

2020

ANNUAL REPORT



**GREENBELT
CONSERVANCY**

— est. 1989 —



Board of Directors

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- Ralf Peetz, PhD, *First Vice President*
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- John Borovilas, *Treasurer*
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Administrative Staff

- Steven Cain, *Executive Director*
- Maren Morsch *Social Media Coordinator*
- Laura Ruggirello, *Finance Coordinator*
- Meghan Wood, *Director of Development*

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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.

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

COVER PHOTO: Ferns on forest floor

A Message from the **Executive Director**



NATURE IS RESILIENT AND SO ARE WE!



In a year of immense challenge, sacrifice, and loss, the Greenbelt Conservancy and the Greenbelt remained open and serving the public. Thanks to the leadership of our Board of Directors, the dedication of our staff, and the unwavering support of donors like you, our mission remained resilient and accessible to all.

The year of 2020, despite its hardships, has also been a time that Staten Islanders experienced first-hand the importance of the Greenbelt, not simply as a beautiful oasis, but as a necessity. For more visitors than ever before, the Greenbelt is now a new living room, office, classroom, gym, quiet place, and gathering space. It is a location of making memories and celebrating life, even in the difficult times.

Throughout 2020, the Greenbelt Conservancy exhibited adaptability and determination in serving our community. From a seamless pivot to a virtual environmental education platform to the implementation of socially distant in-person hikes, volunteer projects, and trail races, the Greenbelt Conservancy stayed connected and provided safe opportunities for community engagement, learning, and fun.

We are so thankful to all of our friends and supporters who have stood by us throughout this difficult year. Thank you, and be well!

Regards,

Steve

Steven Cain
Executive Director

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.



**Usership of the parks and trails more than
doubled during March to September!**



Offering more than 300 Public Programs

The Greenbelt is open 365 days a year!

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

Maintaining 7 trails covering 35 miles

Welcoming more than 100,000 visitors per year

Environmental Education



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Greenbelt Conservancy transitioned all environmental education programs to virtual formats from March through October. Our esteemed educators produced pre-recorded videos, hosted live chats and demos on social media, and creatively adjusted program formats to fit a virtual setting.

CREATION OF OFFICIAL YOUTUBE CHANNEL



**MORE THAN 50
EDUCATIONAL
VIDEOS**

**OVER 1,500
REGISTERED
PARTICIPANTS**

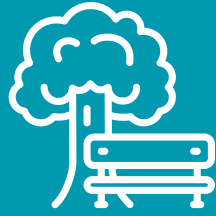


With summer camp cancelled for the season, we needed to find a creative way to keep our campers excited about the environment. In response, our educators developed an **End of Summer Craft Program** complete with five videos to keep kids engaged and learning at home.

Many campers chose to add-on our **swag bag** which included all the supplies necessary to complete the crafts.



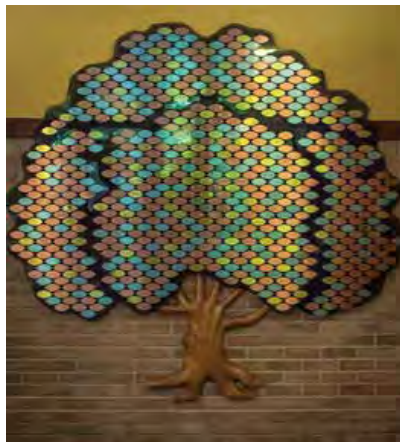
Leaving Your Legacy



For many Staten Islanders, the Greenbelt has been a place of treasured memories, peaceful scenery, and landmark destinations. To celebrate milestone occasions or to honor a loved one, many families have participated in our legacy programs to forever leave their own tribute for the land they have grown to love.

DONOR TREE

Displayed at the Greenbelt Nature Center, our Donor Tree shares special messages from our donors and supporters. Purchase your very own leaf and have your name engraved in a piece of Greenbelt history.



Leaves are available at tiered pricing and are personalized up to 300 characters.

VISIT SIGREENBELT.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.

LEGACY BENCH

Perhaps the most significant tribute, Legacy Benches are permanently installed throughout the Greenbelt and are maintained in perpetuity. Complete with a personalized inscription, benches create a special place of remembrance and celebration.



TO LEAVE YOUR LEGACY IN THE GREENBELT,
PLEASE CONTACT MEGHAN WOOD, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT,
AT WOOD@SIGREENBELT.ORG.

Celebrate in the Greenbelt

The Greenbelt covers more than 2,800 acres of woodlands, natural areas, and traditional parks. Featured within our park, 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 106.

ALONG THE TRAILS

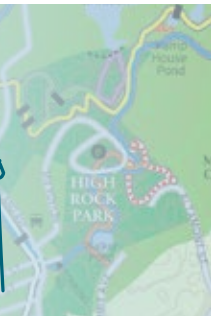
With volunteer programs on hold until August, Greenbelt Educators took the lead on many trail maintenance and improvement projects, including the reblazing of all 35-miles of the Greenbelt Trail System!



The Greenbelt Conservation Corps was formally established as a group of volunteers focused on maintaining and enhancing the Greenbelt. Projects have included trash pick-up and trail repairs. This program builds skills—and community—while making the Greenbelt a better place!



Socially-distanced hikes keep hikers active and engaged with the Greenbelt Conservancy. This weekly program explores points of interest and teaches many lessons about the environment and ecosystem.



To volunteer in the Greenbelt or to join us for one of our hikes, please contact education@sigreenbelt.org.

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 American Sweetgum trees with their seeds (seed pod) 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, colorful migrating 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 treetops is considered one of New York City's most spectacular.

In June, the #35for35 campaign uniquely raised funding and awareness for the Greenbelt's 35-mile trail system. A 35-hour social media campaign featured 35 facts about the trails and encouraged viewers to donate \$35, \$1 per mile.



The campaign was capped by a 30-minute program and toast to the Greenbelt Conservancy in recognition of its resiliency during the pandemic and to thank loyal supporters for sustaining the organization.

The #35for35 concept inspired elite runner and native Staten Islander, Chris Calimano, to run all 35-miles of the Greenbelt Trail System in one day! The trek, totaling over 50 miles (accounting for backtracking and street running to connect trails), took more than nine hours and culminated with a well-deserved hug from his family.



In November, the Greenbelt Conservancy safely and successfully executed an in-person trail race, the annual Fall Flat 5k!

More than 100 runners sent off to complete the course in small waves throughout the day.



Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2019

ASSETS

	2019	2018
Cash	\$88,217	\$96,698
Investments	\$1,120,848	\$986,366
Accrued Interest Receivable	\$1,293	\$1,722
Grants Receivable	\$40,000	\$40,000
Prepaid Expenses	\$11,401	\$5,201
Security Deposit	\$2,285	\$2,285
Fixed Assets	\$45,940	\$59,099
Total Assets	\$1,191,371	\$1,191,371

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

	2019	2018
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$23,392	\$20,347
Accrued Salary	\$ 4,600	\$2,854
Deferred Revenue – Nursery Conduit	\$45,204	\$48,148
Deferred Revenue	\$25,027	\$1,421
Total Liabilities	\$98,223	\$72,770
Unrestricted Operating Fund	\$426,418	\$404,524
Board Designated Funds		
– Nature Center	\$141,489	\$120,711
– Endowment	\$620,201	\$548,620
Total Unrestricted	\$1,073,855	\$1,073,855
Temporary Restricted	\$25,566	\$44,746
Total Net Assets	\$1,118,601	\$1,118,601
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$1,311,897	\$1,191,371

NATURE IS RESILIENT AND SO ARE WE!

The pandemic posed many challenges for all, but particularly nonprofit organizations. Thanks to the support from many local partners, the Greenbelt Conservancy was able to sustain its operating budget to continue actively serving our community.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO:

CON EDISON for its renewed support of **Con Edison Family Science Nights**, which transitioned temporarily to a virtual platform to keep students engaged.



RICHMOND COUNTY SAVINGS FOUNDATION for underwriting the **2020 Greenbelt Venture Program**, an outdoor leadership training program for youth.



THE STATEN ISLAND FOUNDATION for its emergency resiliency funding to support the increase of visitors to the Greenbelt and to sustain the organization's operating budget.



THE NY COMMUNITY TRUST AND THE NYC GREEN RELIEF & RECOVERY FUND for their support of our general operating budget.



CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION SUPPORT

WE THANK OUR PARTNERS 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 SUSTAINING DONOR

Monthly giving provides sustainable revenue for our organization and offers donors an affordable option to make a lasting impact.



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!





200 Nevada Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10306

718.667.2165
sigreenbelt.org

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