



RLT News

Fall 2013

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Rensselaer Land Trust is to conserve the open spaces, watersheds and natural habitats of Rensselaer County, for the benefit of our communities and future generations.

VISION STATEMENT

We envision Rensselaer County having sufficient conserved land to maintain clean water, clean air, wildlife and plant habitats, local farms, working forests, and scenic beauty.

We envision the people of Rensselaer County being connected to nature; having access to outdoor places; understanding the benefits of land conservation; and enjoying the quality of life created by a balanced mix of urban, suburban, and rural communities.

We envision the Rensselaer Land Trust having sufficient staff, board of directors, members, volunteers, partnerships, and financial resources to accomplish our mission.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Achieving a Vision for Rensselaer County

—Nick Conrad, RLT President

How do you see Rensselaer County in ten years? Fifty years?

I see extensive forests still keeping my water clean. I see intact wetlands still filtering pollutants and absorbing potential flood waters. I see moose, bear, bobcat, scarlet tanagers, pink lady's slippers, and other animals and plants still thriving. I see views of rolling hills and valleys still visible as I drive, run, and hike in the County.

A similar vision for Rensselaer County underlies the new strategic plan RLT is developing. In our last issue I introduced RLT's new vision statement (see left). In addition to clean air and water, wildlife, and scenic landscapes, we recognize that Rensselaer County's quality of life also includes vibrant human communities – urban, suburban, and rural.

RLT's role is to protect lands and waters that are critical parts of this vision. Key questions identified in the Board's strategic planning retreats include: What do we want the land to conserve? How much of Rensselaer County needs to be conserved to make our vision a reality? Where do we pursue land conservation projects?

In order to help answer these questions, one key action in our strategic plan will be to develop a conservation plan for Rensselaer County. The goals of the plan are to identify those natural resources, ecological values, and land uses that are most important to conserve, and to determine what places in the County are most significant to these. For example, our member survey identified clean water as their highest environmental concern. One question addressed by a conservation plan would be, "Which watersheds in the County contribute the most to maintaining clean water?"

A County conservation plan would serve as a guide not just for RLT in proactively engaging in land protection projects, but also for our partners in nonprofits and municipalities.

RLT Benefit Performance at Troy Music Hall

Rensselaer Land Trust, The Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, and John Bulmer Photography are excited to announce the Hall debut of Troy's own Sean Rowe, April 12, 2014 at 8:00 p.m. A Meet the Artist Reception will be held from 6:00–7:00 p.m. prior to the performance at the Rensselaer County Historical Society. Both events will benefit the Rensselaer Land Trust.

A Troy native, alternative folk singer songwriter Rowe began his career playing at the local bars before coming to national attention with the release of his critically acclaimed album *Magic*, recorded at Collar City Sound and released through Collar City Records in 2009. Soon after this album, Sean signed with ANTI-Records and released *The Salesman and the Shark* in 2012. These albums, plus a rigorous international touring schedule, led to collaborations with Marketa Irglova, an appearance on The Late Show with Jimmy Kimmel, as well as a performance for NPR's Tiny Desk Concert series.

Sean Rowe Solo Acoustic April 12, 2014 Tickets on Sale Now!

Several years ago, musician and naturalist Rowe headed into the wilderness for some much needed solitude. He lived at a survival school called Hawk Circle Wilderness Education for an entire year and eventually embarked on the 24-day solo survival quest. "I spent an entire year living off the land and going into the woods and surviving on my own," he says. "I can't think of a more pure experience. I wrote most of the songs that were my first album, *Magic*. Writing for me is a very solitary experience. The wilderness is my home and my filter. I try to allude to something bigger in my music, but in a subtle way."



Rowe is a natural partner for RLT because of his love of the natural world and his personal connections to Rensselaer County. We are very pleased to partner with Rowe, Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, and John Bulmer Photography to further RLT's work to protect the natural resources that make Rensselaer County such a wonderful place to live and work.

Ticket Information

- Ticket prices are \$100, \$30, \$25, and \$20.
- There are a limited number of \$100 package priced tickets which include one (1) Sean Rowe performance ticket (best seats in the house) and one (1) ticket to the Meet the Artist reception. The \$100 package can be purchased through Troy Savings Music Hall's Box Office.

Tickets are available at the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall Box Office, 30 Second Street, Troy, Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. or they can be purchased via phone, (518) 273-0038, in person, or online at www.troymusichall.org.

If you wish to attend the Meet the Artist reception, \$50 tickets can purchased directly through RLT at www.renstrust.org.



JOHN BULMER PHOTOGRAPHY

www.bulmerphotography.com

New Affinity Program



RLT has a new partnership with Birds & Beans Coffee, which specializes in shade-grown coffee certified "Bird Friendly®" by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center. This certification means that Birds & Beans is 100% organic and shade-grown coffee. Every time you order their delicious coffee and use a zip code within RLT's service area, a portion of the sales will be donated to RLT. For more information visit our website at www.renstrust.org.

Special RLT Membership Offer When you Purchase Birds & Beans Coffee!

If you purchase Birds & Beans Coffee now through **December 31, 2013** and you are not already a member of Rensselaer Land Trust, you will receive a complimentary membership.

Finding Keys to Support RLT in Tough Times

Rensselaer Land Trust depends on your support. Your donations make it possible for us to open up natural areas to the public, protect our sources of drinking water, offer outdoor recreational opportunities, provide educational programs such as mushroom, dragonfly, fish, and wildflower identification workshops, and work with landowners to save natural treasures for future generations.

We especially appreciate your generosity in an era when state and federal funds are drying up and competition for foundation grants is stiff. We realize many of you are managing tight budgets, too. If you cannot make a large donation all at once, how about making a small steady monthly donation? How about donating a coin or stamp collection that no longer interests you? How about making a gift of stock instead of selling it and taking a loss? Deductible charitable gifts come in many different forms and we, as your land trust working to keep Rensselaer County a wonderful place to live and work, are set up to accept donations of all different types. Give Christine Young a call at 518-659-5263 to discuss options.

Thank you for finding ways to support us even in tough times.



Troy City Councilman Rodney Wiltshire
Planting Trees at Staalesen Preserve.



Spring Amphibian Hike at Geiser Preserve.

RLT Prepares for Renewal of Accreditation

In 2008, the Rensselaer Land Trust became one of the first 38 land trusts in the country to obtain accreditation through the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. The Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, accredits "land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent." Over 200 of the nation's 1,700 land trusts have now achieved this distinction. Accreditation lasts for five years and, this year, ours is up for renewal. We must undergo

an exhaustive organizational assessment to make sure we still comply with the rigorous standards and practices set forth by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. With the help of Linda London, our nonprofit management consultant, RLT staff and Board of Directors have been reviewing all of our policies, procedures, and plans to make sure they are ethical, effective, and practical. We want to be ready for the National Accreditation Commission's meticulous review. This takes a great deal of work, but attaining and maintaining National Accreditation is an investment in our organization. It assures us, our donors, and the people who have entrusted their land to us, that our organization is strong enough to defend the fresh water, fields and forests of Rensselaer County.

Public Comment Period for Renewal of Accreditation is Now Open

The land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs. The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how the RLT complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For the full list of standards see <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/tips-and-tools/indicator-practices>. To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org, or e-mail your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: (fax) 518-587-3183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 201, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Comments on RLT's application will be most useful by **January 2, 2014**.



Rensselaer Land Trust
 415 River Street
 Troy, NY 12180

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Stay in Touch with RLT!

E-NEWS

Send your e-mail address to
julie@renstrust.org

FACEBOOK

[www.facebook.com/
 RensselaerLandTrust](http://www.facebook.com/RensselaerLandTrust)

MEETUP

[www.meetup.com/
 Rensselaer-Land-Trust](http://www.meetup.com/Rensselaer-Land-Trust)

WEBSITE

www.renstrust.org

E-MAIL

renstrust@renstrust.org

PHONE

(518) 659-LAND (5263)

The Rensselaer Land Trust (RLT) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Founded in 1987, we have protected 846 acres, owning seven preserves with 289 acres and holding conservation easements on 12 properties with 557 acres. Your donations are our primary funding sources.



Printed on recycled paper. Reduce waste and bring on a new member—pass this newsletter along!

Support RLT with Your Next Pilsner

Beer is made up of almost 95% water, so having a consistent source of clean water is essential for brewing. To help ensure the purity of our water, Brown's Brewing Company *Pure Water Campaign* was created. An initiative that supports programs and efforts to keep our local water resources clean and pure. As a cornerstone of this campaign, Brown's brews the Tomhannock Pilsner in honor of the Tomhannock Reservoir, the source of water for all their dependable Ales and Lagers. Brown's donates a portion of the sales of their Tomhannock Pilsner to the Rensselaer Land Trust to support outreach programs for watershed conservation.

10% Off

One 16 oz. Pint of
 Tomhannock Pilsner



Offer has no cash value. Not transferable for cash, food, merchandise, other Brown's brands, wine, liquor or bottled beer. Not applicable/valid or incremental to Happy Hour or Mug Club pricing. Xmas Eve, Dec 24, 5-7 p.m. only. Offer good through Dec 24, 2013.

Upcoming Outings and Events

Hike Up and Down the Hollows to the Taconic Crest Trail – Part 3

Saturday, October 5 • 9:00 a.m.

We will hike a portion of the central Taconic Crest Trail. Refreshments will be waiting for us at the end. This will be a strenuous seven to eight mile hike with long steep uphill and downhill sections. No charge. Registration contact: Nick Conrad, (518) 279-1963, nbconrad@msn.com



6th Annual Oktoberfest Benefit Event

Saturday, October 19

1:00–9:30 p.m.

\$8 Admission

Live Performances with:

Flood Road, 1:00–3:00 p.m.

Chilly Nickels, 3:30–5:30 p.m.

East Bound Jesus, 6:30–9:30 p.m.

Annual Meeting

Saturday, December 7 • 9:00 a.m.–Noon

Breakfast Buffet at Brown's Revolution Hall.

Price TBA.

Keynote speaker: Dr. Steven A. Leibo presenting “**The United States, China, and the Climate Crisis: Can They Work Together to Save Civilization?**”

Dr. Steven A. Leibo is Professor of Modern International History & Politics at The Sage Colleges. A full bio can be found at www.renstrust.org.

Victorian Stroll Concert with George Wilson & RLT Open House

Sunday, December 8 • 2:00–4:00 p.m.



George Wilson, local renowned fiddler, multi-instrumental virtuoso, and singer will perform a variety of traditional and folk styles to be enjoyed by all. He has mastered nearly 500 upbeat tunes from New England, Quebec, Cape Breton, Scotland, Ireland, and Shetland. Concert will take place at RLT's office, 415 River Street, Troy. Free.

Snowshoe Hike at Geiser Preserve

Saturday, February 8 • 1:00–3:00 p.m.

More details to be posted at www.renstrust.org

Sean Rowe Acoustic Solo

Saturday, April 12

See ticket information on page 2.

6:00–7:00—Meet the Artist Reception at The Rensselaer County Pictorial Society

8:00 p.m.—Benefit Performance at The Troy Savings Bank Music Hall

For Updates Visit
www.renstrust.org