

Rancocas Conservancy



2010 Annual Report

Rancocas Conservancy Mission

The purpose of the Rancocas Conservancy is to preserve, protect and enhance the ecological and cultural integrity of the Rancocas Creek Watershed and its environs.

Board of Trustees

Officers

Laura Bishop, President

Jessica Sanchez, Vice-President

Rob Hofstrom, Secretary

Steve Tambini, Treasurer



Front (left to right): Jessica Sanchez, Jack Cresson, Laura Bishop, Barbara Rich, Carli Gannone

Back (left to right): Rob Hofstrom, Wayne Ferren, Mark Shourds, Chuck Elmendorf, Steve Tambini, Brad Atwater, Kathleen Brust, Chris Jage

Letter from the President



The Rancocas Creek Watershed encompasses 360 square miles, which reminds me of the 360 degrees in a circle. I can't think of a more perfect symbol than a circle to express the Rancocas Conservancy's growth since it was granted a charter by the State of New Jersey on September 12, 1991.

The Conservancy's circle has widened and our success can be measured by more than the acres we've preserved. We also must consider the development of the board of trustees, whose members bring diverse skills and talents, the increased and ongoing cooperation with other organizations whose missions complement our own and, most significantly, the many individuals – long-time members and new friends alike -- whose lives we've touched and who, through their abiding support, make our work in the Rancocas Watershed possible.

In 2003, the Conservancy had preserved just over 700 acres; in 2006, we reached the 1,000-acre mark in total land preserved. By the end of 2010, the total was more than 1,800 acres. Today we are on the cusp of 2,000 acres preserved; quite impressive, inspiring and motivating as we strive to fulfill our mission to “preserve, protect and enhance the ecological and cultural integrity of the Rancocas Creek Watershed.”

Key highlights of 2010 include:

- Permanently preserved an additional 53.41 acres in the Rancocas Watershed, including parcels in Pemberton and Tabernacle;
- Bolstered and diversified the Board of Trustees with four passionate, talented individuals who share our vision and give us new energy to achieve it;
- Hosted an inspiring Annual Dinner and Meeting that in the words of the recipient of our annual award, Janet Jackson Gould, was “a wonderful, warm and enjoyable evening!”

The Rancocas Conservancy is “many hoops that make one circle” that is as wide as the Creek and as encompassing as the Watershed we have grown to love and protect. At our center are two “mighty” individuals, founders Mark Thomas and Barbara Rich, whose vision and unwavering commitment set the course for this small but mighty land trust, continue to guide us today and will shelter us in the future.

For the Rancocas,
Laura

Strategic Plan 2010 – A Summary of Goals

- Goal 1: Identify, preserve and protect the critical resources of Rancocas Creek watershed
- Goal 2: Maintain an active, skilled and diverse Board of Trustees, well trained staff, and engaged corps of volunteers
- Goal 3: Propose, advocate, and carry out cooperative preservation strategies among the citizenry, public and private sectors in the Rancocas Creek watershed
- Goal 4: Identify, obtain and properly manage funds for staff, operational support and land acquisition
- Goal 5: Increase the public awareness of the existence and importance of the Rancocas Conservancy to increase membership, participation, fundraising capacity, and environmental ethos

Board of Trustees – 2011

Brad Atwater	Government Research Technical Director Lockheed Martin Company
Laura Bishop	President Laura Bishop Communications
Kathleen Brust	Vice President Internal Communications TD Bank
Jack Cresson	Archaeologist R. Alan Mounier, Archaeological Surveys and Assessments
Charles Elmendorf	Senior Director, Environmental Remediation Astra Zeneca
Wayne Ferren	Environmental Consultant, Ecological Restorationist & Botanist Maser Consulting
Carli Gannone	Marketing Innovative Benefit Planning
Rob Hofstrom	Attorney
Chris Jage	Assistant Director for South Jersey New Jersey Conservation Foundation
Toni Parkinson	Administrative Coordinator Gloucester County Chamber of Commerce
Barbara Rich	Co-founder, Rancocas Conservancy
Jessica Rittler Sanchez	Planner Delaware River Basin Commission
Mark Shourds	PE, PP, Senior Project Manager, Engineering Division Taylor, Wiseman, Taylor
Steve Tambini	Vice-President, Operations New Jersey American Water Company
Barbara Jones	Administrative Coordinator Rancocas Conservancy

Many Hoops, One Circle

And I say the sacred hoop of my people was
one of the many hoops that made one circle,
wide as daylight and as starlight,
and in the center grew
one mighty flowering tree to shelter
all the children of one mother
and one father.

- Black Elk

Accomplishments

Since the beginning, in 1991, the Rancocas Conservancy has worked consistently toward its mission: to preserve, protect and enhance the ecological and cultural integrity of the Rancocas Watershed and its environs. The Conservancy owns 761.91 acres in the watershed; through conservation easements or management contracts, it protects an additional 1067.5 acres for a total of over 1800 preserved acres. The Conservancy has worked to raise the visibility of the Rancocas, and increase its sphere of influence with local, county and state agencies. Although methods have changed and expanded over the years, the mission remains constant.

The Conservancy has made great strides toward achieving its goals – and continues to develop more expansive goals for the future. The current strategic plan identifies goals as:

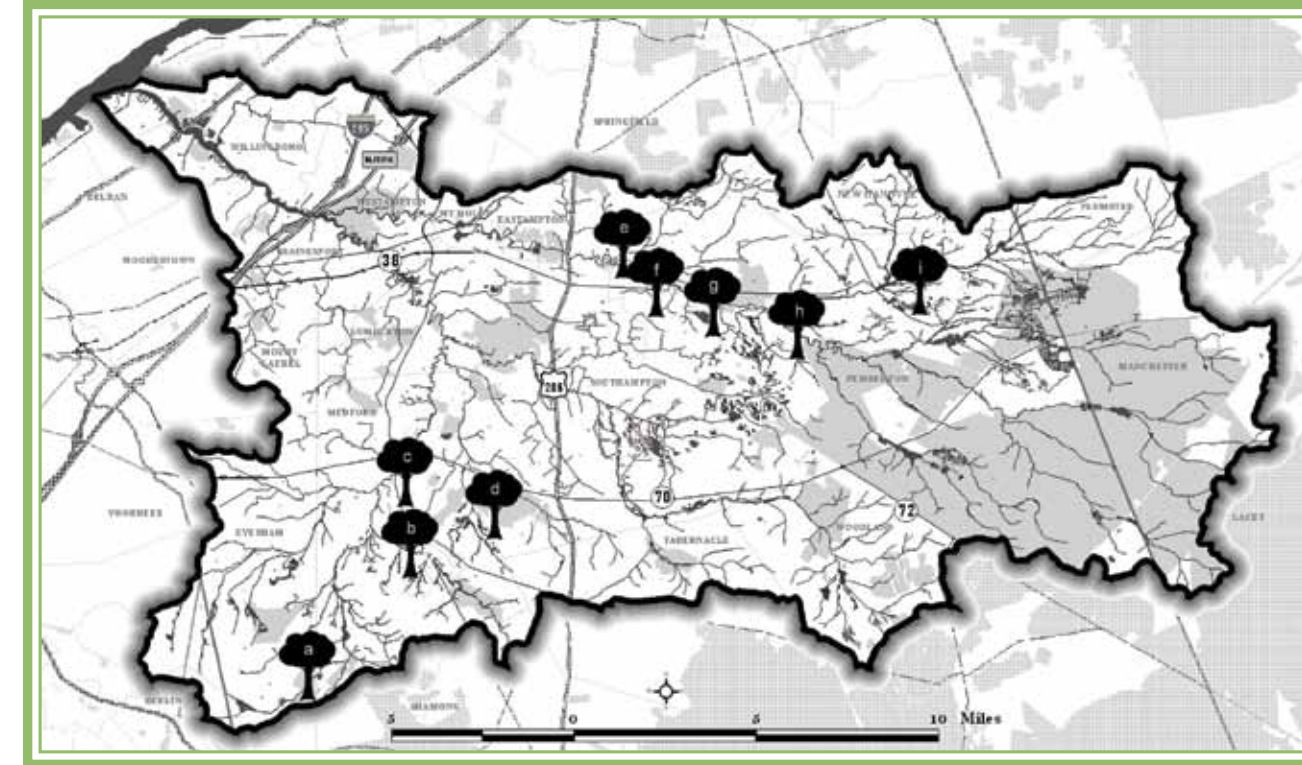
- Increasing membership
- Consolidating acquisitions
- Expanding educational outreach
- Establishing basic research projects
- Developing a template for individual stewardship plans for all of our properties

Some of the Conservancy’s key achievements over the years include:

- Publishing of Rancocas Journal, a watershed resource newsletter, beginning in 1995.
- Preserving our first property, a mere 3.39 acres in Pemberton, in 1995; a small transaction which helped define the future of the Conservancy.
- Developing Rancocas Creek Main Stem and Branches Greenway Plans with Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.
- Developing Rancocas Greenway Project: Comprehensive Greenway Planning for the Rancocas Creek Watershed.
- Co-Sponsoring ‘Weekend for a Cleaner Rancocas’ with Pemberton Township.
- Supporting passage of the Open Space Tax Initiative.
- Hosting the Americorps Watershed Ambassador Program for New Jersey Watershed 19 (Rancocas Creek).
- Developing and organizing the Watershed Festival in 2006 at Burlington County College.
- Establishing a partnership with the Timbuctoo Development Committee.
- Creating a professional ecological inventory of the North Branch Preserve to collect data and develop a protocol for continuing study there as well as for other properties.
- Accepting a challenge to become an accredited land trust through the Land Trust Alliance by year-end 2013.



Wurst Preserve



Municipalities in the Rancocas Creek Watershed

Burlington City	Moorestown	Tabernacle
Delanco	Mount Holly	Westampton
Delran	Mount Laurel	Willingboro
Eastampton	New Hanover	Woodland
Edgewater Park	Pemberton Borough	Wrightstown
Evesham	Pemberton Township	Voorhees
Hainesport	Riverside	Berlin Township
Lumberton	Shamong	Manchester
Medford	Southampton	Lacey
Medford Lakes	Springfield	Plumsted

Acquisitions

Rancocas Conservancy is a land trust, and acquisition is one of the chief weapons in our arsenal – providing the ultimate protection. Realistically, however, the Conservancy cannot simply buy everything it wants to preserve. To ensure the Conservancy can appropriately leverage its impact, a set of criteria was developed to evaluate properties to determine which should be purchased and which require other means of protection. The history of the Conservancy’s acquisitions clearly demonstrates the strategy.

The Conservancy’s acquisition history began in 1995, just 4 years after its incorporation and designation as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. That first property acquired was just 3.39 acres in Pemberton Township, a long narrow piece of property donated by New Jersey Conservation Foundation. Although a modest start, this acquisition set the tone for a major aspect of the Conservancy’s mission.

By the end of the first decade, the Conservancy had acquired 255.18 acres and protected an additional 939.67 acres through conservation easements or management contracts.

In 2010, an additional 53.41 acres was acquired – expanding two key properties. The Friendship Creek Preserve in Tabernacle increased by 23.4 acres and the North Branch Preserve grew by 30.01 acres, bringing the total to 1829.41 acres owned or managed under conservation easements and contracts. The North Branch Preserve acquisition expands the contiguous protected land to the edge of the bypass, eliminating possible development in the future. The Friendship Creek acquisition protects a tract of land with a typical Pine Barrens habitat, which includes an Atlantic White Cedar swamp.

Through partnerships and grants, the Rancocas Conservancy continues to pursue preservation, protection and enhancement through stewardship. The Conservancy’s goal for 2011 is to reach a total of 2000 acres protected in its 20th year of operation.



Preserve Data – Summary 2010

Preserve Name	Township/Location	Total Acreage	Estimated Value
Mirror Lake Preserve	Pemberton	3.39	\$ 22,100
Dixontown Preserve	Medford	11.00	\$ 117,000
North Branch Preserve	Pemberton	227.39	\$ 264,200
Stavola Beechwoods Preserve	Pemberton Borough	55.41	\$ 340,000
Wurst Preserve	Medford Township	93.48	\$1,073,500
Piper’s Corner Preserve	Shamong Township	93.37	\$ 195,570
Cowan Preserve	Medford Township	28.06	\$ 222,500
Friendship Creek Preserve	Tabernacle Township	226.41	\$ 401,400
Total owned		761.91	\$2,636,270
Greenwood Easement	Pemberton Township	17.67	\$ 8,400
Bear Swamp Preserve	Tabernacle Township	922.00	
Cramer Easement	Pemberton & Springfield Townships	115.83	\$ 203,000
Bishop Farmstead	Southampton Township	12.00	\$ 520,000
Total managed		1067.50	\$ 831,400
Total preserved		1829.41	\$ 3,467,670



Programs

Developing and implementing programs is an effective means of enabling the Conservancy to engage the community in its mission and methods. As the Conservancy has grown, so has its capacity to offer programs for adults and children.

Each year, the Conservancy participates in fairs and festivals throughout the Watershed. Conservancy leader and membership consistently attend the Burlington County Earth Fair, the Blueberry Festival at Whitesbog, and the Pinelands Discovery Festival. The Conservancy is active in other events in the Watershed as well. These events and venues provide an opportunity to talk directly to community members who live in the Watershed – often on the Rancocas Creek – and who are interested in finding ways they can help preserve the health and beauty of this precious resource.

Since 2009 the Rancocas Conservancy has sponsored a team in the World Series of Birding, a 24-hour bird-a-thon which attracts competitors from around the world to New Jersey. Team members wander the woods and meadows identifying as many species of birds as possible between midnight and midnight. The World Series of Birding has provided significant fundraising for the Conservancy, as well as reinforcing the organization's message of valuing the natural habitat.

The Conservancy is working to develop a series of programs designed to engage children in schools and scouting organizations in the Watershed. These programs will focus on the water cycle and the concept of a watershed – helping children see how actions in their own backyards affects the entire watershed.



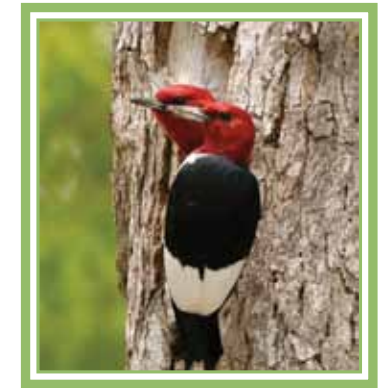
World Series Team Cliff Jones, Karenne Snow and Susan Setterberg

Stewardship

Part of the Conservancy's commitment to the Watershed and the environment is to be a careful steward of the land it protects. One of the most obvious demonstrations of this commitment is the clean-up of the land and waterways in the Watershed.

When the Conservancy takes ownership of a property, one of its first actions is to initiate a clean-up. Conservancy properties are checked and reviewed regularly to identify issues or maintenance needs. There are times when the work required on a property seems nearly overwhelming; on a recent clean-up of a new property, more than 90 rubber tires were removed in addition to the typical trash.

The Conservancy is in the process of developing a management plan for each of its properties which outlines the inspection cycle, development goals, and overall action plan. This management plan is designed to intersect with a current grant project: establishing a protocol for an ecological survey of each of the properties to identify the existing flora and fauna, as well as determining the presence of threatened and endangered species which need to be protected, and/or invasive species which need to be eliminated. Future plans include developing a Breeding Bird Survey for the properties which would identify the nesting locations of species of interest. This project will enable the Conservancy to develop a stewardship strategy that looks to the future of the Watershed and the unique aspects of the habitat that defines it.



Membership

In the beginning, there were just 19 people meeting at Smithville Park to discuss public interest in conservation issues related to the Rancocas Creek. That number has grown to include more than 200 members and an additional 300 non-member supporters, and the sphere of concern has grown to include the Watershed, not just the Creek.

The members of the Rancocas Conservancy are the core of the organization. Their support makes it possible to conduct the day-to-day work required to preserve and protect the Rancocas Watershed.

In addition to providing financial support, Conservancy members often attend 'clean-up' events that are central to stewardship efforts. They demonstrate their interest and commitment at festivals and fairs throughout the year, and enjoy the Rancocas Conservancy Annual Meeting And Dinner, held in September.



Members

Melissa Abatemarco
 Ralph & Melody Alfors
 Virginia Armitage
 Dorothy Baker
 Meghan & Eric Baratta
 Martha Bark
 David and Jane Bartram
 Kevin Block
 Joan Boas
 John & Rosanne Bornholdt
 Howard Boyd
 Jane Brady
 Nancy and Don Buchanan
 Elizabeth Burke
 Sam and Kathy Carswell
 Steve Carter
 Ethel Cebra
 Sandra Cohen
 Carol Comegno
 Bob and Janet Confer
 Richard Connor
 Debora Conrad
 Joe and Theresa Costanza
 Joseph Coyle
 Barry Cranmer

Daniel Dattilio
 William Degnan
 Nancy Easterly
 Patti Elkis
 Steven Fenster and Lorraine Bal
 Robert Fischl
 Marilyn Fishman
 Martin Galanty
 Eleanor Gesenway
 Tom Goodnow
 Ted Gordon
 Ralph F. Graves
 Joanne Greenspun
 Robert Hagmaier
 William Haines, Jr.
 Richard Hicks
 Kathleen Hill
 John Hiros
 Mike Hunninghake &
 Margaret O'Gorman
 Harry Irion III
 Gary & Meira Itzkowitz
 Frank Keith
 Janet Jackson-Gould
 R. T. Jaggard

Elizabeth Jahn
 Cliff and Barbara Jones
 Vijay Kapoor
 Kenneth Langston
 Kenneth Mahoney
 Glenn Malsbury
 Steve Mattan
 Catherine McNelis
 Mary Beth Melton
 B.J. and Herb Minkus
 Kenneth Mitchell
 Ann Moore
 Miriam Moss
 Paul Moss
 Richard Nelson
 Allen Nicholson
 Chris Nicholson
 Alan C. Nicola
 Henry Papit
 Paul Dame
 Charles Paulson
 Robert Pelletier
 Eugenia Phelps
 Janet Phelps
 Joan Ponessa

Francis J. Priest
 Carol Pulley
 Joyce Pyett
 Katherine Reilly
 Rich Renzulli
 Mary Pat Robbie
 Joseph Roland
 James Rosenthal
 Randi Rothmel
 Melissa Rozecki
 Joseph Russomano
 Kathleen Sammartino
 Fredrick Sanger
 Roger Schneider
 Betsy Schnorr
 Paul Schopp
 Samuel Schwartz
 Scotty Seitz
 Susan Setterberg
 Bruce and Judy Shaw
 Cheryl Sims
 John C. Smith
 Kay Smith
 Karenne Snow
 Ruth Spindelowlow

J. Arthur Steitz
 Roland Stratton
 David and Miriam Swartz
 Mark Szutarski
 Uri Taenzer
 Tony Tancini and Jessica Platt
 John Tegley
 Mike and Maureen Templeton
 Joseph Termini
 Mark Thomas
 Louise Tompkins
 Damon and Helen Tvaryanas
 John Volpa
 Marlene Volper
 John Walz
 Guy Weston
 Jane Wilshire
 Brian Wilson
 Heidi Winzinger
 Bob and Joanne Winzinger
 Jeanne Woodford
 Steve Yanai
 Bryan Zilai

Foundations, Organizations and Corporations

The Rancocas Conservancy is proud to have a number of unofficial partners in its efforts to preserve and protect the land and waterways of the Rancocas Creek Watershed, and to expand its land trust in significant and responsible ways.

- Watershed Institute
- Land Trust Alliance
- Henry M. Rowan Family Foundation
- REI
- New Jersey American Water
- NJ Green Acres Program
- NJ Pinelands Commission
- Burlington County

Financial

Rancocas Conservancy, Inc., Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets - Cash Basis
December 31, 2010

Assets:	2010
Cash in the bank -operating	\$5,321
Cash in the bank-savings - Stewardship Defense	5,887
Cash in the bank -savings	169,950
Cash in the bank -certificate of deposit - Endowment Fund	35,729
Petty cash	50
Total cash	216,937
Prepaid land acquisition costs	
Land and Easements:	
Donated Land	589,400
Purchased Land	2,146,849
Easements	2
Total Assets	
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Liabilities:	
Payroll tax liabilities	\$ 850
Net Assets:	
Unrestricted	
Reserved for Land and Easements	\$ 2,736,251
Reserved for Land Acquisition	49,769
Reserved for Endowment Fund	42,090
Reserved for Stewardship Defense	8,875
Unreserved	110,063
Total Unrestricted	2,947,048
Temporarily restricted	5,290
Total Net Assets	2,952,338
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 2,953,188

See Notes to the Financial Statements.

Rancocas Conservancy, Inc., Statement of Support, Revenue and Expenses - Cash Basis
For the Year Ended December 31, 2010

Support and Revenue:	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Grants			
Green Acres Grant			
Pemberton Township	38,700		38,700
Burlington County	51,000		51,000
Contributions:			
Memberships	3,545		3,545
Trustees	1,130		1,130
Gifts and bequests	12,278	5,290	17,568
Fundraising events	5,203		5,203
Investment income	1,772		1,772
Other Income	91		91
Net assets released from restrictions	1,078		(1,078)
Total Support & Revenue	114,797	4,212	119,009
Expenses:			
Personnel	10,289		10,289
Capitalized land acquisition expenses	62,944		62,944
Land stewardship and acquisition	3,586		3,586
Insurance	3,219		3,219
Property taxes	3,711		3,711
Professional fees	549		549
Newsletter	1,052		1,052
Fundraising	230		230
Postage	920		920
Office supplies	1,030		1,030
Annual meeting	1,533		1,533
Audit fees	3,315		3,315
Other	1,362		1,362
Total Expenses	93,740		93,740
Change in Net Assets	21,057	4,212	25,269
Add - Capitalized Land Acquisition Expenses	62,944		62,944
Net Assets, Beginning	2,863,047	1,078	2,864,125
Net Assets, Ending	\$ 2,947,048	\$ 5,290	\$ 2,952,338

Rancocas Conservancy, Inc., Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2010

1. Nature of Activities and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The Rancocas Conservancy, Inc. (the Conservancy) is a not-for-profit organization that exists to preserve, protect and enhance the Rancocas Creek Watershed. The Conservancy works with state and local government programs to obtain funding for the preservation of open space in the Rancocas Watershed. Funds are provided through private donations. The Conservancy also educates landowners and the general public regarding conservation and preservation issues and participates in local and statewide conservation forums.

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements of the Conservancy have been prepared on a modified cash receipts and disbursements basis of accounting, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles. Under that basis, with the exception of the treatment of Land and Easements as discussed below, the only asset recognized is cash and no liabilities are recorded. All transactions are recognized as either cash receipts or disbursements. The cash basis differs from generally accepted accounting principles primarily because the effects of outstanding receivables or payables are not included in the financial statement.

Basis of Presentation

Financial statement presentation follows the recommendations of the Financial Accounting Standards Board. Under these standards, the Conservancy is required to report information regarding its financial position and activities according to three classes of net assets: unrestricted net assets, temporarily restricted net assets, and permanently restricted net assets.

Contributions

The Conservancy accounts for contributions in accordance with the recommendations of the Financial Accounting Standards Board. In accordance with these standards, contributions received are recorded as unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted support, depending on the existence or nature of any donor restrictions.

All donor-restricted contributions are reported as increases in temporarily or permanently restricted net assets depending on the nature of the restriction. When a restriction expires (that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished), temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restriction.

Donated Services

A substantial number of individuals volunteer their time in the organization's program services and in its fund-raising campaign. No amounts have been reflected in the statements for donated services because they did not meet criteria for recognition under standards of the Financial Accounting Standards Board.

Financial

Income Taxes

The Conservancy is a not-for-profit organization that is exempt from income taxes under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Accordingly, no provision for federal taxes has been made. The Conservancy is not considered a private foundation.

In June 2006 the Financial Accounting Standards Board issued FIN 48, Accounting for Uncertainty in Income Taxes, which prescribes how an entity should measure, recognize, present and disclose in its financial statements tax positions that an organization has taken or expects to take on its information returns. FIN 48 is effective for years beginning after December 31, 2008 for nonpublic entities.

The Conservancy regularly reviews and evaluates its tax positions taken in previously filed information returns with regard to issues affecting its tax exempt status, unrelated business income and related matters. Based on the Conservancy's evaluation of their positions relating to any relevant matters no tax benefits or liabilities are required to be recognized in accordance with FIN 48.

Revenue

The Conservancy derives revenue from grants, (public and private), membership dues and contributions.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

Functional Allocation of Expenses

The Conservancy estimates that in excess of 80 % of their expenditures in 2010 were in support of their mission.

Land and Easements

Land is carried at cost, or if acquired by gift, at its fair market value at the date of the gift. Land values are not adjusted for subsequent changes in market value. Gains and losses, if any, are recognized upon disposition. All easements are carried at a nominal value of \$ 1. As of December 31, 2010 there are 0 purchased and 2 donated easements.

Costs directly associated with the acquisition of land are deferred and included in the value of land and easements.

Subsequent Events

The Financial Accounting Standards Board has issued a standard that applies to annual financial periods ending after June 15, 2009. These standards establish principles setting forth the period after the balance sheet date during which management shall evaluate events and transactions that may occur for potential recognition or disclosure in the financial statements. For the purposes of this accounting standard, the Organization has evaluated subsequent events through June 21, 2011.

2. Land and Easements

The Land and Easements at December 31, 2010 consist of the following properties:

Property Description	Donated	Purchased	Easement
Mirror Lake Preserve	\$ 22,100		
Dixontown Preserve	117,000		
North Branch Preserve	41,100	\$ 190,378	
Beechwoods Preserve		457,072	
Friendship Creek Preserve		422,405	
Greenwood Easement			\$ 1
Cramer Easement			1
Wurst/Masso Preserve		1,065,129	
Cowan Preserve	222,500		
Total	\$ 589,400	\$ 2,146,849	\$ 2

During the year an addition to the Friendship Creek Preserve was purchased for \$24,244. Funding for the purchase came from internal funds of the Conservancy. In addition, the Township of Pemberton donated two parcels land in the North Branch Preserve valued at \$38,700.

3. Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

Temporarily restricted net assets released during the year ended December 31, 2010 included:

REI Grant	\$ 430
Neess Conservation Fund	648
Total	\$ 1,078

Green Acres Program

At December 31, 2010 the Conservancy had a total of \$ 251,618 in its NJDEP Green Acres Grant, including \$ 350,000 approved in 2009. These funds are held by the Green Acres Program but are pre-approved to be used in the acquisition of environmentally sensitive land in the Rancocas Creek Watershed

Our thanks to Mike Hogan, Mark Thomas, Joe Costanza, Gary Horn and Peter Gotta for permission to use their photographs.



PO Box 2188
Vincentown, NJ 08088