



Bill Ulfelder © Jonathan Grassi

From Our Executive Director

It is an incredibly important and exciting time for The Nature Conservancy in New York. Earlier this year, we played an essential role in helping win passage of New York's nation-leading climate legislation, which will require net zero emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050. In September, we had the opportunity to facilitate a number of events during Climate Week NYC, a summit taking place alongside the UN General Assembly. We brought together policy makers, business leaders, advocates, First Nations representatives and more. Together, we discussed global climate action, the important role nature has to play in both mitigation and adaptation and how we can act at scale and with urgency. I hope you will join me in celebrating our work and partnerships with New York communities. Thank you for your continued support!

Bill Ulfelder, Executive Director

DONATIONS:

Go to nature.org/newyork to donate. Or you can email donate@tnc.org for more information.



A young community member waters flowers at the Community Blooms site. © Kate Frazer/TNC

Community Blooms

On the corner of Joseph Ave. and Langham St. in Rochester, an empty lot stood as a reminder that the neighborhood once bustled with shops and businesses. Thanks to an innovative community conservation project led by Green Visions, The Nature Conservancy, Joseph Avenue Business Association and the City of Rochester, that lot is now filled with native plants, buzzing bees, a garden path and thousands of flowers tended by local youth. A sign in front introduces the lot's new name, welcoming residents: Community Blooms—a flower farm and garden designed to help young people gain job experience and offer a place for the community to enjoy nature's many benefits.

Through interviews with neighbors and community leaders, the Conservancy learned that public safety and workforce development are urgent needs. Hearing these priorities, we reached out to Green Visions, a workforce development and

neighborhood beautification program that engages young people. Green Visions hired a team of three young adults from the Joseph Avenue community who gained experience in sales and business management as they grew and harvested flowers for custom-made bouquets sold at local Wegmans stores and the Rochester Public Market. The team also gained ecological management experience by working with the Conservancy to enrich the space with plantings that support pollinators while helping to absorb stormwater.

With some 5,000 vacant lots fragmenting Rochester neighborhoods, the project shows one way these spaces can be transformed to directly benefit communities. We love finding inclusive, equitable ways to make our cities healthier, and Community Blooms is an excellent example.



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We Need New Yorkers

Our climate is changing, and we're already living with the effects. Droughts. Heavy rains and flooding. Rising seas along our coasts. Sweltering city temperatures. Climate change can seem like an overwhelming problem, but we have solutions available right now. New York State just passed the most aggressive climate legislation in the country. This powerful law shows that New Yorkers are ambitious.



A climate change-fighting New Yorker
© Getty Images

Making Cities Healthier for All

Meet Darran Crabtree, Senior Conservation Strategy Advisor

Where and when did your interest in nature begin? Like many people, my interest in nature began as a kid growing up in the suburbs of NYC. My backyard bordered a small wooded area containing natural wonders I found endlessly fascinating, such as garter snakes and even mosquito larvae living in a puddle in the broken seat of my old Big Wheel bike. But some of my greatest fascination came from visits to the American Museum of Natural History. That is where I really began to take an interest in the nature inhabiting our entire planet, and when David Attenborough's *Life on Earth* premiered in 1979, this 8-year-old kid's mind exploded in the best possible way!

What does a healthier Rochester look like to you? Depending on where you spend time, Rochester can seem like a vibrant place where people and nature are thriving. But for large areas of the city, this isn't the case. A healthier Rochester, to me, would be a city where all residents feel safe and can support themselves and their families. It would be a city that benefits from the beauty that nature provides and a city that continues to invest in green jobs and green development initiatives. Our Community Blooms project is a great example of this.

What do you enjoy most about your work? I love that I continue to learn every day. I spent my college years and early career with The Nature Conservancy learning about nature, how it works and how people interfere with it. Recently, this view has been challenged as I learn about ways that people are a part of nature and how their interests need to be included in our conservation work. Moving away from an "us and them" mentality has been liberating—it is only "all of us" on this planet!

But fighting climate change requires more than ambition. It takes courage. The Nature Conservancy works hand-in-hand with partners across New York and around the world to solve the climate crisis, and you can help too.

- 1. Reduce carbon pollution:** Lower the amount of food you throw away, buy fewer things, shop locally and limit your meat consumption.
- 2. Use your voice:** Urge your elected officials to make climate change a priority and vote for candidates who are serious about fighting climate change.
- 3. Learn about the solutions available now:** Learn about how wetlands, dunes and marshes can help protect people and places during storms and how trees can capture carbon.