

# The Star-Ledger

## N.J. Highlands Coalition announces grant awards to 6 preservation groups

*By Ben Horowitz | The Star-Ledger  
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**BOONTON** — A Bedminster group fighting a solar power plant development, a Roxbury organization seeking a clean closing of the Fenimore Landfill and two groups aiming to preserve Native American lands in Bergen County are among organizations receiving small grants this year from the New Jersey Highlands Coalition.

The Boonton-based advocacy group, dedicated to protecting the water supply and preventing "damaging" development in the Highlands region of northern New Jersey, is awarding the grants of up to \$5,000 to six nonprofit organizations, a drop [from previous years when it gave about 10 grants](#).

Julia Somers, the coalition's executive director, acknowledged the group had "less funds available this year." But she said donations have picked up since the application deadline and she expects more to be available for the 2015 grants, following the organization's annual Highlands Festival scheduled for Sept. 20 and 21 at Waterloo Village in Byram.

Next year, she said, grant categories will be expanded to include cultural and historic groups. This year's grant recipients include:

- Stop Somerset Hills Power Plant, which is trying to prevent what it calls an "industrial scale" solar development on land designated as the "highest priority" for farmland preservation.
- Roxbury Environmental Action Coalition, to continue its efforts to ensure a "proper" closing of the landfill where harmful gas has been emitted.
- Mahwah Environmental Volunteers Organization, to support its work with members of the Ramapough Lunaape Nation to fight illegal dumping on preserved land within the Highlands region.
- Ramapough Conservancy, which will hire an administrator to work with Ramapo College to protect natural resources within Highlands lands that are the traditional home of the Native American tribe living in the mountains.

- Foodshed Alliance, a Highlands farm-to-table organization operating out of Blirstown.
- Highlands News Service of Byram, which distributes a daily package of news articles via e-mail.

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