

Warren County Department of Land Preservation

2015 Annual Report

Prepared By:
Corey J. Tierney

Port Warren Park
Photo By: Corey Tierney

Warren County

Department of Land Preservation

Since beginning on June 12, 2002, the Land Preservation Department (LPD) has adhered to its charter by administering:

- The Farmland Preservation Program under the Warren County Agriculture Development Board (CADB)
- The Open Space Preservation Program under the Board of Recreation Commissioners (BORC)
- The Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund under The Municipal and Charitable Trust Fund Committee (MCCTFC)
- Other preservation programs as directed by the Board of Chosen Freeholders (BCF)

The Open Space Trust Fund

To balance the needs of the farmland, open space and historic preservation programs, the Board of Chosen Freeholders allocates the trust funds as follows:

- 55% to the County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) for farmland preservation;
- 25% to the Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee (MCCT) for non-profit and municipal sponsored open space and historic preservation projects; and
- 20% to the Board of Recreation Commissioners (BORC) for acquisition of county parkland;

The Land Preservation Department Key Achievements

The Open Space Trust Fund has enabled Warren County to:

- Preserve over **22,550 acres of farmland;**
- Acquire over **1,972 acres of parkland;**
and
- Participate in **129 historical and open space preservation efforts** with local non-profits and municipalities.

The Board of Recreation Commissioners (BORC)



The Board of Recreation Commissioners (BORC)

- The Department assists the BORC with recommending acquisition of lands in accordance with the County's Open Space Plan.
- The Department helps coordinate the use and improvement of parkland and promotes awareness of the county's natural resources.

Open Space & Recreation

Among other objectives, the County Open Space Plan encourages the Department to acquire targeted open space for recreation activities.

Acquisition Goals:

- Land bank as much land as possible for future use or conservation;
- Acquire properties along established and proposed trails, specifically the Highland/Warren Trail, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, and the Morris Canal to create high priority greenways;
- Acquire properties along streams and rivers to establish greenways and linear parks;
- Acquire environmentally sensitive sites;
- Acquire cultural, historical, and archeological open space sites; and
- Connect various open space reserves.

Recreation Goals:

- Develop a model passive recreation system in the short term that allows activities like walking, hiking, sight seeing, bird watching, etc.
- Provide opportunities for traditional uses such as hunting and fishing where appropriate;

(Source: 2008 Warren County Open Space & Recreation Plan)

Open Space Acquisition Strategies

- **Morris Canal Greenway**
 - Unique Features and Sites of Interest
 - Inclined Planes, Locks, Etc.
 - Contiguous Tracts of Land
 - Adjoining Lots, Gaps, Etc.
 - Population Centers
 - Phillipsburg (Lock Street & Plane 10)
 - Lopatcong/Greenwich (Strykers Road, Stine, & Plane 9)
 - Franklin (Bread Lock Park)
 - Washington Township (Meadow Breeze Park)
 - Washington Borough/Mansfield (Port Colden to Port Murray)
 - Hackettstown (Florence Kuipers, Bilby Road, Etc.)

Open Space Acquisition Strategies

- **Natural Resource Areas**
 - Unique Features and Sites of Interest
 - White Lake, Marble Hill, Oxford Mountain, Etc.
 - Contiguous Tracts of Land
 - Adjoining Lots, Gaps, Etc.
 - Regions
 - White Lake – North, Northeastern
 - Marble Hill – South, Southwestern
 - Oxford Mountain - Central

Open Space Acquisitions

- Pipeline
 - Over one dozen properties throughout the county which are being investigated
- Negotiating
 - 10 properties totaling 215 acres in 7 municipalities
- Under Contract
 - 3 properties totaling 131 acres in 3 municipalities
- Closed YTD
 - 2 properties totaling 49 acres in 2 municipalities.

Mount Rascal





Open Space Maintenance & Stewardship

The Department oversees three sizable Natural Resource Areas, as well as several key sites along the Morris Canal Greenway.

Natural Resource Areas include:

- Marble Hill Natural Resource Area;
- Oxford Mountain Natural Resource Area; and
- White Lake Natural Resource Area;

Morris Canal Sites include:

- Port Warren Park (Jim and Mary Lee Museum);
- Bread Lock Park & Museum;
- Port Murray Park;
- The Dennis Bertland Heritage Area;
- Florence Kuipers Park, and others.

Open Space Recreation & Preservation

Our goal is to maximize public use and enjoyment of recreation areas while protecting valuable natural resources by:

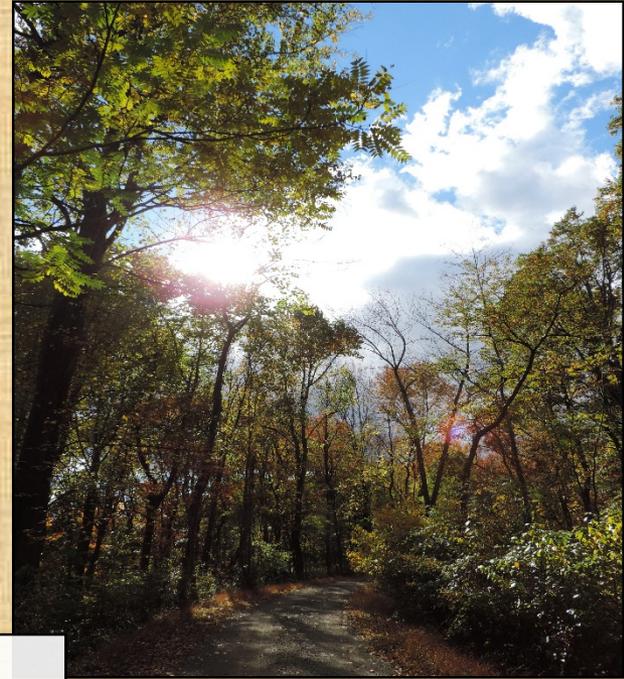
- Educating residents about open space recreation in person, at events, and online;
- Encouraging visitors to enjoy our natural and historical attractions;
- Providing parking areas and signage at trail heads;
- Clearing/marking trails and maintaining facilities; and
- Supporting ecological restoration efforts and sustainable stewardship practices.

Shippen Manor

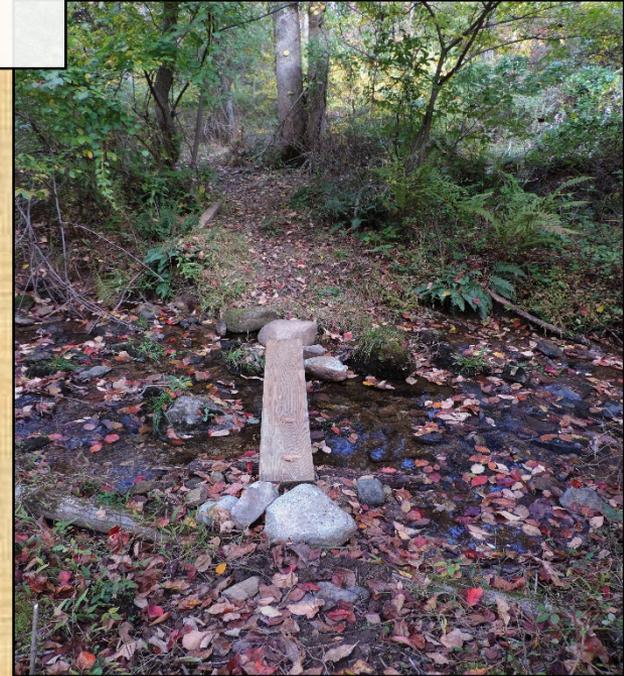
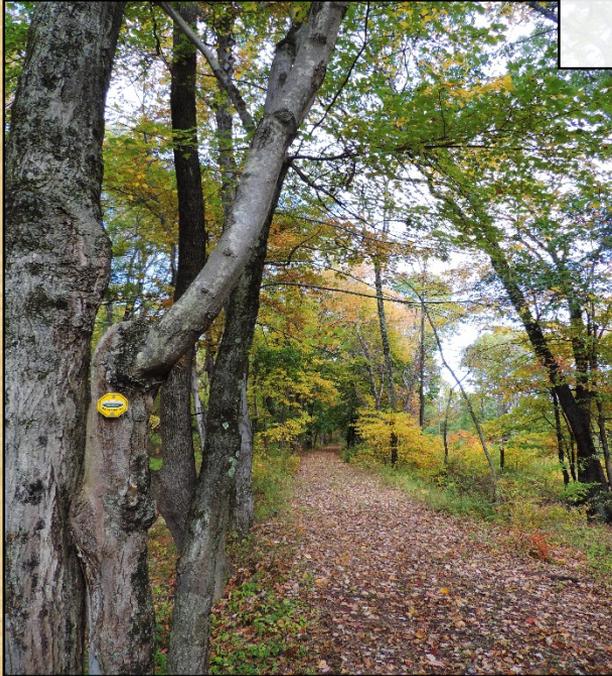


Florence Kuipers Park





Port Murray Park



Open Space Assistance

Volunteer/Nonprofit Partnerships:

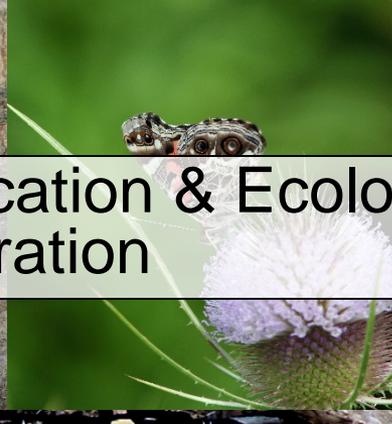
- Working with the NJ Youth Corps on regular mowing and maintenance schedule, as well as various special projects;
- Working with the Ridge and Valley Conservancy to improve recreation and education opportunities at White Lake while protecting ecological resources;
- Working with the Morris Canal Committee and Highlands Project to develop and maintain interpretive sites for public use;



Mowing, Maintenance, & Special Projects Throughout The County

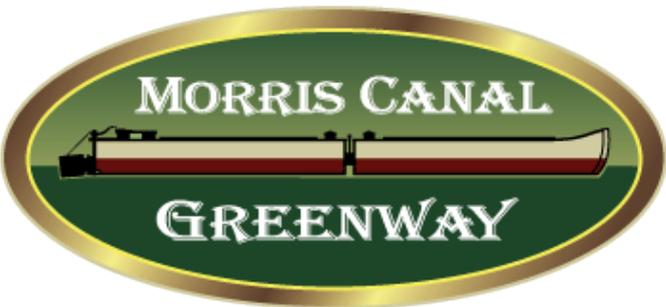


Ridge and Valley Conservancy

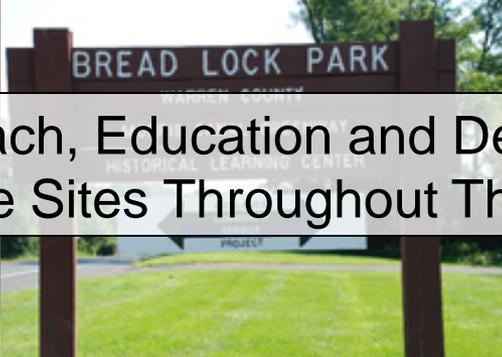


Public Outreach, Education & Ecological Restoration





Public Outreach, Education and Developing Interpretive Sites Throughout The County



Open Space Assistance

Interdepartmental Coordination:

- Working closely with the Planning Department to obtain grants for trail/facility improvement and outreach;
- Working with the Engineering and Road Departments to provide safe and accessible parking areas at trail heads to existing attractions;
- Working with the Public Information Department to encourage recreational tourism;
- Working with the Health Department to promote outdoor recreation and healthy living.

Open Space Website & Social Media



facebook

Email or Phone: Password: Log In

Keep me logged in Forgot your password?

Create Page

Recent
2014

Have Fun & Stay Healthy
GO EXPLORE
Warren County



Warren County Health & Recreation Partnership
Government Organization

Timeline About Photos Likes Videos



Welcome to Warren County New Jersey

Site Search Search

Info Center Directory Municipalities Freeholders Elected Officials Education Tourism What's New

Warren County
Department of Land Preservation

- Land Preservation Home
- Board of Recreation Commissioners
- Agriculture Development Board
- Municipal & Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund
- Warren County Home

Department of Land Preservation
500 Mt. Pisgah Ave.



facebook

Email or Phone: Password: Log In

Keep me logged in Forgot your password?

Marble Hill Natural Resource Area is on Facebook.
To connect with Marble Hill Natural Resource Area, sign up for Facebook today.

Sign Up Log In



Marble Hill Natural Resource Area
13 likes



facebook

Email or Phone: Password: Log In

Keep me logged in Forgot your password?

White Lake Natural Resource Area is on Facebook.
To connect with White Lake Natural Resource Area, sign up for Facebook today.

Sign Up Log In



White Lake Natural Resource Area
45 likes · 3 talking about this · 14 were here



facebook

Email or Phone: Password: Log In

Keep me logged in Forgot your password?

The Morris Canal Greenway - Warren County, New Jersey is on Facebook.
To connect with The Morris Canal Greenway - Warren County, New Jersey, sign up for Facebook today.

Sign Up Log In



The Morris Canal Greenway - Warren County, New Jersey
16 likes · 1 talking about this · 118 were here

Preservation Benefits

Environmental

- Natural resources and services
- Biodiversity and ecological resiliency

Health

- Clean air, clean water, and reduced pollution
- Physical activity and reduced stress
- Fresh locally grown produce

Economic

- Saves on infrastructure and school costs from development
- Increases property values and tax base
- Spurs commerce (outdoor recreation, tourism, and agriculture)



Community & Economic Development

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area

- Gateway Community
- Geo Tourism
- Appalachian Trail Community



**NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC**





Community & Economic Development



September 11th National Memorial Trail

A National Trail Connecting the World Trade Center, Flight 93 and Pentagon Memorials





Warren Preservation Day at Rutherford Hall

The County Agricultural Development Board (CADB)



The County Agricultural Development Board (CADB)

22,550+ Acres of Farmland!

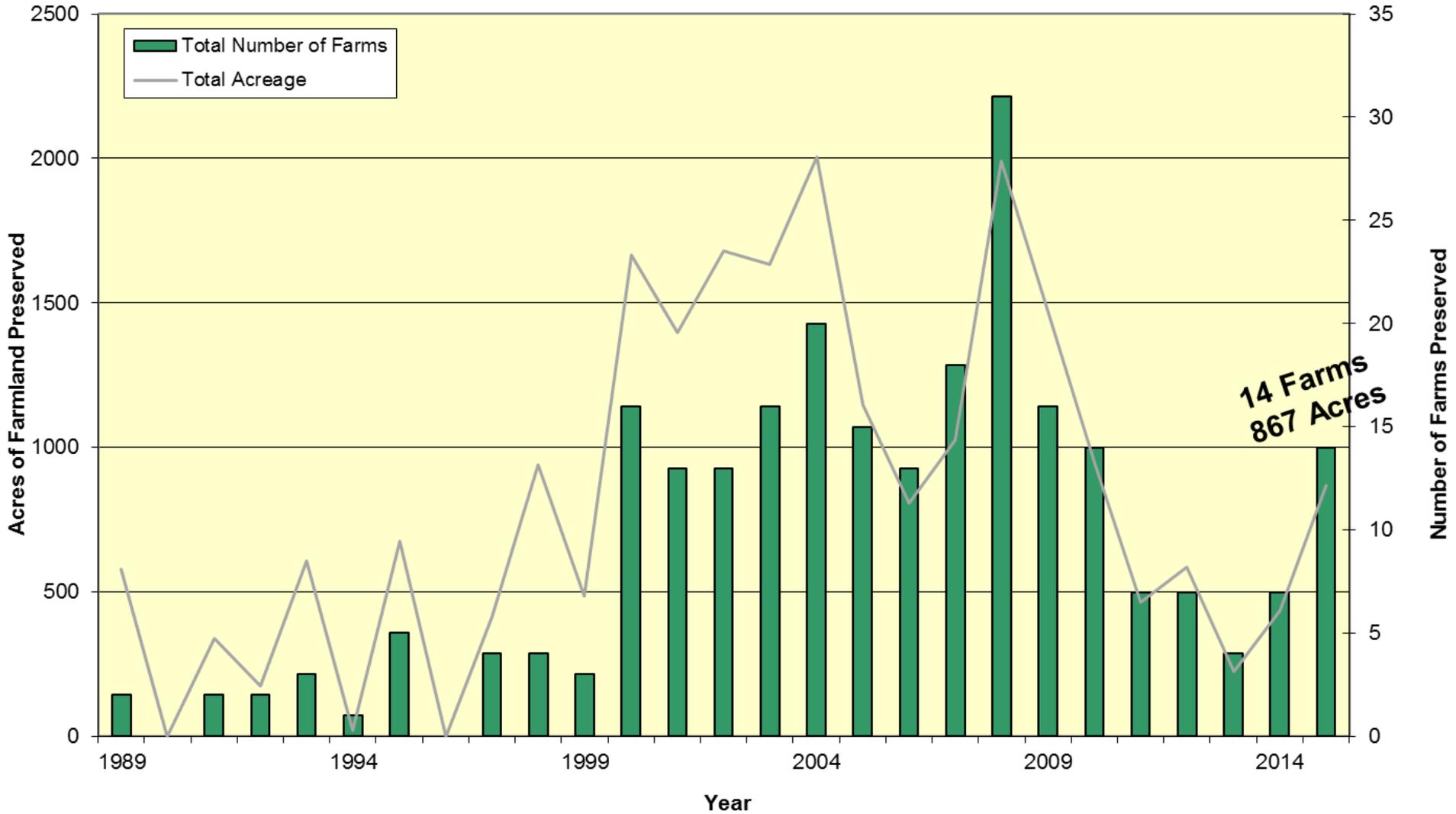


The County Agricultural Development Board (CADB)

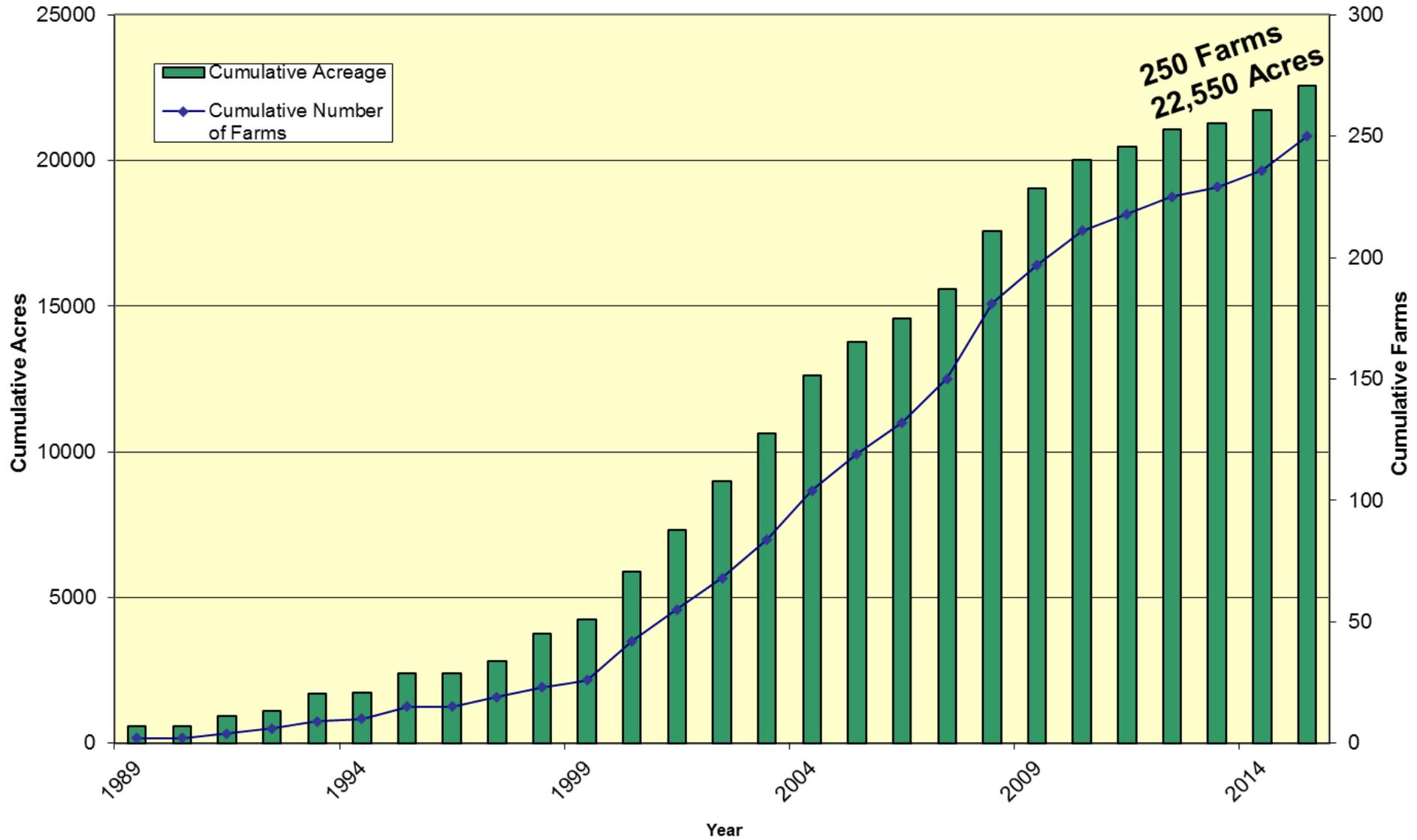
The CADB oversees the County Farmland Preservation Program and Right-To-Farm matters.

- Since the Farmland Preservation Program's inception in 1986, Warren County has aggressively pursued the preservation of its farmland, farms and farmers.
- To date, the CADB has preserved **250 farms** comprising over **22,550 acres** of farmland throughout the county.
- We anticipate 2 additional farms may close before year end, bringing the total to 252 farms comprising over 22,670 acres.

Warren County Land Preservation Annual Preservation Totals



Warren County Farmland Preservation Program Cumulative Preserved Farms & Acres Per Calendar Year



Leveraging Our Investment Through Partnerships



- 2015 YTD, the total cost to preserve approximately 867 acres was \$4,854,808.
 - The SADC contributed \$3,098,125 (or 63.8%)
 - **The County contributed \$1,184,314 (or 24.4%)**
 - Municipalities contributed \$252,020 (5.2%)
 - Nonprofits/Others contributed \$320,349 (6.6%)
- So for every \$1 the County spent this year, we received a match \$3.09 towards farmland preservation.

Value of Agriculture To Warren County



- **Agriculture Products Sold:**

Crops, Greenhouse, & Nursery:

\$54,622,000 (60%) 8th in State

Livestock, Poultry, & Their Products:

\$36,543,000 (40%) 1st in State

Total:

\$91,205,000 (100%) 5th in State

(2012 Census of Agriculture)

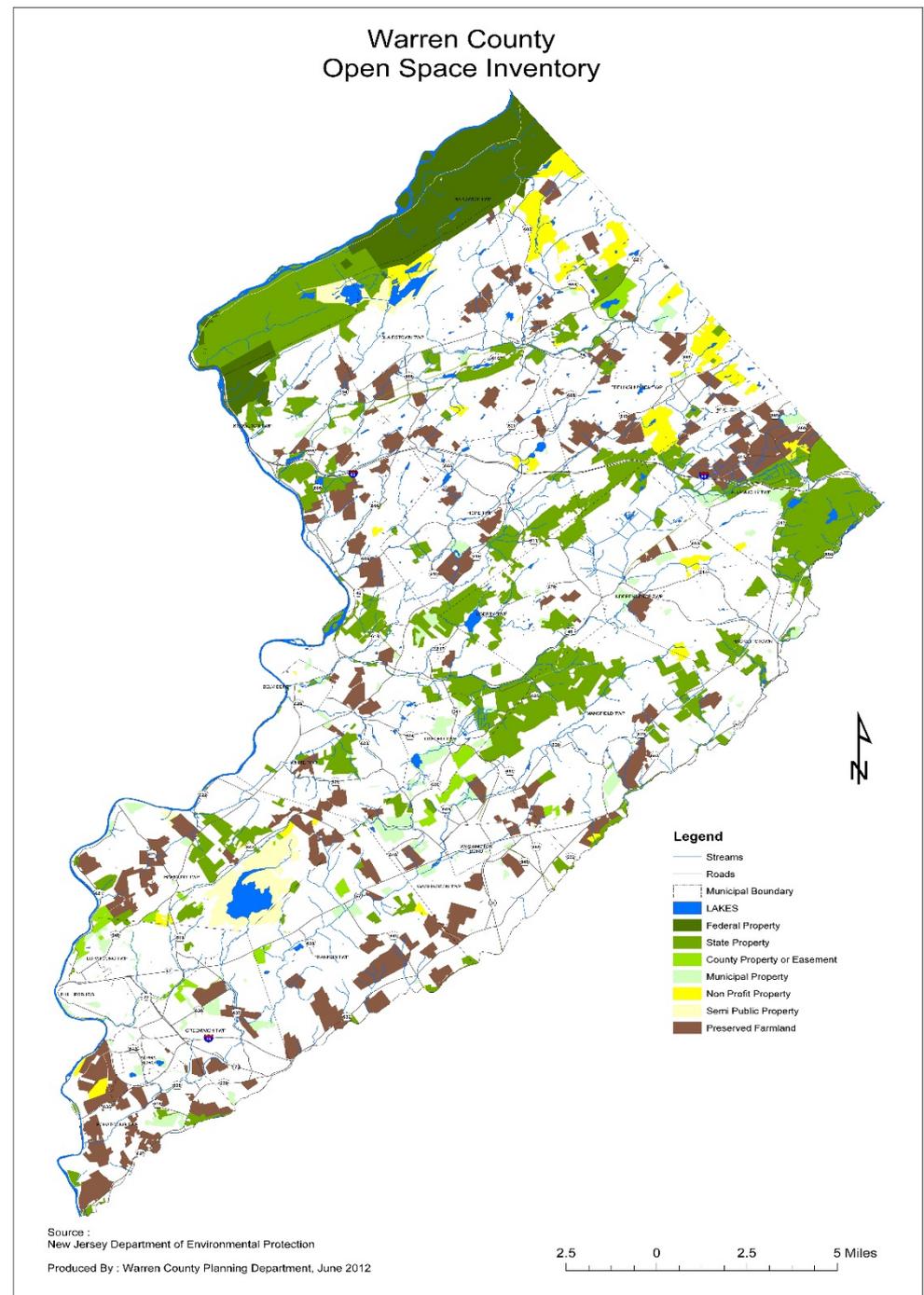
- Supports ancillary businesses, such as equipment suppliers and livestock veterinarians
- Provides indirect support to the local economy by offering seasonal employment opportunities for young residents and seasonal workers who, in turn, patronize local stores and businesses
- Provides a greater economic benefit to the local community than other kinds of land uses because, contrary to residential neighborhoods and commercial districts, farms require little if any municipal services. *(2008 Farmland Preservation Plan)*

Warren County:
232,207 total acres

Warren County Farmland:
933 farms; 74,975 ac. (07' Ag Census)
784 farms; 72,250 ac. (12' Ag Census)

Preserved Farmland:
250 farms; 22,550 ac.

Preserved Farmland
accounts for:
9.7% of Total County Land
31.2% of Total County Farmland



Farmland Preservation Current Applications

- **49 farms** totaling **4,018 acres** have applied for preservation and are currently in some stage of the process.
 - 28 farms are County applications
 - 11 farms are Municipal-PIG applications
(County participates in process and financing)
 - 7 farms are Nonprofit applications
(County participates in process and financing)
 - 2 farms are State Direct applications

Farmland Preservation Current Applications

- **Application Completed**

– County	4 farms	537 acres
– Municipality	1 farm	64 acres
– <u>Nonprofits</u>	5 farms	475 acres
<i>Total</i>	<i>10 farms</i>	<i>1076 acres</i>

- **Being Appraised**

– State	2 farms	140 acres
– County	17 farms	1292 acres
– <u>Municipality</u>	6 farms	456 acres
<i>Total</i>	<i>25 farms</i>	<i>1888 acres</i>

- **Under Contract**

– State	1 farm	92 acres
– County	7 farms	567 acres
– Municipality	4 farms	243 acres
– <u>Nonprofits</u>	2 farms	152 acres
<i>Total</i>	<i>14 farms</i>	<i>1054 acres</i>

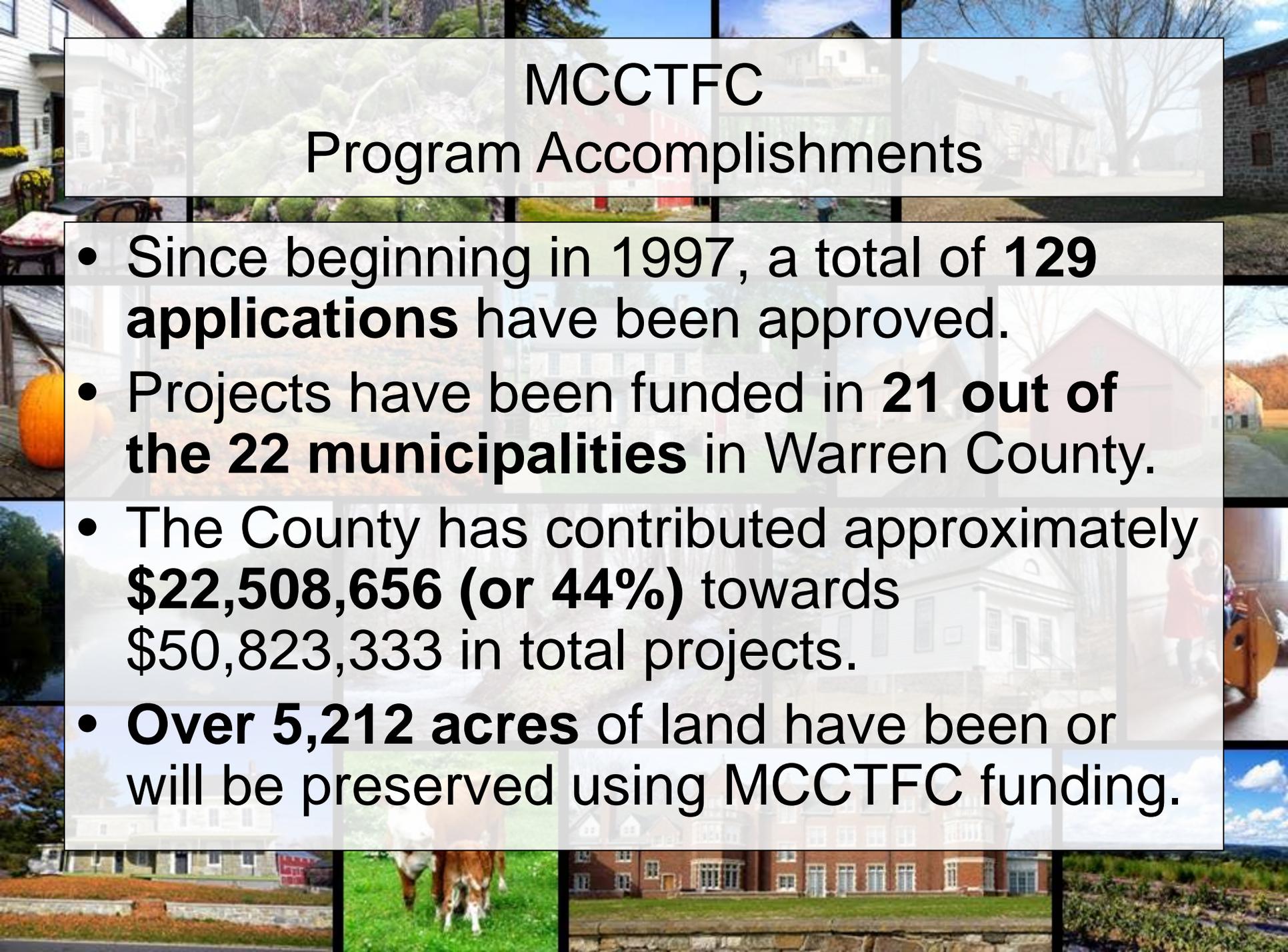
Right-To-Farm Program

- In addition to preserving farmland, the CADB also oversees the county's Right-To-Farm Program under N.J.S.A. 41C-1 et seq.
- The purpose of the Right-To-Farm Act is to protect responsible commercial farmers from public and private nuisance actions and unduly restrictive municipal regulations.
- The CADB resolves a number of Right-To-Farm matters each year.

The Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee (MCCTFC)

The MCCTFC consists of 11 members who review, prioritize and recommend municipal and charitable conservancy projects for funding by the Freeholders.

- Projects may include:
 - Open Space Acquisition for recreation and conservation,
 - Farmland Preservation, and/or
 - Historic Preservation (acquisition, stabilization and renovation).



MCCTFC

Program Accomplishments

- Since beginning in 1997, a total of **129 applications** have been approved.
- Projects have been funded in **21 out of the 22 municipalities** in Warren County.
- The County has contributed approximately **\$22,508,656 (or 44%)** towards \$50,823,333 in total projects.
- **Over 5,212 acres** of land have been or will be preserved using MCCTFC funding.

MCCTFC

2014 Projects

- Last year, 9 applications were submitted with initial requests totaling \$1,630,325.
- 6 historic and open space projects totaling \$800,000 were approved.
 - 1 project totaling \$148,378 will help preserve 124 acres of open space, with the county contributing about 16% towards the total project costs.
 - 5 projects totaling \$651,622 will help preserve historic sites and structures in 5 municipalities.



MCCTFC

2015 Applications

- This year, 7 applications were submitted with initial requests totaling \$946,830.
- 7 historic and open space projects totaling \$775,000 are subject to approval by the Freeholders.
 - 1 project totaling \$67,500 will help preserve a one-acre addition to an existing municipal park, with the county contributing about 25% towards the total project costs.
 - 6 projects totaling \$707,500 will help preserve historic sites and structures in 6 municipalities.



Questions?