

**PROTECTION PLAN SUMMARY**  
**THE NATURE CONSERVANCY'S 161,000-ACRE CONSERVATION PROJECT**  
**MARCH 2009**

**Major land purchase made**

On June 18, 2007, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) purchased 161,000 acres touching 27 towns in six counties in the Adirondacks for \$110 million. At that time, along with the Open Space Institute, which helped to finance the purchase, we outlined the steps we would take over 12 - 18 months to develop a plan for the future of those lands.

**Steps taken**

- Teamed up with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and reached out to elected officials, leaseholders, and other stakeholders to hear their ideas and concerns
- Worked with scientists from the New York Natural Heritage Program to conduct a rapid ecological assessment
- Contracted with the Finch Paper professional foresters to manage the property and the recreational leasing program (there has been no interruption in timber harvest operations or delivery of pulpwood to the Finch Paper mill since TNC's purchase)
- Launched a private fundraising campaign to raise the \$35 million needed to cover TNC's project costs and offset costs to New York State

**What we learned**

- The lands stand out among the Adirondacks' large private landholdings because of their size, location, condition, relation to major rivers, and biological

and scenic richness. They are of global, regional, and local significance.

- The forests, carefully stewarded for nearly a century by Finch, Pruyn & Co., are in excellent condition.
- Property tax revenue, timber industry jobs, recreational leasing, rural quality of life, development potential within hamlets, and public access (including snowmobile trails) are all important.

**What the plan looks like (acres rounded)**

- 92,000 acres to continue as working commercial forests, protected by a conservation easement (recreational leasing permitted)
- 65,000 acres to be transferred to New York as new public lands (includes a ten-year transition period for recreational leases on those lands)
- 1,170 acres set aside for community purposes in Newcomb, Long Lake, and Indian Lake
- 3,500 acres still under negotiation

**Conservation and community objectives met**

In recognition of the property's extraordinary ecological and economic importance, the carefully configured plan:

- Protects lands at the headwaters of one of New York's most important rivers: The Hudson
- Keeps forests intact; preserves habitat for resident, migratory, rare, and iconic species
- Secures working forests (where recreational leasing can continue)

- Offers future opportunities for world-class recreation in places that have traditionally been off-limits to the public, including snowmobile trails in nine towns
- Sets aside parcels for community purposes

### **Community support**

All 27 towns either approved or filed no objection to New York State's future expenditures of Environmental Protection Fund money to purchase the following:

- Conservation easement to protect 89,000 acres (NY already holds a conservation easement on 3,000 acres of the timberland sale property)
- 65,000 acres of new public lands

### **Transactions and next steps**

- TNC listed 92,000 acres with [LandVest](#) and sold it to ATP Timberland Invest. It is anticipated that New York State will acquire the conservation easement on

89,000 acres of those lands before year-end.

- TNC anticipates selling the parcels set aside for community purposes by year-end 2009, possibly sooner.
- Preparations and planning are underway for public access and snowmobile trails. They will become available for use after New York State acquires the easement and properties involved in this project.
- TNC and ATP are both contracting with the Finch Paper professional forestry team to oversee timber harvest operations and manage the recreational leasing programs.

### **Project recap**

Best place to review previous announcements, watch a video clip and read selected news clips:

[www.nature.org/adirondacks](http://www.nature.org/adirondacks)

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