



2003 Annual Report



The Conservation Campaign

## President's Report

New funding for land preservation continued to win broad public support in 2003. Voters in 24 states approved 100 of 134 conservation-related ballot measures during the year, dedicating some \$1.8 billion to land and water conservation.

The Conservation Campaign was involved in 16 of these campaigns, including some of the most controversial and important ones. The year was notable not so much for the funding totals (\$990 million) or the winning percentage (100%) of the measures we worked on, as for the wide range of communities in which conservation won. Saving land proved to be popular across an amazingly broad political, demographic and geographic landscape. From the Democratic wards of Hoboken, New Jersey, to the Republican neighborhoods of Colorado Springs, Colorado, voters shared a common enthusiasm for saving the lands near their homes.

*Five campaigns stood out ...*



Pikes Peak in winter, seen from Palmer Park, Colorado Springs, Colorado

## COLORADO SPRINGS

Colorado Springs is a conservative community that is home to Ft. Carson and the U.S. Air Force Academy. Its mostly Republican voters and elected officials seldom favor tax increases. Its Congressman Joel Hefley, for example, votes for bills backed by the National Tax-Limitation Committee 97% of the time.

The open space campaign drew sharp criticism from the local paper, the *Gazette*, which opposed the measure in a series of editorials. With unemployment in the metropolitan area above 6%, many voters were concerned about jobs and taxes.

Despite the controversy, on April 1st, 2003, Colorado Springs voters approved by 68-32% a ballot measure that will earmark some \$80 million over the next two decades for acquisition of parks, trails and open space. The Conservation Campaign, along with a number of other conservation groups, contributed financial and technical help to the campaign.

The outcome proved that Colorado Springs voters, like those from so many other communities, have recognized that land preservation is the right response to growth. Since 1970, the population and land area of the city have nearly tripled, and growth has become a major political issue. As voters have watched housing developments and office towers sprout across the landscape dominated by spectacular vistas of Pikes Peak, preservation of open space has become a popular cause, appealing to conservatives and liberals alike.

**Cover: Raritan River, Ken Lockwood  
Gorge, New Jersey Highlands,  
Hunterdon County, NJ**

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## HUDSON COUNTY

Overlooking the Statue of Liberty, Hudson is the poorest and most diverse county in New Jersey. Long a magnet for immigrants, Hudson is home to tens of thousands of Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans and citizens from many other cultures. Nearly three fifths of all households speak a language other than English in their homes, and a quarter of the county's children are growing up in poverty.

With the densest population in the state, open space is scarce. Although Hudson County is surrounded by thousands of acres of the Hackensack Meadowlands, the neighborhoods of Jersey City, Union City and Bayonne – where most Hudson County families live – are park poor. A county assessment concluded that the county needed more than 2,660 additional acres of municipal and county parklands to meet standards set by the state.

The 1 cent per \$100 valuation property tax that passed November 4th, 2003 was championed by County Executive Tom DeGise, who kicked off his term in office in January 2003 by setting a long-term goal of doubling the county's park lands. Despite concerns among some voters about higher taxes, the measure won easily 62-38%.

This was an important milestone for the state of New Jersey as well as for Hudson County. With the Hudson vote, New Jersey became the first state in which every county (21 of 21) has approved local funding for land conservation. This record is testimony to the effectiveness of a state program for land preservation that encourages local communities to provide dedicated funding sources for local land acquisition.



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**The Statue of Liberty, seen from Liberty State Park, Hudson County, New Jersey**

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**Beach at John Tanner State Park, Carroll County, Georgia**

## CARROLL COUNTY

Carroll County, some 45 miles southwest of Atlanta, is still a largely rural landscape dependent mostly on farming and manufacturing. In recent years it has been represented by well-known conservative Congressmen, including Newt Gingrich. The county's growth accelerated during the 1990s, with farm and watershed lands along Interstate 20 beginning to experience suburban development.

The campaign in Carroll revolved around the need to preserve watershed lands to protect drinking water supplies. An extended planning process, led by Robert Barr, the chairman of the county commission, led to a broad consensus on the need to protect the county's water resources, especially where development was occurring. This consensus was converted into a coalition that included major regional businesses, the real estate industry, local government and civic groups. With support from the Trust for Public Land, the Conservation Campaign and many local groups, the coalition helped to pass – 67-33% – a major modification of the local sales tax that will provide \$19 million for parks, open space and watershed acquisition.

## ARAPAHOE COUNTY

In some ways, Arapahoe is typical of the attitudes and politics of the new West. Located to the southeast of Denver, the county is one of the fastest growing in the state. A majority of Arapahoe voters are registered Republicans who are generally skeptical of tax increases. In Congress, they are represented by Tom Tancredo, a Republican who leans strongly to the right on most social and economic issues.

Regardless of their political affiliations, Arapahoe voters clearly care about quality of life issues that matter to their families. On November 4th, 2003 by a margin of 54-46%, they passed a referendum to establish a quarter of a cent sales tax to be used to acquire parks, trails and recreational areas. This sales tax – the first ever in Arapahoe County – will raise \$17 million per year for conservation.

Along with the Trust for Public Land, the Conservation Campaign played a significant role in this campaign, including hosting the campaign committee, and making a substantial contribution to the campaign.



© ROBERT FRANZ

**Cherry Creek State Park, Arapahoe County, Colorado**

## ANN ARBOR

Ann Arbor, a mostly middle-class city some 50 miles west of Detroit, has a strong tradition of environmental activism. It is currently represented in Congress by John Dingell, the longest-serving Democrat in the House of Representatives. In the summer of 2003, Mayor John Hieftje proposed a .5 mill property tax surcharge to be used to purchase parks and open space in and near Ann Arbor.

The proposal followed earlier land preservation measures that had been approved by Ann Arbor voters, but it was notable in two ways. First, it proposed to use two-thirds of the \$72 million that would be raised to purchase easements on farmland to create a greenbelt in eight townships outside the city. Only a third of the money raised from Ann Arbor taxes under the measure is to be spent to acquire parks in Ann Arbor. Second, it was opposed by the Michigan Association of Homebuilders and the Homebuilders Association of Washtenaw County, who spent more than \$250,000 to defeat the measure.

In most jurisdictions, a proposal to spend tax money outside of community boundaries, coupled with a well-funded opposition campaign, would doom any land preservation initiative. But Ann Arbor voters approved the measure 66-34%. It was a remarkable achievement by the mayor and the many citizens groups who campaigned for the measure.

*These victories in such diverse communities add up to a single certainty: land conservation can win almost anywhere. What is required is an understanding of the issues that matter to local voters, and a program that addresses those issues at a cost that voters will accept.*



Farm outside Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Michigan

A complete list of the campaigns we were involved in during 2003 is available on the Conservation Campaign website – [www.conservationcampaign.org](http://www.conservationcampaign.org).

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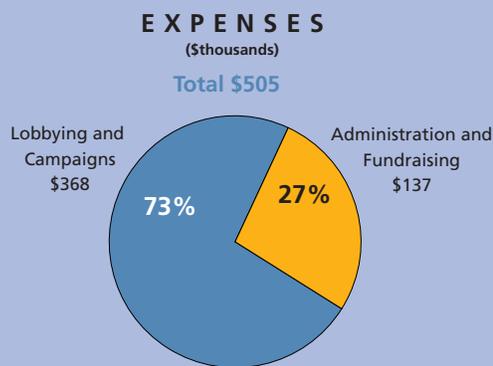
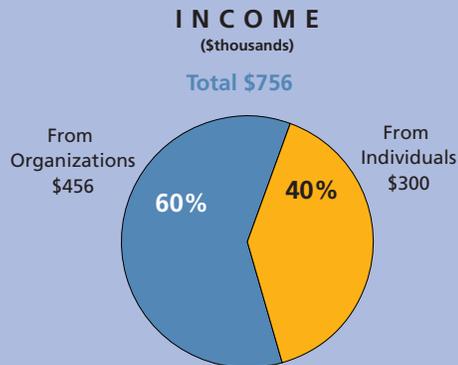
In 2004, conservation is certain to be a major issue in many state and local campaigns, and may even play a small part in the national presidential election. Although the ballot calendar for the year is still taking shape, there may be significant land conservation measures on statewide ballots in Maine, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Utah and a few other states. A number of counties in major metropolitan areas are also considering taking conservation issues to the voters, including those near San Antonio, Tucson, Seattle, Louisville and Camden.

Conservation funding is also under active consideration in many state legislatures, including those in Connecticut, Maryland, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, Illinois, Ohio and Minnesota.

The Conservation Campaign will work with local community leaders, businesses and civic groups to win approval of these and similar land conservation measures.

## Financial Summary FY 2004

(Ending March 31, 2004)



## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

### \$10,000 or more

Anonymous  
Douglas P. Ferguson  
Mr. and Mrs. Francis W. Hatch  
John R. Hunting  
Ron Klyce  
Donald Sussman  
Dan and Sheryl Tishman  
The Trust for Public Land  
United Way

### \$1,000-\$9,999

John W. Baird  
Page and Jay Cowles  
George P. Denny, III  
Steven M. Glazer  
William B. Johnston and  
Leslie F. Ruppert  
Nancy L. Kittle  
George Ledec  
Eugene C. Lee and Joanne M. Hurley  
Maurice Legardeur  
Maine Coast Heritage Trust  
The Nature Conservancy  
Michael E. Patterson  
David E. Price  
Elizabeth H. Richardson  
Marie Ridder  
E. M. and Keren C. Rosser  
Matthew G. Trifiro  
Martha M. Wyckoff

### \$250-\$999

Lester Abberger  
George and Pam Beardsley  
Rutt Bridges  
Barbara Bridges  
Margaret L. Twitchell Brown  
Larry A. Burch  
David Campbell  
Robert E. Carlson  
Lisa Cashdan and Peter Stein  
Mr. and Mrs. Jean Champagne  
Ann and Doug Christensen  
Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Cook  
Robert E. Courson  
Peter J. Davis  
Jennie Gerard and Steven Steinhour  
William R. Ginsberg  
Theophilus Britt Griswold  
Mr. and Ms. Dwight E. Lowell, II  
Mr. and Mrs. Douglass A. Raff  
Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph S. Rasin  
William B. Rogers  
Mr. and Mrs. Martin J. Rosen  
James D. Sano  
Linda J. Strand  
F. Jerome Tone  
Bob and Diane Weggel  
Lyman and Merrie Wood  
K.K. Wu

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### *Chair*

**Page Knudsen Cowles**, St. Paul, Minnesota, is a former investment professional who is currently a partner in Ruminator Books Press, an independent trade book publisher. She also serves on the boards of the Trust for Public Land, the St. Paul Academy and Summit School, a K-12 independent school, the Unity Avenue Foundation, a family foundation, and Lawrence Creek, LLC, a private investment company.

**Lester Abberger**, Tallahassee, Florida, is a trustee of the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, a member of the board of the Florida Humanities Institute and 1000 Friends of Florida, and a member of the Florida Greenways Council among many other civic and cultural responsibilities.

**Ernest Cook**, Brookline, Massachusetts, is president of the Conservation Campaign and senior vice president of the Trust for Public Land. He oversees TPL's national programs, including the Conservation Finance program, which he helped to found, the Tribal Lands program, and the Land and Water program.

**Douglas P. Ferguson**, Mill Valley, California, is an attorney specializing in entertainment and real estate law, and a member of the board and the former chairman of the board of the Trust for Public Land. He serves on the board of LucasArts Entertainment Company, and Lucas Digital Ltd, and is an advisor to the Save San Francisco Bay Association.

**Eugene C. Lee**, Sonoma, California, is professor emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, and a former vice president of the University. A long-time member of the board of the Trust for Public Land, he has consulted globally for university systems and government agencies on management and governance issues.

**Van Parish**, Washington, D.C., is the founder and president of the Parish Group, a political consulting firm that has managed or consulted in more than 50 federal, state and local campaigns.

**Roy Richards, Jr.**, Atlanta, Georgia, is a member of the board of the Trust for Public Land and he has previously served as chair of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and as the chairman and CEO of the Southwire Company.

**Will Rogers**, Kensington, California, is the president of the Trust for Public Land and former director of its western region. He was previously a project manager of commercial real estate projects based in Chicago.

## The Staff of the Conservation Campaign

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Will Abberger

Adam Eichberg

Alan Front

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Tod Dobratz

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### *General Counsel*

William P. Lee

### *Executive Director*

Bill Johnston

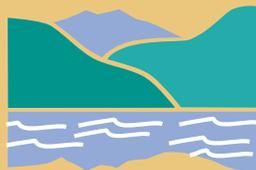


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Pikes Peak framed by a snowy juniper tree at dawn, seen from the Garden of the Gods near Colorado Springs, Colorado

*Vote for Land  
and Water*

CONSERVATION



CAMPAIN

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[www.conservationcampaign.org](http://www.conservationcampaign.org)