

DELAWARE CENTER for THE INLAND BAYS annual report 2014

MISSION



Dear Friends of the Bays,

As I write this, a nor'easter has just pushed the waters of Rehoboth Bay over Coastal Highway. Traffic is creeping through saltwater now, and I cannot help but think: what will this scene look like when the sea has risen another couple of feet?

In 2014, the Center celebrated the achievements of the past 20 years to restore the Inland Bays. Now it's time to look ahead. The flood today is a harbinger of the environmental challenges that face us in the next 20 years.

When the Center was created in 1994, sea level rise was not much of a concern. Now we are planning for 3 to 5 feet of sea level rise by the end of the century. Delaware has the lowest average elevation of any state in the nation, and the lands around the Inland Bays are some of the lowest in Delaware, There is no doubt about it; sea level rise is the biggest challenge facing our community.

To ensure that the resources of the Bays are protected as sea level rise accelerates, the Center pledges to cooperate with all stakeholders to:

- Protect natural areas that are vulnerable to sea level rise, so that dynamic ecosystems like saltmarshes and sandy beaches may persist by migrating inland.
- Provide a neutral forum where science can guide the deliberations of all stakeholders on adapting to sea level rise.
- Educate children and new residents about the Bays: how they are dynamic and constantly on the move; and that as sea level rise increases, they will move inland even faster.

At the same time, the challenges that the Center was created to address are still with us. We must find more efficient ways to keep pollution out of the water, to restore fish and shellfish populations, and educate about the importance of clean water and healthy Bays.

Success over the next 20 years rests on two things: your support and participation in this important mission. Please read on to see the work we have accomplished this year.

At the Center for the Inland Bays, we focus on igniting people's passions about the water by imparting knowledge and involving people in its restoration. Every day, there are little things that we can do as a community and in our own lives that can have an immediate difference on the water that we love.

Thank you for your support,

Chris Bason, Executive Director







JAMES FARM ECOLOGICAL PRESERVE

Preserving a wild place requires a plan

In 1992, the last direct descendant of the James family gave the family farm in Ocean View to the people of Sussex County. What a vision Mary Lighthipe had... Cedar Neck was still rural. Today the James Farm Ecological Preserve is an oasis of open space amid resort development.

Since 1998, the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays has managed the 150 acre Preserve for recreation, education, research and restoration.

Last year, the Preserve felt the footsteps of 10 thousand visitors...many with their four-legged friends. We also welcomed nearly a thousand students for 'hands on, waders on' day of watershed education. But, we need to plan for many more visitors. According to projections, the population in Sussex County will increase 35% to 271,326 people by 2030. And many of them will discover the wonders of James Farm.

Preserving the forests, marshes, beaches and wetlands AND accommodating the growth in visitors each year is the challenge that led us to create a Master Plan for James Farm.

The James Farm Master Plan was completed in summer 2014 with Oasis Design Group and BioHabitats, It will guide us in accommodating the needs of visitors while protecting and preserving the plant and animal communities that make James Farm unique. It identifies facility needs such a restrooms and parking, storage for equipment and education programs, trail improvements and interpretive signage, and provisions for special events. The Plan also anticipates the impact of sea level rise, and makes recommendations to preserve undisturbed areas for wildlife.

The James Farm Master Plan can be viewed at inlandbays.org/visit-us-james-farmecological-preserve.

The James Farm Ecological Preserve belongs to all of us, and it will take the support of many people and partners to realize the vision embodied in the plan.

Some of the priorities that we will seek early support for are:

- Re-design the parking area to serve more visitors.
- Improve facilities and spaces for education activities.
- Provide secure and weather-proof space for the equipment needed to care for the Preserve.
- Build state-of-the-art composting restrooms
- Create named trail loops to better organize the trail system and add interpretive signage.
- Enhance signage and trails to welcome more visitors to lesser used areas of the Preserve.

Proposed plan for the re-design of the entrance to the James Farm Ecological Preserve.





LIVING SHORELINES

It has been said that 'today's flood is tomorrow's high tide'

Coastal communities and homeowners have generally defended their shorelines from erosion by hardening them with stone rip-rap, or with wood or metal bulkheads. But these techniques have an environmental cost—they eliminate sandy beaches and salt marsh habitats that are so important to many marine animals, and they don't filter pollutants from surface runoff.

In 2014, the CIB worked with partners to convene a statewide Living Shorelines committee of scientists, educators and managers.

Together, we are working to bring Living Shorelines to all of Delaware's rivers, creeks and bays by creating demonstration projects, educating coastal residents, offering training to marine contractors so that they can offer living shorelines to their customers seeking solutions to shoreline erosion, and working on standards and regulations that promote and facilitate the use of living shoreline practices.

> This is an approach to shoreline stabilization that uses plants, sand, and limited use of rock to provide erosion protection while also maintaining valuable habitat.

JAMES FARM EDUCATION PROGRAM

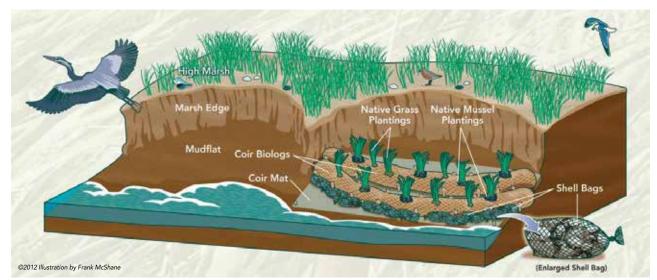
Nowhere can you see the growing diversity of Sussex County better than in our schools

Since 1999, we have partnered with Indian River School District to offer middle school students a day of watershed education at James Farm, an outdoor learning experience to show first-hand the concepts that are hard to demonstrate in the classroom.

For many of them, it is their first experience on the Bays and more than a few exclaim that it is their 'best day ever!'

Each school year about 1,000 students haul seine nets, test water quality and collect data on the flora and fauna of the salt marsh at James Farm, instructed by our teaching staff whose passion and knowledge inspire these future leaders of coastal Sussex.

As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, it's just one of the ways that the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays is investing in educating future decision makers to be stewards of the Inland Bays.





OYSTER SHELL Recycling

Local restaurants are saving their 'shucks' for the Bays

For years, oyster shell has been used to build roads, driveways and houses, with unused shell going to landfills. But today, the shells are an increasingly scarce natural resource for restoration, and we are banking them for future use on the Inland Bays. Last summer, the CIB partnered with local restaurants to recycle oyster shells from their raw bars.

Oyster shell...an investment oysters can grow on!

Oysters can't grow on the soft bottom of our Bays they need hard bottom to form reefs, and oysters like nothing better than attaching to oyster shell. Oysters are like mini-water treatment plants, each one filtering up to 50 gallons of water a day, and removing nutrients that are the greatest pollution threat to the Bays. Oyster shell is also being used instead of rock in living shoreline projects to reduce wave energy and decrease shoreline erosion.

YOUR CREEK

Community-based action creek by creek

Many who live around the Inland Bays grew up in other places and don't know the rivers and creeks in their communities.

Last year, we launched Your Creek, an initiative to introduce people in the watershed to their local creek.

We began in 2014 with Love Creek, a tributary of Rehoboth Bay. Led by a volunteer team leader, the Love Creek Team worked with CIB staff to conduct surveys of residents to gather information on the concerns, opinions, and understanding of local creeks by residents and property owners and to disseminate information to the community on factors that are affecting water quality in Love Creek.

Each creek watershed is distinctive; it's condition affected by surrounding land use, its size and salinity, and its natural features. Over the next few years, the fourteen major tributaries that flow into the three Inland Bays will each have a team. Work continues on Love Creek, the Dirickson Creek Team on Little Assawoman Bay is just underway, and later in 2015, the Vines and Pepper Creek Team will begin their work.

To learn more about your creek or get involved, go to inlandbays.org/projects-issues/your-creek.





THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Grants and Contracts

Delaware Department of Natural **Resources and Environmental Control** Clean Water Advisory Council **Community Water Quality Grants** Program Non-point Source Pollution Program Universal Recycling Program Delaware Nature Society State of DE, Division of Motor Vehicles Sussex County Council The Nature Conservancy Town of South Bethany U.S. Environmental Protection Agency University of Delaware Sea Grant College Program Sustainable Coastal

Communities Development Initiative

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DELAWARE CENTER FOR THE INLAND BAYS Research. Educate. Restore. Go to inlandbays.org for information on how you can Get on board with the Bays in 2015.

Rehoboth Bay Indian River Bay Little Assawoman Bay

Town of Dewey Beach Town of South Bethany Vickie York

\$1000 and up

Chris Bason Cedar Shores Condo Association Ann G. Riley and Thomas M. Bouchelle Becky Brewer and Greg Pfister Dogfish Head Craft Brewery George and Barbara Junkin Anne and Bill Lowe Austin Okie In Memory of Ike Weaver

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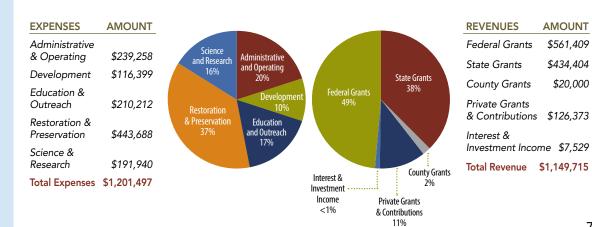
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Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Fund Balances—Accrual Basis September 30, 2014 and September 30, 2013

ASSETS		
Current Assets	2014	2013
Cash in banks	\$ 323,647	\$ 421,575
Grants receivable—State of Delaware	217,411	209,200
Prepaid Expenses	15,220	12,193
Unbilled receivables	1,510	12,404
Total Current Assets	557,788	655,373
Property, Plant and Equipment (at cost)		
Land	125,000	125,000
Building	872,508	872,508
Furniture and equipment	474,840	469,517
	1,472,348	1,467,02
Less accumulated depreciation	(596,401)	(550,969
Total Property and Equipment	875,947	916,050
Other Assets		
DE Community Foundation Endowment Fund	113,586	94,014
Total Assets	1,547,321	1,665,443
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES		
Current Liabilities	* 0(050	* 07.00
Accounts Payable	\$ 26,259	\$ 97,220
Payroll taxes	920	859
Accrued salaries & benefits	37,019	32,453
Total Current Liabilities	64,198	130,538
Fund Balance		
Unrestricted		
Board designated*	113,586	94,01
Net assets invested in property & equipment	692,328	714,140
Undesignated	552,209	601,750
Total unrestricted	1,358,123	1,409,90
Permanently restricted**	125,000	125,00
	,	
Total Fund Balance	1,483,123	1,534,905

* Endowment Fund ** Protected Land





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