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The Land Conservancy Purchases 38.3-Acre Grand Island Property

The Western New York Land Conservancy has permanently protected an additional 38.3 acres on Grand Island. The property will be maintained by the Land Conservancy and be known as the Jim and Edna Braddell Preserve. Funding for the purchase comes from the Greenway Ecological Standing Committee (GESC), which awarded the Land Conservancy a grant to protect the important bird habitat.

In recent years, Grand Island has fielded a number of development requests. Since 2018, thanks to funding from the GESC, the Land Conservancy has protected more than 300 acres in the town—a figure that includes the Margery Gallogly (gal-a-gee) Nature Sanctuary, the Alt Preserve, the Funk Preserve, and the Love Road Preserve.

The property was identified as a conservation priority due to its importance as grassland habitat for birds. A portion of the land abuts the Alt Preserve, which the Land Conservancy protected with a conservation easement in 2022. The Land Conservancy is seeking additional funding to initiate ecological restoration efforts.

“The Western New York Land Conservancy has committed significant resources on Grand Island over the past few years,” says Marisa Riggi, the Land Conservancy’s Executive Director. “We are truly grateful to the town’s leadership and to the GESC for prioritizing conservation in the Niagara River Greenway. As a relatively large, undeveloped tract of land, the Jim and Edna Braddell Preserve offers a wonderful opportunity for grassland bird habitat and will benefit native plants and animals.”

“The Niagara River Greenway is thrilled to have another nearly 40 acres permanently protected in the Town of Grand Island, thanks to the dedication and hard work of the Western New York Land Conservancy,” says Michelle Lockett, Community Engagement Director. “Grand Island and its adjacent small island are the ecological heart of the Niagara Greenway and critically important habitat for our Niagara region, and this parcel will add significant connectivity for wildlife and humans alike.”

“The Town of Grand Island is always excited to work with the Western New York Land Conservancy to protect the island’s most significant ecological habitats,” says Peter Marston, Town Supervisor. “Those of us who live here recognize the incredible beauty our town has to offer. With the protection and, eventually, restoration of this property, the Jim and Edna Braddell Preserve will enhance our island’s natural beauty and give residents yet another reason to be proud to live here.”

“My parents would be thrilled to know this land is protected and that nothing will ever be built on it,” says Nancy Gorrell, who grew up on the property with her 9 siblings. The Land Conservancy purchased this property from her family. “My father loved that land more than you could imagine, and it’s a dream come true for our family to have it protected. It’ll always be home.”

The Western New York Land Conservancy is a regional, non-profit land trust that has protected more than 8,000 acres of land with significant conservation value in our region. We envision a future in which forests, farms, meadows, and waterways are connected, cherished, and protected in Western New York. We are accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. To learn more about our mission and vision, and to read our land acknowledgement, visit wnylc.org.

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