

FreshkillsPark

and The Freshkills Park Alliance



2016 Annual Report

In 2016, Freshkills Park continued to take shape with the development of larger landmark projects. Design for North Park Phase 1 was completed in March, and construction is expected to begin in mid-2017. Under the new Anchor Parks initiative, Freshkills Park was selected as one of five parks to receive \$30 million from the City to fund major improvements. This investment has allowed NYC Parks to begin the planning and design process for opening a section of South Park, connecting to the existing Owl Hollow Soccer Fields.

As park planning moves forward, cross-disciplinary programs and projects are engaging thousands of New Yorkers to think innovatively about what is possible when it comes to our relationship with nature and public space. In 2016, researchers from the College of Staten Island led the first bird banding station at the Park and banded over 20 species of

birds, including orchard orioles, hairy woodpeckers, and yellow warblers. The art program increased its public impact with expanded on-site performances and workshops as well as an exhibit at the Staten Island Ferry Terminal of contest-winning photographs, historic images, and 360-degree panorama experiences of Freshkills Park. The Mobile Education Lab, a workspace inside a reimagined trailer, hosted fall field trips for middle and high school students with tools to help students explore the Park's history, present, and future. Recreational events and tours continued to invite the public to visit normally closed sections of the future park for kayaking, hikes, birding, bicycling, and other activities. Thanks to the Freshkills Park Alliance and its work to support the creation of the Park through a broad range of programs, the landfill-to-park transformation becomes more alive and enriched with the public each year.



Freshkills Park Alliance

The Freshkills Park Alliance is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization working with the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation to transform the former Fresh Kills Landfill into a thriving 21st century park.

As Freshkills Park gradually opens in phases, the Alliance helps to sponsor opportunities for the public to connect to the landfill-to-park project through on-site research, art, education, and recreation


opportunities. The Alliance also supports lectures, installations, and programs that invite people to connect to Freshkills Park in public spaces throughout the Greater New York City area.

These programs and projects educate people of all ages by demonstrating the potential in ecological restoration, design, and our communities. This helps to sustain public investment in the potential of New York City's urban landscapes and their impact on the lives of its citizens. The



Alliance works to establish Freshkills Park as a leader in land reclamation techniques. With cross-disciplinary investigation and interpretation in the arts and sciences, the park-in-process serves as a living laboratory to test strategies that other redevelopment projects around the globe can use.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NYC Audubon leads a birding tour during a Discovery Day event (photo: Malcolm Pinckney, NYC Parks); Photographers document the unique landscape during a Capturing Change photography tour; Visitors arrive at a Discovery Day event (photo: Michael Leto).



Capturing Change

Capturing Change is a series of photography tours at Freshkills Park. By inviting small groups of photographers to document the engineered landscape's evolution — from landfill to park and across all the seasons in between — the series serves to generate a community- and artist-driven archive of our shared landscape and the restoration of natural systems in an ever shifting urban context. Photo essays are published on Urban Omnibus, the online publication of the Architectural League of New York.

Thank you to our partners

Government Partners and Contributing Agencies

The New York State Department of State, Office of Coastal, Local Government & Community Sustainability has provided funding to support the Freshkills Park project under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.

NYC Department of Sanitation
NYC Department of City Planning
NYC Department of Transportation
NYC Department of Environmental Protection
NYC Department of Health
NYC Department of Design and Construction
NYC Department of Cultural Affairs
Mayor's Office of Sustainability
NYC Economic Development Corporation
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
NYS Department of State, Division of Coastal Resources
NYS Department of Transportation
NYS Department of Health

Related City Initiatives

Anchor Parks
OneNYC
Materials for the Arts
MillionTreesNYC
NYC Service
PlaNYC 2030
ReCAP
Waterfront Vision 2020

Project Consultants

AKRF
Arup
DACK
EmphasIs
Geosyntec
Green Shield Ecology (GSE)
HAKS
Integral
James Corner Field Operations
Langan
Kiss + Cathart
Naik
Philip Habib and Associates

Project Projects
Rogers Surveying
Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects and Planners
Urban Arborists
Wesler Cohen

Community Partners

City Parks Foundation
Hilton Garden Inn
New York Cares
Showplace Entertainment Center
Staten Island Mall

Recreation Partners

Kayak Staten Island
New York Road Runners
Transportation Alternatives
Staten Island Athletic Club
Staten Island Bicycling Association

Academic Partners

Barnard + Columbia Architecture
City College of New York
City University of New York
College of Staten Island
Cornell University: AAP
Gaynor McCown High School
Institute for Collaborative Education
Macaulay Honors College
New York Harbor School
New York University
Parsons School of Constructed Environments
SVA Interaction Design

Cultural Partners

AIANY/ Center for Architecture
Archtober
Brooklyn Brainery
Center for Book Arts
Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP)
Chasing Sanitation
Classic Harbor Line
Creative Time
CSI WSIA
DSNY Oral History Archive
Jacques Marchais Museum of Tibetan Art
Land Art Generator Initiative
Make Music New York
Municipal Arts Society

New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA)
NYC Audubon Society
NYC DOT Urban Art Program
New York Public Library
Open House New York (OHNY)
Protectors of Pine Oaks Woods
Queens Museum
Staten Island Arts
Staten Island MakerSpace
Staten Island Museum
Staten Island OutLOUD!
Urban Omnibus
Waterfront Alliance

Science + Research Partners

American Museum of Natural History
BioHabitats, Inc.
College of Staten Island
CUNY Graduate Center
Hunter College
New Jersey City University
New York University
NY/NJ Baykeeper
Rutgers University
US Forest Service
Yale University
Wagner College

Donors and Sponsors (2016)

Bloomberg Philanthropies
Brooklyn Bridge Park
Citi Bank
City Parks Foundation
College of Staten Island
Con Edison
Duggal
Furthermore / J.M. Kaplan Fund
Global Container Terminals New York
Hyde and Watson Foundation
Mid-Island Rotary
National Endowment for the Arts
National Grid
Northwell Health
Pratt Paper
Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation
Staten Island Advance
Staten Island Foundation
Tauck Foundation

Capital Projects Timeline

Beginning Construction

North Park Phase 1: This 21-acre arc will be the first section to open within the former landfill boundary. It will stretch from entrances in the Travis neighborhood at Schmul Playground and a parking area with solar-powered lighting, to the edge of Main Creek. Walking and high-speed paths will lead visitors past flowering swales and through a scenic forested plateau to an expansive picnic lawn, an overlook deck, and a bird observation tower at the water's edge.



In Planning

South Park Anchor Park Project: In August 2016, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Council Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito, and NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver announced that the City would invest \$30 million in Freshkills Park's South Park as part of the Anchor Parks Initiative. NYC Parks hosted a public visioning session, hired design team Starr-Whitehouse and began work on concept plans that were informed by community input. Plans include multi-purpose fields and trails, vehicular and pedestrian access, connections to the Owl Hollow Soccer Fields, parking, and a comfort station.





photo: Michael McWeeney

In Design

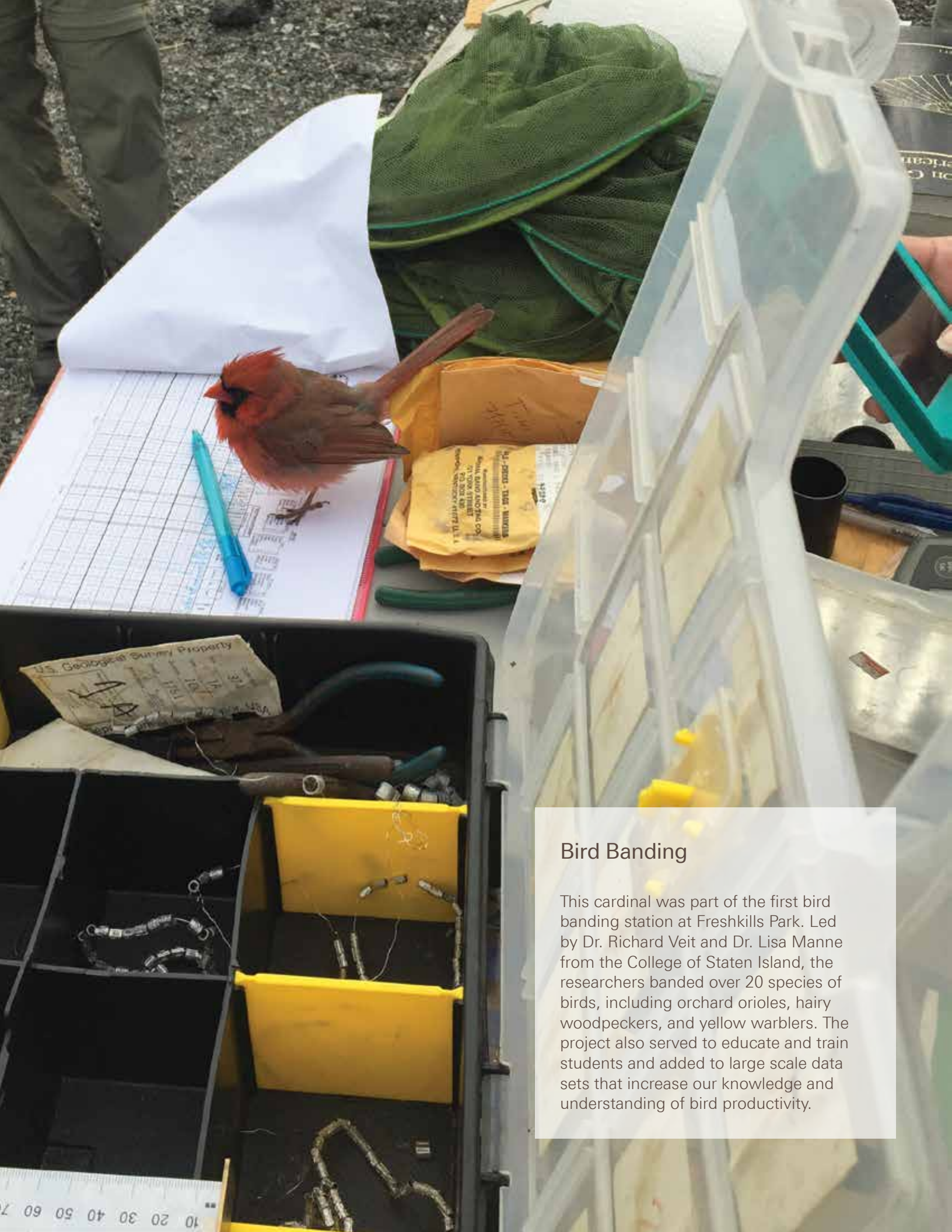
East Park Early Access: This plan will open up 482 acres of park space for recreation. East Park has beautiful expansive meadows, freshwater wetland ponds and creeks and has become a favorite stopping point for some of the area's birds, including the grasshopper sparrow. The early access plans for East Park include a pedestrian and maintenance entrance, additional access points, security fencing, a permanent kayak launch, pathway connections for six miles of walking trails, and a wetland boardwalk.



In Planning

Community Roads: A publicly accessible road system will be a major feature of Freshkills Park. Roads will provide access to the different areas of the Park and create a connection between the West Shore Expressway (Route 440) and Richmond Avenue to open the Park, provide site access, and address transportation needs of the community. The RBA Group, under contract to DDC, has completed a "pre scoping" design for the road system that anticipates DSNY infrastructure and operations issues, as well as parks vehicle, bike and pedestrian uses.





Bird Banding

This cardinal was part of the first bird banding station at Freshkills Park. Led by Dr. Richard Veit and Dr. Lisa Manne from the College of Staten Island, the researchers banded over 20 species of birds, including orchard orioles, hairy woodpeckers, and yellow warblers. The project also served to educate and train students and added to large scale data sets that increase our knowledge and understanding of bird productivity.

Scientific Research Program

Freshkills Park's Scientific Research Program seeks to promote responsible and innovative strategies for environmental sustainability and ecological restoration through collaborative investigation, demonstration, and instruction.



Researchers from the College of Staten Island continued surveying grassland bird populations at the Park. The state-threatened grasshopper sparrows were observed again this year after first being seen at the Park in 2015. With a pilot study, NYC Parks staff began investigations to characterize the particular grassland area this species prefers. This pilot work will be used to inform a larger study, with the goal of developing an adaptive management plan for the emerging grassland habitat at Freshkills Park. The plan will ensure the continuation of habitat conditions that are conducive to these grassland bird species.



2016 saw a continuation of research that began during 2015's BioBlitz monitoring fish populations in the Park's waterways. NYC Parks researchers conducted a seining program, which provided insight into the health of the fish populations as well as the food availability for wading birds like the great egrets and great blue herons.



Researchers from the College of Staten Island had another successful season of painted turtle research. In 2016, more than half of the captured turtles were recaptures, which indicates a stable population. Water samples collected in early June and late August for environmental DNA analysis of pond-life reveal that the microbial communities in the three rainwater basins are similar to natural ponds around Staten Island. These results indicate healthy ecological progress in the Park's freshwater systems.



The North Park Million Trees planting became host to a variety of research projects in 2016. The original research proposal from the US Forest Service (USFS) in 2015 saw the planting of an experimental palette of willows and poplars cultivated to perform well in the urban environment and generate shade canopies quickly to block out the growth of invasive species underneath. Those trees are now actively monitored by the USFS to measure their success relative to the standard Parks palette of trees that also exists at the site. The experimental plots are also being monitored by Rutgers University in a project examining what seeds fall to the ground, both from the planted trees and from birds visiting the trees. By looking at the seeds, the researchers are able to follow the succession of plant life facilitated by the planted palettes.



"Landscape in Motion"

On display from September through December, Freshkills Park organized an exhibit of *Staten Island Advance* contest-winning photographs, historic images, and 360-degree panorama experiences at the Staten Island Arts Culture Lounge in the St. George Ferry Terminal.

The exhibit was complemented by three public programs in the Staten Island Arts space including a Virtual Reality workshop exploring unbuilt landscapes in Staten Island, a talk by *TIME* Photography editor Paul Moakley, and a talk by NYC Sanitation Artist-in-Residence, Mierle Laderman Ukeles.

Art Program

Freshkills Park's Art program increased its public impact with an off-site exhibit and programming as well as expanded on-site performances and workshops, made possible with our partners and through a generous award from the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation Art and Social Justice Grant Program.

NYC Sanitation Artist-in-Residence Mierle Laderman Ukeles' work was the subject of a five-month solo show at the Queens Museum, "Maintenance Art," which prominently featured her longstanding relationship with Freshkills as it has developed from landfill into park, and her future permanent artwork for Freshkills Park, LANDING.

An October 9 boat tour kicked off a long term collaborative research project

with an expedition from the Hudson River through Buttermilk Channel, the Kill Van Kull, the Arthur Kill and into the Fresh Kills waterways. Organized with Dylan Gauthier, guest speakers Mary Mattingly, Nancy Nowacek and Lize Mogel considered the flows of the city through water, a changing waterfront, and artists as catalysts and contributors to the changing urban landscape. Following presentations corresponding to the landscape and a stop at Mattingly's Swale in Brooklyn Bridge Park, Gauthier moderated a discussion between the artists and their work spanning food production and waste, citizen infrastructure, and water(front) reclamation.

Artist Catalina Jordan worked with discard studies scholar Julia Corwin to

produce a waste walk that encouraged visitors to consider the long-term and future effects of their waste and landfills on the planet. Presented in late October, Catalina performed the part of a future archeologist from an imagined alternative planet, examining the human race through consumer waste.

Tattfoo Tan continued New Earth Resiliency Training Module (NERTM) with a shelter building workshop at Discovery Day in September, a mediation walk in November, a two-day Adirondack Pack Basket Making Workshop in December (with attendance at capacity), and the Park's inaugural snowshoeing tour.

Programs in 2016 opened up new partnerships and facilities for socially and environmentally engaged public art.



In May, Freshkills Park participated as a partner at the 2016 New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA) Fair, and presented a panel of artists and organizers on the topic of "New territories and frameworks for public art." Artist Bill Jenkins, introduced through a site tour organized by NADA, completed filming at Freshkills Park for his video piece, "Surfaces" for future display.



Through a juried process, designers Slanted Studios & MTN GODS were selected to develop a new public installation that will educate and excite New Yorkers about the evolving park project. Grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and from the Staten Island Foundation have made this project possible.



Along with the Queens Museum, NYC Parks and NYC Sanitation coordinated a tour led by Ukeles of Freshkills Park and the site of her future installation.



In June, Freshkills Park was one of five citywide sites for "Inside the Bird Chorus," composed by David Rothenberg and presented by Make Music New York.

FRESHKILLS PARK



The **PRINTED TURTLE** lives in the freshwater ponds, which are part of the stormwater runoff collection system.



The **OSPREY** is a large raptor that swoops into the ponds to catch fish between its talons.

The **GREAT EGRET** stands up to 7 feet (2 feet) tall and has a yellow bill and black legs and feet.



NORTH MOUND
150 ft.
223 acres



EAST MOUND
130 ft.
402 acres



SOUTH MOUND
140 ft.
425 acres



WEST MOUND
220 ft.
145 acres



Landfill Layers

The **Planting Soil Layer** is where native grasses and plants grow. These plants prevent erosion and serve as a habitat for wildlife.

The **Barrier Protection Material Layer** protects the landfill cap and adds a thick layer of clean soil that is safe for park visitor use.

The **Drainage Layer** drains water that seeps through the barrier protection layer off the mounds.

The **Impermeable Polyethylene Liner** prevents water from entering the landfill and forming leachate. The plastic liner also prevents landfill gas and its odors from escaping.

The **Gas Vent Layer** allows the landfill gas to get captured by underground wells. The gas is sent to a plant where it's made into gas that people use to heat and power their homes and businesses.

The **Soil Barrier Layer** covers the garbage and ensures the hills are stable.

The **Waste Layer** mounds are composed of 30 years worth of NYC's residential waste.



This map is part of the fold-out poster pamphlet created by design studio Partner and Partners. It illustrates the history, engineering, and ecology of the 2,200-acre park in an easily distributed format. Grants from National Grid and Furthermore, a program of the JM Kaplan Fund, made this project possible.

Education



Freshkills Park's transformation from landfill to landscape is a poignant backdrop for education. Each day, ecology, engineering, design, history and social sciences interact to solve new challenges the project presents. It remains vital to engage local students in the lessons the landscape has to offer.

In 2016, the Education program worked on two new projects aimed at helping students connect with Freshkills Park both at the Park and in the classroom. The Mobile Education Lab, a workspace inside a reimagined trailer, hosted fall field trips for middle and high school students. Inside the lab are tools to help students fully explore Freshkills Park: field guides, microscopes, water monitoring kits, and much more. The

lab can also be moved around to various places in the Park, providing easy access to equipment and offering a creative approach to place-based learning. The Mobile Lab was made possible by grants from ConEdison and Hyde and Watson.

Freshkills Park staff also teamed up with the design studio Partner & Partners to create a fold-out poster pamphlet that uses bright illustrations and typography to provide an overview of some of the many topics surrounding the landfill-to-park project. The pamphlet encourages students and educators to discuss the Park's history, ecology, and engineering in classrooms across New York City.



Students participated in water monitoring activities during field trips to the Park. The data they collect help staff keep track of how the ecological conditions at the Park are changing over time.



During field trips in the fall, students participated in place-based activities with the help of a new workshop on wheels called the Mobile Education Lab.



Recreational Events and Tours



Freshkills Park's recreational events and tours invite the public to visit normally closed sections of the future park for kayaking, hikes, birding, bicycling, and other activities. In 2016, Freshkills Park offered three Discovery Days. These free public events open 700 acres and 8 miles of trails of the Park so that New Yorkers can explore the landfill-to-park transformation firsthand.

With public events and a calendar of public programs, more than 6,000 people were able to go behind the scenes and learn about the landfill-to-park project. These opportunities provide the public with a more tangible sense of the expansiveness of Freshkills Park. Visitors are also able to observe wildlife, get a new perspective on New York City's history and future, and gain a better sense of what the Park will offer as it continues to open.



Volunteers

In 2016, more than 250 volunteers helped at events in Freshkills Park. These volunteers came from different parts of the New York City region to provide visitor services at Discovery Day events and to keep the park's spaces green and beautiful by mulching, planting, removing invasive species, and participating in shoreline cleanups.

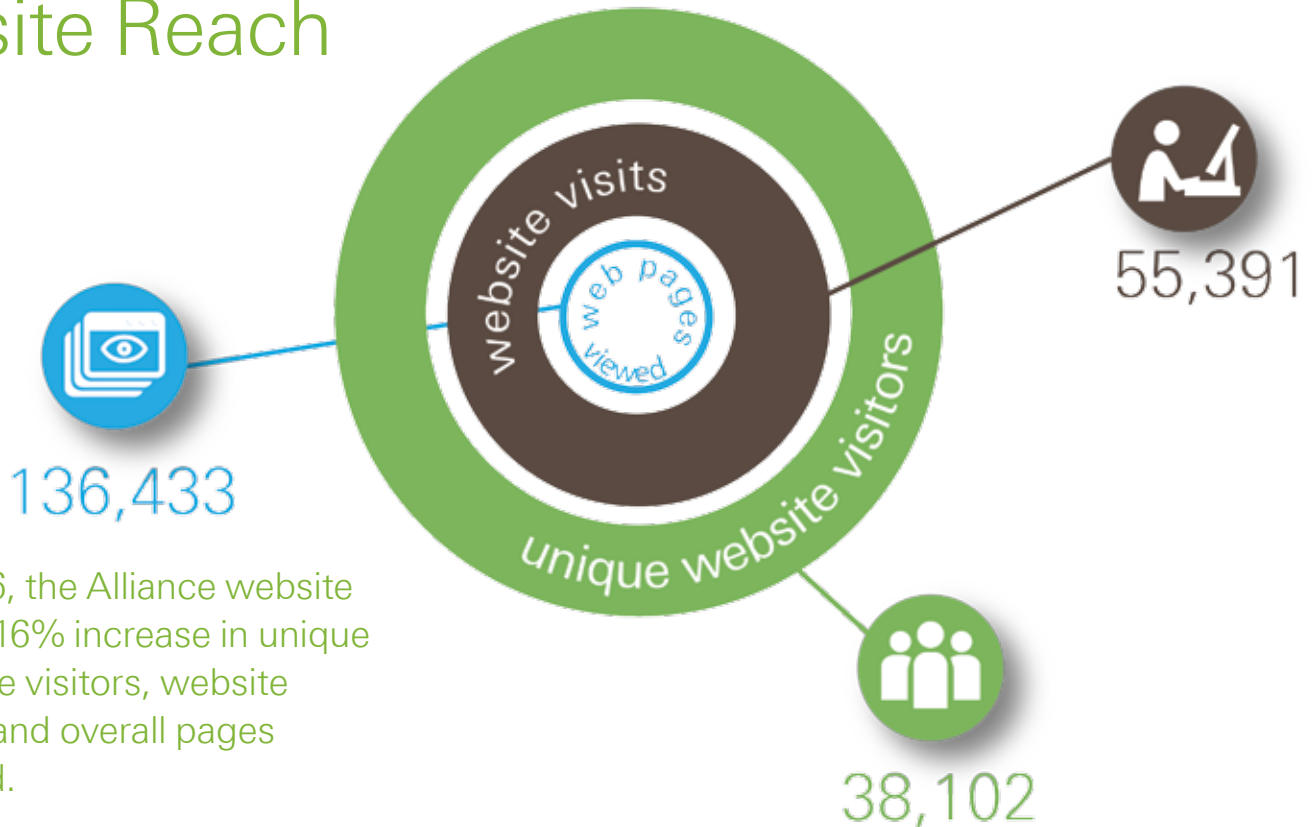
By volunteering, people are able to experience the changing landscape firsthand and to feel part of the transformation project. Without the help of volunteers, many of the events and activities that Freshkills Park hosts throughout the year would not be possible. We appreciate the time they devote to helping develop this beacon for environmental reclamation.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Kayakers embark on a tour through the park's waterways; NYC Audubon leads a birding tour during a Discovery Day event (photo: Malcolm Pinckney, NYC Parks); Students from Susan E. Wagner High School volunteer during a Discovery Day event.



FROM TOP: NYC Parks Enforcement Patrol Mounted Auxiliary Unit at a Discovery Day event (photo: Malcolm Pinckney, NYC Parks); Researchers monitor species diversity, water quality, ribbed mussel abundance, and health along the shoreline; Kayakers prepare to launch during a Discovery Day event (photo: Malcolm Pinckney, NYC Parks); Participants display their Adirondack pack baskets after a two-day workshop with Linda Sherz Allen as part of artist Tattfoo Tan's New Earth Resiliency Training Module (NERTM) series. This workshop was the first in the Freshkills Park house along Richmond Avenue at Draper Place, a space slated for future programs and exhibitions.

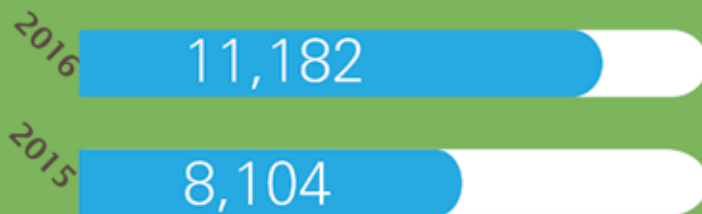
Website Reach



In 2016, the Alliance website saw a 16% increase in unique website visitors, website visits, and overall pages viewed.

Social Media Presence

In 2016, the number of social media followers and newsletter subscribers increased by 52% overall.



52%



Press Highlights



The New York Times

"Where Coyotes, Foxes and Bobolinks Find a New Home: Freshkills Park"
JUNE 2016



Staten Island Advance

"'A Fresh Look' Photo Contest: And the winners are..."
JULY 2016



Curbed NY

"How the world's largest landfill became New York's biggest new park"
SEPTEMBER 2016



Associated Press

"NYC garbage dump world's largest landfill-to-park project"
SEPTEMBER 2016



About the Alliance

Alliance Board Members

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Brendan Sexton
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Joshua Laird (ex officio)
Lynda Ricciardone (ex officio)

Established in 2010, the Freshkills Park Alliance is the not-for-profit partner with the City of New York in its work to develop Freshkills Park into an extraordinary 2,200 acre urban park that will be a model for sustainable waterfront land reclamation, a source of pride for Staten Island and New York City, and a gift of open space for generations to come.

The Alliance helps ensure the Park's evolution and continuing operation by raising necessary financial resources, promoting environmental research and restoration, engaging advocates and volunteers, and sponsoring a broad range of recreational, cultural, and educational programs for the public. Learn more at www.freshkillspark.org.

[Support the Freshkills Park Alliance with a donation today!](#)

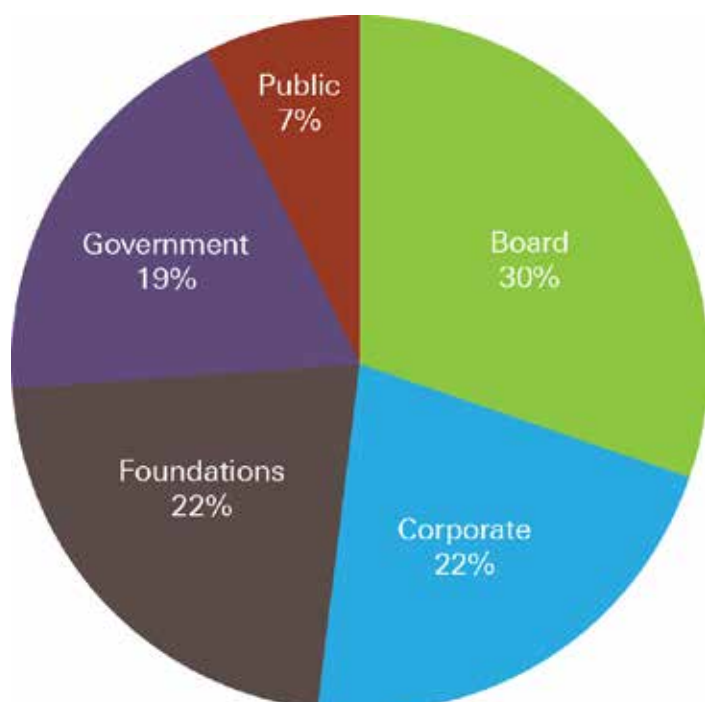
Through donations and sponsorships, the Freshkills Park Alliance funds programs and projects that educate people of all ages by demonstrating the potential in ecological restoration, design, and our communities. The support of individuals is essential in connecting the public to the Park's transformation from landfill to park through these programs and projects. Your contributions help sustain public investment in the potential of New York City's urban landscapes and their impact on the lives of its citizens.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Main Creek from North Park (photo: Michael Anton, DSNY). An osprey family enjoys lunch at the Park (photo: Malcolm Pinckney, NYC Parks). Commissioner Mitchell Silver, FAICP, and Borough Commissioner Lynda Ricciardone with NYC Parks Mounted Enforcement Patrol (photo: Malcolm Pinckney, NYC Parks).



Support



The Alliance is supported by NYC Parks staff

Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP
Borough Commissioner Lynda Ricciardone

Freshkills Park Development Team

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Park Development Manager
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Manager for Programs, Arts + Grants
Mariel Villeré



photo: Sean Sweeney

Freshkills Park is opening in phases from the outside in. During this transformation, programs and events offer opportunities to learn about the project and explore closed sections of the landfill-to-park project. For updates on park progress and programs, join the mailing list through our website:

www.freshkillspark.org

Join us!

Subscribe to our e-newsletter at www.freshkillspark.org

Follow and tag **@freshkillspark**:



Visit www.freshkillspark.org/calendar for the next opportunity to explore closed sections of the landfill-to-park project.

FreshkillsPark  
and Freshkills Park Alliance

Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP
Mayor Bill de Blasio

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