



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

January 3, 2017

**CONTACT:**

Nancy Smith, Executive Director  
[nancyrs@wnylc.org](mailto:nancyrs@wnylc.org)  
(716) 687-1225

## Land donation protects Lakeshore Forest - Land Conservancy seeks community's help to cover costs

Last spring, a generous landowner donated a beautiful 8-acre forest on a bluff overlooking Lake Erie in Derby to the Western New York Land Conservancy. The Land Conservancy is a non-profit land trust that protects forests, farms, and scenic vistas forever; including places like the Stella Niagara Preserve in Lewiston and The Owens Falls Sanctuary in Aurora.

The Lakeshore Forest is the Land Conservancy's first preserve directly on Lake Erie. There is very little natural land like this left along the shoreline. The forest has trees that are more than 100 years old. Many birds find food and shelter in these trees during their long spring and fall migrations. Scattered wetlands provide habitat for frogs, toads, and salamanders.

The Lakeshore Forest is not open to the public yet, but Erie County Parks is interested in turning it into a unique natural habitat park. This forest will be a great place to take a walk, enjoy nature, and marvel at the spectacular sunsets over Lake Erie.

Although the forest was donated to the Land Conservancy, saving this special place was not free. As every landowner knows, the purchase price is only a portion of the property transfer costs. Accepting this land donation actually cost the Land Conservancy \$16,000. Individuals who want to be a part of permanently protecting the Lakeshore Forest can help the Land Conservancy cover these costs by making a donation.

"The Land Conservancy gets requests for land protection on average once a week. Our record was five requests in a single day," said Executive Director Nancy Smith. "Right now we are working to save a more than 50-acre lakefront forest in Brant as well as two family farms in Eden. We are also just beginning our 'Restore the Gorge' project, which will improve wildlife habitat in the Niagara Gorge. It is the support from members of our community that makes it possible to save transformative places like the Lakeshore Forest."

You can make a tax deductible donation today by sending a check made payable to the Western New York Land Conservancy to P.O. 471, East Aurora, NY, 14052. You can also give online at [www.wnyc.org/donate](http://www.wnyc.org/donate). If you have any questions, please contact the Land Conservancy at [info@wnyc.org](mailto:info@wnyc.org) or (716) 687-1225.

The Western New York Land Conservancy is a regional, not-for-profit land trust that permanently protects land with significant conservation value in Western New York for future generations. The Land Conservancy envisions a future in which open spaces, working lands, wildlife habitat, and scenic beauty are cherished and protected as part of the landscape and character of Western New York. The Land Conservancy is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and is one of 1,700 land trusts nationwide, including 90 in New York State. Land trusts have protected 40 million acres over the last 20 years. For more information on upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, or the mission of the Western New York Land Conservancy, please call (716) 687-1225 or visit [www.wnyc.org](http://www.wnyc.org).

###