



FINGER LAKES LAND TRUST

ANNUAL PROGRAM SUMMARY

2012 - 2013



Over 1,500 acres protected...

During its 2012-2013 fiscal year, the Finger Lakes Land Trust completed 15 land protection projects totaling 1,547 acres of the region's most significant open space. Projects were completed in seven Finger Lakes counties and collectively protected 1,400 feet of lakeshore, approximately 6.5 miles of stream bank, a square mile of productive farmland, and more than 724 acres of mature forest. The following projects were completed during this period:

Skaneateles Lake Watershed – Hinchclif property: A conservation easement will forever protect 30-acres of mature, hillside forest overlooking Skaneateles Lake. The easement also protects the banks of Randall Gulf Creek, a significant tributary to the lake (Conservation Easement Donation, Spaford, Onondaga County).

East Branch of Owego Creek – Paisley property: A conservation easement now secures 120 acres of fields and forest bordering State Route 38 and protects 3,376 feet along the banks of one of the region's premiere trout streams. Financial support for the project came from Trout Unlimited's Chesapeake Bay Coldwater Land Conservancy Fund (Conservation Easement Donation, Richford, Tioga County).



Hinchclif Property/Bill Hecht

Emerald Necklace/West Branch of Owego Creek – Larkin property: 12 acres of streamside wetlands donated to the Land Trust secures high quality habitat for birds and juvenile trout and helps maintain the rural character of State Route 79. Known by the Larkin family as *Terreno de la familia Cuervo*, the property will be given to New York State as an addition to Robinson Hollow State Forest. A grant from Trout Unlimited helped cover transaction costs associated with this project (Land Donation, Caroline, Tompkins County).

Emerald Necklace/Shindagin Hollow – Likens property: A conservation easement on 243-acres dominated by mature woodlands helps buffer the nearby Finger Lakes Trail. The parcel also borders state forest, features an agricultural field and protects the headwaters of a stream within the Susquehanna River Watershed. Grants from Tompkins County and the Town of Caroline helped cover costs associated with the project (Conservation Easement Donation, Caroline, Tompkins County).

Emerald Necklace/Danby Creek – Halton property: Danby Creek runs through this 116-acre conservation easement property that borders state forest land and features part of a county-designated Unique Natural Area. A grant from Trout Unlimited helped cover costs associated with this project (Conservation Easement Donation, Danby, Tompkins County).

Cayuga Lake Watershed – Great Gully Farm: This 650-acre farm encompasses prime agricultural land that provides outstanding vistas to travelers on the Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway, which runs through the property. The farm also includes a significant portion of Great Gully – a rugged gorge that hosts uncommon flora, and borders an existing nature preserve (Conservation Easement Donation, Ledyard & Springport, Cayuga County).



Great Gully Farm/Staf Photo

Sugar Hill State Forest – Dickerson property: The Land Trust acted on behalf of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to purchase 139 acres that borders state forest on three sides. Glen Creek, the primary tributary to Watkins Glen, runs through the property. The Norcross Wildlife Foundation provided an interest free loan to enable this acquisition (Cooperative Land Purchase, Reading, Schuyler County).

Seneca Lake Watershed – Ryan property: A rare stretch of undeveloped lakeshore is forever protected thanks to the donation of a conservation easement on this 7-acre property that includes nearly 600 feet of shoreline on Seneca Lake's western shore (Conservation Easement Donation, Starkey, Yates County).

Keuka Lake Watershed – Koop property: The donation of a conservation easement on this 73-acre parcel will ensure the land's continued availability for farming. The property also includes protected wetlands and a vernal pool (Conservation Easement Donation, Potter, Yates County).



Debbie Koop on her Yates County farm
Photo by Elizabeth Newbold



Bare Hill/Bill Banaszewski

Keuka Lake Watershed – Cutler property: This 4-acre parcel boasts 500 feet of undeveloped shoreline, including the very tip of Bluff Point – a well-known, and highly visible, scenic landmark. A conservation easement ensures that both boaters and waterfowl can continue to enjoy this lakeside respite. A grant from the Bluff Point Association helped cover costs associated with this project (Conservation Easement Donation, Jerusalem, Yates County).

Bare Hill – Targee property: Acquired on behalf of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, this 14-acre woodland property is adjacent to the entrance of Bare Hill Unique Area. An anonymous donor provided the funds needed to complete this project. (Cooperative Acquisition, Middlesex, Yates County).

Bare Hill – Reed property: Featuring 390 feet of shoreline on Canandaigua Lake and 65 acres of woodlands bordering Bare Hill Unique Area, the Reed property has long been identified as a conservation priority. The Land Trust intends to retain the lakeshore as a public conservation area and transfer the bulk of the wooded uplands to New York State. The purchase was funded through the generosity of many contributors and a low-interest loan from the Park Foundation (Cooperative Acquisition & Land Purchase, Middlesex, Yates County).

Great Hill Nature Preserve – Armstrong property: A 31-acre addition to the Land Trust's Great Hill Preserve will protect steep wooded hillsides overlooking the West River – the largest tributary to Canandaigua Lake. An anonymous donor provided the funds needed to complete this project (Land Purchase, Italy, Yates County).

Canandaigua Lake Watershed – Hamlin property: A conservation easement donated on this 9-acre property will help secure steep hillsides and maintain scenic views overlooking Canandaigua Lake. The property is located in close proximity to South Bristol’s Carolabarb Park (Conservation Easement Donation, South Bristol, Ontario County).

Canandaigua Lake Watershed – Albright property: 19-acres featuring a mix of wetlands and uplands that border existing town conservation land. The property was acquired in partnership with the Town of Canandaigua under the direction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as mitigation for wetland impacts associated with an expansion of Canandaigua’s airport (Land Purchase & Conservation Easement, Canandaigua, Ontario County).

More than 15,000 acres to steward...

With 32 nature preserves and conservation areas to maintain, more than 35 miles of hiking trails to groom, and over 100 conservation easements to monitor, the Land Trust’s stewardship team relies on two staff, several interns and hundreds of volunteers to accomplish their critical work each year. Highlights from the 2012-2013 fiscal year include:

Grassland Restoration: At the West River Valley Conservation Area in Yates County, staff worked with a contractor to clear 60 acres of wire, poison ivy, and old fence posts from an abandoned vineyard donated by Constellation Brands. Once cleared and graded, the Land Trust partnered with US Fish and Wildlife Services to plant native, warm-season grasses and wildflowers. The area now serves as prime bird habitat and offers sweeping views of the West River Valley.

Boardwalk and Preserve Expansion: A year-long process to design, engineer, and build a bridge and boardwalk over Six Mile Creek at the Roy H. Park Preserve in Tompkins County came to a successful close.

The boardwalk, compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, offers a way for community members of all ages and abilities to enjoy the outdoors. It also connects to a new hiking trail built by Land Trust staff and volunteers, in collaboration with the NYS Department of Conservation, linking the boardwalk to more than 20 miles of multi-use trails at Hammond Hill State Forest. The preserve expansion added key property to the protected lands at the Park Preserve and created a new link in the Emerald Necklace, connecting Land Trust lands with two state forests and a Cornell University Natural Area.

Lakefront Preserve Dedication: A formal dedication for the VanRiper Conservation Area on Cayuga Lake immediately followed the installation of important site improvements. Volunteers were critical to the project’s success, and their labor resulted in a foot bridge over a small tributary to the lake and construction of an informational kiosk and sign. The newly dedicated conservation area protects over 1,400 feet of pristine lakeshore in Seneca County.



Volunteers at the VanRiper Conservation Area/Betsy Darlington

Stewardship Training: Three workshops were offered in Naples, West Danby, and Dryden to more than 100 volunteer stewards over the summer. The trainings provided volunteer stewards with information on recent land developments, Land Trust priorities, and stewardship goals.

Community education and outreach...

The Land Trust educated more than 1,000 people across the Finger Lakes through a combination of guided hikes, workshops, public presentations, and trainings over the last year. A primary focus of our outreach is to increase understanding of land protection tools, with an emphasis on conservation easements. Workshops and presentations explaining conservation easements were targeted to landowners, local municipalities, and conservation groups and held, when possible, in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension, regional planning and development boards, and the New York State Forest Owners Association.

We also hosted 15 Talks & Treks, a series of field trips offered free of charge to community members and visitors across the region. Each walk is led by an expert naturalist and focuses on topics such as stream ecology, animal tracking, birding, plant and tree identification, and insect behavior.

This year we worked even harder to engage our youngest community members and instituted a “story walk” at the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve in the Town of Dryden. Made possible by a grant from the Friends of the Library in Tompkins County, the story walk brings nature and reading together. Children and their caregivers are free to visit the preserve and take a self-guided hike, stopping along the path to read the laminated pages of Chris Van Allsburg’s *Just a Dream*. At the story walk kickoff event, each family received a free copy of the featured book.

With so many conservation projects, exciting events and news to share, the Land Trust created *The Living Land*, our monthly e-news publication. Filled with timely information and beautiful images, *The Living Land* will work with the newsletter and social media outlets to boost our presence and advance our mission across the 12-county Finger Lakes Region.



Story walk at the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve/Rick Lightbody

**FINGER LAKES LAND TRUST
2012-2013 OPERATING
FINANCIAL SUMMARY***

Revenue

Annual Appeal	269,104
Membership Contributions	97,811
Project Contributions	133,247
Grants	57,340
Workplace Giving	5,007
Interest and Dividends	6,589
Earnings from Stewardship Funds	46,289
Transfers from Land Projects	44,614
Campaign Allocations	154,000
In-Kind Donations	4,757
Other	1,377

Total Revenue **\$820,135**

Expenses

Personnel	493,521
Fringe	108,718
Contract Services	65,114
Occupancy	31,789
Supplies and Equipment	9,728
Printing and Postage	39,365
Travel	28,775
Meetings/Receptions	17,403
Stewardship	8,706
Other	3,488
In-kind Expenses	4,757
Transactions Costs	8,473

Total Expenses **\$819,837**

Net Ordinary Income **\$296**

*Unaudited. Income does not include \$1,190,647 additional funds raised for land protection projects, stewardship funds, and campaigns.



The new boardwalk at the Roy H. Park Preserve/Tom Reimers



Hamlin property/Nigel Kent

The Finger Lakes Land Trust was founded in 1989 to work with landowners and local communities to conserve those lands that define the character of the Finger Lakes region.

Officers:

Stu Schweizer, *President* • Howard Hartnett, *Vice President (deceased)* • Steve Green, *Secretary* • Burch Craig, *Treasurer*

Board Members:

John R. Alexander • William D. Birchenough, Jr. • Robert Brancato • Holland C. Gregg, III • Marti Macinski • Edward F. Premo, II • Carrie J. Pollak • Chris Proulx • Donald Specker • Doug Sutherland • Jan Suwinski • Bob Werner • Marianne Young • Mary Jo Yunis

Advisory Council:

James Byrnes • John Fitzpatrick • James Fralick • Barbara Hamlin • Albert Joerger • Lynn Leopold • Robert Mrazek • Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr. • Richard Raines • Mark Stash • Liz Thorndike • James Walsh • David Zorn



Cover photo by Rick Lightbody

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