

Restoration Work Begins With a little help from the goats!

In 2004 The Nature Conservancy of Eastern New York was awarded a \$10,000 LEAF grant to fund the ecological restoration of the Roger Perry Memorial Preserve in Dover, NY. Their efforts to control invasive non-native species include manual removal, the judicious use of herbicides and the use of grazing goats to maintain and protect the high quality wetland habitat.



Studies, interns from the Conservation Association, and local goats—to assist in carrying out their plan. The students and interns, under the guidance of Chris Zimmerman, TNC's Ecological Management Coordinator, cleared out the space around the fens and installed a fence to keep the five goats in. Of the four small wetlands on the preserve, the most degraded will be left up to the goats to help restore.

While the practice of using goats for ecological management is a new

concept, TNC scientists and land managers have incorporated this method of control with other established mechanisms to create a systematic plan for the ecological restoration of the wetlands. The goats are expected to munch away at the woody bark and red cedar trees, but it is not known if they will be attracted to the purple loosestrife. The results will be monitored and the management plan will be adapted accordingly throughout the process.

For more information and directions to the Roger Perry Memorial Preserve, one of The Nature Conservancy's many premier preserves, visit their website at www.nature.org/newyork and click on "Eastern."



During a recent visit to the Preserve, Iroquois representatives were given a guided tour along the short, easy loop trail where we viewed the scenic mountain ridges, dense conifer forests and open areas covered in soft, sparkling white sand from the limestone ridges that have eroded over time.

Referred to locally as the Dover Sand Hills or White Sands of Dover, the 117-acre Perry Preserve located at the base of the Berkshire-Taconic Ridge contains a diversity of habitats including wetlands, red cedar barrens and limestone woodlands.

Acquired by TNC in 2001 and named after an area conservationist and former chapter Trustee, the Perry Preserve has two main regions—the highlands, characterized by narrow limestone ridges; and the lowlands, which cradle a series of special wetlands called fens. These rich sloping fens, rare throughout the world, house rare and endangered species of plants and animals. However, invasive species of plants and trees, such as purple loosestrife and red cedar, are taking over the fens, putting the species that live there in danger of dying out.

Under this grant, TNC has coordinated their restoration work with the NYSDEC, US Fish and Wildlife Service, NY Natural Heritage Program and Environmental Defense and has utilized volunteers—students from Manhattan's High School for Environmental

LEAF AWARDS

Since 1995, Iroquois' Land Enhancement and Acquisition Fund has been helping communities preserve open space, establish and improve parklands, and enhance community-based passive recreational facilities. Of the 14 projects submitted for consideration during the 2005/06 funding cycle, 8 were approved, ranging from trail enhancements to protection for water sheds and freshwater tidal swamps.



Shelton Land Conservation Trust
Fairfield County, CT
www.sheltonlandtrust.org

Funding provided for improvements to the Shelton Recreation Path, a four-and-a-half mile path that links the downtown Shelton area to Huntington Center through open space parcels. Working in conjunction with volunteers from the Shelton Trails Committee, the project will improve a 1,200-foot portion of the path which passes through Land Trust property and City open space. The existing boardwalk, which is too narrow and quickly overgrown during the spring and summer, will be removed and replaced with a new boardwalk measuring approximately 8 feet wide by 40 feet long. The new boardwalk will help with the goal of establishing a completely handicap-accessible path.

Naromi Land Trust, Inc.
Fairfield County, CT
www.naromi.org

Naromi Land Trust was awarded funding for the Sherman Trails Enhancement Initiative. This initiative was designed to increase the recreational and educational

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use of open space in Sherman by completing habitat improvements on preserves and expanding the existing trails network. The project will replace antiquated preserve signs, create adequate and safe parking at trail heads, build informational kiosks at trail heads, and repair damaged trail bridges. The proposed enhancements will be completed on eight NLT properties, six of which have existing trail systems, and two properties where new trails are being developed but currently no signage, parking, or kiosks exist.

Landis Arboretum, Schoharie County, NY www.landisarboretum.org

Funds awarded for tire cleanup on 300 acres of open fields and forest purchased in March, 2005. A portion of the property has decades-old piles of tires, and cleanup will continue into next year. This portion of the property will be used for hiking, snowshoeing, and education programs, and trail systems will be developed in the future. The second part of the project is a comprehensive trail map that will detail the new and existing trails. The new trail map would include all trails and areas of interest and replace the existing collection of maps.



Village of Harrisville/ Towns of Diana and Pitcairn St. Lawrence/Lewis Counties, NY

Funding provided for improvements to the shared Community Recreation Area, originally built with Iroquois Land Preservation and Enhancement Program (LPEP) funds granted in 1991. The Area is used by all three municipalities for softball, basketball, tennis, as a playground for children, and for summer and winter recreation programs. Funds will allow the purchase of materials for the project, including fencing to enlarge the ball field and improve the tennis court, paint to improve existing fencing, top soil, clay and seeding to resurface the softball field. The plan also includes the development of a nature pedestrian path around the outside of the existing Community Recreation Area.

The Nature Conservancy, Eastern NY Columbia County, NY www.nature.org/newyork, "Eastern"

The grant will be used with other grants and funds to purchase a conservation easement on a 168-acre property near The Nature Conservancy's Lewis A. Swyer Preserve at Mill Creek in Stuyvesant, NY. Mill Creek, a tidal tributary of the Hudson River, flows through the rare freshwater tidal swamp contained in the Swyer Preserve. TNC is partnering with Scenic Hudson on this project, and the easement will be held jointly. The easement will provide adequate protection for the globally rare freshwater tidal swamp, one of only five in New York State.

Town of Boonville, Oneida County, NY

Funding to purchase gravel and stone to complete 4.8 miles of the towpath trail running alongside the Black River Canal. Residents use the towpath to walk, run, bicycle, and ride horses. This trail is planned to become part of the North Country National Scenic Trail.

Village of Prospect Oneida County, NY

Acquisition of a 73-acre parcel of privately owned property adjacent to land held by the village for its water system. Combined with the existing 50 acres the village currently owns for its watershed, the new combined parcel will total more than 120 acres. The additional acreage will provide the village with a greater degree of safety and control of its water shed from private development and potential environmental hazards. It will also enhance the recreational opportunity to the village residents and surrounding communities. Working in coordination with the Town of Trenton, the village will develop this land mass for an open space trail system that will offer hiking, mountain biking, and cross country skiing.

Tug Hill Tomorrow Lewis/Oneida Counties, NY www.tughilltomorrowlandtrust.org

Funds provided to reprint the *Tug Hill Recreation Guide: A Guide to Cross-Country Skiing, Hiking, Biking, and Fishing Access on Tug Hill*. First printed in 1990, the guide

remains so popular that supplies have been exhausted. This reprint will be an update of the 2003 guide, which was designed to work in conjunction with the Internet-based guide. The publication includes a region-locator map combined with individual trail maps and descriptions for 26 sites in the region. The guide presents non-motorized recreation opportunities to both local residents and visitors alike in an effort to increase the quality of living for residents by promoting healthy, environmentally friendly forms of recreation, as well as to create economic opportunity for local businesses that provide services for recreation.



LEAF Guidelines Available

If you'd like to receive a copy of our current *LEAF Guidelines & Criteria*, please contact Ruth Parkins, Public Affairs Manager, at ruth_parkins@iroquois.com, phone 203.925.7209. Or, visit our website to download the *Guidelines* at http://www.iroquois.com/new-Internet/igts/CommunityCommitment/leaf_ljep.asp.

2006 LEAF Survey

We would like to extend our thanks to all those who responded to our LEAF Survey conducted in February. Your responses and comments were valuable to us in determining the program's effectiveness in providing environmental and passive recreational opportunities, and the benefit our pipeline communities have gained from LEAF over the past ten years.

Overall, the responses indicated that our pipeline communities are familiar with the LEAF program and appreciate the benefit it has provided in enabling them to preserve open space, establish and improve parklands, and enhance passive recreational facilities.

And the winner is... Sue Loden, Supervisor of the Town of Wright, NY, was the lucky recipient of a \$100 American Express gift certificate as the winner of the raffle held for all survey participants who responded by March 10. Congratulations Supervisor Loden!