

December 2022  
**Year-End  
Report**

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2022 FoHVOS  
Accomplishments



Presented to: Donors, Grantors, and FoHVOS Board of Trustees



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## Thank You For Supporting the FoHVOS Mission

2022 marked the 35th Anniversary of FoHVOS. With a deep commitment to land preservation, what began as a group of neighbors working to preserve a local park has grown to become one of only eleven accredited land trusts in New Jersey. As we look ahead, the FoHVOS Board is guided by our shared responsibility to leave a healthy planet for the next generation.

Although Valley residents first notice the lush beauty of our green preserved lands, many are surprised to learn that preserves are essential contributors to improved biodiversity, storm water management, and healthy ecosystems necessary to combat climate change. The FoHVOS Community Conservation program brings those same assets to school and private lands.

FoHVOS Force of Nature hikes, scientific research, and volunteer programs serve to connect people to and improve our lands. As a statewide leader in land stewardship, we train conservation professionals in the most effective practices.

The connectedness of important habitats

is jeopardized due to a dense network of roads, urbanization, and a changing climate.

FoHVOS is proud to steward thousands of acres of connected habitat that protect threatened wildlife and provide a green belt.

In Hopewell Valley and around the state, much progress has been made towards conservation success. Nearly one third of New Jersey is now preserved, which the NJ-DEP attributes to collaboration

**New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation, so we must stay vigilant to protect highly coveted lands.**

between proactive state and local governments, land trusts, and a public that has consistently voted in favor of open space funding. However, our work is far from complete.

New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation, so we must stay vigilant to protect highly coveted lands that provide clean air and water and improve wellness.

Over the years, FoHVOS has maximized every donation and grant invested in our mission by leveraging our network of school, individual, corporate, government, and other nonprofit partners. It is important to us that you understand your donation's impact, and we gladly share our recent accomplishments in this report.

*J. I. Rubenstein*  
 Board President

*Lisa Wolff*  
 Executive Director

*Michael Van Cleaf*  
 Stewardship Director

# Enhancing Our Trail Network

Completed  
over 25 Years!

Making Land Accessible for  
People & Wildlife



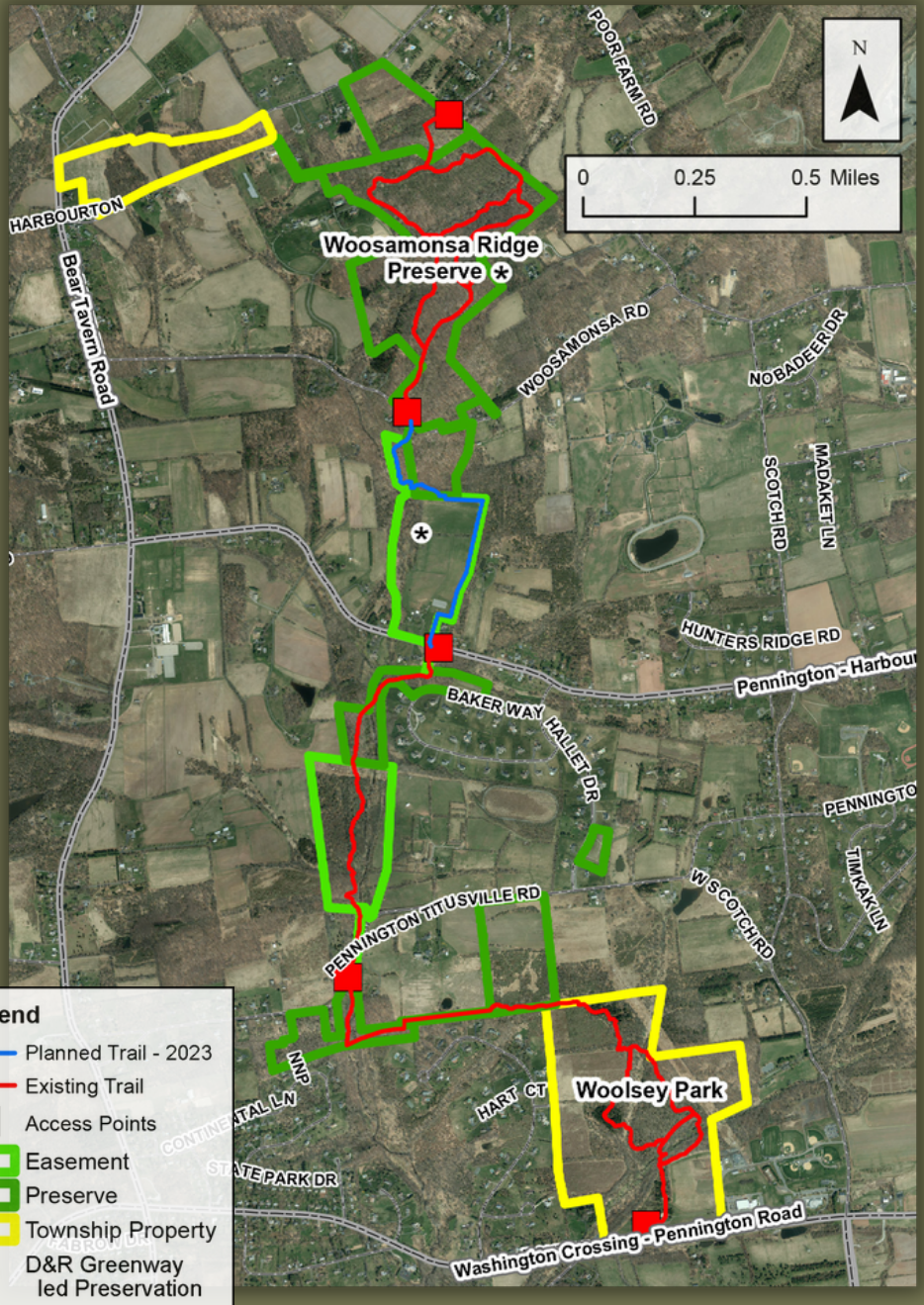
Jacobs Creek Trail Network  
7 Mile Trail/14 Miles Round Trip

In 1998, FoHVOS purchased a 143 acre easement along Pennington-Titusville Road and built a trail along the Jacobs Creek. Over the next 24 years, FoHVOS continued preserving adjacent lots and building trails, by partnering with State, County, Township, and D&R Greenway Land Trust.

In 2022, FoHVOS preserved three lots located just south of Woosamonsa Ridge that totaled 17 Acres. Known as the Walker Property, the land is the final piece necessary to connect the Woolsey Park trails to Woosamonsa Ridge and beyond.

***The trail, to be completed in 2023, will span 7 miles one way and culminates 25 years of work.***

More trail extensions are in the works. While trails help humans keep healthy and in sync with nature, connected preserves are key to wildlife survival.



NJ-DEP Fish and Wildlife recommends Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey (CHANJ) so wildlife is able to move through the landscape to find food, shelter, mates, and other resources.

photo: Mike Van Clef



Green Violet is listed as an endangered plant species with NJDEP. FoHVOS has restored local populations

# Land Stewardship

*“We go where we are needed. Our ability to help schools, homeowners, corporations & nonprofits do great land stewardship at their site differentiates FoHVOS.”*

*Mike Van Clef, Stewardship Director*

## Rare and Native Species

FoHVOS staff and Board include a surprising number of expert scientists including ecologists, botanists, herpetologists, and ornithologists. Our preserves house research from local universities and we partner with other expert scientists.

When possible, we publish results to promote increasing numbers and research that demonstrate the health of both rare wildlife and plants. Yet, in order to shield rare populations from potential human interference, publicity is not always feasible. Our modest staff count has an outsized positive impact throughout the state.

**Members Planted over 10,000**



**Native Plants**

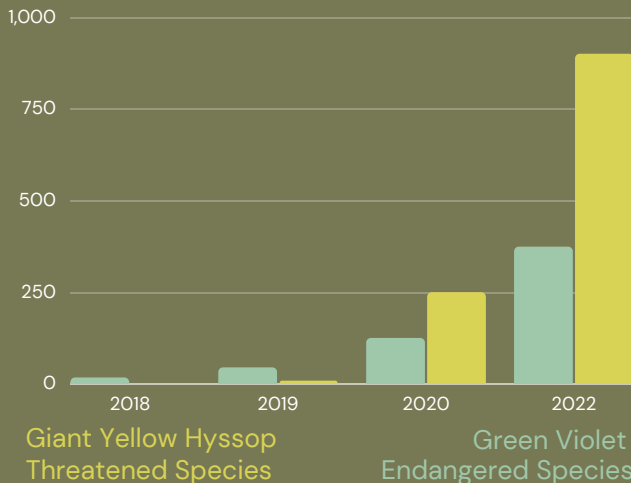
## We are Needs Focussed

As expected from any land trust, we steward the public lands that we preserve. However, FoHVOS takes it one step further. Since 2/3 of NJ land is privately held, we work beyond our own properties to achieve meaningful impact.

We prepare forestry plans and train staff and volunteers for municipalities and other non-profits who look to FoHVOS for our stewardship expertise.

In addition, FoHVOS and our partners have completed outdoor classroom work at all HVRSD schools. Plus, FoHVOS staff visit our member's property at no charge to provide guidance for enhancing the natural beauty and ecological value of your land.

## Improving Populations of Threatened & Endangered Species



# Protecting Wildlife



## Bee Abode Project

Motivated by declining pollinator populations and modeled after our successful kestrel recovery, FoHVOS Bee Abode Project began in 2020 just prior to the pandemic. We pivoted to build-at-home kits. In 2022, Hopewell Valley hosts over 100 bee abodes and our Nayfield Preserve features a bee hotel built by an Eagle Scout.



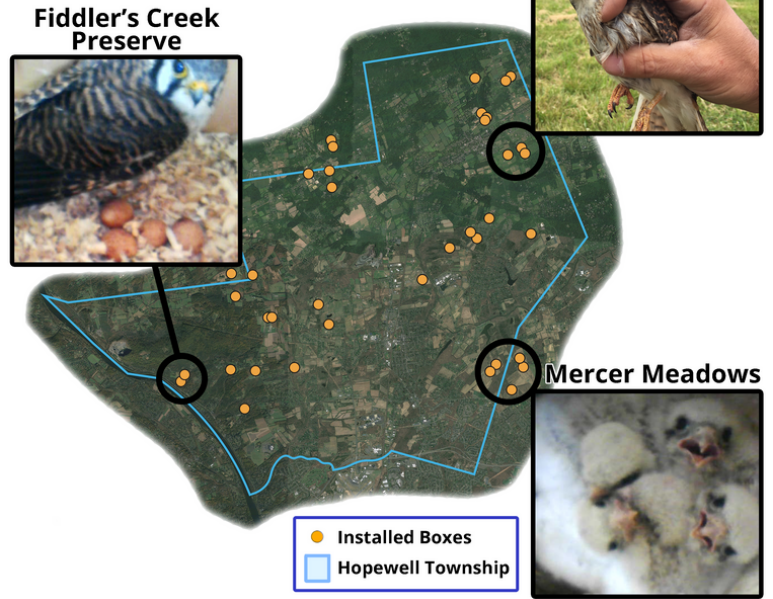
2022 Janssen Cares volunteers assemble Bee Abodes using repurposed invasive Phragmites

## Reptile Rescue

Road crossings have dramatically reduced turtle populations. Donor Mary Rabbitt funded FoHVOS Reptile Rescue pilot to survey Valley roadways for hotspots and reduce impacts through signage. With help from our partners, we hope to develop safe road crossing passageways in the future.



## American Kestrel Recovery Program

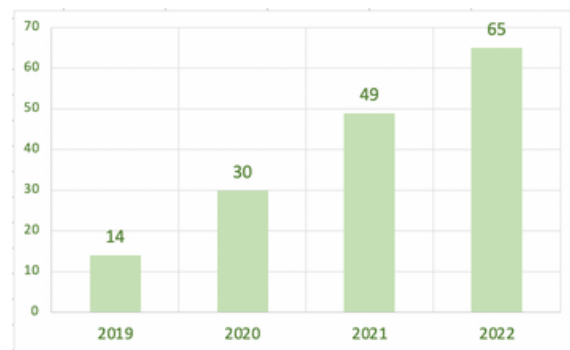


## American Kestrel

Listed as a threatened species in New Jersey since 2012, American Kestrels are challenging to help since they do not build new nests but instead rely on existing tree cavities. Human activity has destroyed many nesting areas.

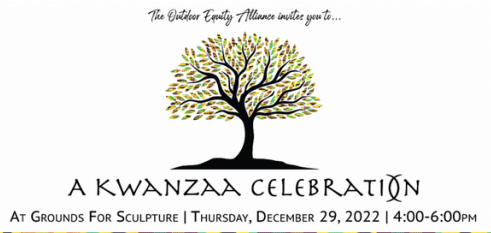
In 2019, FoHVOS Community Conservation team spearheaded a new initiative to welcome the American kestrel back to Hopewell Valley. Over 100 volunteers constructed, installed, and annually monitor 50 nesting boxes. Bill Pitts, NJDEP Endangered Nongame Species, bands kestrel chicks from occupied nest boxes.

## Amazing Increase in banded Kestrels from FoHVOS nesting boxes



Source: FoHVOS Community Conservation, fohvos.org

# Outdoor Equity Alliance



2022

The OEA made great strides in its first full year of existence

“40+ teenagers from public, charter, private, and home schools gained real world STEM skills from local experts at OEA Spring internships.  
  
That is empowering!  
Leslie Summiel, Jr. -OEA Chair”



## 2022 OEA Engagements

**MCCC Trio Upward Bound**  
Customized mini-Agrihood Program



(shown below) OEA provided a 6-week summer online & field study for high school students to learn regenerative farming techniques and work with black farmers.

**City of Trenton**  
Tree Mapping Project



As part of preparation for a federal grant application to improve green infrastructure. The City hired OEA "Careers in Conservation" trained interns for tree mapping.

**Mercer County Park Commission**  
Camp Scholarship Administration



Mercer County Park Commission engaged OEA to select families for a needs-based camp scholarship program.

## 2023 Aspirations

### Programs

- Agrihood Internship
- Careers in Conservation Internship

### Events

- Juneteenth - Black Farmers Market
- Kwanzaa

### OEA Structure

- Welcome New Advisory Committee
- Formalize Partner Structure

### Grants

- NJCF & partners - regional grant for trees throughout Trenton. OEA will provide community engagement.
- Mercer County Park Commission & partners - federal grant to transform Trenton waterfront. OEA will provide community engagement.





FoHVOS New Jersey  
Invasive Species  
Strike Team

# FoHVOS Invasive Species Strike Team

In 2022, the Strike Team and our partners eliminated over 1,800 populations of invasive species!

**The Strike Team provided Direct Outreach to over 1,000 people**

## Professional Conference

Provided conservation professional (CEU) training. Topics included aquatic invaders, climate change impacts, forest pests, and using eDNA for early detection.

## Community Conference

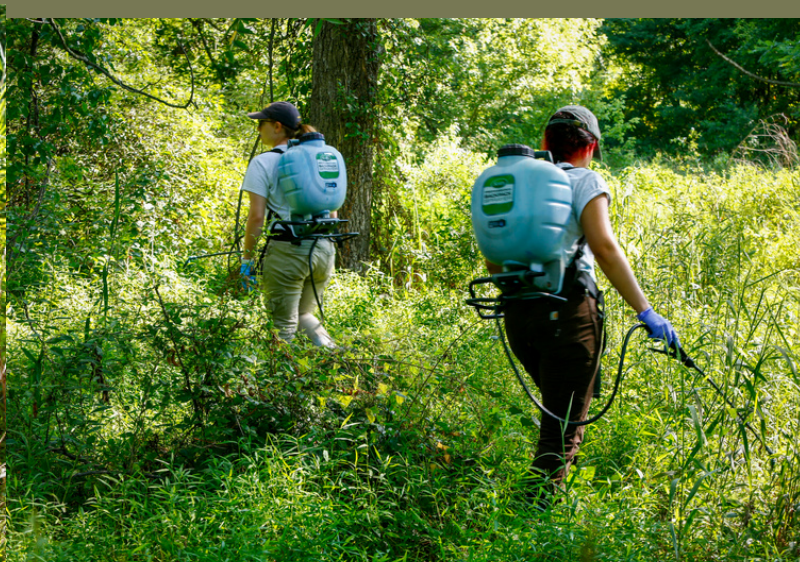
South Mountain Conservancy's Rich Rockwell reviewed their intensive control program, furthering support for Volunteer Stewardship Teams.

## Field Workshops

Led 19 seminars including Rutgers Coop, Seton Hall Ecology Class, Duke Farms, Master Gardeners, Native Plant Society, NJ Forestry Assoc, and Pinelands Comm.

**Strike Team Experts Treated for Invasives & Prepared Forestry Plans for Public and Private Properties across New Jersey**

- Chatham Community Garden
- Duke Farms
- Essex County Parks
- Lawrenceville School
- Monmouth County Parks
- Morristown National Historical Park
- Morristown Shade Tree Commission
- Pennington School
- Municipality of Princeton
- Princeton Montessori School
- Sea Girt Conservancy



# Action & Advocacy

## NJ Bag Ban

Went into Effect May 4, 2022

FoHVOS partnered with NJClean, Hopewell Township, and Pennington Market to provide reusable bags and help Hopewell Valley prepare for the bag ban.

PQM, HV Central High School Students, and the Hopewell Valley Green Team actively partnered with FoHVOS to distribute reusable bags and engaged the community through education and outreach.

*“3.4 billion plastic bags have been kept out of the waste stream since the ban went into effect.”*

*NJ Food Council*

## NJ Clean Communities

\$15/hour for trash abatement in 2022!

Since the 1990s, FoHVOS has administered New Jersey Clean Communities for Hopewell Township. Individuals and groups select a nonprofit organization to receive a donation for each hour they spend picking up trash from local streets and public spaces.

In 2022, we negotiated the first increase in over a decade, that raised the rate to \$15/hour. NJClean is funded by a legislated user-fee on companies that produce litter-generating products.

*To date, residents have removed tons of street litter & earned over \$100,000 for their charities!*



*At Left: Earth Day 2022, Sidonie, Kelsi, and Zoe of GS Troop 70916 with Jean Pinto earn their Silver Award by working with FoHVOS to arrange a planting event at Mount Rose Preserve. 80 girls obtained their **United Nations Climate Change Challenge Badge** by planting 100 trees.*



# NJ Forest Stewardship

Task Force formed April 28, 2022

The NJ Forest Stewardship Task Force was formed by Senate Environment & Energy Committee Chair Bob Smith to study and identify ways in which the State can best manage its forests in order to fight climate change, prevent forest fires, improve ecosystems, and protect soil and water quality.

*Mike Van Clef, FoHVOS/Invasive Species Strike Team serves on The NJ Forest Stewardship Task Force.*

# Action & Advocacy

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Action at a State Level

## Outside, Together!

### NJ Statewide Comprehensive Outdoors Recreation Plan

On April 22, 2022, NJ-DEP Commissioner LaTourette signed Administrative Order 2022-12 establishing the creation of an Advisory Committee that will guide the development of New Jersey's Statewide Comprehensive Five-Year Outdoor Recreation Plan. Outside, Together!

Principles include:

- Expanding high-quality open space and recreational opportunities for all New Jerseyans,
- Enhancing climate resilience and sustainability through acquisition and recreational development,
- Furthering equity, environmental justice, and empowering communities through investment in ecotourism & outdoor recreation, and
- Continuing the commitment to stewardship and the conservation and restoration of biodiversity.

*Renata Barnes, FoHVOS/Outdoor Equity Alliance, serves on the Outside Together Advisory Committee.*

AT RIGHT: May 2022: High School students throughout Mercer County explore Cadwalader Park together learning professional stewardship methods through the FoHVOS/OEA Careers in Conservation program.

***Many students completing Careers In Conservation were hired by isles Climate Corps, City of Trenton, and FoHVOS for seasonal conservation employment.***



In 2022, professional, corporate, and individual volunteers performed over 2,500 hours of work and services!

# Partners

Our #1 Partner is You!!

“

*FoHVOS is the gold standard of a community coming together to protect the natural world around them.*

*Assemblyman Anthony Verrelli*

”

## Corporate Partners

Corporate partners came out to help FoHVOS keep our lands healthy and our community engaged. Projects included:

- Garden Cleanup
- Native plantings & restorations
- Bee Abode Assembly
- Boardwalks built
- Trails cleared
- Event preparations & mailings

## Bloomberg



Bloomberg & BMS volunteers worked hundreds of hours in all weather and seasons! Some even came out on their own time and donated resources.

## Bristol Myers Squibb



## Communication Partners

Whether advocating for policy change, soliciting volunteers, or inspiring the next generation of conservationists, progress can only occur if people are aware.

*Thank you for helping spread the word!*

- Hopewell Express
- Hopewell Valley Neighbors
- Hopewell Valley City Lifestyle
- Hopewell Valley Green Team
- HVCHS Yes Club

## Volunteers

Our volunteers enhanced every mission related activity. In addition to trail, conservation and land stewardship, individuals and professionals provided:

- Teaching & Leading Training
- Tree Services
- Legal Services
- Marketing & Advocacy Content
- Photography
- Tabling Events
- Trail Building & Design

## Sponsors & Grantors

1772 Foundation \*  
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 Franklin Parker Grant  
 NJ DEP Green Acres  
 Northfield Bank  
 Princeton Area Community Foundation  
 Princeton Hydro \*#  
 PSE&G  
 Mary Rabbitt  
 Vanessa Sandom & Carl Seiden \*  
 Mimi & Chuck Turi  
 US Forest Service #  
 USDA Natural Resource Conservation  
 Washington Crossing Audubon Society  
 Weeds, Inc. #  
 Lisa Wolff & Paul Kinney \*#

\* OEA SUPPORTER

# STRIKE TEAM SUPPORTER

# Recognizing Contributors

## Board Officers

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 President  
 Judith Karp  
 Vice President  
 Ryan Kennedy  
 Vice President  
 Mimi Turi  
 Treasurer  
 Marjorie Kaplan  
 Secretary

## Board of Trustees

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 Tomia MacQueen  
 Samara McAuliffe  
 Frank Newport  
 Jeffrey Osborn  
 Daniel Pace

Partnering with you to

**PRESERVE** land,

**PROTECT** natural resources,

and

**INSPIRE** the next generation of conservation.

## Staff

Lisa Wolff  
 Executive Director  
 Renata Barnes  
 OEA Coordinator  
 Leslie Kuchinski  
 Operations Manager  
 Richele Lieboff  
 Outreach Manager  
 Lauren Matthews  
 Website Manager  
 Kyle Weekley  
 Program Manager

Michael Van Clef  
 Stewardship Director  
 Strike Team Director  
 Beth Craighead  
 Senior Land Steward  
 Catherine Atwood  
 Dana Christensen  
 Tyler Christensen  
 Cory Snyder  
 Land Stewards  
 Brian Kubin  
 Strike Team Steward

A complete list of 2022 donors will appear in our April Newsletter.

photo by Benoit Cortet



The FoHVOS Board celebrating 35 Years!

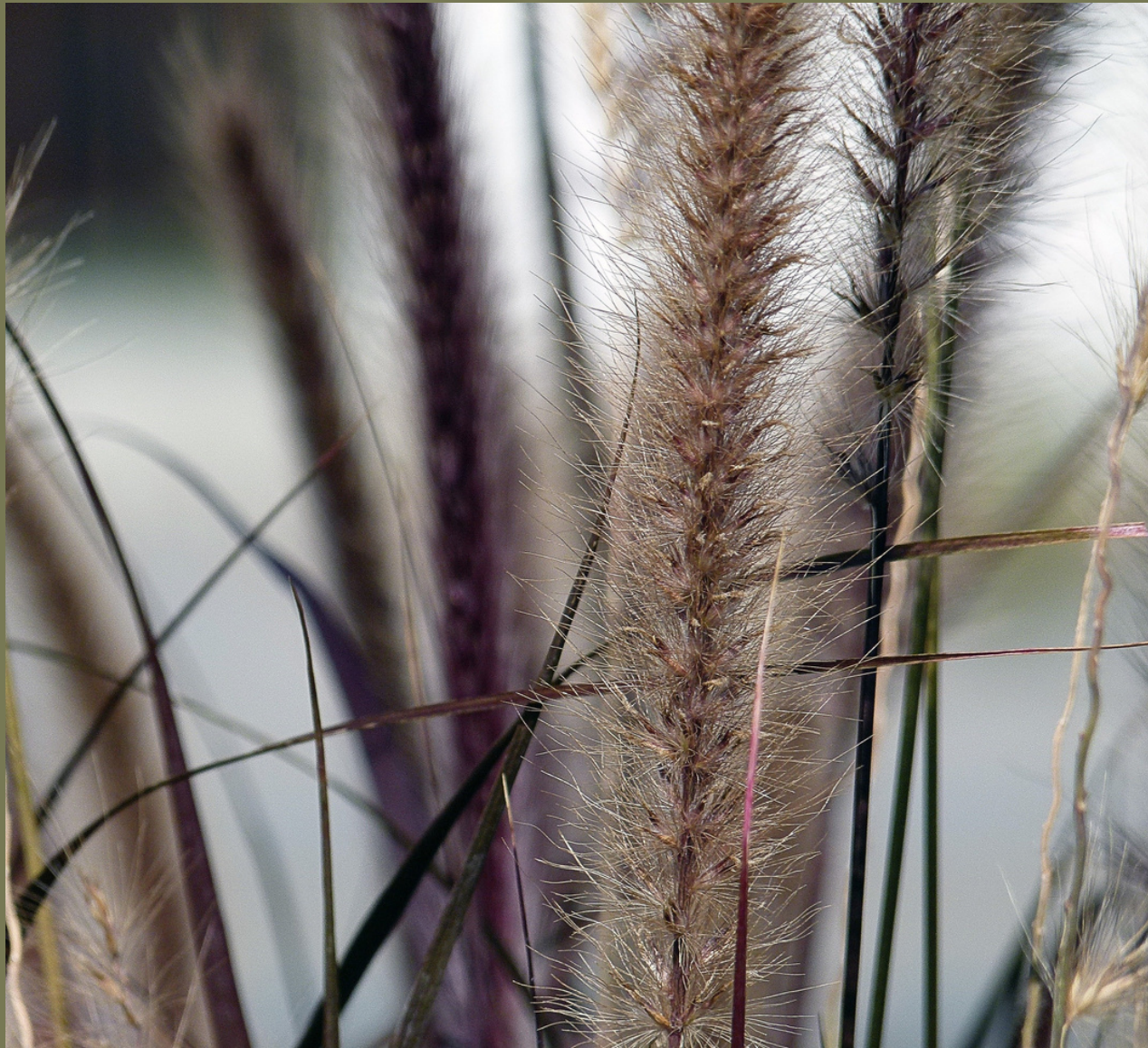
We hope you enjoyed this

# Year - End Report

Please **donate** today at [fohvos.org](http://fohvos.org)  
or scan the QR code



2022



## Contact Us

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609.730.1560  
EIN: 22-2810757

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**FoHVOS**  
FRIENDS OF HOPEWELL VALLEY OPEN SPACE

