

THE MEADOWLANDS REGION

In the Midst of Transformation



2 0 1 1 A N N U A L R E P O R T



New Jersey Meadowlands Commission



AGENCY OVERVIEW

In 1969, the State Legislature created the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC) as the zoning and planning agency for the 30.4-square-mile Meadowlands District, which includes parts of 14 municipalities in Bergen and Hudson counties. The NJMC was charged with a three-fold mandate: to protect the delicate balance of nature; to provide for the orderly commercial, industrial and residential development of the region; and to provide for the disposal of solid waste.

At the time of the NJMC's formation the Meadowlands District was marred by dozens of illegal garbage dumps. Over the past four decades, the Commission's unwavering commitment to carrying out its mission has resulted in the remarkable transformation of a one-time polluted wasteland into an economic engine, environmental jewel and educational resource.

The NJMC has attracted billions of dollars in new development to the region and invested millions more in infrastructure improvements that have benefited District municipalities, residents, businesses and the environment.

The Commission has also contributed to the rebound of a unique urban ecosystem through its tireless effort in preserving thousands of acres of wetlands and helping to improve water quality in the Hackensack River. In addition, the NJMC continues

to work with Ramapo College through the Meadowlands Environment Center to provide education programming for all ages that increases awareness of the importance of environmental protection and preservation for future generations.

Today, the NJMC continues to advance economic growth and development by promoting common-sense business-friendly initiatives to attract new companies to the District and retain existing ones. At the same time, the Commission's ongoing dedication to protecting and enhancing the environment has helped the region become a destination for outdoor recreation and tourism.

This year, the NJMC began working with District municipalities to develop a strong marketing plan to inform people throughout and beyond the State about the region's entertainment, shopping and dining attractions as well as its natural beauty and environmental resources.

The NJMC has worked hard to help change and shape the Meadowlands District for the better. But its job is not done. Moving forward, the Commission will continue to build upon the solid foundation that it has created for a thriving economic and environmental future.



Berry's Creek Canal leading to the Hackensack River and Surrounding Area. Aerial support by LightHawk.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN:



LORI GRIFA
*Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
Chairman, New Jersey Meadowlands Commission*

Since its formation, the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC) has worked diligently to develop the region into one of the State's leading economic engines, helping to attract billions of dollars in new development to the District. As a regional leader and steward of our environment, the Commission has also preserved 3,500 acres of environmentally sensitive wetlands and helped to create a robust public park system, including the NJMC River Barge Park that was dedicated this past fall.

So, it's no wonder that on any given day at the NJMC's headquarters, you can find professional staff members meeting with developers and business people, scientists researching new ways to improve air and water quality, or educators leading students in field-based learning. These are just some of the important ways in which the NJMC serves the Meadowlands District's residents and businesses.

This year, the Commission continued to draw thousands of people to the area through its popular guided pontoon boat tours and free bird walks. Equally impressive, the Meadowlands Environment Center provided hands-on education experiences for more than 15,000 students during the 2010-11 school year.

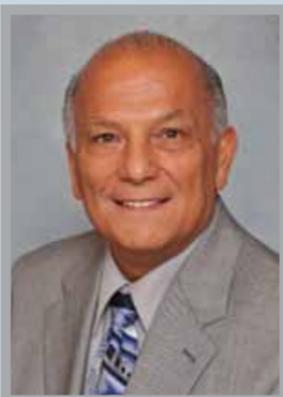
Finally, the NJMC also continued to play a key role in promoting Governor Chris Christie's economic and environmental agenda through renewable energy initiatives. The NJMC 1A Landfill Solar Project is the first solar farm to be developed on a State landfill and includes more than 12,500 photovoltaic panels. It also supports the Governor's Energy Master Plan, which aims to ensure a clean and cost-efficient energy future in part by transforming underused resources such as landfills to conduits of renewable energy.

As you can see by our actions this past year alone, the Meadowlands District is a great place to raise a family, grow a business, and enjoy amazing natural beauty and wildlife. Through its hard work and dedication to District municipalities, residents and businesses, the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission will continue to support this vibrant region in the years to come.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



LORI GRIFA
*Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
Chairman, New Jersey Meadowlands Commission*



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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:



MARCIA A. KARROW
Executive Director, New Jersey Meadowlands Commission

The past 12 months have been an especially exciting time at the NJMC, with the agency taking several critical steps that continue to demonstrate how economic development and environmental restoration are not mutually exclusive.

In keeping with Governor Chris Christie's mandate to send a clear message that the State is open for business, the NJMC significantly strengthened its efforts within the District to further promote economic growth. For instance, the Commission adopted a series of amendments to its rules and regulations that reduced the cost of operating in the region. The agency's dedication to spurring economic recovery has seen tangible results. The number of developers and businesses that met with staff in pre-application meetings increased significantly in 2011, and several small and large-scale companies opened in the District.

The NJMC also celebrated the dedication of River Barge Park, its first new park in eight years. Spread over 5.5 acres of riverfront property once slated for residential development, the park adds to the region's impressive inventory of open space, expands public access to the waterfront and is the latest example of why the Meadowlands District is gaining a well-deserved reputation as a premier destination for outdoor recreation.

Two large initiatives began in late 2011. The NJMC started the process of updating its seven-year-old Master Plan to better reflect the Commission's renewed commitment to promoting business growth while preserving and improving the environment. The Commission also began working with District municipalities to create a comprehensive marketing plan to help keep tourism dollars in the District when thousands of football fans flock to the Meadowlands for Super Bowl 2014. The NJMC will continue to pursue these important initiatives next year.

The Commission's track record of success continues to be the result of the innovative vision of the NJMC Board of Commissioners and the tireless efforts of the Commission's professional staff. The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission looks forward to continuing to partner with residents, officials and stakeholders in the years ahead to further advance the NJMC's long-standing commitment to creating and supporting a region that is both an economic driver and an environmental oasis.



EXECUTIVE TEAM

BERNARD NANGLE
Deputy Executive Director for Facility Operations and External Affairs
Meadowlands Conservation Trust
Facility Operations
Meadowlands Environment Center
Security
Community Outreach

FRANCIS J. ELENIO
Director of Finance / CFO
Accounting and Finance
Purchasing
General Services
Escrow Operations
Municipal Shared Services

CHRISTINE SANZ
Director of Legal Affairs / Chief Counsel
Legal Services
Contract Compliance
Office of Economic Growth
Renewable Energy

SARA SUNDELL
Director of Land Use Management
Planning
Regulatory Review
Project Management
Engineering Support Services
Plan Review
UCC Code Enforcement

TOM MARTURANO
Director of Solid Waste and Natural Resources
Landfill Operations
Enforcement
Parks and Open Space
Wetlands / Natural Resources
Facility Maintenance

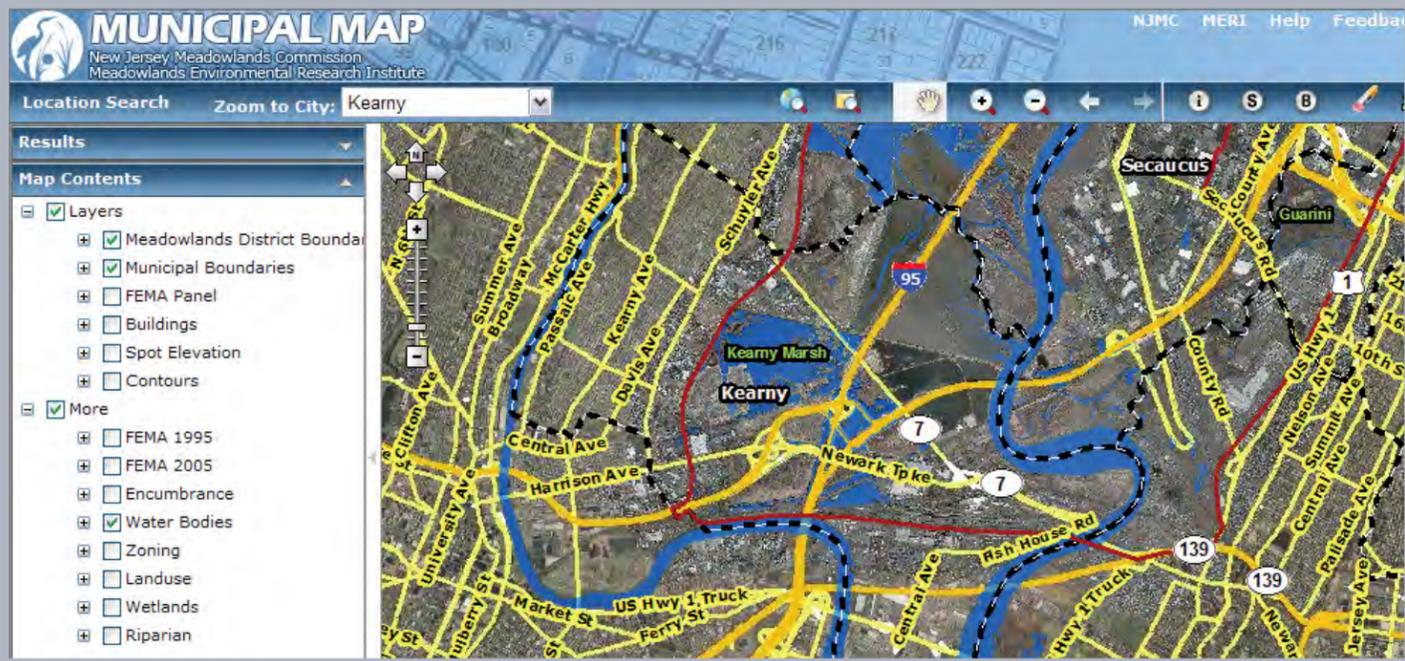
DR. FRANCISCO ARTIGAS
Director of Meadowlands Environmental Research Institute
GIS Programs
Laboratory
Library
Environmental Data Monitoring
Information Technologies

Aerial view of the New Jersey Turnpike in Kearny and surrounding Meadowlands region.

MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS

Assisting Meadowlands District towns and improving residents' quality of life in the District's 14 municipalities is one of the NJMC's top priorities. Through a variety of valuable free services and programs, including its shared heavy equipment pool, Municipal Solar Assistance Program, and digital mapping and planning services, the Commission provides numerous economic and environmental benefits throughout the region.

Top left: Aerial view of Solar Panels at 1A Landfill Solar Farm. Top right: Vac truck and camera van. Bottom: Illustration of web-based GIS map.



MUNICIPAL SOLAR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The NJMC Municipal Solar Assistance Program in late 2010 facilitated the formation of a solar power purchasing cooperative between the Borough of Little Ferry and the Town of Secaucus.

As a result, the cooperative awarded a contract and is scheduled to begin construction of rooftop solar arrays and parking lot solar canopies in late 2011. The cooperative aims to save the towns hundreds of thousands of dollars in energy costs.

HEAVY EQUIPMENT POOL

The NJMC maintains and operates a heavy equipment pool that is available to District municipalities 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The equipment pool consists of a camera van and jet-vac truck that identify and clean clogged storm and sewer lines and catch basins, two portable automatic self-priming pump systems, and a trailer-mounted light tower.

From Jan. 1 through Sept. 1, 2011, District municipalities used NJMC equipment nearly 160 times, saving tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars.

POTHOLE KILLER

In May the NJMC for a second consecutive year leased a pothole-filling truck to help District towns save time and money.

The Pothole Killer helps to support District municipalities by augmenting the amount of potholes that can be filled on a daily basis. Only one person is needed to operate the Pothole Killer, compared to a crew of four or five public works employees using conventional equipment — freeing up employees for other work. NJMC staff operates the truck.

DIGITAL MAPS

The NJMC Meadowlands Environmental Research Institute (MERI) Geographic Information Systems (GIS) team creates, maintains and updates comprehensive, multi-layered digital maps of each District municipality.

The web-based maps include crucial information that can help town officials better prepare for and combat emergencies, manage municipal assets, and plan for infrastructure and other improvements.

In November, the GIS group launched an updated version of the web-based mapping tools that feature a more efficient and user-friendly interface and new layers of data sets including sanitary sewer and storm water lines and manholes.

These dynamic maps include data on every property in the towns, including owner, block and lot including easements, address, zoning and land use, acreage, and building footprint.

The emergency maps detail hazardous materials housed in commercial and industrial buildings, giving first responders easy access to critical information during emergencies.

The GIS team continuously offers training for first responders and other municipal officials throughout the year to refresh their skills and provide updates on new features.

The application is available at <http://meri.njmeadowlands.gov/maps>.

EMERGENCY ASSESSMENT AND INSPECTION SERVICES

The NJMC has a mutual aid agreement with the Bergen County Office of Emergency Management through which the Commission's licensed construction code officials, engineers and planners are available to assist with county and local emergency inspections during disaster events.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLANNING SERVICE

Experienced Commission planners are available to assist District towns in preparing downtown revitalization projects, whose goals include creating more walkable and business-friendly communities and encouraging the use of mass transit.

The Planning Service is an example of the NJMC's commitment to promoting economic growth by helping municipalities to create more inviting business districts.

NJMC planners also assist District municipalities and local Green Teams participating in the Sustainable Jersey program. Planners provide technical guidance and other tools to help towns achieve Sustainable Jersey certification, which increases the towns' potential for achieving grant funding for sustainable projects.

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE/ECONOMIC GROWTH

In 2011, the NJMC greatly intensified its efforts to strengthen the Meadowlands District's economic climate. The Commission took several important steps to further its dedication to promoting and encouraging economic growth and job creation, including amending its rules and regulations while maintaining its mandate to protect and preserve the region's environment and natural resources.

Harmon Meadow (left) and Plaza at Harmon Meadow shopping centers (right), Secaucus. Aerial support by LightHawk.



RULE AND REGULATION AMENDMENTS

In March, the NJMC adopted a series of common-sense amendments to its zoning and transportation rules, advancing its steadfast commitment to supporting the District's business environment.

The amendments reduced the cost of doing business in the District and increased opportunities for companies to locate and expand within the region.

The resulting changes to the fee schedule included reductions in fees for site improvements and occupancy applications, company name changes, and snow removal equipment approvals.

The Commission further invited economic growth by expanding the locations in which several service providers – including health care centers, taxi and limousine companies, electricians, and plumbers – can locate their businesses.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

In late 2011, the NJMC commenced a review of its Master Plan, which had last been revised in 2004. Stakeholders from the business and environmental communities and municipal officials will be given an opportunity to participate in the review.

Proposed amendments to update the plan will reflect the Commission's renewed commitment to promoting economic growth while protecting the environment.

These amendments will set a stage for:

- Revitalizing the Meadowlands District's older industrial and commercial areas.
- Satisfying the regional demand for state-of-the-art warehouse and distribution space in proximity to Port Newark and Manhattan.
- Encouraging the establishment of innovative and emerging industries.
- Promoting the development and use of cost-efficient energy sources.
- Bolstering the Commission's partnerships with the development community.
- Continuing the NJMC's commitment to preserving the District's remaining wetlands.
- Encouraging eco-tourism by growing the District's network of trails and other recreation elements.
- Protecting and recognizing the District's unique historical, architectural and archaeological resources.

SUSTAINABILITY INCENTIVES

The Commission offers incentives to companies and developers whose projects include aspects of sustainable building, such as the use of solar power, recycled materials and energy-efficient heating and lighting systems.

Benefits include reduced fees for zoning certificate and plan review applications and priority review.

To date, solar installations within the District have generated approximately 20 megawatts of renewable energy upon completion of construction.

PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE

As a customer-service-oriented agency, the NJMC makes its professional staff available to meet with developers and businesses before, during and after the development application process.

Various personnel – including engineers and planners – are available to consult with businesses and property owners at no charge regarding land use, planning, renewable energy, sustainability, construction code and other topics that relate to development in the Meadowlands District.

The Commission's Zoning Officer of the Day program ensures that a land use management division department staff member is always available to answer questions from businesses, property owners and the public regarding land use, planning, zoning, redevelopment and application procedures.

Top left: Xchange at Secaucus Junction, Secaucus. Top right: NJMC "Open for Business" brochure.
 Bottom Left: Macy's Parade Studio, Moonachie. Bottom Right: Bindi Dessert Services Distribution Center, Kearny



OUTREACH AND MARKETING

In the summer, the Commission produced the "Meet Me in the Meadowlands™ Open for Business" brochure, a business attraction tool that highlights the advantages of growing a business in the Meadowlands District and emphasizes the services that the NJMC provides to companies in the District.

Benefits of locating a business in the Meadowlands District include:

- Location, only six miles from Manhattan.
- Lower rents.
- Easy access to major highways, airports and seaports.
- An abundance of lively downtowns, fine dining establishments, and professional sports, exposition, and entertainment facilities.
- NJMC staff assistance before, during and after the development process.

SUPER BOWL 2014

A major priority for the Commission is to keep as many tourist dollars as possible in the Meadowlands District before, during and after Super Bowl 2014.

In the fall, the NJMC began meeting with municipal officials to start developing effective marketing strategies that best promote the attractions that the towns have to offer, including upscale and outlet shopping, fine dining destinations, entertainment options, historic sites, parks, museums and more.

Commission staff also began work in partnership with District Municipalities on a user-friendly website that will include a comprehensive display of the town's businesses, cultural and historical attractions, and other places of interest, allowing travelers to conveniently plan their time in the Meadowlands.

The NJMC's marketing efforts will continue in 2012 as the Commission moves toward implementation of a full-scale Meadowlands promotional campaign that highlights the region as a premier tourism destination.

NEW BUSINESSES

The NJMC's efforts to support economic growth, development and job creation have helped to attract new companies to the District in 2011 and existing businesses to expand.

Opened in 2011

- Macy's Parade Studio (*Moonachie*)
- Coinmach - leading supplier of coin- and card-operated laundry equipment in the U.S. (*East Rutherford*)
- European Green Rug Services (*South Hackensack*)
- SecureWatch24 (*Moonachie*)
- Atlantic Hoisting and Scaffolding (*Carlstadt*)
- Prestige Corporation - Commercial Laundry Operation (*North Bergen*)
- Aeropostale - Corporate Offices (*Lyndhurst*)

Coming in 2012

- Goya Warehouse/Distribution Center/Office Facility (*Jersey City*)
- Bindi Dessert Services Distribution Center (*Kearny*)
- Equinix Data Center (*Secaucus*)
- Secaucus Animal Hospital (*Secaucus*)
- Wawa (*Kearny*)

TETERBORO/ INDUSTRIAL AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT AREA

Cleanup continued in 2011 at the 63-acre former Honeywell site, which is located next to Teterboro Airport.

The redevelopment plan allows for 425,000 square feet of retail and restaurants, 100,000 square feet of office space, a six-story hotel, and 250,000 square feet of industrial space.

Visitors and employees will benefit from the site's proximity to NJ Transit's Pascack Valley Rail Line, the airport and major roadways, including Routes 17 and 46.

SECAUCUS TRANSIT VILLAGE REDEVELOPMENT AREA

Two residential buildings and more than 14,000 square feet of accessory retail space have been rented at the Xchange at Secaucus Junction development.

Construction of the third residential building at the development began in 2011. The building will consist of 318 units, including 48 units designated as affordable.

This transit-oriented development takes advantage of close proximity and easy access to the Secaucus Junction Rail Station.

At full build-out, the Xchange at Secaucus Junction complex will ultimately provide 1,805 market-rate units and 230 affordable units.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

In 2011, the NJMC continued to lead by example in promoting the use of renewable energy, specifically solar power, that improves the environment while boosting the green economy and reducing energy costs for residents and businesses. Governor Christie spotlighted the NJMC's solar achievements as part of his vision for a cleaner and more affordable energy future, which includes the transformation of closed landfills into productive solar farms.

NJMC 1A Landfill Solar Farm, Kearny



NJMC 1A LANDFILL SOLAR PROJECT

In September 2011, work began on the installation of a 13-acre solar array atop the Commission's closed, 35-acre 1A Landfill in Kearny.

The project is the first solar farm on a State-owned landfill. The grid-connected solar farm will include 12,506 solar panels and is scheduled to go online by the end of the year.

The NJMC 1A Landfill Solar Project will produce up to 3 megawatts of clean, cost-efficient power and further elevate New Jersey's status as a national leader in solar energy production.

The project is a joint effort between the Commission, SunDurance Energy, Public Service Electric & Gas Company and the State Board of Public Utilities (BPU).

SOLAR CANOPY

Construction began in October on a 230-foot-long, 15-foot-high solar canopy over the NJMC administration building parking lot. It is expected to be completed by mid-January 2012.

The 500 solar panels atop the canopy will provide approximately 20 percent of the electricity needs at the NJMC's administrative headquarters, reducing the Commission's energy costs and carbon footprint.

TRANSPORTATION

The free flow of traffic and commerce is essential to the success of the District's economy and improving residents and commuters quality of life. More than 650,000 private, public and commercial vehicles travel daily through the region on major highways such as the New Jersey Turnpike and Routes 1&9, 3, 46, and 17. Several passenger and freight rail lines also run through the District. Through forward-thinking transportation initiatives the Commission continually works to upgrade and improve the region's traffic systems.

MASSTR

In 2011, the NJMC completed design work on the Meadowlands Adaptive Signal System for Traffic Reduction project (MASSTR), an ambitious initiative that aims to significantly reduce delays and congestion while improving the environment.

MASSTR entails the modernization of 128 signalized intersections throughout the region in 2012 and 2013.

Using adaptive traffic signal control software, vehicle detection devices and wireless communications, NJMC transportation engineers will program traffic signals to continuously adjust based upon the changing flows of traffic in real-time.

The project is expected to reduce vehicle delays by 1.2 million hours per year, gasoline consumption by more than 1.2 million gallons per year and harmful greenhouse gas emissions by more than 11,000 tons per year.

MASSTR is the first adaptive signal system of its kind in New Jersey.

The majority of this innovative project is funded by a \$10 million federal grant awarded to the NJMC in 2010. The Meadowlands Transportation Planning District Fund is providing the remaining \$2.5 million.

SHUTTLE BUS

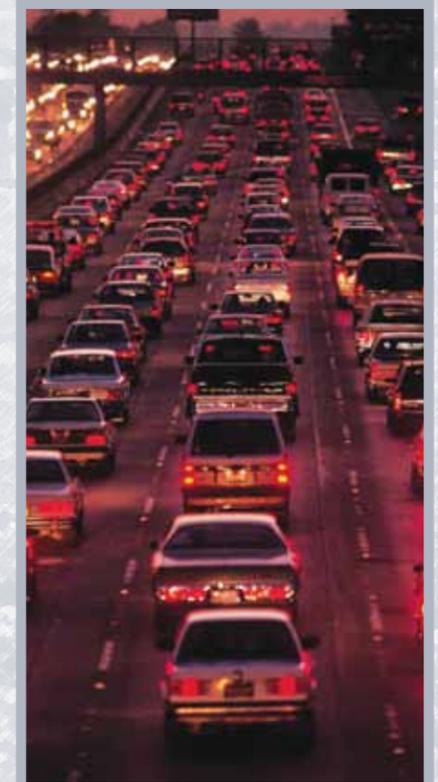
The NJMC sponsors the Lyndhurst Corporate Shuttle, a bus service that transfers workers, students and residents from the Township's Kingsland train station, the Rutherford train station and various NJ Transit bus stops to the Lyndhurst Corporate Center, the Avalon Bay residential complex, the Meadowlands Environment Center and the Lyndhurst campus of Bergen Community College.

Average ridership on the Lyndhurst Corporate Shuttle in 2011 exceeded 100 passengers daily and 2,000 passengers monthly.

In 2011, the Lyndhurst Corporate Shuttle was awarded a two-year Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Freedom 50% matching grant, retroactive to 2010.

Two additional shuttle routes, running between Secaucus and North Bergen and between Carlstadt and Rutherford, were selected this year for Federal Jobs Access for Reverse Commute (JARC) grants. These routes are expected to be running by 2013.

The shuttle bus program helps commuters save on fuel costs, expands the job pool for people without means of transportation to the Meadowlands and helps the environment by taking cars off the road, reducing greenhouse gas emissions.



FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

The NJMC is committed to helping mitigate the effects of tidal storm surge events in the Meadowlands District. The Commission oversees the inspection of 42 flood control structures in the District– 34 tide gates and 8 pump stations. Recent NJMC floodplain management projects helped lessen the effect of several major storms in 2011.

Hackensack River looking south toward the Kingsland Impoundment and Saw Mill Creek in Lyndhurst.



ROUTE 17 FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROJECT

This project, completed in 2010, significantly reduced the amount of storm surge waters that reached the highway in Rutherford and East Rutherford during the April nor'easters and Hurricane Irene.

New tide gates installed at the Moonachie and Bashes creeks in Carlstadt in 2010 helped to stem storm surge related flooding in the Carlstadt industrial area located east of Washington Avenue.

FLOOD WARNING SYSTEM

The NJMC provides an email-based early warning flood alert system for District officials and residents. The seven-day-a-week, 24-hour-a-day system relays information regarding flood scenarios and tide gate operations.

The alerts show what streets and properties – down to the block and lot numbers – would be flooded by a 2-foot, 4-foot, 6-foot or 8-foot and above tidal surge. To register for alerts visit meri.njmeadowlands.gov.

FLOOD INSURANCE DISCOUNTS

As a result of these and other floodplain management efforts, along with the NJMC's work to preserve open space and restore healthy marshes, Meadowlands District property owners are eligible for flood insurance premium discounts through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

This year 2,300 District property owners were qualified to receive 15 percent reductions on new or renewed flood insurance policies.

NJMC BUSINESS ACCELERATOR

The NJMC Business Accelerator provides critical programs and services that entrepreneurs and early-stage companies primarily focused on green technologies need to grow their businesses. By nurturing start-up companies and helping to position them for success, the Accelerator supports economic growth and job creation in the Meadowlands District and throughout New Jersey.



BUSINESS ACCELERATOR SERVICES

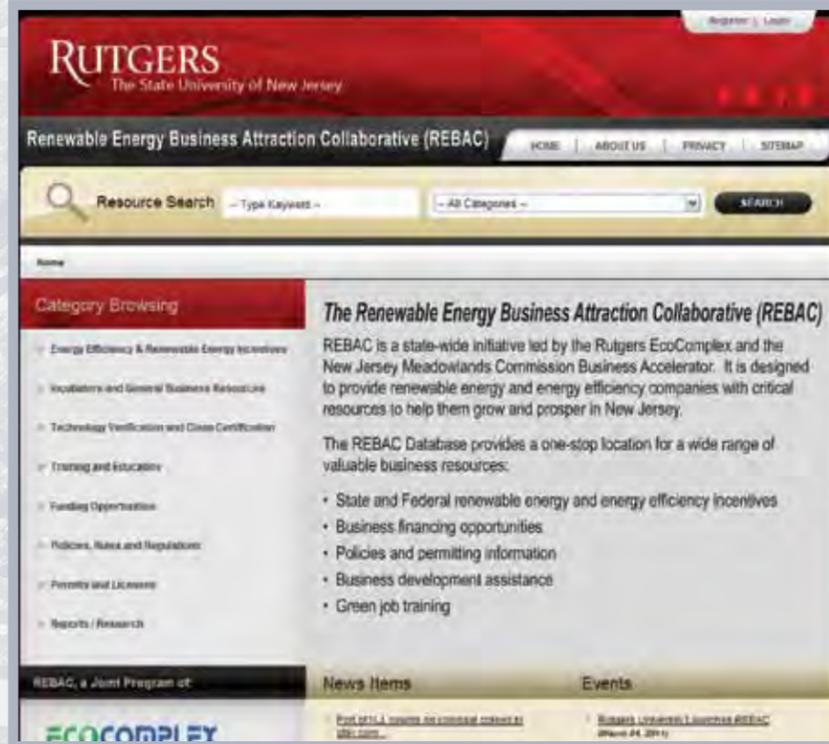
- One-on-one mentoring
- Workshops with established business professionals
- Grant writing support
- Marketing assistance and networking opportunities
- Professional and affordable office space in Lyndhurst.

RENEWABLE ENERGY BUSINESS ATTRACTION COLLABORATIVE (REBAC)

The NJMC and the Rutgers Eco-Complex in 2011 created the REBAC web tool, <http://rebac.rutgers.edu>, an invaluable resource for supporting, attracting and retaining renewable energy companies in New Jersey.

REBAC provides a centralized location for more than 300 links to information on State and Federal renewable energy incentives, financing opportunities, business development assistance, training resources and permitting information.

REBAC is listed as a resource on the website of Choose New Jersey, a non-profit corporation created under Governor Christie's New Jersey Partnership for Action to encourage and cultivate economic growth and job creation throughout the State.



PARKS AND PRESERVATION

Over the past four decades the NJMC has worked tirelessly to preserve, protect and restore the Meadowlands District's unique urban ecosystem. To date, the Commission has preserved 3,500 acres of environmentally sensitive wetlands and overseen the creation of or helped to improve 22 parks that host tens of thousands of visitors each year.

Below and right: River Barge Park, Carlstadt



RIVER BARGE PARK

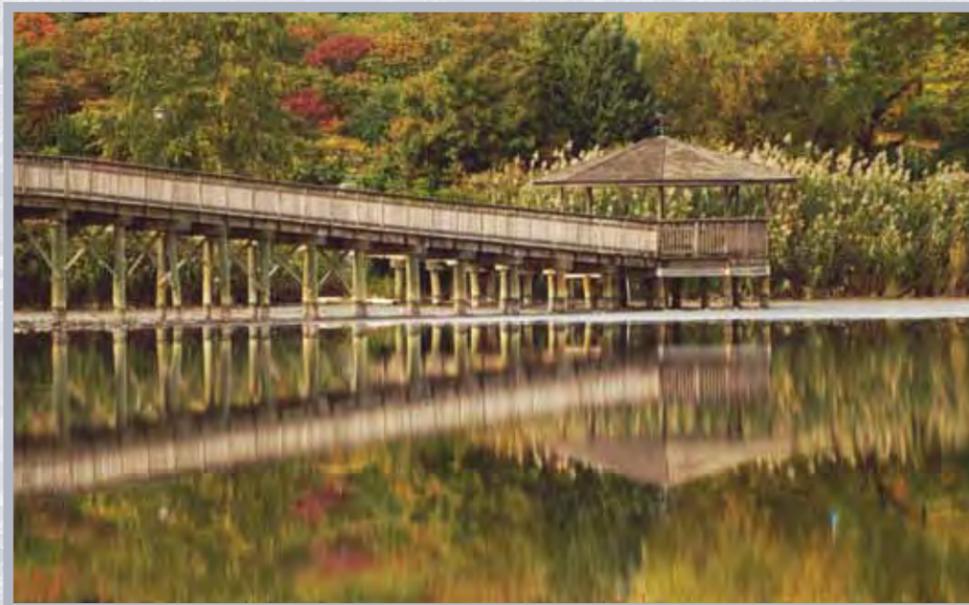
The NJMC dedicated River Barge Park in September 2011. The 5.5-acre park and boating center is an urban jewel that provides the first public access to the Hackensack River from its western banks in southern Bergen County in decades. The park offers magnificent riverfront views, a park trail, an education pavilion and a tranquil setting for relaxation and bird watching. Funding partners included The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and The Meadowlands Conservation Trust (MCT).

Park Features:

- 30-foot by 120-foot boat ramp
- Rowing dock
- Canoe launch
- 30-slip marina
- Riverfront promenade
- Park trail
- Robert Ceberio Environmental Education Pavilion
- Storage buildings for NJMC pontoon boats and canoes
- Dock for catch-and-release fishing
- Wetland enhancement and native plantings
- Restored nautical artifacts
- Interpretive signage
- Handicapped accessible docks
- Car and trailer parking



DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst. Top: Aerial of NJMC Complex and trails. Center: fountain at Jill Ann Ziemkiewicz Butterfly Garden. Bottom: Gazebo near the Meadowlands Environment Center. Aerial support by LightHawk.



DEKORTE PARK

In 2011, nearly 60,000 people visited DeKorte Park, the home of the NJMC. The one-square-mile natural gem includes several nature trails that offer spectacular views of wetlands and water views – framed by the New York City skyline.

DeKorte Park is a nationally known destination for birders. In 2010, *Birder's World* magazine named DeKorte Park among the country's top "Birding Hotspots."

Many of the more than 280 avian species that make the Meadowlands their permanent or seasonal homes — including 18 on the State's threatened, endangered and species of special concern lists — can be seen at DeKorte Park.

In 2011, the NJMC improved park accessibility by constructing new ramp entrances to the Commission's administrative headquarters, the Meadowlands Environment Center, and the Center for Environmental and Scientific Education.



SENSORY GARDEN

This year the NJMC added a sensory garden to DeKorte Park's many features.

Located a short distance from the Meadowlands Environment Center, it was designed to address the needs of visitors with limited mobility and/or vision. It showcases a high diversity of plants - more than fifty species - in a compact area. A low stone wall was designed to bring plants closer to those with limited reach or vision.

Bright flowers and foliage plants were chosen for their appeal to the senses including sight (bright flowers and foliage), smell (fragrant flowers and leaves) and touch (fuzzy, smooth or prickly parts).

Hearing is stimulated by the sounds of grasses or seed pods rustling in the wind, and taste is addressed with culinary herbs, though caution is advised when tasting any plant.



Cranesbills (*Geranium species*) were chosen for their deeply lobed and heavily scented leaves. European Ginger (*Asarum europaeum*) features shiny dark-green leaves which feel surprisingly fuzzy to the touch. An unusual Tiger's-eye Sumac (*Rhus typhina*) appeals to the eye with bright, variegated, lacey leaves.

In 2012 the NJMC will install plant markers throughout the garden, using visual cues as well as Braille overlays to convey information to visitors.

SECAUCUS MEDITATION GARDEN

The NJMC designed a meditation garden in 2011 for the Town of Secaucus at the municipality's request.

The design includes an open, 40-foot-diameter performance area, decorative water feature, benches, shade and flowering trees, and planting beds for display of perennials and seasonal flowers.

ECOTOURISM

The NJMC provides the public many opportunities to take advantage of the region's natural beauty and wildlife up-close. The Commission's highly popular guided pontoon boat cruises and canoe tours of the Hackensack River provide a unique perspective of the District. Twice-monthly guided bird walks and special nature-related events further showcase the region's environmental wonders.

Top: NJMC Pontoon Boat tour on the Hackensack River.
Bottom: Canoe Launch at Mill Creek Point in Secaucus.



PONTOON BOAT CRUISES AND CANOE TOURS

Some 600 people experienced the Hackensack River and its marshes in 2011 from the vantage points of a NJMC pontoon boat or canoe.

The leisurely, two-to three-hour excursions are led by expert Commission guides who explain the region's human and environmental history and identify birds and other wildlife along the way.

The popular, sold-out pontoon boat cruises were featured in several media outlets this year, including The Record daily newspaper, local cable news shows and lifestyle magazines.



GUIDED BIRD WALKS

The NJMC and the Bergen County Audubon Society's free twice-monthly bird walks at DeKorte Park and other locations throughout the Meadowlands District drew more than 750 people from July 2010 through July 2011, up from 500 people in the previous 12 months.

Participants saw everything from Bald Eagles and migratory shorebirds in the spring and summer to Green-winged Teal in the fall and Rough-legged Hawks and Canvasbacks in the winter.

Several birds that are rare to the area, including an American Avocet and a Horned Grebe, attracted birdwatchers from around the tri-state area to DeKorte Park.

NATURE BLOG

The NJMC Nature Blog, www.meadowblog.net, promotes ecotourism by providing daily updates on upcoming Commission nature events and celebrates the District's natural beauty with photos of the region's breathtaking fauna and flora.

The blog has become a go-to resource for nature lovers throughout New Jersey as well as New York, Pennsylvania and Connecticut. It averages 10,000 page views per month.

BUTTERFLY DAY

Nearly 400 people – almost all families – attended the Third Annual Butterfly Day at DeKorte Park in July. The event was co-sponsored by the Bergen County Audubon Society, with help from the North Jersey Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association.

The program featured butterfly walks, introductory slide shows, a scavenger hunt, and information on butterfly identification, butterfly binoculars and butterfly-friendly gardening.



EDUCATION

The Meadowlands Environment Center's in-demand science and environmental education programs for Grades K-12 provide students with hands-on learning experiences and an introduction to the natural world that can foster a lifelong interest in environmental stewardship. Classes are taught by Ramapo College educators at the NJMC's Center for Environmental and Scientific Education in DeKorte Park. The Science Center was the first public building in the State to be awarded LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum Certification — the highest rating from the U.S. Green Building Council.

MEC Summer Camp 2011.



Photo Courtesy of Emily Maurer



SCHOOL PROGRAMS

More than 15,000 students from 70 school districts will participate in education programs during the 2011-12 school year.

Lessons touch on a range of scientific disciplines, including ecology, chemistry, biology, physics, natural history and astronomy, and comply with New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.

DeKorte Park is incorporated into hands-on learning experiences. Students dip-net for fish, collect water samples and gather artifacts from a man-made archeological dig site to study under the microscope.

The Center for Environmental and Scientific Education is also used as a teaching tool, as educators incorporate its many green and sustainable features into their lessons.

In 2008, the Center became the first public building in New Jersey to attain LEED platinum status – the highest ranking – from the U.S. Green Building Council. Only buildings that meet the highest environmental and energy-efficiency standards receive LEED platinum status.

MARSHACCESS

The Meadowlands Environment Center is committed to providing a full range of learning experiences for those with disabilities through its MarshAccess program.

MarshAccess provides hands-on, classroom and field-based educational opportunities centered around the Meadowlands' marsh ecosystem for children and adults with developmental, visual, hearing, mobility, learning/cognitive and age-related disabilities.

Participants learn about nature by exploring DeKorte Park's fully accessible trails and utilizing assistive tactile, visual and audio technologies designed to fit participants' needs.

SUMMER CAMP

Children from area recreational programs (ages 6-13) participated in camp experiences at the MEC examining the ecology of the estuary, animal adaptations and healthy lifestyles.

In the Ramapo and Meadowlands Survival Camp (RAMS), children learned which foods are the most nutritious to help support the body and mind, took part in a 3-mile scavenger hunt, and answered questions about maintaining a healthy lifestyle, among other activities.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In July, MEC educators conducted a four-day professional development workshop for 30 high school science teachers from Paterson. The workshop was sponsored through a State grant to Passaic County College.

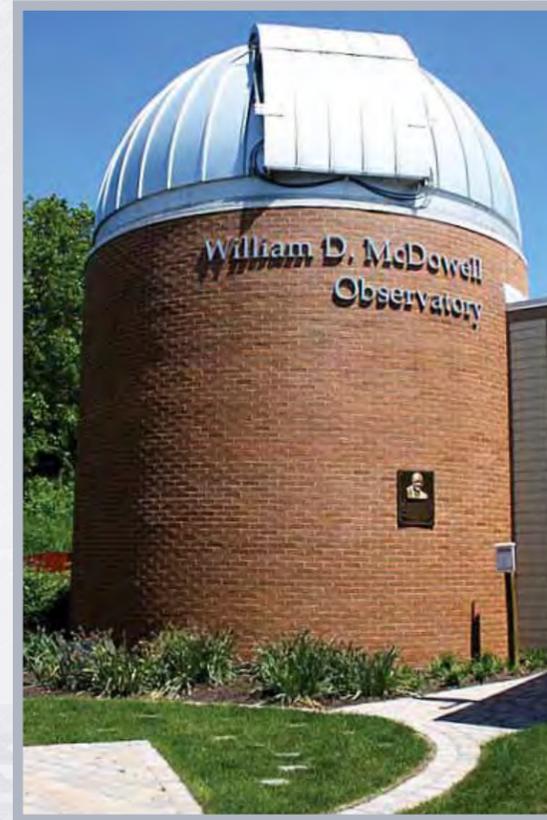
In August, the MEC hosted the Second Annual Math/Science Partnership (MSP) Summer Institute for elementary, middle and high school science teachers.

The two-week professional development workshop, funded by a State Department of Education MSP grant, is run in conjunction with Middlesex County College. Fifty teachers from throughout the State participated in activities centered around New Jersey standards in physical science and chemistry.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Educational programs for all ages, including a range of environmental, astronomy and wildlife themed workshops, are held year-round at the Meadowlands Environment Center (MEC). The MEC is a NJMC facility at DeKorte Park operated by Ramapo College of New Jersey. The MEC houses the Flyway Gallery, the Tideland Treasures Gift Shop and the interactive Marsh Discovery Station. At the NJMC's William D. McDowell Observatory, free public viewing nights are held every Monday and Wednesday.

Meadowlands Environment Center — Top: Children's author Tom Yezerki signs copies of his book, "Meadowlands: A Wetlands Survival Story." Bottom left: Seniors learn the art of flower arranging. Bottom right: Students participate in a science education program.



"Pink Canoe" by the late Andy Gorcica



MEC PROGRAMS

Nearly 3,000 people participated in public programming at the MEC this year.

Highlights included the fall "Astronomy and the Universe" series focused on the influence of the stars and planets on music, art and science.

The always popular Summer Senior Series included programs on New Jersey's nautical history and organic gardening.

WILLIAM D. McDOWELL OBSERVATORY

More than 2,500 stargazers viewed the night sky in 2011 through the NJMC's state-of-the-art, research grade telescope at its William D. McDowell Observatory.

The Observatory is open to the public for free on Monday and Wednesday evenings year-round. An astronomy learning series is held on Tuesday nights.

The Observatory stayed open overnight on Dec. 20-21, 2010, for the first total lunar eclipse that occurred on the Winter Solstice since 1638. More than 300 people visited in the early morning hours to watch the moon move completely into the earth's shadow.

FLYWAY GALLERY

The Flyway Gallery was established in 2002 to spotlight local artists whose work focuses on the environment in and around the Meadowlands.

Gallery shows feature everything from nature, wildlife and landscape photography to oil and water color paintings to multi-media works.

Highlights of 2011 included a found art exhibit, "Curbside Collections," by internationally renowned artist Mohamed Khalil, and "An Overview of the Works of the Late Andy Gorcica," a selection of vibrant watercolors and scenic vistas presented by the artist's widow.

MEADOWLANDS RESEARCH

Environmental and wildlife studies conducted by the Meadowlands Environmental Research Institute (MERI) and the NJMC Natural Resources Department help policy makers better understand and propose sustainable ways to preserve, protect and enhance the District's unique urban ecosystem. Past research has helped contribute to the safe restoration of the Hackensack River and its associated wetlands. Moving forward, the NJMC continues to produce findings that are key to improving the health, safety and environment of Meadowlands District residents as well as the area's watershed and wildlife.

Anderson Creek Marsh, Secaucus



MERI HIGHLIGHTS

A study that will measure the influence of estuary environmental factors on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted by District wetlands began in September. The research is funded by a \$300,000 National Science Foundation grant awarded in August to MERI fellow Karina Schafer, Ph. D.

Conclusions drawn from a three-year investigation found that naturally occurring large patches of salt hay (*Spartina patens*) in Meadowlands marshes are genetically more diverse and are more likely to fend off the invasive common reed *Phragmites australis* than smaller patches.

As a result of this new found genetic diversity, the Commission is targeting the few remaining large and naturally occurring patches of *Spartina patens* in the District for preservation management that could reduce the region's carbon footprint.

MERI scientists began deep coring wetlands over the summer, extracting thousand-year-old sediment core samples from District marshes that could help scientists understand past catastrophic events and how well marshes sequester harmful greenhouse gases.

In addition, MERI continuously conducts detailed air and water quality monitoring throughout the District.

NATURAL RESOURCES HIGHLIGHTS

NJMC naturalists this year continued surveying the diversity, abundance and duration of time that migratory birds use Commission landfills and the Harrier Meadow enhancement site as feeding grounds during their stopovers in the Meadowlands.

High-tech microphones and recording equipment are used to track the number of birds that fly over the landfills. Research findings could be used to better manage Meadowlands natural resources to better serve migratory birds.

Commission naturalists completed their third field season of a diamondback terrapin population study. The diamondback terrapin is a species of State and National concern.

All captured terrapins were measured and weighed. Those that had not been previously captured were tagged with electronic monitoring chips. The terrapins were released unharmed at the point of capture.

Collaboration with scientists and students from The Wetlands Institute, based in Stone Harbor, and Montclair State University will help the NJMC answer questions about the life history of the terrapins in the Meadowlands, such as population size, how far terrapins move within a marsh and how fast they grow.

Surveys producing lists of plant species and maps of vegetation coverage were conducted for the Hawk Site and Little Snake Hill in Secaucus and the Oritani Marsh in East Rutherford.

Plants, animals and physical conditions at Commission natural areas were monitored throughout the year.



MERI LIBRARY

The MERI Library's collection includes more than 12,000 hard-copy and digitalized books, research studies, reports, photographs, maps, newspaper clippings and other current and historical documents. The library is open to the public. Its digital archives may be accessed at <http://meri.njmeadowlands.gov/library>.

FINANCIAL REPORT

COMBINED STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS

DECEMBER 31, 2010

REVENUES

Lease Payments	\$5,395,581
Solid Waste Overhead Contribution	2,209,979
Grants	2,257,690
Fees & Charges	1,216,062
AHA Reimbursement for Legal Services	1,000,000
Revenues from Composting Operations	395,975
Interest Income	120,550
Other Income	266,257
Royalties from Sale of Methane Gas	28,318
User Fees - NJMCEC	72,121

Total Revenues **\$12,962,533**

OPERATING EXPENDITURES

Commission Operations	\$9,163,209
Environment Center Operations	2,364,823
Business Accelerator	738,830
Capital and Maintenance	181,587
Lyndhurst Shuttle Service	109,822
Other Expenditures	1,257,349

Total Operating Expenditures **\$13,815,620**

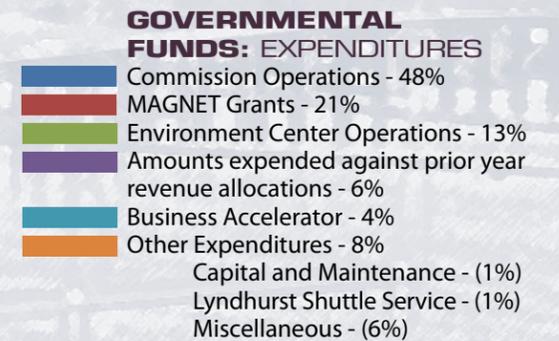
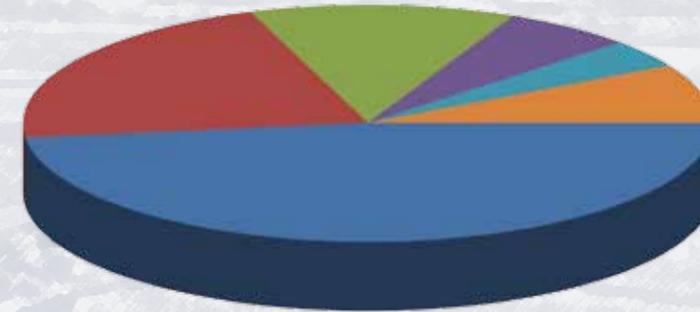
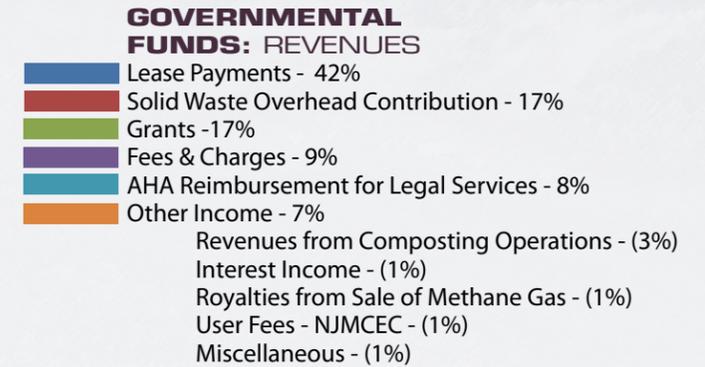
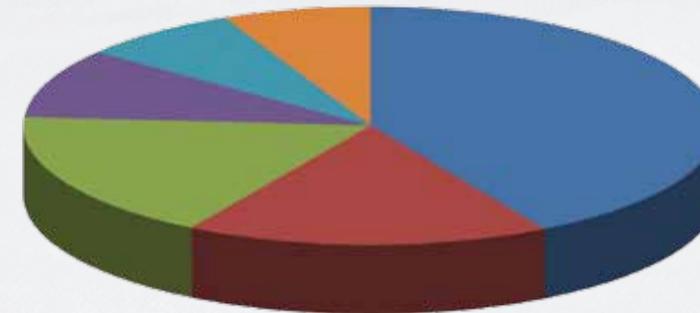
Excess of Expenditures over Revenues before to Non-Operating Costs \$(853,087)

NON-OPERATING EXPENDITURES

MAGNET Grants	4,079,971
Amounts expended against prior year revenue allocations	1,178,047

Total Non-Operating Expenditures **\$5,258,018**

Net Excess of Expenditures over Revenues \$(6,111,105)



RARE BIRD SIGHTINGS

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

SOLID WASTE OPERATIONS

DECEMBER 31, 2010

REVENUES:

Operating Revenue	\$15,934,558
Non-Operating Revenue	1,653,195

Total Revenues **\$17,587,753**

EXPENSES

General Operating Costs	\$7,096,461
Landfill Operations	4,271,029
MERI/Laboratory/Parks & Open Space	2,980,922
Payments to County Utility Authority	1,513,859
Closure Expenses	1,440,843
Other Expenses	684,660

Total Operating Expenses **\$17,987,774**

Net Loss \$(400,021)



AMERICAN BALD EAGLE

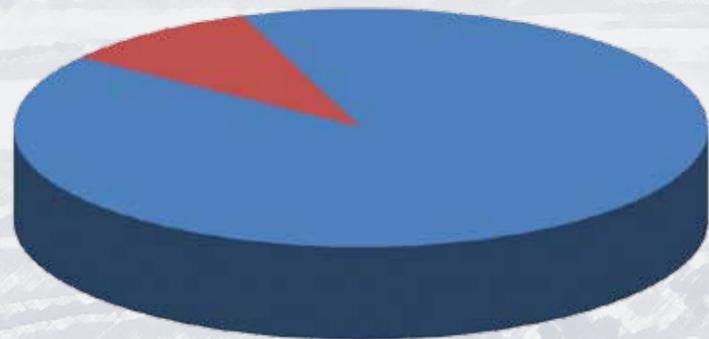
RINGED-NECK PHEASANT



AMERICAN AVOCET

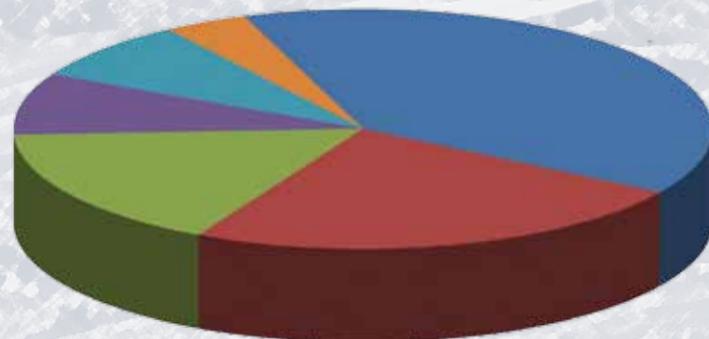


HORNED GREBE



SOLID WASTE OPERATIONS: REVENUES

- Operating Revenue - 91%
- Non-operating Revenue - 9%



SOLID WASTE OPERATIONS: EXPENDITURES

- General Operating Costs - 39%
- Landfill Operations - 24%
- MERI Laboratory - 17%
- Payments to County Utility Authority - 8%
- Closure Expenses - 8%
- Other Expenses - 4%



SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS GATHER AT RIVER BARGE PARK IN CARLSTADT DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST. THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY HAS CATEGORIZED THEM AS BIRDS OF "SPECIAL CONCERN."



New Jersey Meadowlands Commission

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