



Sourlands Journal

www.sourland.org

Newsletter of the Sourland Planning Council

Autumn 2012

2012 Election Questionnaire

As we have in past election years, Sourland Planning Council sent a letter to all the candidates for elected positions in the five towns and three counties that have citizens living on the mountain asking them to “briefly describe [their] attitude and past involvement with the preservation of open space, wildlife habitat, natural resources, and/or places of historical significance in [their] Township.” We asked each candidate to send us their answers by mid-October. In this issue, we are publishing the list of candidates and the questions we asked them. You can view their answers on our website, sourland.org.

The Questions We Asked the Candidates

1. Do you know about and do you support the work of the appointed representatives of the five Townships (East Amwell, Hillsborough, Hopewell, Montgomery, and West Amwell) in developing a Comprehensive Management Plan for the Sourlands?
2. Do you feel the current level of Open Space funding in your municipality should (a) be increased; (b) stay the same; or (c) be decreased or partially redirected for other purposes? How is this funding derived—from an Open Space tax, from your capital funds, or other?
3. Briefly describe your attitude and past involvement with the preservation of open space, wildlife habitat, natural resources, and/or places of historical significance in your Township.
4. The current overpopulation of white-tail deer poses a serious threat to the Sourland ecosystem. We are in the process of developing a site-specific deer management plan. Can you support such a plan, and, if so, what are the important issues we should consider?

The Candidates

East Amwell	Doreen Holley (R) David Wang-Iverson (D)
Hillsborough	Gregory Burchette (R) James Farley (D) Michael Goldberg (D) Judd Mandell (I) Carl Curaci (R)
Hopewell	Phillip H. Robbins (R) Harvey Lester (D)
Mongtomery	Andrea Bradley (D) Christine Madrid (R) Mark Petraske (D) Christopher Sugden (R)
West Amwell	George Fisher (R)
Mercer County	Ann Cannon (D) Pasquale Colavita Jr. (D) Samuel T. Frisby Sr. (D) David Maher (R) Richard E. Urbani (R)
Somerset County	Mark Caliguire (R) William Galtieri (D) Anthony Pranzatelli (D) Patrick Scaglione (R) Edward Zimmerman (I)
Hunterdon County	Andrea Bonette (D) Robert Dramstadt (D) Matthew Holt (R) John King (R)

The Sourland Planning Council is a non-profit organization working to protect the ecological integrity, historic resources, and special character of the Sourland Mountain region.

Sourland Planning Council

Meeting information

Sourland Planning Council trustee's meetings are held on the first Monday of even months at the train station in Hopewell Boro at 7:30 pm. You are warmly invited.

June 4 August 6 October 1 December 3

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COMMENT

Message from the President



The Sourland Planning Council is in the midst of its busiest year ever.

Early this year we renovated the AME church on Hollow Road, restoring the gleam to this lovely piece of Sourlands history.

Since then, we have been leading the effort to prevent the Gibraltar quarry from clear-cutting 20 acres of Sourland forest to accommodate a huge solar array. While we certainly support solar energy, there are alternative locations for this project that would not require destruction of dwindling forest resources. Our efforts have led Gibraltar to withdraw its application for the project, which the company is now redesigning to minimize impact on the forest. We are hopeful that the new plan will be one we can endorse with enthusiasm.

We have been awarded a grant by the Raritan Piedmont Wildlife Habitat Partnership to develop a deer management plan for the Sourlands, and have begun work on this project. The ultimate goal is to bring the size of the herd down to a sustainable level, thereby reducing its harmful effects on the forest and on human health and safety.

This summer we hosted the world premiere of Jared Flesher's new documentary "Sourlands: stories from the fight for sustainability." The sold-out event was so popular we held another showing for October 4.

Also this summer, we had yet another highly successful music festival, and we hosted the first Sourland Spectacular bike and hike rally, which attracted more than 400 participants. In the Spring, we conducted a bus tour of the Sourlands, and another tour is planned for Saturday, October 20. These events raise money and also help us get out the word about the importance of preserving the Sourlands.

And, of course, we continue to support the important work of the Sourland Alliance to implement the Sourlands Master Plan that has been endorsed by the five townships in the region.

Looking ahead, we are planning a Sourlands-wide mailing in November to let people know about our work, and to recruit new members. We will host our annual holiday party in December. And soon we will begin work on a series of videos about the importance of the Sourlands and the various threats to the region's ecosystems and water resources.

It has been a great year for the Sourland Planning Council, and it would not have been possible without the hard work of our entire Board of Trustees as well as the critical support of our members, through financial contributions and volunteer efforts. Thank you all very much for your support.

As our agenda broadens and we take on more exciting and important projects, we will rely more than ever on the support of our members. If you are interested in taking an active role in our work, please contact me via e-mail at president@sourland.org.

~ Cliff Wilson, President

THE ADVOCATE

Update on Quarry's Solar Project

by Cliff Wilson

The Gibraltar Quarry/ KDC Solar application before the Hillsborough Planning Board has been adjourned for an undetermined period. It is wonderful news indeed that the leadership of Gibraltar Rock Quarry has reconsidered the original plan to clear-cut 20 acres of sloping Sourland forest to make way for a large solar array and is looking for a better on-site location and solution.

The Sourland Planning Council actively opposed the original application as did many area citizens. While we certainly support solar energy, we contend there are alternative locations for this project that would not require destruction of ecologically valuable local forest resources.

Gibraltar has withdrawn its original application and they are working with KDC Solar and their engineering consultants to determine another suitable on-site location to minimize impact on the forest. We are hopeful that the new plan will be one we can endorse with enthusiasm.

Gibraltar does not expect to appear before the Hillsborough Planning Board again with new engineering plans before December at the earliest. We will keep our members informed of developments as we continue to track this application. 

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Photo by Tamara Garaffa



State of the Mountain

Tamara Garaffa, Executive Director

SPC Brings Geology of the Sourlands Into Hopewell Valley Schools

In 2011, Sourland Planning Council was awarded a Signature Grant from Pennington Day for a project to benefit the Hopewell Valley community. Proposed was a package of teaching tools that would help local school science students gain new insights about the Sourlands, the amazing natural resource in their own backyards. Why is the Sourland ridge there? How did it form? What makes Sourlands geology unique? Info on local geology and soils was not easy for local teachers to find. Our search for answers led to this project: “The Sourlands Teacher’s Toolkit: An Earth Science Curriculum Supplement.”

We collaborated with Science Supervisor Mary Yeomans and she set us up to work with her sixth grade science teachers—Greg Hunter, Nancy Greener, Nadia Habig, and Jen Martin-Kochis. They stressed the matching of content to the NJ curriculum standards. Two bright summer college interns, Zac Andrews and Brian Becker, helped delve into university records and local geologic and hydrologic studies to gain an understanding of the current conditions and formation of the Sourlands. (The Sourlands are within “The Newark Basin,” a geologic rift that crosses north/central NJ.)

By last fall, the project was taking shape while the Timberlane teachers taught their usual first half environmental science coursework. The concept took the shape of background materials and Sourland specific lessons that the teachers could incorporate into their teaching schedule.

By January of this year a rough draft was shared with the teachers. It included an introductory Powerpoint presentation entitled, “A Geological Tour of the Sourland Mountain.” Draft lessons were provided and the teachers made suggestions and selected those that they liked the best.

On February 24th SPC’s Andrea Bonette and I visited in the 6th grade science classes at Timberlane School to introduce the geology of the Sourlands via Powerpoint. The students were taught a lesson on rock identification using rock samples from the three formations which underlie the Sourlands—the Stockton, Locketong, and Passaic, plus the important diabase, magma intrusion which occurred later. The students had fun working in groups sleuthing out the secret identity of their rock samples, deciding among six local rock types. They based their findings upon observation and applying facts they learned from the Powerpoint presentation. The samples were: Locketong red and grey argillite, Stockton sandstone, Passaic formation shaley mudstone, diabase and hornfels. The students discovered whether each rock type was igneous, sedimentary, or metamorphic in origin. This intro was taught again by Andrea on March 1st so that the entire 6th grade received it.

Several copies of the toolkit binder, DVD, and support materials have been distributed in hardcopy format to the Timberlane teachers; also in PDF format to Principal Suozzo. Information in the toolkits includes: an introduction and guide to Toolkit use • background on the

geology of the Sourlands for teachers • the Powerpoint presentation (stills and video clips) and commentary entitled, “A Geologic Tour of the Sourlands” • commercial videos on plate tectonics and faulting/folding and a soil, sand and gravel kit • a lesson plan series covering NJ earth science curriculum standards content • directions for conducting a school yard-based soils pit demonstration • extracurricular activities for students with parents, including a self-guided loop tour of a variety of rock type outcrops, and geocaching instructions with a list of Sourland caches, a source for free GPS unit rental, and contact information on a local geocaching club • large-format geologic maps courtesy of the NJ Geologic Survey of the Pennington, Rocky Hill, and Hopewell Quadrangles, as well as the USGS Topographic Quadrangle map of Hopewell • links to on-line soils maps covering the Sourlands Regions • four sets of rocks coded by type and soil samples from the Sourlands.

It’s been quite a quest! We hope that the 6th grade science teachers at Timberlane will draw from the Toolkit materials for years to come, including Sourland real life examples to illustrate their earth science lessons. We hope to find other means of applying the prepared materials, such as presentations or even tours on Sourland geology to other audiences. We hope we locate further grant funding to allow development of the Powerpoint into a full educational film about the Sourlands characteristics. We would also like to bring the Toolkit to other grades

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REGULAR FEATURE

On the Mountain

Pat Sziber

Profiles of the Creatures & Features We Protect

~ The Copperhead Snake ~

A Rare Sourland Species

A number of snake species, large and small, are native to the Sourlands. Eastern garter snake, northern black racer, northern ringneck snake, black rat snake, and northern water snake were all documented during a biological survey conducted by Washington Crossing Audubon Society on the Sourland Mountain Preserve in the mid-1990s and are found throughout the region. The northern copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix mokasen*), the only venomous snake known to occur in the Sourlands, escaped detection during that survey. New Jersey's other venomous snake, the timber rattlesnake, only occurs in certain northern parts of the state and in the Pine Barrens.

Copperheads are rare and secretive and sightings are few and far between. While considered a resident of the northern part of New Jersey, reports pop up every now and again all along the Sourland ridge and Baldpate Mountain. Most are unconfirmed, but there are



Copperhead snake

Photo by Steve Creek

expertly documented sightings in the Sourlands. The species bears striking similarity to and is easily confused with the much more common non-venomous northern water snake. The distinguishing characteristics are best left to experts to examine: head shape, pupil shape, the scales and the anal plate. One very different feature is the copper-colored head, which gives the snake its name.

Northern copperheads are generally two to four feet in length. Their coloration renders them readily camouflaged by leaf litter. They are active mid-spring to mid-fall and their preferred habitat is exactly what we have in abundance in the Sourlands: rocky wooded uplands. All snakes are a valuable part of the ecosystems they inhabit, including your own backyard. It is illegal to kill or harm them. If you encounter any snake in the wild or on your property, it is best to just keep your distance and leave it alone.

The northern copperhead is listed by the NJ Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP) as a species of special concern. If you think you have seen this species, by all means take GSP points or mark the location on a map. Instruc-



Copperhead snake

tions for reporting your sighting to ENSP can be found at www.nj.us/dep/fgw/ensp/rprtform.htm. 

THE POET'S CORNER

Herman M. Ward

THE PULL OF FALL

The earth is magnetic in the fall.
 Fruit sags and slips to the ground,
 Bees weigh down their hives
 And trees undress with great whispers.
 A dyed ring surrounds my eye:
 Many gloved sassafras now in orange,
 Dogwood crimson,
 Apples splashed with red,
 Blueberries a dancing scarlet,
 Plums yellowing into pale lemon,
 Weeds drying up, going black and brown.
 At the end of the day
 I float toward the grass, hug it affectionately,
 And sleep.

NEWS

Bus Tour of the Eastern Sourland Mountain Region

Sat. Oct. 20th 9 am to 12 noon
(Check in starts at 8:30 am)

This popular tour is back for the first time in years, don't miss it! Travel by bus through the colorful fall slopes of the Sourland forests and fields with Andrea Bonette as guide. Be a witness to past American history and enjoy the beautiful autumn woods. A highlight will be a visit to Highfields, the fateful home of Charles and Anne Lindbergh in the 1930s. Learn about the Sourlands' unique environment and heritage—and how to keep this place special for future generations. More info at www.sourland.org.

Meet at Otto Kaufman Community Center, 356 Skillman Rd., Skillman, NJ (across from Montgomery High School). Restrooms available 8:30 a.m.-9:00 a.m.

Pre-registration is required and seating is limited for this popular tour. To register contact Sourland Planning Council Trustee Charles Clark at 908-281-0012 or email him at cclarc@comcast.net. Cost \$25. Checks to Sourland Planning Council may be sent to Charles Clark, 727 Montgomery Rd., Hillsborough, NJ 08844. Payment in advance is required to guarantee a seat.



Kenneth Young of Skillman (left) registers for a hike through the Somerset County Sourland Mountain Preserve while John Delamey of Brick (right) registers to bike on September 8, 2012.

Photo by Kristen Vaughn

Mary Jacobs Library to Host SPC's Sourlands Display

September 24 – October 18
64 Washington St., Rocky Hill

The Sourland Planning Council has created a colorful educational display about the Sourland Mountain and its fascinating ecology, geology, and history. The display will be in the lobby of the Mary Jacobs Library in Rocky Hill, New Jersey, from Monday, September 24th through Thursday, October 18th.

The Sourland Mountain is a geologically distinct area, rising a modest 568 feet above sea level at its highest point. Straddling three counties, it runs through Hillsborough, Montgomery, Hopewell, East Amwell, and West Amwell, out to the Delaware River at Bald Pate Mountain. Stubbornly rocky for the most part, within it remains the largest contiguous forested area of Central New Jersey and important stop-over points for migratory bird life as well as habitat for rare wildlife species and plant life.



Sourland Spectacular Bike & Hike

On September 8, Sourland Planning Council sponsored its Sourland Spectacular Bike and Hike and it really lived up to its name. More than 400 cyclists and hikers participated in this new fundraiser and enjoyed the mountain's beauty on a gorgeous day. All enjoyed a gourmet pizza lunch after the morning activities. Some had cycled more than 60 miles of roads and others hiked one or more of seven different themed hikes. These included an early birding hike to Roaring Rocks with Juanita Hummel, a geology hike to Devil's



Photo by Tammy Garaffa

Den with Stony Brook's naturalist, Jeff Hoagland, and a photography hike with noted nature photographer and open space advocate Clem Fiori and his wife Joanna, a Sourland Planning Council trustee.

We have photos of the event scattered throughout this issue of the *Journal*. Above we see Clem and Joanna Fiori at a popular boulder field in Somerset County's Sourland Preserve.



ARTIST INTERVIEW

Jim Jansma, Ceramic Sculptor

Caroline Katmann

The first thing one notices upon pulling up to the residence of James Jansma and his wife, Shirley Koehler, is the serenity. Located at the very end of a closed lane in Hopewell, the Jansma-Koehler home is secluded and lovely. The calm doesn't last too long, though, as Mabel, their golden retriever, is positive that visitors are there to see her and naturally greets one and all.

Natives of Iowa, Jim and Shirley came to the east coast via Jim's attendance in graduate school at the New York State College of Ceramics in Alfred, NY. Jim was the artist-in-residence/program director at Peters Valley Craft Center near the Delaware Water Gap in Layton, NJ, which brought them even closer to the Sourland Mountain region. He served on the faculty at Princeton University in Visual Arts from 1992-2003. This is when he and Shirley, an Objects Conservator wanting to live near the galleries and museums of New York City, decided to settle in the Sourlands.

Currently, he is the Art Director at the Fort Dix/McGuire Military Installation in New Jersey. Jim is a three-time Fellowship recipient from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. He also serves as Director of "East/West," an international group of ceramic artists from USA, South Korea, and Japan, who share in cultural exchange through visiting workshops and exhibitions. Jim's work is in the permanent collection

of the Anseong Museum in South Korea. Closer to home, his work can be seen at the Morpeth Gallery in Hopewell.

In his studio, not far from his home in Hopewell, Jim "exploits the earthiness, raw, ruff and rugged essence of clay" to make his art. Living in the Sourlands allows Jim to stay attuned to the environment, which in turn influences the organic sensibility of his work. Pieces often look like they could have been dug out of the ground or salvaged from an ocean floor, as if formed by unforgiving forces of nature. Here is the artist's statement about a recent series:

"Recently, I have returned to the vessel,



Jim Jansma

making organic inspired forms that embody a generous space both volumetric and asymmetrical, surfaces actualized via painterly enriched overlayers. These objects honor the

notion of containment: one's eye naturally follows around and casts down into the opened void. Essentially, it is my desire to observe and convey meaningful, sensory details from the physical realm to then renew and connect us to our world."

Two of Jansma's multi-glazed earthenware vessels appear in the accompanying photographs.

When asked about what his art may provoke or bring to those who experience it, Jim explained that some art "resonates at the moment," whether socially, politically, or in a trendy way," but he hopes that his work can be revisited after the passage of time and still communicate something new.



Round vessel with stem
10" x 12" x 9"

Photo by artist Jim Jansma

"Timeless, placeless, and self-sustaining" are the words Jim uses to describe the enduring quality of his art and its ability to remain valid and energetic no matter when or where it is viewed. 

*Note: Visitors to the Mary Jacobs Library in Rocky Hill may view two of James Jansma's earthenware vessels as well as the works of other artists who have been featured in the Sourland Planning Council's newsletter *Sourlands Journal*. These works of art are part of a larger display highlighting the Sourland Planning Council's mission and accomplishments that may be seen at the library throughout the month of October.



Photo by artist Jim Jansma



Jim Cryan of Princeton leads a group of cyclists at the Sourland Spectacular.

THE SOURLAND INTERVIEW

Paul Messineo Long-time Resident of the Sourlands Tom Seessel

Most Americans of a certain age have vivid recollections of the 1932 Lindbergh baby's kidnapping in the Sourlands. But Paul Messineo's is distinctive: when Paul was nine, his father, a Sicilian immigrant farmer on Hollow Road, was rounded up and brought to the Lindbergh estate, about 3 miles away, for questioning by the State Police because he had been identified as a "suspicious character."

This happened a few nights after the incident, when he aroused suspicion upon going outside to check on an expectant cow and was seen by a lodger in his farmhouse, a Philadelphia lawyer who had been brought in as a special investigator. Mr. Messineo was cleared and released after a few hours to return to his farm. His son, Paul, who will turn 90 this November, continued to live on the property and raise his family for another 79 years.

When Paul's father arrived in this country near the turn of the twentieth century as a child of about ten, the family settled in the Little Italy section of New York City. He worked for a firm that made pocketbooks until he developed lung disease and was advised by a physician to relocate to the country.

He moved with his family to New Jersey, first to Jamesburg for about six months and then they purchased the house and farm in Skillman, between Fairview and Hollow Roads, when Paul was six. There was no electric power or telephone service, and roads were unpaved. Water was drawn from a well by a gasoline-powered pump.

Upon moving to Skillman, the elder Messineo worked briefly at the local feed store in the building that is now Sculpture House on Camp Meeting Avenue. After turning to farming, the Messineos, whose family size grew to total two boys and two girls, raised vegetables and cows. They sold milk from a horse and buggy until the State required pasteurization, whereupon they sold the cows and bought chickens.

Paul's memories of growing up in the Sourlands in the Prohibition era include the comings and goings of customers from as far away as New York City to patronize a bootlegger near their farm.

Paul's memories of growing up in the Sourlands in the Prohibition era include the comings and goings of customers from as far away as New York City to patronize a bootlegger near their farm. T. J. Luce's *New Jersey's Sourland Mountains*, in a chapter entitled "Shady Characters," recounts an incident involving Sourland area veterinarian Amos Stults, who was summoned early in his 60-year career by a farmer whose pigs were staggering and falling down. "Doc" Stults diagnosed the cause as having drunk from a brook containing the dregs from an upstream still.

Growing up before Montgomery Township had its own schools, Paul Messineo attended Somerville High School and enlisted in the Army Air Corps in WWII. He enrolled in pre-flight and gunnery training in his 3-year hitch but did not see action overseas. After the

war he returned to the family farmstead and got a job at RCA in Plainsboro. With the encouragement of his supervisor, Paul began to take courses in chemistry at Rutgers and received a bachelor's degree in 1957, at the age of 35.

Paul met his wife-to-be, Dorothy Jane Tilton of Toms River, during a coffee break at RCA, where she was a librarian. When they were married, in 1952, the couple moved into the family farmhouse and lived there with their three children until they built their own home on a lot that had been subdivided from the original farm in 1962. For many years Paul was a volunteer member of the Harlingen First Aid Squad.

Dorothy left RCA in the early 1960s to take a job as librarian for the recently-established Montgomery Township School District, where she continued to work for 22 years. She was also a volunteer for Mary Jacobs Library in Rocky Hill, and sang in the choir of St. Charles Borromeo Church in Montgomery Township, where Paul was an usher.

Paul worked at RCA as manager of solid state processing until his retirement in 1982. In 1961, he and a colleague, Josef Gross, were awarded a patent for a cathode ray tube that improved video fidelity in color TV sets.

Dorothy died in 2010. The following year Paul moved into Acorn Glen, an assisted living residence in Princeton, his first relocation since the Messineos arrived in Skillman 83 years earlier. 

The Sourlands Comprehensive Deer Management Plan

Jared Rosenbaum

In order to protect the region's ecology, agricultural economy, and public health, the Sourland Planning Council is creating and implementing the Sourlands Comprehensive Deer Management Plan.

There is general consensus among both ecologists and the general public that the overpopulation of white-tailed deer constitutes one of the gravest threats to our local ecology. The diminishment of our wild flora is to the detriment of the entire food chain—including, ultimately, the deer themselves.

Deer overpopulation also imposes considerable crop losses on farmers, and contributes to several serious public safety hazards including deer-vehicle collisions and several tick-borne illnesses, including Lyme disease.

Deer have lost most of the predators that they evolved with—the native wolves and mountain lions, and to a lesser extent bears and bobcats—who kept deer populations in check. People have extirpated most of these predators from our region, and have inherited the responsibilities associated with being the top predator—keeping the ecosystem in balance.

This spring, the Sourland Planning Council received \$22,850 towards the creation of the Plan, from a RPWHP (Raritan Piedmont Wildlife Habitat Partnership) grant administered by Conservation Resources, Inc.

The Sourlands Comprehensive Deer Management Plan will be written with input and cooperation from many partners. These include the Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space, which will take the lead in writing the plan, using

the successful Hopewell Valley Deer Management Plan as a starting point.

Other potential partner organizations include Hunterdon County Park Commission, Somerset County Park Commission, Mercer County Park Commission, D&R Greenway Land Trust, Inc., the Sourland Alliance, and the Hopewell Township Deer Management Advisory Committee.

The goal of the Sourlands Comprehensive Deer Management Plan is to achieve quantitative reductions in the adverse impacts of deer overpopulation, including damage to wild plant communities, agricultural crops, and incidences of Lyme disease and deer-vehicle collisions.

Strategies to achieve the goals above will include improvement of hunting access, improvement of hunting efficacy, and avoidance of deer impacts.

Implementation of the plan will be driven by SPC but will be shared among stakeholders in the region including the partners listed above.

Implementation will include: landowner deer management consultations including outreach sessions and guidance materials for public and private entities implementing deer management; strategies for improving hunter access; expansion of agricultural areas utilizing depredation permits; the formation of at least one Quality Deer Management Cooperative of over 1000 acres; support for venison donation programs; and advocacy for a special deer management zone for the Sourlands.

The efficacy of the plan in reaching its quantitative goals will be assessed through accurate baseline metrics and

The State of the Mountain

Tamara Garaffa

(continued from p. 4)

in the Hopewell Valley School District and to other school districts within and surrounding the Sourlands. Anyone interested in the curriculum is encouraged to contact SPC at 908-428-4216.

We would like to thank Principal Suozzo, Science Supervisor Mary Yeomans, and the Timberlane 6th grade science teachers for their input, encouragement, and patient cooperation on the project. Talented news photographers George Mariazs and Susan Gulliford and NJN film producer Robert Szuter donated their photography and videography to the project. A special thank you to SPC Treasurer Andrea Bonette whose 30 years of teaching experience led to a fun, enjoyable introductory presentation and lessons. Thank you to our summer 2011 interns and also Sourland Alliance representative Jim Andrews for his research and assistance with duplicating materials. SPC members' support also made this project possible. I would most particularly like to thank Pennington Day for this opportunity to shed light on the unique 'bedrock' upon which the Sourlands stand—fortunately remaining the unique natural oasis that it is today in Central New Jersey. 

subsequent follow-up monitoring of ecological health utilizing Forest Health Monitoring Protocols and the Plant Stewardship Index, and tracking agricultural losses, incidences of Lyme disease, and deer-vehicle collision data across the region. 

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Sourland Mountain Water Wins Taste Test

The StonyBrook-Millstone Watershed Association conducted a water taste test at their Annual Butterfly Festival in August and the results are in! The best tasting water was from the Sourland Mountain!

Butterfly Festival attendees who participated in the taste test were presented with three water samples:

Sample A was well water from the Watershed Reserve.

Sample B was city water from Franklin Township.

Sample C was well water from the Sourland Mountain.

The tasters then voted for their favorite sample by placing a bottle cap in the voting container for that sample. The Sourland Mountain water source out-tasted the competition by 43 votes. So let's hold our water glasses up high and give a toast to the Sourlands. "Cheers!" 

Thanks to Alyse Greenberg, Program Coordinator at the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, for sending us the taste-test results.

SPC Holiday Party

December 9 ~ 2-6 pm

Antique Barn at Cashel Farm

145 Wertsville Road, Hillsborough

We cordially invite Sourland Planning Council members and their families and friends to celebrate the season and a year of great accomplishments! We hope you will join us for an afternoon of music, dining, and cheer—plus a raffle! Please visit our website for details.

The Holidays Are Coming!

Visit Our Sourlands Store

New Jersey's **\$21.00**

Sourland Mountain

by T.J. Luce

Plush Red-breasted \$8.00

grosbeak with green

Save the Sourlands sash

Squeeze it and it sings!

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To order, call or email

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