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E-NEWS

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WEBSITE

www.renstrust.org

E-MAIL

renstrust@renstrust.org

PHONE

(518) 659-LAND (5263)

The Rensselaer Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Founded in 1987, we have protected 1,152.44 acres, owning eight preserves with 347.64 acres and holding conservation easements on 14 properties with 790.8 acres. Your donations are our primary funding source.

Rensselaer Land Trust
415 River Street
Troy, NY 12180

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NEWS • OUTINGS • EVENTS FALL 2015/ANNUAL REPORT 2014

From the President

More reasons to visit our preserves!

Fall Greetings! Looking for new places to enjoy fall colors and see what nature has to offer? Put the Rensselaer Land Trust's preserves on your itinerary.

At our Kinderhook Creek Nature Preserve in Nassau, we have added 14 acres through a land donation from the Edward W. Golden Foundation, expanding the preserve to 73 acres. We are also close to clearing title to another 12.5 acres. We've put up a new preserve sign and kiosk, and



marked the trails. This is a beautiful location with wonderful hiking; I recommend the walk to Kinderhook Creek.

We've also made improvements to our Staalesen Preserve in Troy. Volunteers at our workday in May put up signs and fence posts, cleaned up trash and junk, and cut down invasive Asiatic bittersweet. Since then the fence and gates have been completed, and a path has been laid out from the upper entrance on Willard Avenue.

Looking to the future, the Land Trust is working to create more trails. We are partnering with the City of Troy and the art organization Post Contemporary to add public trails along the Wynantskill in Troy that will connect

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Upcoming Events

For more details go to www.renstrust.org

8th Annual Oktoberfest Benefit

Sat. October 17 • Doors open at noon

Support Rensselaer Land Trust by coming to Brown's Brewing Co.'s Oktoberfest Benefit event. Enjoy great food, great music, great cheer and best of all, a great cause!



Tickets

Tickets can be purchased in advance at www.renstrust.org for a \$15 contribution or at the door for a \$20 contribution.

Bands

Flood Road: 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

Chilly Nickels: 3:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.

Eastbound Jesus: 6:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.

Annual Meeting & Keynote Speaker

Sun. November 15 • 2:00 p.m. • \$15 per person
RSVP to renstrust@renstrust.org or 518-659-5263

Join us at Brown's Brewing Co.'s Revolution Hall as we celebrate the year's accomplishments, review plans for next year, hear a fascinating speaker, and enjoy good food and good company.

Our keynote speaker, Dr. Charles Boylen will present, "Major environmental threats to surface waters of the Northeastern US with specific reference to Rensselaer County"

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From the President Cont

the Staalesen Preserve and Burden Pond Park, and with the Village of Nassau to secure funding to convert part of the old Albany Hudson Electric Rail to a walking trail.

I would like to give a special appreciation to the Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation and to the McCarthy Charities for their generous support of the Land Trust's operating expenses.

With their support and yours, the Rensselaer Land Trust continues to conserve the natural beauty of Rensselaer County, to provide exceptional locations for outdoor recreation, and to contribute to our quality of life.

In appreciation,
Nick Conrad, President

Events Cont



Dr. Charles Boylen is a Professor of Biological Sciences at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and formerly Director and Associate Director of

Rensselaer's Darrin Fresh Water Institute (DFWI). With its research field station at Bolton Landing at Lake George, the DFWI has provided students and researchers from around the world with opportunities to study the environmental state of numerous lakes, ponded waters and streams in upstate New York. Dr. Boylen has authored over 100 scientific publications and presented over 250 presentations to scientific conferences and symposia worldwide.

Dr. Charles Boylen's talk will incorporate five major threats: eutrophication, acid deposition, invasive aquatic species, climate change, changes in land use, and watershed development.

Wreath Making

At Pineridge Cross Country Ski Center
Sat. November 21 • 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Learn to make a delicious smelling balsam wreath to last the entire season with a variety of fresh greens from our local trees. \$20 includes supplies and lunch. Your support will benefit the Rensselaer Land Trust and the Rensselaer Plateau Alliance, who are conserving your local forests. To register: (518) 674-3214 or fran.egbert@gmail.com



Victorian Stroll 2015
Concert with George Wilson & Land Trust's Annual Open House
Sun. December 6
2:00–4:00 p.m.

George Wilson, renowned local fiddler, multi-instrumental virtuoso, and singer will perform a variety of traditional and folk styles to be enjoyed by all. Concert will take place at Rensselaer Land Trust's office, 415 River Street, Troy. Free.

Snowshoe to Geiser Preserve for Animal Tracking

Sat. January 16, 2016 • 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

See who is living in our Geiser Preserve. Winter gives us a special opportunity to see the signs of unseen animals in the snow.

We will hike in on an old logging road in the heart of the Rensselaer Plateau. Then follow the one-mile trail up Perigo Hill with intermittent views of the Catskills and Taconics. To register: (518) 279-1963 or nbconrad@msn.com. \$5, Rensselaer Land Trust members free.



Remembering and Honoring Catherine Steele



Catherine (“Kate”) Steele passed away on December 12, 2014. Kate loved nature and learning, and she showed it by supporting organizations that aligned with the things she treasured. Rensselaer Land Trust is honored to be the recipient of a \$5,000 bequest from Kate. We are putting the funds she left us towards the programs she appreciated: land and water protection, stewardship and monitoring, natural history outings and workshops, and outdoor recreational programs. We are proud to be part of Kate’s legacy. Her gift of \$5,000 makes a big difference to our work and we thank her for her forethought and generosity in remembering us in her Last Will and Testament.

Leaving Your Legacy

What will you be remembered for? What will you leave behind?

Protecting our water, wetlands and woods for future generations of all species is a collective responsibility. Rensselaer Land Trust has been protecting the water and land of Rensselaer County for 28 years, and we will be here for generations to come. You can create your legacy for conservation with a planned gift to Rensselaer Land Trust.

Your gift will help us:

- Protect our water quality and its sources
- Open up new natural areas for people
- Protect wildlife corridors
- Provide unique nature and history education programs
- Conserve ecologically sensitive habitats

Have you considered Rensselaer Land Trust as a beneficiary in your estate planning?

For more information about bequests and beneficiary designations, contact Christine at Christine@renstrust.org or 518-659-5263.

From one generation to the next.....



Fran Martino Receives EPA Champion Award



Fran Martino, who runs our Hudson River Fish Advisory Program, received the Environmental Protection Agency Champion Award this year. Fran is an environmental educator who uses citizen science and

outdoor exploration to connect people to their local watershed. Under her direction, the Hudson River Fish Advisory Program educates the public about safe levels of eating fish from the Hudson River.

Fran expressed gratitude for this recognition, saying, "I appreciate the EPA's recognition of the value of my environmental education programs and outings throughout the Greater Stockport Creek Watershed and Hudson Valley. My thanks go out to Larisa W. Romanowski, Public Affairs Specialist for EPA, who nominated me for the award. EPA has supported my outreach efforts to raise awareness about how actions and things that we do, or don't do, affect the water quality of our local streams, lakes and rivers.

I try to connect people of all ages to our natural resources by getting them outdoors to enjoy a canoe trip, or a snowshoe walk, go fishing for the first time, or whatever it takes to get them to look at the natural world with their eyes re-focused. My goal is to improve the understanding about water conservation and pollution prevention, and give people, especially children, the tools they need to become good environmental stewards. The children of today will be the public opinion and decisions makers of tomorrow."

Congratulations, Fran!

Management of Invasive Plant Species

One of the things we consider when developing a stewardship plan for one of our preserves is a management strategy for controlling invasive plant species while preserving native plant and wildlife habitat. This year we have taken on a few invasive species projects that will benefit our properties and the public that enjoy these natural places.



On June 16, the Rensselaer Land Trust, Brookfield Renewable Energy Group, and Hoosic River Watershed Association joined forces to begin a multi-year effort to control the invasive water chestnut that is choking the Johnsonville Dam Boat Launch. Over 25 volunteers pulled up their waders or paddled out to deeper water to pull a dumpster load of the water chestnut that is covering the surface and making it impossible for paddlers to get through. We thank the tireless efforts of our volunteers who made the Johnsonville Dam Boat Launch an easier place to access this summer.

The Louis & Hortense Rubin Community Fellowship, administered by The Sage Colleges, was recently awarded to Dan Capuano, Assistant Professor at Hudson Valley Community College, to work with the Rensselaer Land Trust on an Invasive Species and Riparian Habitat Restoration Project at our John B. Staalesen Vanderheyden Preserve.

He will develop a stream bank restoration plan and a management plan for controlling the invasive species and replacing them with appropriate native plantings. Our goal is to improve this urban property into a beautiful gathering spot for the public, with appropriate recreational facilities, while preserving native plant and wildlife habitat.

Lastly, we are now a reporting agency for iMapInvasives. We have joined the ranks of many other citizen scientists to increase the knowledge and ability to control invasive species – a major threat to ecosystem health. As a reporting organization in this nation-wide database, inventory and mapping tool, we provide information about the locations of known invasive species and track our control efforts at the Staalensen Preserve and at the Hoosic River in Johnsonville.



Farewell to Board Member Ben Brinker



We regretfully say good-bye to Ben Brinker. During his two years on the Board of Directors, Ben's many contributions included monitoring our easement properties near Dyken Pond Center—and removing boulders from the trails there; and assisting with the establishment of our Kinderhook Creek Preserve as part of our Acquisitions Committee. Ben's job as an airline pilot is taking him, his wife Jenny, and their new puppy to a new home in Wallkill, where the local land trusts there

will now benefit from Ben's love of the outdoors and his passion for environmental conservation. We'll miss Jenny, too, whose volunteer work with the Land Trust has included leading a vernal pool hike at our Geiser Preserve and serving on our Fundraising Committee. We thank Ben and Jenny immensely for giving their time and labor to our important work, and we wish them the best in their new home.

Welcoming New Board Members



Paul Schroeder

Although I grew up in urban Albany, my family spent a lot of time in the outdoors camping, hiking and boating. Today I live in the country. I have always loved the natural world and rarely a day goes by these days when I do not walk at least two miles in the woods. A biologist by education and training, I soon left that world for the more lucrative occupation of real estate. As a commercial appraiser I saw firsthand the pressures that development places upon the ecology and aesthetics of the landscapes that surround us. I realized that, without some type of intervention, this trend is a one way street. Strategic protection of land is one of the best legacies we can leave for future generations.



Fred Alm

I've always derived a sense of spiritual replenishment from my time in natural surroundings, especially around water. I consider organizations like Rensselaer Land Trust to be an important counter-balance to the pressures to develop land, which in many cases is conducted with only profit in mind, and with no concern for the impact on the future.

Board of Directors

Nick Conrad, President
Sally Lawrence, Vice President
Bob Crowley, Treasurer
Kristina Younger, Secretary
Fred Alm
Carl Cipperly
Joseph Durkin, Executive Committee
Stacey Goldstein
Scott Morley
Thomas Phillips
Paul Schroeder
Allan Stern

Staff & Volunteers

Christine Young, Esq., Executive Director
Julie Moore, Admin. & Comm. Assistant
Fran Egbert, Outings Committee Chair
Hal Howard, Board Advisor



Outings Committee Members Needed

The Outings Committee plans and coordinates the Land Trust's annual schedule of hikes, paddles, history walks, workshops, and presentations. We are looking to develop new outings and to continue our favorite outings from past years, and for new ways to get the word out about our outings.

Outings Committee volunteers get to explore new places and events, to meet local experts and fellow outdoors enthusiasts, and to introduce people to Rensselaer County's special places. Outings Committee volunteers attend one or two meetings, conduct some communication by e-mail, to be responsible for two to three outings during the year, and to serve as backup for other committee volunteers if last minute changes are necessary.

Volunteers will get lots of support from me and other Land Trust Directors. Please join me in developing a great outings calendar for 2016. You can contact me at 674-3214 or fran.egbert@gmail.com.

-- Fran Egbert, Outings Committee Chair



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.

Financial Data

Income

Member Contributions	\$55,928
Other Contributions (gifts & grants)	\$58,873
Noncash Contributions	\$73,135
Special Events (net)	\$3,879
Interest Income	\$87
Total Revenue	\$191,903

Expense

Payroll Expense	\$65,345
Payroll Taxes	\$5,791
Professional Services	\$20,511
Advertising and Promotion	\$109
Office Expense	\$1,450
Occupancy	\$3,995
Travel	\$732
Depreciation, Depletion, and Amortization	\$557
Conferences, Conventions and Meetings	\$952
Insurance	\$7,133
Printing and Publications	\$8,003
Repairs	\$5,696
Membership Dues	\$1,735
Telephone	\$882
All other expenses	\$1,799
Total Expenses	\$124,690



Rensselaer Land Trust was awarded renewed accreditation in August 2014 and is one of only 280 land trusts from across the country that are now accredited. Renewal is a testament to our continuing use of good business practices, transaction transparency, ethics, honesty, solid management, and quality of work. Accreditation and its renewal requirements are rigorous and prove to our members, volunteers, donors and funders that we are serious about our conservation work.

Gifts

Grants

Health Research Incorporation
Land Trust Alliance
Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation
Royal Bank of Canada
The McCarthy Charities

Corporate Donors

AMP Abstract, LLC
Anthem Sports
Battenkill Veterinary Bovine
Boght & Oakwood Veterinary Clinics PLLC
Stewart's Shops

Corporate Sponsors

Birds and Beans–The Good Coffee
Brown's Brewing Company
Capital District Triathlon Club
Parkway Music LLC
Snyder Printing

Tribute Gifts

In Memory of James Clark
Berline Mountains Fish & Game Club

In Memory of Robert Ingalls
Jean and Robert Poppei

In Memory of Glen Martin
Maeve McBride

In Memory of Janet Rogers
Virginia Haviland
Deborah and Stephen Pentak
Meredith and Richard Rhindress
Frances and Gregory Zuke

In Memory of Robert Simms
Donna Simms

In Memory of Doris Walsh
Berline Mountains Fish & Game Club

In Honor of Susan and Tom Blandy
Marcia Hoppie

In Honor of Paul Schroeder
Lori Antonson

In-Kind Donations

John Bulmer
Carl Cipperly
Nick Conrad
Bob Crowley
Thomas Coonradt
Joe Durkin
Shirley Dunn
Francille Egbert

Empire Wine
Estate of Lorraine Winkler
Flying Pigs Farm
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Gregory Gaskell
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Hal Howard
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Honest Weight Food Co-op
Hudson Energy Economics
Sally Lawrence
Scott Morley
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Tom Phillips
Price Chopper
Sean Rowe
Paul Schroeder
Brian Shaughnessy
Ray Smith
Marcy Steinberg
Allan Stern
The Sage Colleges
Chris Wheland
George Wilson
Kristina Younger

Watershed Circle

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Jennifer and Robert Newton

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Joseph Durkin
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Alice and Harold Howard
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Kristina and Mark Younger

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Meredith and Richard Rhindress
Gretchen and Lewis Rubenstein
Miriam and Gregory Shields
Guinevere Thaler
Gillian Thompson
Barbara and Francis Welch
Gregory and Frances Zuke

2014 Accomplishments



Education • Outreach • Outings

- Hoosic River Paddle
- Rensselaer Plateau Traverse Hike
- Snow Hole Hike
- Celebration Walk at the Ridgeline Easement Property
- Forage Walk with Sean Rowe
- Wildflower Walk at Bear's Den Preserve
- Hudson River Fish Advisory 44 programs, including 34 school programs
- Stream Spotter Volunteer Citizen Science Program Training
- Training for stream assessment
- Water sampling training at our Ingalls and Kinderhook Nature Preserves
- Solar Energy Program
- Finding the Mohican Indians in Rensselaer County
- Wreath Making
- Edible Mushrooms and Learn the Gilled Fungi Workshops
- Mushroom Walks (2)
- Watershed Map and Brochure development funded by Royal Bank of Canada
- Blue Bird Society developed—55 members inducted who have supported us for 10 years+
- Eight tables at community events, including Troy's Farmers' Market
- Media Mentions: Print: 90, Radio: 132

Fundraising

- Membership growth at 8%
- Contributions to Restricted funds – endowment, stewardship, and legal defense
- Established Board Pledge Campaign
- Sean Rowe Benefit Concert and Meet the Artist Reception
- 7th Annual Oktoberfest Benefit hosted by Brown's Brewing Co.
- Battenkill Bike Race Marshalls
- Crystal Lake Triathlon Volunteers





Accreditation

- Awarded renewed accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

Land Protection

- Three parcels donated to create the Kinderhook Creek Nature Preserve (59.78 acres)
- Completed Sluyter Preserve conservation easement in Poestenkill (104 acres)
- Partnered with RPA in protecting 12,300 acres through a Forest Legacy Application

Stewardship

- Stream Spotter Training and Stream Assessments
- Weekly Trail Crew
- Monitored of all of our 22 properties
- Parking lot and kiosk construction at Kinderhook Creek Nature Preserve
- Tree planting at Staalesen Preserve
- Invasive Species removal at Staalesen Preserve and Bear's Den Preserve
- Trail maintenance at our preserves as well as other public lands in the county
- Fence construction at Staalesen Preserve
- Three surveys completed for York, Gaskell, and Newton's land donations
- Two baselines completed for Ridgeline Easement and Sluyter Preserve Easement

Partnerships

- Support for Rensselaer Plateau Alliance's Community Forest
- Friends of Dyken Pond – land acquisition and programs
- Joint Marketing Project with MHLC, Saratoga Plan, ASA, RPA
- Municipal Water Systems – Educational Watershed Protection brochure distribution

Workdays

- Tomhannock Reservoir shoreline clean-up
- Historic Cemetery Restoration Workday
- John B. Staalsen Vanderheyden Preserve Workday (3)

