

Niagara River Greenway Commission Consultation and Review Form

Date of Submittal:

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: | NY |
| 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

ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM OTHER SOURCES

| Source | Amount |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| <u>Land Conservancy</u> | <u>\$10,000</u> |
| | |
| | |

PROJECT INFORMATION

| | |
|--|---|
| Project Name: | <u>Creating the Stonehaven Nature Preserve</u> |
| Location (include GPS coordinates if possible): | 43 11 12 N, 78 54 32 W |
| Project Site Address: | 4670 Albright Rd., Ransomville |
| State: | NY |
| Zip Code: | 14131 |
| Minor Civil Division(s): | Town of Lewiston |
| County: | Niagara |
| Project Proponent Property Interest (own, lease, easement or other): | The Land Conservancy will purchase the property and own it. |

AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Name: | <u>Nancy Smith</u> |
| Title: | Executive Director |
| Business Address: | P.O. Box 471, East Aurora |
| State: | NY |
| Zip Code: | 14052 |
| Work Number: | 716-687-1225 |
| Cell Number: | |
| E-Mail Address: | nancys@wnylc.org |

PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Name: | <u>Jajean Rose-Burney</u> |
| Title: | Deputy Executive Director |
| Organization / Firm: | Western New York Land Conservancy |
| Business Address: | P.O. Box 471, East Aurora |
| State: | NY |
| Zip Code: | 14052 |
| Work Number: | 716-687-1225 EXT 113 |
| Cell Number: | |
| E-Mail Address: | Jajean.rose@wnylc.org |

CREATING THE STONEHAVEN NATURE PRESERVE

A RESULT OF THE
GREENWAY LAND PROTECTION PROGRAM



Prepared for:



NIAGARA RIVER GREENWAY COMMISSION
Project Consultation and Review

Prepared by:
Western New York Land Conservancy
January 18, 2022

Project Narrative: Creating the Stonehaven Nature Preserve

1. OVERVIEW

The Western New York Land Conservancy, a regional not-for-profit land trust, proposes to create the 61-acre Stonehaven Nature Preserve in Lewiston along the Niagara Escarpment. The land is adjacent to the 551-acre Bond Lake County Park, and is near the Tuscarora Nation. This project will permanently protect one of the largest remaining forests along the Niagara Escarpment in Niagara County, home to rare and protected plants and animals and one of the best examples of unique escarpment geology. The project will also ensure that an iconic forest, owned and managed since 1946 by the Niagara Frontier Council of the Boy Scouts, remains open to the public. Known as Camp Stonehaven, thousands of people have fond memories of the land. If not protected now, it could be purchased privately, developed, and cut off from public use forever.

Overview of the Process

In 2011, with support from the Greenway Commission and funding from the Greenway Ecological Standing Committee (GESC), the Land Conservancy completed the Niagara Escarpment Legacy Project in order to identify the unique ecological and historical features of the escarpment and create a conservation strategy to protect it. More recently in 2021, again with support from the Greenway Commission and funding from the GESC, the Land Conservancy began the Greenway Land Protection Program along the Niagara Escarpment. This project is a result of these programs, and is a high priority for protection.

The Land Conservancy will purchase the Stonehaven property from the Boy Scouts, who are planning to put the property up for sale this year. We will be submitting a funding proposal to the GESC for this project (Greenway Ecological Fund and Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Fund). The land has not yet been placed on the market, but we expect that to happen soon. In order to purchase the property, the Land Conservancy will submit a purchase offer to the Boy Scouts. If that offer is accepted, and if the project is funded, the Land Conservancy will proceed with the purchase. We expect this purchase to be complete before the end of 2022.

Once acquired, we will maintain the property as a publicly accessible nature preserve. We will add signage and make needed adjustments to public access using existing parking areas, driveways, and trails. There are also several structures on the property, including an aging caretaker's house, a lodge, cabins, and lean-tos. Although we intend to ensure long-term public access on the trails, we will not be able to maintain these structures, and we will have to remove them. We will also control some of the invasive plant species on the property to improve wildlife habitat.

We have already spoken with representatives of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) about this project. The DEC expressed interest in owning this property and maintaining it as a protected area, also open to the public. However, the DEC process of

acquiring property may take significantly longer than the Land Conservancy's process. In order to ensure the land is protected, the Land Conservancy will purchase the property initially and hold it until a transfer to the DEC is possible.

We will be requesting funding from the GESC totaling \$843,650, and matching that with \$10,000. This is the amount of funding necessary if the Land Conservancy will be the permanent owner and manager of the property. This is to ensure the Land Conservancy can steward the publicly accessible nature preserve in the long-run if necessary. If the land transfer to the DEC takes place, we will reimburse the GESC funds from the project that are no longer needed by the Land Conservancy, including funds for long-term stewardship. This type of collaborative purchase, where a land trust buys and holds the land until a public agency is able to acquire it, is common in New York State and across the country.

2: CONSISTENCY WITH THE NIAGARA RIVER GREENWAY PLAN

The proposed creation of the Stonehaven Nature Preserve is perfectly aligned with the Niagara River Greenway Plan. The Niagara River Greenway Plan states that "One of the mandates of the Niagara River Greenway legislation is to recommend how the Greenway can be linked to upland and interior communities in order to promote linkages to the River", and it lists the Niagara Escarpment as one of those priority linkages. The plan lists the Niagara Escarpment in the "categories of properties that should receive priority consideration for preservation for conservation purposes." It describes the Niagara Escarpment as a priority for protection, and references the Land Conservancy specifically as an organization that should conserve land along the escarpment to contribute to the Greenway. This current project is a result of the Land Conservancy's Niagara Escarpment Legacy Project, supported by the Greenway Commission and funded in 2011 by the GESC, as well as the Greenway Land Protection Program, also supported by the Greenway Commission and funded by the GESC in 2021.

This project will help achieve the vision for the Greenway. As a nature preserve that protects important open space and wildlife habitat, combined with low-impact public access, it will enhance the world-class "corridor of places, parks and landscapes" in the Greenway.

The project is guided by the same principles as those of the Niagara River Greenway:

1. **Excellence:** In the Land Conservancy's 31-year history we have preserved and protected over 7,000 acres of land, including farms, forests and scenic vistas on nearly 100 properties. Eighteen of our properties are publicly accessible parks or nature preserves. In all of this 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 regional land trusts. The Land Conservancy was nationally-accredited in 2015, and reaccredited in 2020.
2. **Sustainability:** After the property is acquired, the Land Conservancy will manage the preserve 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 the project by contributing funding to a stewardship fund and to a legal defense fund to help cover ongoing costs. If the land is transferred to the DEC, that agency will manage the land with ecological conservation as the top priority.

3. **Accessibility:** The new preserve will be open to the public as a publicly accessible nature preserve with walking trails. Both the Land Conservancy and DEC are committed to ensuring the land is open to the public.
4. **Ecological Integrity:** The land is home to rare and protected plants and animals, and some of the best examples of unique escarpment geology. Conserving this land will help sustain many Species of Greatest Conservation Need that exist there.
5. **Public Well-being:** The preserve will provide people with a health-improving connection to nature through passive recreation on its nature trails. As natural land, the property provides clean air, clean water, and flood control to surrounding communities.
6. **Connectivity:** The project will expand the network of protected open spaces that provide important linkages to the Niagara River. The land is adjacent to the 551-acre Bond Lake County Park. The Niagara Escarpment is described as an important linkage in the Greenway Plan. The Land Conservancy hopes to protect more land along the escarpment in the future.
7. **Restoration:** The Land Conservancy will manage the land to enhance and restore wildlife habitats that have been degraded over time. Invasive plant species management will be a key element of wildlife habitat restoration.
8. **Authenticity:** The preserve will protect the authentic natural history of the Niagara Escarpment that promotes a “sense of place” in the region. The project will ensure the land that many people have visited as scouts is open to the public
9. **Celebration:** We will lead guided hikes at the preserve. These events will celebrate the ecological distinction of the site.
10. **Partnerships:** The Land Conservancy, a regional not-for-profit land trust, is committed to protecting this important land. The Land Conservancy is also committed to its long-term stewardship. The Land Conservancy plans to transfer the land to the DEC because they consider the land a priority for protection.
11. **Community-based:** The Land Conservancy is a regional land trust with deep ties in Niagara County and the rest of the Western New York region. The project is aligned with local, regional, and statewide planning documents.

The project achieves all of the goals of the Niagara River Greenway Plan:

1. **Improve Access:** The property is currently not open to the public. This project will ensure the land is open to the public. This would mean an increase in the opportunities to enjoy the Niagara Escarpment for more people.
2. **Make Connections:** The land is adjacent to the 551-acre Bond Lake County Park. The Niagara Escarpment is described as an important linkage in the Greenway Plan. The Land Conservancy hopes to protect more land along the escarpment in the future.
3. **Protect and Restore Environmental Systems:** The project will protect unique and threatened plant communities, and unique escarpment geology. These habitats support many Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Invasive plant species management will be a key element of wildlife habitat restoration.
4. **Spark Revitalization and Renewal:** The project will contribute to an emerging recreation and tourism industry in Niagara County and a renewed focus for promoting ecotourism. The new preserve will provide year-round walking trails, open to the public.
5. **Promote Long Term Sustainability:** The land provides open space and ecosystem services to the community, like flood control and water quality improvements. The land

helps maintain biodiversity and supports our region's climate resiliency. These values will be protected for future generations through this project. The Land Conservancy will set aside funding for long-term stewardship of the preserve. If transferred to the DEC, that agency will also ensure long-term stewardship of the land.

6. **Extend Olmsted's Legacy:** Protecting this land, which is already connected to Bond Lake County Park, will help achieve Olmsted's vision of a necklace of open spaces that follow the Niagara River and link inland.
7. **Celebrate History and Heritage:** The Niagara Escarpment has witnessed centuries of rich human history. This includes Native American history, the Erie Canal, and the Underground Railroad. The Stonehaven camp has been visited by thousands of people over the years.

And lastly, this project is aligned with the evaluative criteria established in the Niagara River Greenway Plan's "Action Plan."

1. **Consistency with Principles:** As noted already, the proposed project is guided by the same 11 principles that guide the Niagara River Greenway Plan.
2. **Priority Status:** The project addresses many of the priorities in the Niagara River Greenway Plan: The preserve will be part of an *integrated trail and park system*; the protection of this property and the restoration and enhancement of its wildlife habitats will support the *restoration of the Niagara River ecosystem*; and future interpretive programming will help with *interpretation and education about the region's cultural, natural and historic resources*.
3. **Focus Area:** While the site is located outside of the focus area, the land is in the Town of Lewiston and is within the Greenway boundary. The Niagara Escarpment is an important link to the Niagara River and is listed as a priority area for conservation in many different sections of the Niagara River Greenway Plan.
4. **Environmental Soundness:** Environmental conservation is at the core of this project. Protecting this property will protect a forest adjacent to the 551-acre Bond Lake County Park. The land will be managed to protect sensitive wildlife habitats and the species that are sustained there. The trail will be open for hiking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing.
5. **Implementable:** With the Land Conservancy's track record of similar projects, and with a possible partnership with the DEC, this project is strongly positioned for implementation success.
6. **Economic viability:** The project is economically viable. Costs are based on estimates from our experience with many similar projects; long-term stewardship costs are included in the total project costs. The partnership with the DEC opens the possibility of funding not available to the Land Conservancy alone.
7. **Local Sponsor or Partner:** The Western New York Land Conservancy will be responsible for implementing the project.
8. **Matching or Leveraged Funds:** The Land Conservancy will leverage Greenway funds with non-Greenway funds, totaling at least \$10,000, but likely more. Past Land Conservancy projects using Greenway funds have leveraged hundreds of thousands of non-Greenway funds. This includes the Stella Niagara Preserve, the Margery Gallogly Nature Sanctuary, and the Niagara Gorge restoration, among others. The Land Conservancy has already spent approximately \$3,000 on staff time and the initial

appraisal on this project from the GESG-funded Greenway Land Protection Program grant.

9. **Consideration of Other Planning Efforts:** The project is consistent with local and regional planning documents.
 - The Land Conservancy’s Niagara Escarpment Legacy Project, funded by the GESG, concluded that “there are significant ecological, cultural, and recreational resources along the Niagara Escarpment that should be protected and conserved for future generations.” This project is aligned with the strategies in that plan.
 - The Town of Lewiston Comprehensive Plan describes the escarpment as “Lewiston’s most prominent and environmentally-sensitive land form.” It concludes that “insensitive development of the areas adjacent to its vertical elements could distract from or destroy its role as a visual element in the community.” The plan also states that “Lewiston’s recreation system would benefit from the addition of parkland and open space linkages.”
 - Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper’s 2015 Niagara River Greenway Habitat Conservation Strategy prioritizes protecting and connecting natural areas in the Greenway, including the escarpment.
 - The NYS Wildlife Action Plan priorities for implementation in the Great Lakes region include natural habitat protection and restoration.
 - The NYS Open Space Conservation Plan lists the Niagara Escarpment as a priority conservation project. It prioritizes the conservation of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). The plan states that “The Niagara Escarpment contains some of the best exposures of 500 million-year-old fossils found anywhere in the world, threatened, rare and endangered plants and unique ecological communities”.
 - The Niagara Communities Comprehensive Plan 2030 identifies preservation of the natural features of the Niagara Escarpment as a priority issue for the county. The plan categorized the Niagara Escarpment as an asset and opportunity for the county. The plan states that “concerted efforts are under way to protect and preserve the Niagara Escarpment and its valuable ecosystems consisting of unique floral and faunal habitats. The Escarpment contributes significantly to the visual character of many communities in Niagara County, and to the region’s economy as well”.
10. **Clear Benefits:** The project offers clear benefits to Niagara County and the Niagara River Greenway and its vision. The preserve will protect the unique habitat and natural heritage of the Niagara Escarpment—an internationally recognized ecological wonder. It will also improve public access to nature. As natural land, the property provides clean air, clean water, and flood control to surrounding communities.

3. BUDGET

| Sources of Funds | |
|--|------------------------|
| Greenway Ecological Standing Committee (to be requested) | \$843,650 |
| Leveraged Funds (secured) | \$10,000 |
| TOTAL SOURCES OF FUNDS | \$853,650 |
| Uses of Funds | |
| Planning | \$0 |
| Construction | \$200,000 |
| Acquisition | \$410,000 |
| Administration | \$43,650 |
| Operation and Maintenance / Year | \$200,000 (\$8,000/yr) |
| TOTAL USES OF FUNDS | \$853,650 |

Project Budget (Uses of Funds)

- Total project costs are \$853,650.
 - \$200,000 for Construction includes: invasive species control and native plantings at the property addition; public access improvements; existing structure removal; and Land Conservancy staff time.
 - \$410,000 for Acquisition includes: purchase price based on appraised value; legal costs; title search and insurance; full appraisal; phase one environmental assessment; recording fees; legal defense fund contribution; boundary survey and description; boundary markers; baseline document report; management plan; and Land Conservancy staff time.
 - \$43,650 for Administration includes: indirect / overhead costs (15% of all costs except for the purchase price and stewardship fund contribution).
 - \$200,000 for Operation and Maintenance includes: stewardship fund contribution for long-term preserve management (funds are invested, and are calculated by dividing annual costs of \$8,000 by 4%, an estimated annual rate of return).

Project Funding (Sources of Funds)

- Total project costs are \$853,650.
 - \$843,650 from the Greenway Ecological Standing Committee (to be requested): This will pay for Construction, Acquisition, Administrative, and Operation and Maintenance costs (Land Conservancy stewardship fund).
 - \$10,000 of Leveraged Funds (secured): This will come from the Land Conservancy and will supplement awarded funds.

If the land transfer to the DEC takes place, we will reimburse the GESC funds from the project that are no longer needed by the Land Conservancy, including funds for long-term stewardship.

4. COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Throughout this project, the Land Conservancy will continue to ensure public support. Attached to this proposal are letters of support from elected officials. (The Supervisor of Lewiston has provided a letter of support for our funding proposal to the GESC for this project. Since the Supervisor is part of the Greenway Commission, that letter is not included here.)

Protection of the Niagara Escarpment is also consistent with local and regional planning documents which were developed with significant public and stakeholder input, as described earlier in this application.

The Land Conservancy will oversee all phases of this project, until the land is transferred to the DEC. The Land Conservancy will involve neighbors and elected officials in future plans for the preserve. Consultants will help plan and implement public access improvements and habitat enhancements. Volunteers may be involved in plantings and public access improvements.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Priority Plant and Wildlife Habitats

The Niagara Escarpment is a geological feature that is the result of tectonic uplift, multiple glaciations, and millions of years of erosion. The Niagara Escarpment extends from Western New York, through Ontario, across Michigan's Upper Peninsula, and into Wisconsin. In some places in our region, it is a narrow strip of dramatic, 150-foot-high outcroppings that transects Niagara County east to west. The Niagara River has carved its way into the escarpment, forming Niagara Falls. The Erie Canal locks in Lockport traverse the escarpment. Not only is the Niagara Escarpment an internationally recognized geologic marvel that is responsible for the Niagara Falls, it holds flora, fauna, fossils, soils, waterways, and wetlands in an astonishing variety. Because of its important geographic span, the escarpment has been a passageway for generations of both wildlife and humans. Because of its unique ecology, it is considered a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in Canada.

The 61-acre Stonehaven property sits along a 3,700-ft. portion of the Niagara Escarpment. The property is mostly forested, with camping structures spread across the property on a gravel ring road. A large pond sits in the middle of the property, the result of a former quarry.

Maple-Basswood Rich Mesic Forest is the predominant community type, occupying the eastern and southwestern edges as well as along the escarpment slope along the southern boundary and continuing into the county park. Areas with thinner soil and limestone closer to the surface, mainly in the western section associated with natural limestone outcrops, transition into a Limestone Woodland with a shift in canopy and understory composition and structure. Small areas of limestone talus within this community expand eastward along the northern boundary, occupying the space between the old quarry and the access road with Calcareous Talus Slope Woodland. Some of the talus in this area may have been created by quarrying operations, but the well-developed communities of mosses and understory plants suggest that this talus area probably existed prior to quarrying activities.

The DEC's Environmental Resource Mapper shows that the property "is in the vicinity of rare plants listed as endangered, threatened, or rare in NYS." Two State-Listed plant species, Giant Yellow Hyssop (*Agastache nepetoides*, S2S3 Threatened) and Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*, S4 watchlist), were observed as well as one formerly state-listed species, Purple Springcress (*Cardamine douglassii*, S4). Many herbaceous species associated with high-quality examples of the described natural communities were also observed such as Virginia Waterleaf, Canada Waterleaf, White Bear Sedge, Silver Sedge, Black-Fruited Mountain Ricegrass, Virginia Polypody Fern, and Wild Ginger. A high diversity of additional plant species can be expected during the growing season. Other priority flora may be likely to occur at this site. Rock Elm (*Ulmus thomasi*, S3 Threatened) may be present and rarer species such as Nodding Trillium (*Trillium flexipes*, S1 Endangered) should not be ruled out. Invasive plant species are present on some of the more disturbed portions of the property.

This property likely supports a wide array of fauna. Several vernal pools and the quarry pond are likely home to variety of amphibians including salamanders, frogs, and toads. Reptiles, including multiple snake species, are likely present in the talus outcrops, and snapping turtles are present in the quarry pond. Red fox, coyote, white-tailed deer, and even black bear have been reported on the property. The cavities and crevices associated with the talus slopes and outcroppings are also typical habitat for Eastern Small Footed Myotis (*Myotis leibii*, S1S3 Special Concern), our region's smallest bat species, which roosts in such habitats rather than in trees. These cavities may also be associated with winter hibernacula for cave-hibernating bat species.

Based on eBird data, we estimate that there are 176 bird species present at the property. This data is from similar habitats nearby: The Niagara Escarpment Preserve and Bond Lake County Park. Of those species, 33 are listed as NYS Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) according to the 2015 NYS Wildlife Action Plan. Eight of those are listed as High Priority SGCN: Brown Thrasher, Rusty Blackbird, Cape May Warbler, Canada Warbler, Bobolink, Bay-breasted Warbler, Common Nighthawk, and Red-headed Woodpecker. The remaining 25 SGCN are: American Bittern, American Kestrel, American Woodcock, Bald Eagle, Black-billed Cuckoo, Black-crowned Night-heron, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Blue-winged Teal, Blue-winged Warbler, Bonaparte's Gull, Caspian Tern, Common Goldeneye, Common Loon, Common Tern, Great Egret, Greater Scaup, Horned Grebe, Lesser Scaup, Northern Harrier, Northern Pintail, Pied-billed Grebe, Red-shouldered Hawk, Ruddy Duck, Scarlet Tanager, and Wood Thrush. Twelve species are listed in NYS. Four were listed as threatened: Bald Eagle, Common Tern, Northern Harrier, and Pied-billed Grebe; and eight were listed as special concern: American Bittern, Common Loon, Common Nighthawk, Cooper's Hawk, Osprey, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-shouldered Hawk, and Sharp-shinned Hawk.

The land ranks highly according to The Nature Conservancy's Resilient and Connect Landscape tool. This means the land will continue to support biodiversity even as the climate changes.

Protecting and Enhancing Natural Resources

The main purpose of this project is to protect and restore the natural resources that exist on the property. The acquisition of the land by the Land Conservancy will help achieve this. The Land Conservancy and / or the DEC will manage the property to ensure its wildlife habitats and species are protected.

State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR)

This project will not require State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR). The project may require State Historic Preservation Office review because of the presence of structures that are at least 50 years old.

Proposed Conceptual Plan

The property will be maintained as a publicly accessible nature preserve with trails. The existing parking, driveway, and trail system will be modified to ensure public access.

Property Owner Support

The Boy Scouts intend to sell the property, but they are required to put the property for sale on the open market. In order to purchase the property, the Land Conservancy will submit a purchase offer to the Boy Scouts. If that offer is accepted, and if the project is funded, the Land Conservancy will proceed with the purchase. If the Land Conservancy's purchase offer is not accepted, none of the requested funds will be used. Because the Boy Scouts are required to put the property for sale publicly, they cannot preemptively provide a letter of support to the Land Conservancy for this project.

6. PROJECT TIMELINE

This project will be complete within three years from spring 2022.

- Spring 2022 through Summer 2022
 - Purchase the property (title search, full appraisal, phase one environmental review, boundary survey, closing, etc.)
- Fall 2022 through Spring 2025
 - Invasive species control
 - Public access improvements
 - Removing structures

The land transfer to the DEC would be based on the DEC's acquisition process timeline.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. LETTERS OF SUPPORT**
- B. MAPS**
- C. PHOTOS**
- D. TAX EXEMPT STATUS**

A. LETTERS OF SUPPORT



**THE LEGISLATURE
NIAGARA COUNTY**

LEGISLATOR IRENE M. MYERS
1ST DISTRICT
NIAGARA COUNTY LEGISLATURE

January 4, 2022

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

And

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

Dear Greg, Tim, and Kerrie,

I am writing as a Niagara County Legislator representing the 1st District which includes all of the Town of Porter and portions of the Town of Lewiston, including Camp Stonehaven. I support the Western New York Land Conservancy's efforts to purchase the Stonehaven property and maintain it as a publicly accessible nature preserve, with the possibility of transferring the land to the NYS DEC in the future.

This project promises to both protect our important natural assets, but also create economic development opportunities. The Stonehaven property sits on the Niagara Escarpment, the ridge that crosses Niagara County from west to east. The Stonehaven property has mature forests and rare plants and animals. As a scout camp, it has also hosted thousands of kids for nearly a century. Many people in my community remember this forest fondly. Protecting this forest and opening its trails to the public will allow it to remain a destination for thousands of people far into the future. The Stonehaven property is also adjacent to Bond Lake County Park, one of Niagara County's signature parks. Bond Lake County Park already attracts visitors from across the region. Visitors to Bond Lake County Park, coupled with visitors to the proposed Stonehaven nature preserve, will spend money on businesses in Niagara County. This will create jobs based on outdoor recreation.

Thank you for your past support of the Land Conservancy's work in Niagara County at places like the Stella Niagara Preserve in Lewiston and in Lockport at the Niagara Escarpment Preserve. Please consider the Land Conservancy's current proposal for funding. This may be the only opportunity we have to ensure that Stonehaven remains open for people of all ages to visit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Irene M. Myers".

Irene Myers
1st District Legislator

175 HAWLEY STREET

LOCKPORT, NEW YORK 14094

(716) 439-7177



ANGELO J. MORINELLO
Assemblyman 145th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Committee on Codes

COMMITTEES
Economic Development, Job Creation,
Commerce and Industry
Labor
Tourism, Parks, Arts and
Sports Development
Veterans' Affairs

January 12, 2022

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

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

Dear Mr. Stevens, Mr. DePriest and Ms. Gallo:

I proudly represent the New York State 145th Assembly District, which includes Lewiston, New York and Stonehaven Camp. I support the Western New York Land Conservancy's request for funding. Once acquired, the Land Conservancy will maintain the Stonehaven Camp as a publicly accessible nature preserve.

The Land Conservancy has had a positive impact on my district. They successfully created the Stella Niagara Preserve in Lewiston along the Niagara River and they also created the Gallogly Nature Sanctuary of Grand Island. Both of these locations are open to the public and thousands of people visit these preserves annually. All of their work is done in close collaboration with local governments.

As a member of the Committee on Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development, I believe that this project will bring many benefits to the residents of this region. This project will ensure that the land is open to the public and will increase the opportunities for outdoor recreation in my district.

DISTRICT OFFICE: 300 Main Street, Suite 201, Niagara Falls, New York 14301 • 716-282-6062, FAX: 716-282-4226
ALBANY OFFICE: Room 404, Legislative Office Building, Albany, New York 12248 • 518-455-5294, FAX: 518-455-5894
EMAIL: morinello@nyassembly.gov

On a personal note, I recall fond memories of camping at Stonehaven Camp as a boy scout. My personal experiences there give rise to my appreciation for outdoor activities and just being able to enjoy nature in general and to never take these opportunities for granted.

I enthusiastically support the Land Conservancy's application for funding for this project.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angelo J. Morinello". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "A".

ANGELO J. MORINELLO,
Assemblyman, 145th District

AJM/cld

ALBANY OFFICES
ROOM 909 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247
(518) 455-2070

ROOM 315 STATE CAPITOL
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247
(518) 455-2024



**THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY 12247**

**ROBERT G. ORTT
62ND SENATE DISTRICT
SENATE MINORITY LEADER**

DISTRICT OFFICE
175 WALNUT STREET
SUITE #6
LOCKPORT, NEW YORK 14094
(716) 434-0680

E-MAIL
ORTT@NYSENATE.GOV

WEBSITE
ORTT.NYSENATE.GOV

January 14, 2022

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

And

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

Dear Greg, Tim, and Kerrie,

I would like to express my support for the Western New York Land Conservancy and their proposal to acquire Camp Stonehaven in the Town of Lewiston.

Over the years, the Land Conservancy has been a great community partner that has helped protect our region's natural heritage for three decades. Located in the town of Lewiston, this project will permanently protect one of the largest remaining forests along the Niagara Escarpment. The escarpment is recognized internationally for its unique geology and important plants and animals.

Our regions natural beauty is one of the major reasons that so many from around the world come to visit our area. When we provide more opportunities for people to experience the outdoors, we also attract new businesses and create more jobs. It is important that we continue to protect the natural heritage of this region. Known as Camp Stonehaven, thousands of people remember visiting the land as children. The project to acquire the camp in Lewiston is a chance to provide more of those memories and make the camp publicly accessible.

I am grateful that the Land Conservancy continues to do work in my district and I hope the Niagara River Greenway Commission will support this project as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob-G. Ortt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'O' at the end.

Senator Robert G. Ort
New York State Senate District 62

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 11, 2022

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

And

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

Dear Greg, Tim, and Kerrie,

I write today regarding the Western New York Land Conservancy and their proposal to acquire the Stonehaven camp in the Town of Lewiston. This type of project is a perfect fit for the Niagara River Greenway and will ensure that the forest is open to the public.

The Land Conservancy has spearheaded private and voluntary land conservation in western New York since 1991. As a nationally-accredited not-for-profit land trust, they have permanently protected thousands of acres of farms and forests in this region. Each project was with a willing landowner and was in a community that supported the work. Their protected farms are home to small businesses that provide jobs. Their protected forests have trails for hiking and snowshoeing, and generate spending locally on outdoor recreation.

The Land Conservancy has been an excellent steward of previous grants for conservation. In fact, they have successfully utilized this grant program to create the Stella Niagara Preserve in Lewiston along the Niagara River and expand the Niagara Escarpment Preserve in Lockport. I believe they will be an excellent steward of funding if awarded again.

This is an important forest that should be protected and that should be available for people to visit and experience. In this way, the Niagara River Greenway funds will continue to support the people in my district.

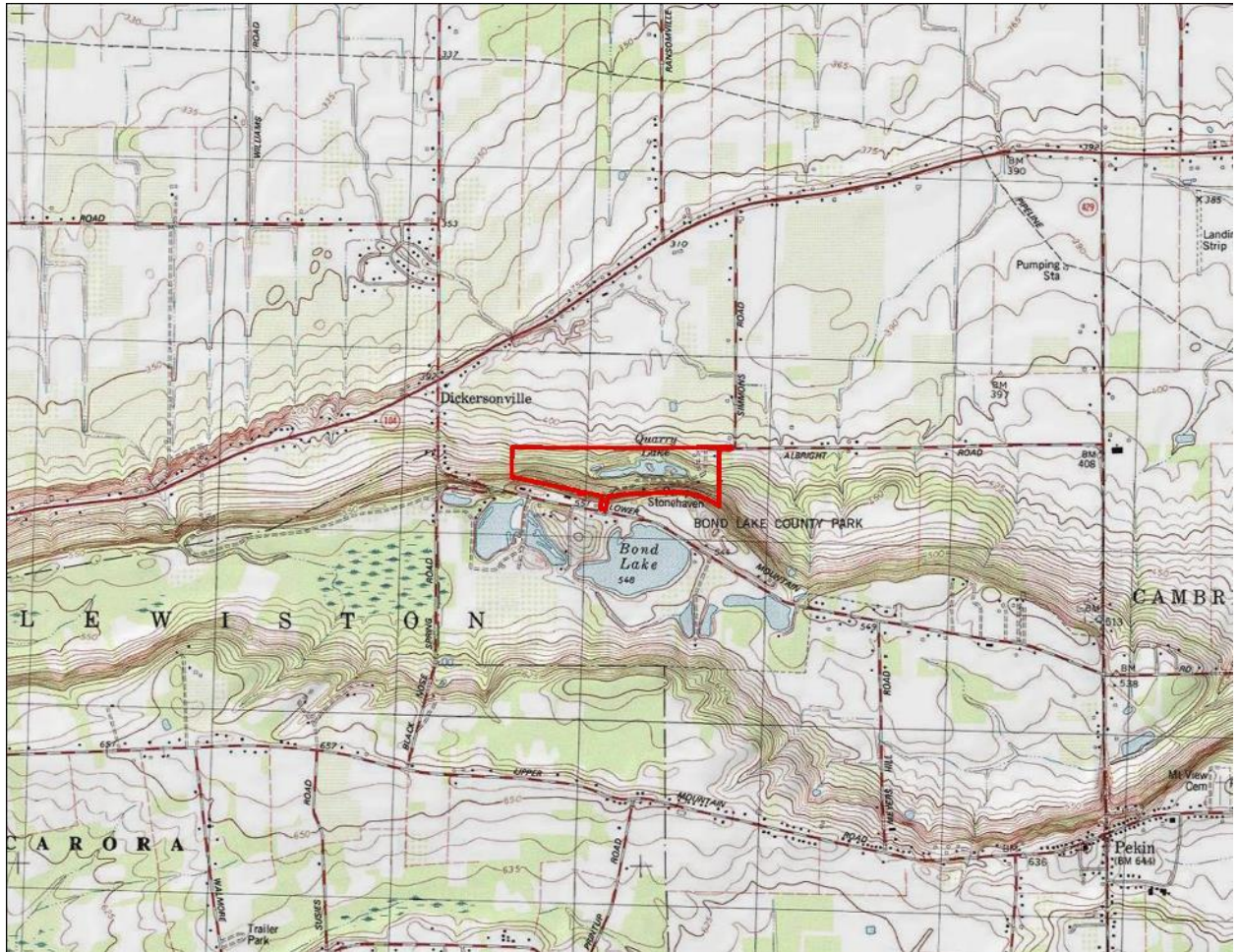
For these reasons and in accordance with all applicable rules, I am asking you to fully consider the Western New York Land Conservancy and their proposal to acquire the Stonehaven camp in the Town of Lewiston. If I may provide any further assistance, please contact my Clarence District office at 716-634-2324.

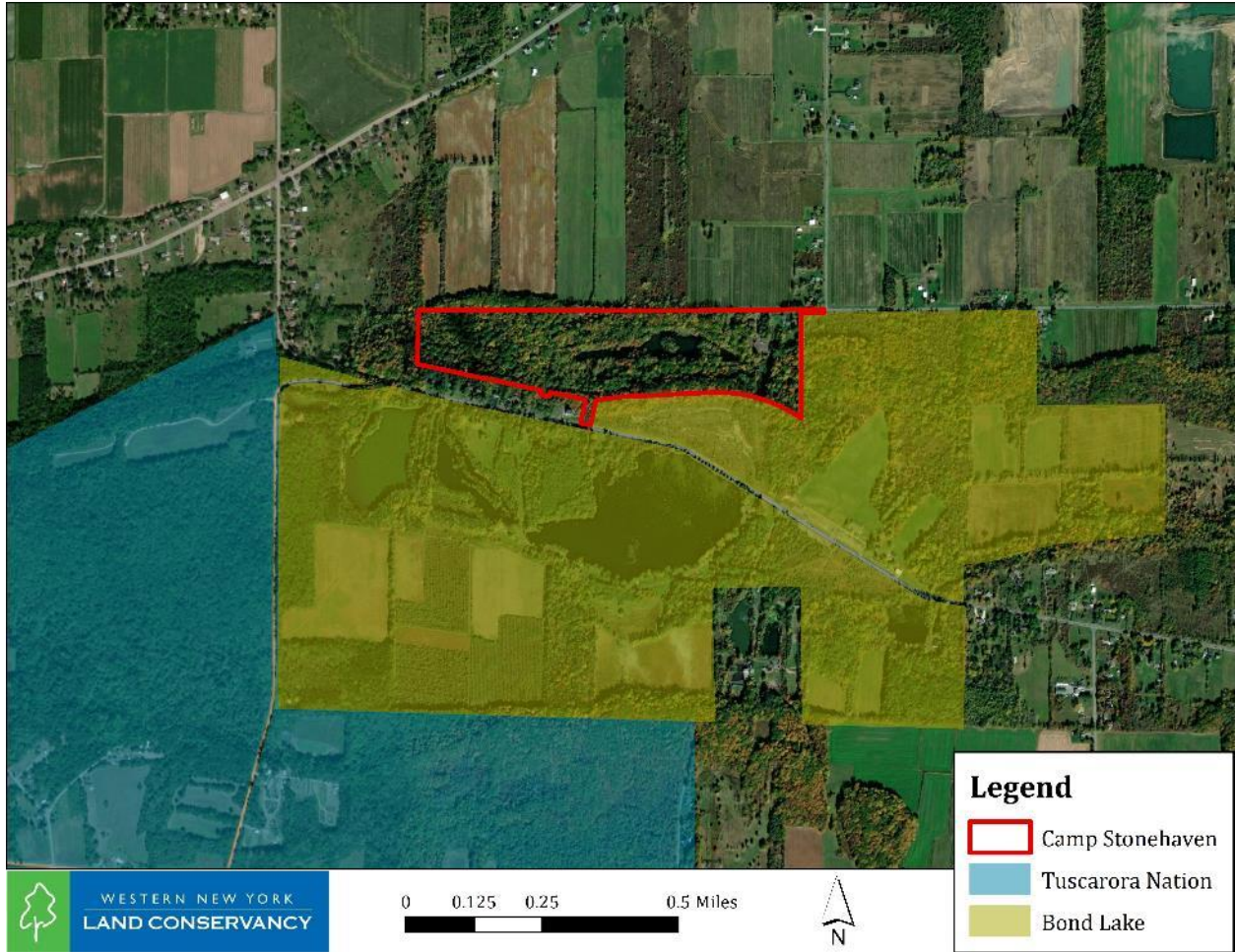
Sincerely,



(CHRIS JACOBS)
(Member of Congress)
CJ/gm

B. MAPS





C. PHOTOS







D. TAX EXEMPT STATUS



CINCINNATI OH 45999-0038

In reply refer to: 0248421964
June 11, 2013 LTR 4168C 0
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00019936
BODC: TE

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



024975

Employer Identification Number: 22-3160426
Person to Contact: Ms. L Mitchell
Toll Free Telephone Number: 1-877-829-5500

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your May 31, 2020, request for information regarding your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that you were recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in April 1992.

Our records also indicate that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are described in section(s) 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

Please refer to our website www.irs.gov/eo for information regarding filing requirements. Specifically, section 6033(j) of the Code provides that failure to file an annual information return for three consecutive years results in revocation of tax-exempt status as of the filing due date of the third return for organizations required to file. We will publish a list of organizations whose tax-exempt status was revoked under section 6033(j) of the Code on our website beginning in early 2011.

