Message from the President

The deep recession has created a difficult climate for the Conservation Campaign’s work of generating public financing for land and water. Yet investing in preserving watersheds, wildlife habitat and farms and creating parks and trails is more important than ever—to protect our water supplies, strengthen the economy and make sure there are places where our children and grandchildren can enjoy the outdoors.

In this troubled economy, Americans are visiting state and national parks in record numbers and many people are appreciating anew the outdoor open space in their own communities. Polls show that even in difficult economic times, voters are willing to pay more taxes to conserve land, especially when they understand the long-term benefits.

Although development has slowed temporarily, land conservation takes years to achieve. The places highlighted in this report were protected through public financing that the Conservation Campaign helped create over the last decade.

We are deeply grateful for your support this past year, and look forward to your partnership in laying the groundwork now to preserve America’s special places in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Ernest Cook

NAT TURNER PARK • NEWARK, NEW JERSEY • 9 ACRES
2007 ESSEX COUNTY RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE TRUST FUND; 2003, 2007 & 2009 NEW JERSEY GREEN ACRES BOND ACTS
CAMPAIGN PARTNER: NJ Keep It Green, a coalition of 150 environmental, urban parks, sportsmen’s and other organizations.
The Lasting Impact of Ballot-Box Conservation

“This place echoes with the premonitions of joy.” So wrote the editorial board of The Oregonian about spectacular Chehalem Ridge, which the Portland Metro Council preserved in January 2010 as public parkland. “Few achievements, recorded in the minutes of a public meeting, last forever,” the paper wrote. “But the purchase of a park comes as close to being a timeless decision as public bodies ever make.”

Voters in the Portland metro region planted the seeds of this forward-looking purchase—which also protects the region’s water supply—when they passed a $227 million bond measure in 2006. The Conservation Campaign sponsored the measure, in partnership with a broad coalition of environmental, parks, business and civic groups.

Over nearly a decade, the Conservation Campaign has helped pass hundreds of initiatives like the Portland measure, in every part of the country. Although fewer measures were on the ballot in 2009, support for public conservation funding remained strong even in a deep recession, as noted in a New York Times editorial that called for a significant increase to the federal fund for land conservation. The Times cited the success on Election Day of two out of three open space ballot measures, notably the Conservation Campaign-sponsored $400 million New Jersey “Green Acres” bond.

The passage of this and other initiatives in 2009—as well placing new measures on the 2010 ballot in Iowa and elsewhere and legislative advocacy to defend and create programs—has kept up the momentum for public conservation funding.

At the same time, past successes have been yielding incredible public benefits: thousands of special places protected and parks created in communities throughout the nation. Safeguarding this outdoor open space is at the heart of our engagement in the political process—and, the reason it succeeds.

The assistance and resources we offer can create the funds to save natural areas in Florida, keep Colorado ranches in business, and allow cities like San Francisco and Santa Fe to become better places to live and work. It can make the difference between million-dollar houses or a beautiful public park on Chehalem Ridge “recorded on the maps and memories of Portlanders for generations to come.” This report celebrates some of those special places—places that exist today only because of public funding secured by the Conservation Campaign and its partners.
CHEHALEM RIDGE NATURAL AREA

Preserving a View—and a Future

CHEHALEM RIDGE COMMANDS A VISTA to the southwest over a patchwork of farms and vineyards framed by the distant peaks of the Cascades. At the edge of Portland’s suburban sprawl, the spectacular site was a magnet for luxury development. But in January, using funds from a Conservation Campaign-sponsored $227 million bond approved by the voters in 2006, the regional Metro Council preserved the entire two-square-mile ridge top. Instead of being carved into estates, the former timberland will be restored to native conifer forests as well as increasingly rare white oak-madrone woodlands, remnants of which can still be found on the drier slopes. The purchase—the largest ever by the council’s Natural Areas Program—protects a wildlife corridor and numerous streams that flow into the Tualatin River, the water supply for 200,000 people. Eventually, the public will have access to the ridge for the first time. The Trust for Public Land initiated and negotiated the acquisition, and committed $90,000 toward restoration and management for the next three years. The preservation of Chehalem Ridge is the latest milestone for The Intertwine, a broad civic collaboration to create a world-class network of parks, trails and natural areas in the Portland region.

CEDAR CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

A Wilderness Within a Suburb

AS THE REAL ESTATE MARKET SLOWED in 2009, the developer who owned one of the largest remaining blocks of open space in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area—a serene, hilly expanse at the confluence of Rum River and Cedar Creek—proposed selling it for conservation. Luckily, Minnesota’s citizens had just passed the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment, which dedicated a percentage of the sales tax to fund conservation and the arts. The property became one of the first parcels protected with the funding. “It would have been impossible to buy this land without it,” said John VonDeLinde, Anoka County parks department director. The wild grasslands, forests, wetlands and wooded floodplains of the Cedar Creek Conservation Area harbor a rich diversity of fish, nesting waterfowl and other wildlife. The parks department plans to manage the land for conservation and as a place where people can hike, watch wildlife, fish and hunt—all just 30 minutes from downtown Minneapolis. The Trust for Public Land negotiated the two-phase purchase and is helping to raise additional funds to complete the deal. Funding for this acquisition is being provided by the Minnesota Outdoor Heritage Fund as recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources and Anoka County.
**Turkey Creek Hammock Preserve**

**Public Funds Save a Hiking Paradise**

The Alachua County Forever Program, begun in 2000 with a voter-approved property tax surcharge, has combined local funding with state, federal and private grants to protect more than 18,000 acres of watershed lands and wildlife habitat. In 2008, even as the economy faltered, voters renewed the program with the Wild Spaces–Public Places sales tax initiative, sponsored by the Conservation Campaign. The measure couldn’t have passed at a better time. The continued funding has allowed the county to preserve five large, environmentally significant sites that came on the market after the real estate crash—including Turkey Creek Hammock, adjacent to San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park. The property was owned by one of the county’s most active developers, who donated $50,000 to help manage the property. With its wooded uplands, wetlands and scenic karst topography, “it will be a hiking paradise,” said Ramesh Buch, program manager for the land conservation program. “As little as two years ago, this piece wasn’t for sale,” he said. “This is an example of why it’s good to have a local pot of money right now.”

**The Farm at Oyster Bay**

**A Living Link to an Agrarian Past**

Few reminders survive of the rich colonial history and once-rural landscape of Oyster Bay, New York. The town, in densely populated Nassau County on Long Island, is rapidly losing its last farms and undeveloped open space. But because voters passed the Save Environmental Assets bond in 2006—one of five ballot measures in the town and county supported by the Conservation Campaign since 2000—the town was able to save a rare colonial farm. The 26-acre property includes a farmhouse with sections dating to the 1680s, an 18th-century barn, ponds, meadows, a garden of old-fashioned roses, and 200-year-old wisteria. The land is also within the recharge area for the region’s aquifer, the water supply for the county’s 1.35 million people. Bringing an earlier era to life, The Farm at Oyster Bay is becoming a vibrant center for horticulture and the arts and a place for young people to reconnect with the land.
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FISCAL YEAR 2010, GIFTS FROM APRIL 1, 2009 TO MARCH 31, 2010

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ANDERSON FARM ♦ WEST BRIDGEWATER, MA ♦ 116 ACRES

2008 WEST BRIDGEWATER COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT
1% PROPERTY TAX SURCHARGE
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Financial Information
Financial Summary FY 2010
(Ending March 31, 2010)

REVENUES
Total Revenues $1,478,557

Unrestricted Income 23%
($340,213)

Restricted Campaign
and Lobbying Income* 77%
($1,138,344)

EXPENSES
Total Expense $1,488,932

Administration and Fundraising 11%
($167,907)

Lobbying and Campaigns 89%
($1,321,025)

* Including donations to Conservation Campaign-sponsored ballot question committees and lobbying coalitions (New Jersey Keep It Green, a project of the Conservation Campaign; Iowa’s Water and Land Legacy, a project of the Conservation Campaign; and others.)
About the Conservation Campaign

The Conservation Campaign is the only national organization that focuses solely on political action to gain public funding for conservation. Since we began in 2000, we have helped towns, cities, counties, special districts and states pass more than 240 ballot initiatives and legislation generating more than $34 billion to protect land and water, preserve farms and ranches, and create parks and trails.

A non-partisan organization, we support transparent, accountable programs that involve the community in deciding how conservation funding should be used, with full compensation to willing sellers on the open market.

All of our work is done through partnerships with other organizations, from local governments and land trusts to national conservation groups. We focus on providing legal, accounting, strategic, organizational and financial assistance for election campaigns and legislative lobbying.

Our efficient structure multiplies the impact of your donation. To date, every dollar contributed to the Conservation Campaign has helped generate more than $2,000 in new public funds for conservation.