



Bill Ulfelder © Theo Morrison

Thoughts from the Executive Director

After Hurricane Sandy, The Nature Conservancy committed to help New York build back smarter and use nature—wetlands, forests, dunes, mussel beds, oyster reefs and parks—to help protect us from the impacts of climate change. Now, two years later, New York State has taken a tremendous step with the passage of the Community Risk Reduction and Resiliency Act. This groundbreaking legislation, supported by The Nature Conservancy, requires decision makers to use the best available science to consider sea level rise, storm surge, and flooding when issuing certain state funding and permits. I'm encouraged by this development in our state's climate policy as I look ahead to 2015, as it means New York values science and is being proactive in ways to protect lives and save resources. And I'm excited about the conservation projects we are focusing on in the coming year where our science is making a difference — like Plan 2014 for Lake Ontario to better manage lake levels for people and wildlife, which you can read more about in this issue. Thank you for your continued support to make this work possible!

BILL ULFELDER

SUPPORT OUR WORK

Make a donation with the enclosed envelope or at nature.org/donate.



Lake Ontario's Braddock Bay, located northwest of Rochester © Mat Levine

Saving Lake Ontario

Lake Ontario—New York's largest freshwater body—represents one of the state's most important ecosystems. It provides drinking water, sustains migrating bird and spawning fish populations, supports recreational economies, and underpins a unique way of life for millions of New Yorkers.

The water levels of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River are currently regulated by the Moses Saunders Dam under an agreement between the U.S. and Canada that dates back more than 50 years. That plan was developed before modern science gave us a full understanding of the lake's fragile ecosystem. But now we know: The old system of management is slowly strangling Lake Ontario.

Fortunately, the International Joint Commission, a joint U.S.-Canadian entity, has developed Plan 2014 with input from many stakeholders, including The Nature Conservancy. "The Conservancy is a leader in sustainable dam management, pioneering projects such as the Penobscot River

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Jim Howe, Central and Western New York Director

restoration in Maine,” says Central and Western New York Director Jim Howe. “Now, New York has the chance to revitalize one of its greatest resources for people and nature.”

By adjusting the dam's operating plan to work with nature while preventing extreme high and low water levels, Plan 2014 will restore 64,000 acres of wetlands, boost hydropower production, and increase the resilience of hundreds of miles of shoreline. As the Syracuse Post wrote: “Plan 2014 makes sense because it looks at the big picture, the long-term picture. It's the right thing to do to make one of the Great Lakes even greater.”

New York State is currently reviewing the plan and considering whether to adopt it. Plan 2014 is the biggest opportunity in our lifetime to restore a Great Lake and help all who depend on it. Find out how you can support Plan 2014 at nature.org/plan2014.



Q&A

Why I Give to Nature

Former New York Board of Trustees member Marguerite Pitts



Why do you give to The Nature Conservancy? My husband and I give to the Conservancy because we have great respect for the organization's approach to conservation—informed by science and by local people and their needs, and partnering with other organizations and businesses to address complex issues. And, the Conservancy continues to share its growing knowledge of specific habitats with others across the globe.

How did you first get involved? I first learned about the Conservancy in the late 1960s when my role model, Aunt Eliz, told me to watch an important new organization that deserved support. My involvement honors my Aunt's foresight. Around 2000, I joined the Central Park bird walks, then the New York International Council, and later the New York State Board of Trustees.

What about the Conservancy's work most inspires you? I have seen The Nature Conservancy in action around the world—everywhere from Mongolia and Guatemala, to North Carolina and Maine. Every project I have seen has been based on science and is well-planned and executed by dedicated and intelligent staff members making a significant difference. I become more dedicated to the Conservancy with each project I visit.

What is your wish for nature in the future? I hope that future generations will care even more and understand more than we do about preserving biodiversity, and that they will find a way for development to occur worldwide without destroying our environment.

Elk Lake in Adirondack Park © Gary D. Paige; Marguerite Pitts © M. Pitts

FAST FACT

720,000

Acres protected across New York by the Conservancy

News and Updates



Long Island coastline © Kenton Rowe

CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN NEW YORK

Thanks in part to the vocal support of our members who downloaded letters and mailed them to Gov. Cuomo, New York State is one step closer to climate resilience. The Community Risk Reduction and Resiliency Act was signed into law on Sept. 22, and requires that for certain state permitting and funding programs applicants proactively consider scientifically projected climate change impacts. It recognizes that our climate is changing, and that being prepared is the most prudent way to mitigate risk. Learn more and find other ways to take action at nature.org/nypolicy.

MAKE A GIFT OF STOCK FOR NATURE

As an alternative to an outright donation, consider making a gift of stock. When you give appreciated securities, you may receive an immediate tax deduction and savings on capital gains taxes. For more information, contact Melissa Weigel at **212-381-2192** or mweigel@tnc.org.

Get Involved

Want to know more about what The Nature Conservancy is up to in New York? There are lots of ways to connect with us!

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- Sign up for our free, e-newsletter: nature.org/nyemail
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