



Board of Chosen Freeholders

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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hunterdon Freeholders Add Preserved Acres At No Cost to the County

The Hunterdon County Freeholders recently approved the preservation of 77 acres of farmland that straddles Glen Gardner, Hampton, and Bethlehem, and gained 209 forested open space acres in Union and Bethlehem, all at no cost to the County.

Freeholder Matt Holt, the Board's liaison to the Department of Planning and Land Use, stated, "Preserving land that ensures a multigenerational farm remains as farmland in perpetuity, and gaining significant forested land that creates trail opportunities and maintains the county's natural beauty and viewsapes, without needing to use County open space monies, is an exceptional achievement by our staff."

Seventy-seven acres of the Grochowicz farm that spreads across three municipalities; Bethlehem, Glen Gardner, and Hampton, has been approved for preservation with the full \$657,050 cost covered by the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) and a Highlands Council grant.

The Freeholder Board recently approved a management agreement for the 144 acre entirely wooded Reilly/Ahlemeyer and NJ Water Supply Authority property in Bethlehem that connects the County owned Jugtown Mountain and Tower Hill properties. The agreement will allow for fluid trail design for what is a combined 677 acres of parkland.

The Freeholders also approved a management agreement with the NJ Water Supply Authority for the 65-acre American Capital property adjacent to the County's Union Furnace Nature Preserve and preserved Plushanski property in Union and Bethlehem Townships. The combination of these properties creates trail opportunities on 235 contiguous acres.

There was no outlay required from the County's Open Space Fund for the addition of the two open space properties to other County parkland. The Hunterdon County Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC) recommended approval of both management agreements.

Holt said, "Developing other funding partners and innovative methods of connecting already preserved parklands which then allows the County to reserve open space dollars for other worthy preservation projects, demonstrates creative thinking by the Planning and Land Use staff that puts the public's interest first. A job well done."