

# Introduction

The purpose of an Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) is to identify and describe the natural resources of a community. A community's natural resources—its soil, water, air, forests, fields, and waterways—are fundamental to its character. The protection and wise use of those resources are essential to the public health, safety, and welfare of current and future residents.

The ERI provides the basis for the development of methods and steps to preserve, conserve, and utilize those resources, although it does not include specific recommendations to those ends. It is, instead, a compendium of all the existing information that can be found about a township's natural resources, presented in a form that is useful to a broad audience. The inventory reflects a particular moment in time and should be updated as new data becomes available. This current ERI is an update of the *Moorestown Natural Resource Inventory*, last updated in 1989.

While present-day Moorestown Township is predominantly developed land, approximately one-third of the town remains covered in natural vegetation and farmland. These natural areas consist of wetlands, prime soils, stream corridors, floodplains, steep slopes, aquifers, and forested lands. Moorestown is bordered by the Rancocas Creek and the North Branch of the Pennsauken Creek, and numerous smaller streams run through the township. Moorestown's water, wetlands, forests, and grasslands provide significant habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals. These areas are critically important in protecting the health and vitality of the township.

Special measures to protect and enhance the historic characteristics, agricultural economy, unique forest ecosystems, and water bodies of Moorestown are essential to maintain these resources in the face of development pressures. Detailed documentation of these resources will aid Moorestown Township's citizens to balance the pressures of growth with conservation, maintaining and shaping the community's unique identity, while preserving its rich historic fabric and natural environment.

## Sources

Several documents and reports were utilized in preparing the *Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) for Moorestown Township*, including the 1989 *Moorestown Natural Resources Inventory*. These reports and references are listed at the end of this document.

The maps and data relating to natural resources are mainly derived from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP's) Geographic Information System

mapping, the Landscape Project produced by the Endangered and Nongame Species Program of the NJDEP Division of Fish and Wildlife, reports by the United States Geologic Service (USGS) and New Jersey Geologic Service, and data and maps compiled by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). The ERI has been reviewed and revised by members of the Environmental Advisory Committee and other municipal officials.

Descriptive introductions to some topics have been included in the ERI to give readers background on various complex topics. The hope is that this information will also assist the Environmental Advisory Committee and other township officials in obtaining additional data from state sources in the future and to determine the types of investigations that still need to be conducted.



Camden Avenue

*Source: Joan Ponessa*