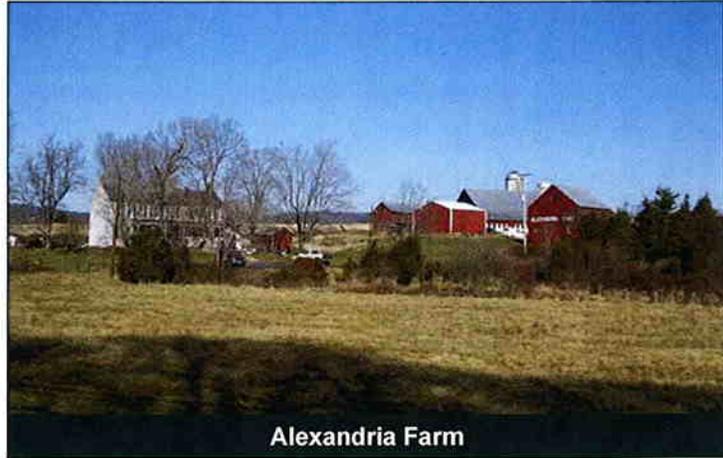

8: OPEN SPACE AND FARMLAND

A. Funding Sources & Tools

Funding for open space comes from a variety of sources, including municipal, county, state and federal sources and private land trusts. Private land trusts are non-profit organizations which “can often act faster and be more creative in their real estate transactions than established government agencies” according to Howe (1989). Landowners are able to reap tax benefits through charitable donations to a land trust. Many successful open space purchases combine a number of funding sources and strategies.



Holland Township residents approved the establishment of a 2 cent tax for every \$100 assessed value to provide a stable source of funding for farmland preservation, as well as the acquisition, development or maintenance of other open space for recreation and conservation purposes. As Holland Township expenditures are funded from other sources, municipal open space monies are set aside each year in the capital budget and residents do not pay the tax directly.

In addition, Hunterdon County residents approved a 3 cent tax per \$100 valuation to fund an Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund in 1999, which was renewed in 2005, and expires December 31, 2009. This revenue is dedicated to the acquisition of lands for recreation, conservation, general open space, farmland, and historic preservation throughout Hunterdon County.

The Garden State Preservation Trust Act provides state funds for land acquisition and park development through the Green Acres program and funding for farmland preservation through the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC). Various programs under the SADC include Purchase of Development Rights, Fee Simple (outright purchase), the Eight Year Program, and the Planning Incentive Grant (PIG). To participate in the Eight Year Program, landowners agree to deed-restrict their farms solely to agricultural use for a period of eight years. In return, they receive certain benefits and increase their score when applying to other programs. The PIG program seeks to preserve reasonably contiguous farms. In order to participate, a township must 1) identify a reasonably contiguous project area; 2) demonstrate a commitment to funding; 3) have an Agricultural Advisory Committee appointed by the mayor; and 4) adopt a Farmland Preservation Element of the municipal master plan.

Farmland owners may wish to pursue various programs through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which either rent or buy easements or cost-share habitat restoration and conservation measures. These include the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) (see **Internet Resources**).

Private land trusts interested in Holland Township include the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance and the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust. These organizations and the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) are sources for in-depth information concerning open space preservation through various funding, planning and zoning techniques (see **Internet Resources**).

B. Greenway Establishment & Maintenance

A *greenway* is a corridor of undeveloped land or open space, which often protects environmental features, such as a stream corridor, floodplain, forested ridgeline, or animal migration route, but which can also preserve a scenic view and provide recreational opportunities, such as parks or biking/hiking trails. Greenway corridors also have the potential for positive economic impacts, by creating jobs, enhancing property values, expanding local businesses, attracting new businesses, increasing local tax revenues, decreasing local government expenditures, and promoting a local community. The publication Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails and Greenway Corridors outlines procedures for analyzing economic impacts of a greenway project, and provides examples. Decision makers can benefit from recognition of potential economic impacts as well as intrinsic values of greenways in support of decisions which enhance the well-being of the community (National Park Service, 1995).

Garden State Greenways is an online planning tool designed for all those involved in conserving open space, farmland, and historic areas in New Jersey. It uses GIS to identify *hubs* (larger areas of undeveloped land with important natural resource values) and linear *connectors* between these hubs. The goal of the program is to help coordinate efforts of both private groups and government agencies (NJ Conservation Foundation, 2005).

Local governments often use a variety of planning and zoning techniques for establishing greenways, including creating a greenway map and adopting it as part of the Master Plan, creating a Greenway Overlay District, cluster zoning and Transfer of Development Rights. These strategies can be combined with farmland preservation, private land trusts, and conservation easements to meet the Township's open space, farmland and recreation goals (Howe, 1989).

Before a greenway is established, issues of maintenance, public access and monitoring of easements must be addressed to ensure long-term success of the project (Howe, 1989).

C. Open Space

Holland Township has purchased several parcels near the center of the township. Hunterdon County owns the Musconetcong River Reservation, which is a 425 acre forested nature preserve. It offers opportunities for hiking, fishing and hunting. A number of state-owned parcels comprise the Holland Church Angler Access, the Musconetcong River Greenway and



Delaware River Bluffs. The Nature Conservancy, a non-profit organization, owns Milford Bluffs, a red shale cliff site with rare plant species.

An updated inventory of the preserved open space properties is presented in **Table 8.1** and **Figure 8**. Using the acreage figures in the GIS data files¹, a total of 1,098.4 acres has been preserved as open space in Holland Township, which is 7.5% of the township.

Table 8.1: Preserved Open Space²

BLOCK	LOT	NAME	OWNERSHIP	USE*	GIS ACRES**
County, Municipality & Non-profit Open Space					
1	1	Musconetcong Gorge section of the Musconetcong River Reservation	County – fee simple (Green Acres)	recreation/conservation	237.3
1	7		County – fee simple (Green Acres)		11.9
1.01	1		County – fee simple (Green Acres)		14.5
2	1		County – fee simple (Green Acres)		124.4
6	2		Municipal		12.6
6	2.01		Municipal		10.1
6	65	Holland Twp. School	Board of Education	school	25.8
6	61.02	Holland Twp. School	Board of Education		6.4
10	12		municipal	recreation/conservation	96.6
10	1.05		Municipal		3.8
13	50		Non-Profit – fee simple		2.9
13	62		Non-Profit		1.0
18	18		Non-Profit – easement		0.4
18	22		State		1.5
18	17		Non-Profit – easement		1.2
18	17.01		Non-Profit – easement		0.6
22	22.01		Municipal		6.0
24	2.04		Municipal		19.5
24	4		Non-Profit – fee simple		36.7
24	7		Non-Profit – fee simple		165.95
26	2		Non-Profit – easement		8.0
27	12		Non-Profit – easement		23.6
27	13		Non-Profit – easement		agriculture
27	16		Non-Profit – easement	recreation/conservation	4.0
27	16.1		Non-Profit – easement		2.2
27	17		Non-Profit – easement		0.3
27	18		Non-Profit – easement		0.6
State Open Space					
3	49	DELAWARE RIVER BLUFFS	Natural Lands Trust	PRESERVE	13.8
3	54		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	33.0
4.01	1		Natural Lands Trust	PRESERVE	1.7
4.01	2		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	1.1
4	9	MUSCONETCONG RIVER GREENWAY	Fish, Game & Wildlife	PRESERVE	6.0
4	11		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	0.6
9	8		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	0.6
9	8.06		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	144.0
9	27		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	18.1
12	1.03		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	11.1
12	2		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	15.7

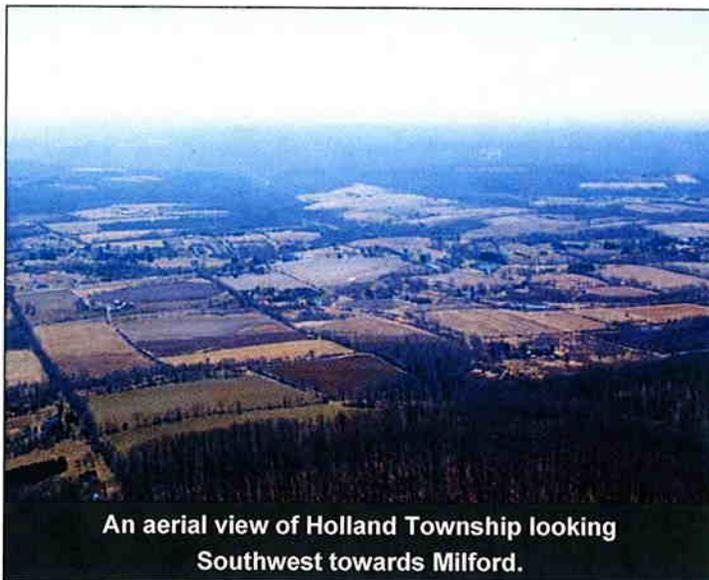
¹ “GIS Acres” is from the GIS data, and may not reflect actual acreage.

² Some properties or portions of properties are not open to the public.

Table 8.1: Preserved Open Space²

BLOCK	LOT	NAME	OWNERSHIP	USE*	GIS ACRES**
18	1	HOLLAND CHURCH ACCESS	Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	2.4
18	18.01		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	2.2
19	8		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	0.7
19	12		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	2.5
18.01	16		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	4.9
26	4		Fish, Game & Wildlife	WMA	7.1
26	4.02		Fish, Game & Wildlife	PRESERVE	6.71
Total Preserved Acres (approximate):					1,098.4
Portions of some properties might not be preserved or public, but might be included in the acreage figures.					
*Use: WMA = Natural Area inside a Wildlife Management Area; PRESERVE = The Natural Lands Trust Preserve					
**GIS Acres is from the GIS data, and may not reflect tax map acreage.					
Sources: Hunterdon County GIS data; NJDEP GIS data.					

D. Farmland



An aerial view of Holland Township looking Southwest towards Milford.

The Farmland Preservation Plan Element (FPPE) of the Holland Master Plan was adopted in May 2001. As required by the Municipal Land Use Law and in order to apply for the Planning Incentive Grant (PIG), the FPPE includes an inventory of farm properties, details of municipal support for agriculture, and a plan for preserving farmland. The Master Plan includes an appendix listing all farmland eligible properties within Holland Township, as of 2001 (MacKenzie, 2001).

According to the plan, the majority of the land in Holland

Township is still being farmed, based on farmland assessed properties, 63% of which is locally-owned.

There are basically three Agricultural Development Areas (ADAs) in Holland Township, shown on **Figure 8**. ADAs are areas where agricultural operations currently exist and are likely to continue, based on the presence of existing farms and productive agricultural soils (farmland soils are shown in **Figure 4h**). The ADAs were delineated by Hunterdon County and approved by the State. The SADC and the County Agricultural Development Board (CADB) will only fund the preservation of farmland parcels that lie within an ADA.

Table 8.2 lists a total of 1,097 acres of farmland that have been preserved pursuant to the SADC. **Table 8.3** lists parcels in the Eight Year Program (temporary preservation), and current applications for preservation.

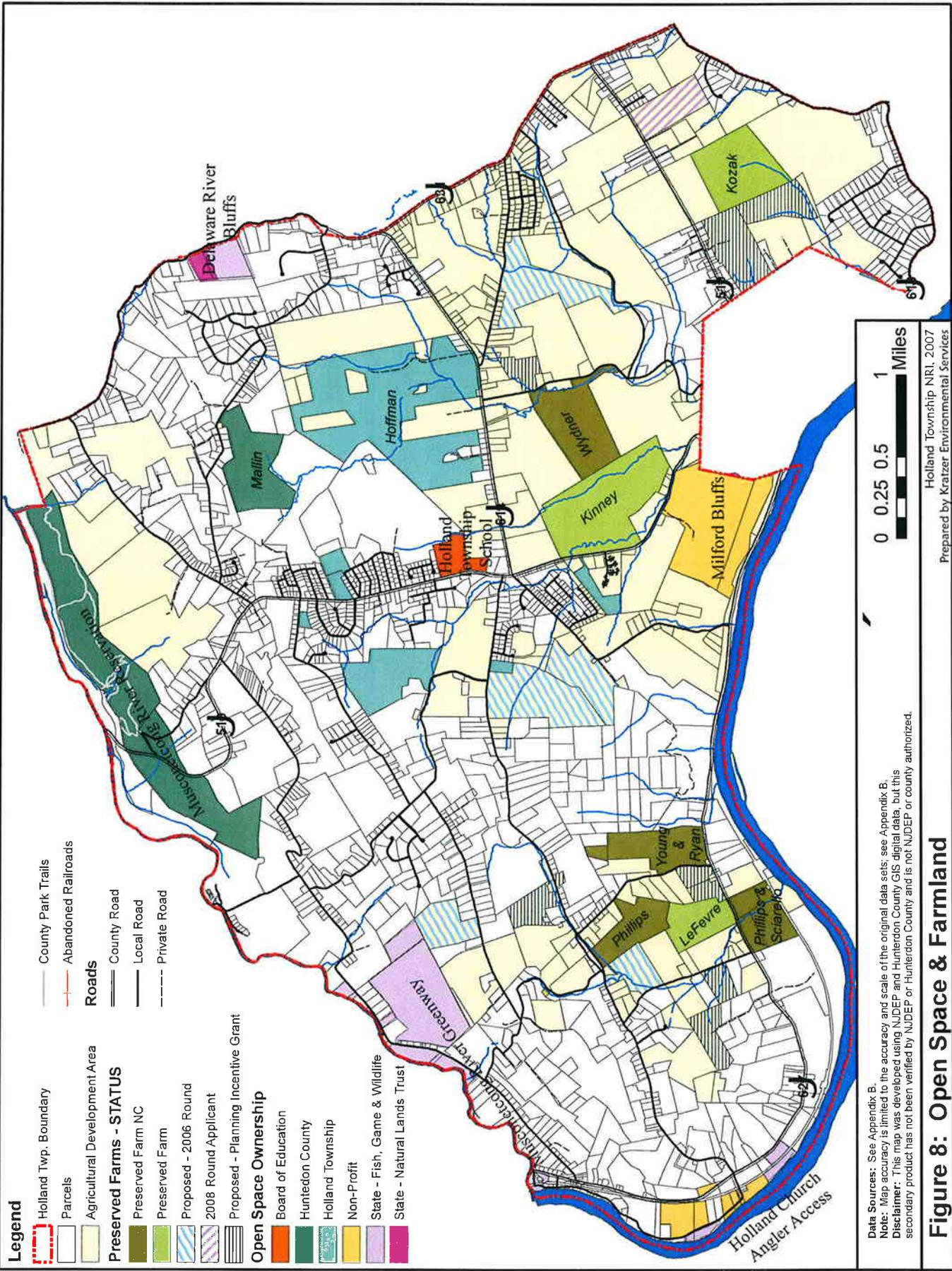


Figure 8: Open Space & Farmland

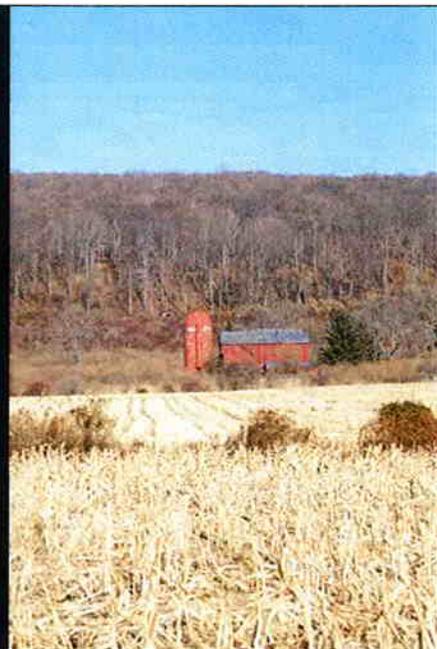
In total, approximately 2,195 acres of land in Holland are permanently preserved, which is about 15% of the township. An additional 802 acres are either in the Municipal 8-year plan or in the application process for SADC funding.

Table 8.2: Preserved Farmland

BLOCK	LOT	NAME	OWNERSHIP	Year Preserved	USE	ACRES
Permanently Preserved Farms - State Agriculture Retention and Development Act (SADC) Program						
6	49	Hoffman	Holland/Hunterdon		farmland	393
15	3	Alexandria (Kinney)*	Preserved Farm	2002	farmland	173
15	4	Wydner**	Preserved Farm, NC	2005	farmland	122
15	5		Preserved Farm, NC		farmland	0.7
20	3	Phillips	Preserved Farm, NC		farmland	65
20	9	LaFevre	Preserved Farm	2005	farmland	59
22	39	Young & Ryan**	Preserved Farm, NC		farmland	94
22	47	Young & Ryan**	Preserved Farm, NC		farmland	
25	59	Kozak	Preserved Farm	2005	farmland	125
26	16	Phillips & Sciarrello**	Preserved Farm, NC		farmland	65
26	17	Phillips & Sciarrello**	Preserved Farm, NC		farmland	
26	19	Phillips & Sciarrello**	Preserved Farm, NC		farmland	
Total Acres Preserved:						1,097
*Holland Township purchased this easement and subsequently sold the easement to Hunterdon County.						
**State owned easement						
Sources: Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Board (September 15, 2005) http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/cadb/farms.htm , Hunterdon County GIS data and NJDEP GIS data.						



Above: An aerial view of part of Bunn Valley region looking east; Spring Mills Road (Rt. 614) is on the left.



Right: A view of Hoffman Farm, Bunn Valley.

Table 8.3: Eight Year Plan and Current Applications for Farmland Preservation

BLOCK	LOT	NAME	OWNERSHIP	USE	ACRES
Municipally Approved Farmland Preservation Program (8-year program)					
20	1	Phillips	Expires June 30, 2005	farmland	85
20	3	Phillips	Expires June 30, 2005	farmland	
26	19	Phillips	Expires June 30, 2005	farmland	
26	16	Phillips	Expires October 25, 2008	farmland	51
26	17	Phillips	Expires October 25, 2008	farmland	
Current Applications to the Sate Agriculture Retention and Development Act (SADC) Program					
9	15.5		2006 Round Applicant	farmland	50.3
14	16		Pending Farm	farmland	84.2
16	4		2006 Round Applicant	farmland	102.5
20	7		2006 Round Applicant	farmland	39.0
22	22		2006 Round Applicant	farmland	117.5
22	34		2006 Round Applicant	farmland	65.7
25	34	Carroll/Wenz	2007 Round Applicant	farmland	77.2
Current Applications to the Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) Program					
14	35		PIG Pending Farm	farmland	33.4
16	1.2		PIG Pending Farm	farmland	22.4
20	12		PIG Pending Farm	farmland	13.5
20	13		PIG Pending Farm	farmland	13.6
21	18		PIG Pending Farm	farmland	20.0
21	18.1		PIG Pending Farm	farmland	33.7
22	98		PIG Pending Farm	farmland	2.9
25	34	Carroll/Wenz	PIG Targeted	farmland	77.2
25	45	Townsquare Nursery	PIG Targeted	farmland	48.8
Total Acres Proposed:					802
Sources: Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Board (September 15, 2005) http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/cadb/farms.htm , Hunterdon County GIS data and NJDEP GIS data.					

References: Open Space & Farmland

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Howe, Linda. 1989. Keeping our Garden State Green: A Local Government Guide for Greenway and Open Space Planning. Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions. 57 pages.

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McKenzie, Elizabeth C. "Farmland Preservation Plan Element" in Master Plan for Holland Township, Hunterdon County, New Jersey. Adopted 5/14/2001. 20 pages + appendix.

National Park Service. 1995. Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails, and Greenway Corridors: A Resource Book. Fourth Edition. 154 pages. http://www.nps.gov/pwro/rtca/econ_all.pdf

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Programs.
http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Programs/index_alph.html

Internet Resources: Open Space & Farmland

Garden State Greenways <http://www.gardenstategreenways.org>

Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Board: <http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/cadb.htm>
Mailing Address: Hunterdon Co. Ag. Development Board, PO Box 2900, Flemington, NJ 08822-2900
Phone: 908.788.1490

Hunterdon County Department of Parks and Recreation, Musconetcong Gorge Section of the Musconetcong River Reservation: <http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/depts/parks/guides/MusconetcongGorge.htm>

Hunterdon County Open Space, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund:
<http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/openspac.htm>

Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance: <http://www.hlta.org>

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Programs.
http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Programs/index_alph.html

NJ Conservation Foundation: <http://www.njconservation.org/>

NJDEP Green Acres Program: <http://www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres/>

NJ Natural Lands Trust: <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/natural/trust.html>

NJDEP Division of Fish and Wildlife (grants and assistance with wildlife habitat):
<http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/artwhip06.htm>

NJDEP Division of Fish and Wildlife Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) Grants:
http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/ensp/lip_prog.htm