporting requirements.</p>
<p>Going Forward: Continue to work principally with small, local groups.</p>	<p>Ensure that application process, access to funds and reporting is not burdensome and appropriate to the size of the grant funds.</p>	<p>Keep the grant program responsive to the changing needs of the conservation community.</p>

Carbon Sequestration Demonstration Grant Program

In 2009, in partnership with Elizabethtown Gas, and later also PSEG, CRI launched a new small grant program for non-profit organizations and local communities to fund activities to directly address climate change. The pilot program ran through 2011 with three grant rounds, and provided \$59,000.00 to restore 194 acres at ten different project sites. In addition to these funds, CRI provided funding to conduct baseline carbon sampling on selected projects. The Carbon Sequestration Demonstration Grant Program provided funding to non-profits and local governments to undertake land restoration projects that demonstrate carbon sequestration and/or avoid greenhouse gas emissions. Non-profit organizations and local governments own and manage tens of thousands of acres of farmland and open space in New Jersey and could have a significant role in adapting the management of these lands to maximize the sequestration of carbon. The purpose of this grant fund was to create pilot projects where the amount of carbon sequestered could be measured and monitored, as a means of demonstrating the efficacy of restoration as a way of reducing and offsetting greenhouse gas emissions. The restoration projects funded through this groundbreaking small grant program were conducted in forest, wetland and grassland areas. Unfortunately, due to the shifting political climate on both the



Photo: A. Heasley, CRI

Quakertown Preserve - Hunterdon Land Trust - Carbon Sequestration Demonstration Restoration Project - Volunteer planting day.

the federal and state level, carbon sequestration came to be considered by some as controversial, and CRI reluctantly phased out this pilot program after the 2011 funding round. Both of our utility supporters, however, continued to support CRI's programs through contributions to the Franklin Parker Small Grants Program.

The pilot projects that were funded are listed below, and all of these projects continue to generate useful data that will serve the state very well when federal and state policies inevitably focus again in the near future on the pressing issue of climate change.

Three Years of Carbon Sequestration Demonstration Grants

2009

- Ridge and Valley Conservancy – Dark Moon Preserve – 85 acres – Grassland Restoration – \$7,500.00
- New Jersey Audubon – Wattles Preserve – 40 acres – Grassland Restoration – \$7,500.00
- Township of Woodbridge – Pin Oak Afforestation Project - 3 acres – Forest Restoration – \$5,000.00
- D&R Greenway – St Michaels Preserve – 1 acre – Forest Restoration – \$5,000.00

2010

- Hunterdon Land Trust – Quakertown Preserve – 2.5 acres - Wetland and stream corridor restoration - \$2,500.00
- Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network – Washington township – 1 acre – Stream corridor restoration - \$5,000.00
- New Jersey Audubon – South Branch WMA – 50 acres – Use of biochar on crops to sequester carbon – \$6,500.00
- Conserve Wildlife Foundation – Ponderlodge – 8 acres – Forest Restoration – \$5,000.00

2011

- D&R Greenway – J Seward Johnson Sr. Woodland Preserve – 3 acres – Forest Restoration – \$7,500.00
- Delaware Riverkeeper Network – Saddler's Woods Preserve – .5 acre – Forest and Grassland Restoration – \$7,500.00

Special Grants Program

From time to time, CRI also made a number of special grants for particularly worthy projects or organizations which we believed had the potential to benefit the wider conservation community and thus deserved support, but which did not fit neatly into any other grant category. From 2009 through 2013, we awarded a total almost of \$158,500.00 in 23 special grants to 15 different organizations, typically in a proactive fashion without requiring an application. The purposes of these grants were fairly wide-ranging, and included: annual funding to the New Jersey Conservation Foundation to support the New Jersey Land Conservation Rally; start-up funding and early operating support for several unique new organizations such as the New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team, the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters, the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, and the Keep It Green Coalition; sponsorship of several important environmental conferences; support for several environmental initiatives of the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers; and several innovative projects which ranged from support for efforts to construct and distribute rain barrels in urban areas, to cutting-edge water quality sampling to identify sources of contamination in a federally designated Wild and Scenic River. Through these special grants, CRI was able to encourage and support some extraordinary conservation efforts, as well as encourage other grantmakers to follow suit.

Cause-Related Marketing Initiative

The Back to Nature Fund Program

In 2011, CRI launched an innovative new pilot program designed to test the creation of a cause related marketing program to help finance stewardship projects and provide operating financial support for participating non-profit organizations. This unique program was an extension of CRI's role as a grantmaker and conservation intermediary. As with other CRI programs, our thinking was that CRI could create a single program that benefitted the entire conservation community, and save individual groups the time and expense of creating their own programs, which few groups were in a position to do.

In seeking a logical first partner to help launch this effort, CRI sought a business that offered products and services that helped people to be more sustainable in their daily lives, as well as a partner which was as passionate as CRI about preservation and environmental regeneration and restoration. That's when CRI approached Back to Nature, a local firm with 17 years of experience in sustainable and regenerative landscape design-build. The recent opening of a Back to Nature retail location in Morris County, near CRI's state headquarters, offered an opportunity to help participating non-profit organizations increase the visibility of their own programs, as well as a chance to provide discounts to the members of these organizations, as well as support for the operations and activities of the participating non-profit groups.

This groundbreaking initiative allowed members and supporters of participating organizations to receive a special discount code, unique to each group that could be used for in person or on-line purchases from Back to Nature store, both in-store and landscape/construction services. Every time shoppers used the code they received a 10% discount and 5.5% of their purchase was rebated to the non-profit conservation group of their choice. In addition, participating groups were also eligible for stewardship grants from CRI, with more than \$37,650.00 awarded in grants in 2012 and 2013 under the pilot phase of this program. In addition, participating groups could also use the Back to Nature store's event center space, free of charge, for educational events up to four times per year.

The participating groups in this test program included New Jersey Audubon, the Schiff Natural Lands Trust, the Harding Township Land Trust, the Great Swamp Watershed Association, the Willow School, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, the North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council, the Westchester Land Trust, and the NY/NJ Baykeeper. Unfortunately, a number of major groups declined to participate in this program, and purchases eligible for rebates did not meet expectations, so the test program was not extended or expanded to other merchants and products. However, during its two-year tenure, the program did allow CRI to make the following stewardship grants: (See *chart next page*)

The 2012 Back to Nature grants included:

- **Great Swamp Watershed Association** — \$2,500.00 for its Forest Understory Restoration project at its Conservation Management Area in Harding Township, Morris County.
- **New Jersey Audubon Society** — \$1,500.00 for restoration of a vernal pond at Scherman-Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary in Bernardsville Borough, Somerset County.
- **North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council** — \$2,000.00 for a riparian restoration project along the Lockatong Creek, Hunterdon County.
- **Schiff Natural Lands Trust** — \$2,500.00 for wetlands restoration at its new Mt. Paul Preserve in Chester and Mendham Townships, Morris County.
- **The Willow School** — \$2,000.00 for expansion and enhancement of interpretive nature trails at the schools' campus in Bedminster Township, Somerset County.

The 2013 Back to Nature Fund award winners include:

- **Great Swamp Watershed Association** — \$6,788.30 for its project: *Hurricane Sandy Recovery at GSWA's Jockey Hollow Educational Site.*
- **Westchester Land Trust** — \$6,788.30 for its project: Restoration of 4-acre Headquarters Site.
- **Schiff Natural Lands Trust** — \$6,788.30 for its project: Schiff Nature Preserve Demonstration Forest with Deer Exclosure.
- **NY NJ Baykeeper** — \$6,788.30 for its project: *Baykeeper Oyster Gardening Restoration Program.*

Together, the grants made during the course of the two year pilot program totaled \$37,653.20.



Regulatory Contributions

Natural Resource Damage Settlements

Natural Resource Damages (NRD) are assessed by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) against responsible parties for damage to the State's natural resources such as ground water, riparian habitat, and biological diversity. The vast majority of NRD settlements resulted from discharges into a water body or groundwater. The money paid for NRD settlements is meant to be above and beyond the cleanup costs. In other words, the responsible party still is liable for the costs of cleaning up the damage, but also must reimburse the people of the State for damage to loss of use of the natural resources. The funds collected for damages to natural resources are intended to provide a funding mechanism for the permanent preservation and/or restoration of equivalent natural resources.

NRD Settlements 1991 – 2010

Land Preservation/Restoration and Other Capital Projects

37% (45 of 121) settlements identified a specific land preservation or restoration component.

Total Amount Preserved: 5,228 acres

59% (63 of 106) settlements require funding for land preservation or other projects to be selected by DEP at a later date.

Average Land Preservation Projects: 116 acres

- **Largest** = Valero Refining Co. Settlement, 615 acres
- **Smallest** = American Standard Settlement, 2 acres (Restoration Project)

Cash Settlements

To date, DEP has collected > \$89,865,954

- **Largest** = Essex Hudson Chromium Sites 11/2003 (groundwater) \$17,000,000
- **Smallest** = Gas and Go/Juster Development Corp, Stratford, Camden County 9/2009 (groundwater) \$2,167

Average Settlement = \$851,894
Median = \$132,000

Through past settlements, NJDEP collected substantial funds. CRI acted as an intermediary on behalf of the conservation community to ensure that collected NRD funds went to actually preserving equivalent natural resources.

In 15 separate cases, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection allowed potentially responsible private parties who executed an NRD Settlement to make a financial contribution to CRI for the purpose of funding a specific CRI-Featured Project which meet the approval of NJDEP.

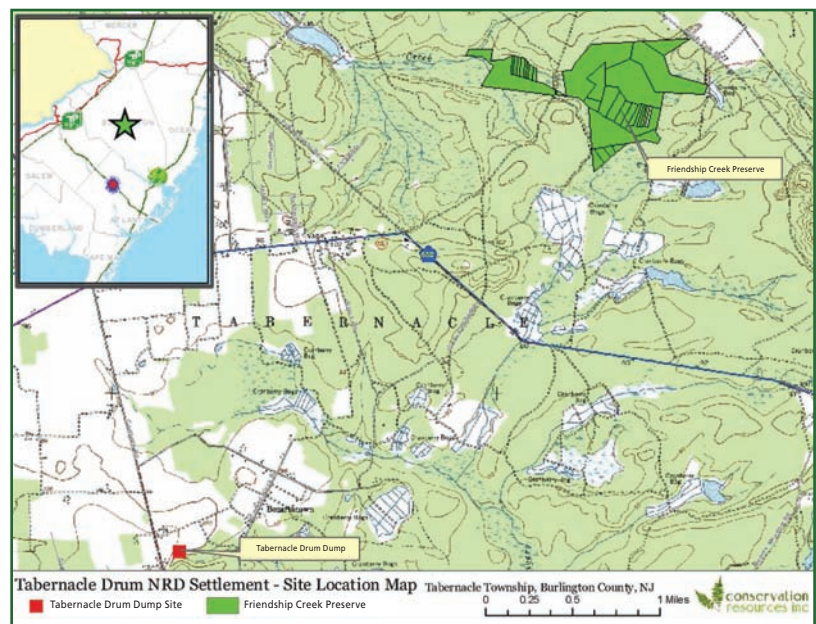
Typically, this meant that the project was located in the same watershed or watershed management area where the natural resources damages occurred, and was of sufficient size and of a satisfactory nature to offset the damaged natural resources. In the event that no currently Featured Projects satisfied the requirements for a particular settlement, CRI helped identify and screen a specific project to meet the geographic and size needs for a particular pending settlement.

There are three general ways that Conservation Resources worked to provide NRD settlement money for Conservation Projects. First, as projects were being settled we would work with NJDEP and the potentially responsible party (PRP) to identify suitable projects listed in *The Conservation Exchange*, formerly known as a CRI-Featured Project, that met the detailed nexus requirements. These requirements were related to location of the damage and groundwater recharge, as determined by a model developed by NJDEP. Basically, the closer the project was to the damage the better and the higher groundwater recharge rate the better.

CRI charged a modest management fee (averaging around 2% of the project cost) to the PRP for those settlements where we played our true intermediary role, i.e. the money flowed through CRI and was granted by CRI to the project sponsor. It is important to note that this fee was in addition to the amount of the settlement, so it did *not* decrease the amount going to conservation projects. PRPs were willing to pay this modest fee and have CRI take care of the due diligence requirements and manage the land preservation project with the non-profit or government project sponsor. NJDEP staff, in turn, benefitted from CRI's involvement because it cut down on their administrative burden in identifying and screening appropriate conservation projects, as well as in tracking those projects after they were funded by a settlement.



Map showing an NRD Settlement *without* a good nexus, typical of many NRD settlements that CRI was not involved in. Note that the sites where the damage occurred (red star) and are dozens of miles away and located in different watersheds from the conservation projects (green dots).



Map showing an NRD Settlement *with* a good nexus, typical of all the NRD settlements that CRI helped facilitate. The natural resource damage occurred about 5 miles from the funded conservation project. Both the damage and the conservation project were located in the same watershed.

CRI also worked with NJDEP by identifying projects featured in *The Conservation Exchange* that had an appropriate nexus to contaminated sites associated with recently-collected NRD funds. We developed a comprehensive database of previously collected NRD settlements that we were able to match up to potential projects. CRI strongly advocated that this funding should be spent on worthwhile conservation projects in the impacted areas, many of which were urban areas. As a matter of simple environmental justice, we believed that the funded projects and the benefits they provided should flow to the area affected by the natural resource damage.

CRI had the most experience and success using NRD settlements to fund conservation projects of any non-profit organization in New Jersey (and perhaps the country). Through 15 separate NRD settlements, CRI provided \$5,039,000.00 to 20 conservation projects protecting more than 1,400 acres. Each of these projects met the strict nexus, natural resource, and legal requirements required by NJDEP.

In the future, in order to make this funding source more effective and efficient, we believe that NJDEP should develop a competitive grant program for NRD funds. As the money gets collected from a particular settlement, we suggest it gets placed into a watershed-based account and that a transparent process should be used by NJDEP to periodically solicit proposals for the use of these funds from non-profits and local government sponsors of appropriate conservation projects. This program could easily be managed by the Green Acres Program, which now houses the Office of Natural Resource Restoration.

NRD Settlements

Organization Name	Project Name	NRD Settlement	Year Awarded	Grant Amount	Acres
Trust for Public Land	Keijdan	Previously Collected NRD Settlement Fund	2005	\$150,000.00	10
Trust for Public Land	Signal Hill	Previously Collected NRD Settlement Fund	2005	\$150,000.00	35
Rancocas Conservancy	Friendship Creek Preserve	Tabernacle Drum	2007	\$150,000.00	226
Ridge and Valley Conservancy	Hemlock Ridge	Previously Collected NRD Settlement Fund	2008	\$12,000.00	150
Natural Lands Trust of Media, PA	Peek Preserve Visitor Center	Previously Collected NRD Settlement Fund	2008	\$30,000.00	
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	Codario Farm	South Jersey Industries	2008	\$100,000.00	127
New Jersey Conservation Foundation	Darmstadt	South Jersey Industries	2008	\$137,504.00	70
New Jersey Conservation Foundation	Wharton Properties	South Jersey Industries	2008	\$110,479.00	64
South Jersey Land and Water Trust	MacKannan	South Jersey Industries	2008	\$201,200.00	40
Rahway River Associates	Old Short Hills Park Restoration	Merck	2008	\$42,000.00	4
South Jersey Land and Water Trust	Daniels	Chemical Lehman	2008	\$400,000.00	100
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Lime Kiln Park	Florence Land Recontoring	2009	\$25,000.00	
Edison Township	Raritan Riverwalk	Hatco	2010	\$593,762.00	
Clinton Township	Windy Acres	Lockheed	2010	\$600,000.00	255
New Jersey Conservation Foundation	Rothpletz – Hell Mountain Preserve	Combe Fill South	2010	\$1,400,000.00	163
Bergen Save the Watershed Action Network	Stewardship and Restoration Upper Hackensack River Watershed	Previously Collected NRD Settlement Fund	2010	\$40,000.00	
Passaic River Coalition	Belcher Creek/Stanford Track/Emerald Forests	CBS	2012	\$557,600.00	220
Natural Lands Trust of Media, PA	Luciano	Buzby	2013	\$65,490.00	
Rancocas Conservancy	Brosel	Buzby	2013	\$180,000.00	
Somerset County	3M/Constructural Dynamics Addition to Sourlands Preserves	Princeton Plasma Physics Settlement	2013	\$94,065	8
			Totals	\$5,039,100.00	1,472



Civil Settlements

Nationally, civil settlements of cases where companies settle environmental violations are a large source of funding for conservation projects. For example, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), a Congressionally-chartered group based in Washington DC, was recently awarded \$2.5 billion from the Gulf Oil Spill for restoration projects along the Gulf Coast.

On a much smaller scale, CRI administered \$1 million in funding for an oyster restoration project in the Raritan Bay which was provided under a civil settlement with Chevron U.S.A., Inc. and the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety. The settlement arose from a February 2006 oil spill in the Arthur Kill, the strait separating Staten Island from New Jersey.

From 2007 – 2014, this funding was used on NY/NJ Baykeeper’s Oyster Restoration in the Raritan Estuary Initiative. It funded the first stages of restoring oysters to the Raritan Bay including research and experiments that have shown that oysters can be restored to this area. Through their work in New York City and New Jersey, Baykeeper is showing that oysters can play a fundamental role helping filter pollutants and restore ecosystem function to the Raritan Bay and Hudson River Estuary.

These types of civil settlements are quite common at the Federal level. Realizing this, CRI met with the US Attorney’s office in 2007 after they announced a big settlement in New Jersey that was to be awarded to NFWF, which, in-turn, was going to grant it to other non-profit conservation organizations in New Jersey. We met with the US Attorney in order to determine whether or not a local non-profit could play the role that NFWF typically plays in administering these funds. The US Attorney’s office could not provide an answer to us and it still remains unclear whether NFWF has a monopoly on this type of federal funding.

Dispute Resolution Settlements

Oftentimes during the permitting process, disputes arise from people and companies seeking various permits from NJDEP, especially in situations where applicants wish to challenge specific permit conditions or denials. The NJDEP Office of Dispute Resolution was created to help resolve these issues as an alternative to expensive and lengthy litigation. At times, the resolution of these cases can involve funding for conservation projects.

As a conservation intermediary, CRI worked with the Office of Dispute Resolution to provide \$210,000.00 to preserve Potter Creek, a 118-acre Trust for Public Land Project, located in Berkeley Township, Ocean County on the Barnegat Bay. Like the NRD program, the success of CRI using this funding source depended on the personnel running the program. The NJDEP staff requested CRI’s assistance as a conservation intermediary at the time of the dispute resolution that funded Potter Creek.

Permit Conditions and Habitat Mitigation Requirements

Many land use regulations will allow certain activities to occur in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, wetland transition areas and buffers, riparian areas, and threatened and endangered wildlife habitat under certain stringent conditions. In order to obtain permits to disturb or impact these environmentally sensitive areas, a developer or landowner will have to prove that they have: **(1)** identified and analyzed all of the alternatives and there is no viable alternative to disturbing or destroying the environmentally sensitive habitat; **(2)** minimized the impact of the proposed activity as much as possible; and **(3)** proposed mitigation to offset the impact. This type of mitigation is called compensatory mitigation, and is a relatively common source of conservation financing, although accessing it in New Jersey can be very difficult.

CRI tried many times to harness this mitigation funding at the State and Federal levels, with varying degrees of success.

One success derived from a stream encroachment permit and Administrative Consent Order which funded two significant projects in Bergen County. The first project was restoration of the riparian area around a pond at Flat Rock Brook Nature Center. The second project was the restoration of a riparian area in Emerson Woods, a park property owned by Emerson Borough next to the Oradell Reservoir, a public drinking water supply reservoir.



The restoration of Emerson Woods was unique because Conservation Resources decided to conduct the restoration ourselves on behalf of the landowners, Emerson Borough. We handled all of the outside contracting and project oversight. We also provided a small grant to Bergen SWAN to help with the long term monitoring and maintenance of the riparian vegetation.

Another successful project was done in cooperation with the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission, and involved helping a permit applicant satisfy a permit condition that required the preservation of less than an acre of stream corridor. The permittee, IDS, made a financial contribution of \$225,254.00 to CRI, which then granted that amount to Somerset County to help fund the acquisition of a 100+ tract of land along a nearby stream corridor which will be permanently preserved in its natural state by a strict conservation easement.

Supplemental Environmental Projects

Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs) are investments made in an environmental improvement that is sanctioned by a regulatory agency or a court of competent jurisdiction. Judicial SEPs are done in connection with settlement of litigation, and administrative agency SEPs are sometimes approved in order to settle some outstanding compliance or enforcement issue. In some cases, an investment in a SEP is allowed in addition to or in lieu of the payment of a monetary penalty. Although some SEPs are authorized in order to provide some additional time or flexibility for a regulated party who is in substantial compliance to fully meet applicable regulatory standards. Most SEPs require that an investment be made in a project will result in some measurable improvement to the specific resource which has been or may be impacted. CRI spent substantial time and effort working to create a template that would allow provide funding for approved SEP projects to be done by non-profit conservation organizations or local government, with CRI serving as an intermediary to identify, screen, obtain approval of, and oversee the implementation of SEP projects.

While SEPs remain a potentially significant source of funding for appropriate conservation projects, current federal and state rules and policies did not allow CRI to establish an effective mechanism to promote SEP projects. Despite the fact that there have been literally hundreds of federal and state settlements that provided funding for third party projects, recent EPA rules appear to actually prohibit the approval of SEPs which direct funding to third parties, and NJDEP has been advised by the Attorney General's Office that either new regulations or a competitive bidding process would be necessary to authorize an effective SEP process, both of which are unlikely to occur anytime soon. As a result of these shortsighted policies, regulated entities are left with the daunting prospect of designing and implementing their own SEP projects, and the more appropriate sponsors of projects are largely ineligible for SEP funding, though a few projects have been approved on a case-by-case basis.

One example of a court-ordered SEP that CRI has administered was the settlement of citizen lawsuit that provided \$300,000 in funding for the Edison Wetlands Association (EWA) to support projects which would enhance the Lower Raritan Watershed. As a condition of the settlement, EWA was required to designate a non-profit administrator of the fund, and CRI agreed to serve as the custodian of these funds and pay grants

for projects approved by EWA. The following entities were funded to undertake a wide range of SEP projects under the Lower Raritan Watershed Grant Program administered by CRI between July of 2010 and May of 2014:

Lower Raritan Watershed Program Grants			
Grantee	Grant Amount	Grantee	Grant Amount
New York/New Jersey Baykeeper	\$33,500.00	Terra Nova Gardening Club	\$56,400.00
Lawrence Brook Partnership Inc.	\$10,000.00	Edison Board of Education	\$10,000.00
Schiff Natural Lands Trust	\$8,952.56	Sheffield Towne Condominium Association	\$21,000.00
Rutgers University	\$50,000.00	Amanda Thorogood	\$2,520.00
Township of Woodbridge	\$10,000.00	Terra Nova Gardening Club	\$45,750.00
Rutgers University	\$1,000.00	Dismal Swamp Preservation Commission	\$6,000.00
WNET	\$5,000.00	Edison Greenways	\$2,000.00
Terra Nova Gardening Club	\$1,500.00	Art Frame Express	\$750.00
WNET	\$4,500.00	Chapin Engineering	\$2,301.66
New York/New Jersey Baykeeper	\$10,000.00	Excel Environmental Resources	\$4,000.00
		Total Grants	\$305,174.22

Lessons Learned: Regulatory Contributions

Natural Resources Damage Settlements; Civil Settlements; Dispute Resolutions and Permit Conditions and Habitat Mitigations; Supplemental Environmental Projects

What Worked:

Providing a process for funding NRD projects that was transparent.

Third-party intermediary served to identify projects with excellent match between damage and repair – as there was no bias towards projects that didn't fit.

Third-party presented projects that likely would not have occurred, but for NRD funds.

Going Forward:

Work to keep process transparent – annual reporting on funds collected to date and where spent. Insure that NRD funds are spent in the area where damage occurred.

Retain unbiased approach to funding to ensure critical match between damages and reparations – explore RFP process.

Critical need for funds – should provide NRD funds for conservation projects that are “additive” and would not have occurred without settlement funding.

Philanthropic Contributions

Conservation Resources helped the philanthropic community to make their conservation grantmaking more effective in many ways. This included everything from developing program forms, serving as staff to review applications, conducting due diligence, and managing the grant award and follow-up process.

Both formally as paid consultants, and informally as grantmaking colleagues and active members of the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers, CRI played a leadership role in helping direct philanthropic funding to conservation projects featured in *The Conservation Exchange*.

Beneficia Foundation

The first foundation CRI advised was the Beneficia Foundation, a small family foundation that focuses its giving on the environment and the arts. In addition to making grants to national and international non-profit organizations, the Beneficia Foundation had a focus on New Jersey. From 2005 – 2007, CRI helped the foundation screen and administer millions of dollars of grants to non-profits outside New Jersey and \$145,000.00 in grants to four New Jersey-based non-profits. In 2008, the Beneficia Foundation decided to change their focus and stop making grants in New Jersey, at which time CRI ceased this role. (See chart next page)

Beneficia Foundation Grants			
Organization Name	Grant Description	Year Given	Grant Amount
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Grant for Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance's Delaware River Protection Initiative	2006	\$15,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Grant for Delaware and Raritan Greenway Land Trust's international land trust program	2005	\$32,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	For a grassland habitat restoration program in Warren County	2005	\$23,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	To continue Agricultural Heritage and grassland-dependent bird habitat work in Warren County	2006	\$25,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	For a revolving loan fund to finance conservation practices on private farmland	2007	\$30,000.00
Ridge and Valley Conservancy	For model land stewardship practices in far northwestern New Jersey	2007	\$20,000.00

The Community Foundation of New Jersey

CRI worked closely with the Community Foundation as an informal conservation advisor for a number of years, identifying conservation projects which the family-advised donor funds administered by CFNJ might wish to support, and by preparing a series of white papers on a range of conservation issues. In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, CRI was formally retained by the Foundation to help identify projects for the New Jersey Response Fund, a multi-foundation effort administered by CFNJ. In 2013, the Board of the Community Foundation approved a series of grant recommendations made by CRI to make the following grants:

The Community Foundation of New Jersey Grants

New Jersey Recovery Fund Grantee	Project Description	Amount
American Littoral Society <i>Partners:</i> Clean Ocean Action, The Nature Conservancy, NY/NJ Baykeeper	To develop and advocate for policies to increase New Jersey's coastal resilience, restore and protect coastal waters, and reduce recurring destruction in partnership with Clean Ocean Action, The Nature Conservancy and New York/New Jersey Baykeeper.	\$250,000.00
Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey <i>Partner:</i> Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences	To restore Delaware Bayshore shorebird and horseshoe crab habitat through beach replenishment, rubble removal, and oyster reef construction.	\$500,000.00
Fair Share Housing Center <i>Partner:</i> Housing & Community Development Network	For advocacy to ensure that people with low and moderate incomes have the same access to timely and affordable opportunities to personally recover, rebuild, relocate and participate in the community planning.	\$180,000.00
New Jersey Future	A collaboration with Sustainable Jersey to field a network of Recovery and Resiliency Coordinators to assist local governments with Sandy recovery and resiliency planning.	\$540,000.00
Partnership for the Delaware Estuary <i>Partner:</i> Bayshore Center at Bivalve	To create a sustainable infrastructure plan for the South Jersey Bayshore that values local stewardship, natural capital, and environmental justice.	\$100,000.00
Rutgers University – Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning & Policy	To engage citizens and community leaders in three communities impacted by Hurricane Sandy in regenerative community vision planning, to produce locally generated scenarios for long term community resiliency.	\$100,000.00
Rutgers University – Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning & Policy <i>Partner:</i> Rutgers Walton Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis	To provide comprehensive geospatial, policy and analytical support to recovery, community engagement, planning and policy efforts of the Recovery Fund.	\$350,000.00
Sustainable Jersey	Collaboration with New Jersey Future to field a network of Recovery and Resiliency Coordinators to assist local governments with Sandy recovery and resiliency planning.	\$560,000.00
TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL RECOVERY FUND GRANTS		\$2,595,000.00

Mary Reinhart Stackhouse Foundation

Conservation Resources also advised the Mary Reinhart Stackhouse Foundation, managed by Bank of America, in 2007. Because the foundation didn't have staff, they relied on Conservation Resources to make recommendations about grants in New Jersey. In 2007, we recommended \$90,000.00 in grants. In subsequent years the Stackhouse Foundation continued to make grants to many of these organizations after being introduced to them by CRI. The Foundation was also a principal and consistent supporter of the Franklin Parker Small Grants program, contributing a total of some \$175,000.00 from 2007 through 2013.

Greater Newark Conservancy	General operations grant	2007	\$20,000.00
Hackensack Riverkeeper	General operations grant	2007	\$25,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	General operations grant	2007	\$20,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	General operations grant	2007	\$25,000.00

Mushett Family Foundation

As a contract advisor to the Mushett Family Foundation, CRI recommended a \$25,000.00 grant to NY/NJ Baykeeper in 2005, and provided advice and due diligence on a variety of matters from 2004 – 2007.

Haines Family Foundation

CRI served as an informal advisor to this family foundation for the purpose of identifying land acquisition projects in Burlington County. In 2012, CRI identified a project being undertaken by the Rancocas Conservancy which was featured in *The Conservation Exchange*, and received a contribution of \$75,000.00 from the Haines Family Foundation to support this project, the full amount of which was re-granted to the Rancocas Conservancy.

Richard and Thelma Gardinier Environmental Fund

In 2009, Conservation Resources began working for the Richard and Thelma Gardinier Environmental Fund, a new foundation dedicated to providing support to energy conservation projects and renewable energy measures, and research into these categories. From 2010 through 2012, we assisted them with granting \$521,166.00 to these types of projects throughout New Jersey.

Richard and Thelma Gardinier Environmental Fund Grants

Organization Name	Project Name	Year Given	Grant Amount
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	Unexpected Wildlife Refuge Nature Center	2010	\$28,125.00
Appel Farm Arts and Music Center	Solar Array	2010	\$26,646.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	NJ Audubon Greening Project	2010	\$22,500.00
Pinelands Preservation Alliance	Energy Audits/ Energy Conservation Measures	2010	\$22,500.00
Schiff Natural Lands Trust	Energy Audits/ Energy Conservation Measures	2010	\$17,438.00
Burlington County	Energy Audits/ Energy Conservation Measures	2010	\$33,750.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	NJ Audubon Greening Project	2011	\$22,545.00
Schiff Natural Lands Trust	Phase II of the Energy Efficiency Project at the Schiff Nature Preserve	2011	\$22,000.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Support solar photovoltaic for a new LEED Platinum Environmental Center	2011	\$47,250.00
Hackensack Riverkeeper	Energy Efficiency Improvements at Hackensack Riverkeeper HQ	2011	\$30,000.00
Ironbound Community Corporation	LEED Certification of Ironbound Community Corporation infant and toddler center	2011	\$25,000.00
Greater Newark Conservancy	LEED Certification for Urban Environmental Center	2011	\$27,000.00
Raritan Headwaters Association	Energy Improvements at Raritan Headwaters Association	2011	\$19,500.00
Pinelands Preservation Alliance	PPA Geothermal system and LEED certification	2012	\$53,712.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	NJAS Energy Efficiency measures at Cape May Nature Center	2012	\$35,700.00
Schiff Natural Lands Trust	Schiff Support for third phase of Schiff's Energy Efficiency Program	2012	15,000.00
ISLES	Isles Mill One Green and Solar Roof Project	2012	\$30,000.00
Ironbound Community Corporation	ICC Greening the Infant and Toddler Center	2012	\$25,000.00
Genesis Farm	Genesis Farm Solar roof and pellet stove	2012	\$17,500.00

Johanette Wallerstein Institute

CRI served as a paid consultant to the Institute from June of 2011 through 2013, reviewing proposals from organizations that had been previously supported, as well as identifying new projects and soliciting proposals from new grantees. Based upon CRI’s recommendations, Wallerstein approved almost \$750,000.00 in funding during this period of time for a wide variety of land acquisition and water quality related projects in the portion of North Jersey from the Highlands east to the Atlantic Ocean. These grants included support for the following organizations:

Johanette Wallerstein Institute Grants	
Clean Ocean Action	Branch Brook Park Alliance
Raritan Headwaters Association	New Jersey Conservation Foundation
Passaic River Coalition	New Jersey Audubon Society
Highlands Coalition	Pinelands Preservation Alliance
Keep It Green Coalition	NJ League of Conservation Voters
Trust for Public Land	North Jersey RC&D Council
The Nature Conservancy	Musconetcong Watershed Association

The Raritan Piedmont Wildlife Habitat Partnership (RPWHP)

In 2005, a small but determined group representing non-profits, and local and state governments began meeting to better coordinate their activities and their joint interest in the preservation, restoration and enhancement of habitats in the Central Piedmont Plains. From these initial gatherings, the Raritan Piedmont Wildlife Habitat Partnership (RPWHP) was formed. RPWHP’s mission is to insure the prompt and effective implementation of the New Jersey State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), in the Central Piedmont Plains. And from the beginning, CRI served as RPWHP’s conservation intermediary securing grants, from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Bunbury Company, to provide financial support for planning, land acquisition, wildlife habitat restoration and equipment.



Photo: A. Heasley, CRI

RPWHP partners meeting at the South Branch Wildlife Management Area to discuss grassland restoration project.

Under the guidance and coordination efforts of CRI, this coalition of more than a dozen public and private conservation organizations has collaborated on developing science-based conservation plans and designed strategies to preserve, restore and enhance habitat. The members share the belief that working together to conserve the natural resources of the Central Piedmont Plains will help to ensure the quality of life for its residents, through retaining farmland, conserving water quality and quantity, and promoting eco-tourism and environmental education.

The first major initiative that the RPWHP undertook was the development of a Grassland Conservation Plan that emphasized the state-wide and regional significance of agricultural grasslands in the Central Piedmont Plains. The Plan was completed in 2006, and since that time the partners have been working to preserve priority imperiled sites, restore degraded habitat, and enhance conditions for grassland birds at sites embedded within the focal areas identified by the plan.

In 2008, RPWHP began to work on other priority habitats and focused on forest and riparian corridors. And in 2010, a new Forest and Riparian Conservation Plan to identify the most critical core forest patches and highest priority riparian corridors and wetlands was completed. The RPWHP Forest and Riparian Conservation Plan identified focal areas for conservation action in 31 townships across Hunterdon, Somerset, Middlesex and Mercer Counties.

In 2011, RPWHP initiated the development of a single RPWHP Comprehensive Conservation Plan that identifies priority Forest, Riparian and Grassland habitats in the Central Piedmont Plains. The previously completed RPWHP conservation plans for Grassland, Forest and Riparian areas used different planning area boundaries. The RPWHP Comprehensive Conservation Plan released in 2013 looks at this area using a unified planning area boundary and also addresses climate change.



Photo: MacKenzie Hall, Conserve Wildlife Foundation

Conserve Wildlife Foundation Grassland Restoration on Pauch Farm

migratory fish. This investment also leveraged over \$11 million dollars for land acquisition projects alone — and the impact to wildlife from the range of restoration projects as well as improvements to quality of life in the Central Piedmont Plains will be felt for generations.

These plans guided the strategic giving of almost \$1.9 million of funding re-granted by Conservation Resources from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Since 2005, CRI has made 56 grants to RPWHP partner organizations, 25 of those grants were for operating support and totaled \$313,000.00 and 31 grants were made for capital projects and totaled \$1,576,650.00. These grants restored wildlife habitat on 2,644 acres of public and private land and secured the permanent protection from development for 901 acres. In addition, the re-grant funds were used to purchase equipment used in partnership projects with local farmers and to conduct design and feasibility studies for the removal of two dams along the Millstone River, eventually opening up 16 more river miles to

The Raritan Piedmont Wildlife Habitat Partnership Grants

Organization Name	Project Name	Year Given	Funds Awarded
New Jersey Audubon Society	RPWHP Grassland Conservation Plan	2006	\$10,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	RPWHP Land Acquisition Outreach	2006	\$6,000.00
Conserve Wildlife Foundation	RPWHP Grassland Conservation Plan	2006	\$4,500.00
New Jersey Conservation Foundation	RPWHP Grassland Conservation Plan	2006	\$4,500.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	RPWHP - Consulting Coordinator	2006	\$24,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	RPWHP Stewardship/Restoration Outreach	2007	\$35,260.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	Six Mile Run	2007	\$61,540.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	RPWHP Grassland Outreach	2007	\$24,000.00
Conserve Wildlife Foundation	RPWHP Grassland Outreach	2007	\$15,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	RPWHP Land Acquisition Outreach	2007	\$15,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	RPWHP - Consulting Coordinator	2007	\$40,000.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	RPWHP - Consulting Coordinator	2008	\$40,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Maple Lane Farm	2009	\$199,500.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	RPWHP Stewardship/Restoration Outreach, Development of Forest Conservation Plan, Wetland Riparian Plan	2009	\$29,500.00

The Raritan Piedmont Wildlife Habitat Partnership Grants

Organization Name	Project Name	Year Given	Funds Awarded
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	RPWHP Development of Wetland Riparian Plan, Forest Plan	2009	\$23,500.00
Conserve Wildlife Foundation	RPWHP Stewardship/Restoration Outreach, Wetland Riparian Planning, Forest Planning	2009	\$17,000.00
NJDEP Office of Natural Lands Management Natural Heritage Program	RPWHP Wetland Riparian Planning, Forest Planning	2009	\$5,000.00
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space	RPWHP Wetland Riparian Planning, Forest Planning	2009	\$5,000.00
New Jersey Conservation Foundation	RPWHP Wetland Riparian Planning, Forest Planning	2009	\$5,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	RPWHP Wetland Riparian Planning, Forest Planning	2009	\$5,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	RPWHP Wetland Riparian Planning, Forest Planning	2009	\$5,000.00
Raritan Headwaters Association	RPWHP Wetland Riparian Planning, Forest Planning	2009	\$5,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Cider Mill Farm	2010	\$411,222.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	Six Mile Run	2010	\$16,000.00
Conserve Wildlife Foundation	Hillsborough Park	2010	\$20,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Sourlands Core Forest Gap	2010	\$7,500.00
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space	Baldpate Mountain	2010	\$17,500.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Riparian Restoration on Stony Brook	2010	\$27,000.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Stony Brook Stream Buffer Restoration	2010	\$12,000.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance Drift		2010	\$74,900.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Zuegner	2010	\$73,094.60
Conserve Wildlife Foundation	Otto Farm Park	2010	\$3,200.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Restoration of an eight acre abandoned hayfield and early detection and rapid response for emergent invasive species at the 700-acre Sourlands Ecosystem Preserve	2011	\$11,700.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Enhancement of grassland habitat at Cider Mill Farm – removal of invasives species and replant in warm and cool season grasses	2011	\$5,000.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Protection of priority parcel identified in the RPWHP Riparian Conservation Plan	2011	\$7,185.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	RPWHP Development of Comprehensive Conservation Plan	2011	\$24,000.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	RPWHP Development of Comprehensive Conservation Plan	2011	\$12,000.00
Conserve Wildlife Foundation	RPWHP Development of Comprehensive Conservation Plan	2011	\$12,000.00
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space	RPWHP Development of Comprehensive Conservation Plan	2011	\$7,000.00
New Jersey Conservation Foundation	RPWHP Development of Comprehensive Conservation Plan	2011	\$5,000.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Native seed harvester	2011	\$5,500.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	Sunflower bagging machine, screener machine, trailer, and new sunflower head harvester	2011	\$14,500.00
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Lockatong Creek Outreach	2012	\$4,400.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Harry's Brook Watershed Outreach	2012	\$10,500.00
New Jersey Audubon Society	Comprehensive Conservation Plan	2012	\$12,520.00
Sourland Planning Council	Sourlands Deer Management Plan	2012	\$22,580.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Acquisition of 42 acre addition to the D&RG Cedar Ridge Preserve	2012	\$85,620.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Hedgerow removal	2012	\$2,500.00
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Enhance forest and vernal pool habitat on privately owned property in the Sourlands	2012	\$1,750.00
New Jersey Conservation Foundation	Assist in the acquisition of 400 acres in the Sourlands	2012	\$54,600.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Design/Engineering plans for dam removal - Weston Causeway - on the Millstone River	2012	\$40,000.00
Stony Brook Millstone Watershed Association	Restoration of Cherry Brook pond to increase habitat and floodplain connectivity	2012	\$13,000.00
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space	Restoration of 435 acres at Mercer Meadows (Pole Farm)	2012	\$252,950.00
Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space	Restoration of 435 acres at Mercer Meadows (Pole Farm)	2013	\$1,166.86

Consulting

Conservation Resources' consulting work focused on six main areas. First, we developed and administered comprehensive land preservation grant programs for regional planning agencies; second, we provided state-of-the-art open space and trails planning services; third, we provided expert advice on all aspects of open space acquisition including landowner negotiations and fundraising; fourth, we helped the Open Space Institute administer the New Jersey Conservation Loan Program, a bridge financing program that was used by non-profit conservation organizations; fifth, we consulted with landowners to help them with conservation planning, land stewardship and land preservation of their properties; and finally, we provided limited consulting services to foundations, public agencies and other non-profit organizations. All of this consulting was done by 2 CRI staff and a handful of part-time "virtual consultants" who worked for CRI on specific projects on an hourly basis. This efficient model allowed CRI to keep our staff small and our overhead costs exceptionally low.

Consulting for Governmental Agencies

The Pinelands Commission

Conservation Resources began our consulting work with Governmental Agencies with the Pinelands Commission in 2005, when we served as the facilitators for the Medford-Evesham Sub-regional Natural Resource Management Plan. In 2006, we were retained to assist the Commission with development of a competitive land preservation grant program of \$9,415,000.00 called the Pinelands Conservation Fund (PCF). *(Continued page 26)*



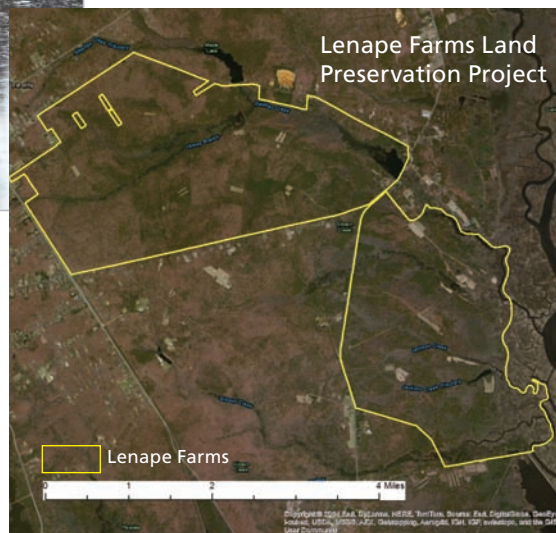
Photo: A. Heasley, CRI

Lenape Farms

Of Pinelands Conservation projects, the largest was Lenape Farms – protecting over 4,800 acres. The Lenape Farms project provides a great example of how Conservation Resources provided technical assistance to the project sponsor, The Nature Conservancy, by helping with landowner negotiations and project fundraising. In addition to the grant of the PCF of \$2,276,227.20, CRI provided a regulatory contribution funding of \$264,000.00 from three matters involving mitigation requirements of CAFRA permits. CRI also helped direct \$50,000.00 of

philanthropic funding from the Johanette Wallerstein Institute.

These additional funds were needed as Lenape Farms extended beyond the Pinelands Boundary in the coastal area. In addition to the 2,793 acres protected with the assistance of the PCF another 2,101 adjacent acres valued at \$4.5 million outside beyond the boundary of the Pinelands were also acquired as part of this extraordinary land protection project. CRI's assistance as a third-party intermediary was essential to the project's completion.



Consulting for Governmental Agencies

Project Name	Organization	PCF Funding Round	Town-ship(s)	Acres	Certified Value	PCF Allocation
Brilla	Rancocas Conservancy	2007	Medford	9.982	\$300,000.00	\$100,000.00
Capri	Buena Vista Township	2007	Buena Vista	68.206	\$185,000.00	\$10,000.00
Cologne Avenue	Atlantic County	2007	Hamilton	699.319	\$2,200,000.00	\$300,000.00
Horner	Ocean County	2007	Ocean	886.609	\$8,100,000.00	\$1,000,000.00
Interboro	New Jersey Conservation Foundation	2007	Lacey&Ocean	583.229	\$2,765,000.00	\$815,978.16
Jackson Land LLC	Ocean County	2007	Jackson	163.25	\$1,060,000.00	\$353,333.00
Paglia	Ocean County	2007	Jackson	4.889	\$185,000.00	\$33,300.00
Sarama Homes	Ocean County	2007	Jackson	10.996	\$525,000.00	\$175,000.00
D'Alessandro	Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	2008	Buena Borough, & Franklin Township	31.859	\$280,000.00	\$93,333.00
M & R Associates	Ocean County	2008	Ocean	44.22	\$303,000.00	\$101,000.00
Masso- Christaldi	Rancocas Conservancy	2008	Medford	67.201	\$382,500.00	\$126,225.00
Oswego Gun Club	New Jersey Conservation Foundation	2008	Bass River	107.21	\$107,000.00	\$35,310.00
Wharton Properties	New Jersey Conservation Foundation	2008	Mullica	64.33	\$318,000.00	\$106,000.00
Clayton - Ridgeway	Ocean County	2009	Jackson	16.04	\$75,000.00	\$24,750.00
Great Egg Harbor Greenway	Camden County	2009	Winslow	78.26	\$485,000.00	\$160,050.00
Martone	Ocean County	2009	Lacey	73.398	\$557,500.00	\$185,833.00
VanAllen	New Jersey Conservation Foundation	2010A	Bass River	8.763	\$29,000.00	\$9,657.00
Barnegat Hills	Ocean County	2010A	Ocean	237.48	\$935,000.00	\$311,355.00
Broome	New Jersey Conservation Foundation	2010A	Bass River	8.895	\$25,900.00	\$8,624.70
Igels Trust	The Nature Conservancy	2010A	City of Estell Manor	5.5	\$11,000.00	\$3,496.50
Tom's River Headwaters Extension	Ocean County	2010A	Jackson	29.58	\$52,500.00	\$17,325.00
Clayton	The Trust for Public Land	2010B	Jackson	380.205	\$4,500,000.00	\$1,125,000.00
Kaltman	New Jersey Conservation Foundation	2010B	Bass River	49.346	\$118,000.00	\$39,294.00
Lenape Farms	The Nature Conservancy	2010B	Estell Manor	2,793	\$10,000,000.00	\$2,276,227.00
Sweeney	Rancocas Conservancy	2010B	Medford & Evesham	43.285	\$58,000.00	\$19,314.00
Wollman Property	YMCA Camp Ockanickon	2010B	Medford	202.819	\$1,311,000.00	\$436,463.00
Maple Root River	Ocean County	2012	Jackson	75	\$300,000.00	\$100,000.00
Toms River Corridor Clayton (Shulton/Jackson)	The Trust for Public Land	2012	Jackson, Manchester and Toms River	195	\$2,000,000.00	\$296,292.00
Dolly	The Nature Conservancy	Continuous Cape May	Dennis	1	\$36,500.00	\$12,154.50
Clarke	The Nature Conservancy	Continuous Cape May	Upper Township	268	\$778,550.00	\$187,845.50
Interboro Turnpike	Ocean County	Continuous Turnpike	Ocean	19.324	\$86,958.00	\$86,958.00
Forked River Mountain - Urquhart	Ocean County	Continuous Turnpike	Ocean	11.46	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Zemel**	New Jersey Conservation Foundation	2012	Pemberton and Woodland	2,438	\$2,100,000.00	\$28,597.44

**Project has an allocation, but has not closed – scheduled to close in mid-2014

CRI worked with Pinelands Commission staff to develop ranking criteria, application guidelines and other internal and external procedures to make the RFP and review process as efficient and transparent as possible. Since that time, and over the course of six separate funding rounds as well as continuous applications in several specific categories, CRI reviewed over 73 project proposals. Based on those reviews, the Pinelands Commission accepted

CRI recommendations to provide funding allocations for 53 projects. Of those 53 projects, 33 projects were successfully closed and completed, providing \$8,618,360.69 to permanently preserve 7,257 acres of unique natural, cultural, historic and agricultural resources in the Pinelands Region of New Jersey. These lands were valued at \$38,618,108.00, which represents a leverage factor of approximately 4:1.

Land Acquisition Projects by Organization				
Organization	Number of Projects Completed	PCF Funds Expended in Completed Projects	Acres Protected in Completed Projects	Certified Value of Completed Projects
Atlantic County	1	699	\$300,000.00	\$2,200,000.00
Buena Vista Township	1	68	\$10,000.00	\$185,000.00
Camden County	1	78	\$160,050.00	\$485,000.00
New Jersey Conservation Foundation*	7	842	\$1,024,863.86	\$3,400,600.00
Ocean County	2	1,572	\$2,446,996.33	\$12,239,958.00
Rancocas Conservancy	3	120	\$245,539.00	\$740,500.00
The Nature Conservancy	4	3,068	\$2,479,723.50	\$10,826,050.00
The Trust for Public Land	2	575	\$1,421,292.00	\$6,500,000.00
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	1	32	\$93,333.00	\$280,000.00
YMCA Camp Ockanickon	1	203	\$436,563.00	\$1,311,000.00
Totals	33	7,257	\$8,618,360.69	\$38,168,108.00

**Totals for the New Jersey Conservation Foundation do not include the \$28,597.44 allocated to the Zemel project. (2,438 acres with a certified value of \$2,100,000.00) expected to close later in 2014.*

The Highlands Council

Conservation Resources was also hired as a land preservation consultant to the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council (Highlands Council). CRI assisted the Highlands Council staff with negotiating the settlement with PGE&G over the Roseland Susquehanna power line upgrade, which will result in more than \$18 million being dedicated for land preservation of conservation priorities in the Highlands. In addition, we helped the Council staff develop a land conservation grant program in anticipation of these funds being available. As part of this process, we conducted a comprehensive survey of open space and farmland preservation efforts in the Highlands and then evaluated these initiatives in comparison to their highly detailed confidential conservation plan. We were able to find gaps in the areas where non-profit land trusts and governmental agencies were working and make recommendations for project leads. We also provided substantial advice to help the Highlands Council design the Highlands Transfer of Development Rights Program.

Consulting for Municipalities

Conservation Resources worked as a consultant providing open space advisory and planning services to several municipalities. These included Chester Township and Chester Borough, Mendham and Randolph Townships, Bernardsville Borough, Long Hill Township, Frankford Township, Franklin Township (Warren County), Fredon Township, Roxbury Township, and Greenwich Township (Warren County).

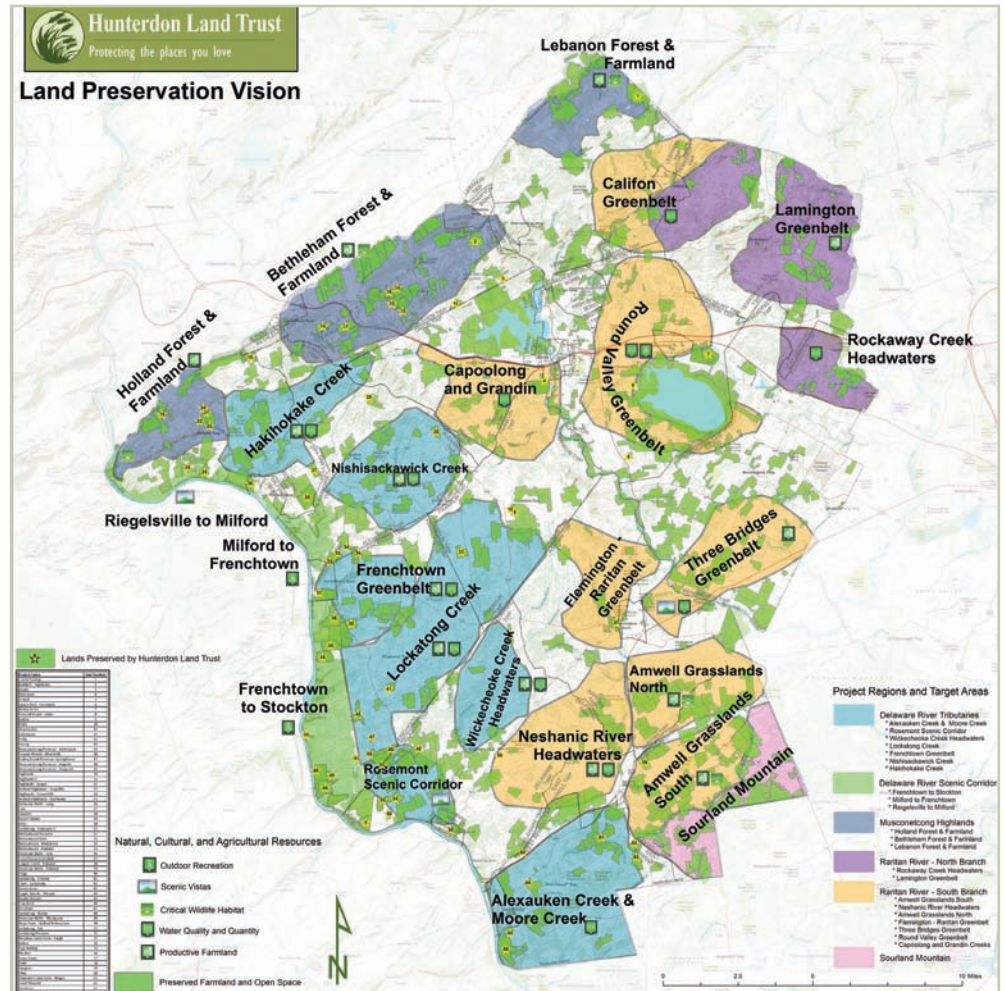
The open space and trails plans we created for municipalities – the Chester Trails Plan and the Bernardsville Open Space Plan update – were innovative in their use of community participatory techniques as well as the use of technology. For each plan, we set up a dedicated website and communication platform for participation of interested citizens. The participatory community meetings facilitated by CRI ensured that local residents were able to shape these plans and then become engaged supporters that helped ensure that the plans actually got implemented.

Non-profits

In limited circumstances, CRI provided consulting services to other non-profit organizations which were not grantees of CRI. Specifically, we worked under contract for the Land Trust Alliance to help lead Ridge and Valley

Conservancy and Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space through an Assessing Your Organization (AYO) process that resulted in an action plan to prepare them for the accreditation process. Similarly, we worked under contract for LTA to create a strategic conservation vision of Hunterdon County for the Hunterdon Land Trust.

CRI was also hired by Banisch Associates as a subcontractor to help them create a Comprehensive Management Plan for the three County Sourland Mountain region for the Sourlands Conservancy. CRI worked with partners and municipalities in the region to create a collaborative vision of the Sourlands that would help to manage the fragile environmental resources found there. The plan recommended continued effort by a new Sourland Municipal Alliance to bring municipal planning agencies and regulatory agencies together to explore the variety of ways their efforts can be combined to protect the Sourlands. CRI managed a large portion of the public input into the plan, including facilitating numerous community meetings.



In a similar but more limited fashion, CRI worked for the Appalachian Mountain Club to help them evaluate existing models of regional land-use planning and their potential application to the Pennsylvania Highlands. One of CRI's first consulting clients was the Student Conservation Association (SCA). SCA was interested in learning more about how they could bring their programs to New Jersey. CRI helped them strategize about groups they could work with and provided introductions and contacts.

Open Space Institute's NJ Conservation Loan Fund

From 2004 to 2010, Conservation Resources was a consultant to the Open Space Institute (OSI) and assisted them with administering the NJ Conservation Loan Program, a \$5 million revolving fund that was developed with the support of the Geraldine R. Dodge foundation and the William Penn foundation to provide short-term, low interest loans to non-profit conservation organizations. As the consultant to OSI, CRI performed programmatic and financial due diligence, and provided technical and financial assistance to 8 non-profit organizations for 10 separate loans totaling more than \$6 million to support the acquisition of 950 acres of land valued at more than \$16 million throughout New Jersey. In many instances, the loan fund was used on projects featured in *The Conservation Exchange*. Subsequent to the loan being approved by OSI, Conservation Resources often helped the non-profit borrowers to secure the funding needed to pay off the loans, and every loan was repaid.

Open Space Institute's NJ Conservation Loan Fund				
Organization Name	Project Name	Year given	Loan Amount	Acres
Tewksbury Land Trust	Cold Brook Watershed Project	2006	\$1,000,000.00	37
Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance	Frenchtown Greenbelt	2006	\$54,000.00	50
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Kiesler and White	2004	\$875,000.00	40
Monmouth Conservation Foundation	Holly Crest Farm	2008	\$500,000.00	37
Monmouth Conservation Foundation	Stern Fisher	2005	\$250,000.00	40
National Biodiversity Parks, Inc.	National Biodiversity Parks/Havey	2004	\$200,000.00	352
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	Codario Farm	2005	\$670,000.00	127
Appel Farm Arts and Music Center	Appel Farm Acquisition	2008	\$680,000.00	46
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge	D'Alessandro Farm	2008	\$278,000.00	32
D&R Greenway Land Trust	Cider Mill Farm	2010	\$1,644,888.00	89
			Total \$6,151,888.00	950

Private Landowners

In addition to the Raritan Piedmont Wildlife Habitat Partnership, Conservation Resources served as a consultant to the Duke Farms Foundation. At the time, the Duke Farms Foundation was developing a strategic vision for the 2,700 acre Duke Farms that better aligned with the Doris Duke Charitable Foundations goals for the property. CRI created a comprehensive report that served as a guide for the transformation of this property to a public park and an example of environmental stewardship. We continued to consult for the Duke Farms Foundation until CRI President Michael Catania was hired as its new Executive Director in 2013.

CRI also helped the Estate of Finn M. Caspersen Sr. to sell and permanently conserve 11,500 acres of forestland in New Hampshire. Much of this land will eventually become part of the new, regional Silvio Conte National Wildlife Refuge system. CRI also advised the Estate on conservation options for their large ecologically significant properties located in New Jersey, Georgia, and Florida.

CRI also helped the Estate of (former Congressman) Peter Frelinghuysen to work with the Harding Land Trust and Harding Township to supplement a series of steps which the Congressman had already taken during his lifetime to preserve his estate by placing easements on portions of the property. CRI helped the Estate design additional easements, prepared baseline documents for those easements, and helped to negotiate the outright purchase of a portion of the estate in separate transactions with the Harding Land Trust and Harding Township. The result was the significant expansion of an existing greenway of preserved lands, the protection of a scenic rural viewshed, and the creation of a wonderful legacy for one of New Jersey's pioneering conservationist and his heirs.

Mountain Development Corporation

In 2010 Mountain Development Corporation sought the advice of CRI on the disposition of a 90 acre undeveloped parcel wedged between Route 80 and Route 23 in Wayne Township. CRI reviewed a range of options to generate income from the property outside of typical land development. The property with frontage on the Passaic River and Signac Brook – a small tributary of the Passaic - contained an impressive stand of hardwood wetland forest subject to frequent flooding. While past land use had altered the hydrology of the site, it was still providing significant flood storage and other ecosystem services. By removal of fill material as well as restoring the hydrology, the property could provide off-site mitigation. The land was suited to providing for riparian restoration credits and to a lesser extent, wetlands mitigation credits. At a time when the economy was not favoring development, CRI was able to explore and promote the idea of enhancing and retaining the ecological function of an undeveloped site to promote development in another more suitable area.

Other Technical Assistance

Over the years, CRI has been very involved in providing technical assistance to other organizations. CRI staff has served as Chair and Member of the Garden State Preservation Trust, as Chair of the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, as President and staff of the Schiff Natural Lands Trust, as founding Chair of the New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team, and Secretary of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance.

In particular, several CRI staff were heavily involved over the course of many years with the efforts to preserve and restore Petty's Island, a 400-acre island which is part of Pennsauken Township but located in the Delaware River between Camden and Philadelphia. CRI staff played a major role in the negotiations to transfer the island to the Trust, as well as efforts to create a vision for the future use of the island as an urban nature preserve with a trail system and a nature center.

Our Business Model – What Worked, What Didn't

Geographic Funds

Starting and sustaining a unique new conservation organization was not easy and was greeted with a great deal of initial skepticism. It was Thomas Edison, who said, "I have not failed 10,000 times. I have successfully found 10,000 ways that will not work." What we have learned at CRI is that when developing new sources of funding for conservation, you fail a lot and it is not easy. When you are doing something completely new, it takes a while to get others to accept that what you are doing can work. This failure is the heart of why these new sources of funding aren't readily available. These sources would already be utilized by the conservation

community if they were easy to access. Initially, we set up a series of funds called "Geographic Funds" that served as the key framework for how CRI would work with the conservation community. The idea behind the Geographic Funds was to raise new money for particular Geographic regions in the State and use this funding on conservation projects. We were going to raise money from sources that were infrequently and intermittently used by the conservation community due to their complexity. We initially believed that the money for these funds would be generated through three primary sources. The first source was meant to be philanthropic contributions from foundations, particularly new foundations that weren't currently engaged in funding conservation projects. The second main source was meant to be Regulatory Contributions from working with DEP, EPA and other environmental regulators and Responsible Parties. Regulatory Contributions are derived from legal settlements, permit conditions, and mitigation. It is clear that one of the main reasons why regulatory contributions were very rarely used to fund conservation is such an effort requires specific legal and technical skills, as well as experience and relationships with regulators and the regulated community, which the conservation community did not routinely possess. For example, using funds derived from compliance with technical regulatory requirements takes a complex understanding of the regulatory and enforcement aspects of local, state, and federal



Location of the seven original Geographic Funds

environmental agencies. Our premise in creating CRI was that it made more sense for one organization to develop these skills and experience on behalf of the entire conservation community rather than to have 50 or more separate groups attempt to do this. This is especially the case because the expertise needed is not easy to come by, and working with these sources is very time consuming and often frustrating. The idea was to develop an efficient way to make these new funds more widely available to the entire conservation community.

The final source was meant to be from consulting revenue. However, potential conflicts of interest limited the type of consulting CRI would do; we never consulted for organizations that were potential grantees of the Geographic Funds. We did consult for Governmental Agencies, individual landowners, local governments, and on a very limited basis, other non-profits which were not expected to be grantees.

The Geographic Funds were envisioned to work similarly to a foundation endowment, where the built-up capital from these three sources would generate interest that would sustain the operations of Conservation Resources. Unlike a foundation, however, CRI always envisioned spending the entire principal of the funds received on projects. But we did envision that some limited interest would be made in the time between when the money was received from a contribution to when grant funds were disbursed to the particular project. The then-prevailing interest rates of 4-5 % which we experienced in CRI's early years would have provided a significant portion of our annual operating budget, but these rates soon declined to less than .5%, which unfortunately provided an insignificant budgetary contribution.

These Geographic Funds each had a comprehensive list of conservation projects that were screened by CRI. CRI conducted due diligence on these projects and gave each featured project our stamp of approval for funding. These projects would then serve as prospects for new sources of funding to contribute to conservation, and we envisioned that potential donors would be able to "shop" CRI's website as a virtual catalogue of projects which they could support.

In addition to the specialized skills and experience need to utilize these new sources, an appealing aspect of Conservation Resources' model to philanthropic and regulatory contributors was that CRI did not do its own projects. This enabled us to objectively evaluate conservation projects within the Geographic Fund and ensure that donor's funding was being used for the best project for their needs and goals, rather than seeking funding for our own projects. We found that when a lot of conservation organizations dealt with these new sources of funding directly they were understandably trying to fund their own projects, but often ended up trying to fit their "square peg" project into the "round hole" of what the regulator or philanthropic entity wanted. Because of this disconnect, most organizations were not very successful at using these new sources of funding.

The objectivity imparted by not doing our own projects was a fundamental reason why we were able to win consulting contracts with the Pinelands Commission and the Highlands Council discussed earlier in this report. Both State agencies explicitly stated in their Request for Proposals that the organization that was to work as a consultant couldn't conduct its own projects.

Evolution to *The Conservation Exchange*

The initial implementation for the Geographic Funds occurred during the boom times for land preservation in New Jersey. Conservation land transactions were at a peak (as were residential and commercial real estate transactions) and interest rates were relatively high. With the financial crisis of 2007 and subsequent retraction of the real estate market and interest rates, it became obvious to us that the model of the Geographic Funds was less likely to work. With interest rates at under 1%, and less government, regulatory and private funding available for conservation transactions, the ability to build up funds and use the interest on these funds to provide operating revenue for CRI was not possible.

This made us begin to explore an even wider array of potential funding sources. It also forced CRI to evolve so that we increased the number of consulting contracts we pursued, in order to cover operating expenses. At around this time, we also decided that we needed to develop a broader way to market the conservation projects that were within the Geographic Funds. This was because many of the funders were not only looking at geography, but were also looking for highly specific types of projects.

In order to categorize the projects listed on *The Conservation Exchange*, we adapted ecosystem services categories used in the 2005 United Nations Environment Program's Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. These categories provided a standard mechanism to highlight the ecosystem services provided by each of the conservation projects featured on *The Conservation Exchange*. The idea was that if a funder wanted a particular project attribute — carbon sequestration for example – we would categorize projects based on that attribute. Then they could easily search on those attributes and find projects that fit their needs.

The Conservation Exchange lived on a dedicated website – www.conservationexchange.org. The online catalogue was the first and largest of its kind for ongoing conservation projects that needed funding. In addition to the various ecosystem service categories, projects listed on *The Conservation Exchange* had a brief narrative about the project, photos, explanation of funds raised, and a statement about the funds needed to complete the project. In order to incentivize conservation organizations to feature projects on *The Conservation Exchange*, we made it a requirement of CRI providing technical assistance, and we limited eligibility for Franklin Parker Small Grants Program only to featured projects.

Throughout its life, *The Conservation Exchange* listed hundreds of conservation projects throughout New Jersey. It was envisioned that *The Conservation Exchange* would help to attract significant funding for conservation projects. Many of the projects that were listed were in need of hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars to become a reality. These projects ranged in size from small community gardening projects, to 5,000+ acre land acquisition projects.

However, the reality was that *The Conservation Exchange* served as mere advertising for projects and that very few if any of the projects were funded solely on the basis of being listed on *The Conservation Exchange*.

The problem we had with fundraising based on *The Conservation Exchange* was both cultural and technological. Online fundraising for the amount of money needed for projects featured on *The Conservation Exchange* had not been tried at the time and the website platform we used was not conducive to tapping into social networks that are common now. There has been a drastic change in technology over the last two years, with websites like "Kickstarter", that have made online fundraising in larger numbers possible by taking advantage of the network effects. The idea of a *Conservation Exchange* that taps into these network effects to raise significant funding still has relevance.

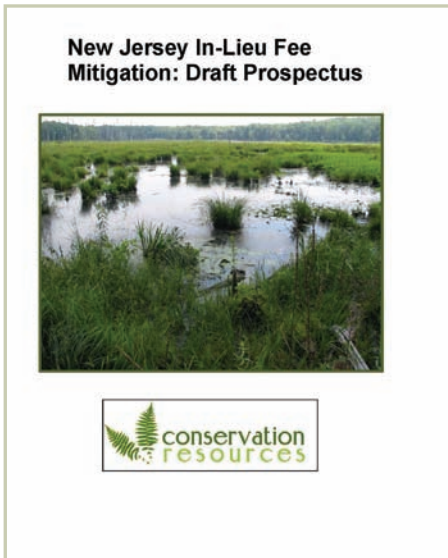
Ecosystem Services Framework for Conservation Exchange

Ecosystem Service	Type	Examples
Climate Stabilization and Air Pollution Mitigation	Carbon sequestration	Aforestation, reforestation, grassland restoration, avoided deforestation
	Physical urban climate moderation	Street trees, community greening projects, physical projects like green roof/white roof
	Air quality	Street trees, other greening initiatives
Water Protection, Filtration & Control	Water quality	Buffers to streams, protection of wellhead areas, protection of headwaters, groundwater recharge areas, stormwater projects (MTDs etc.), CSO projects, wetlands protection
	Water quality	Protection of headwaters, protection of wellhead areas, protection of groundwater recharge areas, stormwater management projects, water conservation projects
	Flood control	Groundwater recharge, wetlands protection, riparian land protection

Ecosystem Service	Type	Examples
Biological Diversity	Habitat	Natural heritage priority sites, landscape project species-based patches, urban habitat islands, federal T&E species
	Pollination	Pollinator meadows
	Ecosystem resilience, pest control, disease control	Ecosystem-level management and acquisitions, acquisition of open space adjacent to agriculture
Agricultural Production	Soils	Prime and statewide soils, soil conservation and enhancement
	Local food systems	CSAs, farmers markets, organic agriculture, community gardens, urban gardens & farms
Recreation & Aesthetics	Public access	Hiking trails, access to waterfront
	Environmental education	Nature centers

New Jersey In Lieu Fee Mitigation

Another idea we explored to provide a better fit for funding conservation projects with mitigation needs was to establish an “In Lieu Fee Program” with the Army Corps of Engineers. We had hoped this program would enable us to use projects featured in *The Conservation Exchange* to create virtual wetlands mitigation banks. We developed the New Jersey In-Lieu Fee Mitigation program to the point of submitting a Draft Prospectus.



We based much of our effort developing the NJ In-Lieu Fee Program on work done by the Environmental Law Institute (ELI). We also looked at a similar In-Lieu Fee Program set up by The Nature Conservancy and the State of Maine and worked closely with both the Philadelphia and New York Offices of the Army Corps of Engineers. While an In-Lieu fee program based on the Draft Prospectus we submitted to the Army Corps is definitely feasible, we discovered that it also had to have strong buy-in from the DEP before it could move forward.

New Jersey has assumed many of the responsibilities of regulating wetlands in most areas of the State, except in tidal wetlands where the Army Corps of Engineers also has jurisdiction. The State also has a very active wetlands mitigation bank program where permittees can purchase wetland mitigation credits from approved wetlands mitigation banks. Additionally, the Wetlands Mitigation Council manages a fund where, rather than purchase mitigation credits, permittees can pay into an account used for mitigation projects in the future. Having two permit agencies operating at once to regulate

wetlands created a confusing environment for permittees, and made the compensatory mitigation process very difficult to navigate.

Unfortunately, the Draft Prospectus, while a viable solution to resolve some of the confusion to permittees, was never accepted by the Corps, so we were unable to move from a Draft to a full “In-Lieu Program”. The Corps insisted that NJDEP would have to be party to a three way agreement with CRI, and for reasons that were never fully explained, NJDEP was unable or unwilling to explore such an arrangement.



Hallmarks of Conservation Resources

Third Party – Unbiased Approach

It is relatively easy to highlight what parts of Conservation Resources worked well. First and foremost, our status as third party intermediary was clearly key to our success. CRI did not have a “horse in the race”, so we were never competing with our grantees. We sought always to find the best match between the funding source and their goals and the conservation projects. We didn’t need to find a way to fund “our” project, but rather we sought a way to find the best match between sources and projects.

Knowledge of the Conservation Community

Another key to our success was our knowledge of the New Jersey conservation community. Having worked in that sector our staff was well informed about the landscape of New Jersey and the range of projects being undertaken. We had intimate knowledge of the issues facing the conservation community as a whole, as well as at the local level. This breadth of knowledge helped us to identify and fund successful projects.

Identifying Real Projects

Every project we funded had been screened by our staff. The projects funded, were based in reality. They were not pipe dreams, but rooted in solid conservation approaches and methods. Sure, there were some projects that we funded that were not finalized, but more often than not, we provided the funding to see them to completion. Our unbiased approach also gave our funders confidence that we would provide realistic, fundable projects that would occur in a timely manner. This is not meant to underestimate the amount of effort it takes to make sure a project is “real”. This is key, especially for mitigation projects where often a permit is conditional to a conservation outcome the permittee has an obligation to fulfill but no expertise to finalize.

Keeping Things Simple

We worked at hard at CRI to keep things simple. To provide an application process for each grant program that was as simple as it could be and still retain the need to provide proper due diligence and oversight. We also strived to provide short time frames between application and approval. And once approved, provide funding in a timely manner. Finally, in reporting, we only asked our grantees what was needed to ensure compliance and no more. Keeping our funding processes simple allowed our conservation partners to focus on their conservation activities — allowing them to conceive and carry out projects in a very short-time frame. We think that this was one reason we were able to keep an active list of potential projects. The conservation community knew that funds which we oversaw would be straightforward to use and timely.

Informed Risk Taking and Entrepreneurial Flexibility

CRI explored a wide variety of potential new funding sources, and was willing to invest time and energy in seeking to develop these new sources. While not all of these sources proved to be feasible, we often learned just as much from our failures as we did from our successes. And we continually evolved our business model as circumstances changes, abandoning some ventures in favor of new one, and being open to new ways to fund the operations of our organization.

Forging Partnerships – Providing Leverage

Along with our knowledge of the conservation community, we also had the ability to leverage the funds we managed. We often worked with more than one partner on a project as we knew the expertise of those working in conservation and could assemble coalitions of organizations to maximize the success and funding for a project. This also provided for sharing of project information and resources across organizations to achieve our goal of enhancing the technical expertise of the conservation community.

Conclusion

From 2003 into 2014, CRI was a significant and successful experiment in developing new resources for the conservation community. While we experienced many challenges and frustration in this effort, we believe that our successes and accomplishments clearly indicate that this effort was entirely worthwhile, and that the role of conservation intermediaries is and will continue to be critical to the success of the overall conservation community.

We trust that the experiences of CRI and the information included in this report will be both illustrative and helpful to our community, as well as to other existing and would-be conservation intermediaries, especially here in New Jersey as we approach complete build-out in this, the most densely populated state in the nation.

Lastly, we would like to thank all of you for your support and interest over the last decade. We would not have missed the experience of creating and running CRI for anything!

