



[Daily Journal](#)

Menantico Preserve could grow by almost 90 acres with Conservation Foundation plan

Joseph P. Smith, Vineland Daily Journal
September 28, 2022 · 2 min read



VINELAND — The New Jersey Conservation Foundation is working on funding to enlarge its Menantico Preserve, a permanent wildlife area it created about four years ago.

The City Council recently endorsed the proposed acquisition of six lots, totaling about 86 acres, off Ascher and Panther roads. The lots have the same owner, a Cherry Hill family.

Foundation Director Stephanie Kreiser said her organization contacted the owner about a sale and found they were interested. A potential sale price is not being disclosed for now and will depend on results of a survey to determine exact acreage and other conditions, she said.

“We had some appraisals done,” Kreiser said. “So, now we are proceeding with trying to raise the money to try to complete the purchase. And then, we would go ahead with some of the due diligence. We have been out on the property.”

Kreiser said the wooded acreage has the same basic attractions as the existing preserve. The foundation cited the presence of a number of endangered and less-threatened animals when it purchased about 600 acres here in August 2018.

The resulting preserve is off Hance Bridge, Mays Landing, and Panther roads in eastern Vineland. It encompasses about 2.2 miles of Menantico Creek and is the foundation's only property in the city.

“We’re still creating the trail system along the Menantico Preserve,” she said.

Kreiser said the foundation, in addition to its own money, is hoping for money from the state Green Acres Program and the Cumberland County Open Space Trust. The county wanted to be sure Vineland was in favor of the idea before committing funding so the city was asked for an official endorsement, she said.

Kreiser said the Open Space Institute also has been asked for a grant and an answer is pending.

The Menantico Creek is a main tributary to the Maurice River.

Joe Smith is a N.E. Philly native transplanted to South Jersey more than 30 years ago, keeping an eye now on government in South Jersey. He is a former editor and current senior staff writer for The Daily Journal in Vineland, Courier-Post in Cherry Hill, and the Burlington County Times.