



Bill Ulfelder © Theo Morrison

## Thoughts from the Executive Director

It's true that The Nature Conservancy is the world's largest land trust. But about 15 years ago we realized that to fulfill our mission to conserve all life on earth, we need to conserve water, too. Since then, New York has helped lead the Conservancy to become a successful water conservation organization. It was in New York that the Conservancy removed its first dam, on the Neversink River, to restore natural flows and allow fish to migrate upstream. The Conservancy also borrowed New York City's model of conserving forests, mountains and farmlands around the city's drinking water supply, rather than spending billions to build a treatment facility, launching similar water funds in Quito, Bogota, and Lima. With the Water for Tomorrow program we are once again looking at how New York manages its water to ensure our rivers, streams and lakes remain healthy for people and nature.

BILL ULFELDER

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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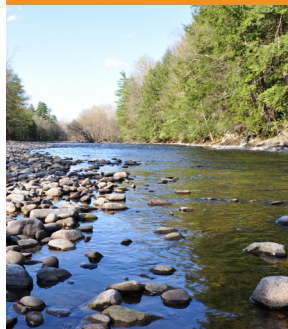
Fly-fishing in Spring Brook, a tributary of the Neversink River © TNC

## Water for Tomorrow

Each day, more than 15 billion gallons of water are withdrawn from New York's lakes, rivers, streams and groundwater. This water is a fundamental resource for life—both human and wild. That is why The Nature Conservancy has launched Water for Tomorrow, a program to reform the way fresh water is managed in New York State and help protect our water for New Yorkers in the future.

In 2011, the Conservancy worked to pass legislation that provided a framework for making decisions about water use. We're building on this success by creating a tool to monitor the potential effects of withdrawing water from our rivers, lakes and streams. For example, we could answer: If we had 1,000 wells withdrawing X gallons per day, how will that impact people and nature? This information will inform the management decisions that state regulators—and all New Yorkers—make about our water resources today, and ensure there is water for tomorrow. Learn more at [nature.org/nywater](https://www.nature.org/nywater).

### See For Yourself



Neversink River © Mari-Beth DeLucia/TNC

#### Check out a freshwater project at Neversink River Preserve

**Location:** Along the Neversink River in Cuddebackville, New York.

**Great for:** Ecology buffs. The 600-acre preserve is home to more than 30 rare species and natural communities, including the globally imperiled dwarf wedgemussel.

**Look for:** A color-coded trail system, which will guide you through easy terrain along the river. Among other birds and mammals, see otters and beavers in the creeks and wetlands that crisscross the preserve.

**Plan your visit:** Get directions and see a slideshow of our recent forest floodplain restoration project at [nature.org/neversink](https://www.nature.org/neversink).



## Q&A

# Meet Stuart Gruskin

Chief Conservation and External Affairs Officer for New York



**How can nature protect communities from the impacts of severe weather and storms?** As we prepare for climate-related hazards, such as the storm surge resulting from Hurricane Sandy, or a drought, or inland flooding, we can use the inherent strength of natural systems, such as wetlands and forests, to mitigate risks. These strategies are cost-effective, typically provide great co-benefits, and can be implemented immediately.

**What is the Conservancy's role in this?** We bring science and hands-on experience to the table. Our participation in Gov. Cuomo's 2100 Commission, for example, helped shape the Commission's recommendations for natural systems to protect New York's infrastructure. Meanwhile, we continue to focus on habitats, but we've found opportunities to address both conservation challenges and risk reduction. For example, we're working on an initiative to improve road culverts across the state. When we make them larger, it helps fish swim under roads more safely, and it also allows higher volumes of water and floating debris to pass through—thereby reducing the risks of flooding.

**How will this impact New Yorkers?** I think the 2100 Commission report will be a gift that keeps giving. It places natural and built solutions on equal standing, and that opens the door to many policy and project opportunities. I'm excited to work with our government and other partners to take advantage of those opportunities. If we do this right, there will be a very significant and lasting impact on New York.

Hudson River Park @ Theo Morrison

### FAST FACT

# \$63 billion

Economic damages incurred in the U.S. and Caribbean due to Hurricane Sandy

## News and Events



Research Assistant Raymond Waweru © M. Levy / TNC

**GRAND OPENING: ELDRIDGE WILDERNESS**  
On World Migratory Bird Day, The Nature Conservancy celebrated the re-opening of its 87-acre Eldridge Wilderness Preserve in Ithaca, New York. The event marked the completion of a nine-month project to make this little-known property a better community resource by improving trails, installing interpretive panels and adding mobile QR code signs that let people connect and learn more online. A recent Conservancy study showed that migrating birds depend on patches of wilderness like Eldridge as "stopover" sites to eat, rest and recharge during their arduous migrations. "People need natural refuges, too," said Jim Howe, The Nature Conservancy's director in Central and Western New York. "We hope the improvements at Eldridge Wilderness will give area students and families a new place for learning, discovery and volunteerism." [nature.org/eldridge](http://nature.org/eldridge)

## Get Involved

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