

Advancing New Jersey's Trails & Greenways

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Case Study

D&R Canal State Park





NEW JERSEY'S TRAILS & GREEN WAYS = intersection of recreation + active transportation

Why Trails Matter



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



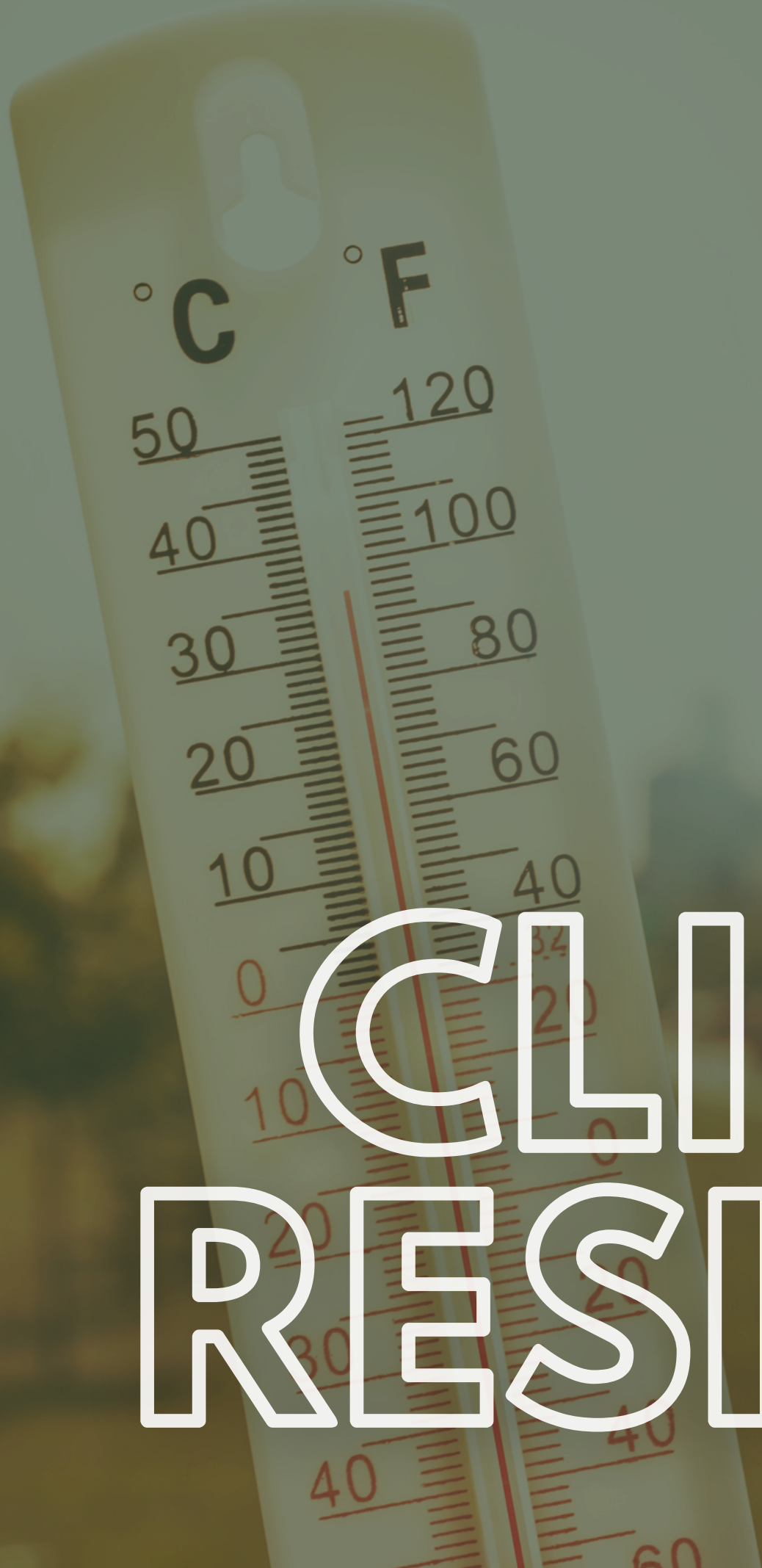


BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY



MITIGATE CLIMATE IMPACT





CLIMATE RESILIENCE

STRENGTHEN ECONOMIES





CONNECTION



CONNECTION

Trails Matter to New Jerseyans



Outside, Together!

A STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN FOR NEW JERSEY

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
GREEN ACRES PROGRAM

14,858 responses to stakeholder survey

1,005 responses to general population survey

Trails are the **TOP** on the list of **most preferred features in outdoor spaces**



Top Priorities:

- maintenance of existing parks
- protecting habitat



Residents Want More:

- trails
- picnic areas
- sitting areas
- cooling features

New Jerseyans most often use outdoor space to:

- take walks or hikes
- gather with friends



75%

of residents primarily utilize local parks/trails



Statewide Trail Needs Assessment

for Trail Planners & Managers



302

responses from those who work with trails in NJ

Accomplishments

90%

of those who work with trails in urban areas work with multi-use trails/shared use paths



- 63% constructed new trails
- 59% formed partnerships
- 56% improved maintenance

Top Trail Goals:

- develop or improve trails
- improve maintenance of existing trails
- better connect the community to trails



Funding Gaps

- maintenance
- construction
- planning



Help Shape the Future of
New Jersey's Trails

New Jersey Trail User Survey



8503

New Jersey residents & trail users

Top Reasons to Use Trails:

- exercise to get healthy & feel happy
- be in nature & find calm
- have fun
- spend time with friends, family, or others in their community



Top Trail Priorities:

- maintain & improve existing trails
- fill in gaps in existing trail networks
- ensure every community has access to quality trails
- build more trails for different activities

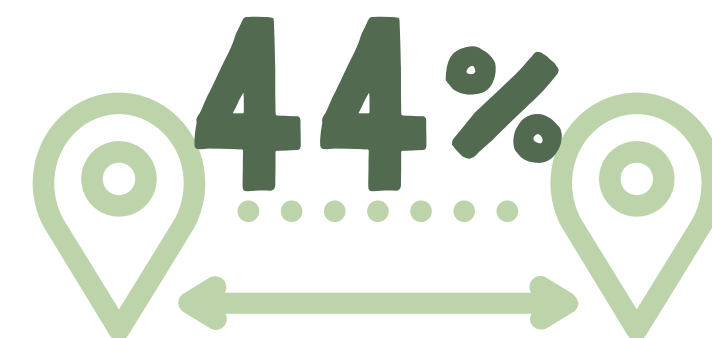
Typical Travel Times:

Urban Trail Users
30-60 minutes
**Suburban & Rural
Trail Users**
15-30 minutes



30%

use trails for active
transportation
purposes at least
some of the time



don't use trails for
active transportation
because the trails
don't connect where
they need to go

equitable access to
outdoor recreation & active transportation
public health . community resilience . safety
economic drivers . mitigate climate change
connection

**Trails &
Greenways**

**Essential
Infrastructure**

COMPREHENSIVE HOLISTIC PLANNING

EARLY
STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT

WORK ACROSS
BOUNDARY
LINES

COMMUNICATION

Identify Stakeholders & Partners

- Consider stakeholders with shared goals that may benefit from the project
- Engage with them early in project planning



Work Across Boundary Lines

- Don't limit connections to municipal, county, or even state boundaries
- Adopt a coalitional model where possible



Early Public Engagement

- Allow public engagement to shape the project
- Connect the project to the community
- Think broadly about the ways the project benefits the community



Planning at Many Scales

- Incorporate the project into local and regional planning
- Leverage planning, ordinances, and other tools to build out connected systems over time



Proactively Identify Project Needs

- Identify potential permit, site remediation, and land ownership needs early
- Create a comprehensive budget and project timeline that anticipates likely adjustments and obstacles



Identify a Maintenance Plan

- Plan and design your trail to have realistic maintenance requirements
- Create a maintenance plan and dedicated funding
- Build partnerships



Plan & Design for Accessibility

- Utilize applicable trail accessibility standards & universal design approach
- Plan, design, and construct your trail & facilities to be as accessible & inclusive as possible



Communicate with Funding Programs

- Contact the program to request to discuss your project prior to applying
- Use them as a resource
- Build professional relationships to accomplish shared goals



Celebrate the Project!

- Gather the community and elected supporters with a ribbon cutting!
- Promote the project and help stakeholders share with their networks
- Share these successes with the funding program



Key Themes

01. **Identify stakeholders & partners**
02. **Early public engagement**
03. **Planning at many scales**
04. **Proactively address hurdles**
05. **Communicate with the assistance program**
06. **Celebrate the project once completed!**

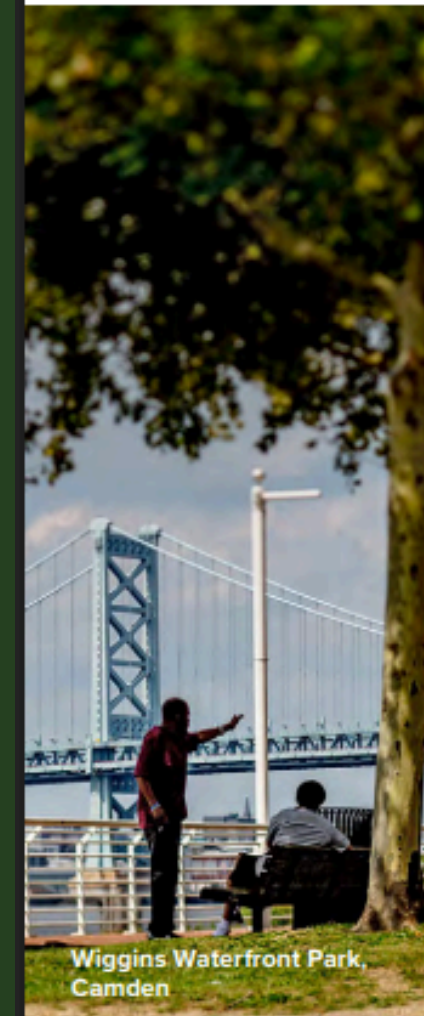
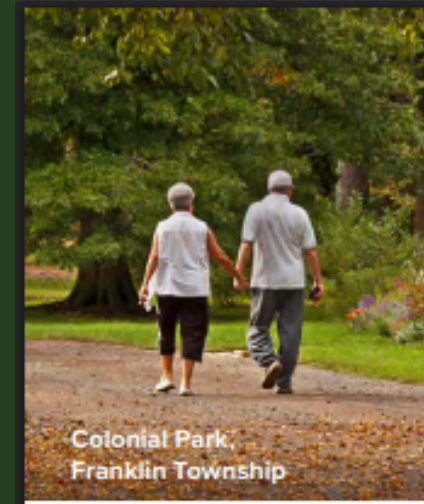
NJDEP Resources



Identification of Trends and Issues in outdoor recreation

Evaluation of Supply and Demand for open space

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) = Framework for open space preservation and outdoor recreation planning and funding priorities in New Jersey

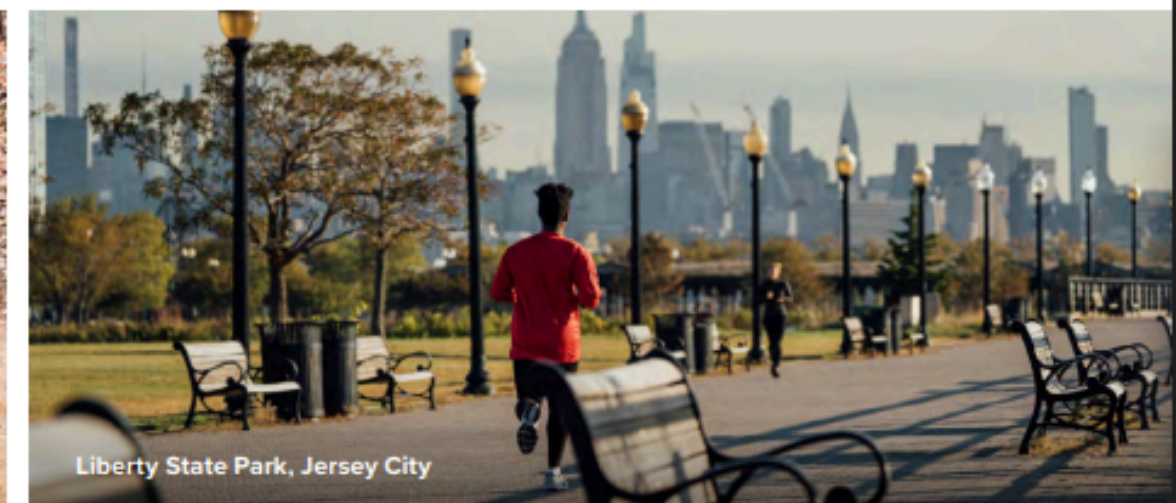


2023-2027

Outside, Together!

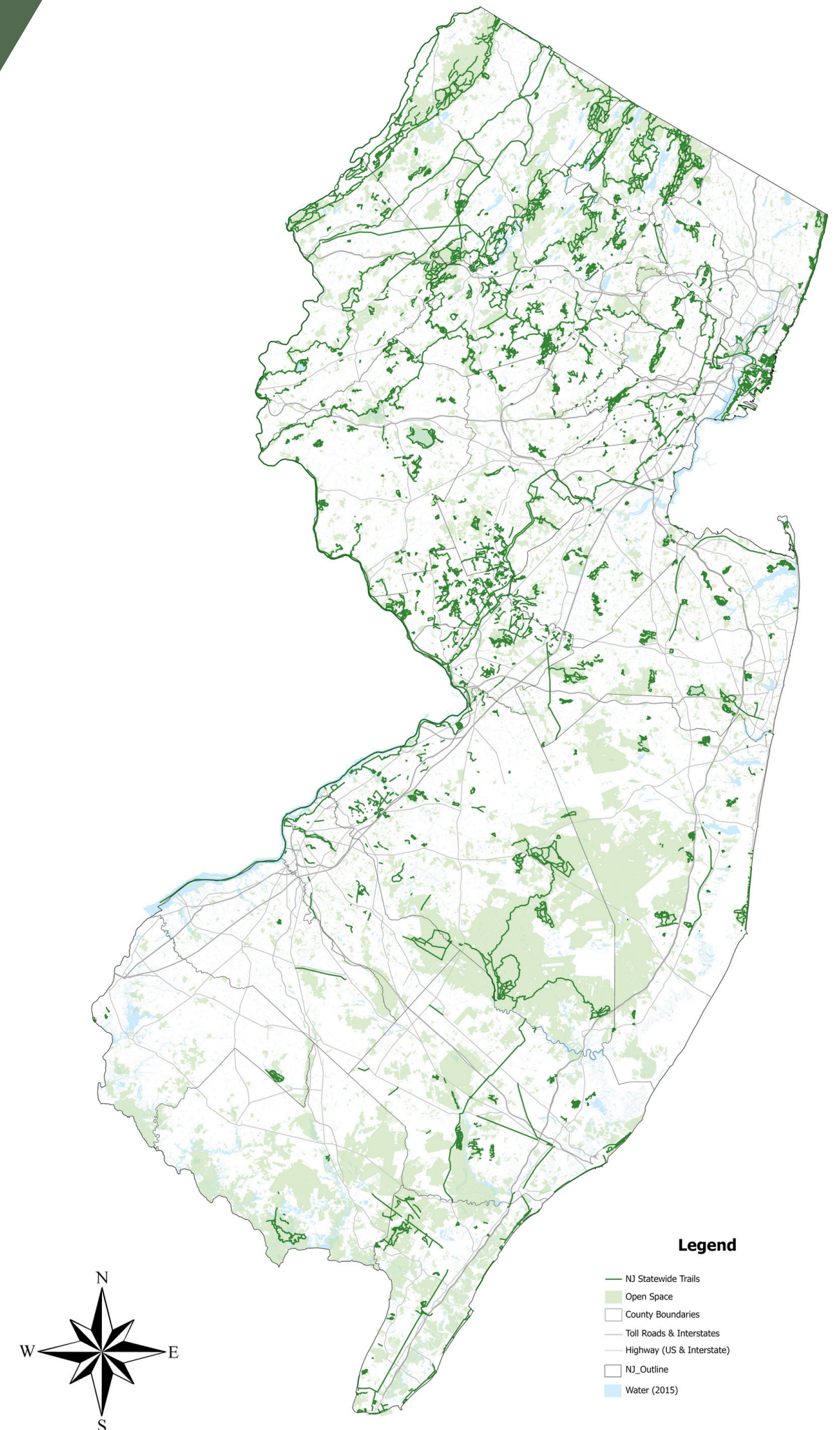
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Statewide Trails Dataset

- Identify existing trails near your project area
- Identify potential opportunities for connectivity
- Includes off-road trails and on-road bicycle and pedestrian facilities where that data has been collected and shared



Green Acres Program Funding

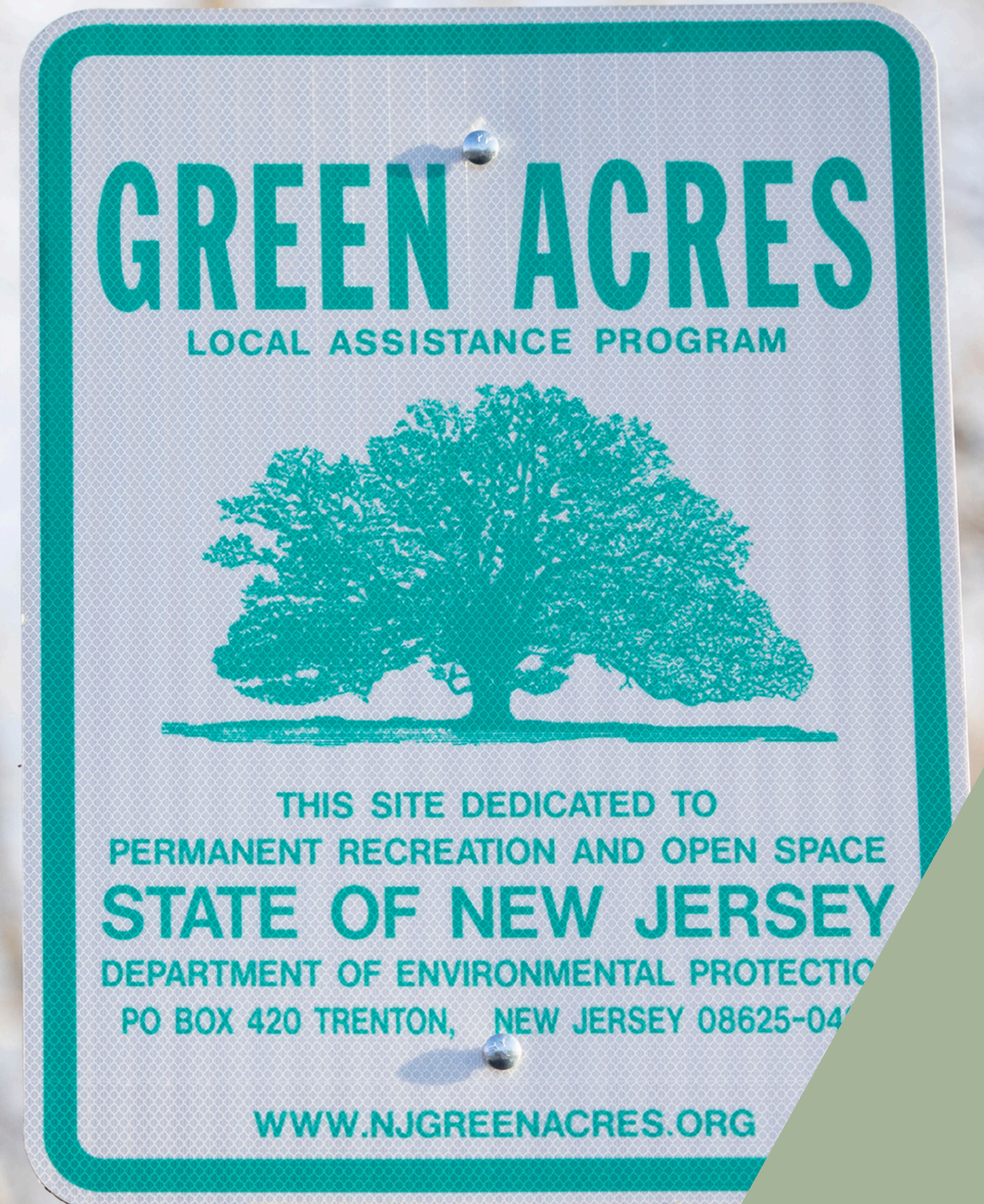


State Funding:

- State Land Acquisition
- Local & Nonprofit Assistance
- **Future* Planning Grants

Federal Funding administered by NJDEP:

- ORLP (Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program)
- **Future* Recreational Trails Program open funding round



Uniting Financial Resources

- consolidates information from different funding programs within NJDEP
- provides eligibility tables and a keyword search to help identify programs that may fit your project
- provides lists of related funding opportunities from other state agencies

Check out New Jersey's Funding One Stop Shop funding finder tool & funding dashboard for sustainability-focused projects!



Find a Trail

NJDEP Trails Program Webpage

- provides tips for exploring trails, how to find them, existing regional trails through the state, annual trail events, and links to organizations that allow people to give back and to get involved with the state's trails



The Vision

Equitable development & improvement of trails throughout the state

Holistic, comprehensive approach to trail planning

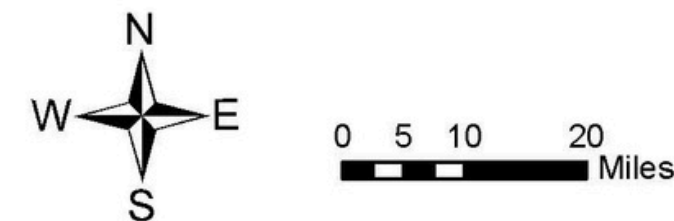
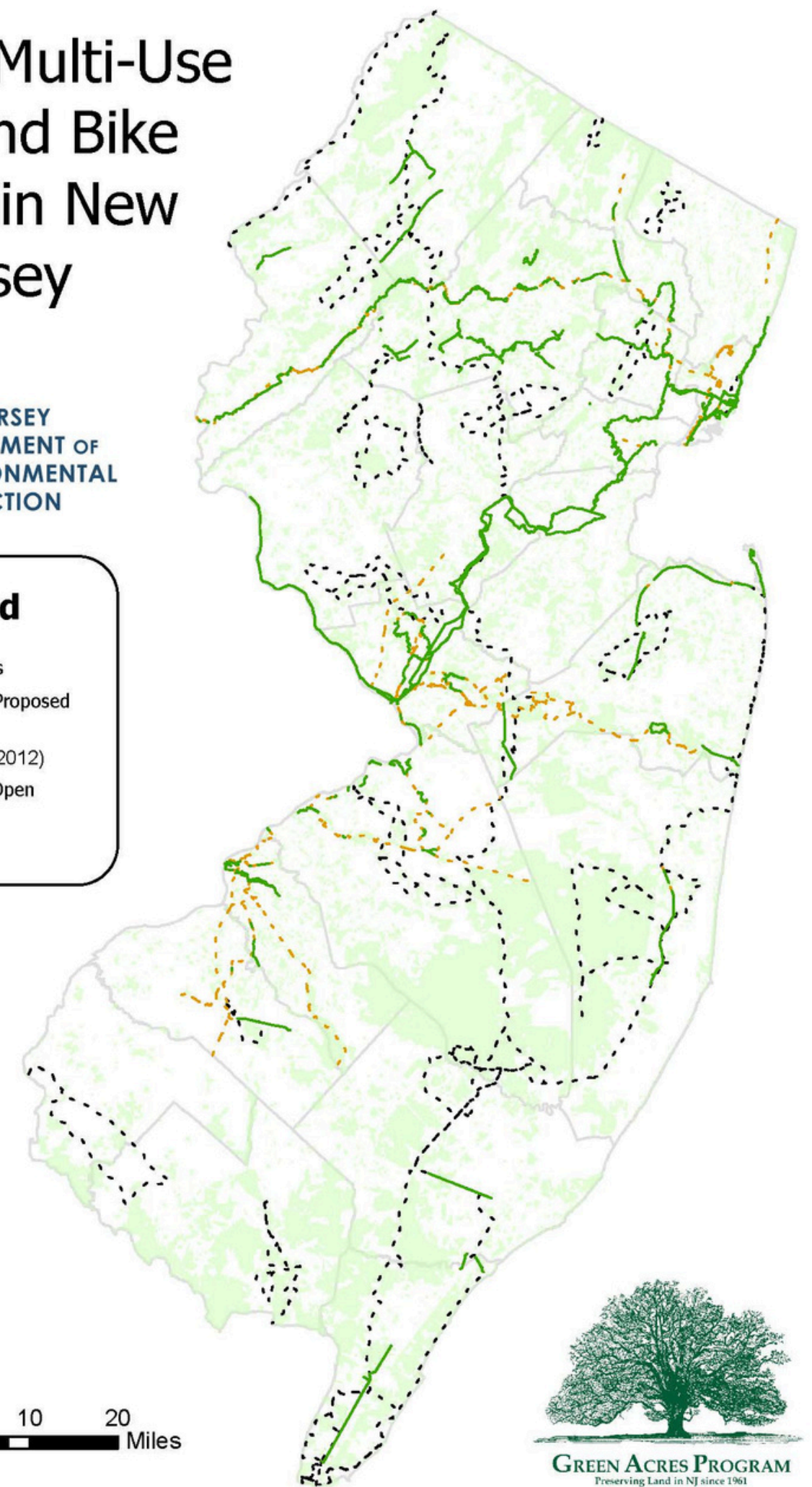
Groundwork for a statewide system of trails & greenways

Regional Multi-Use Trails and Bike Routes in New Jersey



Legend

- Regional Trails
- Planned and Proposed Trails
- Bike Routes (2012)
- Green Acres Open Space
- Counties



Thank you!

For more information, visit:

New Jersey Trails Program website

<https://dep.nj.gov/greenacres/trails-program-home/>

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