

Chapter 4 - Land Conservation and Resource Stewardship

Land Conservation

In many urban areas, different recreation interests are competing for the same limited open space; having regional and State parks within a short driving distance can help to alleviate this demand. At the same time, in rural landscapes there is increasing development pressure and environmental issues on the larger open space and recreation areas. Addressing these needs will depend on the ability for the State to work with local governments, private land owners, conservation organizations and other interested parties to preserve the quality of life in communities throughout New York.

State forest and agricultural lands provide a large and valuable open space resource. The 700,000 acres of State forests in addition to the Forest Preserve in the Adirondack and Catskill Parks provide extensive trail, hunting and passive recreation opportunities. Agricultural working landscapes are critical components of the State's open space, and offer opportunities for numerous recreational activities.

Economic Benefits of Recreation and Open Space

Recreation and open space provides many benefits to society, direct and indirect, short-term and long-term. There

are both tangible and intrinsic values that together make it difficult to fully quantify the true benefits. Our quality of life depends on the surrounding environment and the use and conservation of the natural, cultural and recreational resources. This impacts the water, air, view sheds, forests, agricultural lands, seashores, heritage, solitude or in other words our well-being. There is also an economic value associated with open space and recreation that is associated with where we live, work and recreate. The following is an assessment of some of these benefits.

Tourism and Visitor's Expenditures

Open space, natural, cultural and recreation resources are key in attracting visitors from outside the local area that can stimulate the local economy. For the major destination regions, tourism is the primary industry and source of jobs. The benefits of recreation tourism result from expenditures by non-local visitors associated with travel, lodging, eating, retail and service businesses. These are both direct, (e.g., income to motels, restaurants, bike shops, etc.), and indirect (from the spending by the local businesses on salaries, wholesale goods, etc.). These expenditures support jobs, personal income, and governmental revenue.

Parks, beaches, scenic landscapes, historic sites, lakes, streams and coastal areas are central to New York State's tourism and travel industry. A study in 1994 indicated that State Parks and Historic Sites alone generate almost \$500 million in sales to local area businesses from visitors from out-of-state. Another \$20 million is generated through tax revenues. These figures, converted to 2008 dollars, using data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor

Statistics Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers become \$739 million and \$29.57 million respectively. Other changes may affect these figures. For instance, a 2007 study of park and historic site visitors indicates that the percentage of visitors from outside New York State has increased. Further, additional local and regional economic benefits are derived from New York residents.

Environmental Protection

Open space protection is a critical component in maintaining the quality of the air and water resources and the sustainability and biodiversity of fish, wildlife and plant species. Economically, this can impact the level of treatment needed for water supplies, costs associated with air pollution, and industries dependent on the natural resources.

Retaining open land can be the least costly approach to environmental protection. For example, New York City can buffer its watershed from intensive development through the historic watershed agreement, avoiding much of the estimated \$5 billion cost to construct treatment facilities for the Delaware and Catskill sources of its drinking water.

The State of New Jersey contributed \$10 million for the acquisition and protection of Sterling Forest® State Park to protect the watershed. In 2007, NYS was given a gift of 100 acres of land in Orange County that became part of Sterling Forest State Park, adding to the protection of the New York/New Jersey watershed (OPRHP Sterling Forest Announcement, 2007).

Open space and trees in urban environments can significantly reduce

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residential and commercial heating and cooling costs, reduce air pollution, lower consumption of nonrenewable fossil fuels, and make communities more livable at the same time. Recent studies have documented the pollution reduction potential of trees and a study project is under way to develop a proposal to EPA for ozone mitigation using tree planting in New York City as part of the State's Implementation Plan for Air Quality Management. If approved, this plan could substantially reduce costs and provide direct improvement in urban air quality.

The protection of open space is vital to conserving and sustaining fish, wildlife and plant species, as well as the overall biological diversity of the State. The economic value associated with protecting open space for the purpose of conserving and sustaining the diversity and richness of the State's fauna and flora species is staggering. Many critical economic goods and services provided by the preservation of open space and the species and habitats contained within, serve as an important source of food, fuel, fiber and medicine. For example, the most commercially exploited fish and shellfish species depend on tidal marshes and other coastal environments for spawning and development. Furthermore, many wild plant species have important commercial value for medicinal, food and energy sources.

Forests and agricultural lands are critical in preserving open space and providing recreational opportunities. Timber harvesting on forested lands generates an estimated \$230 million per year in revenue to landowners, public and private. New York's Agriculture industry grossed \$3.4 billion from goods sold in 2001.

Quality of Life

Open space and recreation are important elements in maintaining and improving the quality of life an area can

offer. Areas that provide open space resources and recreation opportunities attract residents and businesses to those communities and stimulate revitalization efforts. This is also the case for areas that have maintained the historic integrity of their communities. Property values increase in areas that possess these values.

A study of property values near greenbelts in Boulder, Colorado, noted that housing prices declined an average of \$4.20 for each foot of distance from a greenbelt up to 3,200 feet. The same study determined that, other variables being equal, the average value of property adjacent to the greenbelt would be 32 percent higher than those 3,200 feet away (Correll, Lillydahl, and Singell, 1978).

The State's 17 Heritage Areas have experienced preservation of their character and heritage and economic vitality of their urban areas.

New open space and parklands and rehabilitated historic structures have helped the revitalization of various waterfront communities utilizing grants through the Coastal Zone Management Program, EPF, Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act and other programs.

Reduction in Public Service Requirements

Open space and recreation areas can result in reduced costs to local governments and other public agencies. By conserving open space rather than permitting intensive development, local agencies may reduce costs for public services such as sewers, roads and school facilities. They can reduce potential damages in flood areas. In addition, open space areas can promote physical fitness through exercise and a relaxing atmosphere thereby reducing health care costs.

A number of recent studies conducted in the Hudson Valley and elsewhere

have demonstrated that undeveloped open space, including forest and agricultural land, generates more in real property tax revenue than it requires in municipal services - representing a net economic benefit to local governments.

Exercise derived from recreational activities lessens health related problems and subsequent health care costs. Every year, premature deaths and lost workdays cost Americans billions of dollars. Further, additional costs are incurred when finding and training replacement employees.

A recent study found that the current levels of physical inactivity in New York State cost the State over \$3 billion annually in medical costs, workers' compensation and lost time due to injuries. The study estimated that a 5% increase in physical activity levels could reduce costs by about \$180 million per year.

Another study on cardiovascular disease, published by the NYS Department of Health, ranks NY as 16th in the US in age-adjusted deaths due to cardiovascular disease; the cost of the disease to New York was almost \$16 billion. Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States and approximately 35% of coronary heart disease mortality is due to physical inactivity (NYS DOH Physical Inactivity, 2007). The risk of cardiovascular disease can be reduced by increased access and participation in physical activity which can be achieved through the New York State Park System (NYS DOH Cardiovascular Health, 2007).

A study in a poor, rural area of Missouri found that the installation of walking trails resulted in significant increases in physical activity. The majority of the trails were within residential park areas, often around sports fields or playgrounds. The availability of the trails was associated with an 8% increase in physical activity in the overall population.

Cognitive health can be maintained through exercise as well. In 2001, women over 65 were studied for an article that was published in Archives of Internal Medicine. The research was to determine the relationship between cognitive health and physical activity. The study found that for every 10 blocks walked per day the women had a 13% lower rate of cognitive decline (Yaffe et al., 2007). The ability to get away from the stress of everyday life will also have a positive effect on users well being.

American adults should get at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity most days of the week. The proximity and accessibility of trails to an individual's place of work and residence is a major factor in how often they will use it. The more parks and trails that are available to the public the better, especially in terms of physical and cognitive health.

Open Space Conservation

The quality and character of the recreation opportunities within New York depend upon the quality and character of the land on. Our mountains, lakes, rivers, forests and coastline, our natural landscapes, urban park and historic resources shape the way we spend our leisure time, affect the long term strength of our economy, determine whether we have clean air and water, support the web of living things of which we are a part, and affect how we think about ourselves and relate to other New Yorkers.

New York's fields, forests, waters and wetlands, however, are vulnerable to human intervention. We have the power to change the landscape, to conserve what is valuable to us as a people, or to destroy places which may be important to our future. How we manage change, how we protect and conserve open land and historic sites while providing space

For purposes of the Open Space Conservation Plan, open space is defined as land which is not intensively developed for residential, commercial, industrial or institutional use.

Open space can be publicly or privately owned, including agricultural and forest land, undeveloped shorelines and scenic lands, public parks and preserves and may contain water bodies such as lakes and bays.

What land is defined as open space depends in part on its surroundings. A vacant lot or a small marsh can be open space in a big city. A narrow corridor or pathway for walking or bicycling is open space even though it is surrounded by developed areas.

And while not strictly open space, the OSP also discusses cultural and historic resources which, along with open space, are part of the heritage of New York State.

Figure 4.1 - Definition of Open Space

for the homes, commercial centers and industrial plants we need, will have a profound impact on future generations.

New York State's first Open Space Conservation Plan (OSP) was authorized by a 1990 Act of the State Legislature. It was prepared through a joint effort by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), working with nine Regional Advisory Committees (RACs) appointed jointly by the State and local governments. The initial OSP received final executive approval on November 18, 1992. It has been updated as required in 1995, 1998, 2002 and 2006. The public response to the OSP has been overwhelmingly positive as it serves as the blueprint for the State's land conservation program.

The 2006 OSP builds on the 2002 OSP. Similar to past versions, the OSP proposes what open space and historic sites should be protected for New York State's future and describes how we can conserve and manage these resources in a sensible and affordable way. The OSP does not confine itself to public land acquisition, but recognizes that encouraging private land stewardship is also important. The OSP recognizes that open space conservation efforts must

be fiscally prudent and they must be pursued in all fiscal climates; because, once developed, forests and fields, lakeshores and seashores will seldom, if ever, be open land again. Similarly, once destroyed, historic and archaeological sites cannot be replaced.

In order to suggest the policies and actions which define the kind of New York we leave for those who follow us, the OSP brings together: 1) an objective analysis of the State's resources; 2) the knowledge and insight of professionals inside state agencies; and most importantly, 3) the informed and valuable ideas of the public, local government and the private sector.

Goals of the Open Space Plan

The Open Space Conservation Plan adopts the following goals for conservation of open space and historic resources in New York State:

- To protect water quality in New York State including the quality of surface and underground drinking water supplies and the quality of lakes, streams and coastal and estuarine waters needed to sustain aquatic ecosystems and water based recreation.
- To provide high quality outdoor recreation, on both land and water, accessible to New Yorkers regardless of where they live, how much money they have, or their physical abilities.
- To protect and enhance those scenic, historic and cultural resources which are readily identifiable as valued parts of the common heritage of New York's citizens.
- To protect habitat for the diversity of plant and animal species to ensure the protection of healthy, viable and sustainable ecosystems, as well as the conservation and preservation of biological diversity within the State.
- To protect habitat to sustain and enhance populations of endangered species, threatened species and species of special concern.
- To protect habitat to sustain the traditional pastimes of hunting, fishing, trapping and viewing fish and wildlife.
- To maintain the critical natural resource based industries of farming, forest products, commercial fishing and tourism.
- To provide places for education and research on ecological, environmental and appropriate cultural resources to provide a better understanding of the systems from which they derive.
- To preserve open space, particularly forest lands, for the protection and enhancement of air quality.

Figure 4.2 - Goals of the Open Space Plan

The Open Space Conservation Plan identifies nine goals (Figure 4.2). The primary strategy for achieving these goals is for the State government to work cooperatively and in partnership with local governments, the federal government, not-for-profit organizations, the private sector and individual property owners to conserve a cohesive framework of open space around which all New Yorkers can build better, more rewarding lives.

While the acquisition of public land and easements by the State is part of this strategy, it is central to the recommendations of this OSP that land acquisition by the State is only one of several tools for conservation of open space. Most of New York State's open land is not, nor should it be, publicly owned. Rather it should include working landscapes managed by farmers, woodland and shoreline owners and nonworking open space maintained by private organizations and citizens. In this context, it should be clear that when the OSP discusses conservation of land or creation of a framework of open space it does not always imply acquisition by

the State. The guiding principles outline the strategy for achieving the goals of the OSP (Figure 4.3).

The State, working in cooperation with others, should continue to focus its attention on conservation of the high priority open space projects described in the OSP. Conservation of these areas, before they are lost forever to subdivision or development, has been determined to be critical to achieving the goals of the OSP. The approach to land conservation recommended by the OSP is complex and involves not just land protection but also ongoing care, management and stewardship.

Guiding Principles for the Open Space Conservation Plan

- The State should work in partnership with others including local governments, not-for-profit conservation organizations and private land owners to establish and achieve land conservation goals.
- Along with the State's Quality Communities Initiative, the Open Space Conservation Plan strives to combat sprawl through conservation of important ecological areas and community resources through local, regional and state planning to grow intelligently.
- State acquisition of land and easements on land are only two of a number of strategies for conserving open space, recreational, historical and cultural resources with public values. The key to the success of this Plan is fitting the appropriate strategy to the resource.
- Given limited public dollars and overall economic concerns, it is essential to establish careful and understandable priorities for state action to conserve specific open space parcels and cultural resources.
- Such priorities ought to be established through the combination of objective measurements of land conservation needs and broad based citizen opinion.
- In pursuing open space conservation goals, the State must deal fairly and openly with property owners on a willing seller/willing buyer basis, local governments and citizens in general.
- In setting out proposals, the plan should try to define costs of implementation and propose methods for meeting those costs.
- When conveying land for public purposes, the cost of adequate management and stewardship must be taken into account.
- Maintaining working landscapes is important to mitigating the causes of global warming through sequestration of carbon in forests and agricultural fields, while also retaining land in private ownership with public benefits.
- Open space has been shown to have an economic value in the maintenance of water quality, air quality and the quality of life of New York's residents.

Figure 4.3 - Guiding Principles of the Open Space Plan

Accomplishments

The State Open Space Conservation Plan has guided an unprecedented level of investment, and subsequent achievement, in a variety of open space protection projects by the State, often in partnership with local governments, non-profit conservation organizations and private landowners. The OSP has helped guide the expenditure of more than \$700 million to protect more than 1 million acres since its inception, nearly a twenty percent increase in State land holdings since 1995.

The State's Environmental Protection Fund has grown to \$250 million annually for a variety of important State and local environmental programs, including funding for State-level land acquisitions

and stewardship, farmland protection programs and local park projects.

Highlights include the largest land conservation agreement in the State's history: a monumental working forest conservation easement with the International Paper Corporation covering nearly 260,000 acres of land within the Adirondack Park, in 21 separate tracts covering 34 towns in 9 counties. The deal will simultaneously protect the forest resource on these lands forever (and all the benefits that are derived from forests including superior water quality and wildlife habitat), require sustainable forestry, restrict non-forestry related development on the property, provide new public access and recreational opportunities and enhance the local tax base.

Many other important open space acquisitions have been made during this time period, from the Pine Barrens of Long Island, to remote wilderness areas in the Adirondacks and Catskills, to waterfront properties along the Great Lakes, Lake Champlain and Lake George. Exciting new urban parks in New York City, including the Hudson River Park, and new State Parks in Western New York and on Long Island have been acquired and developed for public use and enjoyment.

Since 2002, the EPF has also provided \$2 million to land trusts throughout New York to work with private landowners and local communities to help save important open space resources.

The Department of Agriculture and Markets is successfully implementing New York's Farmland Protection program, working closely with local governments and farmers to preserve more than 41,000 acres of productive farmland, using \$102.9 million in EPF funds that has leveraged significant private donations. It also has worked proactively to develop alternative methods to preserve farmland in areas that have not yet experienced strong development pressures.

Through the State's Clean Water State Revolving Loan fund, the Environmental Facilities Corporation has administered low interest loan funding for the acquisition of fee and easement on about 76,000 acres of land within the New York City watershed in the Catskills and Westchester County, and on lands protecting the aquifer that supplies clean water for Long Island residents.

Through the Department of State's Coastal Management Program (CMP) and Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, funded by the EPF, dozens of coastal and inland waterfront communities have prepared comprehensive plans and implemented programs to conserve valuable natural resources and enhance

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public access while redeveloping their waterfronts or coast lines. \$83 million in Stewardship funding from the Environmental Protection Fund also has helped augment available funding to ensure that existing and newly acquired lands are properly cared for and opened to public use and enjoyment.

The Bird Conservation Area Program (BCA) is modeled after the National Audubon Society's Important Bird Areas Program. The BCA program seeks to provide a comprehensive, ecosystem approach to conserving birds and their habitats on state lands and waters, by integrating bird conservation interests in agency planning, management, and research projects, within the context of agency missions. Subsequent to passage of the BCA program, the legislature also authorized the State Natural Heritage Areas program to designate Natural Heritage sites on state-owned lands. To date, 48 BCAs have been designated.

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) was established in 2002 to protect important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values, or that are threatened by development. Since 2002, New York State has received nearly \$10 million through CELCP to fund important coastal land protection projects, including the acquisition of 4 acres to extend the Hempstead Harbor Shoreline Trail in North Hempstead (Nassau County), the acquisition of 35 acres for habitat conservation on Lake Ontario in Parma (Monroe County), and the acquisition of 123 acres for habitat conservation on Montauk Point in East Hampton (Suffolk County).

The State has secured more than \$10 million in federal Forest Legacy funding for a variety of forest land conservation projects identified in the Open Space Plan, including Sterling

Forest, East Branch Fish Creek, and the Adirondack Lakes project. These funds, administered by the United State Forest Service, are focused on conserving forest resources for environmental and economic benefit and are used to augment funding available from the State's Environmental Protection Fund.

The following is an extensive list, compiled regionally, of conservation successes from the priority projects listed in the 2002 Open Space Conservation Plan. It demonstrates the value of a coordinated, integrated open space program that includes extensive partnerships among various levels of government, private landowners, conservation and land preservation organizations and interested citizens. These partnerships have worked to conserve an enduring outdoor legacy of which all New Yorkers can be proud.

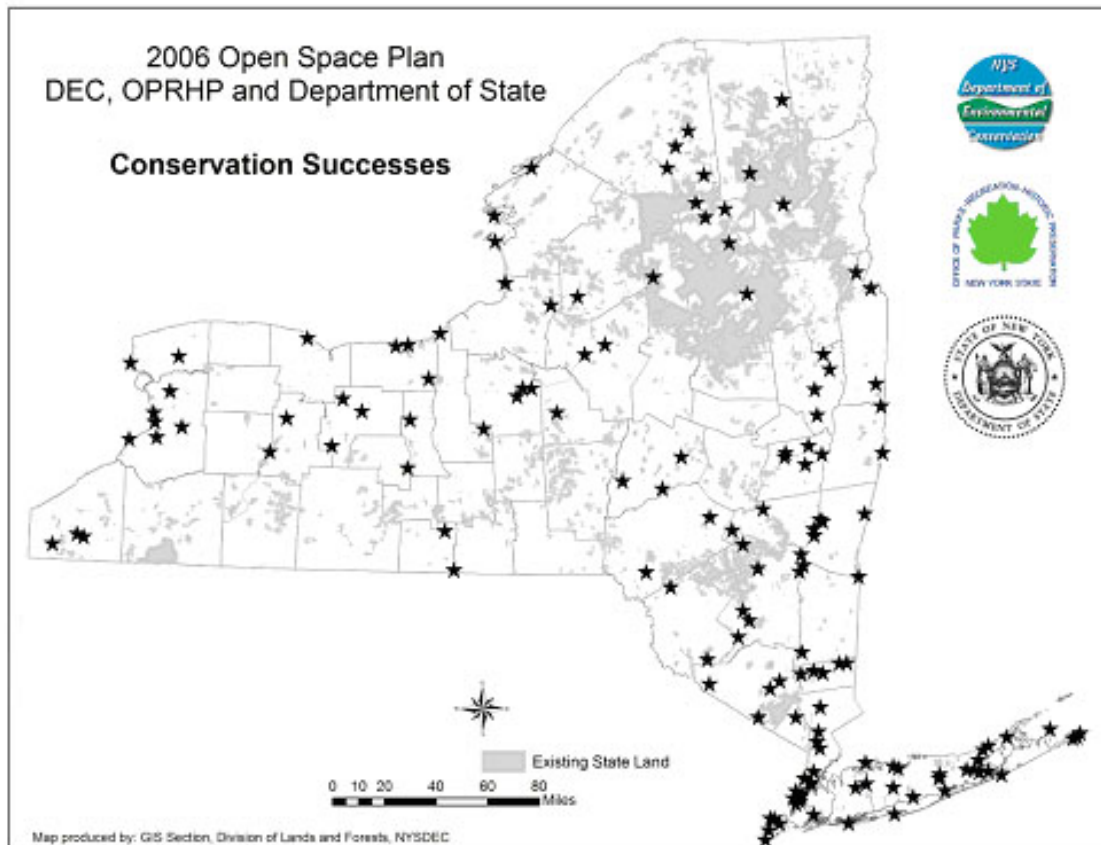


Figure 4.4 - 2006 Conservation Successes

Region 1

In 2003, the OPRHP acquired 225 acres and more than one mile of shoreline along the north shore of Long Island in the town of Jamesport. The former KeySpan site, now known as Jamesport State Park and Preserve is part of 525 acres of open space that was protected for parkland and agricultural use. Approximately 300 acres of land was sold by the Trust for Public Land for agricultural use by local farmers and is subject to a conservation easement. The proceeds from the sale totaling \$3.3 million will support development and environmental interpretation at the park. The shorefront Park and Preserve encompasses both environmentally significant natural resources as well as areas for more traditional active recreation. Jamesport marks the 7th State park on Long Island to be opened since 1996.

DEC added to its holdings on the western shore of Mattituck Creek in the Town of Southold. Since 2002, DEC has purchased three parcels, totaling 5.6 acres. The former Petersen's Marina is the site for a new public boat launch facility, providing needed Long Island Sound Access to the general public.

In addition to the Long Island Access initiative, significant open space has been acquired that increases access to the South Shore, protects environmentally significant areas and expands recreational opportunities.

DEC acquired 2.5 acres on the Shinnecock Bay in the Village of Southampton. The acquisition consolidates public ownership of back-barrier marsh important to Shinnecock Bay fish and shellfish stocks. The parcel was paid for, in part, with a \$500,000 Coastal Wetlands Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. To date, approximately 800 acres have been protected by the State, Suffolk County, the Town of Southampton, the Villages of

Southampton and Quogue, the Peconic Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy.

In July of 2005, OPRHP acquired 122 acres of oceanfront land on the bluffs of Montauk Point in the Town of East Hampton for a new State Park. The property, known as Amsterdam Beach, includes 54 acres of sensitive wetlands and maritime grasslands and is one of the last remaining significant tracts of undeveloped land in Montauk. The property will become the eighth new State Park to open on Long Island since 1995. The property has over 1,288 feet of ocean frontage on the Montauk Peninsula. The \$16.5 million acquisition will be made by the OPRHP, Suffolk County and the Town of East Hampton. The State's \$4 million share of the purchase will be supported through the Environmental Protection Fund. Additionally, the Town's \$7 million share of the purchase price is supported through a \$1 million grant secured by Congressman Timothy Bishop in 2004 through the federal Coastal and Estuarine Land Preservation Program.

The old Bethpage Parkway right-of-way in Nassau and Suffolk Counties has been re-designated as Trail View State Park. The 488 acre linear park, which runs 7.4 miles north from Bethpage State Park to Cold Spring Harbor State Park, offers multi-use trails for hiking, cycling, birding and other trail-related activities.

Gardiner's Island has been encumbered with a donated twenty-year conservation easement, held by the Town of East Hampton. The easement ensures that the 3,400 acre island filled with virgin oak forest and threatened and endangered species will remain in an undeveloped state for at least the next twenty years.

In a cooperative venture, the Town of Southold utilized a \$1 million Coastal Wetland Grant awarded to DEC by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to acquire a 47 acre parcel in the Pipe's Cove wetland

complex on Southold Bay in the Peconic Pinelands Maritime Reserve. The Town paid for the \$2.25 million keystone property using DEC's federal grant, Town funds and funds contributed by The Nature Conservancy. Existing Town and County land holdings in Pipe's Cove area were used as land-value match for DEC's million dollar grant.

On Earth Day 2004, DEC and the Town of Brookhaven together protected 34 acres on the Carmans River in the Hamlet of Yaphank. The property, known as Connecticut River Estates, had conditional final approval in place for a 25-lot subdivision. The Town bought six lots abutting its Camp Olympia property for \$600,000 and DEC purchased the remaining nineteen lots for \$1.9 million. Located in the Compatible Growth Area, the property also fronts the Carmans (a.k.a. Connecticut) River, a State-designated Scenic and Recreational River and home to the largest naturally reproducing brook trout population on Long Island.

DEC purchased 60 acres of land in the Core Preservation Area of the Central Pine Barrens Preserve on Long Island adjacent to State and County preserve lands. The property, encompassing two separate parcels, is located in the Hamlet of Westhampton in the Town of Southampton, Suffolk County. The purchases, 21.8 acres located on Route 31 across from Gabreski Airport and 38.2 acres straddling Sunrise Highway east of Route 31, will consolidate public ownership of dwarf pine plains and are prime habitat for the largest and most dense population of buck moths in New York State.

Suffolk County and the Town of Brookhaven together purchased the Foxlair-Yaphank property, 205 acres located primarily in the Core at the southern end of Suffolk County's Warbler Woods. In July 2005, DEC, Suffolk County, and The Nature Conservancy closed on a landmark deal protecting the single largest privately

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owned parcel remaining in the Core. The WJF Property consists of 308 acres of industrially- zoned land in the globally rare dwarf pine plains between Gabreski Airport and Sunrise Highway in Westhampton. DEC and Suffolk County each took title to 154 acres for a combined purchase price of about \$7.4 million. DEC completed six additional acquisitions in the Core totaling 154.73 acres, including 90 acres in the dwarf pine plains.

DEC, Suffolk County and Town of Southampton holdings within the 1,200 acre Chardonnay Woods area of Hampton Bays and East Quogue, together with the clustering of residential development, have successfully preserved 667 acres of pine barren watershed forest, including deep drinking water recharge areas, glacial knoll and kettle topography, rare lepidoptera habitat, and red maple tupelo swamp.

DEC, Nassau County and the Town of Oyster Bay preserved 50 acres of the 81 acre Underhill Property. In February 2004, DEC acquired 25 acres for \$7.5 million, Nassau County acquired 16.67 acres for \$5 million, and the Town of Oyster Bay acquired 8.33 acres for \$2.5 million. In addition, a conservation easement over an adjoining 15 acre parcel has been donated to the Nassau Land Trust, bringing total protected land to 65 acres. The new public land is comprised of mostly of rolling, grassy hills which will be managed as grassland habitat, and rare kettle hole ponds that were formed by glaciers during the Ice Age. The parcel is located in the Oyster Bay Special Groundwater Protection Area (SPGA).

A transfer of jurisdiction from the New York State Office of Mental Health to OPRHP resulted in creation of the new 52 acre Brentwood State Park, located in the Oak Brush Plains SGPA in the Town of Islip.

Region 2

In September 2004 the State and the City of New York announced more than \$220 million worth of improvements for Bronx Parks. The City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State that allows the City to move forward with the construction of a water filtration plant for the Croton Water Supply System under the Mosholu Golf Course in Van Cortland Park. As part of the agreement, more than \$220 million generated from water and sewer revenue will be spent on improvements to Bronx Parks through 2009. The agreement represents a rare opportunity to invest more than triple what would be spent on Bronx parks through 2009. The projects fall into five categories and include improving neighborhood parks, renovating regional recreation facilities, developing the Bronx Greenway, improving and expanding access to the Bronx waterfront, building and "greening" the borough.

In May 2003 a new segment of Brooklyn Bridge Park was opened. The 1.5 acre segment was converted from a parking lot into lush green parkland.

A \$350,000 Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) grant to the New York Restoration Project NYRP will be used for improvements to waterfront parkland in the Bronx. The grant will support the NYRP's efforts, in partnership with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, to develop and rehabilitate Bridge Park, located adjacent to Robert Clemente State Park along the Harlem River in the South Bronx. Bridge Park was designated as parkland in 1995 but has never been developed. Owned by New York City Parks, the 3.4 acre parcel is located at the base of the George Washington and Alexander Hamilton Bridges. The EPF award will support a rehabilitation project which includes the creation of pathways, barbecue and picnic areas, removal of invasive vegetation, and the installation of fishing piers along the

waterfront. The property offers dramatic views of the Harlem River and the Highbridge Park bluffs.

Progress has been made with several Inner City/ Under served Community Park properties. These areas include densely populated urban areas with limited or no open space resources and are representative of small parks, community gardens and other open space areas in need of protection. For example, the Gantry Plaza property, donated to OPRHP, will provide access to East River waterfront. The 5.3 acre property features two gantry float bridges and four piers jutting into the river. Additions to East River State Park made in 2006 unify the park by acquiring a piece of roadway that transects the park. This nearly 10 acre site provides active recreation and waterfront access in a community under served by open space and is adjacent to an existing city park.

Legislation was signed that will allow for a one-year moratorium on any development of wetlands in the mid-Island section of Staten Island to give New York City additional time to develop a program to protect the environmentally sensitive "Bluebelt" area and to provide for effective storm-water management in the area. The "Bluebelt" program is a pioneer program to preserve streams, ponds, and other wetland areas so that these systems can, through natural means, convey, store and filter storm water. The program will allow the City to save millions of dollars in construction costs which would otherwise be spent on new sewers in southern Staten Island to keep pace with residential and commercial development. Compared to sewers, wetlands management has been determined to be a more environmentally-sensitive and cost-effective method of managing storm water runoff. The new law authorizes the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to place a moratorium on issuing building permits in certain

designated wetlands in Richmond County for one year. The protected areas are bounded by Great Kills Park to the South, the Staten Island transit line to the West, Sand Lane to the North and Raritan Bay to the East.

The State has invested more than \$4.3 million to acquire 119 acres of valuable wetlands in the Harbor Herons Complex on the west and north shores of Staten Island, including Goethal's Bridge Pond and Old Place Creek.

In May 2005, the Hudson River Park's 3.2 acre Pier 40 Athletic Field was opened. The new field is the culmination of a joint governmental, philanthropic and community effort to bring more athletic playing fields and public open space to Manhattan and its waterfront. Also in 2005, the State committed to an additional \$15 million in funding, \$5 million in EPF and \$10 million in Port Authority of New York and New Jersey funding, for the Chelsea segment. New York City will provide matching funds for this segment

In May 2003, the opening was announced of the Hudson River Park's Greenwich Village Segment, which stretches across more than nine and one-half acres of dry land and three piers, from Clarkson Street to Jane Street. This first new section of the park, known as Segment 4, is linked to the rest of Hudson River Park, as well as the Battery, Battery Park City and Riverside Park along the Route 9A Greenway, which was constructed by the State Department of Transportation. The park will include sunning lawns, a display fountain, two comfort stations, a dog run, food concessions, and magnificent display garden donated by the Garden Club of America. The three piers include: Pier 45 which will feature a large, partially shaded lawn; Pier 46 which will feature a passive recreation field; and Pier which will 51 feature a playground with a children's ecology stream.

The State also announced \$70 million in funding from the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation for completion of the Tribeca section of Hudson River Park into a vibrant community resource.

Legislation was signed into law that preserves open space parkland on Roosevelt Island in New York City. The legislation designates four parkland areas on Roosevelt Island – Lighthouse Park, Octagon Park, Blackwell Park and Southpoint Park – as statutory open space areas. The legislation ensures that these park areas will be preserved and developed for park purposes, forever guaranteeing public access and appreciation of their priceless views of the Manhattan skyline. Southpoint Park, which will be protected from development by the new law, has been referred to by some developers as one of the most valuable properties in the world.

Region 3

Through a series of acquisitions since 1995, Clarence Fahnestock State Park has more than doubled in size, from 6,670 acres to 16,171 acres (over 9,000 acres). This has been accomplished through fee simple acquisitions and conservation easements ranging from 26 acres to several thousand acres. These acquisitions have protected wooded areas, panoramic vistas, geological features, significant habitats, streams, shorelines and watersheds. The 1,390-acre Clear Lake Reservation was protected through a conservation easement that was coordinated with the assistance of the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and OSI. This parcel which was provided to OPRHP as a gift from OSI limits future development and provides public access to the trail network on the northern portion of the site. It will continue to be operated as a Boy Scout Camp. Other large acquisitions included 143 acres near Roaring Brook Lake, 700 acres adjacent to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, 501 acres along East Mountain Road, 261 acres along

the ridge of Candle Hill and a 496 acre conservation easement on the Wiccopee Reservoir.

The State purchased 291 acres in the Great Swamp, located in the Town of Patterson, Putnam County. The Great Swamp is one of the largest freshwater swamps in the State and the largest wetland of its type in southeastern New York. It covers approximately 4,200 acres and stretches 20 miles across parts of Dutchess and Putnam counties. The Great Swamp is an ecological treasure that is rich in biological diversity and provides an important source of drinking water for Putnam County and New York City, as well as outstanding recreational and educational opportunities. A portion of the Swamp, including the parcel to be acquired by the State, is within the Croton River Drainage basin and flows directly into the East Branch of the Croton Reservoir, a New York City reservoir. The Great Swamp also anchors the eastern portion of the New York Highlands Resource Area. It contains vital habitat for avian and aquatic species and has been designated as an Important Bird Area by Audubon New York in recognition of its importance for migratory and breeding birds. The State has purchased the 291 acres from The Nature Conservancy using approximately \$1.8 million from the State Environmental Protection Fund.

Similar to Clarence Fahnestock State Park, a series of acquisitions has resulted in over 860 acres being added to Hudson Highlands State Park. Significant acquisitions included 150 acres of DMNA Camp Smith; nearly 300 acres on the north side of County Route 10 that is key in providing a connection between Hudson Highlands and Clarence Fahnestock State Parks; 645 acres at Surprise Lake Camp and 100 acres that abuts the City of Beacon reservoir inholdings and provides trail connections and expansive views of the Hudson River.

Land Conservation and Resource Stewardship

The State has agreed to purchase more than 250 acres of open space, known as the Baxtertown property, in the Town of Fishkill, Dutchess County. The land abuts the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)-operated Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center and the Town of Fishkill's public water supply well field and contains wetlands, vernal pools, and forests. Purchase of the property will help protect the Town's public water supply by ensuring this land is not developed. The land will be added to the Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center and be open to public access for passive recreation and expand the Center's educational offerings.

Lying midway between public lands in Kent and the Great Swamp in Patterson, Putnam County, Wonder Lake State Park is a critical link in the Northern Putnam Greenway. OPRHP made acquisitions adding 28.6 acres in 2003, 54.5 acres in 2004 and 106.8 acres in 2006 have expanded the park to 983.4 acres. These acquisitions provide the opportunity to increase public access and complete missing segments of the extensive trail network.

In December 2003, the State acquired the 617 acre Feldman/Roth property, part of the Northern Putnam Greenway in the Town of Kent, Putnam County. The property contains an excellent example of the oak forest typically found within the rugged Hudson Highlands. The property also contains much of the 90 acre Waywayanda Lake. The acquisition will create an approximately 1,000 acre state forest devoted to sustainable forest management, recreation and watershed protection. The State will pay local property taxes on the parcel. \$2.96 million in EPF funds were used to acquire the property.

OPRHP and PIPC are making progress in the Rockland County Highlands area with the acquisition of 88 acres of the former High Tor Vineyard and various tax parcels. The vineyard abuts

the existing High Tor State Park and contains a wide variety of natural and cultural resources. The property boasts historically important vineyard activity, a raptor breeding and feeding area, views of the Hudson Valley floor, and views to High Tor.

Schunnemunk Mountain which was acquired in 2004 was New York's 163rd State Park. Located in the Orange County towns of Cornwall, Woodbury and Blooming Grove, the 2,466 acre property is nearly 1,700 feet in elevation and extends more than 8 miles. The mountain is covered by deciduous hardwoods, scrub and pitch pine, an understory of blueberry and large stands of mountain laurel. OSI assisted in the acquisition of the site. Another 144 acres was gifted to enlarge the park to 2,610 acres.

The State purchased 942 acres of land encompassing five separate parcels, which expanded hiking and recreational opportunities in the Catskills and protected critical natural resources along the Shawangunk Ridge and Trail in the Town of Mamakating in Sullivan County. The acquisitions expands and enhances the Shawangunk Ridge hiking trail, providing a link from the Bashkill Wildlife Management Area to the Wurtsboro Ridge State Forest and north-east to the Shawangunk Ridge State Forest. The 'Gunks' hold a special place in the minds of hikers, rock climbers and nature lovers, a remarkable landscape which supports outstanding biodiversity, including eight rare natural communities, 27 rare plant and seven rare animal species. It also provides outstanding recreational opportunities for the 500,000 New Yorkers and visitors to the area each year. The purchase price for the five properties was \$937,700 and was paid for through the State EPF.

In 2003, the State purchased 510 acres of undeveloped forest on the Shawangunk Ridge in the towns of Greenville and Deerpark, Orange County. The property was purchased

from the Fini Brothers Partnership for \$826,000 and was funded by the EPF. DEC manages the property as a re-forestation area, which is utilized for hunting, hiking, bird watching, nature study and sustainable forestry. The state pays local taxes on the property. The purchase also included a portion of the Shawangunk Ridge Trail.

Minnewaska State Park has been expanded by 8,091 acres to protect the Shawangunk Mountains and its exemplary natural communities including the globally rare dwarf pine ridge community. These acquisitions include 3,799 acres in Wawarsing known as Sam's Point, 1,228 acres along the north-facing slopes of the Shawangunk Ridge, 192 acres near Roundout Creek Valley, 290 acres on the western escarpment, 62 acres that provide access to the Stony Kill Falls area, and the 2,518 acre Awosting Reserve that protects the eastern slopes.

There have been significant acquisitions west of the Hudson River that have resulted in new and expanded State parks including Sterling Forest, Minnewaska, Schunnemunk Mountain, High Tor and Bristol Beach State Parks.

Sterling Forest State Park has now expanded to 18,915 acres making it one of the largest state parks in New York. The acquisition was to protect a major source of drinking water for New Jersey and protects significant forests, lakes, streams and other natural resources from development. In addition to serving as a watershed for millions of residents in New Jersey and New York, Sterling Forest and its habitats are vital for the survival of many resident and migratory species, including the black bear and a variety of hawks and songbirds, as well as many rare invertebrates and plants.

In April 2006, the donation of two parcels in Westchester and Putnam Counties was announced, which created the 436 acre Donald J. Trump State Park.

Included are the 282 acre Indian Hill site located in the towns of Putnam Valley and Yorktown and the 154 acre French Hill site in Yorktown. The 282 acre Indian Hill is situated east of the Taconic State Parkway, in close proximity to both the Clarence Fahnestock and Franklin Delano Roosevelt State Parks. The new parkland is a mix of heavily wooded lands, large open meadows, and a large wetland running north/south along the eastern boundary. French Hill is a heavily wooded 153 acre parcel and contains a centrally located 20 acre state delineated wetland. This wetland is the origin of two head-water streams, French Hill Brook and Dogwood Creek. The entire property is located within the NYC Watershed Area. French Hill got its name because French General Rochambeau's troops camped in the vicinity before and after they helped the Americans win a decisive battle in October 1781 against the British at Yorktown, Virginia. It is part of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route, included in Heritage New York's American Revolutionary War Heritage Trail and the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.

Region 3/4

The State has acquired 337 acres in the Town of Roxbury, Delaware County, which has become part of Bearpen State Forest. The parcel was acquired using \$362,100 in EPF funding. The parcel will enlarge Bearpen State Forest to encompass 3,250 acres while protecting the 3,440-foot Roundtop Mountain and a portion of the 3,380-foot Bloomberg Mountain. The parcel contains sweeping views of the Catskill Mountains and provides hiking, hunting, trapping, wildlife observation, snowshoeing and camping opportunities.

In 2006, the State purchased a 162 acre parcel in the Town of Lexington, Greene county, which was added to Halcott Mountain Wild Forest in the Catskill Park. The parcel cost \$134,000,

which was funded by the EPF. The parcel includes a portion of the ridge to the northwest of Halcott Mountain that divides Condon Hollow from Turk Hollow. This addition to the Catskill Forest Preserve will help to further protect the wild forest character of the Halcott Mountain Wild Forest from neighboring development as well as provide increased protection for the New York City watershed. The parcel will provide hunting, trapping, fishing, hiking, wildlife observation, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and camping opportunities.

In October 2005, the State purchased four properties totaling 403 acres of land on Overlook Mountain in the Catskill Park. The lands were added to DEC's Overlook Mountain Wild Forest in the Catskill Forest Preserve. Funds from the Environmental Protection Fund were used for the acquisition. DEC was assisted in these land purchases by the Open Space Institute and the Woodstock Land Conservancy, two non-profit conservation organizations who have worked closely with the State to expand open space protection efforts in the Catskills. All four of these parcels are adjacent to existing Forest Preserve lands and were identified as possible future acquisitions by the State in the DEC's Overlook Mountain Wild Forest Unit Management Plan.

The 187 acre Peck Hollow parcel in the Town of Lexington was added to the Catskill Forest Preserve in December 2003. \$197,000 in EPF monies was used for the acquisition. The parcel is within the NYC watershed and links 197,000 acres of existing forest preserve. The purchase increases recreational opportunities and consolidates state lands in the Preserve's Westkill Wilderness Area. It offers camping, hiking, hunting, trapping, fishing and nature observation and will protect the undeveloped shoulders of Mount Sherrill and North Dome, Catskill High Peaks.

The State worked with the environmental organization Scenic Hudson and its land trust to preserve more than 62 acres of open space in the Town of Red Hook, Dutchess County that adjoins the existing Tivoli Bays Wildlife Management Area and the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve. The parcel will further protect this critical habitat and provide additional public access to the Hudson River. The waterfront portion of the property is adjacent to, and creates a preservation buffer zone for the Tivoli Bays section of the Hudson River. Tivoli Bays Wildlife Management Area is part of the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve, which protects 4,800 acres of coastal wetlands located along a 100 mile stretch of the river. These areas are prized natural laboratories for research and education and are vital areas for fish, reptiles, mammals and more than 150 species of birds, including bald eagles. The property Scenic Hudson and the State are purchasing is characterized by upland forests that buffer the Bay's cattail marshes, tidal creeks and pools.

The state acquired nearly 200 acres of open space known as Taxter Ridge Park Preserve in the Town of Greenburgh, Westchester County. This unique parcel is considered the "Gateway to Westchester" and is the largest undeveloped tract of land in the County. It features stunning natural rock ledges, woodlands, streams and wetlands. The site links 400 acres of existing municipal parkland and another 45 acres in the Town of Irvington. The property was acquired with the assistance of TPL and will be operated by the Town of Greenburgh.

Since 1998, Rockefeller State Park Preserve has expanded by 676 acres through gifts by the Rockefeller family, conservation easements and fee title. This has included the 88-acre Rockwood Hall property and approximately 588 acres of other parcels that provide essential links in the equestrian trail

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network and safeguard the character of the approach to the park from the east.

New York State acquired the Turkey Point Multi-Mission property in the Town of Saugerties, Ulster County, through a surplus land transfer from the National Park Service. The no-cost Turkey Point acquisition was a key project of this initiative and Congresswoman Sue W. Kelly was the catalyst to making the transfer a reality. The 8.2 acres of woodland property at Turkey Point has been incorporated into the adjacent DEC Turkey Point Unique Area, a 133 acre parcel of forest and fields. The property also includes a 200-foot wharf on the Hudson River and a navigational light. It is managed for recreation, environmental and historic interpretation, and Hudson River fishing access. The property is a component of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Trail and also a site for a designated Hudson River Greenway Water Trail currently under development. The partners have worked closely with the Coast Guard to develop historic displays of the rich Coast Guard history in the area. The Coast Guard maintains the Hudson River navigational light on the wharf.

Projects in three separate areas will permanently protect 550 acres of grassland, woodland, tidal flats and Hudson River shoreline. The projects were assembled by The Scenic Hudson Land Trust, which is working with the State, local governments and area land trusts to protect the properties and develop access and recreational facilities.

DEC purchased 61 acres at Brandow Point in the Town of Athens, Greene County, for \$879,300 using funding from the EPF. Brandow Point boasts a half mile of Hudson River shoreline in the scenic area of the Olana State Historic Site, the historic home of Frederic Church, one of the most significant members of the Hudson River School of Art. With direct access to the Hudson River, the property provides stunning panoramic views of the

Hudson River, Olana and the Rip Van Winkle Bridge. The site is characterized by diverse habitats, which include open fields, deep ravines, coves, hardwood forests and tidal flats and wetlands. The parcel lies just 200 feet north of the Greene County Cohotate Preserve, and will be managed by the Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District (GCSWCD) under an agreement with the State.

Four miles upriver in the Town of Coxsackie, Greene County, Scenic Hudson has acquired 123 acres at Four Mile Point, including a significant portion of Vosburgh Swamp. DEC and Scenic Hudson are working to transfer this keystone property to the State of New York as well. It is also anticipated that this parcel will be managed cooperatively with the GCSWCD. As demonstrated by its State designation as a significant coastal fish and wildlife habitat and significant tidal habitat, the Vosburgh Swamp is an ecologically rich area of freshwater wetlands and forest. Four Mile Point is comprised of rocky headlands, tidal flats, and beaches.

In another series of acquisitions directly across the Hudson River from Vosburgh Swamp and Four Mile Point, two properties totaling 193 acres of land that buffer the DEC-owned Stockport Flats Estuarine Research Reserve site will be acquired by DEC from Scenic Hudson, with the assistance of the Columbia County Land Conservancy (CCLC). The land, located along Rod and Gun Club Road in the Town of Stockport, Columbia County, has open fields, meadows, and woodlands with spectacular views of the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains. These properties serve as important habitat for grassland bird species. The State is working with Scenic Hudson to add the land to the State-administered Research Reserve, which was established in 1982 to serve as a field laboratory for research and education on estuarine ecosystems.

In addition to establishing the public lands, Scenic Hudson purchased the development rights to the abutting 173 acre Kilcer family farm. The conservation easement allows for the farm to expand and diversify its agricultural operation, while ensuring that the property will always be available for farming. The easement also contains a public trail that will connect to the public lands. Public access on the Kilcer farm will be limited to the designated trail.

In January 1997, the historic New York City Watershed Memorandum of Agreement (“Watershed Agreement”) was signed, which cemented a partnership among New York State, New York City, federal government, environmental organizations, and the 80 Watershed host communities. This landmark agreement formed a new partnership to protect the drinking water supply for nine million New Yorkers, while ensuring the economic vitality of the upstate Watershed communities. This innovative, cooperative watershed protection program is the first and only of this magnitude in the entire Nation. The Watershed Agreement consists of a comprehensive, long-range watershed protection and water quality enhancement program that consists of land acquisition, watershed regulations, and watershed protection and partnership programs. Implementing such a program will ensure that New Yorkers continue to enjoy high-quality, affordable drinking water long into the 21st century.

Given the success of this program, in 2003, it was announced that the State would commit an additional \$10 million towards land acquisition within the Croton Watershed to protect the New York City drinking water supply. Since then, the State has acquired a 291 acre parcel in the Town of Patterson, Putnam County and conservation easements on a 111 acre parcel in the Town of Lewisboro, Westchester County and a 370 acre parcel in the Town of Somers, Westchester County. Nearly 1,470 acres

of land have been acquired by the State for water quality protection purposes within the Croton Watershed.

In June 2006 the State announced it will purchase 426 acres of land to be added to the Harvey Mountain State Forest. The property, which consists of two parcels in the Town of Austerlitz, is part of the former homestead of American poet Edna St. Vincent Millay. One of the most popular writers in her time, Edna St. Vincent Millay was a major figure in 20th-century American literature and was the first American woman poet to win the Pulitzer Prize. DEC is using the State's Environmental Protection Fund to acquire 230 acres from the Edna St. Vincent Millay Society for \$1.69 million and 196 acres from the Millay Colony for the Arts for \$1.42 million. The acquisitions will improve public access to Harvey Mountain State Forest, with substantial new road frontage on East Hill Road and State Route 22. DEC was assisted in these land purchases by the Columbia Land Conservancy.

In 2005, OPRHP purchased 255 acres of woodlands, the Liebeskind Property located in the Town of North East, Dutchess County to expand Taconic State Park. The \$830,000 acquisition, which runs along the Taconic Ridge on the New York/Connecticut state line, increases the total size of the park to 6,054 acres. The new property is adjacent to the Rudd Pond Area of the State Park and is a critical link in protecting the Taconic Ridge and insuring the potential for an extension of the South Taconic Trail. It includes part of the steep west escarpment. This parcel, along with the 40 acre Jarvis property, furthers the effort to eliminate in-holdings within the park. The State acquisition is being supported through the EPF.

Region 4

In the Albany Pine Bush Preserve, administered by the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission, a total

of 3,010 acres has been protected by Commission partners exceeding the goal of expanding the size of the Preserve by 3,000 acres. A formal protection plan is outlined in the 2002 Albany Pine Bush Preserve Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement, adopted by the Commission in April 2002 to guide the future management and protection of the unique Inland Pine Barrens habitat, home of the endangered Karner blue butterfly. Since 1995, the State has invested more than \$12 million in land acquisition funds and \$2.9 million to support the work of the Commission from the EPF and Bond Act. The Towns of Guilderland and Colonie, City of Albany and The Nature Conservancy also have acquired lands for inclusion in the Preserve. The acquisition of 11.5 acres of the State Employees Federal Credit Union (SEFCU) property located on New Karner Road in Albany continues to preserve the unique and fragile ecology of the Pine Bush and the existing two-story building has been adapted to house the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center. The Discovery Center, which opened to the public in June 2007, will enable thousands of school children, families and other visitors to learn about and enjoy this magnificent resource. Funding for the Discovery Center was made possible through a donation from Trustco Bank Corp NY of \$1 million to create and endowment for the operation of the Discovery Center; OPRHP made three awards totaling \$350,000 towards the design and retrofitting of the building; and, the 2006-7 EPF provided \$1.5 million in funding.

The State acquired two properties adjacent to the Five Rivers Environmental Education Center totaling 57 acres through the use of EPF monies in partnership with Five Rivers, Ltd., a local support group for the Center. This acquisition expands the Center property to 402 acres and provides open space protection in an area experiencing accelerated development. The State plans to develop new trails

and footpaths on the properties that will further enhance the outdoor recreational and educational opportunities for the ever-growing number of visitors that come to the Center each year.

In 2007, OPRHP added 190 acres to John Boyd Thacher State Park purchased from the Open Space Institute for \$874,000 supported through the EPF. Referred to as the Jeff Thomas property, it is adjacent to the northern border of Thacher State Park and fronts the Helderberg Escarpment with views to the north and east. The parcel includes "High Point," reported to be the highest elevation along the escarpment, and will provide for trails to be extended, most notably the Long Path, a 150 mile trail that begins near the George Washington Bridge in New Jersey.

Extending north from John Boyd Thacher State Park, 638 acres have been acquired to protect the open space on the top of the Helderberg Escarpment. These additions to the Park contain rolling to hilly terrain with wooded areas, cleared fields and deep ravines. There are trail opportunities and good vistas.

Betty and Wilbur Davis State Park is a scenic 199 acre hilltop property in the town of Westford donated to OPRHP. Two-thirds of the park is forested with a mix of northern hardwoods and conifer plantations. The remainder of the property is open field that was once actively farmed. The park is near Cooperstown and Glimmerglass State Park and is used primarily as a day use area.

In December 2004, the family of Robert V. Riddell donated to the State 1,036 acres in Otsego County, in the Towns of Milford and Maryland, for the new Robert V. Riddell State Park. DOT surplus lands were added to the Park in January 2007 to expand the new park to 1,343 acres. The park provides an extensive woods road/hiking trail network and access to Schenevus Creek, a popular trout fishing stream.

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The State also acquired 1,130 acres, which is now General Jacob Morris State Forest in the Town of Morris, and 392 acres to expand State Forest land in the Town of Plainfield. Together, the three properties will open up new public recreational opportunities, protect water quality and natural resources and promote sustainable forestry in the county.

Region 5

In October 2004, a \$320,000 grant from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund was made to the Town of Clifton Park in Saratoga County, for the acquisition of 250 acres toward the creation of the Dwaas Kill Natural Area, one of the last undeveloped open spaces in the region. The Dwaas Kill Watershed is a critically important natural area and includes several diverse ecotypes for birds and other wildlife. The 250 acres are approximately half of 500 acres known as the Dwaas Kill Natural Area. The site is adjacent to the local historic site, the Stone Viaduct, and close to the Northway (I-87) Exit 10, Ushers Road and an active rail line. The property will be owned and managed by the Town for public access including natural and cultural interpretation and recreational use such as hiking and fishing.

An agreement was announced to permanently preserve approximately 10,000 acres in the heart of the High Peaks region of the Adirondack Mountains, including the headwaters of the Hudson River and the historic site of the abandoned Village of Adirondac in the Town of Newcomb, Essex County. The preservation of these lands, which includes the site of the former Tahawus Club and the first iron ore mining operations in the Adirondacks, will protect the upper Hudson River watershed and the "southern gateway" to the High Peaks Wilderness Area. The Open Space Institute (OSI) purchased the Tahawus property for \$8.5 million from NL Industries using a loan it received from

the State's Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) and private funds. OSI is working closely with the State to add approximately 6,000 acres to the northern portion of the property, immediately adjacent to the High Peaks Wilderness Area, to the State Forest Preserve.

Of the remaining 4,000 acres, approximately 3,000 acres remains a working forest and several hundred acres comprising the historic Village of Adirondac will be managed as an historic district. Both the forest management area and the historic district will be protected by conservation easements to be purchased by the State. The working forest conservation easement requires sustainable forestry, provides for public access and preserves the mineral deposits known to exist on a portion of the lands. During its ownership, OSI will continue to pay property taxes on the parcel.

Originally settled in 1826 as the Village of Adirondac, the historic site retains many important structures, including the McIntyre Works and other early blast furnaces, which illustrate the evolution of iron smelting technology. Also on the site are a dam and water wheel system, several domestic foundations, and the community cemetery. Industrial operations in the Village were abandoned in 1856, but a portion of the property was redeveloped 20 years later into a sportsmen's club, the Tahawus Club, the oldest such organization in the Adirondacks.

In September 1901, then Vice President Theodore Roosevelt was staying at the McNaughton Cottage at the Tahawus Club when he received the news that President William McKinley had been shot. Roosevelt immediately embarked from the club on an historic midnight carriage ride along the back roads of the Adirondacks to the North Creek Railroad station. At the station, Roosevelt received a telegram informing him that President McKinley had died. As a result, Roosevelt became the

nation's 26th president. The Tahawus Club and the Village of Adirondac (also known as McIntyre) are part of the Upper Works: Adirondack Iron and Steel Company, a 400 acre site on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 2004, Saratoga Spa State Park was expanded with the acquisition of two properties totaling 345 acres in the Town of Malta and the City of Saratoga Springs. The acquisitions increase the size of Saratoga Spa State Park, a National Historic Landmark, to 2,545 acres and provide greater public recreational access along the north and south banks of Kayaderosseras Creek. The 239 acre Malta parcel is on the south side of Kayaderosseras Creek and north of Old Post Road and the 106 acre property in the City of Saratoga Springs is on the north side of the Creek and east of Route 50. Improvements will be made for canoe, paddling and fishing access to the Creek. The purchase will also provide further protections for environmentally sensitive wetlands. The addition of these parcels will ensure the viability not only of the Kayaderosseras wetlands but the quality of adjacent upland forested areas. The wetlands are critical to the protection of the water quality of the Creek which is a major tributary to Saratoga Lake. These parcels also greatly enhance the protection of the Kayaderosseras Creek corridor, which in turn contributes to the quality of the ecosystems along Geysers Creek, which also flows through the Park.

In December 2003, the preservation of 1,310 acres of open space on Lake George in the Town of Bolton, Warren County was announced. The acquisition of the Northwest Bay property will protect valuable lands in the region, helping to enhance water quality in Lake George and critical habitat of the area. The Northwest Bay property includes Pole Hill Pond, a pristine, spring-fed pond that drains into the Northwest Bay of Lake George. The property is adjacent to thousands of acres of Adirondack Forest Preserve lands, stretching north

to the Pharaoh Lake Wilderness Area, south across Tongue Mountain Range, and to the lake's eastern shore to include Black Mountain and parts of Washington County. The State purchased the parcel from The Lake George Land Conservancy with funds from the EPF. Maintaining the intact woodland is important to preserving Lake George's pristine water quality. This land is the watershed of Northwest Bay Brook, one of the largest streams that feed Lake George. The woodlands and wetlands of Lake George act as natural filters to catch impure nutrients before they reach the lake's water. The most cost-effective method of preserving water quality in Lake George is to protect the natural lands surrounding the lake.

It was announced in early 2005 that the State reached agreement with The Nature Conservancy and Lyme Timber Company to ensure the protection of 104,000 acres of Adirondack forestland formerly owned by Domtar Industries, Inc. in the "Sable Highlands" region of Clinton and Franklin counties. The agreement represents the third largest land acquisition in State history. The Lyme Timber Company, a private timber investment company headquartered in Hanover, New Hampshire, has purchased 84,448 acres of forestland from Domtar Industries and will continue harvesting timber on the property. New York State will acquire a working forest conservation easement on these lands that will require sustainable forest management and timber harvesting, prohibit residential development and restrict subdivision, and create a balance of public recreational access and continued traditional private recreational leasing on the property.

The Nature Conservancy purchased 19,960 acres of the remaining Domtar property, which it will hold for ultimate transfer to the State. Of these lands, 16,918 acres will be added to the State Forest Preserve including Lyon Mountain and its fire tower, the highest peak in the northern region of the Park,

and a portion of Ellenberg Mountain. The remaining 3,042 acres, located in the Town of Dannemora, will become State Forest land. Local property taxes will continue to be paid on all of the properties. The agreement provides full public recreation rights to more than 47,000 acres of lands and waters that are not under private lease agreement and have not previously been open to the public. Public recreational opportunities will include hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. Partial public recreation rights, including opening more than 44 miles of recreational corridors for public motorized access, will be acquired on more than 56,000 acres of Lyme Timber's lands that are currently leased to private hunting clubs. The agreement also permanently secures public hiking trails on Lyon Mountain, Owls Head, and the Norton Range. Lyme Timber is retaining the right to maintain private recreational leases, and no hunting clubs on Lyme Timber's land will be eliminated.

Since 2000, Domtar's lands have been enrolled in the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) forest certification program, an independent entity that certifies adherence to a comprehensive set of sustainable forestry requirements. The easement the State will acquire requires Lyme Timber to maintain FSC certification or another independently audited certification system, assuring that timber harvesting on the land is conducted in a sustainable and environmentally-sound manner. The agreement protects habitat for a wide array of mammals, such as moose, black bear, and pine marten, as well as forest nesting birds such as warblers and thrushes, and pristine streams that harbor native brook trout and other fish species. It also ensures the conservation of significant wetlands, high rocky summits, and extensive northern hardwood and spruce-fir ecosystems.

DEC purchased 512 acres of the McLenithan property in the Town

of Jackson, Washington County. The McLenithan property is an ecologically important parcel containing a number of habitat types including a section of the Batten Kill, grasslands, deciduous and mixed woodlands, and wetlands. The northern boundary of the parcel consists of 2,800 feet of frontage on the Batten Kill - a river renowned for its trout fishing and paddling opportunities. More than half of the 175 acre Eldridge Swamp is contained on the parcel and is now protected. Several wetland types are represented in this large wetlands complex, which not only provide habitat for a variety of wetland plants and animals but also serves to protect the water quality of the Batten Kill. The property will be named Eldridge Swamp State Forest and this forest designation will allow for harvesting of timber, mowing of grasslands and maintaining the scenic views.

Interpretation of the actual events that occurred at the Bennington Battlefield State Historic Site was greatly enhanced with the 145 acre acquisition of the Cottrell Farm. The acquisition is important since it now allows the telling of the full story of the Battle by protecting the earthworks on the two hills that controlled the route from Saratoga to Bennington. This includes the Tory Fort Hill site that remains very much intact as it was in the 18th century.

The acquisition of the Susan B. Anthony House on State Route 29 in the Village of Greenwich, Washington County preserves the house that was the adolescent home of the well-known social reformer. Susan B. Anthony, later in life, became famous as an advocate of women's rights in the United States and also made significant contributions to the Abolition and Temperance movements.

Region 5/6

In December 1998, an agreement was announced for the protection of

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139,000 acres in the Adirondacks. The agreement was part of a comprehensive transaction coordinated by The Conservation Fund involving 300,000 acres of Champion International lands in New York, Vermont and New Hampshire. The New York land is in three non-contiguous blocks known as the Santa Clara, Tooley Pond and Croghan tracts, covering portions of 10 towns in St. Lawrence, Franklin, Herkimer, and Lewis counties. New York State and The Conservation Fund worked on the agreement with a private timber management organization, The Forestland Group, LLC (TFG). The Conservation Fund purchased all of Champion's lands in New York and simultaneously sold the land. TFG purchased 110,000 acres of Champion's commercial timber land in the Adirondack Park, and 4,300 acres outside the Park. The State then purchased a working forest conservation easement on the 110,000 acres of TFG land in the Adirondack Park, making the land available for hiking, hunting, camping, nature observation, motorized access and other outdoor recreational activities.

The State purchased 29,000 acres along the Deer, Grass, St. Regis and Oswegatchie rivers for addition to the Adirondack Forest Preserve. The lands contain more than 70 miles of river corridors as well as ecologically sensitive wetlands and boreal forest. The State paid \$24.9 million for the land and easements using Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act funds. The New York State DEC will develop Unit Management Plans with public input to guide long-term public use of the land. DEC developed a land management plan with TFG to guide public recreational uses of the land on which the State purchased an easement. The easement prohibits logging along the river corridors and adjacent to other environmentally sensitive water bodies. Thirteen subdivisions, ranging in size from 2,500 acres to 12,000 acres, were made on the land to be owned by TFG to make the land

affordable for smaller-scale, local timber operations in the future. TFG pays its share of all local, school and county taxes with the State paying the balance of these taxes on the easement lands. The State also pays full taxes on the 29,000 acres it purchased.

Protection of nearly 16,000 acres in the heart of the Adirondack Park was achieved through a working forest conservation easement on lands owned by International Paper in the Town of Long Lake, Hamilton County. The easement, one of the largest ever donated to New York State, is a gift from International Paper in honor of its former Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, John Dillon. The working forest conservation easement consists of a total of 15,810 acres, including two adjacent parcels – the 2,166 acre Whitney Triangle, and the 13,644 acre Sperry Grampus tract – separated by Route 30. The easement allowed DEC to work with IP and Paul Smith's College to develop International Paper John Dillon Park containing wilderness style recreational facilities for people with disabilities on Grampus and Handsome Lakes. The property is located immediately east of the William C. Whitney Wilderness Area and south of the Horseshoe Lake Wild Forest; it abuts the 26,000 acres of land preserved under an agreement with The Nature Conservancy and was announced in January 2001 (IP Lakes). The Sperry Grampus tract includes Sperry Pond, Grampus Lake, Handsome Pond, Mohegan Lake, and Moonshine Pond, and is surrounded by forested hills, low mountains, and wetlands. The Whitney Triangle parcel includes Bog Stream and Buck Mountain. It is bounded on two sides by the Sabattis Circle Road, which links visitors to Little Tupper Lake at the William C. Whitney Wilderness Area. Both properties are currently heavily forested and will be managed under the terms of the easement for sustainable forestry activities that help support the regional economy. The working forest conservation easement will limit new industrial, commercial or residential

development of the parcel and require sustainable forestry activities to protect water quality and other natural resources. Existing camp leases on the property will not be affected. The State will pay property taxes on the easement.

On Earth Day 2004, the largest land conservation agreement in State history was announced – an agreement between the State and the International Paper Company to preserve nearly 260,000 acres encompassing 9 counties and 34 towns within the Adirondack Park. The State will purchase working forest conservation easements on more than 255,000 acres, subject to local government approval, and will purchase an additional 2,000 acres in fee to provide new recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the Adirondack Park, while supporting the local economy through the continuation of sustainable forestry. The lands consist of 21 separate tracts, spanning nine counties within the Adirondack Park, including Warren, Washington, Franklin, Clinton, Hamilton, St. Lawrence, Essex, Saratoga and Herkimer. The properties represent nearly all of IP's Adirondack Park holdings, covering about 9 percent of the Park's privately-owned forest land. They include productive forest land, miles of rivers and stream corridors and a wealth of recreational opportunities, including more than 250 miles of existing or potential hiking and snowmobile trails. This agreement is one of the largest ever brokered within the Northern Forest region of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine and was facilitated by The Conservation Fund, an Arlington, Virginia-based non-profit conservation organization that works to protect America's land and water legacy including wildlife habitat, working landscapes and open space.

The easement will restrict subdivision and further development on the property, provide public recreation rights and require sustainable forestry operations that protect water quality and wildlife habitat to ensure the long term

maintenance of the forest resource. The State will pay its proportionate share of local taxes on the easements it holds within the Park. Also as part of the agreement, the State will acquire full public recreation rights on about 84,000 acres and partial public rights, including the ability to maintain and build hiking and snowmobile trails, on about 171,000 acres. IP will retain ownership of these lands. The agreement was structured to preserve the rights of various private recreation club organizations that currently lease large portions of the property for hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreational activities, while expanding public recreational opportunities.

Region 6

In March 2006, the State announced an agreement to preserve 1,800 acres of wilderness in the northwestern Adirondacks, including 4.5 miles of undeveloped shoreline on Lows Lake. Under the accord with the Adirondack Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy, the state bought 1,000 acres previously owned by Sabattis Land Co. to become part of the state Forest Preserve, as well as a conservation easement protecting 800 acres retained by the Sabattis Land Co. The state plans to acquire the land and easement using the Environmental Protection Fund.

The acquisitions will fill a gap in the network of historic canoe routes that are opening to the public for the first time in more than a century, while leaving the southern shoreline of Lows Lake undeveloped and protecting wildlife. The agreement will conserve habitat for loons, bald eagles, waterfowl and other wildlife. The family-owned Sabattis Land Co. had owned the land since 1962.

An agreement was made in June 2003 between the State, the Adirondack Nature Conservancy and the Northeastern Loggers Association to protect the 840 acre Minnehaha Tract. The tract includes lands in the Moose

River Corridor and the Adirondack Scenic Railway in the Town of Webb, Herkimer County. The agreement transfers 333 acres to the Forest Preserve, which includes 5 miles of shoreline along the Moose River. A working forest conservation easement on 512 acres supports sustainable forestry and outlines public recreation rights that provide access to opportunities on an extensive network of trails, including a snowmobile trail that will help relocate an existing trail off State Route 28.

In September, 2005, the State announced the approval of plans to transfer more than 720 acres of New York State Canal Corporation-owned lands in Oneida County to the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to expand Delta Lake State Park. Additionally, in May 2006, approximately 900 acres of lands underwater at Delta Lake were added to the transfer, for a total of 1,700 acres. The lands, identified as surplus to the needs of the Canal System, will more than double the size of Delta Lake State Park and provide new and expanded opportunities for waterfront recreation in the region.

Delta Lake State Park is located on a peninsula with views of Delta Lake and offers camping, a boat launch, fishing, picnic areas, swimming, playgrounds, ball fields, and hiking trails as well as cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and ice fishing in the winter. State Parks has held a permit to operate and maintain the park on approximately 350 acres of land currently owned by the Canal Corporation since 1962. The land transfer agreement will allow State Parks to formally acquire those lands, as well as an additional 370 adjacent acres of land above water and 900 acres underwater, to expand and protect additional natural resources near the park and connect to a network of local trails.

Region 6/7

In 2003, the State acquired 970 acres of valuable habitat along the eastern shoreline of Lake Ontario on Point Peninsula in the Town of Lyme, Jefferson County for \$285,000 in EPF resources. The Nature Conservancy assisted the State in the acquisition, which includes more than a half mile of undeveloped coastal sand and gravel barrier beach and extensive wetlands. The property provides habitat for the endangered short-eared owl and black tern, as well as Blanding's turtles and northern harriers, both listed as threatened species in New York. The project is part of the Eastern Lake Ontario shoreline and Islands priority project area.

Oswego County developed Sandy Island Beach, which compliments State efforts to encourage public access to the shore in appropriate locations while protecting fragile dune ecosystems. OPRHP assumed administration of Sandy Island Beach in 2004 while the transfer of property was finalized. The transfer from Oswego County was completed in July 2006. Due to fiscal constraints and in jeopardy of permanently closing, the 13 acre scenic park along Lake Ontario, also part of the Eastern Ontario Dune and Wetland Area stretches a white sandy shoreline 17 miles from Oswego to Jefferson County. It is the only significant freshwater dune site in the northeastern United States, attracting and providing a unique habitat for several species of migratory birds and waterfowl to its sand dunes, wetlands, woodlands, creeks, and ponds. The scenic property will continue to offer premium waterside recreation for public use, a spectacular view and unique natural resources. Committing to further enhance the park and its facilities for patrons of all ages, General Electric with assistance of Sithe Energies, has provided \$250,000 through the County Industrial Development Agency for construction of the beach's bathhouse.

Land Conservation and Resource Stewardship

After the acquisition by DEC of the 1,067 acre Wehle property in south-western Jefferson County, the property was transferred to OPRHP for development of a new state park, Robert Wehle State Park. The park has approximately 17,000 linear feet of shoreline with spectacular vistas of Lake Ontario. The park offers trail, day use and hunting opportunities along with the rental of the main house. Prior to Wehle family ownership the property was used by the US Army as a gunnery range before and during World War II.

Region 7

Progress has been made to protect the 17th century Seneca Village at Ganondagan State Historic Site. The purchase of 295 acres between 1998 and 2004 by OPRHP allowed the rejoining of Ganondagan's village core and associated burial grounds on Boughton Hill to the Fort Hill granary site and provides added protection to the viewshed of this significant historic property. The acquisition will allow the continuation of an existing interpretive trail system on each site and will allow the development of an accessible trail opportunity to the Fort Hill area.

In 2006, Fair Haven Beach State Park was expanded with the acquisition of 291 acres. This acquisition consists of Sterling Marsh, Springbrook Creek and a golf course. The site includes a significant wetland that provides a staging area for migratory water birds such as loons, grebes and a variety of ducks. The golf course will allow the park to expand the variety of recreational opportunities it has to offer.

In July 2005, the Finger Lakes Land Trust, acting on behalf of the State, acquired Carpenter's Falls, a picturesque, 90-foot waterfall over which Bear Swamp Creek, a major tributary to Skaneateles Lake, flows. Carpenter's Falls and the entire Bear Swamp Creek corridor is an identified priority in the Open Space Plan in recognition of the

importance of the area for water quality protection, outdoor recreation and scenic appreciation. The Finger Lakes Land Trust will transfer the property to the State.

An April 2005 gift of 83 acres to OPRHP provides a buffer for Old Erie Canal State Park. Located in Onondaga County, the parcel protects the viewshed northward from upper elevations of Poolsbrook Day Use Area and places a relatively large section of vulnerable wetland in state ownership.

In a settlement with Niagara Mohawk, the State will receive 2800 acres of open space, once subjected to sub-division and private development, along the Salmon River in Oswego County. A nationally renowned Salmon and Steelhead fishery, home of the Salmon River Fish Hatchery, the River attracts tens of thousands of fishing enthusiasts every year making it the most intensively fished river in the State. The property includes over 15 miles of shoreline along the River and the Redfield Reservoir with 19 parcels of land located on or near the Salmon River in the Towns of Albion, Redfield, Orwell, and Richland, and in the Villages of Altmar and Pulaski.

Made possible in part by the support of local communities, the DEC now will be able to protect this high quality watershed, including habitat to bald eagles, and ensure public recreational access to the largest cold water tributary to Lake Ontario, providing the largest run of both stocked and natural salmon and trout to the lake. Future plans of the DEC also include the construction of a hiking and fishing access trail system along the banks of the River.

OPRHP is in the process of completing design, acquisition and development of the Black Diamond Rail Trail in the Cayuga Inlet Corridor. Since 2000, 70 acres have been acquired to develop and protect the trail corridor. Planning for the Trail is in progress and The Draft

Master Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement is near completion.

In Spring 2005, Two Rivers State Park was created with the purchase of 474 acres in Tioga County and later expanded with the acquisition of 73 additional acres. The park is the first State Park within the county. Located in the Village of Waverly, north of the New York-Pennsylvania border where the Chemung River joins the Susquehanna River, the mix of open grass lands and forested areas makes the park an ideal location for a variety of day-use and overnight recreational opportunities.

Region 7/8

Cooperative efforts among the state and federal governments and not-for-profit organizations working with landowners have added to the Northern Montezuma Wetlands, one of the premier waterfowl areas in the North American flyway. The Nature Conservancy bought a 120 acre farm along the Seneca River and Erie Canal in the town of Montezuma using \$230,000 from a federal North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant. The property features 3,000 feet of frontage on the Seneca River. The farmland on the property will be restored to wetlands to provide habitat for migratory birds. The land will be transferred to the State for addition to the Montezuma Wildlife Management Area.

TNC also purchased an 82 acre parcel of forestland, wetlands and farmland along Crusoe Lake in Savannah adjacent to the site of the new environmental education center to be built in partnership with Audubon New York, the state program of the National Audubon Society. The property will be transferred to the State.

Region 8

A \$200,000 EPF grant went to the Town of Greece in June 2004

to acquire a 49 acre parcel that extends the Braddock Bay State Wildlife Management Area. The parcel will link the WMA to the 140-acre Frisbee Hill Park. Braddock Bay is identified by the Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area because of its significance as a raptor, waterfowl and songbird flyway and a habitat for several rare birds and fishes. It was in addition to a June 2003 purchase of 71.6 acres for \$587,218 with EPF grants, in partnership with the Town of Greece, the county, and the Trust for Public Land. The State is planting native grasses, trees, and shrubs to provide additional bird habitat and the formation of nests structures to help foster the growth of native migratory bird populations. The land is available for public fishing, hiking, birding, hunting, cross-country skiing and other day-use activities. Input on a management plan will be provided by a committee, comprised by area homeowners, local and State officials, sporting groups, and birding groups.

The Sonnenberg Gardens and Mansion, a Finger Lakes landmark in the city of Canandaigua, was acquired in March 2006 as a State Historic Park. The Queen Ann-style mansion welcomes tens of thousands of visitors a year and is recognized by the Smithsonian Institution as having "one of the most magnificent late Victorian gardens ever created in America". Developed between 1863 and 1923, the 50 acre estate is listed on the State and National Register of Historic Properties.

Three parcels, totaling 2,000 acres along the south end of Honeoye Lake in the Finger Lakes region were acquired from The Nature Conservancy using \$1.1 million in funds from the 1996 Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act and the EPF. The lands acquired are a mix of wetlands, oak-hickory forests, and open meadows. A new Wildlife Management Area will protect critical habitat for a variety of plants, birds, mammals, and other wildlife that thrive in this wetlands ecosystem with opportunities for

hiking, canoeing, birdwatching, fishing, and hunting.

In June 2002, the State acquired 3.2 miles of Public Fishing Rights on Cayuta Creek, in Chemung and Schuyler counties. The acquisition on Cotton-Hanlon Lumber Corporation, was part of an ongoing effort to acquire 5.9 miles of public fishing access along the creek's outstanding brown trout fishery. The Chemung Federation of Sportsmen provided invaluable assistance to DEC in identifying prospective properties and helping to create an overall strategy for public fishing rights on Cayuta Creek. The easements also allow DEC to maintain the stream banks stability through tree and shrub planting.

The State accepted a gift in February 2004 of 40 acres of wetland property along the Lake Ontario Shoreline in the Town of Huron. The waterfront property is bordered by the State's Lake Shore Marshes Wildlife Management Area-Beaver Creek Unit that provides critical habitat and unique recreational opportunities. The transaction was facilitated by The Nature Conservancy and includes 1,200 feet of undeveloped shoreline providing access for angling, beach walking, birding, hunting and wildlife observation.

Nearly 89 acres of land were purchased by OPRHP in the Town of Portage from the Nunda Rod and Gun Club. This land has been added to Letchworth State Park to enhance and enlarge the open space attributes of the park. It consists of second generation growth mixed hardwoods, conifer plantations, a 5 acre pond and minor wetland features.

Beechwood State Park, formally a Girl Scout Camp, acquired in 1999 by OPRHP was expanded by 146 acres in November 2006. The 317-acre park is located on the shores of Lake Ontario in the Town of Sodus, Wayne County. It's diversity of natural communities, significant habitats and variety of plant

and animal species provide excellent opportunities for educational and environmental interpretive programs.

Region 9

In 2006, the State acquired the remaining 23.7 acres of the Cheney Farm on Chautauqua Lake with an additional 2,246 feet of shoreline. The \$3,391,500 purchase was funded by the EPF. DEC will manage the Cheney Farm lakefront parcels as a low-intensity access site offering shoreline fishing.

In an agreement with the State and the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy, Inc., \$800,000 in EPF funds went to the purchase of the 18.6 acre Stow Farm Lakeshore property, one of the few remaining undeveloped parcels on Chautauqua Lake. The Conservancy contributed \$115,000 toward the acquisition from the Stow family and then turned it over to the State. The Ralph C. Sheldon Foundation, Johnson Foundation and Arnold Holmberg Foundation of Jamestown with more than 300 individuals, businesses and organizations were involved in preserving this parcel. The Lake is designated as a Statewide Important Bird Area. The purchase protects important fish and bird habitats along the lakeshore and culminates several years of work by the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy and the DEC to preserve this ecological sensitive portion of the shoreline.

\$1.7 million in EPF grants were used in Niagara and Erie Counties for recreation, historic preservation, and waterfront revitalization. In May 2004, \$658,500 went to completing the development of Lockport's Historic Canal Park, spurring growth of the Niagara Region's recreational facilities and contributing to long-term waterfront revitalization and historic preservation. The acquisition will complete the development of the Lockport Historic Canal Park Project, establishing a public park and interpretive museum. In addition,

Land Conservation and Resource Stewardship

Niagara County received \$280,376 for development of a Gateway Point and restoration of the historic Carnegie Art Center Library in North Tonawanda, rehabilitation of a pier and boat launch in South Waterfront Park on the Niagara River, and for public access enhancements on the Niagara River in the Village of Lewiston.

The EPF grants in Erie county included: \$350,000 to Buffalo to restore the former Delaware-Ashbury Church for re-use as an entertainment venue; \$87,423 to the Town of Lancaster to acquire and preserve remaining parcels of the historic Warren Hull House and Farmstead; \$300,000 to the Town of Evans to develop Sturgeon Point Bluffs Park on Lake Erie as a multi-use public recreation area; \$40,000 to the City of Tonawanda to construct a 640-linear foot dock to accommodate increase boating in the Gateway Harbor and provide boater access to Longs Point Park, the Canalway Trail and downtown businesses; and \$12,500 to the Town of Grand Island for the development of a master plan for the Bicentennial Park/ Scenic Woods. All projects are used to reconnect local businesses to the historic waterway.

Multi-Region

In May 2005, the State unveiled a new vision to create "The Erie Canal Greenway," representing a new chapter in the future development of the Canal. This new direction for the Canal will restore, revitalize and afford greater protection of one of New York's most valuable resources and become a central link in the long-term strategy of creating an Empire State Greenway.

A potential Greenway designation would incorporate a more regional approach to land-use planning, tourism, recreational trail development and other collaborative initiatives. The fundamental concept behind a Greenway is to partner with communities and assist them in local grassroots planning

that balances their economic and environmental resources. The establishment of an Erie Canal Greenway would strengthen local ties across the Canal Corridor and protect and enhance its natural and cultural resources for future generations.

The State has protected over 613,000 acres under working forest conservation easements. These easements maintain the economic vitality of forest lands while allowing for public recreational access to thousands of acres of privately owned forest land. Any development of those lands is also prevented with the exception of that associated with continued timber production. Much of the working forest conservation easement acreage is included in a few large easements: Champion, International Paper and Domtar/Sable Highlands. Descriptions of these projects can be found in the sections for Regions 5 and 6.

OPRHP has protected a total of over 30,000 acres to improve access, eliminate in-holdings and provide buffers to protect the resources as well as to enhance recreational and cultural opportunities at our existing State Parks and State Historic Sites. These were accomplished through fee acquisition and gifts. Please note that many of these acres have already been described previously in this chapter and may meet the criteria for more than one priority project.

The Department of Agriculture and Markets has awarded farmland protection planning funds totaling over \$2 million to 51 counties and 45 farmland protection plans have been completed by their respective county governments and approved by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets. Each county agricultural and farmland protection board is eligible to receive up to \$50,000 from the State to assist in the development of such plans.

Since 1996, the Department of Agriculture and Markets has also awarded \$95 million in State funds to local municipalities to purchase development rights or conservation easements on eligible farms totaling over 41,000 acres. To date, 95 conservation easements on farms totaling over 17,500 acres have been permanently protected. An additional \$23 million is included for this program in the State's 2006/2007 Budget.

Since 1995, DEC has purchased more than 40 equivalent miles of Public Fishing Rights covering more than 115 acres.

Priority Projects

The open space planning process identifies projects, which deserve immediate conservation attention from DEC, OPRHP and their partners in land conservation. These projects have been identified as a result of:

- An analysis by agency staffs of New York State's resources including hydrology, rare and endangered species, population and density, water supplies, existing State land ownership patterns, recreational and cultural resources preservation needs;
- The recommendations of the Regional Advisory Committees;
- Recommendations of those testifying at public hearings or providing written comments on the draft OSP;
- Geographic distribution across the State.

The projects have also been reviewed through the first three screens of the projects selection process identified in the OSP.

Taken together, the list of projects represents the best current thinking regarding those places, which should be conserved to achieve the goals of the OSP and to protect the open space heritage of the people of New York State. The priority projects, however,

only represent a small number of those projects identified through the public input process. The selectivity in identifying priority projects is required by fiscal prudence and by the basic approach of the OSP, which suggests the need to establish clear priorities for open space conservation.

The priority projects are listed by DEC regions and alphabetically and numbered sequentially; no priority should be inferred by the listing order. Project numbers have been revised; numbers for projects which appear both on the 2002 list and on this list generally will be different. Some progress towards conservation has been accomplished for many of these projects. A detailed description of each of the projects is provided in the 2006 OSP.

Region 1

- Atlantic Coast {1}
- Central Pine Barrens {2}
- Long Island Sound Coastal Area {3}
- Long Island. South Shore Estuary Reserve (SSER) {4}
- Long Island. Trail and Greenway System {5}
- Peconic Pinelands Maritime Reserve {6}
- Special Ground Water Protection Areas (SGWPA) {7}

Region 2

- Bronx River Trailway {8}
- Eastchester Bay Waterfront {9}
- Harbor Herons Wildlife Complex {10}
- Harlem River Waterfront {11}
- Inner City/Underserved Community Parks {12}
- Jamaica Bay Protection Area {13}
- Long Pond/Butler Wood {14}
- New York City Historic Preservation Sites {15}
- Northeastern Queens Shoreline {16}
- Putnam Railroad {17}
- Staten Island Bluebelt {18}
- Staten Island Greenbelt {19}
- Staten Island North Shore Greenbelt {20}

- Staten Island Wet Woods {21}
- Upper Hudson River Waterfront {22}

Region 3

- Great Roundout Wetlands {23}
- Great Swamp {24}
- Karst Aquifer Region {25}
- Long Island Sound Coastal Corridor {26}
- Mongaup Valley Wildlife Management Area {27}
- Neversink Highlands {28}
- New York Highlands {29}
- Northeastern Westchester Watershed and Biodiversity Lands {30}
- Plutarch/Black Creek Wetlands Complex {31}
- Rockland Riverfront Communities/Palisades Ridge {32}
- Schunemunk Mountain/Moodna Creek/Woodcock Mountain {33}
- Shawangunk Mountains {34}
- Turtle Conservation Sites {35}
- Wallkill Valley {36}

Regions 3 & 4

- Catskill River and Road Corridors {37}
- Catskill Unfragmented Forest {38}
- Hudson River Estuary/Greenway Trail Corridor {39}
- New York City Watershed Lands {40}
- Taconic Ridge/Harlem Valley {41}

Region 4

- Albany Pine Bush {42}
- Black Creek Marsh/Vly Swamp {43}
- Drowned Lands Swamp Watershed {44}
- Five Rivers Environmental Education Center {45}
- Franklin Vlaie Wildlife Management Area {46}
- Hand Hollow Conservation Area {47}
- Helderberg Escarpment {48}
- Hoosick River Corridor {49}
- Mohawk River Valley Corridor/Barge Canal {50}
- Oomsdale Farm and Surrounding Landscape {51}
- Rensselaer Plateau {52}

- Schoharie Valley Corridor {53}
- Susquehanna River Valley Corridor {54}
- Woodlawn Pine Barrens-Wetlands Complex {55}

Region 5

- Adirondack Mountain Club Lands {56}
- Battenkill Watershed {57}
- Big Cedar Swamp {58}
- Boeselager Forestry {59}
- Domtar/Lyme Fee Lands {60}
- Douglas Property {61}
- Floodwood (Northern New Jersey Council Boy Scout Camp) {62}
- Follensby Park {63}
- Hudson River Projects {64}
- Lake Champlain Watershed {65}
- Lake George Watershed {66}
- International Paper Fee Lands {67}
- National Lead/Tahawus {68}
- Roden Property {69}
- Saratoga County {70}
- Whitney Park {71}

Regions 5 & 6

- Bog River/Beaver River Headwater Complex {72}
- May's Pond Tract {73}
- Northern Flow River Corridors {74}
- Recreational Trail Linkages & Networks {75}
- Region 6
- Black Creek Watershed {76}
- Black River Corridor {77}
- For Drum Conservation Partnership Priority Project {78}
- Imman Gulf {79}
- Massawepie Mire {80}
- Maumee Swamp {81}
- Moose River Corridor {82}
- Rome Sand Plains {83}
- St. Lawrence River Islands, Shorelines and Wetlands {84}
- State Park Battlefields {85}

Regions 6 & 7

- Tug Hill Core Forests and Headwater Streams {86}

Land Conservation and Resource Stewardship

Region 7

- Camillus Valley/Nine Mile Creek {87}
- Carpenter Falls/Bear Swamp Creek Corridor {88}
- Clark Reservation State Park {89}
- Cortland County State Park {90}
- Fair Haven Beach State Park {91}
- Genny-Green Trail/Link Trail {92}
- Minoa Lakes/Green Lakes State Park {93}
- Nelson Swamp {94}
- North Shore of Oneida Lake {95}
- Old Erie Canal State Historic Park Trailhead Development, Buffer and Historic Protection {96}
- Peter Scott Swamp {97}
- Salmon River Corridor {98}
- State Parks Greenbelt/Tompkins County {99}
- Summerhill Fen and Forest Complex {100}
- Two Rivers State Park {101}

Regions 7 & 8

- Emerald Necklace {102}
- Finger Lakes Shorelines and Wetlands {103}

- Northern Montezuma Wetlands {104}

Region 8

- Catharine Valley Complex {105}
- Chemung River Greenbelt {106}
- Hi Tor/Bristol Hills {107}
- Indian Hills Golf Club {108}
- Jinnus Ponds {109}
- Seneca Army Depot Conservation Area {110}
- Sonnenberg Gardens {111}
- Westbury Bog {112}
- Western Finger Lakes: Conesus, Hemlock, Canadice and Honeoye {113}
- Wolf Gully {114}

Regions 8 & 9

- Genesee Greenway/Recreationway {115}
- Tonawanda Creek Watershed {116}

Region 9

- Allegany River Watershed {117}
- Buffalo/Niagara River Corridors {118}
- Cattaraugus Creek and Tributaries {119}

- Chautauqua Lake Access, Vistas, Shore Lands & Tributaries {120}
- Ecological Corridors {121}
- Exceptional Forest Communities {122}
- Grassland Preservation and Restoration {123}
- Indian Lakes {124}
- Lake Erie Tributary Gorges {125}
- Niagara Escarpment {126}
- Significant Wetlands {127}
- Urban Wetlands {128}

Region 6, 7, 8 and 9

- Great Lakes Shorelines and Niagara River {129}

Multi-Region

- State Forest and Wildlife Management Area Protection {130}
- New York State Canal System {131}
- Working Forest Lands {132}
- State Park and State Historic Site Protection {133}
- Statewide Farmland Protection {134}
- Long Distance Trail Corridors {135}
- Statewide Small Projects {136}
 - 1) Public Fishing Stream & River Access Projects
 - 2) Waterway Access
 - 3) Enhancement of Public Lands
 - 4) Rare Habitats
 - 5) Historic & Archeological Resources
 - 6) Trail & Greenway Connections

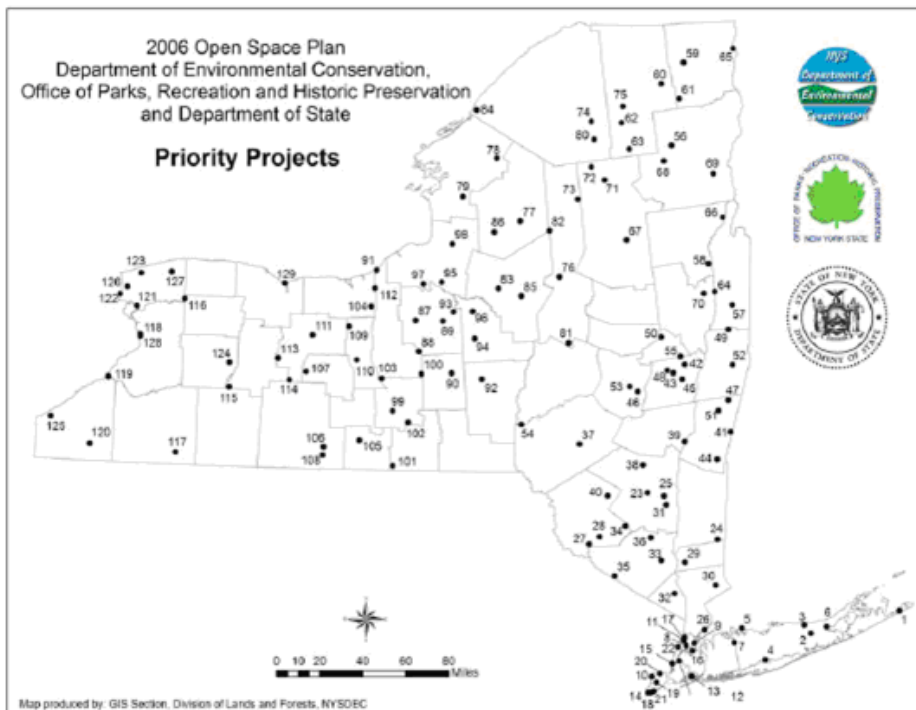


Figure 4.5 - 2006 Priority Projects

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) is a federal initiative established in 2002 to protect coastal and estuarine areas with significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values. Priority is given to lands with significant ecological value, those that can be effectively managed, and which are threatened by imminent conversion.

In order to qualify for funds under this program, coastal states must develop a CELCP plan that provides as assessment of priority conservation needs and clear guidance for nominating land conservation projects. State CELCP plans are developed and submitted by the state's coastal management program in conjunction with other state or federal agencies involved in coastal land acquisition, conservation, or management; any National Estuarine Research Reserves in the state; and other interested parties.

The Department of State, working closely with its state partners in open space protection - the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Office of Parks, Preservation and Historic Preservation - developed a CELCP plan that was included in the 2006 New York State Open Space Conservation Plan. With completion of the expanded Open Space Conservation Plan that includes the State's CELCP plan, New York is eligible to compete for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration funds for the acquisition of coastal and estuarine lands.

New York's CELCP priorities are protecting tidal and freshwater wetlands, coastal floodplains, coastal erosion hazard areas, significant coastal fish and wildlife habitats, wild and scenic rivers, and lands suitable for providing coastal-based recreation and water-related access. The CELCP plan also establishes New York's priority coastal and estuarine waters as the Long Island marine district (Peconic Estuary, Long Island Sound, and the Long Island South Shore/Atlantic Ocean), the Hudson - Raritan Estuary, the Hudson River Estuary, the Great Lakes (Lake Erie and Lake Ontario), and the St. Lawrence River.

DOS works with coastal and inland waterfront communities throughout the state to prepare LWRPs, which can be used to identify potential CELCP projects through community-based plans. LWRPs also contain policies and recommendations related to resource, habitat and open space protection that can be used to protect coastal and estuarine lands with significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values.

Goals

Protect coastal and estuarine lands with significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values.

Accomplishments

New York State's CELCP plan was prepared and adopted as part of the 2006 New York State Open Space Conservation Plan. The plan was approved by NOAA in 2007.

The Division of Coastal Resources submitted requests for funding in response to the FY 2007, FY 2008 and FY 2009 CELCP Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity for land acquisition projects.

In 2008, the State received nearly \$2 million in CELCP funds for the acquisition of approximately 36 acres on Pipes Coves on Long Island on the Peconic Estuary, a federally designated estuary of national significance.

Through 2008, New York State has received nearly \$11.8 million in federal CELCP funds for land acquisition.

Actions

- Utilize LWRPs, the State's CELCP plan and the Open Space Conservation Plan to identify important coastal and estuarine lands for protection.
- Seek funding for protection of important coastal and estuarine lands through CELCP, EPF, land trusts and municipal sources.

Farmland Protection

The State has two major programs in place to prevent the conversion of agricultural land to nonfarm uses. The Agricultural Districts Program and the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Program are complementary approaches to maintaining land in active agricultural production. The former relies on voluntary landowner initiative and municipal and state government cooperation to protect active farm operations from the threats of conversion; the latter actually seeks to preserve the land base where the benefits and protections available through agricultural districting may not be sufficient to overcome local development pressure. The following summarizes each of these major strategies which serve as the cornerstone of the State's farmland protection efforts.

Agricultural Districts Program

New York's Agricultural Districts Law (Article 25-AA of the Agriculture and Markets Law) was enacted in 1971 to protect and conserve the State's agricultural resource base. The Agricultural Districts Program has its foundation in Article XIV of the State Constitution which concludes that it is the policy of the State "...to conserve and protect its natural resources and scenic beauty and encourage the development and improvement of its agricultural lands for the production of food and other agricultural products." The Constitution recognizes that agricultural lands are a necessary and irreplaceable resource that must be protected to assure economic stability and growth within the agricultural industry.

The Agricultural Districts Law prescribes a locally-initiated program involving both land owners and local governments. The Program is based on the principle that land will remain in

agricultural production only insofar as an economic and land use climate exists which encourages farmers to remain in farming.

The 30-year old Agricultural Districts Program, the first of its kind nationally, has been endorsed and broadly adopted by landowners and local governments across the State. Since the beginning of the Program, first administered by the DEC from 1972 to 1979 and, thereafter, by the Department of Agriculture and Markets, total land area within districts has increased yearly. The number of districts grew from 19 in 1972 to 295295 in 2007 and the total amount of land in districts has also increased markedly, from 171,528 acres to over 8.5 million acres containing approximately 21,991 farms during the same time period. The number of districts has declined in recent years due to consolidation, but the number of acres in districts continues to rise modestly.

The popularity of the Program is attributable to its grassroots orientation and to the protections and economic incentives extended to agricultural enterprises within a district. These provide farmers with immediate economic benefits in the form of real property tax reduction as well as assurances that protections against public acquisitions, nuisance suits, and unreasonably restrictive local ordinances are available if needed.

Agricultural and Farmland Protection Program

Article 25-AAA of the Agriculture and Markets Law complements the Agricultural Districts Law in that it authorizes the Commissioner to administer programs to assist counties and municipal governments in developing agricultural and farmland protection plans and to assist both county and municipal governments in the implementation of such plans. The purpose of the

Agricultural and Farmland Protection Program is to fund local initiatives that are intended to maintain the economic viability of the State's agricultural industry and its supporting land base and to protect the environmental and landscape preservation values associated with agriculture. Article 25-AAA is a logical complement to other State statutes that address open space preservation and authorize local governments to expend public funds to acquire interests or rights to real property for the preservation of open space including land used in agricultural production.

State assistance payments for farmland protection projects may cover up to 50% of the costs for counties and municipal governments to develop agricultural and farmland protection plans, and up to 75% of the costs for the purchase of development rights (PDR) on farms as implementation grants. Since 1995, the Department has earmarked approximately \$22 million in farmland protection planning funds for 5252 counties, which have been completed by their respective county governments and approved by the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets. Each county agricultural and farmland protection board is eligible to receive up to \$50,000 from the State to assist in the development of such plans.

Legislation enacted in 2005 authorizes grants for the development of municipal agricultural and farmland protection plans. Municipal governments will be eligible to receive up to \$25,000 from the State to assist in the development of such plans. Additionally, as of 2007, counties are eligible for up to \$50,000 to update their plans after 10 years.

Since 1996, the Department has awarded over \$116 million in State funds to counties and towns to purchase development rights to protect a total of over 50,000 acres. To date, 125 projects totaling over 24,000 acres have been protected using these state funds.

Pursuant to Article 25-AAA, the Commissioner must give priority to proposed implementation projects that:

- a) will preserve viable agricultural land (defined as “land highly suitable for agricultural production and which will continue to be economically feasible for such use if real property taxes, farm use restrictions, and speculative activities are limited to levels approximating those in commercial agricultural areas not influenced by the proximity of nonagricultural development”);
- b) are located in areas facing significant development pressure; and
- c) serve as a buffer for a significant natural public resource containing important ecosystem or habitat characteristics.

The Agricultural Districts and Agricultural and Farmland Protection Programs are critical components of the State’s overall land protection and open space programs. Farmland protects valuable open space and associated intrinsic benefits and supports the many farm businesses across the state. It contributes to scenic vistas and provides recreational opportunities including hunting, fishing and trail activities. Farms help to preserve the State and local heritage while providing educational and interpretive opportunities. The farming industry also contributes to the economy by supporting agro- and eco-tourism. They will continue to play an important role as the State continues to expand its goals for protection the rural character and associated open space across its many regions.

Stewardship

Natural Resource Stewardship and Interpretation

State lands provide habitat for an incredible diversity of plants, animals, and ecosystems, many of which are rare or endangered. Proper stewardship of these natural resources require an understanding of biodiversity, identification and protection of important plant and animal habitats; restoration of degraded ecosystems and enhancement of freshwater and marine habitats; control of existing invasive species and prevention of new introductions; and preparation for the long-term ecological impacts of climate change and sea level rise. In order to expand the public’s awareness, develop an environmental ethic and support stewardship initiatives, there is a need for enhanced natural resource interpretation and education programming. Therefore, proper stewardship of these natural resources is achieved through:

- Understanding biodiversity
- Inventory and identification of ecological communities and habitats.
- Designation of important communities and habitats.
- Management of communities and habitats.
- Regulations for the protection of communities and habitats.
- Interpretation and education of ecological systems and their importance.

Understanding Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a shortened form of the term “biological diversity.” As defined by the premier ecologist, Edward O. Wilson, it is simply the variety of all life on earth. There are several components to this variety. First is species diversity, or the sum of the variety of all living organisms at the species level. Within individual species or populations, there can also be a tremendous amount of genetic diversity. This genetic diversity is essential to the process of evolution by natural selection, because it provides the raw materials by which new species arise. Ecosystem diversity is another element affecting total biodiversity. An ecosystem is comprised of a geographical location, its physical features and the organisms that survive and interact there.

Loss of habitat, loss of species in a community, or pollution changing physical and chemical processes can result in ecological simplification. Such simplification means a reduction in the number and complexity of interrelationships between organisms and their environments. This simplification often results in complex, insidious changes, further reducing the number of species and variety among individuals. Scholars believe that we are currently experiencing extinction rates rivaling or exceeding the rates of the prehistoric mass extinctions. Mass destruction attributable to our own species is apparently unique in the earth’s history. Biodiversity loss does not just mean that certain species are going extinct. As population sizes and the numbers of populations decrease, genetic diversity is lost as well. The net result may be that major ecosystems may become imbalanced and crash.

Research is essential to understanding biodiversity. The Biodiversity Research Institute, described in Chapter 7, is the state’s primary program that advances biodiversity research, through

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a partnership with scientific and natural resource management agencies and organizations. Biodiversity and ecosystem research is also carried out by educational institutions and other entities such as the Cary Institute for Ecosystem Studies.

Inventory and Identification

In order to protect natural resources and biodiversity, it is critical to know what exists and requires protection.

The NY Natural Heritage Program (NHP) is a partnership between NYS DEC and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Its mission is to enable and enhance conservation of rare animals, rare plants and significant natural communities (which are different types of forests, wetlands, grasslands, etc.). THE NY NHP accomplishes this mission through field inventories, scientific analyses, and New York's most comprehensive database on the status and location of rare species and natural communities (NY NHP, 2007). The NY NHP delivers the highest quality information for natural resource planning, protection and management. NYNHP was established in 1985 and is a contract unit housed within DEC's Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources. The program is staffed by more than 20 scientists and specialists with expertise in ecology, zoology, botany, information management, environmental review and geographic information systems. It is partially supported by state taxpayer voluntary contributions to the Return a Gift to Wildlife program (DEC 2007).

Currently, the NY NHP monitors 174 natural community types, 737 rare plant species, 431 rare animal species, and 6 types of animal concentration areas across New York, and keeps track of more than 11,700 locations where these

species and communities are found. The database also includes detailed information on the relative rareness of each species and community, the quality of their occurrences, and descriptions of sites. The information is used by public agencies, the environmental conservation community, developers, and others to aid in land-use decisions. The information is used for prioritizing those species and communities in need of protection and for guiding land-use and land-management decisions where these species and communities exist.

Ecological Communities of New York State, published by the NYNHP in 1990, classified and described ecological communities (such as forests, wetlands, and other habitat types) representing the full array of biological diversity in the state. Information for the report was provided by NYNHP/DEC staff, field biologists and other state agencies such as the State Museum's Biological Survey (Reschke 1990.) The report quickly became the primary source for community classification in the state. Despite the prevalence of human land use in the northeast, Ecological Communities of New York State remains the only classification that includes a comprehensive treatment of cultural communities along with the natural types. This allows users of this classification to describe and map nearly any ecological community encountered in the state. A draft revised and expanded edition (Edinger et.al. 2002) is available at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/29392.html>.

The NYNHP has published online comprehensive fact sheets ("Conservation Guides") about individual rare species and natural community types designed to help land managers, decision-makers, planners, scientists, consultants, students, and the interested public better understand the biodiversity that characterizes New York (NYNHP 2007)

DEC has also provided a new Environmental Resource Mapper

online at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/38801.html>. This interactive mapping application shows the general areas where rare animals, rare plants, and rare and significant natural communities have been documented by the NYNHP. The Environmental Resource Mapper also displays locations of New York regulated freshwater wetlands and of protected streams, rivers, and lakes. These maps are intended as one source of information for landowners, land managers, citizens, local officials, and project sponsors engaged in land use decision making, conservation, or environmental assessment.

Numerous other entities and programs within the state provide ways to identify important natural resources. Estuary programs, the State Museum (under State Education), universities, and not-for-profit research bodies such as Hudsonia are just a few of the ways in which to approach this important step. Hudsonia, for instance, developed a Biodiversity Assessment Manual for the Hudson River Estuary Corridor. The Manual is distributed free of charge to municipal conservation commissions, land trusts, and public libraries throughout the region, and a training program instructs local agencies and organizations in using the Manual to identify the biodiversity resources at greatest risk and to help establish policies and practices for biodiversity protection (Hudsonia, 2008). Similar training can be extended around the state to provide municipalities and managers with the tools needed to identify and protect biodiversity resources.

Designation

One tool to enhance protection of biodiversity resources is designation of special areas or species to increase the public's awareness for the need for management and protection. DOS's Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats, designation of Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers, and

establishment of greenways are just a few examples of designation programs. Two relatively new designation programs are highlighted in this section.

Bird Conservation Areas

Legislation establishing the New York State Bird Conservation Area (BCA) Program was enacted by the State legislature and signed into law on September 5, 1997. The BCA program is the first of its kind in the United States and is modeled after the National Audubon Society's Important Bird Areas Program, which recognizes special bird habitats on both private and public lands across the country.

This program applies criteria for designating BCAs to state-owned lands and waters and seeks to "safeguard and enhance" bird populations and their habitats in these areas. The BCA program seeks to provide a comprehensive, ecosystem approach to conserving birds and their habitats by integrating bird conservation interests into agency planning, management, and research projects, within the context of agency missions.

To date, New York State has designated 49 BCAs in New York State. Sixteen BCAs have been designated on State parkland including the latest addition, Moreau Lake. Thirty-two have been designated on lands owned by DEC, including latest additions Carlton Hill, Peconic River Headwaters, Lake Shore Marshes, Three Rivers and Keaney Swamp. The NYS Canal Corporation also now boasts a designated BCA at Vischer Ferry. Additional areas are continually being prepared for designation by state agencies.

Natural Heritage Areas

Legislation establishing Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) was enacted

in 2002. Modeled in part after the Bird Conservation Areas program, the purpose of the Natural Heritage Areas program is to heighten awareness of state-owned land that supports important natural heritage resources and to better ensure stewardship of those areas compatible with the long-term conservation of these resources.

Sites that are eligible for designation as a NHA must meet one or more of the following criteria: provide habitat for endangered or threatened species (as defined in ECL §11-0535, for animals and ECL §9-1503 for plants); provide habitat for species designated as rare by the NY Natural Heritage program, or support a significant ecological community. Sites may be designated by the DEC commissioner, or by any other state agency owning land eligible for designation, subject to the commissioner's approval.

OPRHP designated Moreau Lakes State Park as the first NHA in 2006 as part of its master planning process. In 2007, DEC designated its first NHA at Tivoli Bays Wildlife Management Area in the Hudson Valley. It is expected that

additional designations will be forthcoming in the ensuing years.

Management

Management actions required to protect and perpetuate ecological systems occur on a statewide level down to a site specific area. Such actions are described throughout SCORP, and encompass such programs as State Wildlife Grants, estuary programs, Biodiversity Research Institute grants, OPRHP resource protection projects and BCA Management Guidance Summaries. Two new state programs in particular have been instituted since the last SCORP and are described further in this section.

Ecosystem-based Management

Ecosystem-based management (EBM) is an integrated, adaptive approach to managing human activities to ensure the coexistence of healthy, fully functioning ecosystems and human communities. The goal of EBM is to maintain an ecosystem in a healthy,

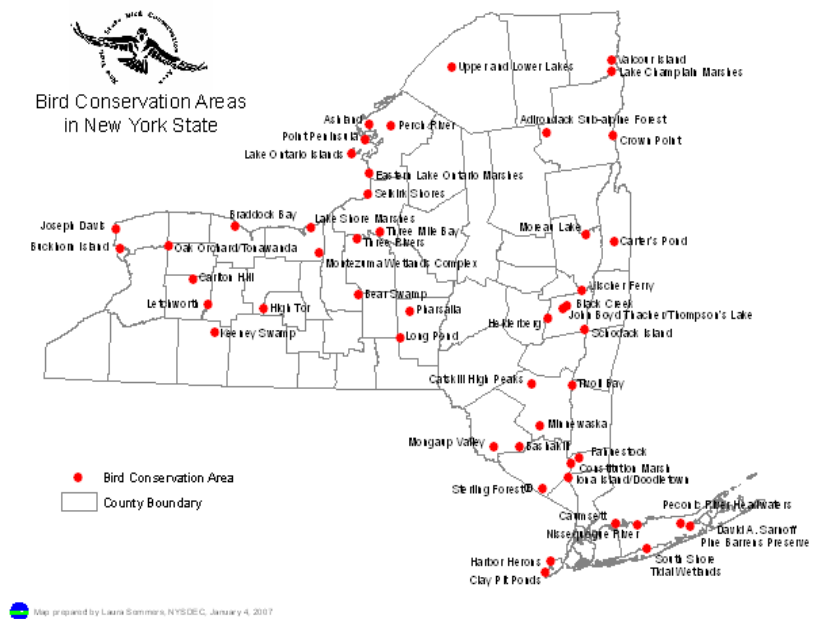


Figure 4.6 - New York State Bird Conservation Areas

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productive and resilient condition so that it can provide the services humans want and need. An ecosystem is the dynamic complex of plants, animals, microbes and physical environmental features that interact with one another. Ecosystems come in many sizes with smaller ones embedded within larger ones. Ecosystems provide many services such as habitat and food.

The Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Act, described in greater detail in Chapter 7 under DOS programs, calls for the integration and coordination of EBM with existing laws and programs. EBM would evolve the current regulatory system and governance structure which is largely sector-based, (e.g. air, water, transportation, agriculture) and sometimes conflicted (independent regulatory and economic growth goals), toward a system which will: lead to decisions based on a holistic understanding of ecosystems; be adaptive and responsive to change; promote coordination and cooperation among sectors; balance competing uses; and inspire compromise (DOS, 2007).

EBM is different from current management approaches that focus on a particular issue or on a single ecological component such as a single endangered species or isolated water quality parameters. By focusing on interacting systems, EBM requires participation of many state agencies and requires the integration of knowledge from individuals with local experience as well as experts in biological, social and economic fields. EBM is a tool that can cut across programmatic and geographic jurisdictions with the components of EBM providing a language that allows for improved communication between citizens, scientists, the private sector and government officials (DOS, 2007).

Each Agency is charged by the Act to integrate and coordinate EBM practices into their programs to advance the policy and principles of the Act (refer to Chapter 7 under DOS). OPRHP is

working to integrate EBM principles into its many diverse programs and regional operations. OPRHP is developing guidelines to ensure that activities, programs and goals related to coastal ecosystems and their management are aligned with ecosystem-based management. This SCORP demonstrates this effort. Refer also to sustainability and ecosystem-based management policies and strategies identified in Chapter 2.

Invasive Species

By federal Executive Order and by NY state law, an invasive species is a species that is: 1) nonnative to the ecosystem under consideration, and; 2) whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. In the latter case, the harm must significantly outweigh any benefits. (NYS ISTF, 2005)

Invasive species are a form of biological pollution. As a threat to our biodiversity, they have been judged second only to habitat loss. Invasive species come from all around the world; the rate of invasion is increasing along with the increase in international trade that accompanies globalization.

Invasive species have caused many problems in the past, are causing problems now, and pose threats to our future: our ecosystems, including natural systems and managed forests; our food supply, including not only agriculture but also harvested wildlife, fish and shellfish; our built environments, including landscaping, infrastructure, industry, gardens, and pets. Invasive species have implications, too, for recreation and for human health.

Some of the more well-known invasive species in New York are zebra mussels, milfoil, chestnut blight and the Asian Long Horned Beetle, and new ones are being found at a rapid rate (DEC 2007). Last summer, DEC confirmed the presence of the algae *Didymo* (*Didymosphenia geminata* or

“rock snot”)” in certain locations of the state including a section of the Batten Kill, a fabled trout stream in Washington County. The algae can wreck trout habitat by harming the bottom-dwelling organisms on which fish feed (DEC 2007).

In recent years, thousands of migratory birds that stop at Lake Ontario and Lake Erie have died after consuming two particular invasive species (quagga mussels and a fish called the Round Goby) that helped spread type E botulism in the Great Lakes. Ballast-water discharge from ocean-going vessels is a likely suspect in the spread of the Round Goby, the mussels and viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) a fatal fish disease that has been found in the Great Lakes and – just last summer – in several smaller New York lakes and ponds. As part of a multi-state lawsuit, the Commissioner of DEC called on federal officials to force ocean-going ships to clean out their ballasts before entering the nation’s waterways (DEC 2007).

Invasive species have also spread to forests. DEC has been combating the Sirex wood wasp, which spreads a fungus that can devastate trees, especially red and white pines. Also, foresters are preparing for the possible emergence of the Emerald Ash Borer, a tree eating beetle that has been spreading east from the Midwest and has recently appeared in Pennsylvania (DEC 2007).

An example of an invasive species and the degree of impacts on the environment, kudzu (*Pueraria montana*) is a legume that has become highly invasive in the U.S., and is known to fix nitrogen in its native range. Kudzu’s tendency to form dense stands and its extensive coverage in the southern U.S. may increase rates of nitrogen cycling and accumulation in soils, potentially leading to changes in community composition, soil acidification, and increased fluxes of nitrogen gases and leached nitrate to neighboring ecosystems. Preliminary

results of a study (Hickman and Lerdau 2006) suggest striking effects of kudzu invasion on ecosystem processes, with large increases in nitrogen-cycling parameters occurring in the invaded sites. Initial findings show that nitric oxide fluxes from soil in invaded areas are twice those from uninvaded patches. The excess nitrogen may make it easier for other fast-growing invasive plants to take over, and rains may wash excess nutrients into rivers, causing algal blooms that deplete waters of oxygen and lead to fish kills. As soil nitrogen levels rise, so will emissions of nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide. Hickman has confirmed that kudzu causes small increases in emissions of nitrogen dioxide, which is 300 times more potent a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide (Cabreza 2007). Since nitrogen dioxide readily converts to ozone in the presence of sunlight, it could also lead to spikes in low-level ozone. Kudzu is currently found in Long Island, New York City, and Albany County (New York Flora Association 2005).

Recreational impacts of invasive species include visual impacts such as when common reed (*Phragmites australis*) grows so tall along the shoreline as to obstruct views, and physical impacts such as Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) obstructing boat access or swimming. In the latter case, at least one death has been attributed to milfoil (Cabreza 2007). Other health and safety impacts impeding recreation use are also caused by certain invasive species, such as Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) that may increase sensitivity to sunlight causing painful, burning blisters similar to severe skin burns that may last for months.

Management of a threatened or endangered species or unique habitat may occur at a site, regional, or watershed level. The development of natural resource stewardship/management plans will identify management actions. Actions can also be identified through

the development of a master plan, unit management plan, or more specific invasive species management plan.

As described more fully in Chapter 7 (under DEC), a State Invasive Species Task Force produced a report with recommendations to address invasive species. Since the Invasive Species Task Force first convened in 2004, at least eleven new organisms have invaded New York. A new Invasive Species Council (ISC), a permanent body within state government, was established in law in 2007. EPF resources have been used to deliver invasive species programs primarily through partners. In 2006-07, \$3.25 million, and in 2007-08, \$5 million have been provided for agency action, contracts and grants to implement the recommendations. Funding has been or will soon be provided to advance planning, database, research, eradication projects, and Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISMs) to ensure prevention and rapid response to new invasives.

A number of other partnerships promote the management of invasive species. The Plant Conservation Alliance (PCA) is a consortium of ten federal government member agencies and over 260 non-federal cooperators representing various disciplines within the conservation field (PCA 2007). The PCA's Alien Plant Working Group works to promote the conservation and restoration of native plants and natural ecosystems by preventing the use and introduction of invasive species and by removing invasive plants from natural areas. The APWG is addressing these goals by gathering information on invasive species that affect natural areas in the US; sharing this information with the public, land managers, scientists, researchers and policy makers; supporting regional and local invasive plant management efforts; and forming partnerships from the local to international levels (PCA APWG 2006). Participation in this Weeds Gone Wild project is open

to anyone interested in getting involved and includes federal, State, and local government agencies, non-governmental organizations, universities, private firms and individuals (PCA APWG 2007).

TNC's Global Invasive Species Initiative – a network of Conservancy scientists and specialists focused on invasive species – provides worldwide leadership by catalyzing high impact partnerships, developing policy strategies and leading research, science and innovation about invasive species and conservation. TNC applies an approach to prevent invasions, provide science-based solutions, and eradicate invasive species when populations are still small. An “adaptive management” approach sets realistic targets for control, identifies the best response, and evaluates how effective the efforts have been once implemented. Stringent guidelines are followed to reduce any potential side effects of control efforts. Minimizing risk to the native species and ecosystems being protected must always be a priority when selecting a control method (TNC 2008). In NYS, TNC has taken an active leadership role to assist in formation of PRISMs and to assure the principles of the global initiative are being applied.

Regulation

Regulations are an important tool utilized in the protection and management of the natural resources including fish and wildlife, lands and forests, parkland, water quality (fresh and saltwater), and air quality. Freshwater and tidal wetland regulations, for instance, provide protection for these resources as well as the plant and animal species that rely on them. Protecting water quality through SPEDES permits not only protects the aquatic habitat but also the quality of the recreational experience.

Regulations controlling bait fish and other species-specific regulations

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will help reduce the spread of invasive species. Under the state law establishing the ISC, the council will recommend a four-tiered system for classifying invasive species, with the most harmful species made illegal to possess without a permit. The regulations need to be done very carefully with all the parties, especially the business community, involved. A 2010 deadline will not stop DEC from issuing emergency regulations for threats that have to be addressed immediately. Such rules already have been put into place for viral hemorrhagic septicemia, a fatal disorder of fish that has spread into western upstate from the Great Lakes; chronic wasting disease in whitetail deer; and Didymo discussed earlier.

Interpretation/ Education Programs

Educating the public is vital for the protection of natural resources. Education provides a better understanding of the complexity of ecosystems and their interrelationships with people and their actions. This understanding will also lead to increased support for protection and management.

Programs

Environmental educators prepare and carry out educational and interpretive programs related to natural resource and environmental quality management. They prepare multimedia and written material, conduct guided programs for a variety of public audiences and school groups and conduct training and teacher education workshops. Professional educators are sometimes assisted by seasonal staff and members of the Student Conservation Association. DEC and

OPRHP have often worked in conjunction with the Adirondack Park Agency and the State Education Department in planning and implementing cooperative education and interpretive endeavors. A renewed and expanded cooperative effort will be essential to enhancing our natural resource interpretation and education programming. The goal of such enhanced programming is to help create an environmental ethic and appreciation for the natural world among visitors to our parks and other open spaces, particularly among children and urban residents.

Facilities

OPRHP and DEC maintain nature centers and interpretation and education facilities and environmental camps throughout the state. These centers are dedicated to developing an awareness of the value and beauty of natural areas and knowledge of the habitats and species.

OPRHP administers several outdoor education centers, many of which are listed here, dedicated to developing an awareness of the value and beauty of natural areas and knowledge of the habits and worth of creatures, along with unique museums that chronicle the historic and cultural resources of an area. The Theodore Roosevelt Nature Center at Jones Beach State Park and the Emma Treadwell Thacher Nature Center at Thompson's Lake State Park are two relatively new nature centers that evolved through public/private partnerships. Similar types of facilities exist at the Taconic Outdoor Education Center's residential program as well as its day program at Clarence Fahnestock State Park and Minna Anthony Common Nature Center at Wellesley Island State Park. Other similar programs are provided at museums at Bear Mountain, Allegany, Niagara Reservation and Gilbert Lake State Parks.

DEC operates a number of interpretation and education facilities throughout

the State. The Bureau of Environmental Education operates four Environmental Education Centers (EECs): Five Rivers EEC in Delmar; Rogers EEC in Sherburne; Stony Kill EEC in Wappingers Falls and Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve and EEC in Cheektowaga. The Bureau is currently developing a Catskill Interpretive Center in Mt. Temper.

EECs offer a variety of personal and non-personal service activities. Staff-conducted interpretive and education services include guided walks, slide-illustrated lectures, workshops, curriculum-based lessons, and professional training and continuing education seminars in both on-site and off-site contexts. Other services include audio visual programs, exhibits, interpretive publications and self-guided interpretive trails.

The Bureau of Environmental Education also operates three conservation education camps: for youths aged 12-14 at Camp Colby in Saranac Lake, Camp DeBruce in Livingston Manor, and Camp Rushford in Caneadea. The summer of 1998 marked the opening of a new camp at Pack Forest in the southern Adirondacks. Here DEC offers week long ecology workshops for teens who are 15-17 years old. Throughout July and August, campers enjoy week-long residential outdoor education programming focusing on natural resources and environmental conservation.

Cultural Resource Stewardship and Interpretation

Existing Resources/Inventories

New York State possesses extensive archeological and historic resources. It is important that these cultural resources are identified, protected and interpreted for current and future generations. The benefits of preserving the past can enhance today's quality of life and function as economic generators.

New York's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) within OPRHP helps communities identify, evaluate, preserve, and revitalize their historic, archeological, and cultural resources. The SHPO administers programs authorized by both the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the New York State Historic Preservation Act of 1980. These programs, including the Statewide Historic Resources Survey, the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places, the federal historic rehabilitation tax credit, the Certified Local Government program, the state historic preservation grants program, state and federal environmental review, and a wide range of technical assistance, are provided through a network of teams assigned to territories across the state. The SHPO works with governments, the public, and educational and not-for-profit organizations to raise historic preservation awareness, to instill in New Yorkers a sense of pride in the state's unique history and to encourage heritage tourism and community revitalization.

State Preservation Historical Information Network Exchange (SPHINX)

This newly revamped system tracks survey data on more than 250,000 properties in the state. Users can seek out information regarding historic resources within specific municipalities.

Document Imaging Program

The State and National Registers of Historic Places Document Imaging program provides access to scanned images of New York's nomination documents and other related materials. Users of the system can take advantage of a powerful search program that can sort these nomination files based on a variety of information including Location, National Register Criteria, Architectural Styles, Building Materials and Areas of Significance.

The Geographic Information System for Archeology and National Register

Begun in 1989 this system provides a map depicting the approximate boundaries of each of the New York's State and National Register properties and districts. A second overlay depicts the general boundary of the state's known archeological areas. The user can simply select a county and town and then zoom into the map of the community to find the location of a listed property or known areas of archeological sensitivity. (All archeological sites are protected by a buffer zone)

Management and Resource Protection

The Field Services Bureau (FSB), acting as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), administers state

and federal preservation programs authorized by the New York State Historic Preservation Act (1980) and the National Historic Preservation Act (1966 as amended). Each of these laws authorizes the agency to conduct a range of program initiatives designed to protect and enhance privately owned historic properties as well as resources not specifically under the management of OPRHP.

The mission of FSB is to advocate the preservation of New York's cultural heritage through the identification, evaluation, registration, and protection of its significant buildings, structures, objects, places, and landscapes. This is supported by the following goals:

- To promote the use, reuse, and conservation of significant properties for the pleasure, education, inspiration, welfare, recreation, prosperity, and enrichment of the public.
- To protect, enhance, and preserve those resources which are significant to New York's diverse history and culture.
- To foster pride in our collective heritage by education and advocacy, in active partnership with public and private organizations, schools, and institutions.
- To coordinate state and federal preservation programs through consultation with individuals, organizations, and governmental agencies.

The New York SHPO has earned national recognition as an outstanding and progressive program. FSB is committed to fulfilling its mission to advocate for preservation while meeting the broad needs of the public for preservation services and programs.

The framework for New York State's preservation program involves four basic activities: identification, evaluation, protection, and incentives. The corresponding programs are:

- Cultural Resource Survey (identification and evaluation)

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- Data collected on over 257,500 properties since the beginning of the program in 1969
- State and Natural Register of Historic Places (designation)
- More than 85,000 structures, buildings, sites, and other features listed
- Protection (project review)
- 6,500+ reviews conducted annually
- Historic Preservation Tax Credits (incentives)
- Since 1976 has leveraged more than \$3 billion of investment in rehabilitation and reusing NYS historic structures
- Historic Preservation Grants (incentives)
- 50% matching grants under the EPF and Bond Act awarded to 249 projects (\$27.5 million) since 1995
- Over 100 grants to owners under the Barn Restoration and Preservation Program
- Certified Local Governments (incentives)
- 57 participating communities
- A newsletter for member communities
- An active listserv for member communities
- Outreach (education and technical assistance)
- Continued individual efforts (meetings, letters, phone calls, site visits)
- Produced and distributed program brochures
- Produced and distributed the newsletter, *The Preservationist*
- Produced and distributed a video promoting the registers program and community revitalization

Each of these programs are managed according to state and federal law regulations and standards and with exception of the State grants program, each is monitored by the National Park Service which matches the State's contribution to these external programs. The Bureau responds to a large demand by private citizens, government officials, consultants, and institutions for assistance and access to the full range of preservation concerns and initiatives.

Interpretive Programs

The oversight and technical services for the 35 State Historic Sites are provided by OPRHP's Bureau of Historic Sites. It provides specialized technical services (i.e. services impractical to decentralize or not readily available for other sources) which are necessary for the professional management of a statewide historic site system. These services include archeology survey and resource management, historic and landscape architecture, engineering, exhibit design and fabrication, historic research and interpretation, collection management, curation and conservation, and protective services.

Friends groups play an important part in the operation and maintenance of historic sites. At the present time, there are 15 not-for profit organizations, chartered by the New York State Board of Regents and recognized by OPRHP as "friends groups" of the State historic sites. (Note: This is exclusive of the nine sites, which are regarded as "affiliates" and are administered by local organizations via cooperative agreements with OPRHP.) Site specific in nature, these friends groups provide volunteer and monetary support for a wide range of site programs and activities, ranging from landscape restoration to collection acquisition, from office support to equipment purchase, from special event sponsorship to research and publication. Collectively, the friends groups represent over 5,000 members who volunteer well over 20,000 hours annually.

The Bureau of Historic Sites was established in 1972 to provide technical support and program assistance to OPRHP's State historic sites. Today the Bureau not only serves the needs of the 35 State Historic Sites, it also serves dozens of State parks which have significant cultural and historic resources. With support from the Bureau, the public's understanding of the rich history of the State, as represented

by its sites and parks, is immeasurably advanced. Comprehensive preservation and interpretive services are provided by nine bureau units.

Archeology – Conduct excavations and analysis of archeological resources at State historic sites in order to preserve the cultural record, interpret archeological evidence to the public, and manage a collection of over one million State historic site archeological artifacts.

Building and Landscape Conservation – Provide sites and parks with a full range of technical advice and assistance necessary to preserve historic structures and cultural landscapes, including: materials research and contract specifications; project compliance with state and federal preservation law; resource documentation, evaluation and planning (e.g. historic structures and cultural landscape reports); and, staff training.

Collections Management – Create and maintain automated records for OPRHP's historic, archival and artistic collections including inventories, collection acquisition and storage, and loan management.

Conservation – With expertise in eight different disciplines (e.g. paper, paintings, furniture, textiles) examine and undertake the treatment of historic and artistic collections, conduct surveys of environmental conditions at sites and parks, and advise and train staff, interns and volunteers on the proper care and handling of museum collections.

Curatorial Services – Undertake research into historic collections and social and cultural history necessary to furnish historic houses, support and curate orientation and thematic exhibits, interpret site collections, create authentic period reproductions, and produce

publications and scholarly reports (e.g. historic furnishings reports).

Exhibit Design and Fabrication —
Collaborate with other Bureau units and facility staff to create exhibits for State historic site and park visitor centers, nature centers and museums, and create computer-assisted designs for publications and related graphics.

Interpretive Services – Work with other units and facility staff to produce a wide variety of interpretive materials, including: exhibit scripts, on-site and school outreach program materials, promotional and educational brochures, visitor surveys and audience research, and signage.

Protective Services – provide sites and parks with technical assistance, system designs and training necessary to protect historic resources from fire, theft and natural disasters.

Research – Undertake primary and secondary research necessary to create interpretive materials and exhibits, planning studies and publications.

In addition to the above-mentioned services, the Bureau works with Albany office and regional staff to foster the formation of nonprofit friends organizations and other partnerships to support the preservation, development and public use of OPRHP's facilities. The Bureau also provides collections care and conservation services, on a contractual basis, to other state and federal agencies which have responsibility for cultural property.

Generally, the Bureau's primary mission is public service through preservation and education. More specifically, the Bureau aspires:

- To interpret the history of New York State for present and future genera-

tions through properties preserved and managed in the public trust and designated as New York State Historic Sites because of their associations with persons, places or events, of state and national importance; and to develop the educational potential of these sites to foster public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of New York State's heritage;

- To advise other bureaus and regions within OPRHP on the preservation and interpretation of historic resources within their jurisdiction; and,
- To advise and educate individuals, organizations, and other state agencies on the preservation and interpretation of historic resources related to national, state and local history.

