

DELAWARE CENTER for the INLAND BAYS

Annual Report 2019



To **PRESERVE, PROTECT** and **RESTORE**
Delaware's Inland Bays and their watershed

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



The Center turned 25 this year and, thanks to you, we celebrated with the most successful fundraiser ever, directing \$41,950 to our mission. Your support realized advancements in oyster restoration, reforestation, and advocacy for clean water policies. Record numbers supported the Bays in 2019 both financially and with their time. This was all personally thrilling for me.

But over the course of 2019, I began to experience cognitive dissonance between this local success and increasing alarms about global climate change. Last year, 11,000 scientists declared a climate emergency by presenting a suite of earth's degrading vital signs and stated that after 40 years of calls for action, climate change and its impacts have accelerated. Another major assessment found that over 1 million plant and animal species were facing extinction, many within decades. In the US and abroad, natural disasters exacerbated by climate change continued to shock me, and flooding here at home left me shaking my head. I was sure the Center was succeeding, but it became clear that the current pace of climate change would overwhelm our progress.

Cognitive dissonance by definition makes one personally uncomfortable. And towards the end of the year, I realized that I had been coping with my own discomfort by compartmentalizing the evolving science on climate. When I finally confronted the meaning of what I was hearing, I was upset with myself as a trained scientist for not changing my behavior in proportion to the information I was receiving. Quickly though, my tension morphed to action as I began an ongoing journey to live more within my own values.

So... I traded in my gas powered car for a hybrid vehicle. I tried the new plant-based sausages and burgers; they were so amazing that "Meatless Mondays" became "Meatless Mondays & Tuesdays!" I offset the carbon emissions from my air travel by donating to conservation. And I switched my power purchase to 100% renewable sources.

The personal changes were easy and felt great. But what about the Center, what could we do to adapt? The first thing to do was to talk about it and plan for it. The Center has completed a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment that we are using to guide the revision of the Inland Bays Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. We also plan to host this year a meeting of the Delaware Climate Conversations Series where everyone is welcome to discuss the changing climate in their community. The second thing to do is act. The Center switched to 100% renewable energy use in 2019. And we will continue to accelerate our ecosystem restoration efforts, which all pull carbon from the atmosphere. But the key to leading on this challenge locally is to educate more about the benefits of a transition to renewable energy and the protection of the carbon stores in forests and wetlands.

For me, 2019 was an exciting and sobering finale to 25 years of success for the Inland Bays. The challenge ahead is daunting. But it is also thrilling to think that we can lead as a part of a global solution. And where better to do this than in the place we care about so much: our community, our Inland Bays. We hope you continue to support the Inland Bays and work with us to leave a lasting legacy for the future!

Sincerely,



Chris Bason, Executive Director



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INLAND BAYS

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BUILDING LIVING SHORELINES in Your Coastal Community

WHY LIVING SHORELINES?

Living shoreline demonstration projects are being constructed throughout the Inland Bays. These projects use nature-based tactics to improve water quality and wildlife habitat through shoreline stabilization while providing public education opportunities.

Engineered using native plant material, recycled oyster shell, sand, and some hard structures, living shorelines prevent erosion, trap floating sediment, and filter stormwater runoff— all while maintaining natural beaches or wetlands that provide habitat for fish and wildlife. Compared to hard-armoring approaches such as bulkheads, living shorelines provide ecological benefits while providing similar protection against erosion.

Living shorelines play a key role in the Center's work to preserve, protect and restore Delaware's Inland Bays. For homeowners or property managers concerned about waterfront erosion, a living shoreline may be a natural solution that would benefit the bays.

SUCCESSFUL BEGINNINGS

To date, five living shoreline demonstration sites have been completed by the Center's staff, volunteers, and partners. The latest addition to these sites was the living shoreline at Sassafras Landing in the Assawoman Wildlife Management Area, completed in 2019. **The Sassafras Landing project created 13,000 square feet of salt marsh habitat using 5,190 native marsh plants.** It serves as an important buffer to protect the shoreline from boat wakes, storms, and sea-level rise.

EXCITING CONTINUATION

Construction of the Read Ave. living shoreline demonstration project on Rehoboth Bay in Dewey Beach closed the Center's year on a highlight. This project includes a shelf made of rock and recycled oyster shell, low dune, restored salt marsh, tide gates, a small offshore oyster shell reef, and a kayak launch. The project will improve water quality, provide new natural habitat, and help mitigate persistent flooding that threatens properties and roadways in the Town of Dewey Beach. In 2020, the Center will construct a bioretention facility next to the Little Store grocery on Read Ave. to reduce stormwater runoff to this part of Rehoboth Bay. These projects were identified in the Dewey Beach Stormwater Master Plan, completed in 2017 by the Center and the Town. Both projects address either rainwater flooding or tidal flooding on the bayside of town.

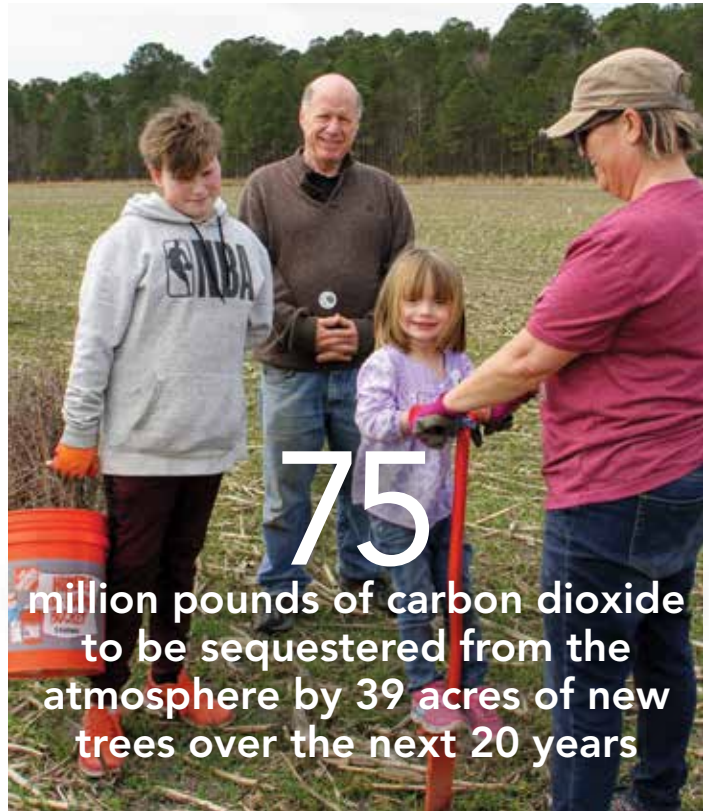
PROMISING FUTURE

The next steps for the Center's living shoreline initiative include the planning and construction of another project at the Delaware Botanic Gardens at Pepper Creek. Using an innovative design, this project will provide shoreline protection using a variety of native plants and natural building materials. It will also offer a unique opportunity to demonstrate the benefits of living shorelines to the Garden's visitors, who will be able to observe its monitoring over time. Final design and permitting will be completed in the spring of 2020, with construction planned for the fall.

The Center's Science & Restoration team has had a very busy year. More projects to improve the health of the Bays are in the pipeline for 2020, with even more community participation!



22,825
trees planted— 39 acres
reforested



75
million pounds of carbon dioxide
to be sequestered from the
atmosphere by 39 acres of new
trees over the next 20 years

Succeeding in Reforestation

Plants are the lungs of the Earth. Reforestation gives Mother Nature a second chance for a breath of fresh and clean air. In 2019, the Center together with hundreds of volunteers reforested parts of Assawoman Wildlife Management Area on Little Assawoman Bay and the Sussex Landfill. These projects promise to help restore wildlife habitat and improve water quality in your Inland Bays!

You can make an impact, too! Your financial contribution enables us to conduct research, restore natural areas, and educate our community. **Donate today to help your Inland Bays!**



873
pounds of nitrogen prevented
from entering the Bays per year

21
pounds of phosphorus prevented
from entering the Bays per year



481
volunteer hours for planting
projects



MOVING FORWARD: The James Farm Ecological Preserve Master Plan

The James Farm Ecological Preserve is an ecological treasure located in Ocean View, Delaware that provides the community with a diverse collection of natural areas and wildlife.

The Delaware Center for the Inland Bays manages the Preserve for Sussex County. In 2014, the Center created the James Farm Master Plan with its two phases. The Master Plan accommodates the growing needs of the Preserve for the next 20 years while protecting its special natural resources, enhancing its educational opportunities, and lighting the way for future generations to safely enjoy this treasure.

In late 2018, the Center broke ground on the first phase of the James Farm Master Plan. A few months later, its construction was completed in April 2019. Thanks to the funding and donations from our many partners the Preserve now provides safe entry and exit to Cedar Neck Road. The gateway area can now hold 27 cars while safely accommodating the buses that bring thousands of students from the Indian River School District to participate in the Day on the Bay environmental education program.

In addition, the newly renovated event lawn has allowed the Center to expand community-friendly events like the Native Plant Sale and Family Water Fest, welcoming thousands of visitors, volunteers, and participants. We thank you Sussex County Council, the State of Delaware Outdoor Recreational Parks and Trails Program (ORTP), former Councilman George Cole, Senator Gerald Hocker, and Representative Ron Gray for their funding assistance. Also, thanks to Denney Electric, Bunting and Murray

Construction, Coastal Services LLC, Sposato Landscaping, Nutrient Ag Solutions, and Perdue Agri-Recycling for in-kind donations that helped expedite the project. Finally, we thank you the James Farm's corps of volunteers.

In December, the Center received the great news that ORTP has again provided a grant for design, engineering and permitting of Phase Two improvements. This grant award is being matched in part by the Sussex County Council. Upgrades to the James Farm will include new educational facilities, restrooms, improved storage areas for equipment and supplies, repair of trail structures and realignment of the trail system, interpretive signage, and provisions for special events. The year 2020, promises to be an even more exciting year for the James Farm. The Center expects to keep the momentum of Phase One and move forward with the development of Phase Two.



Completed Phase One: event lawn, entrance, bioretention, and parking

For more information about the James Farm Master Plan and how you can get involved, go to inlandbays.org/JamesFarm.

Raised for the Mission



\$41,950

were raised at the Anniversary Gala held to celebrate 25 years of preserving, protecting and restoring the Delaware Inland Bays

Hosted the National Estuary Programs Annual Meeting



90 attendees
26 National Estuary Programs in attendance
21 presentations

All National Estuary Programs of the Environmental Protection Agency are organizations dedicated to the protection and restoration of estuaries of national significance.



RELEASED: *The State of Herring and Guinea*

Determining and communicating the health of local waterways to the public is an essential and unique service of the Center. The public and decision makers need to understand the amounts of pollution entering waters in order to decide what actions are needed to clean them up.

In 2019, the Center released the third report in its Your Creek series: The State of Herring and Guinea Creeks in the Rehoboth Bay Watershed. The Your Creek series focuses on the health of the individual tributaries to the Inland Bays. These waterways are very important recreationally and ecologically but they tend to receive less attention than the Bays themselves. The Your Creek project has previously helped local communities near Dirickson Creek and Love Creek understand and protect these much loved waterways.

The report details shocking levels of pollution in Herring and Guinea Creek that were in some cases increasing. Average concentrations of nitrogen measured in them were 10-12 times the healthy limit. In parts of Guinea Creek, this pollution is made worse at times by oxygen levels too low for fish to survive and bacteria levels not safe for swimming or shellfishing.

High levels of nutrients may sound like a good thing to some, but is actually very bad for waterways. It puts them at risk for a number of problems, including overgrowth of algae, poor water clarity, and unhealthy conditions for fish and people.



Inland Bays Creek Report

Since there are no direct discharges of pollution (a.k.a., point sources) to these creeks, all this pollution runs off and through the land (a.k.a. non-point sources). These watersheds saw a 68% increase in developed lands over ten years (1992-2012) and have one of the highest densities of active septic systems of anywhere in the Inland Bays watershed. These factors, along with the loss of forests, and a decreasing but still significant percentage of agricultural land, contribute to water pollution. As the watersheds become more urbanized there are fewer forests and wetlands to help absorb and filter pollution.

The report paints a picture of pollution persisting despite many years of work to reduce it. But it also points out that there can be a lag time between making improvements on the land and seeing results in the water. The conversion of septic systems to central sewers conducted by Sussex County is expected to have a positive impact on reducing bacteria and nutrient pollution.

Center scientists produced the report using environmental monitoring data collected by a number of organizations including the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control and the University of Delaware Citizen Monitoring Program. The Center's Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee provided review and input to the study. With millions of dollars being spent annually to clean up the Inland Bays, reports such as these that document water quality and restoration progress are essential to measure the success of the public investments.

VOLUNTEERING IS THE CENTER'S HEARTBEAT

835 VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTED **6,392** HOURS

VALUE = **\$162,548.56**



Maintaining the James Farm Ecological Preserve, performing the Citizen Science surveys, and coordinating outreach and reforestation activities, would not be possible without our group of volunteers.

Get onboard with the Bays!

Thank you to our generous donors

Names listed here reflect those who donated during the 2019 Fiscal Year 10/2018-9/2019

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BUILT 3 OYSTER REEFS IN THE INLAND BAYS!

2019 AT A GLANCE

The Center developed a Shellfish Enhancement Action Plan that focuses on restoring sustainable populations of native oysters in the Inland Bays.

These oyster reefs represents the full life cycle of an oyster shell: from the dinner plate to the foundation for new oyster growth in an oyster gardener's basket, to finally returning to the bays as part of an artificial reef.

<p>CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS</p> <p>16 TONS</p> <p>10 tons of recycled shell and 6 tons of concrete blocks</p>	<p>DIMENSIONS</p> <p>872 SQUARE FEET</p> <p>Total spatial coverage</p>
<p>VOLUNTEERS</p> <p>113</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 93 Oyster Gardeners grew the adult oysters • 20 Participated during construction 	<p>PARTNERS</p> <p>30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 Don't Chuck Your Shucks restaurants • 3 Project collaborators • 3 External laboratories
<p>2,305</p>	<p>Adult oysters grown by Oyster Gardeners to seed the reefs</p>
<p>INVESTED</p> <p>\$169,085</p> <p>44%</p> <p>In-kind contributions</p>	
<p>GET INVOLVED IN 2020</p> <p>Visit www.inlandbays.org OR email nperezperez@inlandbays.org</p>	

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Pam McRaine
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Patrick McDonnell
Patti's Hallmark Shop
Paul's Kitchen
Perdue AgriRecycle
Pernod Ricard
Rehoboth Beach Farmer's
Market
Rehoboth Beach Sailing
Association
Rehoboth Toy and Kite
Saketumi
Salted Rim
Seagrass Plantation Community
Organization
Senator Tom Carper
Shell We Bounce
Shine by the Sea
SoDel Concepts
Sposato Irrigation
Susie Ball
Taylor Knox
The Pond Bar and Grill
Tony Pratt
Vintage Imports
Walt Trela
Zogg's Raw Bar and Grill

Tributes and Memorial Contributions

In Memory of Alex K. Dombrowski

BJ Flagg
 Carrie Corcoran
 Daniel Dombrowski
 Francis S. Lynch
 Ingrid Deane
 Jane Karas-Neurohr
 Jeanne Hillenbrand
 Joan Thomas
 Joanne and Paul Muldoon
 John Dombrowski
 Jon Beird
 Judith L DeAngelis
 Judith Tigani
 Karen Morneau
 Kenneth Wat
 Kimberly Saxton
 Lois Munson
 Mary Margaret Girard
 Michelle Fiorelli
 Robert Higgins
 Sara Maggitti
 The Nolan Family

In Memory of Crystal Lingenfelter

Mary Jane Nickles

In Memory of Diane

Claire Simmers

In Honor of Ginger Boyce

Bunny Meyer

In Honor of Judith Chelotti

Samantha Cedeno

In Memory of Kenneth West, D.O.

Dr. Marianne Walch

In Memory of Lou Mueller

Bettie Dunkin

Marian Forbes and

James Lambe

Thomas and Mary Jo Murphy

William Johnston

In Memory of Mae and Del

Bennett

Frank and Elaine Davey

In Honor of Michael Simmers

Dan Karczeski

Kim and Charles Chelotti

In Honor of Nathaniel Cedeno

Jessica Simmers

In Honor of Sam Calagione IV

Rachel Grier-Reynolds

In Honor of Susie Ball

Kathy Casey

Vincent Pompo and

Robert Yungman

In Honor of Tom Barbehenn

Rachel Hutchins

Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Fund Balances

September 30, 2019 and September 30, 2018

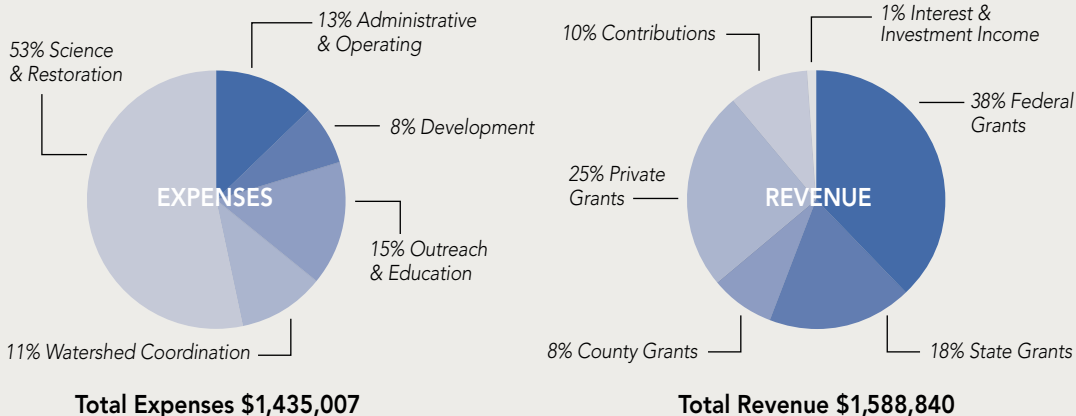
ASSETS

Current Assets	2019	2018
Cash	\$ 637,466	\$ 493,678
Grants Receivable	211,759	193,725
Prepaid Expenses	29,923	17,042
Accounts Receivable	15,029	11,854
Total Current Assets	894,177	716,299
Property, Plant and Equipment (at cost)		
Land	125,000	125,000
Building	894,696	894,696
Furniture and Equipment	333,644	344,155
	1,353,340	1,363,851
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(597,128)	(597,036)
Net Property, Plant and Equipment	756,212	766,815
Other Assets		
DE Community Foundation		
Endowment Fund	133,815	132,697
Total Assets	1,784,204	1,615,811

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$ 6,326	\$ 9,712
Accrued Payroll Taxes	2,912	1,629
Accrued Salaries and Benefits	45,857	36,120
Total Current Liabilities	55,095	47,461
Net Assets		
Unrestricted		
Board Designated*	133,815	132,697
Invested in Property and Equipment	631,212	641,815
Undesignated	331,570	311,502
Total Unrestricted	1,096,597	1,086,014
Temporarily Restricted	507,512	357,336
Permanently Restricted**	125,000	125,000
Total Net Assets	1,729,109	1,568,350
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$1,784,204	\$ 1,615,811

* Endowment Fund ** Protected Land





DELAWARE CENTER FOR THE
INLAND BAYS
Research. Educate. Restore.

Get on board with the bays.
inlandbays.org

Rehoboth | Indian River | Little Assawoman

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Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

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*This year the Inland Bays Native Plant Sale joins **Water Family Fest***

Saturday, June 13, 2020 (10 am-3 pm)

James Farm Ecological Preserve, Ocean View, DE

This year the Center partners with Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to celebrate summer. Join us and enjoy a day of family outdoor activities, native plants nurseries, exhibitors, food trucks and more.

FREE Admission



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