



New Jersey has preserved a 213-acre scenic property overlooking the Delaware River in West Amwell, Hunterdon County.

"With its breathtaking beauty and spectacular views of the Delaware River, this property is a real treasure," Environmental Protection Acting Commissioner Mark N. Mauriello said Wednesday at the site. "It's hard to imagine that this land was at risk of being developed for new housing."

The Department of Environmental Protection's Green Acres program purchased the Goat Hill Overlook property for \$4.5 million from Constructural Dynamics Inc. of Fairless Hills, Pa. The company acquired Goat Hill Overlook from the Boy Scouts in 1983 and originally intended to use the land for mining operations. That plan was later changed in favor of constructing of residential development.

In addition to views of the Delaware River, the property features a prominent rock, known as Washington Rock. The site also offers miles of hiking trails and contains a variety of wildlife and plant species.

The Goat Hill Overlook acquisition is part of the Green Acres' Crossroads of the American Revolution land preservation initiative, which links Revolutionary War sites across the state to help interpret New Jersey's role in the Revolution.

More Revolutionary War battles and skirmishes took place in New Jersey than in any other state. The DEP's Division of Parks and Forestry will manage the area as part of Washington Crossing State Park.

The DEP's Green Acres program purchases land to protect environmentally sensitive open space, water resources and other significant natural and historical areas. Land acquired by Green Acres becomes part of the statewide system of parks and forests, wildlife management areas and natural areas.

Green Acres also provides funding to county and municipal governments and nonprofit organizations to acquire open space and parks in their communities.

Since its inception in 1961, the Green Acres program has protected more than 640,000 acres of open space, in addition to funding the development of hundreds of parks throughout New Jersey.

New Jersey's statewide system of preserved open space and □ farmland now totals more than 1.4 million acres.

– *TOM HESTER SR., NEWJERSEYNEWSROOM.COM*