

**Morris County Preservation Trust
Recommended Open Space Projects for 2004**



H.J. Koehler III Tract

Submitted by: Rockaway Township

Type of Acquisition: ☒ Fee Simple
☐ Conservation Easement

Acres To Be Acquired: 526

Grant Amount: \$2,000,000

Description:

Located off Meriden and Splitrock Roads, just south of Splitrock Reservoir and east of Wildcat Ridge Wildlife Management Area, this 526-acre tract has been a priority for preservation for over a decade. This property could easily bring \$10 million if purchased for residential development.

It was originally owned by Kip Koehler, whose desire was to see his family's land preserved in perpetuity, a goal being carried out by a consortium of private land trusts and public agencies. An example of the beauty and diversity of the Highlands, it has a thick forest habitat for a wide range of wildlife and plants. A recharge area, it is part of a watershed that provides drinking water to more than 3 million northern New Jersey residents.

The Trust for Public Land and Morris Land Conservancy have teamed up with Rockaway Township, Green Acres and Forest Legacy to acquire this property. There is a negotiated option agreement with the Koehler Estate and the N.J. Division of Fish and Wildlife has expressed a strong interest in seeing this property as part of the adjacent 3,100-acre Wildcat Ridge Wildlife Management Area.

