

2019

ANNUAL REPORT



**GREENBELT
CONSERVANCY**

est. 1989



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PROMOTE, SUSTAIN, AND ENHANCE STATEN ISLAND'S
2,800-ACRE GREENBELT THROUGH EDUCATION,
RECREATION, CONSERVATION, AND RESEARCH.**

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COVER PHOTO: Swamp Rose Mallow (Hibiscus moscheutos), native plant in Loose Strife Swamp, High Rock Park. Photo: Dorothy Reilly



The Greenbelt Conservancy works in partnership with NYC Parks to oversee the administration and public use of the parkland of the Greenbelt.

A Message from the Executive Director



**GREENBELT
CONSERVANCY**
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The Greenbelt Conservancy's mission is to promote, sustain, and enhance Staten Island's 2,800-acre Greenbelt through education, recreation, conservation, and research. Founded in 1989, the Conservancy works in partnership with NYC Parks to oversee the administration and public use of the parkland of the Greenbelt.

Oversight of more than **2,800 acres** of natural areas and parkland

Offering **hundreds** of group hikes, educational programs and trail runs each year

Maintaining **7 trails** covering **35 miles**

Welcoming more than **100,000 visitors per year**

The Greenbelt is **open 365 days a year!**

THE GREENBELT CONSERVANCY IS AN ORGANIZATION BUILT ON THE IDEAL OF PRESERVING NATURE FOR PEOPLE.



That means that from our 35-miles of pristine hiking trails to our Frank Lloyd Wright styled Nature Center nestled in the woods —and all the education programs, trail races, family events, carousel rides and outdoor adventures in between—we are working to give *all* Staten Islanders access to nature.

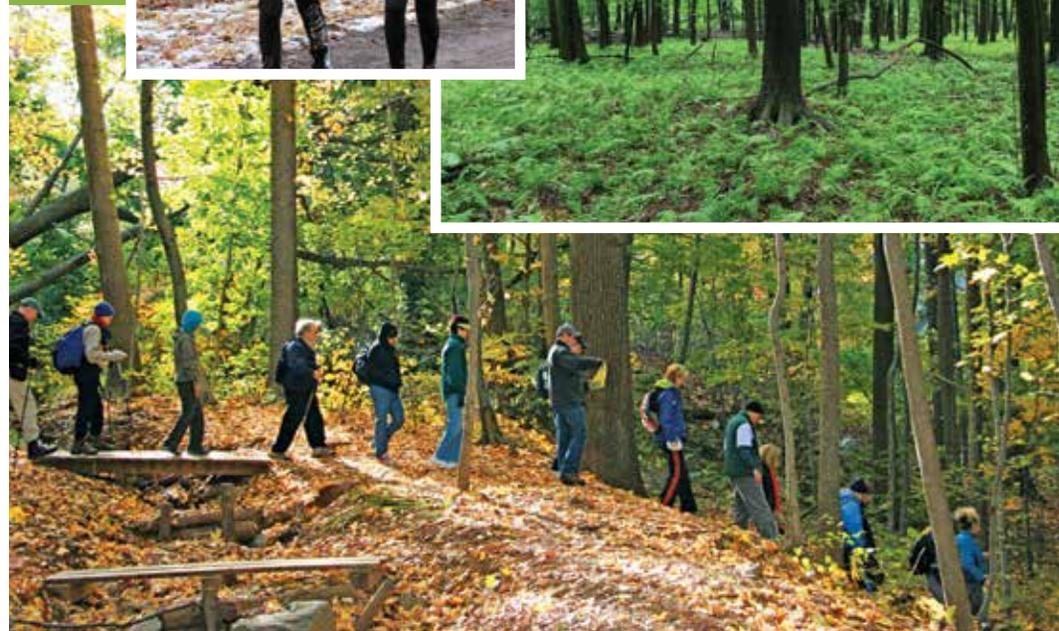
Over the past twelve months the Greenbelt Conservancy continued to expand access to the Greenbelt to communities across Staten Island. Our passion for access and equity are highlighted in two of our flagship programs, Con Edison Family Science Nights and the Greenbelt Venture program, funded by the Stravos Niarchos Foundation. As you scroll through the pages of this report you'll learn more about these unique programs that are providing parents and students with the opportunity to accomplish hands-on science and math experiments together, and how the Greenbelt Venture program is engaging middle school students with Leadership Training through outdoor adventures, while providing a first forest experience.

We could not do this work without you. As a Greenbelt Conservancy supporter, when you read through our 2018 Annual Report, I am confident you'll feel proud of all we've accomplished. Even more so, I hope you'll feel energized and excited to join in the effort to preserve, maintain and enhance the 2,800-acre Greenbelt. Our work together is impactful, it is important, and it is just getting started.

Regards,

Steve

Steven Cain
Executive Director



Environmental Education



The Greenbelt Environmental Education Department at High Rock Park offers various programs for people of all ages.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Our "Tree Tots" and "Peepers" programs introduce toddlers and their caregivers to nature-inspired learning. Our young visitors become familiar with the signs and sounds of nature. Before long, our these toddlers matriculate into our summer camp and become strong, well-prepared young naturalists!



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This program is geared toward teachers and non-formal environmental educators. It provides instruction, resources, and interactive activities that help interpret complex environmental concepts.



SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Offered as a compliment to NYS Learning Standards, our classes, hikes and activities instill in children a lifelong appreciation for the natural world and their place within it. Topics of study range from the study of insects and birds, reptiles and amphibians to the forest and wetland ecosystems to the Lenape people and their customs, to name just a few.



GREENBELT SUMMER CAMP

Each summer, the Conservancy welcomes children ages 5-13 for the Greenbelt Summer Camp in High Rock Park. The half-day outdoor camp experience includes hikes, forest explorations, crafts, field trips and team building activities. In 2016, the Greenbelt Summer Camp was at capacity.

GREENBELT VENTURE PROGRAM

The Greenbelt Venture Program provides a unique outdoor adventure experience for children ages 12 to 14. Generously supported by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, this program seeks to empower youth by introducing them to open communications, conflict resolution, and outdoor leadership skills. The pilot program kicked off this Fall with 10 students meeting once per week for 12 weeks.



Trail Races



From family friendly 5 K and 10 K races to extreme team adventure challenges, the Greenbelt Conservancy offers unique trail racing events for all ages. Ours is the most extensive trail system in New York City, affording adventure seeking individuals extraordinary wilderness opportunities.

HIGH ROCK CHALLENGE 10K TRAIL/OBSTACLE RACE

One of the most anticipated hometown races takes place every April along the Greenbelt trails. Two-member teams conquer a challenging course and surmount both natural and human-made obstacles along the way. Many runners are competitive and many are just out for a fun morning. The event is held in memory of fallen NYPD Officer John Kelly.



COLD FEAT 5K AND 10K

The Cold Feat 5K and 10K kicks off the Greenbelt's trail race calendar in mid-February. The race starts and finishes at LaTourette Golf Course challenging runners through hilly trails and cold and wet conditions. This event has never been canceled due to weather, and never will be – anything is possible in the Greenbelt!



FALL FLAT 5K

Often referred to by runners as “my favorite local race,” the Fall Flat is fun, fast and of course, flat! The scenic course takes runners around Willowbrook Lake and along the White Trail – starting and finishing in front of the Carousel Pavilion. The race attracts new runners and also those recovering from the NYC Marathon. There is great camaraderie and community support.

WEEKLY GROUP HIKES

Weekly hikes take place during the day and evening, on weekdays and weekends. Consult our website: sigreenbelt.org for a hike that suits your time and interests. Some hikes offer a history and nature component, and some are fast-paced for those interested in fitness. The trails are also open for your personal adventure – a map of our trail system is online and also available for free at the Greenbelt Nature Center.



Signature Events



The Greenbelt Conservancy hosts two unique signature fundraising events each year to engage and interact with donors, volunteers, and supporters. All proceeds from these events support the general operating fund.

BLUE JEAN BALL

Willowbrook Park

This great event is a night for adults to be kids again with unlimited rides on the Carousel for All Children, popcorn and comfort food, and sweet surprises. More than 125 guests join us each year, for this low-cost, high-fun evening!



ANNUAL GALA

The Greenbelt Nature Center

The Greenbelt Conservancy welcomes guests for its most formal event featuring dinner, cocktails, entertainment and more. This event celebrates the Conservancy's annual accomplishments and features select individual and corporate honorees.



Celebrate in the Greenbelt

The Greenbelt covers more than 2,800 acres of woodlands, natural areas, and traditional parks. Imbedded within are two incredible facilities to host public programs, recreational activities, and offer you and your family unique locations for your event.



GREENBELT NATURE CENTER

The centrally-located **Greenbelt Nature Center** is a hub for a wide range of Greenbelt activities and programs. Here you may view the Richmond County Savings Foundation exhibits to learn about Greenbelt history, geography, and current happenings. The Nature Center is open to the public and is also available for private rentals.



THE CAROUSEL FOR ALL CHILDREN

The perfect location for birthday parties and corporate events alike, the Carousel for All Children in Willowbrook Park has been an iconic fixture of the community since 1999. Open from May to October, renters select from semi-private events during public hours or exclusive private parties after-hours. The Carousel is also available for private photography and film sessions.



To learn more about hosting your private event in the Greenbelt, please contact celebrate@sigreenbelt.org or 718.667.2165, extension

ALONG THE TRAILS



PATRICK ECKELMAN

Patrick Eckelman has been hiking in the Greenbelt since childhood. Now, as a runner and father, he trains on the trails and teaches his son about the wonders of nature. Patrick volunteered at the 2019 High Rock Challenge to “sweep” the course and remove course markers.

IN HIS WORDS: My earliest memory as a boy is hiking through High Rock Park and climbing to the top of Moses’ Mountain with my father and two older brothers on a brisk afternoon. That experience led to endless camping adventures and outings in and around the Greenbelt. Later on, when our son was in preschool, I remember packing snacks and heading out on day trips exploring the trails together. Now I spend my weekends running with friends through the trails as we take in the sites and tranquility right in our own borough’s beautiful backyard.



JEN DIORIO

Jen Diorio is a participant in the Greenbelt’s avid hiker, backpacker, climber and equestrian.

Jen Diorio is a participant in the Greenbelt’s Wednesday night hiking Group. She is pictured here on the right with her dog, Hayden.

My favorite trails are right here at home, the Staten Island Greenbelt. I’ve made the most amazing friendships and learned more about myself as a hiker here than anywhere else. The Greenbelt will always hold a special place in my heart.”

RACE FOR THE RING

Each Spring, hopeful couples compete for a chance to win an engagement ring sponsored by Casale Jewelers. The months long competition culminates with a 2-mile obstacle course throughout the Greenbelt. In addition to completing various physical and mental challenges, couples must also fundraise for the Greenbelt Conservancy and share their participation with friends and family.



GREENBELT TREASURES

As you walk along the Greenbelt trails, see if you can tell when you leave an upland forest community (hill-top with relatively dry soil) and enter a lowland forest. You will probably have walked downward, and the soil will be wetter with moss and ferns growing around you.

In the spring these areas often become ponds, the perfect breeding ground for peeper frogs. You will see Sweetgum trees with their seeds (itchy balls) and star-shaped leaves. You will also find delicate red maples, and the very tall tulip trees. These woods put on a brilliant show in the fall, displaying bright red and yellow leaves.

A flash of yellow on a small bird means the warblers are visiting as they migrate, but the friendly black capped chickadees stay all year. If you see a tunnel of earth pushed up across the trail, it is just a mole looking for a worm meal.



HIGH ROCK PARK

Often referred to as one of the most tranquil places in New York City, High Rock Park is noted for its quiet ponds and deep woods. Hosting the Greenbelt Conservancy's headquarters and Environmental Education Department, the park has been recognized as a Natural Environmental Education Landmark by the United States Department of the Interior. This bucolic park is the cornerstone of the Greenbelt.

High Rock Park contains five ponds and various wetlands, including Walker Pond and Loosestrife Swamp. Hiking trails lined with stands of red maples, high-bush blueberries, and patches of skunk cabbage in spring are just some of the area's abundant natural features.

Wood ducks, great blue herons, and muskrats all make their homes here along with hawks, owls, migrating colorful warblers, woodpeckers, frogs, salamanders and turtles. Visitors can also climb Mt. Moses, a 260-foot hill named for City builder and Parks Commissioner Robert Moses whose plan to develop this natural area was thwarted by local citizens. The 360-degree panoramic view of the Greenbelt's tree-tops is considered one of New York City's most spectacular.

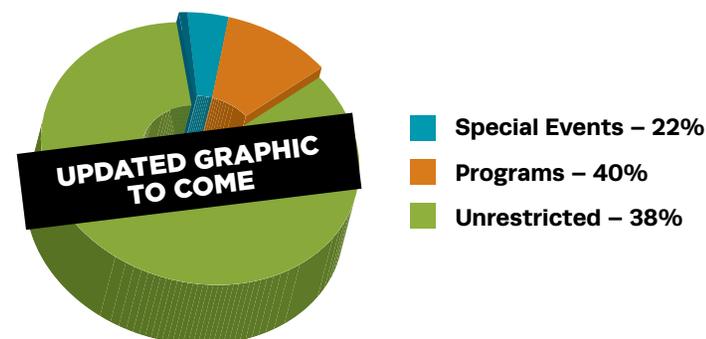
Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2018

ASSETS		
	2018	2017
Cash	\$96,698	\$62,370
Investments	\$986,366	\$1,216,387
Accrued Interest Receivable	\$1,722	\$1,986
Grants Receivable	\$40,000	\$26,254
Prepaid Expenses	\$5,201	\$2,767
Security Deposit	\$2,285	\$2,285
Fixed Assets	\$59,099	\$67,542
Total Assets	\$1,191,371	\$1,379,591
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$20,347	\$60,499
Accrued Vacation	\$2,854	\$6,417
Deferred Revenue - Nursery Conduit	\$48,148	
Deferred Revenue	\$1,421	
Total Liabilities	\$72,770	\$66,916
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted Operating Fund	\$404,524	\$453,338
Board Designated Funds		
– Nature Center	\$120,711	\$ 136,143
– Endowment	\$ 548,620	\$ 644,063
Total Unrestricted	\$1,073,855	\$1,233,544

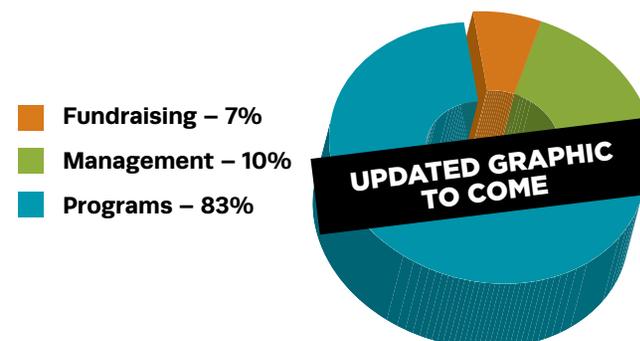
REVENUE

The Greenbelt Conservancy generated **more than 80%** of its revenues in the form of unrestricted funds from individual donors, corporations, and government grants. Our programs, which include public offerings at the Carousel for All Children and the Greenbelt Nature Center, generated **over 10%** revenues through fee based programs and private rentals. Special events, including our signature fund raisers and trail races, and the Greenbelt's membership program accounted for the remainder of revenue.



EXPENSES

For each dollar contributed to the Greenbelt Conservancy in 2018, 83 cents directly supported our environmental education programs, recreational offerings, conservation efforts and research projects. Administrative and fund raising expenses were kept at a minimum while still ensuring effective operations.

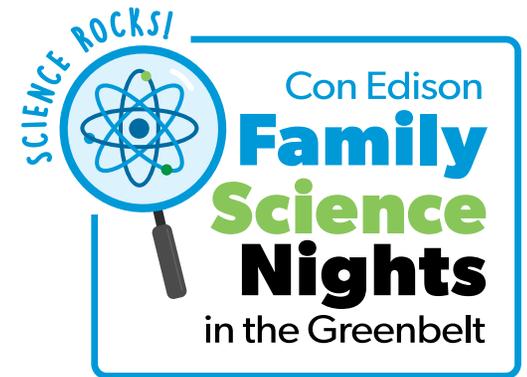


Con Edison Family Science Night: Science Rocks!

We are celebrating our fourth season of “Con Edison Family Science Night,” a series of free monthly sessions featuring science topics and experiments designed for children and parents to accomplish together.

These monthly programs have been enormously popular attracting new audiences of youthful scientists! This year, we added “Con Edison Science Saturdays” geared toward younger children and their adult chaperones.

During the sessions, several self-guided activities start families thinking together, followed by a full group activity. Topics range from physics and chemistry to ecology and our solar system, to name just a few. Minds and hands are engaged while our education team emphasizes the importance of scientific knowledge.



“Con Edison Family Nights provide more than hands-on STEM learning—they provide the opportunity for children and their caregivers to work together as a team. We are proud to bring this program and our support is an investment in the next generation—sparking scientific curiosity—and the importance of learning from each other.”

—Katia Gordon, Director of Con Edison's Staten Island Regional & Community Affairs.

CORPORATE SPONSORS

WE THANK OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS FOR THEIR CONTINUED GENEROSITY.



INVEST IN OUR MISSION



DONATE

The Greenbelt Conservancy is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax deductible and support our mission to promote, sustain, and enhance the 2,800-acre Greenbelt.



VOLUNTEER

From on-site event support to in office assistance to committee involvement, the Greenbelt Conservancy welcomes volunteers of all capacities. Get in touch to learn more about current opportunities.



BECOME A MEMBER

Help us grow today and become a member of the Greenbelt Conservancy! Benefits include exclusive member only discounts for events and summer camp, invitations to private events, and more.



LEAVE A LEGACY

Adopt a park bench in memory of a loved one or engrave your family name on a plaque or paver stone at one of our iconic locations. To leave your legacy at the Greenbelt, please call 718.667.2165.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE GREENBELT CONSERVANCY AT 718.667.2165 OR VISIT US ONLINE AT SIGREENBELT.ORG. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!





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