

Hunterdon County Open Space Trust Fund Plan

Proposed edits based on comments received

www.co.hunterdon.nj.us

#	Comment received (draft version)	name/organization	Pages affected	Introduced language	Recommended action	
1	Emphasis that the OS Trust Fund is restricted to state statute and ballot question language (10/6/15 draft)	Julie Allen, Readington Township; Readington Township; public comments	pg. 5	The Open Space, Farmland, and Historic Preservation Trust Fund Plan (hereafter referred to as the Open Space Trust Fund Plan) permits the Freeholder Board to supplement existing resources, both from the County as well as from preservation partners, thereby strengthening aggressive preservation campaigns.	addition	It must be noted that all activity that is funded by the Hunterdon County Open Space Trust Fund must comport with state statutes as well as the ballot questions passed by the voters of Hunterdon County.
2	Further expand and clarify the definition of stewardship (10/6/15 draft)	POSAC members; Jim Borders, Delaware Township	pg. 6	For the purposes of this document, stewardship is defined as both the ecological management of natural ecosystems to maintain environmental quality, and the maintenance and upkeep of park infrastructure that allows or enhances the public's enjoyment of the open space.	see comment #3	For the purposes of this document, stewardship is defined as both the ecological management of natural ecosystems to maintain environmental quality; and the care of any improvement to land acquired for recreation and conservation purposes designed to expand and enhance its utilization for those purposes. This definition is taken from the statute governing county open space trust funds. To further explain the definition, "recreation and conservation purposes" means the use of lands for parks, open space, natural areas, ecological and biological study, forests, water reserves, wildlife preserves, fishing, hunting, camping, boating, winter sports, or similar uses for either public outdoor recreation or conservation of natural resources, or both, or the use of lands for public indoor recreation. Please refer to the Recreation, Development, and Maintenance Plan on page 51 for additional details.
3	(2/2/16 draft)	Richard Allen, Readington Township; public comments	pg. 6	For the purposes of this document, stewardship is defined as both the ecological management of natural ecosystems to maintain environmental quality, and the care of any improvement to land acquired for recreation and conservation purposes designed to expand and enhance its utilization for those purposes. This definition is taken from the statute governing county open space trust funds. To further explain the definition, "recreation and conservation purposes" means the use of lands for parks, open space, natural areas, ecological and biological study, forests, water reserves, wildlife preserves, fishing, hunting, camping, boating, winter sports, or similar uses for either public outdoor recreation or conservation of natural resources, or both, or the use of lands for public indoor recreation. Please refer to the Recreation, Development, and Maintenance Plan on page 51 for additional details.	replace	For the purposes of this document, stewardship is defined as repairing, restoring or improving lands acquired or developed for recreation and conservation purposes or farmland preservation purposes for the purpose of enhancing or protecting those lands for recreation and conservation purposes or farmland preservation purposes. To further explain the definition, as explained in the statute governing county open space trust funds (N.J.S.A. 40:12-15), "recreation and conservation purposes" means the use of lands for parks, open space, natural areas, ecological and biological study, forests, water reserves, wildlife preserves, fishing, hunting, camping, boating, winter sports, or similar uses for either public outdoor recreation or conservation of natural resources, or both, or the use of lands for public indoor recreation." Please refer to the Recreation, Development, and Maintenance Plan on page 51 for full and additional details.
4	Clarify Trust Fund spending (12/23/15 draft)	Public comments	pg. 6	n/a	addition	For the varying uses of the Trust Fund, the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders determine the breakdown of Trust Fund spending, specifically the allocation of funds to the grant programs offered. The Board revisits the allocations annually to take into account program needs and matching outside funding sources. For 2016, the Open Space Trust Fund revenue is distributed as follows: 30% - Farmland Preservation 25% - Cooperative Open Space Grant Program 15% - Non-profit Open Space Grant Program 15% - County Open Space (purchases and stewardship) 10% - Municipal Grant Program 3.5% - Historic Preservation Grant Program 1.5% - County Historic Preservation
5	Limit stewardship to passive recreation (2/2/16 draft)	Richard Allen, Readington Township	pg. 11	An Open Space Recreation, Development, and Maintenance Plan is contained within the Open Space Trust Fund Plan. This element is designed to guide the county in its efforts to steward the lands owned by the county for open space and recreational purposes.	no action	Active recreation is a part of the County's recreational opportunities and needs to be addressed in the Open Space Recreation, Development, and Maintenance Plan.

#	Comment received (draft version)	name/organization	Pages affected	Introduced language	Recommended action	
6	update information regarding Franklin Township (12/23/15 draft)	Lora Jones, Franklin Township	pg. 25	<p>Franklin Township</p> <p>In 1998, the Franklin Township Committee appointed an Open Space Advisory Committee. The Committee was charged with four tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inventory all land parcels at least 15 acres in size; - Develop criteria to identify high priority open space parcels; - Develop a program to inform residents of the benefits of preserving open space; and - Develop an open space and recreation plan. <p>The Plan was completed and approved by the Township Committee in 1999. Among its recommendations was a ballot question calling for an Open Space Trust Fund, in the amount of 5 cents per \$100 of assessed value. The ballot question was approved in 1999. It permits funding for farmland preservation, conservation and recreation.</p> <p>The Open Space and Recreation Plan serves as a long range guide (25 to 50 year planning horizon). Its ultimate goal is 4,891 acres of preserved open space for active and passive recreation and farmland. This comprises one-third of the Township's land base. The Township has been very successful in its farmland preservation efforts.</p>	replace	<p>Franklin Township</p> <p>In 1998, the Franklin Township Committee appointed an Open Space Advisory Committee charged with four tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Inventory all land parcels at least 15 acres in size; 2) Develop criteria to identify high priority open space parcels. 3) Develop a program to inform residents of the benefits of preserving open space; and 4) Develop an open space and recreation plan. <p>The Plan was completed and approved by the Township Committee in 1999. Among its recommendations was a ballot question calling for an Open Space Trust Fund, in the amount of 5 cents per \$100 of assessed value. The question was approved in 1999. It permits funding for farmland preservation, conservation and recreation. In November of 2015, Franklin residents voted to amend its Open Space Tax uses to include historic preservation and Blue Acres acquisition.</p> <p>The Open Space and Recreation Plan serves as a long-range, 20 to 50-year planning guide. Its ultimate goal is 4,891 acres of preserved open space for active and passive recreation and farmland, one-third of the Township's land base. The Township has been very successful in its farmland preservation efforts.</p>
7	update information regarding West Amwell (12/23/15 draft)	Hal Shute, West Amwell Township	pg. 28	<p>In 1999, West Amwell Township residents approved the creation of an Open Space Trust Fund for open space, farmland, conservation, recreation, or historic preservation. The township may collect two cents per \$100 of assessed value. The township envisions a series of greenways along stream corridors and ridgelines, linking existing parks, natural areas, and cultural resources and "nodes" of open space both in Hunterdon and Mercer Counties.</p>	replace	<p>In 1999, West Amwell Township residents approved the creation of an Open Space Trust Fund for open space, farmland, conservation, recreation, or historic preservation. The township initially collected two cents per \$100 of assessed value. Subsequently, in 2001 voters approved four cents per \$100 and in 2004 approved the current six cent per \$100 tax.</p> <p>The township envisioned a series of greenways along stream corridors and especially the Sourland ridge, linking existing parks, natural areas, trail systems, cultural resources and "nodes" of open space. The township also recognized the value of preserving our many large farms.</p> <p>The Open Space program in West Amwell continues to be very active. Current preserved farmland and open space from all state, county, nonprofit and municipal programs covers approximately 6,000 acres.</p>
8	Update information regarding Hunterdon Land Trust (10/6/15 draft)	Hunterdon Land Trust	pg. 30	<p>The mission of HLT is to preserve and protect the rural character of Hunterdon County. It aims to accomplish this through a variety of mechanisms.</p> <p>HLT maintains acquisition interests throughout the County, however it is currently focusing on three regions within the County. These areas are the Delaware River Bluffs, the Lockatong Creek watershed, and the Alexauken Creek watershed, including adjacent portions of the Sourland Mountains.</p>	addition & replace	<p>The mission of HLT is to preserve the integrity of the rural landscape in Hunterdon County region by protecting and enhancing natural resources, and the cultural landscape of the historic Dvoor Farm, for public enjoyment and education.</p> <p>HLT's preservation efforts are focused in throughout Hunterdon County with an emphasis on the following project regions: Delaware River Scenic Corridor, Delaware River Tributaries, Musconetcong Highlands, North Branch Raritan River, South Branch Raritan river and the Sourland Mountain Region.</p> <p>HLT also owns and stewards the historic Dvoor Farm which is an iconic property that reflects the historical and agricultural heritage of Hunterdon County.</p>

#	Comment received (draft version)	name/organization	Pages affected	Introduced language	Recommended action	
9	Update information regarding Raritan Headwaters Association (12/23/15 draft)	Raritan Headwaters Association	pg. 31/32	<p>Raritan Headwaters Association (RHA) The Raritan Headwaters Association (RHA) is a nonprofit organization that serves the 190 square mile area drained by the North Branch of the Raritan River and its tributaries. This includes Lebanon Borough and portions of Tewksbury Township, Clinton Township, Readington Township, and Califon Borough.</p> <p>Among its many activities, RHA serves as a land trust, acquiring and holding properties in fee and conservation easements. It also helps other entities preserve lands within the watershed.</p> <p>RHA has identified three areas in Hunterdon County where future preservation activity will be focused. These include the creation of a Black River greenway and two greenbelts around the villages of Oldwick and Pottersville.</p>	replace	<p>Raritan Headwaters Association The Raritan Headwaters Association (RHA) is a nonprofit organization that serves the 470-square-mile area that makes up the headwaters region of the Raritan River Basin. This includes Lebanon Borough and portions of Tewksbury Township, Clinton Township, Readington Township, and Califon Borough.</p> <p>RHA was formed in 2011 when the South Branch Watershed Association (SBWA) and the Upper Raritan Watershed Association (URWA) merged to form one organization which would address water quality issues throughout the upper Raritan River Watershed. The activities and interests of the SBWA have been incorporated into the work of RHA. Among its many activities, RHA serves as a land trust, acquiring and holding properties in fee and conservation easements. While RHA focusses primarily on water quality, they continue to partner with other non-profits and governmental entities to help preserve environmentally significant open space.</p>
10	Make clear the recommended action is not contrary to the ballot question (10/6/15 draft)	Julie Allen, Readington Township	pg. 10, pg. 35	Recommendation: Allocate the available funding to appropriately match the funding levels available from preservation partners and support the agriculture community in ways other than easement purchase.	See comment #11	Recommendation: Allocate the available funding to appropriately match the funding levels available from preservation partners and encourage support for the agriculture community.
11	Remove discussion surrounding supporting the agriculture community (12/23/15 draft)	Readington Township OS Committee; Robert Becker, Flemington Borough; Hal Shute, West Amwell Township	pg. 10, pg. 35	<p>Recommendation: Allocate the available funding to appropriately match the funding levels available from preservation partners and encourage support for the agriculture community.</p> <p>In addition, the County should determine if it can play a role in supporting the agricultural infrastructure with projects or funding from outside of the Trust Fund. Supporting efforts in agricultural tourism and supporting the location of agricultural vendors and dealers within the county would help sustain and revitalize the industry that is the underpinning of the county's agriculture economic engine.</p>	replace	<p>Recommendation: Allocate the available funding to appropriately match the funding levels available from preservation partners.</p> <p>In addition, numerous municipalities and nonprofit organizations are able to make use of funding sources that the County does not have access to. Using grant funds from the Hunterdon County Open Space Trust Fund to supplement outside sources allows the Trust Fund to have a greater effect than it would otherwise. The State Green Acres program has been instrumental in the preservation of a large portion of the open space in the county.</p>
12	Clarify the explanation for <i>Recommendation: Allocate the available funding to appropriately match the funding levels available from preservation partners and support the agriculture community in ways other than easement purchase</i> in regards to the County's position on Ag. Industry support and a shift in focus (10/6/15 draft)	Julie Allen, Readington Township	pg. 35	In addition, as the County moves toward a complete preservation picture in regards to the amount of agricultural land preserved, the focus should shift toward the support of the agricultural infrastructure that is instrumental to the farmers of the preserved land. Supporting efforts in agricultural tourism or supporting the locating of agricultural vendors and dealers within the county would help sustain or revitalize the infrastructure that is the underpinning of the agriculture economic engine.	see comment #11	In addition, the County should determine if it can play a role in supporting the agricultural infrastructure with projects or funding from outside of the Trust Fund. Supporting efforts in agricultural tourism and supporting the location of agricultural vendors and dealers within the county would help sustain and revitalize the industry that is the underpinning of the county's agriculture economic engine.
13	Limit the expenditure for stewardship and maintenance to a small percentage of the Trust (12/23/15 draft)	Readington Township OS Committee; Tracy Kirk, Diana Hendry, Readington Twp	pg. 35	Recommendation: Allocation of available funding among the numerous recommended Open Space Trust Fund programs should be determined on an annual basis to meet the funding needs of each program and use.	no action, see comment #28	While the Trust Fund Plan sets out recommendations as to the types of uses the Fund shall be used for, it is not the venue for setting limits on the funding. The Board of Chosen Freeholders set the percent allocations for the grant programs on an annual basis. It is at this time that the Board determines the appropriate amounts for each specific use.
14	Limit the parks system requests to those that advance acquisition only.	Richard Allen, Readington Township	pg. 36	Funding for the Park System and for the Farmland Preservation Program should be determined annually. It should be based on budget requests, projected needs, and a demonstration that the requests complement and advance the County's vision and goals for open space, parkland and farmland preservation contained in the Farmland Preservation Plan, the Parks and Open Space Plan and the Open Space Trust Fund Plan.	no action	Stewardship projects are an integral and necessary part of the operation of a functioning parks system and as such should not be excluded from consideration.

#	Comment received (draft version)	name/organization	Pages affected	Introduced language	Recommended action	
15	Include County Open Space to the list of programs	Richard Allen; Readington Township	pg. 36	To ensure a stable and reliable source of funding for the Historic Preservation Grant Program, the Municipal Grant Program, the Cooperative Assistance Grant Program, and for the Nonprofit Grant Program, the Freeholder Board allocates a certain percentage of the Trust Fund annually toward each.	replace	To ensure a stable and reliable source of funding for Farmland Preservation, the Cooperative Assistance Grant Program, the Nonprofit Grant Program, County Open Space initiatives, Historic Preservation, and the Municipal Grant Program, the Freeholder Board allocates a certain percentage of the Trust Fund annually toward each.
16	Clarify the statement regarding the use of certain percent allocations for stewardship (10/6/15 draft)	Jay Kelly, POSAC member; Readington Township	pg. 36	In addition to acquisition of open space or parkland, these percentage allocations may also be used for stewardship. Stewardship includes the development, improvement, or maintenance of the parks for the public's use and enjoyment. It also includes the monitoring of our farmland easements to ensure compliance with the restrictions placed on the properties as a result of the preservation process.	addition; replace	Any change to the annual percent allocation would require at least one public hearing identifying the distribution of monies governing the County Open Space Trust Fund. In addition to acquisition of farmland, open space or parkland, according to the last ballot question, the municipal and County percentage allocations may also be used to "develop, improve and maintain county and municipal lands for recreation and conservation purposes." Once property is acquired, proper attention and care must be given towards stewardship to protect the natural environment and the public's use of the land.
17	Remove the ballot question language in reference to how trust fund money may be used (2/2/16 draft)	Richard Allen, Readington Township	pg. 36	In addition to acquisition of farmland, open space or parkland, according to the last ballot question, the municipal and County allocations also may be used to "develop, improve and maintain county and municipal lands for recreation and conservation purposes." Once property is acquired, proper attention and care must be given towards stewardship to protect the natural environment and the public's use of the land.	no action	The ballot question language is what authorized the Open Space Trust Fund to expend money for those purposes and that language must be referenced.
18	Emphasize the support of unique nonprofit initiatives in regards to natural resources (10/6/15 draft)	Jay Kelly, Suzanne Wilder, POSAC members	pg. 37	Non-profit organizations are in a unique position, they have the ability to pull together funding from a variety of sources, both public and private that the County does not have access to. This makes these organizations ideal preservation partners.	addition	Non-profit organizations are in a unique position; they have the ability to pull together funding from a variety of sources, both public and private that the County cannot access. Non-Profit organizations often utilize these funds to complete preservation projects that protect the County's natural resources, in addition to providing new recreational opportunities. This makes these organizations ideal preservation partners.
19	Clarify the goal of supporting the CEDS (10/6/15 draft)	public hearing comment	pg. 10, pg. 37	Goal: Support the county's economic growth through open space initiatives in the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)	see comment #22	Goal: Support the county's economic growth through open space initiatives supported by the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

#	Comment received (draft version)	name/organization	Pages affected	Introduced language	Recommended action	
20	Remove or clarify reference to CEDS document in goals and recommendations (10/6/15 draft)	Readington Township OS Committee; Robert Becker, Flemington Brough; public hearing comment	pr. 10, pg. 37/38	Goal: Support the county's economic growth through open space initiatives supported by the CEDS. Recommendations: Support the open space and recreation action items discussed and outlined in CEDS."	replace	Goal: Support the county's economic growth through open space initiatives. Recommendation: Support the open space and recreation action items discussed and outlined in farmland, parks and open space planning documents.
21	(10/6/15 draft)	Readington Township OS Committee; Robert Becker, Flemington Brough; public hearing comment	pg. 37/38	Support for the CEDS can be shown in a number of ways. The County can look at future open space and recreational needs of the county through the lens of the CEDS and make strategic choices about where open space purchases or recreational development needs to occur to better meet the needs of the populace. In addition, the County can help our preservation partners achieve goals that are consistent with the CEDS by providing grant opportunities.	see comment #22	Support for the CEDS can be shown in a number of ways. The County can look at future open space and recreational needs and make strategic choices about where open space purchases and recreational development should occur to better meet the needs of its residents and visitors alike. In addition, the County can help our preservation partners achieve goals that are consistent with the CEDS by providing grant opportunities.
22	(12/23/15 draft)	Readington Township OS Committee; Betty Ann Fort, Mayor, Readington Twp; Robert Becker, Flemington Borough; public hearing comment	pg. 11, pg. 38	Recommendation: Support and implement the action items discussed and outlined in the CEDS. The Hunterdon County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is designed to foster the economic growth of the county with a well balanced but nuanced perspective. The CEDS provides a researched framework of goals and objectives that will lead the county toward an improved economic future. Open space and recreation play a large role in the community of Hunterdon County and contribute to the economy in many ways. The CEDS outlines several initiatives that the County and municipalities can take, using an open space lens, to advance the economic health of the county. Examples of these action items as found in the CEDS are as follows: -Create, draft, and adopt a strategic master plan for County parks and open space -Develop an annual survey of park visitors -Locate opportunities for increased bicycle and pedestrian facilities within and connecting parks and open space. Many more potential objectives related to the planning and use of open space and recreational lands are located in the full Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report document located in the Strategic Investment Projects segment of the Action Plan.	replace	Recommendation: Support the open space and recreation action items discussed and outlined in farmland, parks and open space planning documents. Hunterdon County has many planning documents that are designed to foster the preservation efforts of the county with a well balanced but nuanced perspective. The County Parks & Open Space Plan, as well as the County Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan provide a researched framework of goals and objectives that will lead the county toward an improved future. Open space and recreation play a large role in the community of Hunterdon County and contribute to the community in many ways. The various plans provide the backbone for initiatives that the County and municipalities can take to enhance open space and farmland preservation programs and allow the county to make the best use of the Open Space Trust Fund. Enjoying the rural nature of the county is a pastime shared by Hunterdon County residents and visitors alike. Proper planning, and adherence to those plans are essential to maintaining the county's character while aiding in the county's economic growth.
23	Clarify the goals of the CEDS that are allowable under the ballot question and remove examples that may not be allowable. (10/6/15 draft)	Julie Allen, Readington Township	pg. 10, pg. 38	The CEDS outlines several methods that the County and municipalities can take, using an open space lens, to advance the economic health of the county. Examples of these action items are as follows: - Support shared services through professional resources - Brand Hunterdon County as a recreation and farming County that can promote its history and unique assets and draw visitors - Develop an annual survey of park visitors - Locate opportunities for increased bicycle and pedestrian facilities within and connecting parks and open space Many more objectives are located in the full Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report document located in the Strategic Investment Projects segment of the Action Plan	see comment #22	The CEDS outlines several initiatives that the County and municipalities can take, using an open space lens, to advance the economic health of the county. Examples of these action items as found in the CEDS are as follows: - Create, draft, and adopt a strategic master plan for County parks and open space - Develop an annual survey of park visitors - Locate opportunities for increased bicycle and pedestrian facilities within and connecting parks and open space Many more potential objectives related to the planning and use of open space and recreational lands are located in the full Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report document located in the Strategic Investment Projects segment of the Action Plan.

#	Comment received (draft version)	name/organization	Pages affected	Introduced language	Recommended action
24	Clarify limits to Trust Fund dollars in regards to shared services (12/23/15 draft)	Readington Township OS Committee	pg. 38	Goal: Strengthen open space and parks planning through interdepartmental coordination and shared services management.	no action It is understood that expenditures of Trust Fund dollars are limited to appropriate uses. This goal and associated recommendation are to ensure that there is proper use, oversight, and coordination within the County to protect the Trust Fund.
25	Clarify the following goal: <i>Goal: Determine the overall preservation goals of the county and develop a strategy to shift focus from acquisition to stewardship</i> and following text (10/6/15 draft)	Julie Allen, Readington Township; Readington Township; POSAC members; Hunterdon Land Trust	pg. 10, pg. 39	Goal: Determine the overall preservation goals of the county and develop a strategy to shift focus from acquisition to stewardship.	replace Goal: Determine the overall preservation goals of the county and develop a long term strategy to address stewardship.
26	(10/6/15 draft)	Julie Allen, Readington Township; Readington Township; POSAC members	pg. 39/40	The County Open Space Trust Fund can be used for the preservation of open space, farmland and historic properties; however as more properties and easements are acquired, stewardship of those properties will be brought into the forefront.	replace Since its inception, the County Open Space Trust Fund has been utilized solely for the preservation of open space, farmland and historic properties; however as more properties and easements are acquired, stewardship responsibilities also increase. Just as future acquisitions should be planned for, so should the role of stewardship so that a proper balance between acquisition and stewardship is achieved.
27	Acquisition should be the primary focus of the Trust Fund (12/23/15 draft)	Readington Township OS Committee	pg. 40	Goal: Determine the overall preservation goals of the county and develop a long term strategy to address stewardship.	no action This goal serves to create an overarching direction for County open space acquisitions so that there exists a structure for future open space purchases. The addition of stewardship and maintenance ensures that the County will be able to properly care for the parks system.
28	Limit the expenditure for stewardship and maintenance to a small percentage of the Trust (2/2/16 draft)	Richard Allen, Readington Township, public hearing comments	pg. 40	n/a	addition As part of this funding examination, stewardship responsibilities must be factored in. It is recommended that a small separate allocation, under the County's Open Space Trust Fund apportionment, be dedicated solely to county stewardship projects. This would ensure adequate funding, planning, and predictability for the County's stewardship activity as is present for the grant programs funded by the Open Space Trust Fund.
29	Clarify the Commission's role in recommended actions for County-owned historic structures (10/6/15 draft)	Lora Jones, Chair, Cultural & Heritage Commission	pg. 49	The Cultural and Heritage Commission should develop a list of proposed projects to be funded through the Open Space Trust Fund and submit this to the Board of Chosen Freeholders on an annual basis. Comments from the County Park System and the County Planning Board should be solicited and considered by the Commission prior to formalizing its recommendations. The Freeholder Board should consider the recommendations of the Commission in its annual budgetary process. If there are no projects proposed in any particular year, funding can be diverted to any of the other programs eligible to receive Trust Funds. The Commission should use the inventory of County owned structures that includes structures deemed potentially eligible or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The list can and should be updated by the Commission as new information becomes available.	replace Working with data provided by both the Division of Facilities and the Department of Planning, the Cultural & Heritage Commission should maintain an inventory of historical structures potentially eligible, or already listed, on the National Register of Historic Places. The list should be reviewed by the Commission annually and, after soliciting and considering comments from the County Park System, submit a list of structures to be funded by the Open Space Trust Fund to the Board of Chosen freeholders in advance of their budgetary planning. The Freeholder Board should consider the Commission's recommendations in their budgeting process. If there are no projects proposed in any particular year, funding can be diverted to any of the other programs eligible to receive Trust funds. To assure that the list is kept up-to-date, the Commission should program regular data exchanges from the Facilities Division and Planning Department.

#	Comment received (draft version)	name/organization	Pages affected	Introduced language	Recommended action	
30	Clarify the purpose of the Open Space and Recreation Development and Maintenance Plan (10/6/15 draft)	Julie Allen, Readington Township; Readington Township; POSAC members; Hunterdon Land Trust	pg. 51	As the County's open space acquisition program continues to meet key goals, the need to focus funds from the Open Space Trust Fund toward stewardship of the open space and parks system is moving to the forefront.	replace	In order to utilize Open Space Trust funding to develop and maintain open space lands, state statute requires the completion of an Open Space and Recreation Development and Maintenance Plan. As the County's open space acquisition program continues to meet key goals, the ability to utilize funds from the Open Space Trust Fund for stewardship of the open space and parks system can aid in better ecological management and improve the balance between often conflicting interests of public access and maintaining environmental quality.
31	(10/6/15 draft)	Julie Allen, Readington Township; Readington Township; POSAC members; Hunterdon Land Trust	pg. 51	This plan will allow for a balanced approach to the funding levels, distribution, and expenditure of money within the County's Open Space Trust Fund and provides the guidance necessary to properly care for the County's open space and recreation lands.	replace	This plan allows for a informed, balanced approach to the expenditure of money within the County's Open Space Trust Fund and provides the guidance necessary to properly care for the County's open space and recreation lands.
32	Further describe and clarify the language change in the 2009 ballot question (10/6/15 draft)	Julie Allen, Readington Township; Jay Kelly, POSAC member	pg. 51	What it did not include was an anticipation of the shift in public sentiment that occurred with the 2009 ballot question that gave additional consideration to the development, improvement or maintenance of county and municipal open space. Due to the evolving economic, cultural and environmental landscape of today's county, it is necessary to adopt and implement an Open Space and Recreation Development and Maintenance Plan to provide further guidance on how the County effectuates the initiatives outlined in the ballot questions, supported by the plans approved by the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders and recognized by the voters.	replace	What the 2000 Trust Fund Plan did not include was the additional language in the 2009 ballot question that gave consideration to "develop, improve and maintain county and municipal lands for recreation and conservation purposes." Due to the evolving economic, cultural and environmental landscape of today's county, and to comply with state statutes, it is necessary to adopt and implement an <i>Open Space and Recreation Development and Maintenance Plan</i> to provide further guidance on how the County effectuates the initiatives outlined in the ballot questions, supported by the plans approved by the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders and recognized by the voters.
33	Further define what is meant by stewardship; incorporate Preserve NJ Act "stewardship activity" definition (12/23/15 draft)	Richard Allen, Readington Township; public comments	pg. 52/53	n/a	addition	In 2015, the New Jersey state legislature further addressed the definition of stewardship activity in numerous bills, namely the "Preserve New Jersey Act," that received overwhelming support. The definition is incorporated here, as taken directly from the Preserve New Jersey Act: "Stewardship activity" means an activity, which may be beyond routine operations and maintenance, undertaken by the State, a local government unit, or qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organization to repair, restore, or improve lands acquired or developed for recreation and conservation purposes or acquired for farmland preservation purposes for the purpose of enhancing or protecting those lands for recreation and conservation purposes or farmland preservation purposes.
34	Remove examples of develop, improve, and maintain projects in reference to equipment or structures	Richard Allen, Readington Township	pg. 53	- The development of public parks, playgrounds, trails, paths, and other recreational facilities including installation of fixed or semi-fixed equipment and structures on, or above ground that are designed to be incidental to the natural landscape and openness of the land. - Maintain, repair or replace existing structures and other improvements necessary for the public's recreation and conservation use, access, and convenience.	no action	The referenced definitions are taken from the statute governing county open space trust funds as well as the municipal land use law and are designed to incorporate foreseeable stewardship uses. The restrictions inherent in the definitions, such as "development... designed to be incidental to the natural landscape and openness of the land." and "improvements necessary for the public's recreation and conservation use..." already set forth the limitations to the type of projects that would fall under these categories.

#	Comment received (draft version)	name/organization	Pages affected	Introduced language	Recommended action
35	Further stress the importance of ecological management in the direction of the Plan (10/6/15 draft)	Jay Kelly, POSAC Member	pg. 55	Hunterdon County strives to plan for the future needs of the public in regard to the use and utilization of open space and recreational lands.	replace Hunterdon County strives to plan for the best management and care of natural ecosystems, as well as for the future needs of the public in regard to the use and utilization of open space and recreational lands.
36	Clarify the focus of the Trust Fund (10/6/15 draft)	Julie Allen, Readington Township; Readington Township; POSAC members	pg. 56	As the County plans for the future of the Parks and Open Space system, it must continue to apply these models. Acquisitions become more targeted as land is added to the park system and stewardship issues come to the forefront as the public seeks to get the most enjoyment out of the open space and recreational opportunities that they helped create. This includes shifting the focus from a Trust Fund dedicated to include both key open space acquisitions as well as the utilization of the Open Space Trust Fund to insure the best management of the great open space resources the County has to offer.	replace As the County plans for its future Parks and Open Space system, it must continue to balance protection of environmentally sensitive areas and improvements designed to enhance the public's access and enjoyment of the parks. While acquisition remains the priority, county acquisitions will become more focused as land is added to the park system and these concepts become more important as the public seeks to get the most enjoyment out of the open space and recreational opportunities that it helped fund. The County has been very successful in the application of the Open Space Trust Fund for acquisition, but now must also plan for stewardship, improvement and maintenance. The Open Space Recreation Development and Maintenance Plan ensures a proper balance between acquisition, ecological management of the properties acquired and the public's use and enjoyment of the many open space resources the County has to offer.
37	include comments in opposition to PennEast Pipeline/public utility easements on preserved lands (12/23/15 draft)	Thomas Manning, Stockton Planning Board	n/a	n/a	no action The Open Space Trust Fund Plan's purpose is to issue goals and recommendations as to the expenditure of the Open Space Trust Fund. Policy discussions or statements in regards to the conversion of protected lands for non-compatible development are appropriate for the Board of Chosen Freeholders. The Board has issued a resolution formally opposing the locating of the PennEast Pipeline in Hunterdon County.