



**MCF**  
MONMOUTH  
CONSERVATION  
FOUNDATION

FISCAL YEAR  
**2019**  
ANNUAL  
REPORT



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\* Indicates Former Board Member  
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 the period of this annual report.

\*\* In memoriam.

Message from the  
 PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

There's much to celebrate about this past year! We encourage you to read through the pages that capture Monmouth Conservation Foundation's successes since our 2019 fiscal year began.

While we could enumerate each success and every new initiative, we prefer to share the big picture: What MCF's overall work means in terms of maintaining our quality of life and addressing climate change, along with the everlasting impact our initiatives will have locally for future generations.

First, let us share some good news. Study data released by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJ DEP) confirms a significant shift that should please environmentalists and capitalists everywhere. For years, MCF and other land trusts have advocated for a concept called "smart growth," which is designed to spare farms, forests and natural habitats from development by redeveloping areas that are already built upon. As reported by the DEP, the percentage of residential building projects in New Jersey that occurred in areas already developed almost doubled from 30% to nearly 60% when comparing 2000-2007 vs. 2008-2018. These projects not only pleased environmentalists but created an economic surge of contemporary walkable neighborhoods with a range of housing opportunities for all ages, attracting millennials and adding to open space where none previously existed.

The "smart growth" phenomenon not only offers farms, forests, wetlands and other open spaces a longer lease on life, but also plays a supporting role in combating climate change. A recent study commissioned by the Nature Conservancy and the Doris Duke Foundation, found that natural climate solutions, such as land conservation, are among the most effective ways of addressing this very real and very urgent issue. Did you know that preserving and conserving carbon-storing environments such as forests, mangrove swamps, peat bogs, salt marshes and seagrass beds could help achieve up to 37% of carbon capture goals as agreed to at the 2015 Paris climate talks?

As Monmouth County's only land trust, MCF understands that by preserving and conserving land to help mitigate the breakdown of our climate, we safeguard the future for our children and retain our communities. Our planet can and should remain livable and unplagued by droughts, floods and horrific storms like Hurricane Irene and Superstorm Sandy. Each parcel of land preserved (or redeveloped), and stewarded properly is an important step in that direction.

We thank you for your continued support through your donations, volunteering, letters, emails and phone calls to local, state, and federal officials demanding constructive change on behalf of the environment, and for all that you do to champion our mission. We could never do what we do without your help. *Let's all keep up the good work!*

With gratitude and appreciation,

Holly Boylan Flego  
 President

William D. Kastning  
 AICP, Executive Director

2019 MCF ANNUAL REPORT  
 DESIGNED BY JANICE HAHN STUDIO

FRONT COVER PHOTO BY  
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BACK COVER PHOTO BY MAGGIE REILLY,  
 MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

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Conservation Excellence

# PROJECT SUCCESSES

## Since FY19

MCF celebrated some exceptional land preservation milestones from August 2019 through November 2019 — following the period detailed in the FY19 Annual Report. Since the process of preserving land requires coordination among many partners and navigating a myriad of challenging real estate transactions, we did not want to wait to share our exciting news.



PHOTO BY MAGGIE REILLY, MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM



PHOTO BY FRED YAHN, EAGLE DRONE SOLUTIONS

### **Druesne Farm (Colts Neck Township)**

MCF worked with the County of Monmouth, the State Agriculture Development Committee and the Township of Colts Neck to acquire a farmland easement on 20 acres on Route 537 in Colts Neck. The closing occurred in October 2019, and the total purchase price was \$1,012,940.

### **Shark River Hills Estates (Neptune Township)**

MCF worked with Neptune Township and the NJ Green Acres Program to acquire 3 acres near the Shark River for public open space, storm surge protection and water access. The closing occurred in November 2019, and the total purchase price was \$1,255,000.



PHOTO BY MARIBETH GARDENER, MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

# PROJECT SUCCESSSES Since FY19

None of these projects would be possible without the commitment of donors like you and our board of trustees. It is the shared commitment to the mission that unites us all in this critical work. As a member of the MCF community, we want you to know how essential your support is to us. *Thank you for making 2019 an especially significant year of saving land!*

## DeGroot Farm (Colts Neck Township)

MCF worked with the County of Monmouth, the State Agriculture Development Committee and the Township of Colts Neck to acquire a farmland easement on 42 acres on Route 34 in Colts Neck. The closing occurred in September 2019, and the total purchase price was \$1,604,772.



PHOTO BY FRED YAHN, EAGLE DRONE SOLUTIONS



PHOTO BY MAGGIE REILLY, MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

## McDowell (Wall Township)

MCF worked with the State of NJ Green Acres Program to acquire a 190-acre tract of natural habitat as an addition to Allaire State Park. The closing occurred in August 2019, and the total purchase price was \$3,819,000.



PHOTO BY MAGGIE REILLY, MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

MCF has been around for a long time, and as consciousness becomes more acute over the environmental challenges facing us, we are uniquely positioned to lend expertise and stewardship in the struggle to save land and maintain this precious and very limited resource.



PHOTO BY MAGGIE REILLY, MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM



# MCF

## Our Evolving MISSION in a Turbulent World

As climate challenges impact decisions from Davos to the debate stage, local initiatives from groups like Monmouth Conservation Foundation (MCF) underscore the critical connection between land preservation and global carbon reduction ...



Just as we are instinctively driven to protect and nurture our families, we now know we must treat Mother Nature similarly. In the more than 40 years since MCF was launched, we have come to see land preservation as something far more vital than just safeguarding this corner of New Jersey (aka "The Garden State") from the ravages of development chaos.

Clearly there's a collective desire to preserve the remaining and astonishing acres of green, our vibrant wetlands, woodlands and forests — all home to an extraordinary array of wildlife. However, the actual **work being done at MCF, and our sister land trusts elsewhere, has a far greater connection to the climate issues currently challenging our world than most might believe.** In fact, a key component to reducing carbon levels everywhere IS actually local *land preservation*.

While **climate change** is a *hot topic*, so to speak, for politicians and the twitteratti, the subject deserves much more than lip service.

## MCF: CLIMATE and the Global Economy

Climate change is driving some of the biggest fiscal outlays happening today, as major institutions now understand that to ignore sustainability is to court disaster. At the Davos World Economic Forum in January, the global business community was presented with a rather startling fact: they'll need to factor in an "economic disruption of \$12 trillion a year" from key businesses and industries that are prioritizing sustainability.

For the first time, investors are positioning allocations based upon environmental impact. Long-term goals are being measured in terms of the potential for rejuvenation vs. the threat of catastrophic loss due to what could be called "manmade" natural disasters. Recently, Goldman Sachs underwrote a \$150 million "Green Bond" for the Conservation Fund — a first in the land-preservation arena. Climate change is now driving investment strategies across all socioeconomic strata.



...and what does creating parks like Huber Woods in Middletown have to do with mitigating carbon release in a factory in Shanghai?

## MCF & Climate Change: What's the CONNECTION?

While many of us cannot process the enormity of a doomsday scenario while going about our daily lives, we must try to stay focused. This is why it's important to understand just **how MCF plays a direct role in the ongoing global struggle to live sustainably.** By preserving and conserving these unique and beloved spaces, MCF and stakeholders like you are furthering efforts to approach the climate crisis in a tangible way. How tangible? For one thing, your support of MCF means you're part of our initiative to incorporate "natural climate solutions."

By helping us in the conservation of these invaluable forests, fields, wetlands and marshes, you're already working to reduce carbon emissions in New Jersey.

### Carbon Reduction: Why It Matters

Most of us know that the climate change issue is centered around a steady rise in global temperatures that can lead to devastating and catastrophic consequences. Whenever we burn fossil fuels (like oil, coal and natural gas), gases are released into the environment. At the same time, the sun is radiating energy back down to Earth. That energy effectively traps those fossil fuel gases in the atmosphere, which means this trapped gas has become an insulation layer — which in turn makes things much warmer (the greenhouse effect).

The trickiest (and most frequently referenced) of these gases emitted into the atmosphere is carbon dioxide — CO<sub>2</sub>. There are others, but CO<sub>2</sub> is the primary pollutant here. We frequently hear about "carbon offset" or one's "carbon footprint" and why something needs to be done to address this abundance of carbon. A lot of the discussion is on a global scale — and it needs to be. Excessive CO<sub>2</sub> is threatening everyone. CO<sub>2</sub> released into the atmosphere lingers forever — and, in fact, since the Industrial Revolution began in the 18th century, CO<sub>2</sub> levels have increased 30%. That's a lot of carbon.





## MCF: Using NATURAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS?

A forest is a repository for carbon — also known as a carbon sink. A tree absorbs carbon — which means that the more carbon in a tree, the less of it there is in the atmosphere.

A natural climate solution (NCS) can mitigate dangerous carbon levels by keeping the carbon safely where it belongs — in the world’s forests, grasslands and wetlands. Exactly what MCF is doing right now.

Clearly carbon mitigation needs to be addressed worldwide via international governance and billion-dollar initiatives that seek to modify the very practices that got us where we are today. But you might be surprised to learn just how cost-effective and ultimately far-reaching natural climate solutions employed by MCF and other land trusts around the world can be.

According to the Land Trust Alliance, natural climate solutions “can provide 37% of cost-effective CO<sub>2</sub> mitigation needed through 2030 for a greater than 66% chance of holding global warming below 2°C (3.6°F) through improved management of forests, wetlands and agriculture.”

With every parcel of land MCF preserves, each habitat we preserve, every acre of marsh and wetland we sustain — we are capturing carbon. It’s that simple. Land is, above all, finite. And before it is lost forever to development, what remains deserves our protection.

The extraordinary benefits don’t stop there. Every time we designate property to be protected to keep the carbon where it belongs, we are also staving off additional negative land uses. Acreage we steward doesn’t become a home, a commercial establishment or a factory that then jettisons more carbon into the atmosphere.

Finally, MCF’s land initiatives also impact ecosystems in yet another powerful way. By saving an open space, we effectively bolster its biodiversity quotient and make it more resilient. The healthier an ecosystem, the more heartily it can respond to increases in environmental catastrophes linked to climate change. Protected land has a far greater ability to withstand the trauma of a hurricane like Irene or a superstorm like Sandy.

Over the past year, MCF has celebrated some significant land preservation milestones.

*We worked with the State of NJ Green Acres Program to acquire a **190-acre tract of natural habitat as an addition to Allaire State Park.***

*We teamed up with the County of Monmouth, the State Agriculture Development Committee and the Township of Colts Neck to acquire a **farmland easement on 42 acres on Route 34 in Colts Neck.** In conjunction with this partnership, we also acquired a farmland easement on 20 acres on Route 537 in Colts Neck.*

*MCF worked with Neptune Township and the NJ Green Acres Program to acquire **3 acres near the Shark River** for public open space, storm surge protection and water access.*

These projects would not be possible without the commitment of donors like you and our board of trustees.

It’s important for you to understand just how essential your support is to us, and how grateful your children, your grandchildren and future generations will be knowing that you put your money where your heart is to help protect the natural world.

Remember... “there is no **PLANET B!**”

“ The truth is: The natural world is changing. And we are totally dependent on that world. It provides our food, water and air. It’s the most precious thing we have, and we need to defend it.

– Sir David Attenborough

### SOURCES:

#### BBC NEWS

[www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-24021772](http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-24021772)

#### CMI: CARBON MITIGATION INSTITUTE

[cmi.princeton.edu](http://cmi.princeton.edu)

#### DAVOS REPORT

Visualizing the Biggest Risks to the Global Economy in 2020

[www.visualcapitalist.com/](http://www.visualcapitalist.com/)

[biggest-risks-global-economy-2020-environment](http://biggest-risks-global-economy-2020-environment)

#### LAND TRUST ALLIANCE

[www.landtrustalliance.org](http://www.landtrustalliance.org)

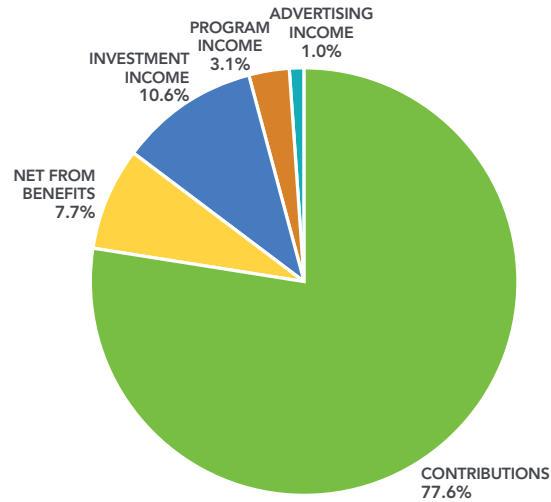
#### NATURAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

[www.naturalclimate.solutions/the-science](http://www.naturalclimate.solutions/the-science)

#### U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE FOREST SERVICE

Carbon sequestration

[www.fs.fed.us/ecosystemservices/carbon.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/ecosystemservices/carbon.shtml)



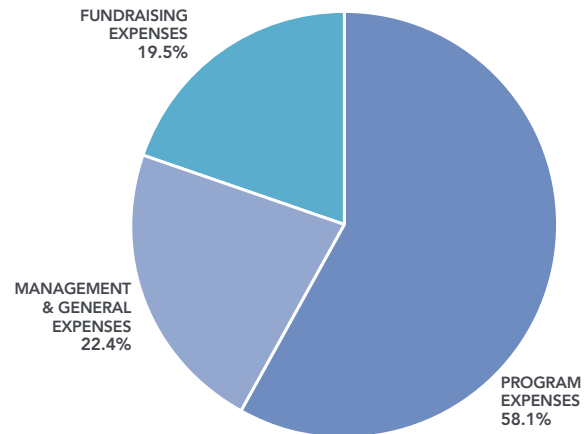
## Focus on Finance

For year ending June 30, 2019

### FY19 Organization Support & Revenue

Contributions	\$ 1,101,313
Net from Benefits	\$ 109,350
Investment Income	\$ 150,343
Program Income	\$ 44,099
Advertising Income	\$ 13,750

**Total Organization Support & Revenue \$1,418,855**



### FY19 Organization Expenses

Program Expenses	\$ 515,288
Management & General Expenses	\$ 198,798
Fundraising Expenses	\$ 172,844*

**Total Organization Expenses \$ 886,930**

**Increase in Net Assets \$ 531,925**

\*The fundraising expenses percentage is higher than prior years due to the initiation of a comprehensive campaign.

## Focus on Donors

A heartfelt thank you to the individuals, corporations, organizations and foundations for their generous support to Monmouth Conservation Foundation in 2019.

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State of New Jersey Green Acres Program  
Upper Freehold Township  
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PHOTO BY MAGGIE REILLY, MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

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## SAVE THESE DATES MCF 2020 EVENTS

**Thursday . March 12**  
Winter Dinner

**Wednesday . April 22**  
Annual Meeting

**Thursday . April 30**  
Spring for Conservation  
Rooftop Party

**Friday . May 8**  
Hops & Grapes  
Craft Beer & Wine Tasting

**Saturday . September 26**  
Fall for Conservation Party

**Tuesday . December 1**  
Holiday Style Lunch

For additional information and/or to discuss  
Sponsorship Opportunities please contact:

KATHLEEN KENNEY OR ANNE DELANEY

732.671.7000 OR EMAIL

KKENNEY@MONMOUTHCONSERVATION.ORG

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