



Campaign to preserve New Jersey's parks, natural areas, clean water, farmland, and historic treasures

142 W. State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
Website: www.NJKeepItGreen.org

Tel: (609) 392-1181
Fax: (609) 392-1182

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 11/3/09

Contacts: Tom Gilbert, Trust for Public Land, (267) 261 7325
Kelly Mooij, NJ Audubon Society, (609) 577 1434

New Jersey Keeps It Green! Passes Green Acres, Clean Water Ballot Issue

Nov. 3, 2009, TRENTON, NJ -- Yesterday New Jersey voted Yes to continue investing in preserving our land, water and history for the benefit of citizens today, and for future generations. The majority of voters, 52% to 48%, voted to continue funding to the state's highly successful preservation programs.

Funding for the Green Acres Program, the Farmland Preservation Program, and the NJ Historic Trust will now continue for the next two years, giving New Jersey time to identify a long-term funding source for these programs.

In the meantime, the \$400 million in approved funding will:

- Preserve sources of clean drinking water
- Protect water quality in our rivers, lakes and streams
- Preserve wildlife habitat, working farms, historic sites and natural areas
- Invest in our ecological resources that save on the high costs of degradation, protect New Jersey's multi-billion dollar outdoor tourism industries, and create jobs restoring natural and historic landmarks.
- Cost each household less than \$1 per month
- Require continued full public disclosure of all spending
- Leave a legacy for future generations.

"Once again New Jersey voters have affirmed their commitment to continuing efforts to protect clean water and open spaces for our children and grandchildren," said **Tom Gilbert of The Trust for Public Land, and Chair of the NJ Keep It Green Campaign of over 135 organizations**. "This demonstrates that even in difficult economic times, voters understand that these are wise investments, and believe we must maintain our commitment to preserving New Jersey's land, water and history."

Today's result shows the strong citizen support for safeguarding our environment, according to members of the NJ Keep It Green coalition. "Today we heard from the voters with a strong and unwavering voice that New Jersey continues to believe in these programs and recognizes the value of open space, clean water, farms and parks, not only to our pocketbooks, but to preserving what we love about New Jersey and protecting our quality of life," said Kelly Mooij, **Director of Government Relations for the NJ Audubon Society and Coordinator of the NJ Keep It Green Coalition**.

Mooij added, "Today the voters strongly affirmed their continuing commitment to safeguarding our environment, our economy and our quality of life. We are grateful for that support and for the support of our over-135 coalition organizations and legislative leaders **such Assemblyman McKeon, Senator Smith, Senate Majority Leader Sweeney, Senate Minority Leader Tom Kean Jr., Assemblyman Malone**, among many, many others

who gave voters the opportunity to protect New Jersey and make it a better place to live, do business and raise a family."

"Once again, New Jersey voters have shown their commitment to protecting land and other natural resources," said **Michele Byers of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation**. "They know a good investment when they see one – and they voted with their hearts and their wallets when they voted yes on Question #1 today."

"Today, voters showed they continue to understand that preserving land protects our clean water supply." **Julia Somers, Executive Director of the NJ Highlands Coalition**, said, "New Jersey's voters understand that when they preserve land they protect the drinking water of the Highlands that they depend on. "

Passage of the Act yesterday will allow New Jersey to preserve many specific and ecologically fragile locations. "We are thrilled New Jersey has chosen to protect our clean water, wildlife, and recreation resources by voting in favor of Green Acres," said **Barbara Brummer, Director of The Nature Conservancy in New Jersey**. "The immediate tangible outcome is funding for setting aside Bear's Head Branch in Cumberland County, and Clove Brook in Sussex County. Both of these places are home to wintering bald eagles, and reserves for clean water resources. We are proud of New Jersey today!"

This was a good day for everyone - The 5.4 million New Jersey users of NJ Highlands water users and NJ Highlands landowners. "Preserving open space has become a way of life for New Jersey residents," said **David Epstein, President of The Land Conservancy of New Jersey**. "Today voters showed that they recognize the value of New Jersey's landmark preservation programs, even in tough economic times."

The results tonight also benefit New Jersey's working farms that make a major contribution to New Jersey's economy, our access to fresh food, and our quality of life. "This election shows that the citizens of New Jersey still care about preserving our farms and open spaces," said **Rich Nieuwenhuis, president of the New Jersey Farm Bureau**. "The results show it is time to work on a long-term funding source for our vital preservation programs."

The benefits of New Jersey's decision tonight are wide ranging. "It is wonderful that New Jersey voters understand a smart investment opportunity when they see one and that they realize the importance of continuing to support clean water, open space and farmland preservation," said **Margaret O'Gorman of the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ**. "This result will help grow our \$3 billion wildlife recreation industry and every resident benefits."

"The voters' Yes vote on Question #1 will ensure that for the next two years there are funds available to protect healthy forests that surround our drinking water sources and to prevent productive farmland from being lost. The NJ Keep It Green coalition will echo the voters' message to the Governor and the Legislature to work for long-term open space funding to protect what we all love about New Jersey," said **Jennifer M. Coffey, Policy Director, Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association**.

#####

The New Jersey – Keep It Green Campaign is a coalition of over 135 organizations from across the state working to renew the Garden State Preservation Trust, and provide for clean water, open spaces, farmland preservation and historic preservation. For more information on this Campaign, please contact us directly or visit www.NJKeepItGreen.org