

Creating Public Access



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Why Preserve Land?



Ecological Benefits

- Water and Air Quality Improvements
- Reduced Flooding
- Wildlife Habitat
- Soil Conservation



Economic and Social Benefits

- Tax Stabilization
- Increased Property Values
- Tourism/Agritourism
- Community Gardens
- Access to local food/wine
- Scenic vistas
- Recreational Opportunities





How is Land Acquired for Public Use?

- Protected from development in perpetuity
 - Fee simple purchase – often public access
 - Conservation easement (sale or donation) – can include public access
- Right of Way Easement
 - Useful when landowner does not wish to preserve the property or sell it
 - Value negotiable
 - Can be removed with grantees' consent
 - Grantee responsible for improvements (e.g. walkway)



Funding Options and Requirements

Public Funding

- NJ Green Acres Program
- NJ Blue Acres Program
- NJ Farmland Preservation Program
- County and municipal open space taxes

Private Resources

- Foundations (e.g. Victoria Foundation)
- Individual donations
- Landowner donations (e.g. bargain sale or donation)
- Loans



Considerations...

- Municipalities – open space tax and OSRP
- Time frame
- Matching requirements
- Future of NJ public funding is uncertain
 - Bond Act of 2009 approved by voters authorized a total of \$242 million for Green Acres (including \$24 million for Blue Acres), \$146 million for SADC and \$12 million for the Historic Trust.
 - All funds are fully allocated in 2013



Status of public funding

- Senate passed two bills this summer to fund programs
 - one dedicated 1/5 of one cent of sales-tax revenues annually for 30 years
 - second one dedicated a flat \$200 million annually
- Represents less than 1% of state revenues and sales-tax revenues projected to increase by more than \$400 million each year
- Required public approval (on November ballot)
- Assembly did not act on either bill. Governor took no public position.

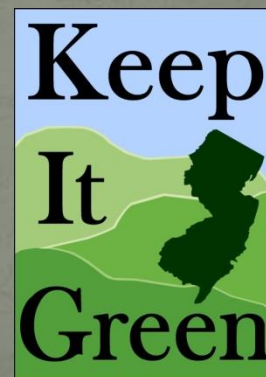


Status of public funding

- Water user fee – equity?
- Assembly bill currently under consideration
 - Stop gap - 1 year funding
 - \$200M bond on November 2014 ballot
- Keep It Green: A coalition of over 180 conservation, park, recreation, wildlife, agricultural and forestry groups

Goal: long-term, stable funding for:

- Land and water protection, parks (Green Acres)
- Farmland preservation (SADC)
- Historic preservation (NJ Historic Trust)
- Stewardship of parks, preserved lands, historic sites





Next Steps – Reach out to Partners

- Hunterdon Land Trust
- New Jersey Conservation Foundation
- Raritan Headwaters Association
- Trust for Public Land
- The Land Conservancy of New Jersey
- Municipalities
- Landowners





Questions?

