Introducing the Dextra Baldwin McGonagle Preserve
An Update from our Summer Interns
2013 Annual Report
An Evening Under the Stars

Another 115 acres preserved!

It’s Our Nature
Dear Friends,

First had the chance to hike the 115-acre parcel of land on Abbeyfield Lane in Patterson, New York last year. As part of the Ice Pond Conservation Area in the Great Swamp in Putnam County, the area is home to a wide variety of plant and animal species including a newly discovered leopard frog, more than 120 species of birds, and 600 species of vascular plants, mosses, and lichens. It was obvious that this was a piece of land that needed to be protected and preserved for future generations. In a unique collaboration, the Westchester Land Trust (WLT) worked with Putnam County Land Trust (PCLT) and Friends of the Great Swamp (FrOGS) to protect this land. Today, the parcels have been named the Dextra Baldwin McGonagle Preserve (p. 3) in honor of Candace Schafer at our Annual Benefit.

PCLT will maintain ownership of the Preserve, while WLT will hold the conservation easement, thus ensuring the continued stewardship of the land and protection of this acreage forever.

This project is a shining example of what our organization can achieve with the collaboration and support of the community. And, as important, it is another in what we expect to be many conservation successes completed in the near future. The number of projects in our pipeline is burgeoning, and it is the most geographically diverse it has ever been — stretching from the Long Island Sound and the Hudson River to Putnam County, with many locations in between.

It is an exciting time to be protecting and enhancing the natural resources in the community we all share. But much like the fact that it takes many hands to care for the land, it is my privilege to continue the work of WLT’s former Executive Director, Candace Schafer. WLT was proud to honor Candace Schafer at our Annual Benefit (p. 10) this past June and recognize her for the many successful projects she spearheaded during her tenure — protecting more than 450 acres including the Maryknoll Center in Ossining, Jensen and Burdick Farm in Putnam County, and many others. Protecting the land is just the first step. We have the responsibility to manage and steward it forever — clearing trails, building boardwalks, removing invasive plants, and restoring native trees and shrubs.

As we preserve and care for the land, we also have been training the next generation of conservationists. This summer, we had two interns engaged in several strategic projects at WLT preserves (p. 4). Their work will inform future land management decisions. We’re proud of their efforts, and who knows, one day, they may be the future custodians of WLT’s important work.

So, I invite you to join me and take a walk at one of our preserves, volunteer to clear a trail or harvest vegetables at our farm, and make a contribution in support of our efforts! We can’t do it without your participation.

Lori J. Ensinger
President.
A Successful Summer for WLT’s Interns

WLT’s summer interns, Mike Kaminski & Kristen Gamboa, applied their skills to a dynamic roster of conservation projects in the fields of Landscape Architecture and Plant Ecology.

Mike Kaminski—a native of Yorktown Heights and a recent graduate of University of Michigan’s School of Natural Resources and Environment—worked on several projects this summer. He designed enhanced parking areas at the Westchester Wilderness Walk/Zofnass Family Preserve (Pound Ridge), the Frederick P. Rose Preserve (Waccabuc), and the Rock Shelter Preserve (Waccabuc) using industry-specific computer programs like AutoCAD, Photoshop, and GIS. Additionally, Mike developed a sustainable landscape design plan for Sugar Hill Farm, WLT’s Bedford Hills headquarters. Mike created clear visuals so that WLT can, in turn, transform each of these projects from the conceptual to the buildable. In addition to his extensive design work, Mike researched local building ordinances and permitting requirements and met with various town officials and planners to ensure that his designs would be successfully implemented.

Kristen Gamboa, a third-year student at Sterling College, focused her summer internship pursuits on an exhaustive inventory of plant species found at a number of WLT’s public preserves—Westchester Wilderness Walk/Zofnass Family Preserve (Pound Ridge), Frederick P. Rose Preserve (Waccabuc), Rock Shelter Preserve (Waccabuc), and Pine Croft Meadow Preserve (Waccabuc). These surveys were critical, providing WLT’s stewardship team with ecological baselines that best inform future land management decisions.

“Working for nature, rather than against it, is one of the powerful lessons I have learned during my time at WLT. I am truly grateful knowing that this is the field where I belong.”

— Kristen Gamboa

Special thanks to Rusticus Garden Club for their support of our Landscape Architecture Internship.

These diverse perspectives deepened my understanding of how to craft truly sustainable solutions for each of my assignments this summer.”

— Mike Kaminski

Operating Support, Revenue & Expenses

SUPPORT AND REVENUE
Individual Donations $1,615,018
Foundation Donations 345,400
Corporate & Government Donations 14,909
Special Events net of expenses 202,462
Special Projects 1,000
Miscellaneous 5,412
Total operating Support and Revenue $1,911,201

EXPENSES
Program Services $747,466
Fundraising 211,510
Management and Administration 178,550
Non-Operating Endowment Donations: $505,977
Endowment Investment Income, net 8,000
Net Assets (December 31, 2013) 28,068,752

Total Operating Expenses $1,137,526

* Includes land held for conservation, Sugar Hill Farm, endowment funds, and other Board-designated and restricted funds.

Please visit our website or contact us for a copy of our audited financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2013.
Thank You to all of our incredibly generous donors and volunteers. It is only because of your support that we are able to accomplish all that we have. We are all in this together!
Exciting News!
Field Notes from our Stewardship Team

WLT’s stewardship team identified the Baltimore checkerspot butterfly at the Pine Croft Meadow Preserve (Lewiston) this summer. The preserve’s wet meadows provide this declining invertebrate with essential host plants. Over the coming months WLT will work to increase the size of the wet meadow by removing invasive shrubs.

This ‘red eft’—spotted by Bruce Churchill—is the land-loving amphibian that transforms from a fully aquatic larval stage to a juvenile, terrestrial stage (red eft) and back to an aquatic adult. Red efts roam across the forest floor for 2-5 years hunting worms and insect larvae and spend their winters hibernating under logs or leaves.

See something interesting on one of our Preserves, like a plant or animal? Don’t know what it is? Take a picture and post it to our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/WLandTrust

The plants we see around us in summer use the fall to get ready for the winter. To ensure the survival of each unique species that is part of our landscape, nature has produced a unique package of life that we call a seed. WLT preserves with meadows habitats are great places to observe ripening seeds of all sizes and shapes. Plan a visit to the Pine Croft Meadow Preserve in Waccabuc, the Tom Burke Preserve in Bedford, and the Danner Family Preserve at the Yorktown Putnam Valley border and look for the seeds of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers including the common milkweed, the quintessential seed producer of our local meadows. Bring along a field guide to native plants and a magnifying glass.

Stew on This!

Watch for this exciting news next year!
AN EVENING UNDER THE STARS
annual benefit
JUNE 14, 2014,
OLD SALEM FARM IN NORTH SALEM

Every June, the Westchester Land Trust holds its annual benefit honoring a group or individual whose commitment to our mission has been outstanding. This year was no different as 300 of our closest friends gathered to celebrate our preservation work and the achievements of former WLT Executive Director, Candace M. Schafer.

Guests marveled at the extraordinary view from Old Salem Farm’s double decker tent, generously donated by Ellen and Kamran Hakim and Pamela and David Small. Tastefully Yours catered an amazing meal, and there was dancing, a silent and live auction, and the premiere of WLT’s new video “Voices of Conservation.” (Visit westchesterlandtrust.org to view the video.) But the highlight of the evening was Candace who was honored with the Preservation Angel Award.

Jonathan Wiener, Chairman of WLT’s Board of Directors applauded Candace’s commitment to the organization, saying, “She worked to revitalize regional thinking across county and state borders through partnerships with other land conservation organizations and municipalities and she oversaw the protection of almost 450 acres of land.”

WLT applauds the outstanding generosity of all of its friends, supporters and sponsors. As we know we couldn’t do it alone, we are especially grateful to the members of the Benefit Committee including: Nanette Boume & John Delfs, MD, Amy & Keith Ferguson, Susan & James Henry, Jackie & Peter Kamenstein, Vivien G. Malloy, Gretchen & Peter Menzies, Mary Ann Petrilena, and Pamela & David Small.

All of the funds raised through this year’s Benefit will support WLT’s efforts to protect environmentally-important open space and care for and manage the 26 preserves it owns.

WLT receives $25,000 Grant from Westchester Community Foundation

WLT recently received a $25,000 grant from the Westchester Community Foundation’s (WCF) H.F. Kreh Memorial Fund in support of our efforts to improve 35 acres of wetland habitat along the Long Island Sound in Mamaroneck.

“The Westchester Land Trust is dedicated to protecting and caring for the local environment — from the Long Island Sound and the Hudson River to Putnam County, with many locations in between,” said Lori Ensinger, WLT President. “We are delighted that one of the area’s most engaged foundations recognized our efforts and decided to partner with us to improve this wetland habitat in Southern Westchester.”

WLT’s efforts will take place at the 35-acre Otter Creek Preserve — the largest privately-owned tidal wetland designated and protected as a nature sanctuary in Westchester County.

Wetlands are one of the most threatened ecosystems in the United States, according to the National Wildlife Federation, and according to the EPA, they benefit communities by providing nutrient regulation, filtering water, offering habitats for migratory birds, fish and mammals, and of course, serving as a critical flooding buffer during significant storms. “WLT’s work at Otter Creek will complement the Foundation’s support of other efforts to restore the Long Island Sound ecosystems and increase public access to its shores,” said Catherine Marash, Executive Director of the Westchester Community Foundation.

WLT Receives $36,000 Grant from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program Administered by the Land Trust Alliance

WLT was awarded $36,000 in New York State Conservation Partnership Program grant funds through the state’s Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), administered by the Land Trust Alliance.

This New York State Conservation Partnership Program grant specifically supports WLT’s efforts to protect 115 acres in the Ice Pond Conservation Area of the Great Swamp — a region of statewide ecological significance — in the Town of Patterson, New York in Putnam County (see story on page 3).

“The Westchester Land Trust applauds the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Commissioner Joe Martens, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, and the Land Trust Alliance for recognizing the importance of investing in the local conservation efforts of land trusts like ours as we work to preserve New York’s natural resources for generations to come,” said Lori Ensinger, WLT President.

YES! I want to make a contribution to protect the environment and enhance natural resources right here in Westchester and Eastern Putnam Counties:

☐ I have remembered the Westchester Land Trust in my will.
☐ I am interested in volunteering. Please contact me.
☐ I wish my gift to remain anonymous.
☐ I have enclosed/will send a matching gift form from my employer.
☐ I have enclosed/will send a gift certificate.
☐ Other $_________

Enclosed is my check payable to Westchester Land Trust.

To contribute online, please visit westchesterlandtrust.org
WHAT’S GOING ON

CHECK OUT OUR NEW VIDEO!

After premiering at WLT’s Annual Benefit in June, ‘Voices of Conservation’ is live on our website and ready to watch and share.

WLT NOW OFFERS NAMING OPPORTUNITIES AT ITS PRESERVES

WLT exists first and foremost to protect land, and since our founding more than 25 years ago, we have protected more than 8,000 acres from the Long Island Sound and the Hudson River, to Putnam County, and many locations in between. But it costs money to protect land... at times, a lot of money. And when we do, we have the responsibility to manage and care for the property forever!

That’s why, in an effort to support our ongoing and perpetual land management and stewardship efforts, WLT is proud to now offer select naming opportunities on some of its preserves. These opportunities include: adopting a trail, underwriting a specific enhancement project (such as tree planting, invasive plant removal, boardwalk construction, and the like), and supporting a front entrance kiosk. There are also opportunities for businesses and individuals to underwrite WLT’s website and/or newsletter.

If you’d like to show your support for WLT’s efforts through one of our new naming opportunities, please contact WLT’s Development Director, Tom Gabriel, at 914-234-6992 ext 18.

Check out the latest WLT events and news at westchesterlandtrust.org

Does Your Company Have a Workplace Giving Campaign?

The Westchester Land trust is a member of EarthShare New York, a nationwide federation of the nation’s most respected environmental and conservation charities. Supporting our organization is easy through EarthShare New York which works with your employer to organize workplace giving campaigns. By donating a small amount from your paycheck every week you can help WLT protect open space in Westchester. These gifts add up!

More and more companies now allow their employees to contribute to through Earth Share. Among them: Accenture, American Express, HBO, Hewlett Packard, Thomson Reuters, JP Morgan Chase, Toyota Motor Sales, UnitedHealth Group, and Walmart.

For more information about EarthShare New York, including how your employer can host its own campaign, view EarthShare New York’s Web site at www.earthshareny.org or directly at 646-496-0319. You may also contact WLT’s Development Director, Tom Gabriel at 914-234-6992 ext. 18 or Tom@Westchesterlandtrust.org.