

the Emerald Necklace

Extending in an arc around Ithaca, more than 50,000 acres of conserved land stretches from the Finger Lakes National Forest in the west to Hammond Hill and Yellow Barn State Forests in the east. From above, these public lands look like emeralds dotting the landscape. They provide clear water to both Cayuga Lake and the Susquehanna River basin and important habitat for an extraordinary variety of wildlife, including wide-roaming species like black bear, migratory songbirds like scarlet tanagers, and watchable wildlife, like playful river otters. These lands also boast abundant recreational opportunities for Finger Lakes residents and visitors alike. Hunters and fishermen have long been familiar with the majestic green hillsides and the clean, clear creeks. For hikers, 80 miles of the Finger Lakes Trail link this "gorges" terrain and many of the state forests have miles of marked, multi-use trails. Bird watching, fishing, biking, trail running, and cross-country skiing opportunities abound.

The Finger Lakes Land Trust and a variety of public and private sector partners have launched an ambitious effort to conserve an uninterrupted green corridor that will extend across the hills and valleys of the necklace, while also providing for appropriate public access to these lands.

Photo: Donald Spedler



Stevenson Forest Preserve.

Already, fifty thousand acres of public land are protected from future development within the Emerald Necklace. The largest emeralds are the Finger Lakes National Forest and the state-owned forests of Texas Hollow, Connecticut Hill,

The Land Trust has already completed a preliminary assessment of conservation opportunities and secured thousands of acres of open space lands within the Emerald Necklace. The first link in the necklace was established when the organization acquired a key parcel that connects Hammond Hill with Yellow Barn State Forest. Ecological significance, connectivity of the necklace, and scenic beauty are three of the main factors weighed when determining which tracts of land to protect.

New York State's Open Space Plan recognizes the Emerald Necklace as a conservation priority, noting the increasing pressure of development on forest habitat and recreational opportunities in this area. The plan boldly envisions the necklace as "a world-class ecological, recreational and educational resource."

A VISION FOR CONSERVING THE NECKLACE

Photo: Tom Reiners



Boardwalk at the Roy H. Park Preserve

Danby, Shindagin Hollow, Hammond Hill and Yellow Barn. Smaller, but no less significant, gems include Robert H. Treman and Buttermill Falls State Parks, several Tompkins County Reorestation Lands and six Finger Lakes Land Trust nature preserves. In all, the necklace spans portions of four counties: Schuyler, Seneca, Tompkins and Tioga.

PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION

Although the Land Trust and partners plan to pursue strategic property acquisitions within the Emerald Necklace, the scope of the project requires a greater role for private land conservation. Using conservation easements, which are voluntary legal agreements that limit future development, the Land Trust can ensure the future of significant open space lands while keeping these areas in private ownership and on the tax rolls.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

JOIN! Contribute to local conservation by becoming a member of the Finger Lakes Land Trust today. We rely on your support to achieve our conservation goals within the Emerald Necklace and around the Finger Lakes.

VOLUNTEER! The Land Trust relies on the support of more than 200 committed volunteers to steward our properties and accomplish our work.

ACT! Take an active role in local land use issues. Attend public meetings and voice your support for trails and open space protection in your community.

GET OUTSIDE!

Enjoy the resources of the Emerald Necklace by taking a hike at a Land Trust nature preserve or on the Finger Lakes Trail. Take a friend for a walk and show them the beauty and diversity of our region.

Find out more at www.flit.org



Photo: Chris Olney

Planting trees at the Roy H. Park Preserve.



Photo: Rick Lightbody

ABOUT THE FINGER LAKES LAND TRUST

The Land Trust is a membership-supported, not-for-profit, conservation organization that works cooperatively with landowners and local communities to conserve landscapes that make the Finger Lakes distinctive. Since it was established in 1989, the organization has protected more than 15,000 acres of the region's most cherished farms, gorges, shoreline, forests and wetlands by establishing nature preserves, holding conservation easements that protect private land from future development, and providing technical assistance and educational programs to landowners and community members.

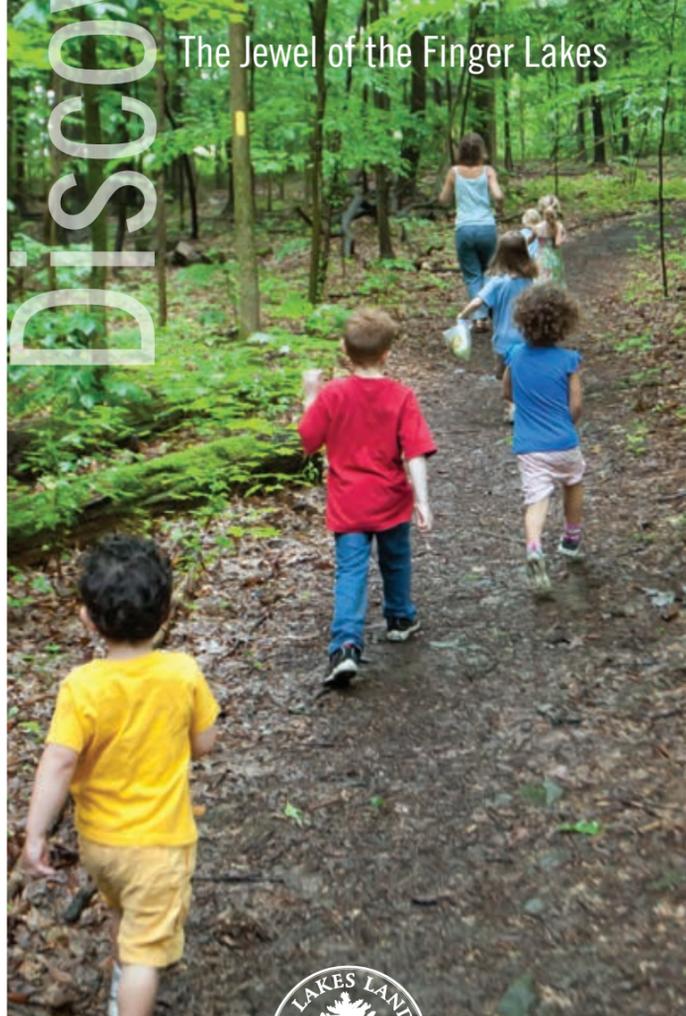


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Discover The Emerald Necklace

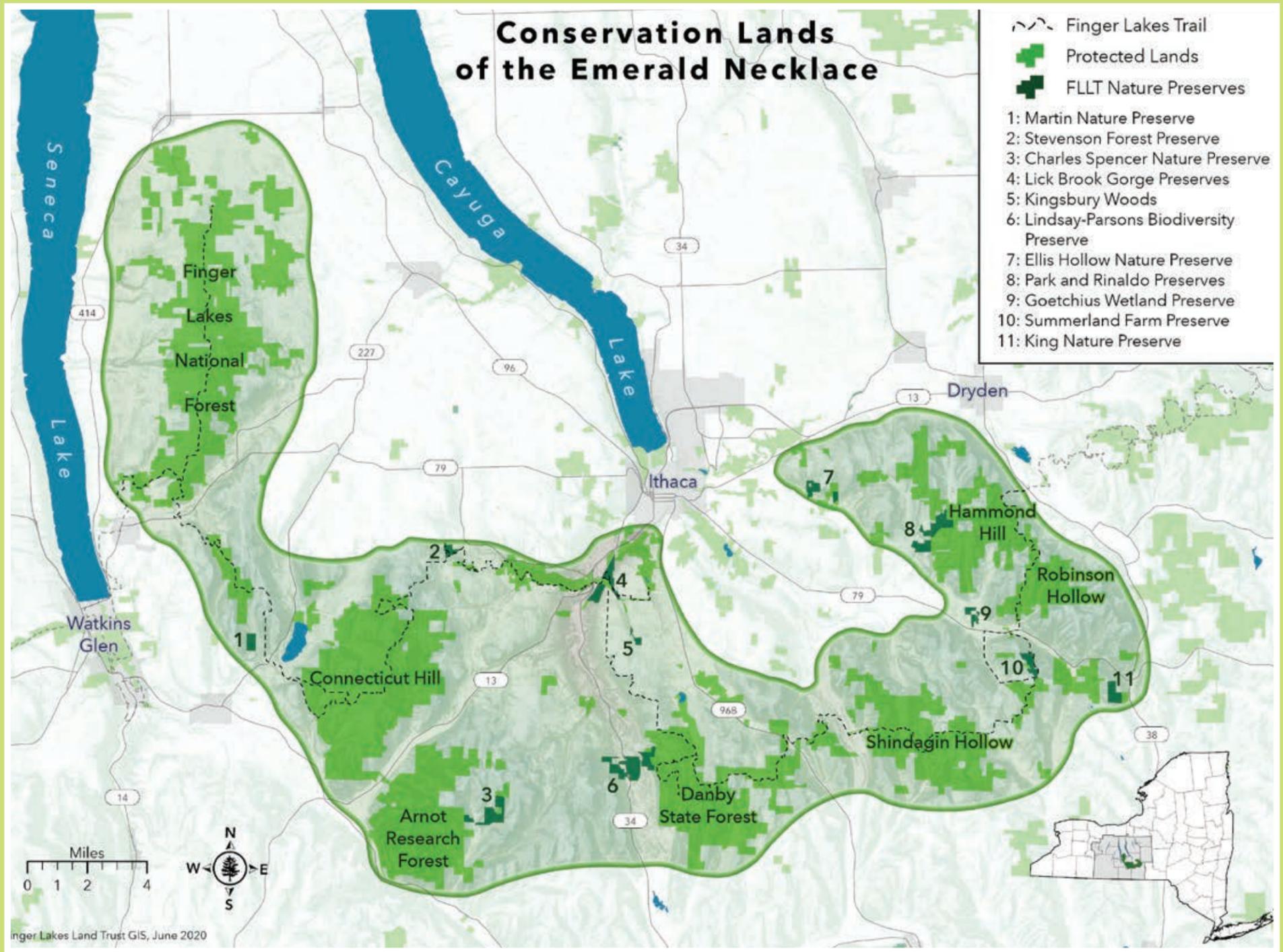
The Jewel of the Finger Lakes



Cover: Nature walk at the Roy H. Park Preserve in Dryden; Photo credit: Rick Lightbody



Finger Lakes Land Trust



Exploring the Necklace



The Land Trust continues to make contributions to the necklace and its natural areas by creating conservation areas that are open to the public, such as the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve, Roy H. Park Preserve, Sweedler Preserve at Lick Brook, and Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve. Each of these natural areas provide the community with an opportunity to explore the beauty of the necklace.

Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve

Established in partnership with Cornell University as the world's first temperate zone preserve for bioprospecting, this site features more than 500 acres of diverse habitats and several miles of hiking trails.

Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve



Photo: Marie Read

Roy H. Park Preserve

Located on the banks of Six Mile Creek (Ithaca's drinking water supply), this sanctuary features a handicapped accessible boardwalk and trails that connect to the adjacent Hammond Hill State Forest.



Photo: Marie Read

Six Mile Creek at Roy H. Park Preserve

Sweedler Preserve at Lick Brook

Lick Brook's waterfalls and rugged gorge are easily viewed from a popular stretch of the Finger Lakes Trail that passes through the Land Trust's popular preserve located just outside of Ithaca.



Photo: Dick Ruswick

Lower Falls, Sweedler Preserve at Lick Brook

Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve

Located just east of Ithaca, this easily accessible nature preserve features mature forest and is a great place for kids to explore.



Photo: Rick Lightbody

StoryWalk at Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve

For maps and directions to these sites, visit the Finger Lakes Land Trust online: www.fllt.org