

Niagara River Greenway Commission Consultation and Review Form

Date of Submittal: 6/30/2026

Project Registration Number (*office use only*):

Type of Review Required (please check one):

☒ Mandatory Consultation for proposals seeking Greenway Funding

☐ Voluntary Review and/or Endorsement for proposals not seeking Greenway Funding

PROJECT SPONSOR INFORMATION

Name:	Western New York Land Conservancy, Inc.
Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 471, East Aurora
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14052
Federal ID#:	22-3160426
Charities Registration #:	05-27-68

PROJECT TYPE (Please check only ONE)

☐ Trail Development / Improvement

☐ Interpretation / Cultural Monuments

☒ Ecosystem / Riparian Habitat Restoration

☐ Stewardship

☐ Niagara River Greenway Placemaking / Public Access / Wayfinding

FUNDING COMMITTEE

☐ Host Community Standing Committee

☒ Ecological Standing Committee

☐ Buffalo and Erie County Standing Committee

☐ State Parks Standing Committee

☐ Unsure at this time / N/A

TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED

\$203,884

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM OTHER SOURCES

<u>Source</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Buffalo Ornithological Society	\$1,500

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name:	Restoring Habitat for Grassland Birds at the Jim & Edna Braddell Preserve
Location (include GPS coordinates if possible):	43.035368, -78.987923
Project Site Address:	South of Bedell Rd., near the I-190 overpass, Grand Island
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14072
Minor Civil Division(s):	Grand Island
County:	Erie
Project Proponent Property Interest (own, lease, easement or other):	Western New York Land Conservancy, own.

AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

Name:	Marisa Riggi
Title:	Executive Director
Business Address:	P.O. Box 471, East Aurora
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14052
Work Number:	716-687-1225
Cell Number:	716-687-1225
E-Mail Address:	marisa@wnylc.org

PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT

Name:	Kyra Umrigar
Title:	Grants Specialist
Organization / Firm:	Western New York Land Conservancy, Inc.
Business Address:	P.O. Box 471, East Aurora
State:	New York
Zip Code:	14052
Work Number:	716-687-1225x111
Cell Number:	716-687-1225
E-Mail Address:	kumrigar@wnylc.org

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Please attach material which responds to the following six items in the order that they are presented.

1. In a brief paragraph, describe the project and its purpose, how and when it will be accomplished, and why it is important.

The Western New York Land Conservancy proposes a three-year habitat restoration project at the permanently protected Jim & Edna Braddell Preserve on Grand Island. Protected in 2024 with support from the Greenway Ecological Fund, the 38.3-acre preserve contains grasslands, wetlands, vernal pools, and mature trees and connects to the adjacent Alt Nature Preserve and Center, creating a larger network of protected habitat. Restoration activities will follow NYSDEC grassland habitat management guidance and will focus on controlling invasive species, increasing native plant diversity, and enhancing habitat for declining grassland birds. The former agricultural field currently supports nearly 60 documented bird species, including Northern Harrier, Bobolink, American Kestrel, Wood Thrush, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. By restoring native grassland communities, the project will provide improved habitat for birds, pollinators, amphibians, and mammals while strengthening the ecological resilience of this important landscape. The restored preserve will also provide community benefits by improving stormwater infiltration, reducing erosion and flooding, supporting cleaner waterways, sequestering carbon, and preserving open space.

2. Referring to the Niagara River Greenway Plan, clearly document and describe how the proposed project will advance the Niagara River Greenway vision including the goals, principles, and criteria that define that vision. The proposed project is perfectly aligned with the Niagara River Greenway Plan. It is the result of the Land Conservancy's Greenway / Grand Island Land Protection Program that was determined to be consistent with the Plan in 2017, and that was funded by the GESC in 2018. The project protects the ecological resources of the Greenway, connects people to those resources, and expands the "corridor of places, parks and landscapes" envisioned by the Greenway Plan. Habitat restoration and invasive species control like this project, is specifically recommended for use in the Greenway Plan. The property is located along the Niagara River and Greenway Focus Area boundary.

The Braddell Preserve builds on the Niagara River Greenway **Principles** in the following ways.

1. **Excellence:** It is the Land Conservancy's mission to permanently protect land with significant conservation value in Western New York. In our 32-year history we have protected over 8,500 acres across nearly 100 properties, assisted partners in protecting nearly 1,000 acres across 17 properties, and offer 23 publicly accessible nature preserves. The Land Conservancy is a nationally-accredited land trust. In all of our work, the Land Conservancy has adopted and strives to exceed the Standards and Practices set forth by the Land Trust Alliance, a national conservation organization that establishes best practices for land trusts.
2. **Sustainability:** The Land Conservancy will take measures to ensure that the property, its habitats, and the ecological services that it provides are protected into the future. The Land Conservancy will ensure the economic sustainability of protecting the property by contributing to a stewardship and legal defense fund to help cover ongoing costs.
3. **Accessibility:** The Jim and Edna Braddell Preserve allows for public access. At this time, there is no public access infrastructure on site. The Land Conservancy has offered to work with the Town of Grand Island if/when they choose to turn the Alt Boulevard paper street into a publicly accessible greenway and trail. As the property protects habitat for sensitive grassland birds, including ground-nesting species, additional trails are not planned at this time to limit disturbance of these sensitive species. Annual public ecology walks will offer guided site access and information about the project.
4. **Ecological Integrity:** This project protects and will enhance important ecological communities and wildlife habitat. The preserve is predominantly comprised of fallow agricultural field transitioning to meadow, and includes seasonal wetlands and a mature tree line. These habitats filter stormwater entering the Niagara River. The project will help sustain and protect rare plants and animals, and Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

5. **Public Well-being:** The project will help maintain the character of Grand Island. Restoration activities of this will increase the quality of life of nearby communities, and will improve health outcomes for people of all ages. The project will also support the local economy. Property values increase when they are adjacent to protected greenspaces. The property, in its natural state, helps clean our air and our fresh water, and reduces flooding. Protecting the property will help protect those important ecosystem services.
6. **Connectivity:** The project will connect people to the Greenway and to nature. The Braddell Preserve is .8 miles from the popular West River Trail bike path with potential future connectivity by bike trail and walking path throughout this quadrant of the island. The land is adjacent to the 36-acre Alt Preserve, .8 miles from the Gallogly Nature Sanctuary, 1.3 miles from Buckhorn Island State Park, 3 miles from Scenic Woods, 4.3 miles from Spicer Creek Wildlife Management Area, and 4 miles from Beaver Island State Park.
7. **Restoration:** The Land Conservancy is committed to the enhancement and restoration of degraded landscapes. The Land Conservancy will control invasive species and restore wildlife habitat at the property.
8. **Authenticity:** The property is part of the iconic natural heritage of Grand Island. The project will preserve the sense-of-place that makes Grand Island a showcase for the entire Niagara River Greenway.
9. **Celebration:** By prioritizing and protecting land that most typifies the Greenway vision, we will promote the recognition, interpretation, and celebration of the “natural, cultural, recreational, and scenic...resources” that make this region unique.
10. **Partnerships:** The project is supported by the landowner, Buffalo Ornithological Society, the Grassland Bird Trust, the supervisor of the Town of Grand Island, and Assemblyman Angelo J. Morinello. The acquisition of this property in 2024 was supported by the Town of Grand Island, State Senator Sean Ryan, and Erie County Department of Planning. The property to be protected is the result of the Land Conservancy’s Greenway Land Protection Program, a partnership between the Land Conservancy, the Niagara River Greenway Commission, and the GESC that allowed the Land Conservancy to proactively identify and work with the landowner. The Land Conservancy will continue to work with stakeholders including elected officials, community leaders, and partner organizations.
11. **Community-based:** The project was made possible by the Greenway Land Protection Program. The Greenway Land Protection Program was inspired by community members themselves who have expressed concerns about rapid development that is taking place and the loss of valuable open spaces. It builds upon the restoration work completed by the owners of the adjacent Alt Nature Center and Preserve. It is supported by the Buffalo Ornithological Society. The Town of Grand Island supports habitat restoration and protection work.

Restoration of the Braddell Preserve achieves all of the goals of the Niagara River Greenway Plan:

1. **Improve Access:** The Braddell Preserve is located along the envisioned Alt Boulevard greenway and nature trail identified in the Town of Grand Island’s Comprehensive Plan.
2. **Make Connections:** The project will contribute to the Greenway’s landscape-scale ecosystem connectivity by creating a new protected area. The Braddell Preserve is .8 miles from the popular West River Trail bike path with potential future connectivity by bike trail and walking path throughout this quadrant of the island. The land is adjacent to the 36-acre Alt Preserve, .8 miles from the Gallogly Nature Sanctuary, 1.3 miles from Buckhorn Island State Park, 3 miles from Scenic Woods, 4.3 miles from Spicer Creek Wildlife Management Area, and 4 miles from Beaver Island State Park.
3. **Protect and Restore Environmental Systems:** The project will protect unique and threatened ecological resources including meadows, wetlands, and mature trees. These habitats support rare and protected plants and animals and Species of Greatest Conservation Need. The Land Conservancy will restore wildlife habitat by controlling invasive plant species and adding native plants.
4. **Spark Revitalization and Renewal:** The project will strengthen an awareness of the importance of our natural heritage for the growing recreation and tourism economy on Grand Island.

5. **Promote Long Term Sustainability:** The basic goal of this project is the protection of irreplaceable resources that provide long-term ecosystem services including flood control, water quality benefits, and wildlife habitat. The property is protected in perpetuity.
6. **Extend Olmsted's Legacy:** This project will restore a property in the Greenway not far from the Niagara River, and thus will help strengthen Olmsted's vision of a necklace of open spaces along the length of the Niagara River.
7. **Celebrate History and Heritage:** The project will protect a property that is emblematic of our unique natural heritage. The protected property provides a living testament of the unique history and heritage of the Greenway corridor.

Lastly, the project measures well in relation to the evaluative criteria established in the Niagara River Greenway Action Plan.

1. **Consistency with Principles:** The project is guided by the same 11 principles that guide the Niagara River Greenway Plan and will extend and strengthen those principles and outcomes.
2. **Priority Status:** This project mirrors the very same priorities designated in the Niagara River Greenway Plan. The newly protected natural area may become be part of an "integrated trail and park system." Protecting land will be part of the "restoration of the Niagara River ecosystem."
3. **Focus Areas:** The project is all within the Niagara River Greenway boundary.
4. **Environmental Soundness:** Environmental conservation is at the core of the project. The project activities align with state guidelines for restoring habitat for grassland birds, was designed and will be implemented by a qualified team of ecologists, and will positively impact the plants, animals, and communities that live within the Niagara River Greenway.
5. **Implementable:** The Land Conservancy has a strong track record of implementing similar restoration projects. The project does not require review under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and does not require any permits.
6. **Economic viability:** The project budget is based on recent quotes from well-qualified and known contractors, and based on the Land Conservancy's previous experience with similar projects.
7. **Local Sponsor or Partner:** The Western New York Land Conservancy will be responsible for implementing the project. The Land Conservancy protects land across the eight counties of Western New York, including Erie County.
8. **Matching or Leveraged Funds:** The Land Conservancy will leverage GESC funds with a \$1,500 grant from the Buffalo Ornithological Society, which will support targeted native tree plantings along the preserve boundaries to reduce disturbance from neighboring properties, and installation of a portable acoustic bird monitoring system. Land Conservancy projects using Greenway funds have leveraged hundreds of thousands of non-Greenway funds. Two grant applications are currently pending which, if awarded, would support ongoing and new habitat restoration activities at the Margery Gallogly Nature Sanctuary and Staley Wetlands. WNY PRISM has also selected the Land Conservancy's Funk Preserve to receive follow-up invasive species treatments, and the Staley Wetlands Preserve to receive an invasive species survey
9. **Consideration of Other Planning Efforts:**
 - The Town of Grand Island's Comprehensive plan highlights the islands' natural resources as its biggest asset. The plan states that the Town's natural assets have a significant impact on economic development and overall quality of life. Conserving open spaces was one of the top priorities discussed by town residents during the creation of the Comprehensive Plan. The Town of Grand Island's Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan states that "...open space offers aesthetic values through scenic corridors and vistas, agricultural lands, woodlots, waterways and similar spaces. Lands set aside to protect environmentally sensitive features such as wetlands, floodplains, unique sites or stormwater retention and detention areas likewise contribute to the quality of life of the community."
 - The NYS Open Space Conservation Plan recommends protecting ecological corridors, water quality, significant wetlands, and land in the Niagara River Greenway. It prioritizes the protection

of the Niagara River watershed. It also identifies protecting Niagara River shoreline and public access as a regional priority conservation project.

- The NYS DEC's Great Lakes Action Agenda includes a goal to "Prevent and control invasive species impacting waterways and riparian areas," and to "conserve and restore native fish and wildlife and their habitats."
- By protecting wetlands, the program advances the Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (RAP) and will contribute to the de-listing of two Beneficial Use Impairments of the Niagara River Area of Concern: loss of fish and wildlife habitat and degradation of fish and wildlife populations.
- Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper's 2015 Niagara River Greenway Habitat Conservation Strategy prioritizes protecting and connecting natural areas in the Greenway. Land on Grand Island is called out in the plan.

10. Clear Benefits: Restoring and enhancing habitat at this property will benefit native bird, amphibian, and mammals. It will result in high-quality native habitats. Control of invasive species will reduce risk of increased erosion. Invasive species such as glossy buckthorn also provide better habitat than native shrubs for ticks. benefitting human and animal health. The parcel includes wetlands that filter and improve water quality, while also preventing flooding of neighboring property. This land already supports many Species of Greatest Conservation Need, including grassland birds, and restoration will further improve conditions for those species.

3. Define the budget for the total proposed project and include costs for the following:

Sources of Fund	Total
Greenway Ecological Standing Committee (to be requested)	\$203,884.00
Leveraged Funds (Buffalo Ornithological Society)	\$ 1,500.00
Total Sources of Funds	\$ 205,384.00
Uses of Funds	
Planning	\$
Construction	\$172,831.00
Acquisition	\$
Administration	\$32,553.00
Operation and Maintenance / Year	\$
Total Uses of Funds	\$205,384.00

Project Budget (Uses of Funds):

- Planning: We are requesting no funds for planning. Planning was completed prior to submitting this application.
- Construction: Control invasive species (\$105,152), implement mowing regime (\$9,000), no-till drill native seeds (\$19,500), plant native trees and associated materials (\$1,000), staff oversight and implementation of restoration activities (\$26,282), acoustic bird monitoring (\$500), staff outreach about project progress and implementation and grant management (\$8,922), travel to project site (\$2,475).
- Acquisition: This project does not involve acquisition as the land is owned by the applicant.
- Administration: indirect/overhead costs, calculated as 19% of all costs (\$32,553).
- Operation and Maintenance: No funds are requested for operations and maintenance.

Project Budget (Sources of Funds):

- \$203,884 from GESC. If awarded, this funding will support all habitat restoration and native seeding activities, including project monitoring and oversight, except for components supported by Buffalo

Ornithological Society.

- \$1,500 from Buffalo Ornithological Society. This funding will support the purchase of an acoustic bird monitoring system (\$500), and native trees and associated planting materials (\$1000).
- The Land Conservancy will continue annual monitoring and maintenance during and beyond the grant period, funded by a dedicated stewardship and legal defense fund. The fund was established with grant funds from GESC. It ensures that the property is maintained and protected in perpetuity.

4. Describe the measures taken at the local level to gain community and government support for this project (hearings, petitions, public surveys, resolutions of support or other methods). If this project has been cited or described in a local planning document or some equivalent thereof, attach copies of that documentation highlighting the sections that are relevant to the proposed project. Describe the role of municipal agencies, stakeholder groups, consultants, volunteers or others who will be involved in the proposed project.

The Braddell Preserve project has strong local support from community members, conservation partners, and government representatives. The acquisition of the property in 2024 was made possible through a grant from the Greenway Ecological Standing Committee. The property was identified through the Greenway Land Protection Program, a program that was developed in response to community concerns about development pressures and the loss of open space. The acquisition of the property was supported by the Town of Grand Island, State Senator Sean Ryan, Assemblyman Angelo J. Morinello, and the Erie County Department of Planning.

The Land Conservancy will continue to collaborate with local stakeholders, including the Buffalo Ornithological Society, Grassland Bird Trust, adjacent Alt Nature Preserve and Center, elected officials, community leaders, and volunteers. These partners provide ecological expertise, community engagement, and support for long-term stewardship of the preserve. The project builds upon existing conservation efforts in the area and aligns with local priorities to protect habitat, expand green space, and support future greenway and trail connections identified by the Town of Grand Island.

5. Describe and document the environmental setting and existing conditions at the proposed project site. If you are not the owner of the property include a letter(s) or resolution(s) evidencing support for the project by the owner. Provide photographs, conceptual plans and drawings that show the site as it presently exists and how the site will change with the addition of the proposed project. Describe how your project will comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The existence of wetlands, significant upland and aquatic habitats, and plant or animal species that are classified as rare, threatened, or endangered should be noted. Explain how such natural resources will be protected and/or enhanced. Cite any relevant project-related studies.

At 38.3 acres, the Jim & Edna Braddell Preserve represents a significant area of undeveloped land for Grand Island (see attached maps and photos). The land is primarily meadow and is becoming grassland, an important and locally rare habitat in which ground-nesting birds and other species thrive. A line of mature trees bolsters the site's biodiversity while providing an important seed bank for native trees, and wetlands provide critical environmental services including stormwater management and filtration and nutrient uptake for water quality improvement. Undeveloped grassland is rare, and of great value to the community and for the ecology of Grand Island and the Niagara River. Protecting this property would increase the community's access to natural places.

Non-native perennial rye (*Elymus*) and fescue (*Festuca*) grass species dominate the grasslands, so restoration will be important to bring back native biodiversity and ecological function. The natural hydrology has been altered to consist of channels leading to small pools which harbor pockets of native rudimental wetland flora, including wool grass (*Scirpus cyperinus*), common rush (*Juncus effusus*), and fringed sedge (*Carex crinita*).

Approximately one acre of wet depression/ephemeral stream habitat crosses the northern portion of the property and is partially lined with willows (*Salix sp.*) and native red osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*).

A line of mature trees (approximately .5 acre total) encompasses the southern boundary of the property. The tree line consists of several mature white oak (*Quercus alba*), pin oak (*Quercus palustris*), and shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*) trees. Pin oak regeneration accounts for the majority of the sub-canopy trees, with occasional hop hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*) interspersed. The tree line is contiguous with an approximately 15-acre woodlot currently managed as a portion of the Alt Preserve. This woodlot largely consists of mature white oak, shagbark hickory, and red oak (*Quercus rubra*) trees.

Principle attributes of the Braddell Preserve include the relatively large size of this tract of undeveloped land on Grand Island; valuable soils; limited presence of invasive species; and prime opportunity for grassland and reforestation plantings.

There are at least 21 species of reptiles and amphibians likely to occur on Grand Island according to the NYS Herp Atlas. This includes one NYS threatened species (Blanding's Turtle) and two NYS special concern species (Jefferson Salamander and Blue-spotted Salamander). Two of these species are considered high priority Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) according to the NYS Wildlife Action Plan (Blue-spotted Salamander and Blanding's Turtle), and four species are considered SGCN (Common Mudpuppy, Western Chorus Frog, Common Map Turtle, and Common Snapping Turtle). Many of the 21 species are likely to occur on the land to be protected, including Jefferson Salamander, Blue-spotted Salamander, and Western Chorus Frog.

There are at least 100 bird species likely to occur in the grasslands of Grand Island, with nearly 60 confirmed at the Braddell Preserve and adjacent Alt Preserve and Nature Center. The total number of bird species likely to be present is based on Land Conservancy observations on site and on eBird data from woodland and grassland habitats on Grand Island. The list of 100 species excludes aquatic bird species likely to be only found on the Niagara River off-shore from Grand Island.

Nine of these bird species are listed in New York State, with two listed as threatened (Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle), and seven listed as special concern (Osprey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Common Nighthawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Golden-winged Warbler). The Northern Harrier has been observed on site multiple times.

Ten of these bird species are identified as high priority SGCN by the 2015 New York State Wildlife Action Plan (Common Nighthawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Brown Thrasher, Golden-winged Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Canada Warbler, Rusty Blackbird), and ten are identified as SGCN (Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, American Woodcock, American Kestrel, Wood Thrush, Blue-winged Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Scarlet Tanager). The Bobolink, another grassland-dependent bird, is confirmed to be present and breeding at the Braddell Preserve.

Partners from across the Lower Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Plain Bird Conservation Region (BCR 13), including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, developed a bird conservation plan for this region. Nineteen of the 137 species were listed as priority bird species in the BCR 13 Plan. Six were listed as High Priority: Wood Duck, American Woodcock, Black-billed Cuckoo, Wood Thrush, Brown Thrasher, and Field Sparrow. The remaining 13 were listed as Medium Priority: Northern Harrier, Chimney Swift, Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Willow Flycatcher, Prairie Warbler, Canada Warbler, Song Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Bobolink, Rusty Blackbird, and Baltimore Oriole.

Many of the protected, SGCN, and BCR 13 birds likely nest in the forest of the property to be protected. They include Wood Duck, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, American Woodcock, Black-billed Cuckoo, Northern Flicker, Wood Thrush, Brown Thrasher, Blue-winged Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Baltimore Oriole. The Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, Song Sparrow, and Field Sparrow likely nest in the grasslands at or near the Alt Preserve. The Land Conservancy confirmed Bobolink as nesting at the Braddell Preserve and adjacent properties.

Other nesting bird species of note: At the adjacent Alt Preserve, the Land Conservancy confirmed the presence of Purple Martins, Eastern Kingbird, and Savannah Sparrow, all during nesting season. These species are likely to also be present at the Braddell Preserve.

The entire Niagara River Corridor is internationally designated as a globally significant Important Bird Area (IBA), primarily for its role as a bird migration corridor and its congregations of winter waterfowl and gulls. According to the Great Lakes Migratory Bird Portal, many of Grand Island's open spaces rank highly as a migratory stopover site for songbirds.

The project will not require SEQRA.

6. Please attach the proposed project timeline, identify any relevant milestones, and provide an estimated date for project completion/opening. If funded, it is expected that the project sponsor or point of contact will notify the Commission of the project opening date as it nears completion. *(Note: This addition to the application was made September 2018.)*

Project Schedule

October 2026 – December 2026:

- Complete grant agreement and ensure compliance with requirements.

2027:

- Spring/Early Summer: Establish ecological monitoring plots to track progress of restoration efforts.
- Spring/Early Summer: Map Invasive species and select contractors for the work.
- Spring/Early Summer: Contractor treats 24 acres of Canada thistle, bull thistle, and teasel.
- Spring/Early Summer: Annual preserve ecology walk offered at no cost to the public.
- Late Summer/Early Fall: Mow 12 acres of the field.
- Late Summer/Early Fall: Contractor treats 24 acres of reed canary grass.
- Late Summer/Early Fall: In-house spot treatments of invasive shrubs.

2028:

- Spring/Early Summer: Revisit ecological monitoring plots to track progress of restoration efforts.
- Spring/Early Summer: Review and map invasive species infestations after 1 year of treatment.
- Spring/Early Summer: Contractor treats 24 acres of Canada thistle, bull thistle, and teasel.
- Spring/Early Summer: Annual preserve ecology walk offered at no cost to the public.
- Late Summer/Early Fall: Mow 12 acres of the field.
- Late Summer/Early Fall: Contractor treats 24 acres of reed canary grass.
- Late Summer/Early Fall: In-house spot treatments of invasive shrubs.
- Late Fall/Early Winter: No-till drill seeding of 12 acres mowed in 2027.

2029:

- Spring/Early Summer: Revisit ecological monitoring plots to track progress of restoration efforts.
- Spring/Early Summer: Review and map invasive species infestations after 2 years of treatment.
- Spring/Early Summer: Contractor treats 24 acres of Canada thistle, bull thistle, and teasel.
- Spring/Early Summer: Annual preserve ecology walk offered at no cost to the public.
- Late Summer/Early Fall: Mow 12 acres of the field.

- Late Summer/Early Fall: Contractor treats 24 acres of reed canary grass.
- Late Summer/Early Fall: In-house spot treatments of invasive shrubs.
- Late Fall/Early Winter: No-till drill seeding of 24 acres mowed in 2028 and 2029.

Project updates will be provided periodically through social media and e-newsletters.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letters of Support
2. Maps
3. Photos
4. Tax Exempt Status

12 Spring Street
Schuylerville, New York 12871



June 19, 2026

Niagara River Greenway Commission
Mr. Greg Stevens
PO Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Greenway Ecological Standing Committee
Kerrie Gallo and Erin Redding, Co-Chairs
New York Power Authority
123 Main Street
White Plains, NY 10601

Dear Members of the Niagara Greenway Commission & Greenway Ecological Standing Committee,

On behalf of the Grassland Bird Trust, I am pleased to offer our strong support for the Western New York Land Conservancy's grant request to support grassland bird habitat restoration at the Jim & Edna Braddell Preserve.

Grassland habitats are among the most threatened ecosystems in New York State, and their protection and restoration are critical to the survival of an important family of declining bird species and the many other plants and wildlife that depend on these unique landscapes. The Braddell Preserve represents an important opportunity to restore and enhance high-quality grassland habitat while permanently protecting a landscape that provides lasting ecological value.

The Grassland Bird Trust's mission is centered on conserving grassland bird populations through habitat protection, restoration, and stewardship. While our work is in Washington County New York, we collaborate with staff of the Western New York Land Conservancy on a statewide Grassland Bird working group in coordination with the DEC. We recognize the importance of projects like the Braddell Preserve restoration effort, which will help address the ongoing loss and degradation of grassland habitat across Western New York. By improving habitat conditions, this project will benefit priority species such as Bobolink, Savannah Sparrow, and other wildlife that rely on open grassland ecosystems.

The proposed restoration work will not only improve habitat quality but will also serve as a model for thoughtful land management that balances ecological needs with long-term conservation goals. We believe this project aligns strongly with the Greenway Ecological Standing Committee's commitment to advancing meaningful environmental stewardship and protecting the region's natural resources.

The Grassland Bird Trust is proud to support this important initiative and encourages the Greenway Ecological Standing Committee to invest in the restoration of the Jim & Edna Braddell Preserve. This project will make a meaningful contribution to grassland conservation in New York State and help ensure that these important habitats continue to support wildlife for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Terry Griffin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "T" and "G".

Terry Griffin
Board Chair
Grassland Bird Trust
tgriffin@grasslandbirdtrust.org



ANGELO J. MORINELLO
Assemblyman 145th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

MINORITY LEADERSHIP
Deputy Minority Whip

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Committee on Codes

COMMITTEES
Ethics and Guidance
Economic Development, Job Creation,
Commerce and Industry

Labor
Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development
Veterans' Affairs

Legislative Commission on
Toxic Substances and Hazardous Wastes

June 25, 2026

Niagara River Greenway Commission
Mr. Greg Stevens
PO Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Greenway Ecological Standing Committee
Kerrie Gallo and Erin Redding, Co-Chairs
New York Power Authority
123 Main Street
White Plains, NY 10601

Dear Greg, Kerrie, and Erin,

I am writing to offer my support for the Western New York Land Conservancy's efforts to restore grassland bird habitat at the Jim & Edna Braddell Preserve in Grand Island. The Braddell Preserve includes meadows and wetlands that provide important wildlife habitat and ecosystem services, such as stormwater management. Given the property's location along the proposed Alt Boulevard Paper Trail, it offers opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of greenspace. This project is perfectly aligned with the Niagara River Greenway's purpose.

The Niagara River, its islands, shorelines, and surrounding forests define my district. Residents of, and visitors to, my district boat, fish, and hunt in these natural places. These places shape the communities that I love. Restoring grassland habitat here will help us protect habitat that is home to wildlife. The open spaces and natural heritage of Grand Island is one of many reasons my constituents choose to live here. Protecting our natural heritage maintains the high quality of life that our families enjoy today.

The Western New York Land Conservancy has a long history of protecting and stewarding natural places within my district, especially in Grand Island. Their Margery Gallogly Nature Sanctuary provides hiking trails to the local community, and the Stella Niagara Preserve celebrates our history and provides a connection to the Niagara River. With demonstrated experience implementing restoration projects, improving habitat, and stewarding publicly accessible natural places, they are well suited to undertake this next project.

I urge you to consider the Western New York Land Conservancy's proposal. Thank you for your continued support of projects that protect the natural heritage of my district.

Sincerely,

Assemblyman Angelo J. Morinello, 145th District

This letter was provided in support of a grant application to the Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative, Small Grant program. The proposal was not selected for funding, but BOS still supports the project.

Buffalo Ornithological Society voted at their meeting on 3/11/2026 to provide a grant of \$1,500 to install an acoustic bird monitoring system on site and plant native trees. The gift was received on 3/16/2026.



February 21, 2025

Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative Grant Committee
Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Attn: Sara Barker
159 Sapsucker Woods Rd.
Ithaca, NY 14850

Dear Grant Committee Members,

On behalf of the Buffalo Ornithological Society (BOS), I am pleased to provide this letter of strong support for the Western New York Land Conservancy's application to the Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative grant program. As an organization dedicated to the study and conservation of birds and their habitats in Western New York and Southern Ontario, we recognize the critical role that the Land Conservancy plays in protecting and restoring key landscapes for avian populations.

The Western New York Land Conservancy has been an invaluable partner in bird conservation, securing and stewarding lands that provide vital breeding, migratory, and wintering habitat for numerous bird species, including those facing population declines. Their science-based approach to conservation, combined with a commitment to community engagement, ensures that these lands will remain havens for birds and other wildlife for generations to come.

This grant will enable the Land Conservancy to restore critical grassland bird habitat on Grand Island, NY, which lies within a designated Ramsar corridor and contains vital grassland ecosystems increasingly threatened by development. The project supports ongoing protection and restoration efforts, addressing key conservation priorities identified in regional and national bird conservation plans. Their work aligns closely with our mission, and we fully support their efforts to secure funding for projects that will benefit birds, biodiversity, and the broader ecological health of our region.

We urge the Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative to give full consideration to this application, as we believe that investing in the Land Conservancy's work will yield meaningful conservation outcomes. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Beverly Seyler'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name 'Beverly' is written in a larger, more prominent script, and the last name 'Seyler' follows it in a similar but slightly smaller script.

Beverly Seyler
Buffalo Ornithological Society President



The following email was received in response to our message notifying the Town Supervisor of Grand Island of this project.

Kyra Umrigar <kumrigar@wnylc.org>

Land Conservancy Greenway Application for Habitat Restoration in Grand Island

Peter Marston <pmarston@grand-island.ny.us>
To: Kyra Umrigar <kumrigar@wnylc.org>

Tue, Jun 30, 2026 at 9:29 AM

Good Morning.
Yes, I received your email and documentation.
We support the Land Conservancy and the direction it is headed.

Regards,
Pete Marston

From: Kyra Umrigar <kumrigar@wnylc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2026 8:07 AM
To: Peter Marston <pmarston@grand-island.ny.us>
Subject: Land Conservancy Greenway Application for Habitat Restoration in Grand Island

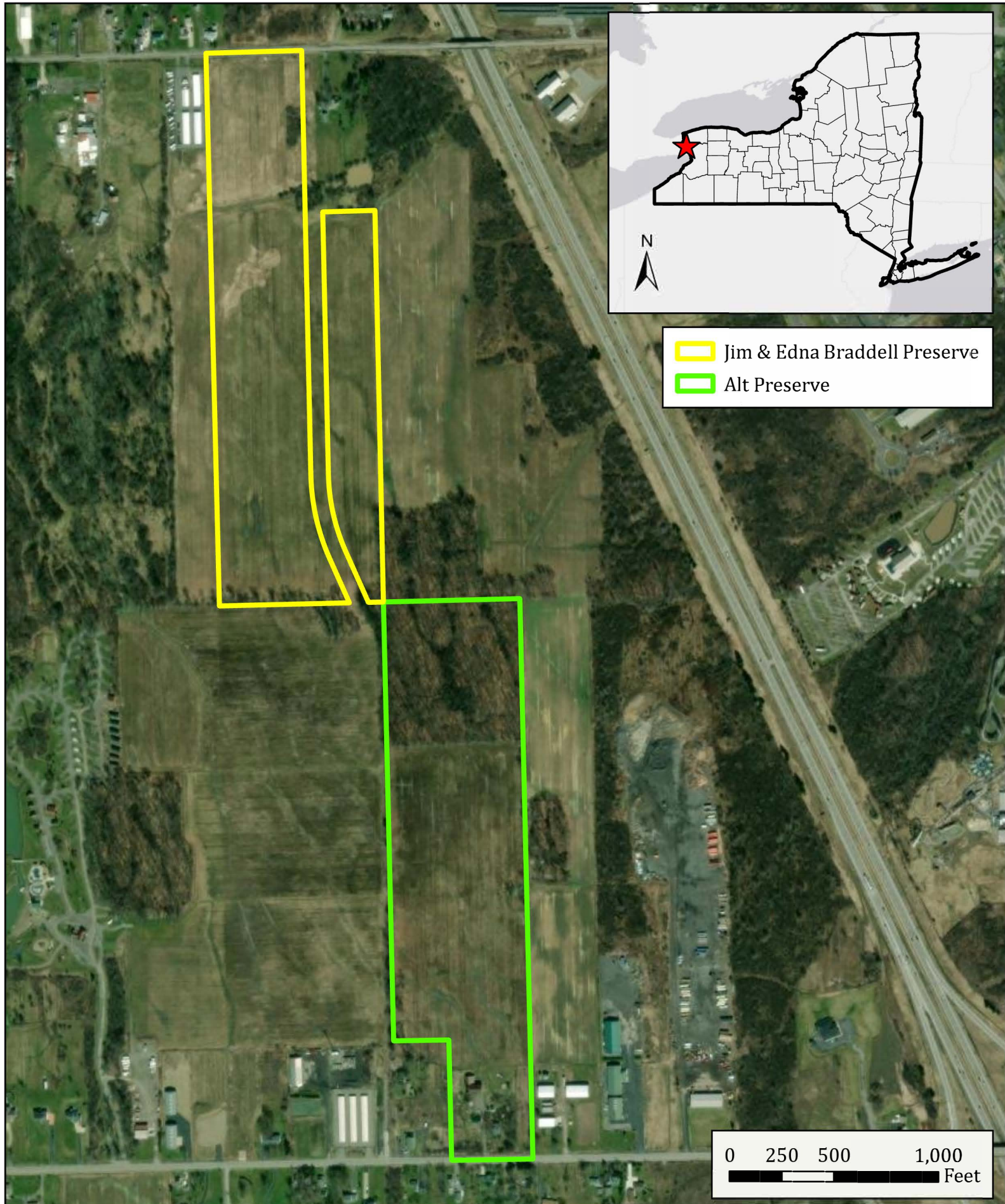
CAUTION: This email was sent from an external source.
Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

[Quoted text hidden]

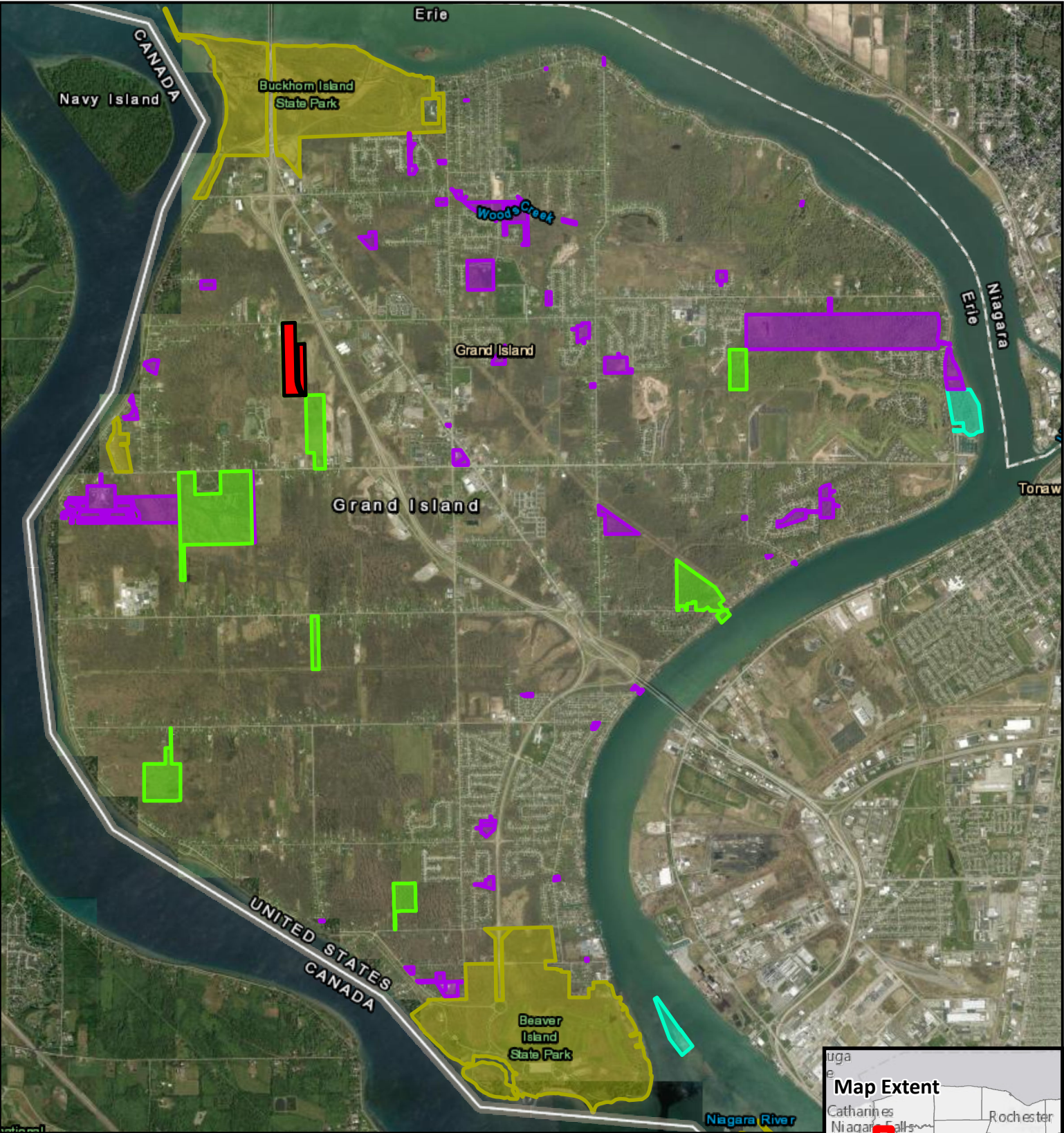


WESTERN NEW YORK
LAND CONSERVANCY

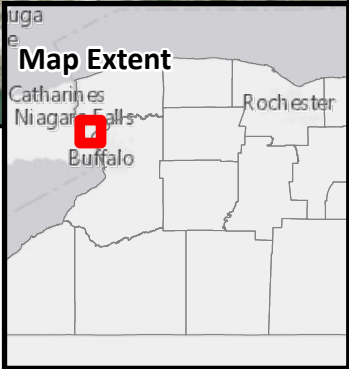
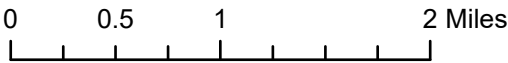
Grassland Habitat Restoration at Braddell Preserve, Grand Island, NY



Grand Island Regional Connectivity



- Braddell Preserve
- WNYLC Protected Lands
- Town of Grand Island Lands
- NYS Department of Conservation Lands
- NYS Parks Lands



Photos



Above: Braddell Preserve, October 2025



Left: Northern Harrier, March 2025



Below: Bobolink, May 2025

CINCINNATI OH 45999-0038

In reply refer to: 0256554084
Mar. 05, 2024 LTR 4168C 0
22-3160426 000000 00

00017987
BODC: TE

WESTERN NEW YORK LAND CONSERVANCY
INC
PO BOX 471
EAST AURORA NY 14052

Employer ID number: 22-3160426
Form 990 required: Y

Dear Taxpayer:

We're responding to your request dated Feb. 27, 2024, about your tax-exempt status.

We issued you a determination letter in April 1992, recognizing you as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3).

We also show you're not a private foundation as defined under IRC Section 509(a) because you're described in IRC Sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors can deduct contributions they make to you as provided in IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts under IRC Sections 2055, 2106, and 2522.

In the heading of this letter, we indicated whether you must file an annual information return. If you're required to file a return, you must file one of the following by the 15th day of the 5th month after the end of your annual accounting period:

- Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax
- Form 990EZ, Short Form Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax
- Form 990-N, Electronic Notice (e-Postcard) for Tax-Exempt Organizations Not Required to File Form 990 or Form 990-EZ
- Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation or Section 4947(a)(1) Trust Treated as Private Foundation

According to IRC Section 6033(j), if you don't file a required annual information return or notice for 3 consecutive years, we'll revoke your tax-exempt status on the due date of the 3rd required return or notice.

You can get IRS forms or publications you need from our website at www.irs.gov/forms-pubs or by calling 800-TAX-FORM (800-829-3676).

If you have questions, call 877-829-5500 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.,

0256554084

Mar. 05, 2024 LTR 4168C 0

22-3160426 000000 00

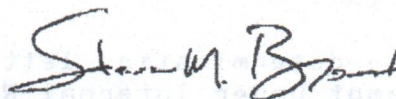
00017988

WESTERN NEW YORK LAND CONSERVANCY
INC
PO BOX 471
EAST AURORA NY 14052

local time, Monday through Friday (Alaska and Hawaii follow Pacific time).

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,



Steve M. Brown, Operations Manager
Operations 3-CIN