

# The RESOURCE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN NEW YORK LAND CONSERVANCY | FALL 2024



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# Putting the Pieces Together: 4 for '24

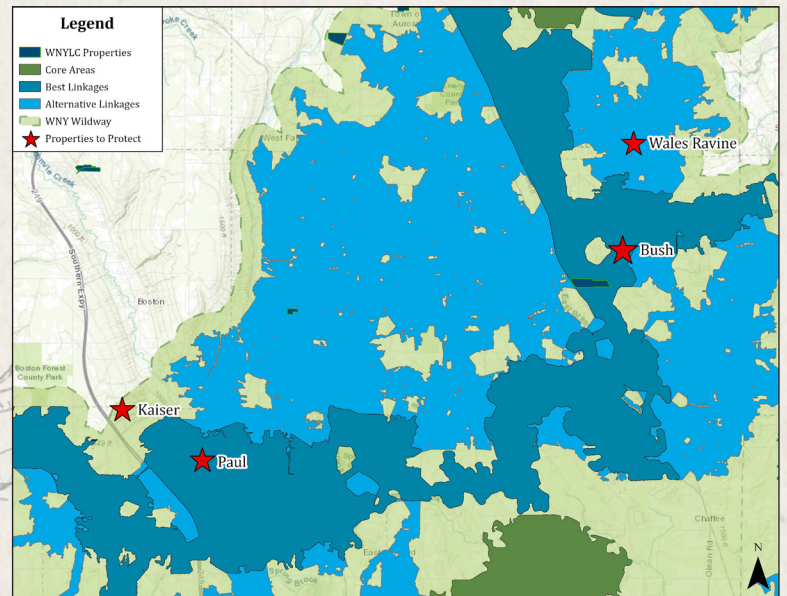
A new puzzle is dumped on the table before you. 1,000 pieces. Where do you begin? The edges or a distinctive part of the design?

The landscape in WNY is a bit like that puzzle. Over the last 250 years our region's landscape has been broken into many small pieces, first by the taking and selling of the land from the original inhabitants of WNY and then, over time, by the roads and developments that have fragmented the landscape further. For the last 33 years the Land Conservancy has worked to put this puzzle back together.

Since 2021 we have used the WNY Wildway as our approach for putting together the pieces. With your support we can add four important pieces to the WNY Wildway puzzle in 2024.

Among the most important and vulnerable parts of the WNY Wildway puzzle are the linkages between the large core forest areas on the map below. These linkages are the corridors that provide the easiest, or best, connection for animals and plants to move between large core areas. Thanks to our ongoing wildlife movement study, we've shared many photos on our social media over the summer of animals using these important linkages. Currently, only 1.3% of identified linkages in WNY are protected—we have our work cut out for us.

Our 2024 year-end campaign will permanently protect four key WNY Wildway properties in southern Erie County.



**The WNY Wildway** is our ambitious long-term plan to protect and connect the largest of our region's remaining forests and habitats. By connecting the vast forests of northern Pennsylvania to the Great Lakes, the WNY Wildway allows plants and animals to roam across the land as they once did, to move as climate changes, and to expand their ranges and ensure their survival.

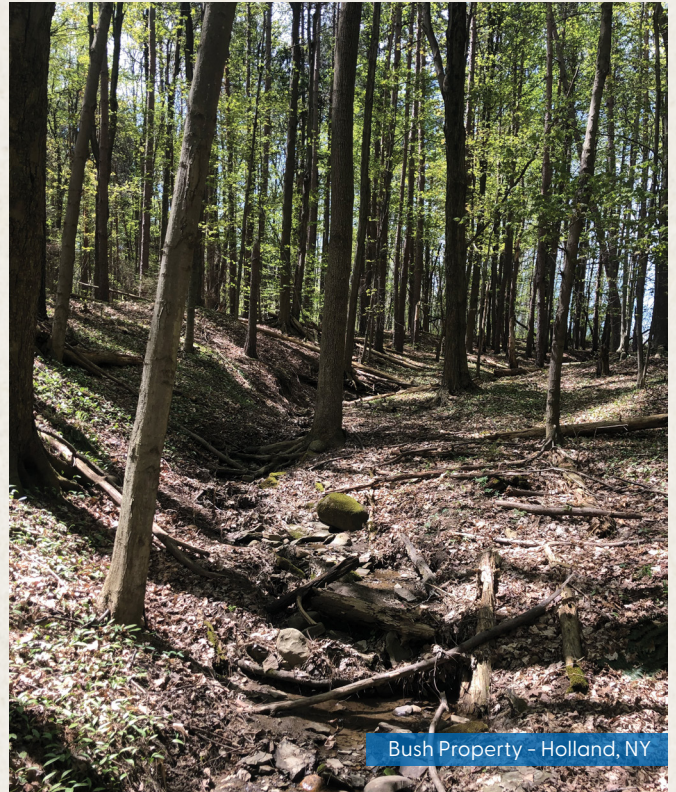


## BUSH PROPERTY | 85 ACRES

This beautiful hardwood forest explodes with color each spring with an abundance of wildflowers. A landowner left the property for the Land Conservancy in his Will, but even donated land comes with a price. We need to raise funds to cover real estate transaction costs and a permanent stewardship fund to take care of this wonderful property in perpetuity.

## ROBERT G. KAISER PRESERVE | 22 ACRES

Colonies of ferns cluster thickly on the slope of a Hemlock forest much like the one you'll find at our Mossy Point Preserve. This shady forest provides excellent habitat for nesting and migratory birds, and abuts additional forested land—making it an ideal property. The Kaiser Preserve will be funded in part by Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper's Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP), and the Land Conservancy is raising matching funds for the stewardship and transaction costs. The property, when protected, will become a nature preserve owned by WNYLC.



Bush Property - Holland, NY



Kaiser Preserve - Concord, NY

TOGETHER  
WE WILL **PROTECT,**  
**CONNECT, & RESTORE**  
WESTERN NEW YORK

If you would like to contribute to the permanent protection of these properties, please send a check to:

**The Western New York Land Conservancy**  
**P.O. Box 471, East Aurora NY 14052**

or donate online at [wnylc.org](http://wnylc.org)





# SAVE LAND with a monthly donation!

Want to save our farms, forests, streams, and meadows for future generations? By becoming a monthly donor, you will help protect Western New York's most valuable resources forever.

To donate, use the envelope in this newsletter or visit [wnylc.org](http://wnylc.org) and make your contribution online. Thank you!

## WALES RAVINE | 26 ACRES

Intermittent streams serve as the headwaters to Hunter's Creek, flowing to Lake Erie. Giant beech and maple trees line a deep and diverse ravine and provide important corridors for animals on the move. A generous donation of land by this landowner has made this project possible, but we still need to raise funds to cover the transaction costs and the stewardship fund.

## PAUL PROPERTY | 22 ACRES

When local landowner Judy Paul began planning for her retirement, she decided to sell part of her beloved property. Luckily for her, her land sits on an important part of both the WNY Wildway and Eighteenmile Creek. Like the Kaiser Preserve, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper's WQIP grant is paying for a portion of the purchase and restoration. We are fundraising for the transaction costs and stewardship funds; the land will be owned by the Land Conservancy.



Wales Ravine - Holland, NY



Paul Property - Concord, NY





## The WNY Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Collaborative

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) is an invasive species that threatens the survival of Eastern Hemlock trees. HWA can wipe out entire stands of Hemlock by feeding on the sap from the branches and disturbing the nutrient flow throughout these trees. As the trees decline, the resulting loss of shade and moisture can disrupt the intricate balance of plant and animal species in our forests, leading to decreased biodiversity and greatly altered ecosystem functions. We're spearheading a two-year partnership that will work to survey and treat thousands of acres of hemlock forests to stop the spread of this destructive species. This project includes workshops and trainings in the latest HWA survey techniques to enlist the public's help in eradicating this pest from our forests. Thanks to a grant from the U.S. Forest Service through their Great Lakes Restoration Initiative - Forest Restoration Program\*, we've formed a unique and exciting partnership with Erie County, Cornell Cooperative Extension, the NYS Hemlock Initiative, WNY Partnership for Invasive Species Management, Lake Erie Watershed Protection Alliance, Craneridge Homeowners Association, and NYSDEC to survey for HWA and treat infested properties.

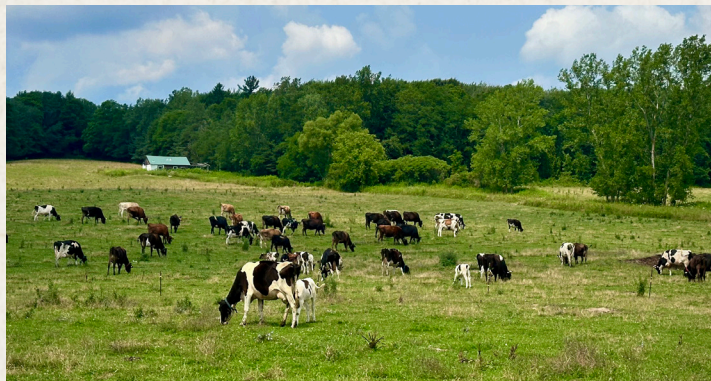
\*The Western New York Land Conservancy is an equal opportunity provider

## The Schmieder Family Farm's Journey to Permanent Protection & Future Success

The Schmieder Farm is an organic dairy operated by Paul Schmieder Jr. and his wife, Lynnette. It's been family-owned and operated since 1951, when Paul's dad bought it with his grandfather's help. For Paul and Lynnette, the farm is their happy place—and even after they retire, they plan to stick around. Like anyone who has found a calling in life, it's more than a job to them: it's a passion.

Paul and Lynnette understand the difficult economics involved in running a farm. Like many farms, Lynnette's off-farm job has been essential to keep the family farm afloat. Before Paul made the fateful decision to go organic in 2017, he was shipping around 1.5 million pounds of milk per year by operating according to conventional practices, which included feeding his 60 cows grain

and milking them twice daily, seven days a week. Going organic meant that Paul could switch to a “low-input, low-output” model that drastically cut down his expenses as well as the amount of work he would have to do each day. The cows are grass-fed now, grazing in the pastures as long as the weather permits, and he milks them just once a day. Thanks to the increased revenue from organic milk production, even though the farm produces less milk, they actually increased the farm's total revenue.



©Angeline Woodworth

Although the switch to organic practices helped reinvigorate Paul's love of farming and stabilized their finances, it didn't solve the question of the farm's next chapter. For that, Paul and Lynnette turned to our Acquisitions Director, Rachel Chrostowski, who has assisted numerous farmers through our farmland protection efforts. Paul and Lynnette's 25-year-old son, Dustin, is eager to take over for his father when the time comes.

Working in partnership with Paul and Lynnette, Rachel submitted a successful Farmland Protection Implementation Grant (FPIG) application. Thanks to this grant from New York State, which pays the Schmieders for the development rights of their land, the 432.9-acre property will always be farmland. It also means that Dustin will begin his career on solid footing. Because of Paul and Lynnette's commitment to conservation, the next generation in the Schmieder family will continue operating the farm as a vital part of the local community.



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## Are you a farmer?

Would you like more information about protecting your land? Contact our Acquisitions Director, Rachel Chrostowski, at

[rachelc@wnylc.org](mailto:rachelc@wnylc.org) or 716.687.1225 ext. 126



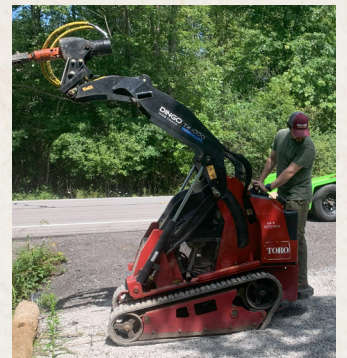


# news

## GRAND ISLAND



The Love Road Preserve is slated to officially open this fall. Over the past few months, our team has been hard at work removing the invasive plants—common and glossy buckthorn and multiflora rose—that impacted the forest. We have built just under a mile of dirt-packed trail for the community to enjoy, with some sections of bog bridging like you’ll find at our Margery Gallogly Nature Sanctuary. This new preserve is a wonderful oak forest with swamp white oaks, pin oaks, red oaks, and even large American elms. Come spring, the forest floor is filled with vernal pools alive with Jefferson salamanders. Look for a preserve opening announcement in our e-newsletter and on our social media.



Grand Island photos by Andrew Gaerte

## FIRST ANNUAL CONSERVATION CELEBRATION

Our first annual Conservation Celebration was a huge success! Thank you to the over 350 attendees who joined us for our inaugural event at Blueberry Treehouse Farm in September. With perfect weather, delicious food, great music, and a crowd-favorite s’mores station, it was a memorable evening in support of the Land Conservancy’s mission. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we raised over \$115,000 to support our work. A special thanks to our anonymous donor, whose \$30,000 matching challenge inspired incredible giving, including a key contribution from Outside Chronicles and their Western New York Hiking Challenge members, which helped us meet the match.



Henry J. Kreher Conservation Award



During the event, we were honored to present the Henry J. Kreher Conservation Award in memory of our cherished board member, Gail V. Wells, who passed away this summer. We also celebrated The Field Guides podcast team—Bill Michalek, Steve Fleck, and Daniel Mlodozenic—by awarding them the Volunteer of the Year Award for their dedicated support. It was truly a night to remember, celebrating conservation and community!



Volunteer of the Year Award

Conservation Celebration photos by John Carocci



**Thank you to our Legacy Society members** who have made us part of *their* legacy by including us in their planned giving and ensuring their favorite places are protected for future generations. If you are interested in learning more about how you can support the Land Conservancy in the future, please contact Andrew Gaerte, Director of Development and Communications, at 716-687-1225 ext.120 or by email at [agaerte@wnylc.org](mailto:agaerte@wnylc.org).

## THANK YOU

for honoring those you care for & supporting their love for nature.

### In Honor of

Lorna Lippes

from Deeny Shatkin  
& Stacy Gold-Taylor

Nancy Smith

from Keith & Kathleen Pace

WNYLC Board Members

from Eric Weidemann

### In Memory of

Carol Forge

from Margaret Dominski

John Kociela

from Carol Kociela

Emily Oprea

from Anne Ogan

Caitlin Carey

from Patricia Kane

Gail V. Wells

from Patricia Flavin

Travis B. Bulmer

from Steven Lovejoy

## Deep Roots

Frank and Linda Meyer's roots run deep in Western New York. As a seventh-generation resident of Eden, NY, Frank's family has lived and worked in the region since the mid-1800s. After earning his dental degree from the University of the Pacific in San Francisco, he returned home to WNY and opened a dental practice in Eden in 1982. Now in semi-retirement, he remains involved in the business, is active in community concerns, and is an avid hiker and canoeist.



Linda also shares a deep connection to Western New York. Raised in West Valley, she and her brother were the 4th generation on their family dairy farm. Her family's history mirrors Frank's in its multigenerational ties to the land. Linda, a writer and skilled calligrapher, is a reader, gardener, and hiker; she also serves on the boards of several organizations in Eden.

For thirty years the Meyers lived on the farm that had belonged to Frank's grandfather and great-grandfather before him. Preserving this property from development became a significant goal. Working with the WNY Land Conservancy, the land was placed into a farmland conservation program that will protect it in perpetuity. The property has since been purchased by a young farmer who continues this commitment to stewardship of the land.

Frank and Linda's involvement with the WNY Land Conservancy did not end there. They have supported several major fund drives to purchase endangered properties and, as members of the Legacy Society, they will continue to provide support far into the future. Their decision to support the Western New York Land Conservancy speaks to their shared love of the outdoors and commitment to preserving its natural beauty for future generations. **"We are proud to support an organization that also cares about how the next generation will have access to the land we care about so deeply."** Through the Legacy Society, Frank and Linda Meyer can be assured that their connection to Western New York will endure and that the land their families have called home for generations is safeguarded. Their legacy is one of deep roots, service, and a profound respect for nature's gifts.

## Legacy Society Members

James Battaglia  
Kathryn and Scott Bieler  
Lawrence and Carolyn Brooks  
Joan Choboy  
and Pamela Rossotto  
Larry and Sheila Drake  
Joan Eschner  
Deborah H. and Peter Fenn  
Chuck and Ann Fournier  
Douglas Germony  
Amy Holt  
Ed and Gayle Hutton

David Kimball  
Mark P. and Deborah Kisker  
Art and Marilyn Klein  
Paul and Jane Lehman  
Nancy J. Leone  
Sally Metzger  
Franklin and Linda Meyer  
Barbara Mierzwa  
and Dennis Galucki  
Suzanne Murphy  
John Owen, Jr.  
Donald and Barbara Owens

Jajeon Rose-Burney and  
Ana Hernandez-Balzac  
Carleen Blake Ryan  
Deborah Sabol  
Judith Sabol  
Shirley Shannon  
LeRoy and Carla Smith  
Tom and Nancy Smith  
Greg and Nancy Stevens  
David Stout  
Clarence Wigler







WESTERN NEW YORK  
LAND CONSERVANCY

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## Our Mission

The Land Conservancy is a regional, non-profit land trust that has protected more than 7,850 acres of land with significant conservation value in Western New York for the benefit of future generations. We envision a future in which forests, farms, meadows, and waterways are connected, cherished, and protected in Western New York. Our clean air, clean water, and fertile soils will equitably support the health and wellbeing of future generations of every living thing. We are accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

*The Land Conservancy recognizes that we serve on the traditional and ancestral lands of the Seneca, Tonawanda Seneca, and Tuscarora Nations and other indigenous communities. We are thankful to the Haudenosaunee who have been and continue to be the stewards of this land. We are committed to the Haudenosaunee Seventh Generation Principle which asks us to honor the lessons of the last seven generations as we work in partnership to shape and heal the world the next seven generations will inherit. This acknowledgment, while important, is just a start. We are listening, learning, and taking actions to address injustices that have impacted the Haudenosaunee and the land.*

## Did you know?

If you are 70 ½ or older, you can protect forests, farms, and wildlife by making a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from your IRA. By directing a gift to the Land Conservancy from your IRA, you are not only permanently protecting land but may also reduce your taxable income—up to \$100,000.

To explore this tax-saving giving option, please contact Andrew Gaerte, Director of Development & Communications, at [agaerte@wnylc.org](mailto:agaerte@wnylc.org) or 716-687-1225 ext.120.



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