The world we depend on depends on you.
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Dear Friends:

As Chair of the New York Board of Trustees, it is my privilege to work with leaders like you who support The Nature Conservancy to create balanced solutions to our toughest environmental challenges, here and around the world.

With your partnership, New York is leading the nation on climate change. We catalyzed New York State’s landmark legislation to cut carbon emissions and expand renewable energy, setting a precedent. We are charting ways that wind and solar energy generation can benefit communities and wildlife habitat—a blueprint for other states to follow. And our forest-carbon program is motivating new investments in nature in New York and beyond, advancing the Conservancy’s global strategy to leverage healthy lands as a climate solution.

Thanks to generous New Yorkers, this year, the Conservancy also brought science to state and national decisions that sustain fisheries, conserve forests, combat invasive species, and reduce flood risk. Across New York and in nearly 75 countries and territories, the Conservancy provides examples and hope for safeguarding the natural world we all depend on.

In this final year of the Our World Campaign, I look forward to working with you to drive conservation and climate action, across boundaries and at a scale that matters.

Sincerely,

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New York Board Chair
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Dear Friends:

Thanks to your generous leadership, 2019 was a remarkable year for The Nature Conservancy in New York. In a climate-changing world, our work has never been more urgent, and I am grateful for your passion and commitment.

Through the *Our World* Campaign, you are empowering us to tackle the greatest challenges facing New York and the world. In 2019, we forged the strongest climate legislation in the United States—a clear path to expanding renewable energy, reducing emissions, and reaching a net-zero carbon economy by 2050. This groundbreaking law also dedicates funding to communities that are disproportionately burdened by pollution and establishes nature’s critical role in achieving any climate target. Thanks to you, we also successfully championed a ban on single-use plastic bags, lowering—by millions of tons—the plastic entering our waterways. And we promoted new guidelines to keep Atlantic fisheries sustainable and minimize the impacts of offshore wind energy on ocean life.

From the Finger Lakes to Long Island, we advance science, conservation know-how, and diverse partnerships to build a resilient future. We are united in the need to conserve land, water, and all the life it sustains, including ourselves. It is the legacy we must strive for.

With your valued partnership, we can meet the challenges ahead.

Thank you.

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BILL ULFELDER  
Executive Director,  
The Nature Conservancy in New York
Our Mission
Despite the challenges our planet faces, we believe nature and humanity will thrive together.

Now, more than ever, we need nature—for healthy lands and waters, a stable climate, and resilience to the changes ahead.

Our 4,000 conservationists work with partners and communities in nearly 75 countries and territories to conserve what future generations will need.

The world we depend on depends on us. And we depend on you.
Our World Campaign © Carlton Ward Jr.
New York’s goal was to raise $300 million toward the Conservancy’s $4.65-billion Our World Campaign—the largest, most ambitious campaign for conservation in history. Thanks to you, we surpassed this target in 2019, with impacts in New York and beyond. The challenges facing our world mean we cannot slow down. Together, we can achieve unprecedented conservation and climate progress.
Dear Friends:

The Our World Campaign has brought us together for a vital purpose: to advance conservation and climate action at a global scale. As Chair of the Campaign Executive Committee, I am inspired by what The Nature Conservancy has achieved to date, and by its unwavering efforts to create a better world.

Thanks to leaders across New York, we have surpassed our initial Our World Campaign goal and have raised more than $300 million for conservation. Since its launch, the campaign has allowed the Conservancy to set an impressive pace. In 2016, we conserved 400,000 km² of ocean waters and coastal habitat in the Seychelles Islands through innovative debt relief—a model the Conservancy is now replicating around the world. In 2017, we expanded community environmental programs to dozens of cities. In 2018, we released new science showing that conserving and restoring nature is essential to slowing climate change. Last year, we secured 250,000 acres of Appalachian forest critical for carbon storage, wildlife, and local economies. And we also saw stark reminders of what is at stake, as fires burned the Amazon and Australia and hurricanes battered the Caribbean—places where the Conservancy works to protect lands, coasts, coral reefs, and communities.

With the evolving challenges to our world, much more is required of us. We have therefore set greater goals: to transform public and private investments in nature, innovate solutions to sustainability, and inspire people in all walks of life to act. I hope you will join us to secure a thriving, healthy planet for future generations.

Thank you.

DANIEL C. CHUNG
Chair, Our World Campaign in New York
Why Us

We work at the scale of today’s challenges.

Together, we’ve delivered unprecedented results.

We marshal unparalleled science and policy expertise to tackle climate change; protect land and water; make food and water sustainable; and build healthy cities—in New York and around the world.

Last year alone, we helped forge the strongest climate legislation in the nation, committing New York to carbon-free electricity by 2040 and net-zero emissions by 2050, and made sure that nature is part of the solution. We also pressed for the country’s first traffic congestion pricing plan, reducing car fumes in New York City and raising billions for mass transit—a model for other cities. And we were instrumental in securing permanent authorization for the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, which protects natural areas across the nation.

Why Now

We must protect the progress we’ve made.

New York is leading the way.

Nature is our strongest ally—it cleans our air and water, absorbs carbon pollution, and is essential to our well-being. Since its founding, the Conservancy has safeguarded hundreds of millions of acres of land, water, and ocean around the world. In New York, we are transforming the management of forests, rivers and lakes, and fisheries, and accelerating action on climate change, so that future generations can thrive.

Last year, we innovated solutions for healthy oceans, shores, and communities. We unlocked new ways for people to move out of flood zones and restore these areas with resilient habitat—a strategy to save people, wetlands, and billions in disaster-recovery funds. And to sustain our oceans, we promoted smarter fishing regulations; wildlife-compatible designs for offshore wind energy; and a ban on single-use plastic bags.
The Future Depends on All of Us

Inspiring People to Connect to Conservation

Emily and Adam Steinberg  
Co-Chair and Member,  
New York Leadership Council

To strengthen the Conservancy’s impact, we inaugurated the New York Leadership Council in 2016. This group of prominent supporters forms a broad conservation constituency and is leading our mission to create a world where people and nature thrive through active input on programs and outreach strategies.

“Although The Nature Conservancy is a huge global organization, its work touches down right here in our neighborhood. The mission is relevant to us and has a material impact on our lives in New York City. It’s our hope to see the organization continue to be bold, aggressive, and hold itself to the highest standards while accelerating solutions to the world’s biggest conservation challenges.”
Safeguarding Lands and Waters for Generations to Come

Charlie Svenson
Adirondack Trustee

Building relationships, engaging partners, and using a non-confrontational approach enables us to conserve vast tracts of land to protect clean drinking water sources for communities across the state. And restoring and stewarding New York’s forests, wetlands, and coasts maintains corridors for wildlife to move through in a changing world.

“" The Conservancy’s size is its strength. As climate change continues, the Adirondacks will remain one of the most important places we’ve conserved in the United States. There’s nothing more satisfying than walking the land, in the field, and aligning with our partners to help shape the land’s future.”

Transforming Urban Landscapes into Healthy Cities

Emanuel J. Carter, Jr.
Central and Western Trustee and Professor of Landscape Architecture, State University of New York

Working closely with community partners, the Conservancy is transforming landscapes in cities for public enjoyment and to improve health and well-being. In Rochester, we teamed up with local nonprofits and the City to revitalize a vacant lot to benefit people of all backgrounds.

“As a city planner, what excites me is the Conservancy’s ability to assist communities in developing a love of place that comes from an attachment to nature. In turn, people want to invest in their communities—not only financially, but also in terms of where they live, what they care about, and how they interact with the neighborhood.”
2019 was a year of generosity and legacy, with impacts in New York and beyond. We celebrate five transformative gifts here, with deep gratitude.
The Conservancy’s hallmark is forging solutions at the local level and scaling them broadly, building on science and pragmatism. Thanks to leadership support from Marguerite and Reid Pitts, we are tackling environmental challenges at home and abroad. Our track record includes conserving more than 200 million acres of lands, lakes, and ocean—from New York to Montana to China. Essential to lasting success is strengthening indigenous land rights and stewardship—work championed by the Pitts family. In addition, they helped us engage diverse urban communities to bring more nature into cities, benefiting millions of people. Reid and Marguerite’s dedication is helping sustain the natural world for future generations—from British Columbia’s Heiltsuk Nation to New York City.
The Conservancy’s work in numerous places around the world has impressed me—with programs based in science and the rare ability to find common ground across diverse stakeholders. They are making a real difference and taking on new challenges.”

MARGUERITE O. PITTS
Grasslands are one of the most endangered ecosystems on Earth. From North America to Asia, these complex, highly diverse communities of plants, insects, and wildlife are under threat from development, poor management, and climate change. Thanks to leadership support from the BAND Foundation, we are helping protect 26 million acres of the world’s largest remaining temperate grasslands in Mongolia, where nomadic herders rely on pasture that is also refuge to rare antelopes and gazelles. In a study funded by the BAND Foundation, we are assessing the impacts of overgrazing on grasslands, their carbon sequestration capacity, and the viability of root stocks and seedbanks—information needed to maintain resilient landscapes. Here in New York, we are restoring meadows on Shelter Island, extending a habitat that is quickly disappearing around the world.
The Conservancy’s work in grassland systems is critical. We must do all we can to protect these undervalued habitats, and the Conservancy offers science-based solutions and an emphasis on locally-led initiatives.”

CLARK MITCHELL
BAND Foundation Trustee

Mongolia’s Eastern Steppe is a grassland system 10 times the size of the African Serengeti.
The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust

BUILDING HEALTHY CITIES

Trees clean and cool the air and improve the health and well-being of millions of people in cities. New York City’s urban forest spans parks, streets, and private property. As heat waves and storm flooding increase, trees are even more essential. With leadership support from The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, we launched an initiative to protect, restore, and expand the City’s urban forest to benefit all New Yorkers. We are bringing together a broad range of stakeholders who understand trees across the city to build the case for long-term investments in trees that will strengthen climate resilience, improve public health, and enhance equity. Thanks to the Helmsley Charitable Trust, we can work to ensure that New York City’s forest thrives, now and for generations to come.

NYC’s trees reduce public health costs by $60 MILLION EACH YEAR in part by filtering air pollution.

Each year, New York City’s trees provide a valuable health service, removing 1,100 tons of pollutants from the air.
“The vitality of any city depends on healthy residents, who in turn depend on a thriving environment—our natural surroundings and our health go hand in hand. The Conservancy works to make our hometown, New York City, a greener and healthier place for all New Yorkers.”

CHARLOTTE GAUTHIER
Associate Program Officer
New York City Program, Helmsley Trust
Miriam Harvey Catalyst Fund for Global Lands and People

LEVERAGING NATURE’S POWER

The Miriam Harvey Catalyst Fund, created by a generous couple, supports transformative solutions at a global scale. Thanks to the underwriting this fund provides, the Conservancy is combining science, policy, and the power of carbon-absorbing lands to tackle climate change. With support from the Miriam Harvey Fund, we quantified nature’s potential as a climate solution, showing that conserving and restoring natural lands is key to reducing one-third of the carbon emissions needed to keep global temperature rise below a 2°C threshold. We are now working with governments, businesses, and local communities to expand nature as a climate solution—from doubling the size of Columbia’s Chiribiquete National Park to managing 22 million acres of boreal forest in Canada. This named fund is a model for greater philanthropic impact, catalyzing conservation from South Asia to the Adirondacks.
The Nature Conservancy is elevating nature as a cost-effective way for countries to meet their climate goals and showing that nature’s help will be crucial to success in tackling climate change.”

CATALYST FUND CO-FOUNDER

We conserve landscapes at scale so that they continue to support livelihoods and absorb and store carbon.

© Mark Godfrey
Margaret L. Wendt Foundation

RESTORING ABUNDANT FISHERIES

Early European settlers found the Great Lakes waters teeming with whitefish, lake herring, and lake trout. Since that time, overfishing, pollution, and invasion by non-native species have taken a severe toll on the Great Lakes’ once world-renowned fisheries. The Margaret L. Wendt Foundation recognizes the importance of restoring fisheries in Lake Ontario and Lake Erie as an economic engine for lakeside cities, including Buffalo. With dedicated and renewed support from the Wendt Foundation, the Conservancy is launching a new initiative in Lake Erie to enhance the sustainability of fisheries for both people and nature.
We work to make Great Lakes fisheries more diverse and resilient, increasing native species such as lake herring and cisco.

Buffalo is intimately connected to Lake Erie through our history, economy, and quality of life. We applaud the Conservancy’s ability to partner with agencies, businesses, and local interests to restore our native fisheries and rebuild this incredible ecosystem.”
Celebrating People and Nature

New York Gala
Spring 2021
The Glasshouse, New York City

This biennial celebration brings together over 500 guests who care deeply about people and nature in an ever-changing world. This year, in recognition of his extraordinary commitment to conservation, we will honor past chair of our Global Board of Directors, Craig McCaw.
Mashomack Preserve Dinner Dance

July 25, 2020
Mashomack Preserve, Shelter Island

We will gather with supporters and friends to highlight the connection between healthy coasts and forests, clean waters, and a future where people and nature thrive.

Long Island Summer Benefit

June 27, 2020
The Center for Conservation, East Hampton

Our annual Long Island celebration, now in its 21st year, will showcase progress toward achieving clean waters and thriving habitats and fisheries.
Conservation accomplishments in New York and around the world, made possible by New Yorkers.
New York’s 2019 climate legislation leads the nation in unprecedented targets for clean energy and carbon emissions reductions, and the Conservancy was instrumental in getting this historic law passed.

We negotiated with stakeholders across sectors to successfully advocate for commitments to 100% carbon-free electricity by 2040 and carbon neutrality by 2050. To jumpstart this transition, we promoted smart, wildlife-compatible siting of new wind and solar energy facilities—starting on Long Island and offshore—and pushed for the nation’s first congestion pricing program to reduce traffic emissions in New York City. With much of the state vulnerable to flooding and sea-level rise, we also tested solutions that strengthen coastlines and lakeshores—such as restoring wetlands—and innovated ways to help communities move out of flood zones.

Beyond New York, the Conservancy led coalitions in Washington, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Maryland, and Maine that secured new commitments to climate and clean energy in these states. In Washington D.C., we grew Congress’s bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus to 65 members and galvanized dozens of corporations to call for a national price on carbon. And, since nature could absorb one-third of the carbon emissions needed to slow warming, we led campaigns to motivate investments in forests, wetlands, and mangroves worldwide.
Across New York, we protected places that provide important resources for wildlife and communities, now and in a changing future.

We conserved forests and floodplains—from Westchester County to the Adirondacks' Black River Valley—in partnership with land trusts, towns, and private landowners, helping improve forest health and resilience and increase carbon storage. To sustain our lands and waters, we secured significant increases in New York State’s environment funding, and successfully urged Congress to reauthorize the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. And we expanded our multi-year partnership with the state to halt the spread of harmful invasive species into New York’s lakes and forests.

Beyond New York, the Conservancy protected a quarter-million acres across the Central Appalachians by leveraging impact capital—a model that generates revenue for communities and for the conservation of wildlife habitat and water sources. In Canada's Northwest Territories, our partnership with the Lutsélé Ké Dene First Nation secured a 6.5 million-acre area that is important for grizzly bears and caribou. And we challenged global lenders and investors to join the biggest ever vision for saving marine habitat and vulnerable island communities—Blue Bonds—potentially conserving 1.5 million square miles of ocean.
Provide Food and Water Sustainably

Off New York’s Atlantic coast, we pushed for smarter fishing regulations to sustain abundant fish that are critical to whales, dolphins, and New York’s economy.

Forging an unprecedented coalition of scientists, fishermen, and charter boat captains, we advocated for management changes to keep menhaden and other fish populations thriving, including a ban on the use of destructive equipment in New York waters. And to reduce agricultural and fertilizer run-off into our waterways, we worked with farmers and other stakeholders to expand practices that improve soil health.

Beyond New York, the Conservancy leveraged partnerships with tech companies for agricultural sustainability, exploring innovations from monitoring water risk to improving accountability in supply chains. In the Central and Western Pacific Ocean, we launched a transformation in tuna fishing, helping eight island nations deploy state-of-the-art electronic monitoring on vessels in their waters that will reduce illegal fishing activities, which cost this region and vital ocean systems more than 1 million tons of fish each year.
We advanced New York City’s leadership in urban sustainability by pressing for a requirement that new buildings install green roofs or solar panels, and by launching an initiative to expand New York City’s urban forest.

We also joined forces with the City to accelerate deployment of green infrastructure—vegetation that absorbs excess stormwater—and, in Rochester, we transformed a vacant lot into a flower farm. To drive more effective water management, we unlocked $362 million in public funds to replace home septic systems on Long Island, cutting harmful nitrogen effluent by 200,000 pounds per year. And we trained more than 100 water managers across New York on collaborative solutions to pollution and waste.

Beyond New York, the Conservancy worked with community partners in 24 cities across the United States to bring more nature into neighborhoods that need it most. Focusing on equity, we co-created greening solutions with communities that enhance climate resilience and public health. To safeguard water supplies in burgeoning global cities, we expanded our urban Water Funds—financial mechanisms that conserve upstream lands to sustain rivers and groundwater—with the latest established in Nairobi, Kenya.
The world we depend on depends on you.