

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY COUNTY OF HUNTERDON

## RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, In 2004, under Chapter 24 of the Public Laws of 1997, authorizing the acquisition of lands for conservation of open space and provided for a special taxation in an amount or rate to be approved by the voters of the County, and established that all funds to be raised be deposited in a "County Open Space, Recreation, Farmland Preservation and Historic Trust Fund" was approved by the voters of Hunterdon County; and

**WHEREAS**, as the 2004 Ballot Question sunsets on December 31, 2009 and the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders is desirous of continuing the "Hunterdon County Open Space, Recreation, Farmland Preservation and Historic Trust Fund" to allow a specific source of funds for the County acquisition of lands for recreation, conservation, general open space, and farmland preservation prioritized to slow down residential growth and historic preservation of County and municipal Historic properties, structures, facilities, sites, areas or objects, in view of the fact that open space, agricultural lands and historic structures are an important part of the heritage of Hunterdon County and are rapidly decreasing at an accelerated rate; and

**WHEREAS**, the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders is also desirous of placing on the Ballot for the November, 2008 General Election a Referendum which would continue the annual tax assessment to fund the "Hunterdon County Open Space, Recreation, Farmland Preservation, and Historic Trust Fund" in an amount not to exceed Three (\$.03) Cents per One Hundred (\$100.00) Dollars of total County equalized real property valuation, commencing January 1, 2010 with all funds subject to an annual independent audit; and

**WHEREAS**, the selection of lands for acquisition for recreation, conservation, general open space, farmland preservation and the selection of historic preservation projects will be in accordance with plans prepared and adopted by the County in accordance with the requirements of N.J.S.A. 40:12-15.2.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Hunterdon that the Hunterdon County Clerk be and is hereby requested to place the following question on the November 04, 2008 General Election Ballot:

### COUNTY QUESTION

#### CONTINUATION OF HUNTERDON COUNTY OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, FARMLAND AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION TRUST FUND

Shall the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders continue the current "Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund" for the purposes of protecting drinking water sources and water quality; preserving open space, natural areas, farmland and historic sites; to acquire, develop, improve and maintain county and municipal lands for recreation and conservation purposes; and preservation of historic structures, properties, facilities, sites, areas, or objects; or for the payment of debt service or indebtedness issued or incurred by the County for any of the purposes described above, with projects to be selected through a fair and open process and to be acquired from willing sellers only, to be funded by continuing the existing annual tax assessment not to exceed the amount of Three (\$.03) Cents per one hundred (\$100.00) dollars of total County equalized real property value commencing January 1, 2010, with all funds subject to an annual independent audit?

### INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT

**A "yes" vote will permit the County to continue** the existing Hunterdon County Open Space, Recreation, Farmland, and Historic Preservation Trust Fund. Funds shall be used to:

- i) Protect drinking water sources;
- ii) Improve the water quality of rivers, lakes, and streams;
- iii) Preserve open space and natural areas;
- iv) Preserve farmland;
- v) Protect wildlife habitat;
- vi) Provide park and recreation land;
- vii) Preserve historic sites;
- viii) Acquire land for other conservation, recreation, and historic preservation purposes;
- ix) Develop and maintain county and municipal lands for recreation and conservation purposes; and
- x) Pay debt service on indebtedness incurred by Hunterdon County for any of the above purposes.

Projects for this funding would be selected through a fair and open process. Land will be purchased from willing sellers only on a voluntary basis. A "yes" vote will permit the County to continue to levy no more than 3 cents per \$100 equalized real property value. There would be no increase in the current County Open Space tax rate per \$100 of assessed value. As an example, at the rate of 3 cents, the owner of a single family residential property in Hunterdon County assessed at \$306,000 would continue to pay \$92 per year, or \$7.66 a month, to the Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund. Every year there will be an independent audit of how the funds were spent.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Clerk of the Board of Chosen Freeholders deliver a true copy of this resolution to the Hunterdon County Clerk for appropriate action to be taken by that official in accordance herewith.

<i>ROLL CALL</i>	<i>MOVED</i>	<i>SECONDED</i>	<i>AYES</i>	<i>NAYS</i>	<i>ABSTAIN</i>	<i>ABSENT</i>
<i>Erik C. Peterson, Director</i>			X			
<i>William G. Mennen, Deputy Director</i>		X	X			
<i>J. Matthew Holt, Freeholder</i>			X			
<i>George B. Melick, Freeholder</i>				X		
<i>Ronald M. Sworen, Freeholder</i>	X		X			

**Adopted** August 05, 2008

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Rhonda E. Kelly, Deputy Clerk