



Forest Conservation Easements for Land Trusts 2025 Grant Awards

Genesee Valley Conservancy, Livingston County: \$227,220 to purchase a conservation easement on the 135-acre Pokey Moonshine Hallow property, located in the town of Springwater. This land is 99% forested and situated within the watershed of Hemlock Lake, a drinking water source for the City of Rochester. The landowners will continue to sustainably manage the forest.

Genesee Valley Conservancy, Steuben County: \$350,000 to purchase a conservation easement on the 841-acre Beckhorn property, located in the towns of Rexville and West Union. This is one of the largest forested parcels remaining in Steuben County and will connect to other protected land. The property's forest blends species found in both temperate and boreal climates, making for a diverse mix of trees and plants, enhancing biodiversity and providing habitat for numerous species of birds and mammals.

Hudson Taconic Lands, Rensselaer County: \$265,000 to purchase a conservation easement on the 288-acre Wheeler Mountain Escarpment in the Towns of Brunswick and Grafton. The land is 100% forested and is adjacent to the 1,100-acre Camp Rotary Conservation Easement recently acquired by Hudson Taconic Lands. The easement will protect Wheeler Mountain and the Quaken Kill, home to critical habitat and part of a larger initiative to create a four-mile contiguous corridor of protected forest along the western escarpment of the Rensselaer Plateau.

Otsego Land Trust, Otsego County: \$54,250 to purchase a conservation easement on the 41-acre Burr Forest property in the town of Westford. The land is adjacent to the popular Betty and Wilbur Davis State Park. The easement property is 90% forested, and includes wetlands and hemlock stands, along with large concentrations of native plants. The landowners will manage the forest for wildlife and the health of the forest.

Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy, Ulster County: \$160,850 to purchase a conservation easement that will protect 19 acres of diverse forestland adjacent to Minnewaska State Park in the town of Wawarsing. The easement will protect Mine Hole Brook, which contains brook trout and is a tributary to Rondout Creek. The easement will also ensure that the area surrounding the Mine Hole Trail, a popular and heavily used recreation area, remains in a natural state. The current owner is interested in proactively managing the woodlands for habitat, with a focus on improving the health and ecological diversity of the forest.



Scenic Hudson, Columbia County: \$250,000 to purchase a conservation easement on the 272-acre West Family Land property in the towns of New Lebanon and Canaan. The land was once part of a larger 19th century Shaker Community and is adjacent to conserved land, including Bates Memorial State Park in Massachusetts. The forest is a mix of hardwood and softwood and includes habitat for several bird and mammal species.

Scenic Hudson, Dutchess County: \$125,000 to purchase a conservation easement on the 137-acre Royal Strawberry Hill Farm and Preserve in the town of Poughkeepsie. The property, once part of a network of farms, has mostly reverted to forest in an area under extreme development pressure. The City of Poughkeepsie has identified the property in its Open Space Plan and has designated the land as an urban greenway. The land hosts a limestone woodland forest community, wetlands and streams, habitat for birds, mammals, and amphibians, and connects some of the last remaining forests in the area.

Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust (THTLT), Herkimer County (two projects): \$131,122 to conserve the 135-acre Kimak Forest property and \$161,175 to conserve the 182-acre Grafer Forest property, both located in the town of Russia. Both properties are part of a large, forested area that includes other conservation easements held by the land trust. These new easements will build on THTLT's conservation efforts surrounding Hinkley State Forest. Both properties are characterized by forested land that contains a mix of softwood and hardwood species, which play a crucial role in providing habitat for a diverse array of wildlife. Several streams cross the property and flow into West Canada Creek, an important water source.