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The Somerset County Park Commission is committed to excellence in promoting stewardship of land and resources, providing outstanding recreation opportunities and leisure services, and fostering an environment which is service-oriented and responsive to public needs.

The Somerset County Park Commission does not discriminate in any manner against any person by reason of race, color, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, or religious or political affiliation.
At a ribbon cutting ceremony in the fall of 2018, the Park Commission officially opened the expansion of East County Park. Located in Warren, the 150-acre park features an 8-foot-wide stone multi-use trail approximately one-half mile long, two large dog and one small dog leash-free areas, three ponds, and two pavilions. The park was developed in partnership with Warren Township. Future plans include the installation of picnic tables in the pavilions and the ability to reserve the larger of the pavilions for group events.

In August 2011, Hurricane Irene flooded Lord Stirling Park causing significant damage to the boardwalk trails at the Environmental Education Center (EEC). The Boondocks Boardwalk, a remote section of trail, suffered the most damage, resulting in the closure of the trail. In 2015, a funding campaign began and $62,000 in donations was received mainly by a generous donation from Investors Bank, as well as the Somerset County Park Foundation and individual donors. For two years, staff and volunteers removed, transported, rebuilt, and ultimately replaced 900’ of boardwalk. Groups from REI, GlaxoSmithKline, Janssen, United Way, Enbridge, and the Somerset County Volunteer Services Handyman Crew attributed countless hours in varying weather conditions to complete this project. In April 2018, the completion of the Boondocks Boardwalk rebuild culminated with a ribbon cutting ceremony. The Boondocks Trail is now open for everyone’s enjoyment.

There were 155,033 rounds of golf played on the five golf courses. Despite the record setting rainfalls amount of 66 inches of rain that fell on 160 days of the year, Golf staff provided customers with outstanding playing conditions and a wide variety of events and tournaments that the golfing public enjoyed throughout the year. Two indoor simulators, located at the Neshanic Valley Learning Center provided an option for golfers on rainy days and during the winter months.

In colonial Park, 4,465 rounds of miniature golf were played at the putting course, and the paddleboats were rented 1,540 times. The four-acre leash-free dog area continued to be quite popular with 15,600 visitations. More than 24,400 visitors enjoyed the EEC trails, special events, and school and public programs.

Swimmers and sunbathers totaled 15,767 at Warrenbrook Pool. Individual and league play court time at Green Knoll and Colonial Park Tennis Centers totaled 22,000 visitations. Baseball, softball, lacrosse, and football teams and leagues at the Torpey Athletic Complex totaled 65,600 players. The softball fields at North Branch Park, Duke Island Park, and Quail Brook Park hosted 23,900 people. The baseball fields at Mountain View Park hosted 56,870 people. The Howe Athletic Complex consists of a cricket field and four soccer fields. These fields hosted 11,500 people. Cross Country Track courses located at Natirar Park, Colonial Park, Duke Island Park, and East County Park hosted 10,000 runners.

The Flying Field buzzed with model airplane enthusiasts. More than 3,100 people watched the hawks soar in Washington Valley Park, and almost 30,000 visitors hiked and mountain biked there. 32,000 people did the same in the Sourland Mountain Preserve.

In 2018, 2,858 permits were issued for family picnics, dog and horse shows, scout camping, soccer, softball, football, lacrosse, cross country track, cricket, walk-
a-thons, and special events. Of these, Colonial Park, Duke Island Park, and North Branch Park are venues to form lifetime memories. There were 325 picnic permits issued to families and private organizations, totaling visitation of 22,000.

The Environmental Education Center was visited by 23,435 people in 2018. Nearly 8,000 people participated in instructional programs led by park Naturalists, including school programs, public programs, scout groups, birthday parties, library programs, and senior center programs. In addition, 1,778 youth ages 4-16 took part in the summer camp programs offered at the EEC. Special events included Children’s Art Show, Maple Sugaring, Swamp Search, County Caper, 1770s Festival, By the Light of the Moon, and Festival of Trees. The Great Swamp Experience exhibit attracted more than 6,000 visitors.

More than 27,000 visitors took advantage of recreational riding and public events at the Lord Stirling Stable in 2018. Residents from 19 Somerset County municipalities enjoyed programs and events at the Stable throughout the year. Family members from 4,000 households state-wide rode in lesson sessions, took a trail ride or participated in an educational program. 37 birthdays were celebrated with pony parties, bringing more than 1,200 guests to the facility, while another 400 children were introduced to horses through the daily lead line program, free pony rides at special events, and other pony programming. An open house and 10 Introductory Rides were held to introduce new people to the opportunities available at Lord Stirling Stable.

Leonard J. Buck Garden and Colonial Park Gardens continue to be destinations for those who treasure public gardens, nature, flowers, wildlife, and tranquility. Almost 12,000 visitors enjoyed Buck Garden’s magnificent rock garden flower collections and winding trails, and 13,950 visitors enjoyed Colonial Park Gardens’ roses, perennials, herbs, and the distinguished arboretum.

A stone paver walkway was installed in compliance with the American Disabilities Act at the entrance of the Perennial Garden. This walkway significantly improved both accessibility and the aesthetics of the garden. The proposal for a new design of the Perennial Garden has also been approved. The design will create a more impressive garden that will extend the season of bloom and enhance the overall visitor experience of the garden. These essential upgrades to the Perennial Garden will also contribute significant design elements that will enhance Colonial Park’s reputation as a must see destination and an extraordinary showpiece for Somerset County.

Tree saplings were distributed at the third annual Arbor Day Native Tree event, accompanied by a brochure which informed participants about proper planting methods.

The “Milkweed for Monarchs” program also continued for a third year, in which 800 milkweed plants, the host plant for Monarch butterflies, were distributed free of charge to the public, in order to bolster declining Monarch butterfly habitats. During the summer, the staff of Buck Garden raised 60 monarchs from caterpillar to butterfly, and created an educational viewing station for the public inside the visitor’s center. Children visiting the garden were given the opportunity to release many of the adult monarchs.

A nine-person delegation from the Guizhou Botanical Garden in Guiyang City, China visited the Rudolf W. van der Goot Rose Garden at Colonial Park in September 2018. Led by Horticulture Supervisor Shauna Moore, the delegates toured the garden that had been presented with the prestigious 2015 World Federation of Rose Societies’ Garden of Excellence Award.
PROGRAMS

The free summer concert series in Duke Island Park began with a performance by The Happenings who played their 1960s doo-wop hits including See You In September and Go Away Little Girl. Then Billy Gilman, runner-up winner in the smash hit TV show The Voice took the stage the following week to belt out ballads and received a standing ovation when he performed Frank Sinatra’s My Way. The Amish Outlaws love music – all music. They brought infectious joy to the crowd playing Johnny Cash, Lady Gaga, and even Pitbull. Garden State Radio brought the crowd to its feet dancing and singing along while they played a bit of everything, spanning four decades of music. The season ended with the Annual Food Truck Festival, where in addition to sampling a range of culinary delights, the audience was treated to Kinderhook, a popular New Jersey country rock band from the 70s and 80s. The evening ended with Home Again, a celebration of Carole King’s legend that captured the “Beautiful” spirit of a unique time in music history!

The Environmental Education Center continues to stimulate awareness and understanding of the natural world through environmental, cultural, and recreational learning experiences. This year, Naturalists led a number of overnight trips including a bird and nature tour of south eastern Arizona, a weekend climbing all of New Jersey’s Lighthouses, and bird watching in Cape May during the fall migration season. Several popular Day trips were also conducted, including the beloved Garden Discovery Tours.

Paddling programs are always popular. From April through October, canoe and kayak instructional courses took place on Branta Pond in addition to visiting off-site canals, rivers, reservoirs, and bays throughout the tristate area. Interest has also grown in stand-up paddling (SUP), and included instructional day trips and sunset yoga on a SUP board.

Summer programs were offered for a variety of ages. Coyote Kids highlighted habitat and animal exploration through hands-on water play, crafts, and hiking for children ages 4-6. Eco-Explorers and AWESIM Kids provided watercraft instruction, hiking, field trips, and science-based lessons for children ages 7-9 and 10-13 respectively. Xtreme Adventure challenged teens ages 13-16 with hiking, rock climbing, stand-up paddling, and kayaking day trips.

As part of the Program Series, the film Saving the Great Swamp was featured with two public performances, which highlights how the area became an environmental preserve, and not an airport to rival Newark, as originally proposed. Michael Roswell, a Doctoral candidate from Rutgers University presented, “Do Male and Female Bees Like Different Flowers?”, and 220 visitors participated in the “Dinosaurs Rock” program. Christian Hagenlocher of the Raptor Trust presented The Birding Project. Linda Akeson McGurk, of Sweden, presented Amazing Health Benefits of Nature Play. Discovery Gardens proved to be the perfect location for the EEC’s first fairy garden party. More than 50 children explored and played in the gardens while listening to fairy stories, building fairy homes, and making fairy wands.

At Lord Stirling Stable, a total of 9,462 group lessons and 1,140 private lessons were taught to 1,400 Junior and 1,800 Adult riders. The accomplishments of 239 riders were spotlighted during four horse shows, along with a special show for the riders from the Academy of Saint Elizabeth, where all were able to demonstrate the skills they achieved through riding lessons. More than 400 riding hours were logged by the Therapeutic Riding Adaptive Instruction at Lord Stirling (T.R.A.I.L.S.) program. Accommodations were made so that six junior riders with special needs were able to ride in traditional group classes, and four riders took adapted private lessons. Special programming for 23 seniors was developed including hands-on experiences with the horses.

Pony programs introduce children ages two to eight to horses. Hands-on activities teach the children about basic pony care. The participants are treated to a pony ride as part of the program and take home a horse-related craft. Firefly’s Pony Tea Party included 23 guests dressed in their finest tea party clothes listening to stories, riding ponies, and eating cake and lemonade alongside Firefly.

Equine Care Workshops are offered at three different skill levels. A new workshop was also offered during the evenings for people unable to attend weekend programming. A new hands-on grooming class was created this year, and new curriculum was created for the Summer Equine Workshops for the 365 participants. Scout programming brought more than 50 scouts to the Stable to learn about horses, and 36 girls from Scout Camp Oval participated in a special week-long horse camp programming.
Throughout the year, the Stable hosted more than 40 events and special rides. Some were sponsored entirely by the Somerset County Park Commission while others were co-hosted with the Friends of Lord Stirling Stable. Participation in these events exceeded 2,000 people. To promote healthy living, more than 1,000 visitations occurred on the Saturday morning weekly dog walks, and 225 riders took part in the Winter Break Clinic series.

Recreation, leisure, and play are essential for health and wellness. Participation in recreation services offered to people with disabilities can help an individual develop skills, meet friends, improve social interactions, reduce stress, and have fun all while promoting health and wellness. Through participation in various programs, the Therapeutic Recreation (TR) department is able to provide social and learning experiences, as well as community integration. Adapting or modifying activities based on each person’s ability allows for everyone to be a part of the TR programs. This past year, children, teens, and adults with developmental disabilities were able to choose from a variety of activities that promote an active leisure lifestyle. The activities offered help individuals develop the skills needed to enhance functional independence in the community and promote an improved quality of life. Programs are offered to four age groups; children ages 6-12, teens ages 13-17, young adults ages 18-30, and adults 31 and older.

Sports Sampler, Birthday Bash, and Rally Ball were favorites among the programs offered for children. Young adult and adult program favorites for this group of individuals were trips to places such as Lost River Caverns, the Yogi Berra Museum, and the Mayo Performing Arts Center to see the Wizard of Oz. The traditional cooking, horticulture, craft programs, and other trips were also offered keeping participants of all abilities recreating year round.

Camp Okee Sunokee is a six-week camp experience for children with learning disabilities, Aspergers Syndrome, high functioning autism or a mild intellectual disability that provided lasting memories, friendships, and laughter. TR Travelers, a summer program for teens offered trips around New Jersey and surrounding states every day. From the American Museum of Natural History, Dutch Springs Water Park to Medieval Times, tubing on the Delaware, and Camel Beach, these were just a few of the fun places that the teens traveled to and created memories to last a lifetime.

In December, Photos with Santa was a unique experience in which a sensory friendly environment helps to calm children’s anxieties and limit negative behaviors that are often manifested when visiting a large crowded mall and waiting on line for children with Aspergers. This program allowed families to capture the memory of the holiday season.

Swim lessons were offered at Warrenbrook Pool, where 163 children swam in classes ranging from toddlers to intermediate. Summer tennis lessons and tournaments drew 353 participants. Hatha Yoga instruction was offered throughout the year, with enrollment that filled two classes each season (beginner and advanced). The Duke Island Walkers group continues to keep pace with a steady number of 40 walkers per week. The Adult Bocce League maintained popularity during its 8th season with 20 teams competing throughout the spring.

The Junior Golf program provided 2,015 children from ages 6 to 17 the opportunity to learn from seasoned golf professionals. The program expanded this year, with a summer-long program, as well as sets of one-week lessons. Neshanic Valley Learning Center was the host location for the Drive, Pitch, and Putt championship competition sponsored by the Masters, USGA, and PGA. The Somerset County high school championship, as well as a NJSGA/NJPGA junior qualifier, was also held at Neshanic Valley.

Several annual golf tournaments continued to be popular. The annual William Anderson Match Play Championship at Neshanic Valley kicked off the season. The 5th Annual Somerset County Women’s Golf Tournament was held at the Warrenbrook Golf Course, and has been recognized annually by the New Jersey State Golf Association as a groundbreaking event for women’s golf. Club championships were conducted at each golf course. The 59th Annual Michael S. Kline Memorial Somerset County Championship and the 40th Annual Senior Championship were held at Spooky Brook Golf Course.

The 11th annual Art and Photography Exhibit at Leonard J. Buck Garden included 61 paintings, drawings, and photographs, as well as one sculpture and one handmade quilt, by 42 exhibitors. The 28th Annual Spring Plant Sale and Earth Day Celebration, held in conjunction with the Watnong Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society, included a sale of rare and unusual plants and garden lectures. In total, 2,442 visitors participated in garden tours, programs, and special events at Buck Garden.

In April, the Leonard J. Buck Garden hosted a program entitled “Honey Bees: One of our Favorite Pollinators” presented by Apiarist John Garretson. Teacher and naturalist Dorothy Smullen presented a new program entitled “Focus on Ferns”. The Hypertufa Trough Workshops continued to be popular. The hands-on class created trough containers used to grow and display rock garden plants.

Colonial Park Gardens continued to provide programs, offer special events, and conduct guided tours. In February, a talk entitled “Josephine: The Empress Gardener” was given by garden historian Lesley Parness. Attendees to this event also enjoyed French patisserie handmade by the Horticulture staff. Other new programs include Smart Phone Photography Workshop, Holiday Swag Building, and Forest Bathing. The Japanese practice of Shinrin-yoku, translates as “forest bathing” that is intended to help participants foster a connection with nature which feeds mind, body, and spirit. The ever-popular Rose Day Festival was a beautiful day, in which visitors were entertained by music on the lawn while reveling in the beauty of the garden in peak bloom.
The dedicated volunteers who donate their time care deeply about the community and are devoted to the Park Commission. During 2018, individual volunteers contributed 5,520 hours of service throughout the park system. If converted into paid staff hours, this would be the equivalent of more than $156,325. Group and corporate volunteers also donated service time in 2018. Their combined 1,308 hours assisting the Park Rangers and the Environmental Education Center staff equates to more than $37,000 in additional savings to the Park Commission.

Ten corporate volunteer groups dedicated their time to assisting with a variety of outdoor projects at the EEC. In 2018, these ten groups accounted for a total of 326 volunteer hours. REI and United Way assisted with removal of old wood and rebuilding the Boondocks Boardwalk Trail which contributed to the grand reopening of the trail in April. Kneipp and Johnson & Johnson removed invasive plants from Kitty’s field and seeded Stirling Meadow. BASF, Ingredion, and Alight Solutions all assisted with garden clean-up, mulching, and tree planting in the courtyard and Discovery Gardens. Ingredion assisted with cleaning and organizing The Great Swamp Experience exhibit and Library. Glaxo Smith Klein removed invasive plants along the Orange Trail and re-planted the area with bare root native trees. Portfolio Evaluations made needed repairs to the steps leading up to the Sugar Shack, shored up fence posts, and completed a fall cleanup in the native plant and rain garden. REI returned in the fall to remove an old courtyard fence before painting and installing a new fence.

Four Eagle Scout candidates completed their Service Projects at the EEC in 2018. Pat Robbins, Troop 154 created a seating area, constructed two wooden benches, and made improvements to the canoe and kayak access along the Passaic River at Fisherman’s Parking Lot. Brett D’Aprile, Troop 90 constructed and installed 55 new trail map signs throughout the 9.5 mile trail network, and replaced five rotten posts, with accompanying trail blazes. James Lapus, Troop 28 removed an old kiosk near the flagpole at the main trailhead and replaced it with a new and improved version to welcome all guests to the park. Jack Maloney, Troop 351 constructed two new footbridges along the blue trail to replace rotted bridges along a very wet part of the trail. Jack Vorshiem, Troop 351 completed his Conservation Award by removing invasive Purple Loosestrife from the meadow near Bluebird Way. Cameron Mays, Troop 54 also completed his Conservation Award by making repairs to a damaged deer exclosure on the Red Trail and removing invasive plants from within the exclosure. Scout projects accounted for 641 hours of volunteer service in 2018. In addition, several Girl Scouts baked and donated baked goods for the Festival of Trees Snowflake Café on weekends throughout the month of December.

Three Eagle Scout candidates completed their Service Projects throughout other parks in 2018. Alex Mindish, Troop 489, built a new boardwalk in the Sourland Mountain Preserve. Matt Emmonds, Troop 185, built Mason Bee shelters and installed them in Buck Garden and the Colonial Park Rose Garden. Brian Morris, also of Troop 185, created wood duck boxes for Neshanic Valley Golf Course.

Individual adult and teen volunteers from the local area contributed 1,567 hours throughout the year at the EEC. Volunteers assist with a variety of tasks including program support, critter care, gardening, special event set-up and activities, hosting the front desk, and assisting with paddling trips. These individual volunteers help to create the best experience possible for all public visitors.

With the help of many volunteers, including Jersey Off-Road Bicycle Association, The Sourland Conservancy, various scout groups, and the Volunteer Park Patrol, 226 hours were donated for trail maintenance and park beautification projects.
Volunteers and corporate volunteer groups continue to help Colonial Park Gardens flourish. Seniors from the Rutgers University Outing Club generously helped prepare the Rose Garden for the annual Rose Day Festival by helping to weed the garden and by handcrafting hundreds of paper roses used for decoration. Buck Garden volunteers serve as docents to lead tours and help with plantings throughout the garden.

Volunteers are an integral part of the riding program at Lord Stirling Stable, serving in roles from clerical help in the office and teaching assistants during lessons, to grooming horses and mucking stalls. More than 100 volunteers contributed 2,800 hours to help ensure a continued tradition of equestrian programming at the stable. The generosity of volunteer help at the Stable enabled the therapeutic T.R.A.I.L.S. program to have side-walkers for 40 youth and adults with disabilities. Volunteers also helped to plan and implement other special functions such as the Dressage Show, Family Fun Day, the Fall Festival, and the Holiday Festival.

The Friends of Lord Stirling Stable continue to support the Stable with programs to attract the public and supplemental funds to facilitate horse purchases and provide supplies for horses with special needs. The Friends’ School Horse Retirement Committee supports Stable horses that are no longer suitable for the lesson program until permanent, loving homes are found. The Friends contributed $10,000 in funding for these purchases. The Friends also hosted 16 events that raised more than $14,000 to directly benefit the Stable.

Somerset County Park Commission is also proud of its staff, 180 fulltime and 350 part-time employees who bring creativity to programs, dedication to their job, and offer unparalleled service to the public. Their efforts result in year-round programs and special events, as well as acquisition, development, and maintenance of parkland, gardens, playgrounds, golf courses, and trails.

The Park Commission appreciates these endeavors, and recognizes employees for their dedicated service. Service awards were presented to 37 employees for their years of service to the Commission ranging from five years to 35 years. Six Park Commission employees retired in 2018; Secretary-Director Raymond Brown with 25 years of service, Environmental Science Event Specialist Jane Parks with 15 years of service, Buck Garden Supervisor Jim Fleming with 12 years of service, Naturalist Maria Rossi with 10 years of service, Greensworker Mervyn Bousignac with 10 years of service, and Deputy Director/Business Administrator Dan Livak with nine years of service.
The Park Commission’s sustainability group, called the ‘Go Green Committee’ coordinated a lecture entitled “Green Infrastructure.” James Rossi, Deputy Chief, of Green Infrastructure Maintenance and Bluebelt Operations of the NYC Environmental Protection/Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations presented the lecture which focused on the use of Green Infrastructure as a means for flooding, creating new habitat, and improving water quality.

The EEC continued to provide school programs that align with the New Jersey Next Generation Science Standards. The program guide for school groups features the updated standards to assist teachers to select programs specific to their classrooms. This year, the Naturalists created an interpretive brochure to highlight the interactive sections of the EEC’s Discovery Gardens.

Customer service for the golf courses will be enhanced with the installation of the upgraded GolfNow point of sale system, occurring during the winter of 2019. The two most notable upgrades that customers will notice are that the check-in process will be speedier, as the system identifies customers faster and the credit card processing has been streamlined, which expedites the entire process. Secondly, the Starters are now equipped with iPads that immediately display all pertinent information to speed along and enhance the customer experience.

The Therapeutic Recreation Department assisted seven municipal recreation departments with the inclusion of people with disabilities in their summer camps and sport programs they offer to their residents. Upon assessing the individuals, TR staff made recommendations for program adaptation/modification and behavior management support based on each individual’s needs.

Several publications to market programs and events are printed including park and special event brochures and flyers, the quarterly volunteer newsletter, the park program guide, and the Park Commission website. The seasonal program guide, Parks, Programs, and People, details programs, facilities, and special events. The Park Commission website also continues to provide information about upcoming programs and events. Each of the five golf courses also has a website, and they are all updated daily, to promote their use to the general public.

Social Media continued to be an important method to communicate with the public about programs, facilities, and events. Several options exist depending upon one’s interests, including the main Facebook page, as well as Facebook pages specifically for the various parks, facilities, gardens, and athletic field inclement weather playing conditions. There are also Instagram and Twitter accounts for the EEC, Colonial Park Gardens, JJ the Pony at Lord Stirling Stable, and the summer concert series.

The Stable Manager wrote two publications for the County Office of Emergency Management’s County Animal Response Team; the first on Emergency Equine First Aid and the second on Equine Evacuation Tips during Disasters.

The staff of the Park Commission also believes strongly in working collaboratively with other non-profit agencies, whose mission and goals parallel those of the Park Commission. In 2018, the agencies to which staff volunteered their time include the American Academy of Park and Recreation Administration, Basking Ridge Business Alliance, Bernards Township Adopt-A-Road, Garden State Gardens Consortium, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, Golf Course Superintendents Association of New Jersey, Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, Jersey Shore Rose Society, Let’s Move!, Manhattan Rose Society, Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association, National 4-H Horse Round-up, National Golf Foundation, National Recreation and Park Association, Native Plant Society of New Jersey, New Jersey/Eastern Pennsylvania Therapeutic Recreation Association, New Jersey Recreation and Park Association, New Jersey State Golf Association, New Jersey Turfgrass Association, North American Rock Garden Society–Watnong Chapter, North American Association of Environmental Education, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Professional Golfers Association of America, Rutgers Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners of Somerset County, Rutgers Equine Science Center, Somerset County 4-H Association, Somerset County Business Partnership, Somerset County Library System, Somerset County Police and Fire Training Academy, United States Equestrian Federation, United States Golf Association, and United States Golf Teachers Federation.
Planning and Land Acquisition

The Park Commission acquires land in keeping with the goals as identified in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. As per the Master Plan, county parks are regional in nature. Potential park sites located close to population centers which are able to meet standards for resource protection as well as recreation development capability are given priority for acquisition. The Park Commission and the County Planning Board are currently working with the consultant group Heritage Strategies to update this Master Plan, along with the development of Farmland and Historic Preservation Master Plans. Individual plans will be developed for each of the three entities, as well as an overall plan that coordinates the goals of each, as they intersect for preservation purposes.

During 2018, parcels were acquired from nine property owners totaling 83.51 acres. The total Open Space Inventory now exceeds 14,701 acres.

Several parcels were acquired in the Sourlands. The Lanwin Development property was the largest of these. The Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority contributed the $350,000 purchase price as required compensation for a Green Acres diversion of two acres of encumbered parkland for the construction of its emergency treatment facility. The Fendt property was acquired to be a connector between preserved County and municipal open space. The acquisition also preserved 520 linear feet of frontage on Montgomery Road. The Jones property was surrounded on all sides by County-owned parkland. The acquisition filled the “hole” and preserved additional contiguous forested land that is critical to the habitat on the Sourland Mountain.

The Haelig acquisition was the largest acquisition this year. The property preserves a significant wooded portion of the south face of the First Watchung Mountain and contains a large evergreen stand. Almost 10 acres were purchased from D&R Greenway Land Trust along Old Georgetown Road in Franklin. The purchase of this parcel provides a physical connection between land already owned by the County. This will allow for the development of a continuous greenway along Canal Road within the Millstone River Valley.

The Stone/Weiss property was subdivided and a parcel containing 2.8 acres was deeded to the Somerset County Open Space Preservation Program. The other piece of property containing 0.88 acres was deeded to Branchburg Township. Located at the intersection of Main Street and Elm Street in Neshanic Station, the property is the site of the former Neshanic Flea Market. The County and township partnered to purchase the property. The County acquired the vacant portion of the property.

The Kalley property is a property containing a previously flooded vacant residence adjacent to Duke Island Park. The acquisition of this property is consistent with the goal of acquiring flood prone residential properties. The acquisition of the three Somerset Land Equities properties continues the preservation and infill of lots within a mid-20th century small-lot subdivision located in the Robert Street/Edgewater Avenue area along the Raritan River.

Somerset County Park Commission continued to manage farming rights licenses on 23 parcels with acreage of 1,100 acres. Fourteen hunting license agreements were managed on parcels containing 1,858 acres. Revenue from these two programs total $192,600.
The Softball Field at the Somerset County Park Commission Frank “Nap” Torpey Athletic Complex in Bridgewater was the recipient of the 2018 Sports Field Managers of New Jersey “Field of the Year” award. This award complements the 2017 award for the baseball field, and is the second time that the softball field has earned the honor, having also been recognized in 2012. The award criteria is based on playability and appearance of the playing surface, maintenance procedures, and physical improvements. This award is also a tribute to Athletic Field Specialist Dave Kuczynski and the Torpey staff for the dedicated service they provide.

Park Commission gardens were recognized in 2018. Colonial Park Horticulture was presented with the Reader’s Choice Award for Best Park by the Courier News. The Rudolf W. van der Goot Rose Garden was included in the World Federation of Rose Societies “50 Golden Years”, a publication compiled in 2018. Leonard J. Buck Garden was featured on the cover, as well as on the July and August pages of the 2019 Calendar published by Town Planner Express for Bedminster, Bernardsville, Peapack/Gladstone, and Far Hills.

A $1,500 grant was received from Ethicon in support of STEM enrichment for EEC summer programs. Summer programs Eco-Explorers and AWESIM KIDS benefited from a planetarium presentation and a fossil dig program.

Marge Margentino, Stable Manager, was recognized by the Somerset County 4-H Horse Program at its annual Horse Project Achievement Dinner for her continued support of the 4-H Horse Program. The Park Foundation was the recipient of 5% of opening day receipts from Whole Foods Markets, and the $16,000 donation is being used to develop wellness programs at the Environmental Education Center and the Recreation Department. The Park Foundation supported the TR Program by awarding scholarships to TR program participants to enable families who can’t afford the program fees. The Foundation supported Photos with Santa in which a sensory-friendly environment helped calm anxieties for children with Aspergers who can’t visit a large crowded mall and wait in line. This program allowed families to capture the memory of the holiday season.

Capital projects were funded for several Buck Garden improvements, through donations from the Helen Buck Foundation. These include purchasing several teak garden furniture pieces to enhance and upgrade the amenities for the Visitor Center and Courtyard; a trail stabilization project on three Buck Garden pathways; and funding a drainage improvement project in the Azalea Meadow, the Boardwalk-West End and in the central portion of the Kennel Field. The Foundation also partnered with the Park Commission for the NJ Arborists’ Annual Day of Work, when Colonial Park was selected as the one park in the state for the Arborists for provide $100,000 of work in one day. The Foundation also sponsored the plants to be donated on Arbor Day in the spring, as well as sponsored activities at the Annual Rose Day Festival in Colonial Park. Foundation members were on site at the EEC for the ribbon-cutting of the Boondocks Trail completion which their matching funds helped complete.

The Somerset County Park Foundation served as the official sponsor of “Autograph Sundays”, a Somerset Patriots program featured at all home games played on Sundays throughout the 2018 season. The reverse side of the autograph poster listed all of the Park Commission spring and summer special events, programs, lessons, and tournaments, reaching an audience of 5,000 children. Throughout the past 15 years, the valuable financial assistance provided by the Somerset County Park Foundation to enhance Park Commission programs, services, and facilities totals more than $1.5 million.
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Academy of St. Elizabeth
The American Chestnut Foundation
Audubon International
Basking Ridge Business Alliance
Basking Ridge Garden Club
Bedminster Township School District
Bernards Township Protective Association
Bernards Township School District
Boy Scouts of America, Conservation Awards
Cameron Mays, Troop 54
Jack Vorsheim, Troop 351
Eagle Scouts
Brett D’Aprile, Troop 90
Matt Emmonds, Troop 185
James Lapus, Troop 28
Jack Maloney, Troop 351
Alex Mindish, Troop 489
Brian Morris, Troop 185
Pat Robbins, Troop 154
Girl Scouts
Abby Marazita, Troop 61076
Kate Mercer, Troop 61076
Elizabeth and Emily Perna, Ambassador Troop 60988
Bradley Gardens Rescue Squad
Bridgewater Garden Club
The Camera Naturalists
Cancer Support Community – Central New Jersey
Central Jersey Stream Team
Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Country Hills Volunteer Fire Department
Friends of the Boudinot-Southard-Ross Estate
Friends of the Great Swamp
The Friends of Lord Stirling Stable
The Garden Conservancy
Girl Scouts Camp OVAL
Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey
Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge
Great Swamp Watershed Association
Groundwater Foundation
Helen R. Buck Foundation
Investors Bank Foundation
Jersey Off-Road Bicycle Association
Lord Stirling School
Morris County Park Commission
Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center
Morristown National Historic Park
MTI Integrated Business Development
National Park Service
Native Plant Society of New Jersey
Neshanic Valley Garden Club
New Jersey Arborists – International Society of Arboriculture
New Jersey Audubon Society
New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife
New Jersey Forest Fire Service
New Jersey Land Conservancy
New Jersey Water Supply Authority
North American Rock Garden Society – Watnong Chapter
Pingry School
Raptor Trust
Ridge High School
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital
Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Somerset County, Master Gardeners Program
Rutgers University Department of Ecology and Evolution
Rutgers University Equine Science Center
Rutgers University Office of Continuing Professional Education
Scherman Hoffman Wildlife Sanctuary
Somerset County Association of Chiefs of Police
Somerset County Business Partnership
Somerset County Park Foundation
Somerset County Volunteer Services
Somerset Hills Garden Club
Somerset Signal Senders
Somerville Spade and Hoe Garden Club
The Sourlands Conservancy
United States Department of Agriculture – APHIS
United States Department of Agriculture – Wildlife Services
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
United States Golf Association
United States Tennis Association
United Way
University Outing Club
Village Elementary School
Volunteer Park Patrol
Volunteers of America, Delaware Valley
West Jersey Rose Society
CORPORATE AND INDIVIDUAL PARTNERS

Advance Realty*
AJ Santye & Company*
All Risk Property Damage Experts*
Allied Beverage*
Back to Nature Home and Garden
Barlett Tree Experts
Senator Kip Bateman*
Dawn and Gary Bernstein*
Brandstetter Carroll Inc.*
Bridgewater Marriott*
Freeholder Mark Caliguire*
Callaway Golf
Cammps Hardware & Lawn Products*
Chimney Savers*
The Cigar Room*
The Law Office of William T. Cooper*
Courier News
Daisy Garden Center and Sculpture
Dameo Trucking*
Deep Eddie Vodka*
Della Pello Paving*
DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flau*
F & G Mechanical*
Bob Fazen*
Fedway Associates Inc.*
Finch Services*
Kathy and Al Fischetti*
Flemington Car and Truck Country*
Fullerton Auto Group*
Fulton Bank of New Jersey*
GUESS*
Chuck Hackel/Northwestern Mutual Financial*
Herr’s Snack Foods*
High Grade Beverage*
Hionis Greenhouses and Garden Center*
The Horse Institute
Horsemens’s Outlet
Mark Hughes*
Ray and Christine Hughes*
The Hughes Family*
Hughes-Plumer & Associates*
Hyatt House of Branchburg*
Investors Bank*
JML Landscaping, Inc.
Johnson & Johnson
Dave Keogh*
KeyScripts*
LaFontaine & Budd Insurance Co.*
LaGuardia & Associates Entertainment
Landmark-Crave
Mike LaValva*
Melick’s Town Farm
Merri Makers Caterers*
Metro Exhibits*
MillerCoors*
Mophie*
Peggy and John Moskway
Robert Mulcahy*
Munich Reinsurance America*
Natirar*
New Jersey Risk Managers & Consultants*
Northeast Lock Corporation*
Peter Palmer*
Peapack Gladstone Bank*
Pfizer
Louis and Teri Piancone*
PSE&G*
Dan Puntillo*
Purcell, Mulcahy, and Flanagan*
Qual-Lynx*
Raritan Valley Community College and Foundation*
REI
The Reitman Group*
Saul Ewing LLC*
Ken and Donna Scherer*
ShopRite of Somerset
SiteOne Landscape Supplies
Somerset County Business Partnership*
Somerset County Association of Chiefs of Police*
Somerset County Sheriff’s Superior Officers Association FOP Lodge 89*
Somerset Patriots Baseball Club*
Somerset Savings Bank*
SSP Architectural Group*
Dr. Fred Sterritt/Raritan Valley Orthodontics*
Rick St. Pierre*
Storr Tractor Company*
Suplee, Clooney & Company*
The Torpey Family*
Unity Bank*
Stella Valle*
Van Cleef Engineering*
Vanderbeek Family Foundation*
Anthony Ventola*
Verve Restaurant and Bar*
Villa Plaza @ Bridgewater*
Visionary Art*
Warren Distributing Company*
Wegmans Food Market
Margaret Whiting
Whole Foods
Willis Towers Watson*
WithumSmith + Brown*
WMGQ Magic Radio
Zeus Scientific*

* Somerset County Park Foundation event sponsor of a program that directly benefits the Somerset County Park Commission
VOLUNTEERS

Pamela Ackert
Siddhant Agarwal
Aakanksha Ahuja
Deborah Alexander
Earlyne Alexander
Ryan Amalfitano
Liz Anthony
Liz Askin
Robert “Birdie” Auerbach
Fred Aufschlager
Catherine Baker
Elizabeth Baker
Barbara Barbeau
Barbara Barkley
Ron Barkley
John Beavin
Lainie Beavin
John Benvent
Briana Berisha
Andrea Binder
Karen Bizzoco
Louis Bizzoco
Bill Bollwage
Jacqui Boulter
Chris Brawley
Sandy Brennan
Christine Bridge
Louise Bridge
Nancy Brown
Phyllis Ryan Brown
Leah Buccino
Linda Carter
Jordi Castells
Diane Cawley
Gretta Cevallos-Melendez
Jaclyn Chen
Matthew Chen
Angie Cheng
Isabella Chouqueut
Ruth Claus
Lee Cleary
Benjamin Clott
Rachel Clott
Madison Clowes
Jeanne Cocuzza
Nancy Conner
Brianna Cookman
Margaret Cronin
Sarah Czekalski
Tori Dalton
Will D’Andrade
Daisy DeSimone
Aida Diaz
Laura Doeringer
Marilyn Doteowski
Shawn Douceth
Victoria Dziasik
Celeste Eby
Kavin Elamurugan
Kathleen Tille
Emmet
Merrill Eppedio
Olivia Erikson
Carol Falcone
Judy Felton Storey
Natalie Fontana
Deborah Fonteix
Lexi Franchi
Butch Futrell
Dana Gallion
Enrique Garcia
Marguerite Gargiula
Joan Garvin
Eileen M. Gavin
Julia Gehriger
Lexi George
Paige Gilberti
Steven Gray
Dot Green
Marjorie Grill
Cristina Grobert
Denise Grohn
Alex Gruber
Ruthie Gu
Emma Haberman
Diana Hackett
Bev Hahn
Keke Hammell
Nancy Harms
Terr Heide
Anne Marie
Heithmar
Lisa Heithmar
Laura Held
Kimberly Heller
Valerie Henken
Brielle Herbst
Rachel Hewitt
Sibylle Hinoul
Ethan Hoffman
Deirdre Hollock
John Hosmer
Marian Hosmer
Hanna Houllion
Angela Huang
Leroy Hunninghake
Christopher Huston
Eric Iglesias
Hans Iselborn
Kim Jensen
Cheryl Jewel
Elaine Kaeser
Ian Kane
Niyati Kashyap
Kevin Keegan
Daniel Keller
Rebecca Kilroy
Fairlie Kirkpatrick
Baird
Alex Kochetov
Clark Kokenge
Anika Kopczynski
Catie Kowalski
Crista Kowitski
Lorrie Lane
Dale Leubner
Gavin Leung
Beth Lipman
Mia Lopez
Cyndy Losanno
Tori Lyman
Brian Magnier
Sophia Malloo
Sherie Malt
Nancy Mantone
Christine Manyak
Allen Marakov
Renee Mareski
Grace Martin
Brock Martynowski
Tom McCloskey
Sandra McConkey
Shannon McCray
Pat McFadden
Mary McHale
Anna McIver
Kristine McNamara
Bailey McPherson
Helen Mehau
Jamie Meiselman
Gerrit Messberger
Sven Migot
Pat Millward
Cheri Milos
Alex Mindish
Kathy Mindish
Lindsay Mish
Norma Molyneux
Christian Morize
Isabelle Morize
Yellane Morize
Olivera
Maggie Morrison
Brynne Murphy
Erin Murphy
Nicholas Murray
Angela Naab
Tanvi Namjoshi
Ashley Narus
Annanaria
Newmark
Michelle Noesner
Annie Page
Shreyas Pani
Sarah Parks
Joseph Pastor
Mariel Peckaz
Hannah Pernia
Samanta Pernia
Ella Pesot
Amanda Pietrzyk
Stephen Porac
Chris Possanza
Susan Puleo Pesot
Syeda Quader
Kim Rahner
Clara Rak
Teodor Rak
Desiree Ramirez
Sameena Rao
Sarah Renz
Leah Ricci
Alexa Rice
Christopher
Richardson
Lauren Richardson
Barbara Roche
Colleen Roche
Mike Roche
Charles Rosen
Rita Russo
Sarah Russo
Ruth Ryan
Breda Ryan-Blake
Rose Salaki
William Sanders
Randy Santoro
Hitha Santosh
Barbara Sarsony
Maria Scarpantonio
Sandi Schaffer
Isabel Schmid
Frank Scibilia
Graham Seelig
Ellyn Shain
Sarah Shepard
Michael Shouldis
Rachel Siegel
Kaylee Simone
Maia Sirabian
Samantha Sirabian
Jim Slamon
Avantika Srinivasan
Anne Standley
Abel Stephen
Andrew Stillufgen
Susan Strahs
Santosh
Subramanian
Barbara Sullivan
Spencer Talish
Elaine Taub
Brianna Titus
Bridget Torcivia
Isabella Trujillo
Ffion Turner-Lawrence
Haleigh Tyler
Teri Valle
Olivia Van De Brake
Megan Vetter
Jody Villa
Esther Warner
Erin Weems
Carol Weinaertner
Martha Wells
Ann Wild
Diane Wilkinson
Nancy Williams
Nancy Willis
Skylar Yarter
Dennis Yi
Allison Yin
Sam Younger
Xavian Zambrana
Leslie Zarnowski
Katie Zheng
Devon Zienkiewicz
Susan Zienkiewicz
## ASSETS

**Current Fund:**
- Cash and Cash Equivalents: $569,387.75
- Change Funds: $8,000.00
- Petty Cash Funds: $2,600.00
  - **Total:** $579,987.75

**Receivables and Other Assets with Full Reserves:**
- Inventory: $27,035.14
  - **Total:** $607,022.89

**Grant Fund:**
- Cash and Cash Equivalents: $4,384,067.03
- County Grant Accounts Receivable: $2,000,000.00
  - **Total:** $6,384,067.03

## LIABILITIES, RESERVES, AND FUND BALANCE

**Current Fund:**
- **Liabilities:**
  - Accounts Payable: $3743.23
  - Appropriation Reserves: $43,539.80
  - Encumbrances Payable: $523,097.77
    - **Total:** $570,380.80
  - Reserve for Receivables and Other Assets: $27,035.14
  - Fund Balance: $9,606.95
    - **Total:** $607,022.89

**Grant Fund:**
- Encumbrances Payable: $1,351,215.29
- Reserve for County Grant Appropriated: $5,032,851.74
  - **Total:** $6,384,067.03

- **Fund Balance:** $6,991,089.92
### SOMERSET COUNTY PARK COMMISSION / CURRENT FUND

#### Statement of Revenues - Statutory Basis

**Year Ended December 31, 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Description</th>
<th>YEAR 2018 REALIZED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous Revenue:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>$ 10,751,382.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Anticipated Revenues:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Knoll Golf Course/Pitch and Putt</td>
<td>$ 884,866.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neshanic Valley Golf Course</td>
<td>$ 1,997,961.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quail Brook Golf Course</td>
<td>$ 896,440.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spooky Brook Golf Course</td>
<td>$ 934,099.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrenbrook Golf Course</td>
<td>$ 589,021.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neshanic Valley Performance/learning Center</td>
<td>$ 536,332.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Miscellaneous Revenues Anticipated</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 5,838,722.03</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Park Paddleboats/Putting Course</td>
<td>$ 35,967.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Park /Green Knoll Tennis Center</td>
<td>$ 54,026.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Science</td>
<td>$ 214,670.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Stirling Stable</td>
<td>$ 691,346.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warrenbrook Pool</td>
<td>$ 180,931.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic Recreation</td>
<td>$ 97,432.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concessions</td>
<td>$ 48,900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licenses/Leases</td>
<td>$ 262,965.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest on Investments and Deposits</td>
<td>$ 87,595.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Reimbursements</td>
<td>$ 11,721.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>$ 78,067.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>$ 319,790.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reservations</td>
<td>$ 285,482.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 8,187,618.39</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 18,939,000.39</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### STATEMENTS OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE - Statutory Basis

**Year Ended December 31, 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue and Other Income Realized:</th>
<th>YEAR 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Revenue Anticipated:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County of Somerset</td>
<td>$ 10,751,382.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Revenues</td>
<td>$ 8,187,618.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Revenues Not Anticipated</td>
<td>$ 64,618.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Miscellaneous Revenues</strong></td>
<td>$ 5,838,722.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Credits to Income:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexpended Balance of Appropriation Reserves</td>
<td>$ 215,042.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canceled Accounts Payable</td>
<td>$ 1,157.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County of Somerset Contribution of Pension Costs</td>
<td>$ 1,091,739.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 20,311,558.51</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditures</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget Appropriations:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>$ 19,210,211.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers’ Share of Pension Costs</td>
<td>$ 1,091,739.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 20,301,951.56</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Excess in Revenue                                      | $ 9,606.95 |
| Fund Balance, January 1                                 | $ .00     |
| **Total Excess in Revenue**                            | **$ 9,606.95** |

| Decreased by:                                          |           |
| Utilization as Anticipated Revenue                      | $ .00     |
| Balance, December 31                                   | $ 9,606.95 |
PEOPLE AND PLACES