Nature new york

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

FALL/WINTER 2009

The Nature of Change

Director's Message

As I jogged across the sand of Hampton Beach this past June and down into the choppy waters, two thoughts ran through my mind: "How cold is this water going to be?" and "When was the last time I actually swam in the Atlantic Ocean?"

I knew the answer to the first question as soon as I hit the waves: *really* cold! But I had to search my adrenaline-charged brain for the answer to the second. After spending years working for The Nature Conservancy in Arizona and Colorado, this was probably the first time I'd dipped my toes in the waters off the East Coast in seven years.

As I glided through the salty water and looked back at the shore, I was reminded yet again of just how incredibly diverse and beautiful New York state is — with the stunning beaches and marshes of Long Island, the magnificent waters of the Hudson River, the majestic high peaks of the Adirondacks and the wide expanse of the Great Lakes. Our state is truly a remarkable place.

However, with great opportunities also come great challenges. And as I learn more about what makes New York a special place, I also can't help but envision how these landscapes will fare in the years ahead. Climate change stands to affect New York significantly — from increased temperatures to rising sea levels that threaten human and natural communities.

But our state is also positioned to play a key role in finding solutions — and that gives me tremendous hope. In this issue of *Nature New York*, you will read about some of the ways in which the Conservancy is building on our strong science and conservation experience in New York to develop practical solutions to the global problem of climate change.

Initiatives like Rising Waters and the Coastal Resilience Project were developed and tested right here in the Empire State; now they are serving as models to prepare for sea level rise across the country. And our work to connect landscapes from Tug Hill to the Lake Champlain Valley has us working across chapter and state lines to find the right solutions for both people and nature.

But it doesn't stop there — we're crossing continents, too. This past September, I attended a breakfast hosted by Conservancy Trustee Zach Taylor in honor of the President of Mongolia and attended by Conservancy CEO Mark Tercek, staff, trustees and the Mongolian delegation. As the President spoke about the importance of our partnership, I was struck by the power of conservation to bring people and nations together.

What we do here in New York will have lasting impacts on conservation everywhere. As always, your support makes it all possible and for that, I thank you.

Sincerely,

Bill Ulfelder
State Director

P.S. Have you been to the Design for a Living World exhibition at the Cooper-Hewitt museum yet? If you haven't, check out the back page for a special offer in thanks of your continued support. Please hurry – the exhibit closes in January!

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

Nature
new york

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

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nature.org/newyork


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Editor's Note

Connect with Nature
For more information about the stories contained in *Nature New York* — and additional content like videos and slideshows — visit us online: nature.org/nyupdate.

Natural Inspiration
The Design for a Living World exhibition continues through January 4, 2010. See back page for a special offer on admission.

> *There can be no doubt that a society rooted in the soil is more stable than one rooted in pavements.* – Aldo Leopold

In Remembrance of Things

Learning from Long Island Express

By Emily Manley

Seventy-one years ago this September, a hurricane 500 miles wide with wind speeds topping out at 183 miles per hour slammed into the coast of Long Island with an impact that registered on seismographs in Alaska.

Named for its sheer force and speed, the Long Island Express arrived without warning, catching residents of New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island off guard and unprepared. The storm left more than 600 dead and $300 million in damage, and even altered the geographic shape of Long Island: 12 new inlets were created (including Shinnecock Inlet), and Montauk was temporarily an island.

While the Long Island Express remains the worst hurricane to ever hit New York, scientists warn that climate change could bring more intense storms to coastal communities around the world. In response, The Nature Conservancy has launched a new effort on Long Island, the Coastal Resilience Project, that will help places, plants, animals — and people — adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Riding the Wave

Sarah Newkirk, coastal team leader for the Conservancy on Long Island, usually opens her climate change discussion with an image of a giant snail taking over California's famous Hollywood sign.

"It's not a perfect analogy," she admits with a smile, "but it does illustrate the challenge of dealing with an enormous threat like sea level rise that is easy to ignore — until it's too late." Sea level rise, predicted to range from 7 to 22 inches by the 2050s, will make New York's coasts increasingly vulnerable to flooding, while warmer temperatures will bring stronger, more frequent storms. And in many ways New York is no more prepared today than it was in 1938. More than 60 percent of New Yorkers live somewhere along the coasts.

It's no coincidence that experts now rank New York as the third most dangerous major city for the next hurricane disaster, after Miami and New Orleans.

Brilliant and Resilient

That's why Newkirk's team, working with partners, has recently launched the Coastal Resilience Project (www.coastalresilience.org). The Web site, using Google Earth technology and interfaces, enables decision makers to visualize the effects of sea level rise and storm surge on Long Island's south shore, and to see how those effects will impact people and nature.

"The problem we're facing is that, despite a growing acceptance of climate change, public response to the foreseeable effects, especially flooding and storm surge, continues to lag," explains Newkirk. "Most communities and decision makers have very little access to detailed information on the impacts; this new Web site aims to change this knowledge deficit while also suggesting best practices and solutions."

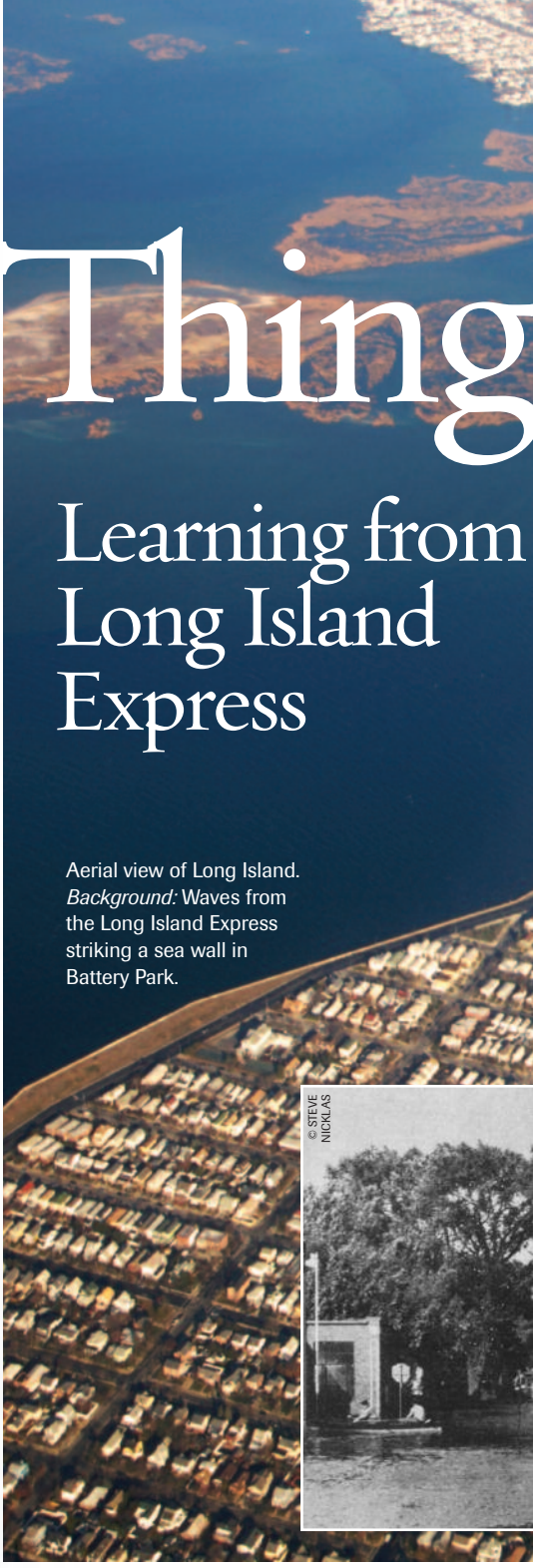
The Coastal Resilience Web site allows users to visualize various flooding scenarios caused by sea level rise and storm surge along Long Island's south shore. By zooming in on specific locations, users can see what places are at risk and learn ways to protect communities and natural ecosystems from the impacts.

People Get Ready

The Conservancy has also developed a five-step program for dealing with sea level rise on Long Island, centered on the premise that we can — and should — protect our environment while we protect ourselves. The healthier and more resilient our landscapes and communities, the better equipped they will be to absorb and withstand the effects of climate change.

The program includes the following recommendations:

1. *Restore natural habitat*: Coastal wetlands are the first line of defense against storm surges and waves, while simultaneously providing habitat for fish, birds and other wildlife. By protecting and restoring these ecosystems, we are also protecting our homes and livelihoods. In fact, new research shows that, had



Aerial view of Long Island. *Background:* Waves from the Long Island Express striking a sea wall in Battery Park.

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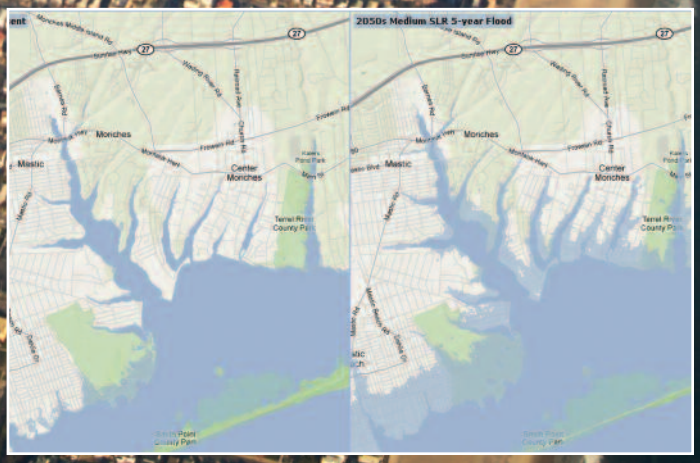


Inset left: In the aftermath of the Long Island Express, many streets and homes were flooded. *Inset right:* Left panel shows current conditions at Mean High Water at southern end of the Mastic Peninsula and the mouth of the Forge River. Right panel shows conditions in the 2050s at Mean High Water, under a moderate emissions sea level rise scenario, during a 5-year flood.

the original wetlands been intact and levees in better shape, a substantial portion of the $100 billion-plus in damages from Hurricane Katrina could have been avoided.

2. *Amend key laws*: Many laws that govern shoreline management predate our current knowledge of sea level rise. These laws should be updated to reflect new data and adequately protect communities and ecosystems.
3. *Plan for poststorm redevelopment*: In the absence of a plan to do otherwise, we often react quickly in the aftermath of storms and rebuild structures in the same style, place and design as the originals. By planning ahead, we may be able to redevelop communities in a more sustainable, less vulnerable way.
4. *Fund voluntary land acquisition*: Financial incentives should be provided to local governments that implement programs to buy out willing coastal landowners. This strategy would protect communities and permit natural processes to occur in the coastal zone.
5. *Relocate vulnerable public structures*: Governments should relocate vulnerable public structures threatened by sea level rise whenever possible. Sea walls are often costly, ineffective and harmful to the surrounding environment.

Coast to Coast

As high-quality elevation data becomes more widely available, Newkirk's team hopes to expand the project to the rest of Long Island and eventually other tidal areas of the state including New York City and the Hudson River Valley.

While the Conservancy continues to work toward reduced carbon emissions from every sector of the world economy, we know that changes to our climate have already begun. With a remembrance of the past and a nod to the future, now is the time to prepare, protect and restore ourselves, our community and our environment.

Go Online!
Check out the Coastal Resilience Project online at coastalresilience.org and visit nature.org/nyupdate for more information.


© CARL HELLMAN II

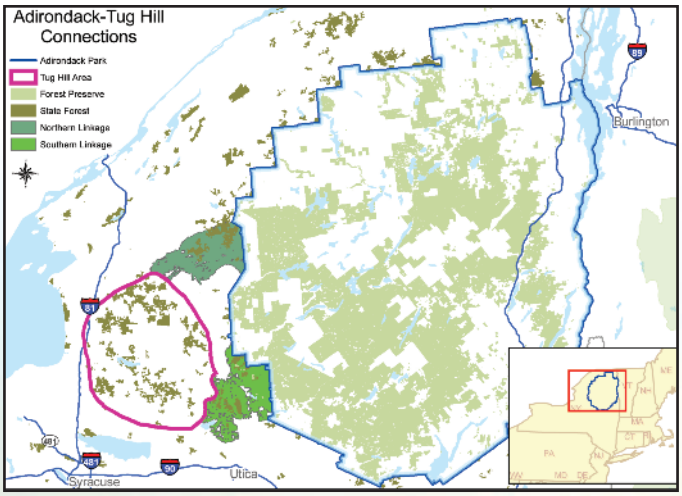
Connecting the Dots

The 6 million rambling acres of the Adirondack Park are separated from the protected forests of Tug Hill by nothing more than a small belt of land following the Black River Valley. If development and fragmentation continue in that narrow zone, the two adjacent areas could become isolated, limiting habitat for animals that require large swaths of land to roam.

In an effort to protect these patches of high-quality habitat, The Nature Conservancy, working with Tug Hill Tomorrow and Wildlife Conservation Society, recently completed a two-year project that identifies key pathways between Tug Hill and the Adirondacks.

Roam if You Want To

Maintaining connectivity between protected areas is vital for effective conservation. Even for species that do not migrate by season, the ability to find new mates in new places protects genetic health and diversity. And as a changing climate begins to shift habitats, weather patterns and temperatures, the ability for animals to roam becomes vital to survival.



"In the past, we've protected biodiversity by drawing lines around important places and designating them for protection," says Dirk Bryant, director of conservation programs for the Conservancy. "This strategy assumes that these places are stable and that as long as we manage them, the plants and animals that live there will be safe. With climate change, this assumption no longer holds true — we now know that animals ranging from birds to moose are going to need room to move if they are to survive."

Stepping Stones

Using complex computer models that incorporate species range, habitat preference and landscape characteristics, Conservancy scientists and partners predicted where pathways might be between Tug Hill and the Adirondacks for seven representative species: black bear, American marten, cougar, Canada lynx, moose, river otter and scarlet tanager.

After compiling all results onto a single map, two substantial pathways emerged: a northern linkage through Carthage and a southern linkage through Forestport (see map). Now the Conservancy and its partners are developing a series of on-the-ground strategies to make these connections a reality.

While land acquisition of key "stepping stones" is part of the solution, the Conservancy and partners will also work closely with local townships, decision makers and state agencies to incorporate connectivity objectives in land use planning, zoning and transportation infrastructure.

"We have to think creatively," says Bryant, "because it's not as though we are dealing with an area void of human development — people live, work and recreate in the Black River Valley. That means we have to have an arsenal of different strategies at hand to create these linkages while simultaneously respecting the needs of both humans and nature." ●

Go Online!
Learn more about our work to connect habitats across the state. Log on to nature.org/nyupdate.

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Losing Water, Gaining Ground

"Perhaps the truth depends on a walk around the lake." —Wallace Stevens

The Great Lakes region is a land of striking glacial legacies: spectacular lakes, vast wetlands, fertile southern soils and rugged northern terrain forested in spruce and fir. It is also a place of great complexities, wild variations and flat-out uncertainties, especially when it comes to the impacts of climate change.

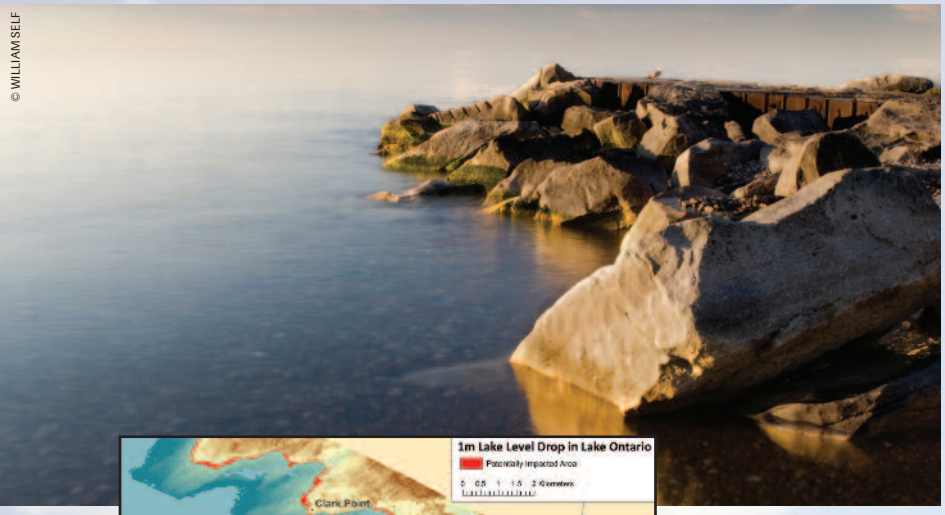
Unlike communities along the coasts of the Atlantic and the Hudson that are preparing for increased flooding and storm surges due to sea level rise, Great Lakes residents are facing a very different kind of climate effect: a significant decrease in lake levels across the region.

That's why The Nature Conservancy is currently working to determine the impacts of reduced lake levels now and in the future, and helping to devise solutions for both human and natural communities.

Testing the Waters

Higher temperatures, reduced winter ice cover, and subsequent increases in evaporation have scientists predicting a water loss of up to two and a half feet in Lake Ontario by 2050. But because levels in the Great Lakes vary by almost that much over 30 year cycles, and Lake Ontario's levels are regulated by a dam, determining exactly what the effects of climate-related losses might be on surrounding ecosystems is turning out to be a complex equation.

"It's tempting to think of the situation as if you're unplugging a bathtub," explains Kristin France, senior conservation scientist for The Nature Conservancy. "But in reality, lake levels vary a lot between seasons, and by even more from year to year. So seeing lake level declines will be more like watching the amount of money in your checking account change—it goes up and down, but it dips lower more often than it used to, and isn't quite as full as often as it used to be."



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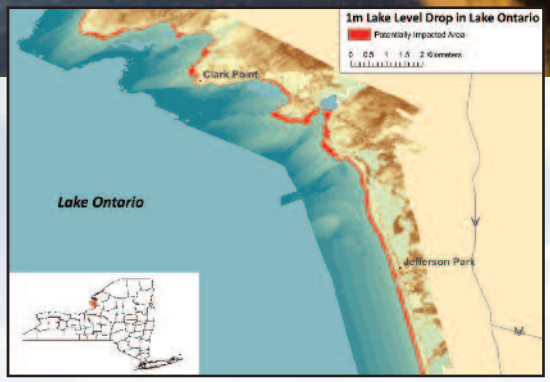


Coastal elevation along Lake Ontario: blue-green and red are currently below mean lake level; green, yellow and brown are currently above it. Red areas show lake bottom that might be routinely exposed if mean lake level was 1 meter lower. The pictured lake level decline is well within the range of what is predicted by the end of the century, and a bit more extreme than the maximum change in average lake level predicted by 2050 (0.75m). Since lake level varies as much as 0.25 meters within a year, and as much as 1.5 meters over decades, the particular lake level shown here might occur multiple times before mid-century under a range of climate scenarios. Elevation data provided courtesy of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; data analyzed and map created by NOAA Coastal Services Center for The Nature Conservancy.

Mapping the Future

To explore different water level scenarios—and what effects they might bring—scientists from the Conservancy and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coastal Services Center have created high-resolution topographical maps for both the shore and underwater terrain of Lake Ontario (see map).

"We are currently using the maps to think about how different lake level scenarios might play out in the future," explains France. "For example, if we imagine lake levels dropping by one and a half feet, the map can show us what kind of land might be exposed, where we might lose wetland habitat, and how human structures like docks or marinas could be affected."

The Conservancy hopes that the findings, when shared with local businesses, decision makers and communities, might help the region better prepare for the coming changes in ways that can benefit both nature and people. And on a larger scale, the methods, best practices and strategies developed here could be shared across the region, from Lake Erie to Lake Superior.

Go Online!
Check out nature.org/nyupdate for up-to-date news about our Great Lakes Program.

© RÉMI CARREIRO

Solving Scenarios

In 1609, four centuries ago this fall, English navigator Henry Hudson landed in what would later be called New York while searching for a passage to the Pacific. The landscape he encountered then was likely stunning: all old-growth forests, sparkling lakes, wild wetlands and river banks covered in heaps of oyster shells, evidence of the area's rich natural resources and Native Americans' taste for shellfish.

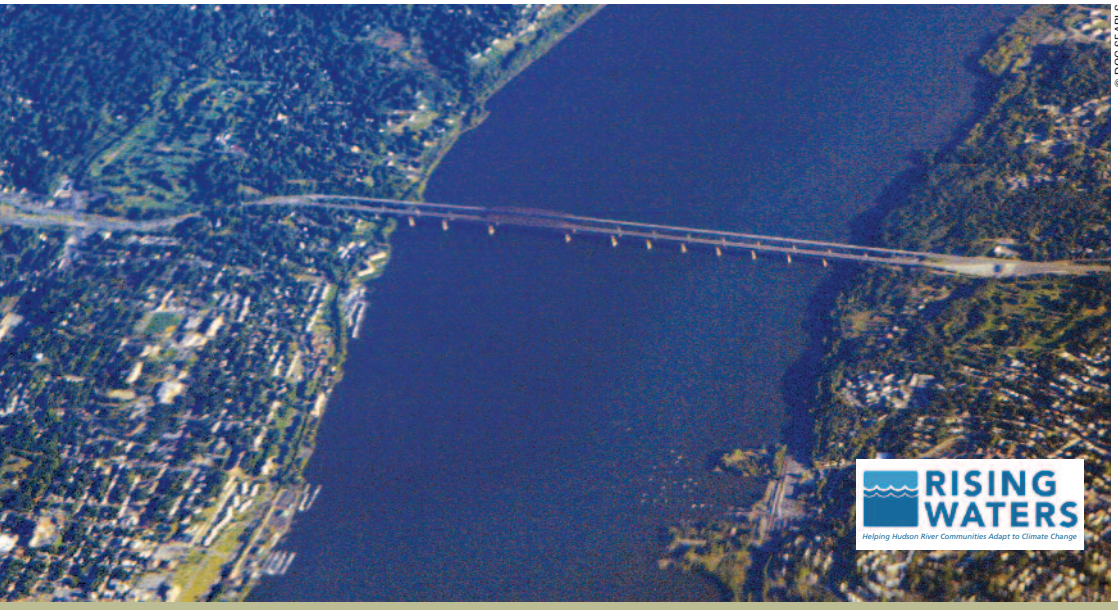
Over the years, the Hudson River has inspired millions, from artists to writers to entire social movements. And now that it faces the serious threat of climate change, the river has again inspired action. Rising Waters, led by The Nature Conservancy, is a diverse group of local constituents working to protect the Hudson Valley's environment, economy and quality of life from threats associated with climate change.

Waters in Motion

The Hudson's original name, *Muhheakantuck*, means "waters in constant motion," highlighting the fact that the waterway is more than a river—it's a tidal estuary, an arm of the sea where salty meets fresh, and where the waters rise and fall with the rhythm of the ocean.

This unique natural feature is both a blessing and a curse: while estuaries are among the most productive places on Earth, they are also extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

"The science is clear," says Katie Dolan, who helped lead Rising Waters. "The future Hudson Valley climate will likely be warmer, wetter and wilder." Indeed, scientists predict the area could experience up to 3 feet of sea level rise by 2100, and when this increase is considered alongside increased storm surges from tidal influences, the threat to the landscape becomes very, very real.



Visualizing Climate

Enter Rising Waters. For the past year, more than 160 local representatives, including emergency responders, railroad companies, government agencies and environmental groups, have come together at a series of "scenario planning" workshops to explore the impacts of climate change in the Hudson River Valley.

"Scenario planning uses plausible, researched stories to help constituents make sense of future situations," explains Dolan. Four scenarios were considered for the Hudson River, each describing different outcomes and trajectories from 2010 to 2030. Participants then used this knowledge to develop overarching strategies to prepare communities for the possible impacts of climate change.

Collective Consensus

A number of ideas emerged from the workshops, ranging from community planning to land-use and development considerations. The recommended actions and report can be found online at nature.org/risingwaters. At the final planning meeting, participants formed coalitions that will meet throughout 2010 to keep these strategies moving forward.

From its inception, Rising Waters aimed to create new connections with diverse stakeholders and make the case for climate change adaptation. While strong and collective action is still needed, the Conservancy looks forward to refining and implementing strategies to strengthen Hudson Valley communities in the face of a changing climate.

Go Online!
Check out nature.org/nyupdate to find out more about Rising Waters and download the final report.

A Year in Review

State Budget Victory Protects Environmental Funding

As the state budget felt the pinch of a declining economy, 2009 presented the conservation community with some significant challenges. Proposals included efforts to reduce the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), alter the steady revenue source of the EPF, and remove money from the dedicated fund for general state budget relief.

More than 100 environmental, health, agricultural, recreational and community stakeholder organizations, including The Nature Conservancy, came together as The Friends of New York's Environment to restore funding to protect our land, air and water — and therefore our health, economy and environment.

Seventeen million dollars was restored to the EPF — with critical funding for some of the Conservancy's priorities, including open space preservation, invasive species eradication, water protection, the Albany Pine Bush, Hudson River Estuary Program, and state land stewardship. The fund, totaling $222 million, also retained its revenue source — the state's Real Estate Transfer Tax. This has been the source of funds for the EPF since its creation in 1993, and is still providing adequate revenue even in the context of the current economy.

© ALEXANDRA BROWN

Finally, for the first time, the Legislature rejected a proposal to "sweep" money from the EPF into the state's General Fund, where it would not be available for critical environmental programs. These victories protected the integrity of the EPF and ensured continuation of programs that benefit the environment, communities and public health.

The Conservancy's work on the EPF now turns to the next state budget process, which will begin this winter with a proposal from Governor Paterson. We are hopeful that state officials will continue their commitment to New York's environmental programs.

Federal Climate Action

In late June, the House of Representatives passed a climate change bill sponsored by Congressmen Henry Waxman and Ed Markey. This comprehensive legislation — the first climate change bill to reach the House floor — signals to the world a readiness to fully engage in global climate change negotiations. The Nature Conservancy is pleased that the bill largely reflects the recommendations in the U.S. Climate Action Partnership's (USCAP) Blueprint for Legislative Action. As a member of USCAP, a coalition of major corporations and leading environmental organizations, the Conservancy looks forward to continuing efforts to refine the legislation as it moves toward a floor vote in the House.

© LEON WONG

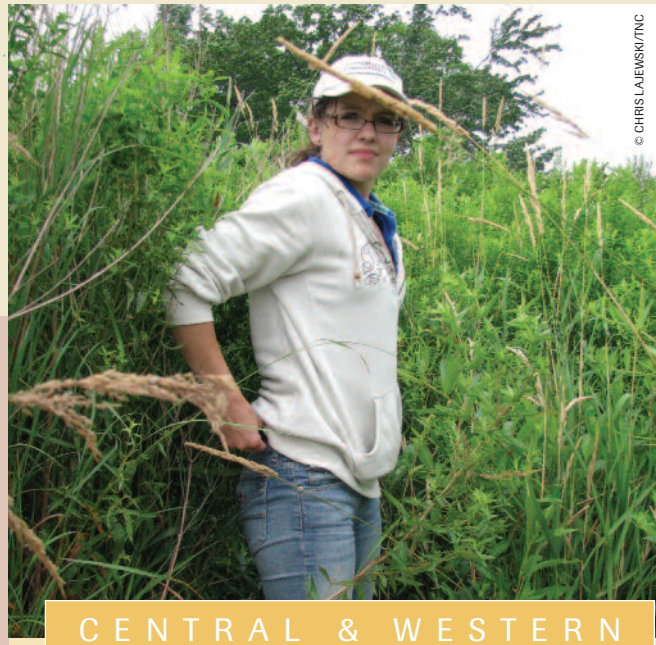
As the Senate now formulates its own version of the Waxman/Markey carbon cap-and-trade legislation, a key question will be how quickly emissions would be reduced as a result of the bill. The Conservancy urges legislators to reach for bold reductions that will be a strong signal to other countries and protect future generations.

The Conservancy will be working actively with members of both parties and in both houses to assist in enacting legislation that delivers the investments and emission reductions that will be needed in time to provide a strong basis for a U.S. negotiating position at the international climate talks in Copenhagen in December. The Conservancy has also worked closely with the congressional delegation in New York to make sure the final bill reflects the state's leadership on limiting and monitoring acid rain-producing gases.

As a global organization facing a global problem, the Conservancy is mindful of the need to develop a domestic policy that fits with what is happening around the world. The bill recognizes this with an innovative combination of market-based credits and a dedicated fund for forest protection and capacity building in other nations. At last, we have an opportunity to slow or halt forest destruction on a global scale, while providing critically needed emission reductions to stabilize our atmosphere.

Around the State

Right: Seasonal staff member Jessica Bumpus prepares to release purple loosestrife beetles. *Bottom right:* Purple loosestrife is a beautiful but aggressive invader. Each plant can produce up to 2.7 million seeds each year, quickly choking out important wetland habitat.



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ADIRONDACKS

Giving to Nature

Fieldwork is a crucial part of The Nature Conservancy's success and the cornerstone of our land management strategies.

The Fund for Field Ecology (FFE) equips us for timely and thorough analysis of conservation lands. A breakdown of our fieldwork in the Finch, Pruyn & Co. lands reveals how vital the resources of the FFE were in making the most efficient use of our time and expertise.

With the FFE, our scientists had the capacity to move quickly in assessing the vast 161,000-acre former Finch, Pruyn & Co. lands. First, they assembled all of the remote data they could find—soil types, plant and animal distributions, geological substrates, elevation and hydrology—so that they could have an initial sense of the property's attributes. When it came time for fieldwork, those exercises proved invaluable for prioritizing where to go and what to look for. As it turned out, two seasons of painstaking field surveys on the former Finch lands turned up a host of natural communities, species, and conditions.

© MATTHEW D. SCHLESINGER/NYNHP

Ecologist Tim Howard, on a shoulder of Snowy Mountain near Indian Lake, confirmed three new Bicknell's thrush nesting sites.

Our scientists verified forest types and ages, various fens, downed woody debris (an indicator of healthy forest dynamics), Bicknell's thrush, peregrine falcon, dwarf sand-cherry, pygmy snaketail, common loon, and Northern white-cedar swamp, among others.

In addition to skill and tenacity, this type of research requires funding. We're grateful to the family who founded the Fund for Field Ecology for providing the Adirondack Chapter and Adirondack Land Trust with financial resources to do a thorough and professional job. Given the scale of our recent land protection projects, we've used that pool of money to put a team of scientists on the job, applying their skills and making recommendations for conservation action.

The founders, who prefer to remain anonymous, invite others to join them in contributing to this mission-critical fund—and replenishing this pool so that our science is at its strongest for our next epic project.

Find out more at nature.org/adirondacks.

Go Online!
Visit us at nature.org/nyupdate for more conservation news around the state!

CENTRAL & WESTERN

Taking Action Against Invasives

Because of the threat invasive species pose to natural communities and native flora and fauna, the Central & Western New York Chapter hired five seasonal staff this summer to help manage and control non-native invaders like purple loosestrife, swallow-wort and water chestnut.

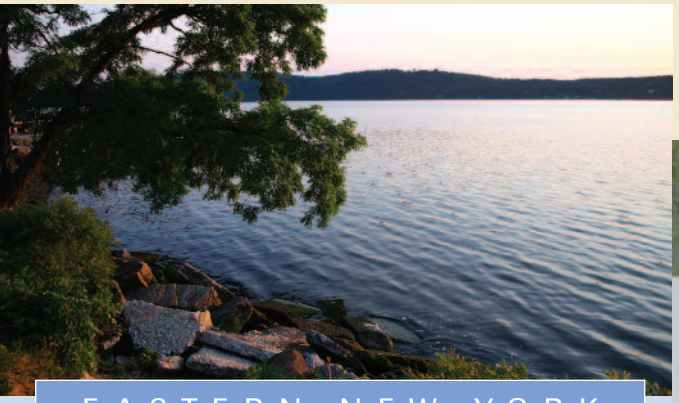
Although the data from the field season is still being analyzed, it is clear that the core forests of the Tug Hill Plateau have fewer invasive species occurrences than other areas with greater human populations and higher levels of disturbance. This means that the core forests of Tug Hill are minimally impacted by invasive plant species, which is good news for native plants and animals.

Chapter staff also participated in the release of 3,000 *Galerucella spp.* beetles to help control purple loosestrife at six high-priority fens and wetlands in eastern Lake Ontario. The beetles are a natural predator of purple loosestrife—a major threat to wetland health—and effectively control the spread of this highly invasive plant. These release sites will be monitored each fall and spring to track the success of the project.

Find out more at nature.org/cwny.

© CHRIS HELZER

The Hudson River could experience a sea level rise of up to 3 feet by 2100.



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EASTERN NEW YORK

Rising Waters Gets Noticed

New York's Rising Waters project was one of 20 programs selected from across the Conservancy to participate in a Climate Adaptation Clinic held in Salt Lake City in late August. Over 150 participants from 14 countries participated in this best practices learning clinic that focused on adapting conservation action plans in the face of the uncertain impacts of climate change.

The climate clinic follows the release of an important report documenting the results of Rising Waters, a multi-stakeholder scenario development process designed to consider the likely impacts of climate change on the Hudson Valley through 2030. (See page 6 to learn more about this program.)

"Climate change is already happening in the Hudson River Valley, and the best available scientific evidence shows that our climate will become increasingly warm, wet and variable," says project participant Katie Dolan. "Feedback from our peers at the clinic reinforced one of the project's key findings — that the capacity of the Hudson River Valley to withstand and adapt to climate change will depend critically on preparing for expected impacts *beforehand*, particularly with respect to decisions around land use and regulation."

Rising Waters has developed a suite of strategies designed to strengthen communities throughout the Hudson River Valley (online at nature.org/rising waters), and the project continues to be a model throughout the organization for climate change action and preparation.

Find out more at nature.org/eny.

© TNC

© TNC

Inset left: Matthew Zucker
Inset right: Brooke Britt
Below: Sam Gochman

© KARA JACKSON/ TNC

LONG ISLAND

Kids These Days...Are Giving to Nature

The latest cell phone or designer jeans? Who needs 'em!

That's the philosophy of three generous kids who spent their green by "going green" and donating to The Nature Conservancy.

Twelve-year-old Sam Gochman of Dix Hills, Long Island, turned his hand-painted watercolors of animals into greeting cards and sold them. He then donated the proceeds to help protect vital habitat. This young "John James Audubon" raised a whopping $1,000 for the Conservancy.

Half a world away in Hong Kong, fifth-grader Brooke Britt sold badges reading "I Saved a Tree" and donated funds to the Conservancy's Plant a Billion Trees campaign. But she didn't stop there. While spending the summer in Sag Harbor, Long Island, Brooke sold lemonade to raise even more money for Brazil's Atlantic Forest.

And there's another amazing young philanthropist with a different strategy.

Matthew Zucker, 10, asked his friends to contribute to the Conservancy rather than buying him birthday presents — and he's done it for the past two years.

"Living creatures are more important than birthday presents," explains Matthew. "I really like what The Nature Conservancy does. I feel good about helping to save species from dying out."

Lucy Cutler, director of philanthropy adds, "If you give kids the opportunity to make a difference now, they will continue to make a difference for the rest of their lives."

Find out more at nature.org/longisland.

Conservation Supporters

The Nature Conservancy's work is made possible through the efforts of thousands of members and supporters, including conservationists, scientists, private landowners, public officials, concerned citizens and organizations. Your commitment to the natural world has enabled us to make great strides toward achieving our conservation mission, both locally and globally. We are pleased to acknowledge the Conservancy's supporters who live in New York State or give to New York's Last Great Places. In particular, we'd like to recognize the following leadership gifts made from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009.

$1,000,000 - $4,999,999

Butler Conservation Fund
Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust
The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
The Linden Trust for Conservation
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The Open Space Institute's Northern Forest Protection Fund
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Mr. & Mrs. Mark L. Pacala
Pall Corporation
Panaphil Foundation
Ms. Sylvia Parker
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The Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation
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The Simons Foundation
Spia Foundation
Charles and Sally Svenson
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Mr. & Mrs. Gurdon Wattles
Connie & Craig Weatherup
The Whitehead Foundation
Wildlife Forever Fund
Wildwood Foundation
Ms. Deborah E. Wiley
Mr. Mark & Ms. Dorinda Pell Winkelman
Anonymous (7)

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Mr. W. M. Birch
Ms. Laurie A. Branch
Mr. Donald F. Chandler
Joseph & Joan Cullman Conservation Foundation, Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. J. Dennis Delafield
Mrs. James C. Edwards
The Energy East Foundation, Inc.
FJC
Mr. & Mrs. John Hussey
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Kaplan
Mr. Thomas G. Lightburn
Liz Claiborne Art Ortenberg Foundation
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Mr. & Mrs. Peter MacGill
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Mr. Bruce McLanahan
McNeil Investments
Edward W. McNeil
The Neuwirth Foundation Inc.
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Mr. John S. Potter Jr.
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
William E. & Maude S. Pritchard Charitable Trust
Reader's Digest Scholarship and Leadership Fund
Dr. & Mrs. Stephen Rosenfeld
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The Morris & Alma Schapiro Fund
Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.
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Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program
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$25,000 - $49,999

Mr. Kurt Abrahamson
The Ayco Charitable Foundation
Bank of America Foundation
JMR Barker Foundation
The Howard Bayne Fund
Richard S. Berry and Lucy A. Commoner
Peter and Fay Bisson
Bloomberg
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Brille
Mr. Michael H. Brown
Mr. Michael H. Coles & Ms. Edie Landeck
Harriet Ford Dickenson Foundation
The Durst Family
EarthShare
Eastman Kodak Company
Environmental Defense
Mr. & Mrs. John Evangelakos
The Foundation for the Jewish Community
Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation
Mr. Gregg Horowitz & Ms. Ellen Levy
The David S. Howe Foundation
Jefferson E. & Karen T. Hughes
Ivorybill Foundation, Inc.
Mr. Nathaniel J. Klipper
Lawrence H. Linden
Ms. Laura J. Lofaro/Sterling Resources International, Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Lowerre
Mr. & Mrs. Iqbal Mamdani
The James S. Marcus Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. Michael McConnell
Meadowhill Fund
Tom & Louise Middleton
Mr. Edward H. Miller
William L. Paternotte Family
Mrs. Meredith M. Prime
Puth Family Foundation
Rhodebeck Charitable Trust
Andrew Rosenthal & Shari Levine
Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Seymour
Mr. David J. Sorkin
Mr. Jerry I. Speyer & Ms. Katherine Farley
Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Stelle
The Daniel K. Thorne Foundation, Inc.
The Tides Center
Trust for Mutual Understanding
United Way of New York City
Weeden Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Wright
Wright-Cook Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Zucker
Anonymous (2)

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Mr. & Mrs. Russell Albanese
Helen & Roger Alcaly
The Allyn Foundation, Inc.
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Ms. Elizabeth Anderson
Avalon Park and Preserve, Inc.
Ms. Emily F. Baker & Mr. David Tobin
The Barrington Foundation
Frances & Benjamin Benenson Foundation, Inc.
Mr. Bill Benenson
Mr. & Mrs. Louis Bevilacqua
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Mr. & Mrs. Jan Breslow
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Chris & Deborah Buck
Mr. Clifford N. Burnstein & Ms. Sabra C. Turnbull
Butler Conservation Fund at the request of Tony Grassi
Mr. & Mrs. W. Russell Byers
Mr. & Mrs. Francis Cabot
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Shelley & Michael Carr
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The Chingos Foundation
Citi Global Impact Funding Trust, Inc.
Citigroup, Inc.
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Coleman Family Charitable Foundation
Mr. Ronald Collins & Dr. Nancy Wallbridge Collins
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Covanta Energy
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Harney & Sons Teas Corp.
Mary W. Harriman Foundation
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Francisca P. Irwin
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Mr. James H. Worth
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Zurich Financial Services
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We sincerely regret any errors contained in this listing. Please call Elyssa Davis at (212) 381-2198 to report any changes required. Thank you.


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Leaving a Legacy

From Bolivia to Bhutan, **Tom and Wendy Stephenson** have traveled widely, always carrying with them a respect for nature and a dedication to the environment. They are also longtime members of The Nature Conservancy's Legacy Club and are truly ambassadors for conservation. *Nature New York* recently took a moment to talk with Tom and Wendy about their travels and their interests.

Nature New York: Tell me a little bit about yourselves.

Tom: I grew up in Ithaca, New York. I've been a musician most of my life and spent 10 years touring with my own band. Later I had the opportunity to work with artists like Phil Collins and the Grateful Dead before becoming national sales manager of Roland and Boss recording products. I was lucky to be in the right place at the right time!

Wendy: I grew up in Iowa. After college, I taught French and then joined IBM. During my 30 years there, I was able to live in various places, including four years in Hong Kong. I'm now retired and working in real estate in Brooklyn, where Tom and I have lived for almost 10 years. We both enjoy diving, sailing, art, theater, opera, cooking and, of course, birding.

NNY: You mention birding—I know both of you are fantastic birders. How did you first get interested?


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Top left: Wendy Stephenson, right, with an Indian family at Point Calimere, a remote bird sanctuary in southern India.
Above: Tom Stephenson, middle, with birding guides in Bhutan.
Below: Red-bearded bee-eater.

Tom: My younger brother and I got hooked when we were very young. We used to go to lectures at Cornell's Lab of Ornithology and got to know Dr. Arthur Allen and Peter Paul Kellogg. In spring, my brother and I would try to get the first records of warblers and other migrants; one year we got over 30 percent of the first sightings. I've also done some special projects, including bird censuses on Conservancy properties in Montana and South Dakota, and training local bird guides in the country of Bhutan, at the request of the government. Here in Brooklyn, I lead bird walks, write articles for *Birding* magazine and *Bird Watcher's Digest*, give some lectures and try to indoctrinate as many as I can into the joys of birding and conservation.


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NNY: What ignited your interest in conservation?

Tom: Wendy and I both have found that bird-watching changes your relationship with the world. You must listen and look carefully, and become aware of life outside your normal purview. I remember the feelings I had as a kid: the wonder of the sounds, the colors, and above all, a great feeling of excitement at not knowing what you might find next. It was very magical, and still is. It's a simple progression from that to wanting to preserve the lives and habitats of all of the amazing species that share the world with us.

NNY: What drew you to the Conservancy and, specifically, the Legacy Club?

Wendy: We really support the Conservancy's approach to conservation. The simple mandate of directly buying land to preserve it is among the most effective we've ever seen, especially when that work is backed by strong science and the integration of local people and their economies. Joining the Legacy Club is just a natural extension of our desire to conserve natural places and our confidence in the Conservancy's approach. It provides an easy way to extend our commitment to conservation beyond what we can do in our own lifetime. I would recommend it heartily to anyone.

NNY: What gives you hope?

Tom: We live in an incredible time. The world is still full of magical forests, wetlands and grasslands. From cloud forests in Peru to the Kalihari to the Himalayan foothills of Bhutan, there are many amazing places full of beautiful birds, plants and animals. But threats like overpopulation, development and global warming may be closing the windows into these worlds if we don't act quickly. This is what drives our desire for conservation.

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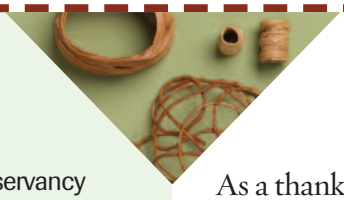

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TOP TO BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: MACKENZIE STROH; AMI VITALE; DAN WHIPPS; MACKENZIE STROH; AMI VITALE; AMI VITALE; MACKENZIE STROH; AMI VITALE; AMI VITALE; DAN WHIPPS; ROEL VAN TOUR.

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Bird in the Hand

Get up close and personal as our scientists capture, tag and release tiny migratory songbirds! Watch the action on the video at **nature.org/albanywarbler.**

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Natural Growth

The Internship Program for City Youth gets kids out of the city and into nature — this year a video camera followed them into the wilderness. Join in their adventures at **nature.org/ipcy.**

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Visiting Mianus

Did you know the Conservancy's first preserve is in Westchester County? Follow along as we visit Mianus River Gorge, 54 years later at **nature.org/visitmianus.**

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Join our Community

Stay up to date on New York news, events and bird walks! Sign up at **nature.org/nycommunity.**

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