

# DELAWARE CENTER for the INLAND BAYS

Annual Report 2018



To **PRESERVE, PROTECT** and **RESTORE**  
Delaware's Inland Bays and their watershed



## DELAWARE CENTER FOR THE INLAND BAYS

# LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



At the end of my first year as Board Chair it is my honor to update you on some of the great things we have accomplished this year at the Center for the Inland Bays. These projects are just a highlight of our accomplishments this year to work toward our goal of enhancing our Inland Bays as a resource for future generations.

Our goals are accomplished by the incredible teamwork of hundreds of people; generous donors, tireless volunteers, an excellent staff, a committed Board of Directors and our partnerships with sister agencies.

This year saw the historic **closing of the last major point source of wastewater flowing into the Inland Bays** and the opening of the City of Rehoboth Beach's ocean outfall. This project will prevent over 17,000 lbs of nitrogen and 1,100 lbs of phosphorus from entering our bays each year.

At the same time as we see the loss of forest land due to a building boom around the watershed, Delaware Fish and Wildlife have made land available to us to plant trees around the Inland Bays. To date, **volunteers have planted over 11,000 seedlings**. The trees will absorb nitrogen and carbon dioxide to mitigate runoff to the bays, assist in carbon reduction, as well as providing habitat for both migrating and resident bird species.

This fall we **broke ground at James Farm** for the start of Phase One of our Master Plan to enhance the farm to be a premier educational and recreational resource. We were able to accomplish funding for this phase through prestigious grants and your generous donations. A capital campaign will be initiated next year to raise the funds for Phase Two. We will need to pull out all the stops for fundraising from our partners and our generous donors.

Our citizen science projects will be enhanced next year by a project to monitor diamond back terrapins, which was funded by a grant of 11,000 dollars from a generous donor foundation. This year, our hardy **volunteers counted 16,491 horseshoe crabs** in all weathers staying up very late and yet with a wonderful sense of camaraderie.

Thank you for all that you do for the Bays. We look forward to working together with you all in 2019.

*Susie Ball*

Susie Ball  
Chair, Board of Directors

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## STUDENTS EXPLORE THE ESTUARY

The James Farm Ecological Preserve is a hub of activity in the spring and fall. Not only is it a popular spot for dog walkers, birders and families looking to enjoy nature, the James Farm also acts as an outdoor classroom for Indian River School District students. During last year's rainy spring, 336 eighth grade students visited the James Farm to learn about the Inland Bays. Students were able to mimic our citizen science fish survey by seining for, identifying and counting fish along the beach. This popular "waders-on" lesson allows students a chance to experience the bays first hand!

This fall, the Education team welcomed Indian River School District 6th grade students for the first time. These students focused on earth systems, soils and cycles during their day-long extension activity at James Farm. In addition to these 6th graders, The Jefferson School 3rd-8th graders

visited as well. The Jefferson School was treated to brand new lessons, highlighting the creatures that depend on the Inland Bays. In total, 642 students learned about the importance of the Inland Bays during the fall semester.

Interactive educational opportunities for students to experience nature and the bays are becoming rare. For many students, the James Farm Educational Program is their first opportunity to experience the Bays, despite living fewer than 20 miles from the water. In order to inspire the next generation of conservation stewards, we must first provide opportunities to appreciate the ecosystem that needs saving. These programs continue to provide that opportunity. However, the number of enrolled students are rising, and the Center's education team is looking forward to introducing the Inland Bays to even more students in the future.



*Students carefully collect creatures from a seine net on the beach at the James Farm*



*Forest animals and children alike planted trees to benefit water quality and wildlife habitat at Assawoman Wildlife Area*

## SCIENTIFIC MODEL PINPOINTS MOST VALUABLE SITES FOR REFORESTATION

In 2018, the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays partnered with Sussex Conservation District to create a Watershed Reforestation Plan for the Inland Bays. The objective was to identify and conceptualize reforestation projects that offer the most cost-effective improvements to water quality and wildlife habitat in the watershed.

This plan looked at both publicly and privately owned agricultural lands and prioritized them using a geospatial Watershed Reforestation Model. Parcels that ranked "highest" in the model were those that, when reforested or managed with Best Management Practices, provided the highest water quality benefit to the Inland Bays. Such best management practices could include installations of pollinator meadows, bioswales (a vegetated, sloped drainage area), or wetland ponds (a shallow pond that

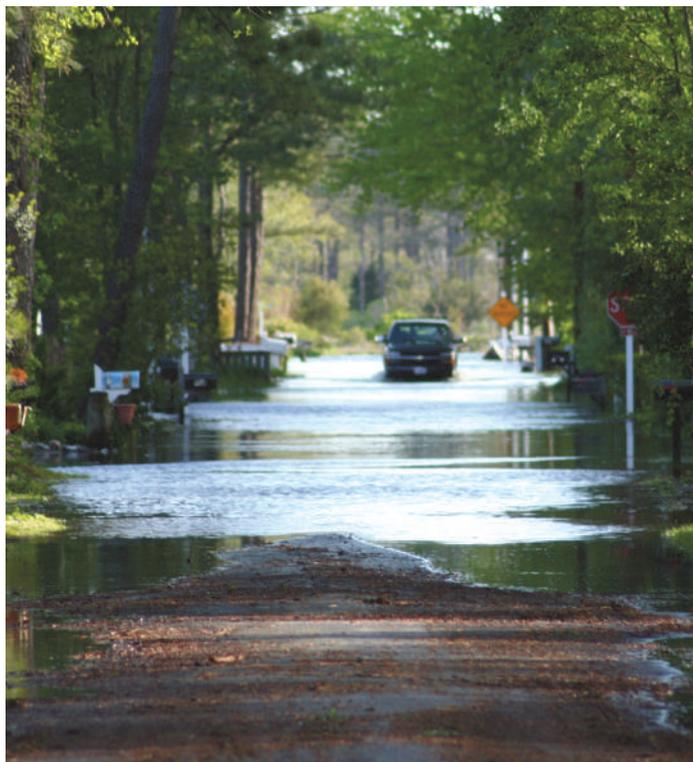
captures stormwater runoff). Using this model, ten parcels were selected to receive concept plans, with a goal to implement them over a series of years as funding became available.

The first project was implemented in October at Assawoman Wildlife Area along Sassafra Landing Road near Frankford. A one-acre habitat island was constructed...with the help of 38 volunteers dressed in their best Halloween costumes! Larger native trees were selected for this site to increase survivability and improve the rate at which the fallow field would naturally regenerate. As the trees mature, native animals and birds that rely on large blocks of unfragmented forests, such as Cerulean Warbler and Black-and-white Warbler, will have new habitat for nesting, foraging, and resting.

## A WIN FOR TIDAL WETLANDS

An ordinance passed by the Sussex County Council will protect the County's tidal wetlands and tidal tributary streams by subtracting their acreage from a development's buildable area. Until now, the County's calculation for a development's "gross buildable area" has been calculated using the total acreage of a development site, even when this acreage includes unbuildable and ecologically-important areas like wetlands and streams.

This practice has effectively concentrated dense development on areas too near the County's most sensitive wetlands and waterways. The Center supported the new ordinance by acting as a technical advisor, developing educational materials, providing testimony and coordinating with partner organizations to provide testimony supporting the adoption of the ordinance.



*The previous trend of high density development near these sensitive areas was putting people right in the path of that water*

Areas with high-density development and impervious surfaces such as roads and rooftops are more vulnerable to stormwater runoff and flooding from storms and sea level rise. The previous trend of high-density development near these sensitive areas was leaving community members right in the path of this flooding: putting their homes and lives at risk.

The new ordinance, passed by the County Council on December 4, will calculate permitted density based on total acreage unless that acreage includes a state tidal wetland or tidal tributary stream. In that case, the total acreage will be determined by subtracting out the acreage of these newly protected areas. The ordinance was amended after the public hearing and council discussions, removing language that would have offered the same protections for perennial non-tidal rivers and streams, and non-tidal wetlands.



*A floating wetland after 100 days of growth*

## CREATING WETLANDS IN THE CANALS

Residents in South Bethany know that the water in their canals can be choked with algae during the summer, turning these waterways a solid green color from end to end. Due to the design of the canals, the water movement is slow, and water at the dead ends can remain trapped for months. This shallow stagnant water can create the perfect environment for those summertime algae blooms.

In an effort to help clean up the water and provide more natural habitat, the Town of South Bethany and the Center for the Inland Bays partnered to place 127 floating wetlands within the community's canals. Roughly 10,000 plugs of saltmarsh cordgrass were hand planted in the wetlands by volunteers from South Bethany.

Throughout the summer, the floating wetlands flourished! The floating grassy islands helped to filter the water, and provided excellent habitat for fish, crabs and countless other creatures. After growing for a season, the grasses were harvested. Removing these grasses at the end of the season results in the removal of the nutrients they took up during growth.

The South Bethany floating wetlands are projected to remove at least 38 pounds of nitrogen per year and 6.8 pounds of phosphorous per year. Nutrient analyses are being performed to correctly measure the number of nutrients removed during their first year.



Clean water supporters at the June Clean Water Rally

## SUSSEX CITIZENS OFFER DETERMINED SUPPORT FOR CLEAN WATER

On March 13, 2018 the Center hosted the Rehoboth Clean Water Kick-off, to launch the Center's efforts of the Clean Water: Delaware's Clear Choice Campaign. A total of 96 concerned citizens packed into the Lions Club in Dewey Beach to learn about the Clean Water Campaign and learn how to advocate for their communities. The Clean Water: Delaware's Clear Choice Campaign is a statewide education and outreach effort focused on securing additional clean water funding. The steering committee and Alliance Members support legislation that provides additional funding for improvements to wastewater systems, flood reduction initiatives and investments in drinking water quality. Clean Water is essential to everyone, it impacts the food we eat, the waterways we fish and swim in and the homes of fish and wildlife. Currently, 90% of Delaware's waterways are polluted and Delaware faces an annual deficit of \$100 million to address our water quality needs.

The Center's 2018 "Letter to the Editor" events, served as a starter guide and helped to launch successful letter-writing campaigns. At one of the events, attendees were even treated to a private Q&A session with Dennis Forney, the Publisher of the Cape Gazette! Mr. Forney provided an insider's perspective of the newspaper industry and lauded the efforts of the citizen advocates.

The Clean Water Campaign will continue into 2019 as financing for Clean Water continues to be a high priority both locally and statewide. The Center is looking forward to welcoming more Alliance members, working with partners, and helping to establish sustainable funding for cleaner water in the coming year!

## Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Fund Balances

September 30, 2018 and September 30, 2017

### ASSETS

Current Assets	2018	2017
Cash	\$ 493,678	\$ 403,419
Grants Receivable	193,725	206,465
Prepaid Expenses	17,042	4,500
Accounts Receivable	11,854	14,569
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>716,299</b>	<b>628,953</b>

### Property, Plant and Equipment (at cost)

Land	125,000	125,000
Building	894,696	887,716
Furniture and Equipment	344,155	345,999
	1,363,851	1,358,715
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(597,036)	(579,242)
<b>Net Property, Plant and Equipment</b>	<b>766,815</b>	<b>779,473</b>

### Other Assets

DE Community Foundation		
Endowment Fund	132,697	127,105
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>1,615,811</b>	<b>1,535,531</b>

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

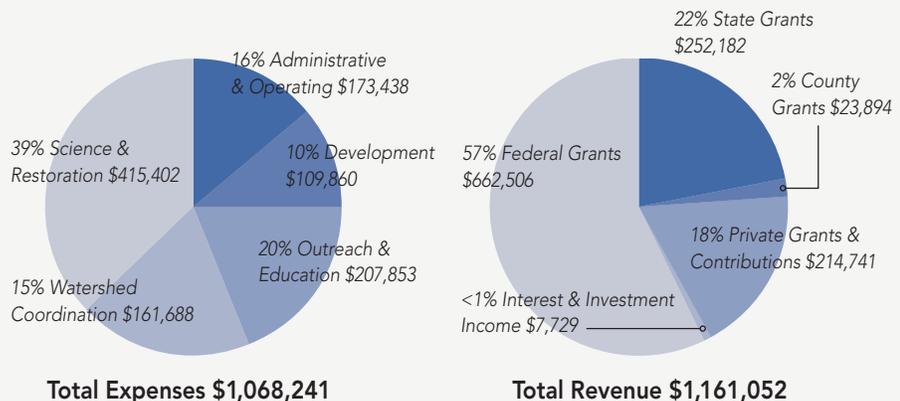
#### Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$ 9,712	\$ 26,900
Payroll Taxes	1,629	1,358
Accrued Salaries and Benefits	36,120	31,734
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>47,461</b>	<b>59,992</b>

#### Net Assets

Unrestricted		
Board Designated*	132,697	127,105
Invested in Property and Equipment	641,815	654,473
Undesignated	311,502	300,419
<b>Total Unrestricted</b>	<b>1,086,014</b>	<b>1,081,997</b>
Temporarily Restricted	357,336	268,542
Permanently Restricted**	125,000	125,000
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>1,568,350</b>	<b>1,475,539</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,615,811</b>	<b>\$ 1,535,531</b>

\* Endowment Fund \*\* Protected Land



# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

Names listed here reflect those who donated during the 2018 Fiscal Year 10/2017-9/2018

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*In Honor of Kathy Jankowski*  
 Vickie York  
  
*In Memory of Lillian Elizabeth Karczeski*  
 Claire Simmers  
  
*In Memory of Marie Peterson*  
 James Betz  
  
*In Honor of Steven Brooks*  
 Steven Brooks  
  
*In Honor of Susie Ball*  
 Christopher Bason and Archer Larned, Coleen Collins, Deborah Grant, Donna Davis and Gail Jackson, Gabe Steerman, Joanne Cabry, Judith B. Wetzel, Karen Oates, Karla Engle, Leslie Ledogar, Mary A Delaney, Myra Kramer, Nancy Dicken, Natalie Moss, Evelyn Maurmeyer, Rich Morgante, Sandra Roberts, Steve and Judy Britz, Steven Glass, The Girlfriends, Theodora Burke, Vickie York  
  
*In Memory of Vinnie DiDomenicis*  
 Charlene Bryant, Robert and Nancy Knapp  
  
*In Honor of Wally and Paula Pflapsen*  
 Waldemar Jacob Pflapsen III  
  
*In Memory of William Henry Jaeger*  
 Dave Jaeger  
  
*In Honor of Dr. and Mrs. William Oetgen*  
 Mary Townend



Artist John Donato, works on an original painting that went for \$2,000 at the Center's 2018 Decked Out fundraiser!



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Mark Kohout (Gateway Construction), Gina Jennings (Sussex County Council Finance Director), Alex Schmidt (Century Engineering), George Cole (Sussex County Council), Dr. Susie Ball (Center Board Chair), Chris Bason (Center Executive Director), Bob Collins (Center Project Manager), Todd F. Lawson (Sussex County Administrator), Rep. Ron Gray (Delaware General Assembly), and Hans Medlarz (Sussex County Engineering)



- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Entrance Sign         | 15. Evergreen Screen      |
| 2. Existing Kiosk        | 16. Maintenance Storage   |
| 3. Donor Wall            | 17. 3-Sided Pole Building |
| 4. Bus Drop-Off          | 18. Exterior Storage      |
| 5. Bioretention          | 19. Dry Goods Storage     |
| 6. Sculpture             | 20. Nursery               |
| 7. Event Lawn            | 21. Existing Pavilion     |
| 8. Butterfly Garden      | 22. Education Building    |
| 9. Composting Toilet     | 23. Amphitheater          |
| 10. Existing Access Road | 24. Trailhead Signage     |
| 11. Reforestation        | 25. Overflow Parking      |
| 12. Shrub Massing        | 26. Trail                 |
| 13. Arboretum Plantings  | 27. Successional Meadow   |
| 14. Meadow               |                           |

Groundbreaking for Phase One of the James Farm Master Plan Implementation took place on November 16. Led by retiring Sussex County Councilman George Cole, representatives of Sussex County, the Delaware Outdoor Recreation Trails and Parks Program, the Delaware Legislature, Gateway Construction, Inc. and the Center over-turned ceremonial shovels-full

of dirt to commemorate a new entrance and parking area that will allow safe access for the growing number visitors to the Preserve. Construction is expected wrap-up prior to spring, and the Preserve will remain open during this time. Phase Two planning is underway for improvements to the Preserve's Campus area, educational signage, and trail system!