



Bill Ulfelder © Theo Morrison

Thoughts from the Executive Director

This summer marked a season of big accomplishments. In June, with Conservancy support and leadership, both houses of the state legislature passed groundbreaking legislation recognizing that science must inform decision making, state permitting, and resource decisions to address climate change, reduce risk and make New York more resilient. Significant lands were transferred by the Conservancy to the “Forever Wild” sections of the Adirondack and Catskills Parks. On Long Island, a dramatic change in awareness regarding nitrogen pollution resulted in more than \$400 million of post-Sandy funding for improving water quality for people and wildlife. Our LEAF program for urban youth celebrated its 20th season, and for the first time interns undertook urban conservation work in New York City. As we look ahead to the fall we expect even more success—including the adoption of Plan 2014 to better manage the waters of Lake Ontario. Read the interview with our Central and Western Chapter Director Jim Howe to learn more and see how you can get involved. Thanks for all your support to create these great accomplishments!

BILL ULFELDER



LEAF Alumni survey tree health and monitor for invasive insects at Prospect Park © TNC

New York’s Future Foresters

New York City needs trees. They clean the air, keep the city cool, increase property values and absorb carbon. But without stewardship, our urban forest is threatened by disease and non-native species. That is why The Nature Conservancy has launched a new initiative, *Healthy Trees, Healthy Cities*, to help maintain the health of urban forests around the country.

This summer, as part of the Conservancy’s Leaders in Environmental Action for the Future (LEAF) program, four college students helped get this project on the ground in New York City. In a paid internship, the students were trained in methods of tree and forest health assessment to help with earlier detection of non-native insect infestations in Prospect Park. The data they gather will help inform urban conservation work in New York City parks, and knowledge they acquire will provide a foundation for careers in science and urban forestry. Support this project at nature.org/donate.

Twenty Years in the Making



LEAF interns © Erika Nortemann

LEAF Program Celebrates a Milestone

In 1995, The Nature Conservancy in New York launched a small program to engage urban youth through paid summer internships, called Leaders in Environmental Action for the Future (LEAF). Now in its twentieth year, the LEAF program has expanded from hosting a few students in one state to hosting students at preserves in 27

states around the country. To date, more than 700 urban high schoolers have been exposed to nature and careers in conservation through the LEAF program, and alumni surveys show that more than 30 percent of those students have pursued careers in an environmental field because of the program. Learn more at nature.org/leaf.



Q&A

Plan for Lake Ontario

Central and Western Chapter Director Jim Howe on Plan 2014



What is Plan 2014? Plan 2014 is a science-based management plan that would restore 64,000 acres of Great Lakes wetlands. Plan 2014 was developed with input from hundreds of experts and thousands of citizens. It represents an investment in New York's recreation-based economy, our environment, clean energy and a resilient shoreline.

How does it work? For over 50 years, the Moses Saunders Dam, whose operating plan was developed with pre-computer technology, have regulated the levels of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. Plan 2014 uses modern simulations to adjust the dam's operating plan to work *with* nature. If adopted by the state, the new plan will protect New Yorkers from extreme water levels, restore critical wetlands, boost hydropower production and increase the resilience of 712 miles of shoreline.

Why do we need it? Plan 2014 is one of the most important environmental policy decisions of our lifetime. Healthier wetlands will support stronger populations of native fish and wildlife, improving the area's hunting, angling and wildlife-viewing opportunities and generating economic benefits of up to \$9.1 million per year.

How can New Yorkers help? Plan 2014 has received more than 15,000 expressions of citizen support, but its opponents remain vocal, spreading misinformation. Plan 2014 recognizes that Lake Ontario belongs to everyone. We hope all New Yorkers will explore its benefits and express support for its adoption.

Lake Ontario © Matt Levine / TNC; Jim Howe © TNC

TAKE ACTION

Get the facts about Plan 2014, and send a letter to Gov. Cuomo expressing your support at nature.org/plan2014.

Project Updates



Taking an inventory of culverts in the Adirondack region. © Erika Edgley / TNC

GRANTS FOR RESILIENCY IN NEW YORK
In June, the Department of the Interior announced more than \$100 million in competitive matching grants for restoration in communities damaged by Hurricane Sandy. The grants will fund 54 projects along the Atlantic Coast, including a project led by The Nature Conservancy's Adirondack Chapter to upgrade road culverts in New York's Lake Champlain Basin. The project will restore access to at least 40 miles of upstream cold-water habitat for native fish, mitigate future flood damage, improve safety on vital local road networks and reduce maintenance costs for communities. Learn more at nature.org/nyculverts.

BUTTERFLY GARDEN INSTALLED
Conservation staff spent the summer prepping our Thousand Acre Swamp Preserve for a new butterfly garden, with plantings and seedings set to begin this fall. With invasive species cleared and competing vegetation thinned, the grounds are ready for butterfly-friendly plants that are meant to attract monarchs and other pollinators. See photos and get tips for your own butterfly garden at facebook.com/tncny.

Get Involved

- Donate: Use the enclosed envelope or visit nature.org/donate
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- Follow us: facebook.com/tncny and twitter.com/nature_ny
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