

MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

IMPORTANCE OF  
**PARKS**  
DURING THE

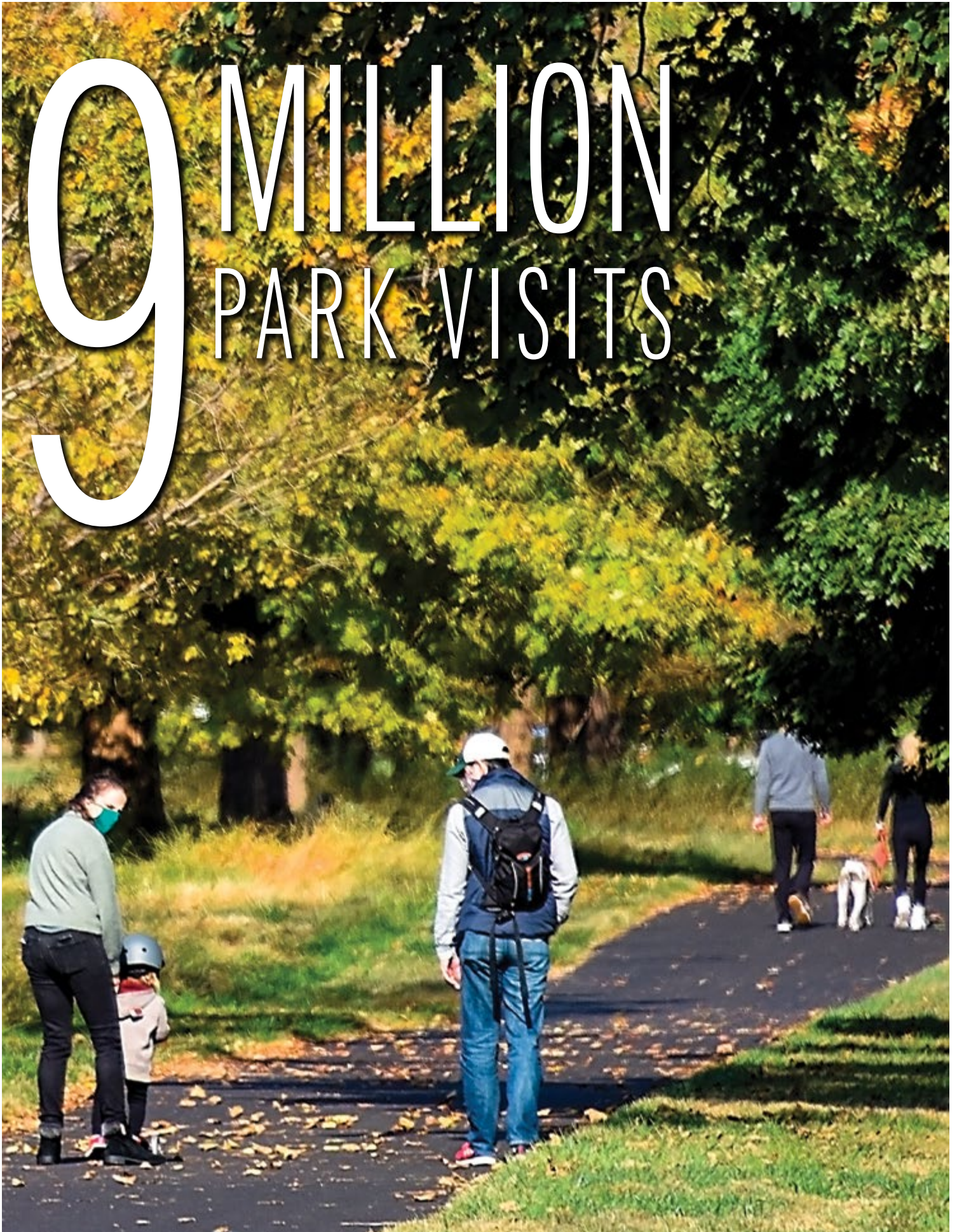
**PANDEMIC**

2020 ANNUAL REPORT





# 9 MILLION PARK VISITS





# 2020 THE YEAR IN REVIEW

PARKS IN DEMAND DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC



The most outstanding statistic from 2020 was record-breaking attendance; park visits topped 9 million vs. 7 million in 2019. This 30% increase in park attendance and golf rounds occurred over a technically shorter operational year: 2020 was more like 10½ months as park facilities began closing in mid-March and didn't reopen until May 2, with 50% capacity limits for another month after that.

Some areas saw visitation increase over 50% (Deep Cut Gardens, Fisherman's Cove and Bel-Aire and Pine Brook Golf Courses), a few sites had increases over 60% (Shark River Park, Turkey Swamp Park and Mount Mitchell Scenic Overlook), and one park had a staggering 112% annual increase in attendance (Hartshorne Woods Park).







Increased park visitation occurred before and after the shutdown, and was managed under extraordinary circumstances without extra staff. One challenge was enforcing the capacity limits after reopening in May. This was achieved by controlling parking lot access, which required Park Rangers to monitor the number of cars in and out. Golf Rangers enforced an elaborate set of restrictions designed to limit contact during play. Parks and Golf Courses remained extra busy all year as the demand for outdoor (and therefore safer) gathering spaces had increased because of the pandemic.



There were also new cleaning protocols, social distancing measures to enforce and the ever-changing guidelines for outdoor crowd sizes. Parks had the extra challenge of figuring out how to operate “hybrid” facilities that defied simple indoor/outdoor safety rules such as playgrounds, skateparks, outdoor fitness equipment, ball courts, boat rentals, picnic shelters and pools.



County residents took advantage of the Park System’s full operational status by showing up in record numbers: golf rounds increased, beach attendance soared, rentals resumed and summer camps/programs had steady attendance with stringent safety protocols and fewer participants. Visitor Services programming had a surprisingly resilient year after losing 14 weeks and cancelling activities that could not resume safely (trips, group activities/school programs). Dozens of large scale outdoor events were also cancelled, including the Monmouth County Fair for the first time in its 45 year history.





# QUICK FACTS

## 2020 SUMMARY

SEE PAGES 22-23



Overall, the increase in park attendance and steady program participation underscored how critical open spaces were--and are--in times of crisis. The Park System was proudly able to continue offering a calming dose of nature and a safe escape to normalcy during an otherwise strange and stunted year. New parcels of land were still acquired (pp. 8-9), new facilities opened and construction projects were completed (pp. 4-7), and management/administration and financial functions continued (pp. 12-14).

### PARK SYSTEM VISITATION

BAYSHORE WATERFRONT PARK	227,538
BEL-AIRE GOLF COURSE	53,361
CLAYTON PARK	34,945
CHARLESTON SPRINGS GOLF COURSE	72,553
DEEP CUT GARDENS	166,858
DORNBROOK RECREATION AREA	872,556
EAST FREEHOLD SHOWGROUNDS	47,082
FISHERMAN'S COVE	162,981
HARTSHORNE WOODS	677,973
HENRY HUDSON TRAIL	245,096
HISTORIC LONGSTREET FARM	81,892
HISTORIC WALNFORD	16,213
HOLMDEL PARK	1,201,937
HOMINY HILL GOLF COURSE	42,645
HOWELL PARK GOLF COURSE	37,419
HUBER WOODS	131,922
MANASQUAN RESERVOIR	1,606,842
MONMOUTH COVE MARINA	36,102
MT. MITCHILL SCENIC OVERLOOK	269,755
PERRINEVILLE LAKE PARK	24,398
PINE BROOK GOLF COURSE	32,457
SEVEN PRESIDENTS PARK	880,400
SHARK RIVER GOLF COURSE	44,648
SHARK RIVER PARK	332,014
TATUM PARK	144,473
THOMPSON PARK	821,820
TURKEY SWAMP PARK	305,574
UNION TRANSPORTATION TRAIL	35,104
WOLF HILL RECREATION AREA	396,838
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,003,396</b>

# 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Park & Facility Improvements



New bluestone walkway was installed at Deep Cut Gardens to improve access to the rose garden/parterre.



The basketball/sport courts were refinished and the t-pool restored at Dorbrook Recreation Area.



In place of the Fair, East Freehold Showgrounds hosted six socially distanced graduation ceremonies in addition to the usual horse/dog shows.



A new street crossing at Route 537 will allow Henry Hudson Trail users to access a developing 1/3 mile trail extension into Freehold center.





A second “transition style” skatepark and new outdoor fitness area opened at Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park.



Monmouth Cove Marina acquired a new lift, expanding service to boaters.



A new kiosk map was installed at Wetz Park to help visitors navigate the trails (also available online).



Mount Mitchell Scenic Overlook received a stunning new light array for the Annual 9/11 Memorial Ceremony, set up at Popamora Point.





The paved trail at Thompson Park was extended by ¼ mile along the entrance road.



Shark River Park and Tatum Park (pictured) were the first two county parks to receive a new trail marking system to help with navigation.



One mile of new, natural surface trail was added at Wolf Hill Recreation Area, along with a second information kiosk.



# 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Visitor Services/Programming



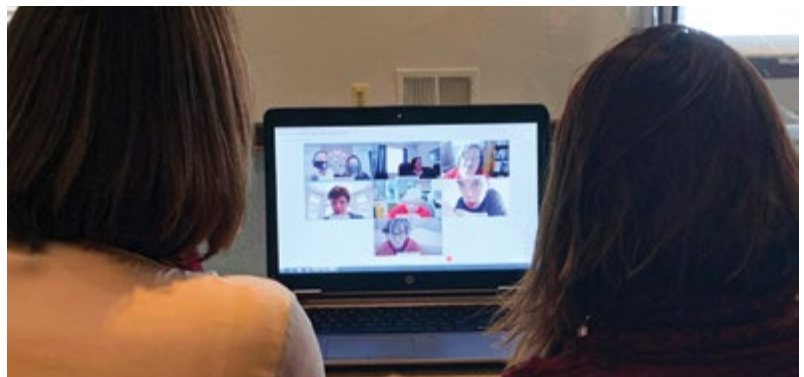
Annual website visitation was up 60% to 1.7 million in 2020, with an average of 4,652 visits per day.



A total of 280 in-person summer camps hosted almost 3,000 participants. Families were more than grateful for the return to some kind of normalcy after months of isolation.



During uncertain times, park staff answered thousands of inquiries by phone, email and social media from a curious public.



Working through strict, new guidelines, park areas serving special populations adapted with smaller scale, socially distanced summer programs; Therapeutic Recreation's day program switched to a virtual format by year's end.



The new gallery at the Creative Arts Center hosted five successful exhibits during its first year. (Landscapes, pictured).

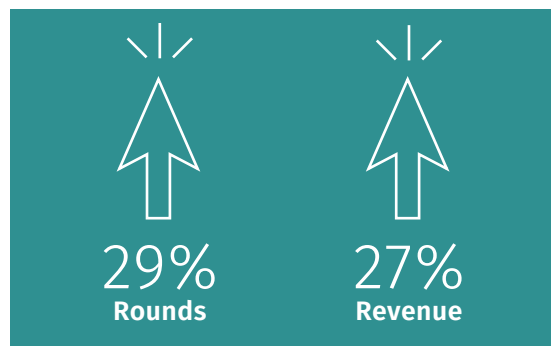


For adult programs, in-person nature walks, outdoor fitness programs and kayaking, hiking, biking, archery and tennis were all popular, along with outdoor concerts and poetry nights.



# 2020 MORE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

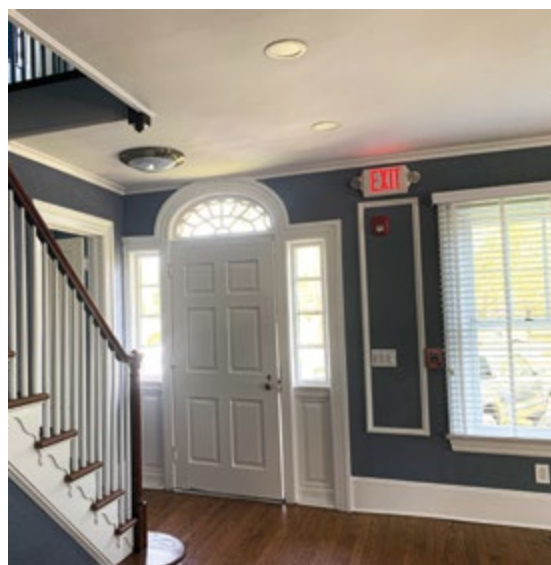
## GOLF COURSES



The largest number of annual rounds ever were played on Monmouth County Golf Courses in 2020: rounds and revenue were up 29% and 27%, respectively.



Charleston Springs Golf Course completed a large-scale project to dredge its three-acre lake for improved water quality and a dependable water supply for irrigation.



Hominy Hill Golf Course's administrative office building underwent general renovations: windows, plumbing, electric, flooring, etc.



# 2020 MORE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RENOVATIONS, RESTORATIONS & HISTORIC SITES



Thompson Park's Brookdale Farm Complex was entered into the Federal Register of Historic Places, our seventh site on the list of recognized National Historic Landmarks.



At Hartshorne Woods Park, a second WWII-era bunker in the Navesink Military Reservation at Rocky Point, Battery 219, underwent renovation.



Also at Hartshorne Woods Park, an erosion protecting wall with a living shoreline was installed at Portland Place to stabilize 650 feet of bluff along Navesink River.



# 2020 MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS



New Maintenance Garage at Deep Cut Gardens.



At Thompson Park and Sunnyside Rec Area, 5.7 miles of paved trail underwent maintenance/repair; 0.6 miles of asphalt were replaced along the Bayshore section of the Henry Hudson Trail (pictured).



New roof and façade at Fort Monmouth Recreation Area.



Expanded parking lot added 30 new spaces at the Thompson Park Creative Arts Center.



# PARKWIDE PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Safety guidelines required an array of creative retro-fits to protect both staff and visitors:

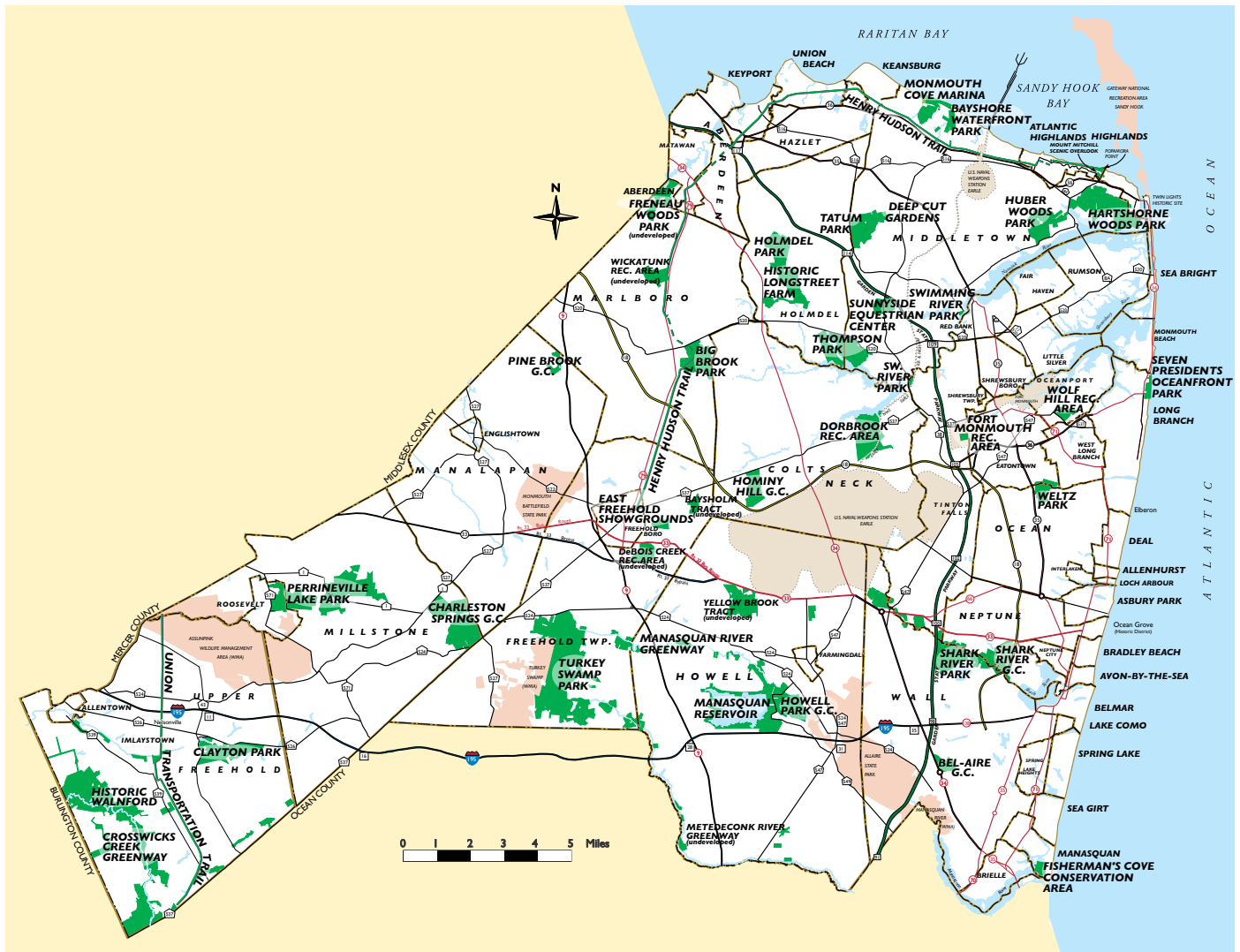


- Plexi-panels to protect staff at front desks, information desks, payment booths
- Signs for closures and to enforce distancing measures/other guidelines
- Temperature testing/screening stations
- New outdoor tents for safer interactions during programs and summer camp sign-in/sign-out
- Demanding new cleaning/sanitizing regimens
- Sanitizing equipment/dispensers/products
- Multi-stage protocols for staff quarantine, symptom-reporting, etc.



# 2020 LAND ACQUISITION

A total of 243 new acres (20 parcels) were added to 11 park properties in 2020. The Park System now owns/manages 17,797 acres in 43 parks and golf courses across Monmouth County. Another 574 acres (33 parcels) of open space were protected as easements (NOT shown on map).





## PARKS THAT EXPANDED ACREAGE IN 2020

Bel-Aire Golf Course	11	Huber Woods Park	9
Charleston Springs Golf Course	1	Metedeconk River Greenway	42
Dorbrook Recreation Area	5	Turkey Swamp Park	105
Freneau Woods Park	2	Union Transportation Trail	5
Holmdel Park	44	Wickatunk Recreation Area	18
Howell Park Golf Course	1		

LAND ADDITIONS	243
EASEMENTS	574
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>817</b>

## 2020 PARK ACREAGE

Bayshore Waterfront Park	229	Monmouth Cove Marina	10
Bel-Aire Golf Course	132	Mount Mitchill Scenic Overlook	12
Big Brook Park	432	Perrineville Lake Park	1,266
Charleston Springs Golf Course	820	Pine Brook Golf Course	61
Clayton Park	450	Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park	38
Crosswicks Creek Park	2,349	Shark River Golf Course	176
Deep Cut Gardens	54	Shark River Park	991
Dorbrook Recreation Area	540	Sunnyside Recreation Area	135
Durand Tract (leased to Freehold Twp.)	94	Swimming River Park & Greenway	18
East Freehold Showgrounds	81	Tatum Park	366
Fisherman's Cove Conservation Area	55	Thompson Park	667
Fort Monmouth Recreation Area	9	Turkey Swamp Park	2,388
Freneau Woods Park	313	Union Transportation Trail (UTT)	115 <sup>‡</sup>
Hartshorne Woods Park	794	Weltz Park	169
Henry Hudson Trail (HHT)	234 <sup>*</sup>	Wickatunk Recreation Area	115
Historic Longstreet Farm	9	Wolf Hill Recreation Area	92
Historic Walnford	36	Miscellaneous Trail Corridor (1)	1
Holmdel Park	664		
Hominy Hill Golf Course	262		
Howell Park Golf Course	350		
Huber Woods Park	390		
Manasquan Reservoir	1,208 <sup>†</sup>		
Manasquan River Greenway	517		

## UNDEVELOPED SITES

Baysholm Tract	71
DeBois Creek Recreation Area	165
Metedeconk River Greenway	540
Yellow Brook Tract	379

<b>TOTAL ACRES OWNED AND/OR MANAGED BY THE PARK SYSTEM</b>	<b>17,797</b>
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<sup>\*</sup> 83 acres of the HHT are owned by the county and assigned to the Park System; another 104 acres are under 20 year lease from NJ Transit.

<sup>†</sup> 1,052 acres at the Manasquan Reservoir are owned by the NJ Water Supply Authority and leased to the Park System for perpetual use.

<sup>‡</sup> 64 acres of UTT are under permanent easement from JCP&L as a trail right-of-way.



# 2020 PARK PARTNERS



Looking back over 2020, it has become more evident than ever that our strength lies in our community. In spite of the pandemic, a great deal was achieved through the dedication, passion and enthusiasm of volunteers.

## 2020 VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS



**462**  
Volunteers



**9,270**  
Hours of Service

**2,347**  
Programs & Camps

**1,898**  
Gardening

**468**  
Administrative

**2,270**  
Equestrian

**250**  
Training

**331**  
Trail Marking

**1,414**  
Trail Maintenance

**234**  
Park Clean-Ups

**58**  
Corporate Groups

Here are the individuals who volunteered 40+ hours with the Park System in 2020. Names with an \* volunteered 100+ hours.

Werner Aehlich \*  
Andrew Antonioli  
Eric Arolick  
Cynthia Bellino  
Mitchell Berman  
Chris Bremseth \*  
Tracey Brown  
Sandy Burn \*  
Colleen Carroll  
Susan Cartmell  
Cathy Chamberlain  
Nicole Cieluch \*  
Beth Clarke  
Dennis Costa  
Marie Costa  
Denise Day \*  
Louise Delcollo \*  
Nancy Endresen  
Jim Gault \*  
Loma Gault \*

Mary Green \*  
Susan Halle  
Peter Haney  
Robert Haney III  
Ellen Harrold  
Kaitlyn Heller  
Amanda Hintelmann  
Ida Hosseini  
Christel Kavulia  
Art Lackner \*  
Elizabeth Lilleston  
Dan Lingelbach \*  
Jeanette Lingelbach  
Gerry Lingner \*  
Lydia Locke  
Lois Lyons \*  
Danielle Martinez  
Anna Merlino  
Eileen Murphy  
David Nass \*

Laurie Nass  
Les Neiman \*  
John Olson \*  
Gabriel Podsvirow  
Sophia Prestigiacamo  
Ann Reilly \*  
Walter Salzmann \*  
Fritz Schwager  
Carla Sinclair \*  
Rita Smith  
Carol Smolinski  
Nancy Stab  
Lynn Stone  
Priya Thamburaj  
Rosemary Tunncliffe  
Dan Tutler  
Rosanne Vaz  
Elaine Weigl





Founded in 1991, this non-profit facilitates sponsorship and hosts fundraising events/activities to raise money for special projects in the parks. In 2020, this included the Lion's Den Sensory Playground addition at Dorbrook Recreation Area with funding from the Colts Neck Lions Club (pictured). The Friends placed 11 new memorial park benches as a tribute to the memory of loved ones and funded the application for Brookdale Farm in Thompson Park to be added to the National Register of Historic Places. Funding continued for urban youth to attend park camps and fees to support after school excursions, and special activities for volunteers and young adults with disabilities. Camps and excursions were scheduled with strict COVID precautions and social distancing protocols. [www.friendsofmonmouthcountyparks.com](http://www.friendsofmonmouthcountyparks.com)



Monmouth Conservation Foundation (MCF), now celebrating its 44th year, is dedicated to saving open space, creating parks, preserving farmland, protecting wildlife, teaching environmental sustainability, and safeguarding waterways throughout Monmouth County. MCF has assisted with the preservation of more than 8,500 acres and is one of 446 accredited land trusts out of 1,700 nationwide. Jointly, MCF and Monmouth County are working to expand and enhance park lands to ensure that the County remains a desirable place for people and wildlife. [www.monmouthconservation.org](http://www.monmouthconservation.org)

*PHOTO CREDIT: Tyler Christensen Photography*



Special People United to Ride (SPUR) is a nonprofit organization that supports therapeutic horseback riding and equestrian programs at Sunnyside Equestrian Center. During 2020, in response to the pandemic, the SPUR program arranged a "soft opening" in the summer adhering to the new guidelines, followed by a full reopening in the fall with 78 SPUR students, 12 youth riders, and eight Equine Psychology series program participants. Staff were also able to provide several volunteer workshops to keep the community involved. SPUR riders competed at the 2020 Health and Recreation Through Horses show last fall at the Horse Park of NJ (Allentown), and were among the largest participants in attendance from any one center. [www.spuronline.org](http://www.spuronline.org)



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

## 2020 UNAUDITED

Combined Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balances  
For Year Ending December 31, 2020

	TOTALS	GENERAL	TRUST	CASH DONATIONS
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>\$13,607,309</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$13,457,930</b>	<b>\$149,379</b>
<b>INCOME</b>				
County Appropriation				
Salaries/Wages	19,989,314	19,989,314		
Other Expense Approp.	1,890,688	1,890,688		
Revenue				
Donations	18,508			18,508
Golf Courses	13,721,531	8,696,478	5,025,053	
Parks	2,260,868	1,573,723	687,145	
Monmouth Cove Marina	1,270,031		1,270,031	
Visitor Services	1,863,359		1,863,359	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$41,014,299</b>	<b>\$32,150,203</b>	<b>\$8,845,588</b>	<b>\$18,508</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Personnel	21,552,052	19,940,508	1,611,544	
Operations	7,281,492	1,616,112	5,652,420	12,960
New Jersey State Sales Tax	218,581		218,581	
General Revenue Returned to Treasurer				
Golf Courses	8,827,543	8,827,543		
Parks	1,437,657	1,437,657		
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$39,317,325</b>	<b>\$31,821,820</b>	<b>\$7,482,545</b>	<b>\$12,960</b>
Excess (Deficit) in Revenues	1,910,006	328,383	1,581,623	
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>\$15,522,863</b>	<b>\$328,383</b>	<b>\$15,039,553</b>	<b>\$154,927</b>

### Capital Cash & Open Space Expenditures: <sup>(a)</sup>

Site Improvements	9,691,149
Land Acquisition	10,397,394
Line Item Capital - Equipment (additional & replacement)	2,081,482
Offset to Maintenance, Personnel, and other expenses	8,366,428

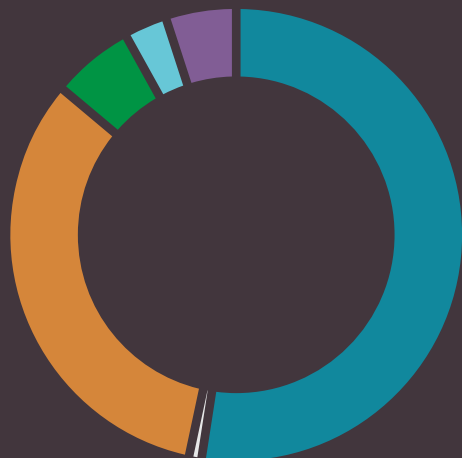
**Total** **\$30,536,454**

**Notes:** (a) not included in above statement of expenditures

Capital items listed are not amortized

Appropriation does not include salary adjustments, fringe benefits, insurance, information technology support, and legal services

# 2020 MCPS INCOME BY SOURCE



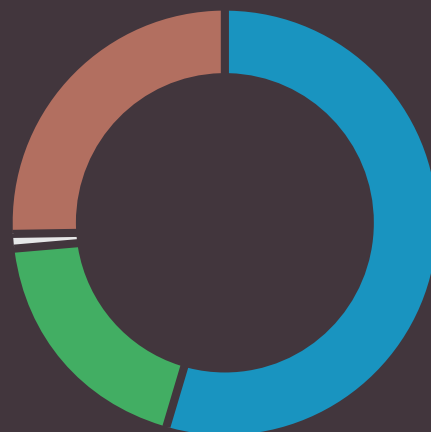
County Appropriation	\$21,880,002	53%
Donations	\$18,508	0%
Golf Courses	\$13,721,531	33%
Parks	\$2,260,868	6%
Monmouth Cove Marina	\$1,270,031	3%
Visitor Services	\$1,863,359	5%

\$41,014,299

# 2020 MCPS EXPENDITURES

EXCLUDING CAPITAL

Personnel	\$21,552,052	55%
Operations (supplies, utilities, services, contracts, etc.)	\$7,281,492	19%
New Jersey State Sales Tax	\$218,581	0%
General Revenue Returned to Treasurer	\$10,265,200	26%



\$39,317,325



# VALUE OF IN-KIND DONATIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS & GRANTS 2020 (UNAUDITED)

## DONATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

### Friends of the Park

<i>Benches for Various Parks</i>	\$28,560.00
<i>Deep Cut Gardens</i>	\$159.00
<i>Hartshorne Woods Park</i>	\$135.00
<i>Historic Longstreet Farm</i>	\$6,631.00
<i>Historic Walnford</i>	\$10,663.00
<i>Hospitality</i>	\$565.00
<i>Lions Sensory Den (Dorbrook)</i>	\$4,391.00
<i>Marketing</i>	\$948.00
<i>Therapeutic Recreation Assistance</i>	\$340.00
<i>Timolat Farm (Huber Woods)</i>	\$1,280.00
<i>Tree Donations</i>	\$2,695.00
<i>Training</i>	\$180.00
<i>Urban Recreation Assistance</i>	\$5,508.00
<i>Volunteer Services</i>	\$137.00

\$62,192.00

### Betty Knorr Estate Donation for Deep Cut Gardens

\$61,349.45

### Land

\$576,000.00

### Miscellaneous Donated Items

\$0.00

### Monmouth Conservation Foundation (MCF)

<i>Acquisition</i>	\$0.00
<i>Support Services</i>	\$16,500.00

\$16,500.00

### Monmouth University Urban Rec. Camps

\$4,998.00

### Special People United to Ride (SPUR)

<i>Scholarships</i>	\$11,591.50
<i>In Kind Donations/Equipment &amp; Misc. Items</i>	3,827.96
<i>Instructor Training</i>	721.95

\$16,141.41

### Sponsorships - Monmouth County Fair

\$0.00

## GRANTS

\$0.00

### VOLUNTEER HOURS (a)

462 volunteers for a total of 9,270/hrs @ \$29.49/hr

\$273,372.30

**TOTAL \$1,010,553.16**

<sup>(a)</sup> Based on Points of Light "Value of Volunteer Time" 2019 (independentsector.org)

## 2020 MONMOUTH COUNTY FREEHOLDERS

*Director*

**Thomas A. Arnone**

*Deputy Director*

**Susan M. Kiley**

*Liaison to the Park System*

**Lillian G. Burry**

**Patrick Impreduto**

**Nick DiRocco**

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## 2020 MONMOUTH COUNTY BOARD OF RECREATION COMMISSIONERS

*Chairman*

**Kevin Mandeville**

*Vice Chair*

**Michael G. Harmon**

**Violeta Peters**

**Thomas E. Hennessy Jr.**

**Mark E. Zelina**

**David W. Horsnall**

**Patricia M. Butch**

**Thomas W. Adcock**

**Glen Mendez**

*Secretary-Director*

**James Truncer**

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## 2020 MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION

*Secretary-Director*

**James J. Truncer**

*Assistant Director*

**Andrew J. Spears**

*Superintendent of Recreation*

**Patti Conroy**

*County Park Superintendent, Golf*

**Michael Janoski**

*Chief of Land Acquisition and Design*

**Gail Hunton**

*Director of Development*

**Maria Wojciechowski**

*Purchasing Agent*

**Jennifer Kaczala**

*Public Information Officer*

**Karen Livingstone**

*County Park Superintendent, Parks*

**Thomas Fobes**

*Director of Personnel*

**Kevin Dunn**

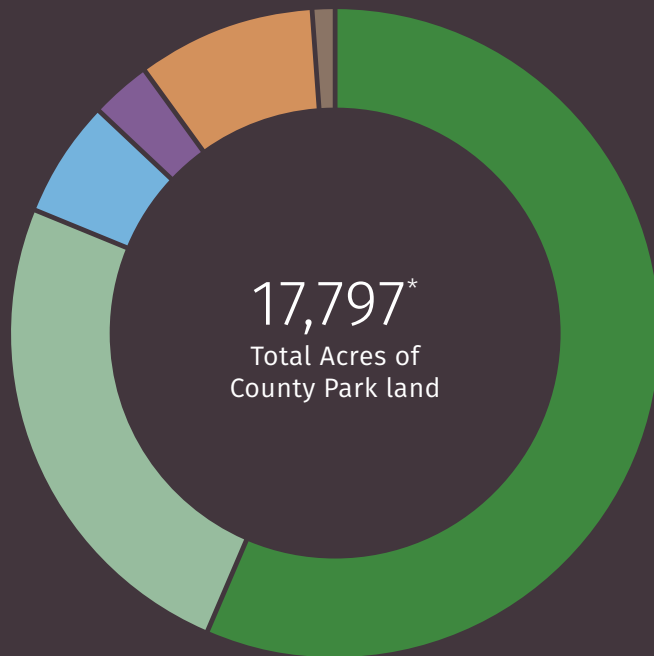
*Chief Clerk of Administration*

**Barbara Berry**



# 2020 QUICK FACTS

## LAND

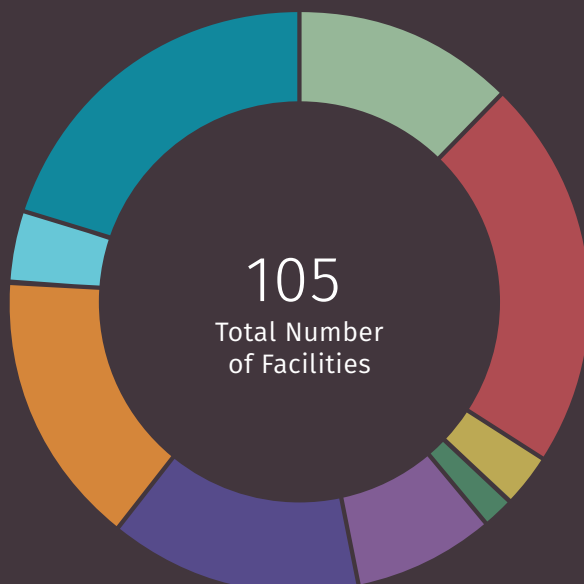


243 New Acres Acquired in 2020\*

43 Number of Parks & Golf Courses

\* Excluding easements; represents approx. 6% of Monmouth County's total acreage 301,804.

## RECREATION FACILITIES



## VISITATION



9,003,396  
Total County Park Visits



583,537  
Summer Visits - Seven Presidents

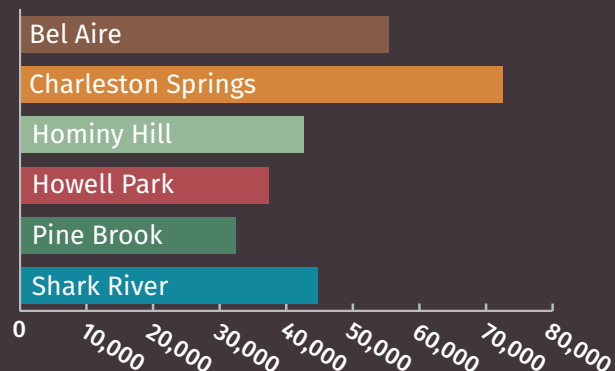


1,702,647  
Visits to Park System Website

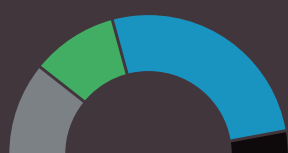
## GOLF



283,083  
Total Rounds Played



## TRAILS



● Paved: 31  
● Easy: 29  
● Moderate: 76  
● Challenging: 8

144

Total Miles of Trails

## RECREATION PROGRAMS<sup>†</sup>



4,510  
Number of  
Programs Offered



50,085  
Program  
Attendance

<sup>†</sup> Includes Visitor Services, Golf and Historic Sites, plus school/other group programs and birthday parties.

## PERSONNEL



● Full-time Staff 347  
● Hourly/Part-time Staff (Seasonal) 499  
● Program Staff/Instructors 67  
● Volunteers 462  
Provided 9,270 hours of service





Shown here at the County 9/11 Memorial Ceremony at Mount Mitchell Scenic Overlook in September, Park Rangers worked throughout the year, maintaining the parks during the COVID-19 shutdown and after, hosting a record number of visitors in 2020.

**Headquarters:**

805 Newman Springs Road,  
Lincroft, NJ 07738  
732-842-4000  
[www.MonmouthCountyParks.com](http://www.MonmouthCountyParks.com)



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Park and Recreation Agency



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