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Donation of a Conservation Easement

Donation of Land

Donation of Other Real Estate

Bequest and Living Trust

Donation of a Retained Life Estate

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Protect Your Land

Each decision to protect a property is a personal one. It involves the landowner's financial and tax circumstances, the land resource itself, and the owner's vision for the future of the land. Since every situation is different, the Finger Lakes Land Trust offers several ways of conserving the lands that make up the unique Finger Lakes Region.

For landowners who share the goals of the Land Trust, the options described here are a way to achieve a personal dream— that of forever protecting a special part of the landscape. Some of these conservation techniques involve project costs and long-term stewardship expenses. How these costs are covered varies based on individual project circumstances.



The Land Steward

NEWSLETTER OF THE FINGER LAKES LAND TRUST

working to protect the natural integrity of the Finger Lakes Region

Vol. 23, No. 3 • Summer 2011

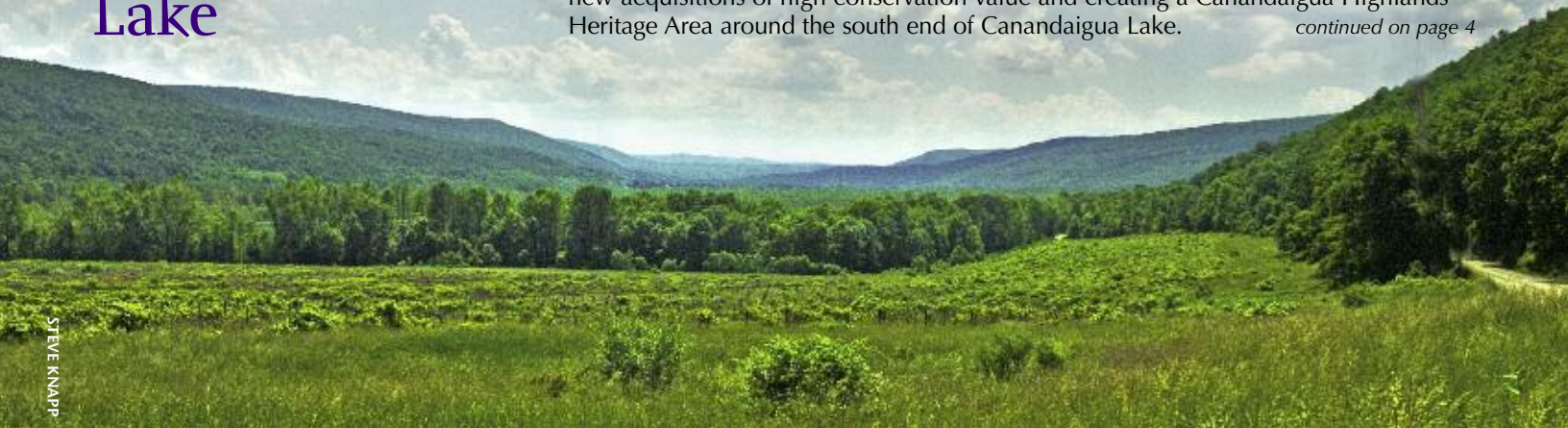
Land Trust Accepts Gift of Scenic Acreage Near Canandaigua Lake

Thanks to the generosity of Victor-based Constellation Brands, the Land Trust recently accepted a donation of 64 scenic acres adjacent to High Tor Wildlife Management Area in the town of Italy, Yates County. Previously managed as a vineyard by Widmer Wine Cellars, a Constellation Brands subsidiary, the property is located on Sunnyside Road with deeded access to the nearby West River.

"Constellation Brands is very pleased to donate this beautiful parcel of land to the FLLT," said Rob Sands, company president and chief executive officer. "This land will provide nature admirers with additional areas to enjoy the natural majesty of the Finger Lakes."

Aside from the beauty of the land itself, the property fits nicely into the Land Trust's twin long-range goals of connecting already protected lands in the area with new acquisitions of high conservation value and creating a Canandaigua Highlands Heritage Area around the south end of Canandaigua Lake.

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STEVE KNAPP



BETSY LANDRE

Sisters Margaret White (left) and Helen Launt

Sisters Donate Easement on 7th Generation Farm in Ontario County

When a farm has been in the same family for more than 200 years, it takes on a special meaning so personal that it is almost impossible to describe. This was the case for sisters Helen Launt and Margaret White, seventh generation owners of a beautiful 180-acre farm in Richmond, Ontario County. They recently donated a conservation easement on their shared property to the Land Trust.

The sisters' sense of responsibility to the land was so profound that they were compelled to take action to protect the property itself and, in a broader sense, their family legacy. Helen explained her feelings about her property this way: "When I walk on the farm, just knowing about the generations before me that have walked and worked this land ... it's sacred land to me."

The farm was part of a 400-acre parcel transferred in 1798 from the vast Phelps and Gorham Purchase land holdings in Western New York to William Baker, the sisters' great, great, great grandfather. William Baker worked the land, as has every generation since. Occasionally, the land was sub-divided to accommodate a growing number of heirs.

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PLEASE
JOIN US FOR
THE...

Land Trust's 22nd Annual Meeting & Celebration
Sunday, July 24th at the Skaneateles Country Club,
overlooking beautiful Skaneateles Lake. (SEE INSERT FOR DETAILS.)



The new tract lies between extensive wetlands along the West River and forested hillsides that rise steeply from the Naples Valley. The land is located within the heart of the High Tor Wildlife Management Area, a sprawling 6,000 acre expanse of state-owned wild lands. Directly across Sunnyside Road lies the entrance to Clark Gully, a popular hiking spot and a place of special historical significance to the Seneca Nation of the Iroquois. High Tor has been designated an "Important Bird Area" by the National Audubon Society and is also included as a priority project for conservation in the New York State Open Space Plan.

The property is also located in close proximity to the Land Trust's 226-acre Great Hill Preserve overlooking Canandaigua Lake and adjoins the Perlman Tract, a parcel acquired by the Land Trust in 2007 which features 1,700 feet of frontage on the West River.

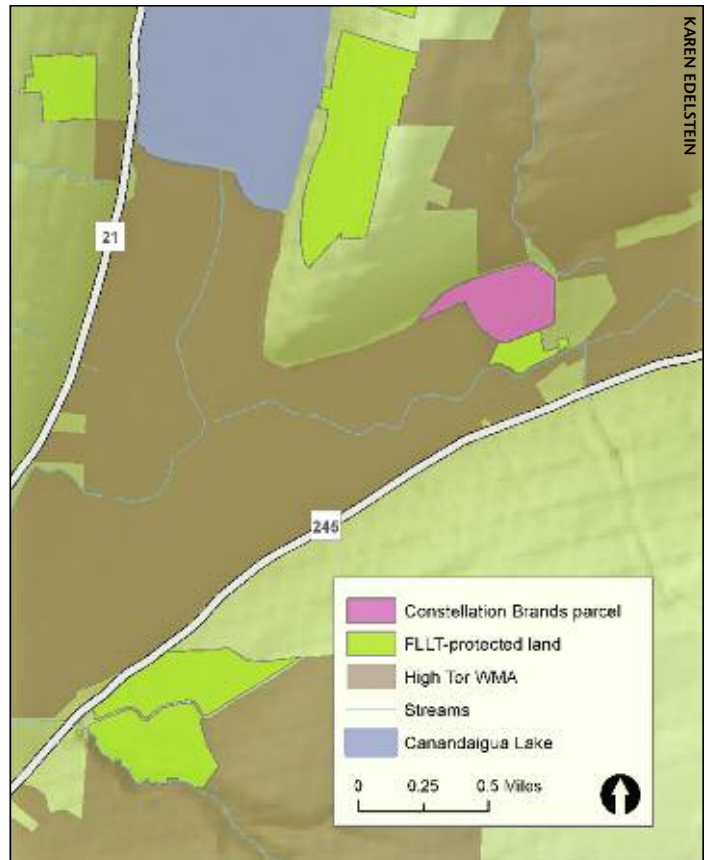
"This is a wonderful gift to the community as conservation of this land will help ensure Canandaigua Lake's water quality while providing high quality bird habitat and enhanced recreational opportunities," said Land Trust Executive Director Andrew Zepp.

Inclusion of the Constellation Brands Tract within this assemblage of protected open space has several public benefits. The property commands a sweeping view of the broad, U-shaped Naples valley left behind by glaciers retreating during the last Ice Age, as well as seasonal views of the West River. With extensive road frontage on Sunnyside Road, the property is easily accessible to the public. These scenic views are enjoyed by even the most casual passerby.

Its location between High Tor's forested hillsides and the West River, with its associated wetlands far below, provides a natural corridor for the movement of wildlife. Now, with the addition of public access, it expands opportunities for recreational users, too.

This tract is also central within the Canandaigua Highlands Heritage Area, a 45-square mile focus area identified in the Land Trust's 2010 report "A Vision for the Canandaigua Lake Watershed." Local communities and stakeholders, such as the Finger Lakes Visitors Connection and Canandaigua Lake Watershed Alliance, have enthusiastically received the notion of the Heritage Area.

Among other things, the Land Trust's report identifies three important goals within the area around the south end of the lake: promoting compatible economic development in the village of Naples and hamlet of Middlesex; enhancing recreational opportunities and public interpretation of the rich natural, cultural and historic resources of this scenic area; conserving natural resources through a variety of tools including strong land use planning, select acquisitions of open space



parcels by conservation organizations and public agencies, and the use of conservation easements on other tracts.

The Land Trust intends to engage the local community through a management planning process that will identify appropriate uses for the site. Some ideas have already been suggested, such as the restoration of native grassland bird habitat, and the installation of interpretive signs for visitors.

To restore wildlife habitats and prepare the site for public access, the Land Trust will first have to remove grape trellises and grape vines that were abandoned 15 years ago. The Land Trust has begun investigating options for site restoration and will be seeking funds, perhaps in combination with in-kind services, to accomplish this task.

—Betsy Landre

The Land Trust gratefully acknowledges Attorney Scott A. Forsyth of the law firm Forsyth & Forsyth in Rochester, NY for providing pro bono legal services in support of this project.

Conservation Easement Buffers State Forest

Thanks to the generosity of Frank and Jean Schonfeld, Birdseye Hollow State Forest will now benefit from a conservation easement that ensures 23 acres of adjacent woodlands and field will continue to serve as both wildlife habitat and buffer to these public lands.

Birdseye Hollow hosts a popular segment of the Finger Lakes Trail and also encompasses several ponds and a portion of Mud Creek.

The Schonfelds donated their property to the Land Trust with the understanding that it would be sold subject to a

conservation easement. Located in Bradford, Steuben County, the property includes frontage on both sides of Myers Road. The land was recently sold to a family that intends to use the property as a rural retreat, just as the Schonfelds had for many years.



Sisters Donate Easement on 7th Generation Farm *continued from cover*

Today, the sisters lease most of their land to a neighboring farmer who cultivates hay and a variety of crops. A majestic 70-acre woodlot cloaks a hillside and includes a large, forested wetland. A stream flows out of the forest and traverses the fields. Tucked away in the rolling hills northeast of Honeoye Lake, it is a verdant and peaceful place.

The White/Launt property is contiguous to a 200-acre farm on neighboring Green Road, placed under a conservation easement in 2005 by Donald Green, a distant relative. The Land Trust holds this donated easement as well.

Land Trust Executive Director Andrew Zepp said, "Not only is the farm exceptionally scenic with many natural resource values in its own right, but this project adds to a block of conserved land. The community now has 380 acres of productive farmland, forests and wetlands protected forever by conservation easements ensuring that future generations can work the farm and enjoy the land."

Under the terms of the conservation easement, the farm will stay intact, as sub-division is prohibited. No residence exists on the property at this time. Under the agreement, a single family home may be constructed in a designated area. The easement also allows for the construction of agricultural buildings. This provision will give future owners of the property flexibility to adapt to new farming practices. The owners can harvest trees subject to an approved forest management plan that takes into account the sensitive wetland.

With nearly 3,500 feet of level frontage on scenic Pierpont Road, division of the farm for house lots was certainly one possible future scenario. The sisters have been approached multiple times to sell small lots along the road. Asked if it was hard to resist those offers, Helen exclaims, "No way! We have no wish to sell."

But they admit they were concerned about what could happen if development pressure increased for the next

generation. Margaret has five children and Helen has three; they intend to pass the land on to eight heirs. They both worried that somewhere along the line, the farm would be broken up. "We had been thinking about what to do about the farm," Helen said. "Then I saw an article in the paper about Mr. Houghton's conservation easement on Grimble Road and I said to Margaret, 'This is it! This is what we should do!'"

Helen was referring to Bill Houghton's 2002 donation of a conservation easement to the Land Trust on his 110-acre property in East Bloomfield. The sisters understood the deep passion the then 85-year old man held for his land, and they shared his desire to protect it from future development as housing tracts.

After more deliberation and careful financial planning, the sisters contacted the Land Trust and began an earnest and thoughtful process of preparing for the eventual transfer of the farm to their children with a conservation easement in place.

"We are delighted that it is done," Margaret said about the easement process. "It's all fallen into place. We both feel like this was meant to be."

The Land Trust is excited, too, and appreciates the tremendous commitment two seventh-generation landowners made to conserving a rural landscape and heritage. "It was a privilege to work with this family," said Andy Zepp. "Their easement is an extraordinary gift and we're honored to play a role in helping them continue their tradition of stewardship."

—Betsy Landre

The Land Trust gratefully acknowledges Attorney Edward F. Premo, II of the law firm Harter Secrest and Emery in Rochester, NY for providing pro bono legal services in support of this project.



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Summer 2011 Calendar

SUNDAY, JULY 24, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Please join us for the Land Trust's 22nd Annual Meeting & Celebration at the Skaneateles Country Club overlooking beautiful Skaneateles Lake. See insert for details.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23-24

Finger Lakes Regional Trails and Greenways Conference at Cornell University

To promote the advancement of regional trails and greenways, the Land Trust is supporting Parks and Trails New York in putting together a two-day conference to provide a variety of workshops that will be designed for both trail advocates, planning board members, and other local officials. Please visit www.ptny.org for more information.

PLEASE SEE PAGE 11 FOR THE SCHEDULE OF OUR 2011 SUMMER TALKS & TREKS SERIES & VOLUNTEER WORK DAYS

See our web site for maps and photos of the preserves.

WALKS GO RAIN, SUN OR SNOW. PLEASE BRING SNACKS AND WATER, AND WEAR STURDY SHOES. CALL THE LAND TRUST AT (607) 275-9487 FOR DETAILS.

CONSERVATION BUYER WANTED

For 35-acre rural retreat located Just outside of Ithaca in Town of Danby. Features mixed hardwoods and hemlock. Located on Olsefski Road (seasonal).

To be sold subject to conservation easement.

Asking price is \$35,000. Contact Ed Finegan at 607-272-8213