

# OPEN SPACE

Vol. I

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Front cover: Lower Preston Pond/Tahawus Tract by Carl Heilman




Gary Randolph

Tahawus Tract

## About the Open Space Institute, Inc.

The Open Space Institute ([www.osiny.org](http://www.osiny.org)) is a non-profit land conservation organization that protects significant recreational, environmental, agricultural and historic landscapes. Founded in 1963, OSI has protected more than 90,000 acres in New York State. Through its Northern Forest Protection Fund, OSI has assisted in the protection of close to 1,000,000 acres in New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. OSI's recently launched New Jersey Conservation Loan Program has helped protect 9,780 acres in the nation's most densely populated state.

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# FROM THE EDITOR

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Every newsletter, newspaper, and journal begins with lofty aspirations, and at OSI, we start ours with equally high hopes. We want to interest, inform, and inspire. We also aspire to being more provocative than self-congratulatory. To that end, we invite news and information you might have to include in our quarterly publication, available in paper form, via email, and on the homepage of our website at [osiny.org](http://osiny.org). We have reserved this space in future publications for correspondence from you and brief comments from us.

A quick review of OSI's history and why this effort takes us back to our roots: the late Dick Pough (see page 11) founded the Open Space Institute in 1963 to educate suburban communities around New York about the value of open space and to enlist people to fight for protection of traditional, open landscapes. He acquired little green VW Beetles and sent volunteers around to leaflet Westchester communities, and because of those efforts, some of the first land trusts in America were founded around local community protection of natural landscapes.

As a way to prompt local conservation in the 1960's, OSI produced literature on the values of open space — financial, ecological, and spiritual. We're still trying to do that today, though we might use different vehicles to tell our story.

Over the years, OSI has developed a suite of programs to protect environmental, historic, agricultural and recreational resources. Our work is never done alone — our accomplishments are the result of highly successful partnership with the State of New York and with friends in the private sector. Our lead story — about the Tahawus Tract in the Adirondacks, which OSI recently acquired after a decade long courtship with a Texas mining company — looks at the challenges of land conservation in the Northern Forest and collective efforts to save this great wilderness.

We trust you will learn something about the state of conservation and forests in the Northeast, and we invite you to join us in conversation about our work. We look forward to hearing from you. Send us your comments via email or snail mail.

Thank you for your interest and support.

Kim Elliman  
*Chief Executive Officer*



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## Drop Us a Line

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or email us at: [Editor@osiny.org](mailto:Editor@osiny.org)

# OPEN SPACE NEWS



## As Forests Shrink, Lyme Disease Risk Rises

Scientists have for years suggested that tampering with forests could have an impact on human health. A new study by Bard College and the Institute of Ecosystem Studies shows a direct link between lyme disease and shrinking forests. The scientists ventured into 14 forests of differing sizes in Dutchess County, New York. By dragging nets through the forests, they found that ticks, which carry lyme disease, existed in higher concentrations in small forest patches.



## Legislative Watch

A coalition of non-profit organizations, including the Open Space Institute, recently voiced its collective concern about legislation that would re-write laws allowing real property tax exemptions for non-profit organizations. Under the new bill, sponsored by New York State Senator John Bonacic (R-New Hope), many not-for-profit providers would be forced to eliminate programs that serve the common good, putting the onus on the cash strapped State of New York to meet a variety of social, religious and environmental needs.

Federal legislation allocating as much as \$110 million to the Highlands of NY, NJ, CT and PA could be signed into law before the end of the year. In October, the U.S. House and Senate passed the Highlands Conservation Act. Identified by the U.S. Forest Service as "nationally significant," the 2 million acre Highlands region is the source of drinking water for over 11 million people. The Highlands Coalition, comprised of over a hundred groups, including OSI, supported the bill. Log on to [www.highlandscalition.org](http://www.highlandscalition.org) for updates.



## Kudos, TPL

Several nonprofits, including the Trust For Public Land (TPL), are working hard to generate local and state funding for land conservation. Log on to [LandVote.org](http://LandVote.org) for TPL's "Top Ten Ways To Increase Open Space Funds" and other useful facts. Funding mechanisms like real estate transfer taxes, license plates, bonds, and state sales taxes, can substantially augment public funding for open space protection.

## Potential Threat to NYC Water



The State of New York is currently assessing a proposed \$200 million Belleayre Resort in the Catskills. The Catskills/Delaware watershed, where the resort would be built, is the source of drinking water for millions of New Yorkers. The State's watershed inspector, James Tierney, warns: "It's the largest project ever proposed in New York City's watershed and the Park, and it's on areas that are very difficult to build upon without causing harm to water quality." Meanwhile, the threat of terrorism has closed roads around the Catskills' Ashokan Reservoir.



# ON THE TRAIL

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## OPEN SPACE: TAX BARGAIN OR BURDEN?

A proposal is floated to construct a condo development on the shores of the river that graces your hometown. Everyone loves the views from the river's edge and the condos are sure to attract homebuyers. Can the town planners safely assume that the condos will bring more revenue to the town coffers than a public park or a network of trails? This is a constant, emotionally charged question that has become the subject of considerable scientific inquiry.

Dr. Robert Burchell, one of the nation's top experts on sprawl, says the net impact of those riverfront condos could be a considerable tax burden. "My studies show that the costs generated by residential development are typically double what they produce in revenue," says Burchell, Co-Director of the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University. Conversely, open spaces, like parks and farmland, that typically require limited public services, yield slight increases in revenue, due in large part to the appreciation of nearby properties that bring in higher tax receipts. Burchell is synthesizing his research in an upcoming book, *Sprawl Costs*.

Burchell's findings dovetail with a growing body of evidence indicating that development rarely pays its way. There's empirical proof in "Cost of Community Services" (COCS) studies, a widely applied method of estimating the fiscal and economic impacts of urban development and open space.

COCS studies conducted by the American Farmland Trust (AFT) in more than 83 communities nationwide show that farm and open space lands contribute more to tax revenues than they demand in public service expenditures. Individual taxpayers, local, state, and federal governments, all bear the burden of both



*Studies show that the costs associated with land preservation pale in comparison to the monetary and non-market costs of development.*

monetary and non-market costs from development. Examples of this monetary drain include a whole suite of infrastructure cost: building construction, road and highway maintenance, transportation, public services and utilities. Non-market, or "natural capital" costs include environmental degradation, habitat loss, water pollution, noise, crime and changes in community character that take place when open landscapes and vistas are lost forever. And while farmland, parks, forests and

other open spaces may not generate as much revenue as residential, commercial or industrial uses, the costs associated with their preservation and longevity pale compared to the alternative.

In New York, for example, 15 COSC studies by AFT found that farm and forestland cost only \$.029 in municipal services for every dollar they create in tax revenue. Meanwhile, residential properties cost \$1.27 for every dollar of municipal revenue.

In Kinderhook Creek, Columbia County, one of OSI's priority conservation areas, farmland costs the community only 17 cents for every dollar it creates in tax revenue. Residences cost \$1.05 for every dollar they create in tax revenue! This is the consistent positive net contribution to community budgets being documented across New York State and across the country.

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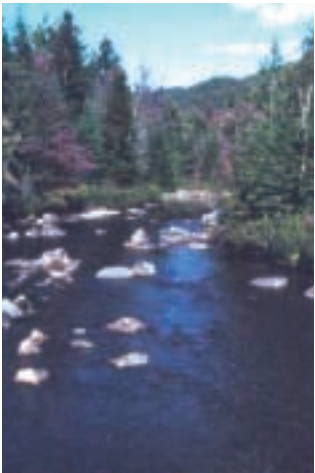
Read more about the economics of open space online:

<http://policy.rutgers.edu/cupr/index1> (Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers)

[www.farmland.org](http://www.farmland.org) (American Farmland Trust)

[www.nrdc.org](http://www.nrdc.org) (Natural Resources Defense Council)

# THE NORTHERN FOREST AT A CROSSROADS



The Hudson River begins as an inconspicuous stream in the Adirondacks

## OSI ACQUIRES TAHAWUS TRACT

**D**esigned both to protect nature and provide for human use, the six-million-acre Adirondack Park has illustrated, since its creation in 1892, the challenges raised by conflicting ecological and economic interests. The Open Space Institute's recent \$8.5 million acquisition of the Tahawus Tract, nearly 10,000 acres lying at the western approaches to Mt. Marcy and long recognized as one of the highest priorities for addition to the Adirondack Forest Preserve, seeks the right balance.

OSI's President, Joe Martens, recently presented with the State's Adirondack Stewardship award, pursued the protection of this magnificent property for more than eight years. The deal, closed on August 19th, expands public access to the High Peaks Wilderness Area and opens to the public pristine, glacially carved lakes, including Preston Ponds and Henderson Lake, headwaters of the mighty Hudson River. OSI's protection of the Tahawus Tract simultaneously preserves jobs and economic benefits by ensuring that a portion of the land will be managed as a working, sustainable forest and another portion as an historic site.

Like much of the Northern Forest (see accompanying article), though mined, logged, and criss-



Henderson Lake and the High Peaks

1826

Tahawus property "discovered" by Archibald McIntyre and David Henderson, who purchase 105,000 acres from NY State for 10 cents an acre.

1827

First ore mined from "McIntyre Mine."

1857

Mining operations cease.

crossed with roads for the past 175 years, Tahawus still retains much of its primeval forest character. But the economics of resource extraction, long the backbone of the region, are changing, and mining and timber jobs are migrating to the tropics and to Canada. Tahawus has not seen much commercial activity since 1989, when the titanium mines shut down. In 1994, concerned that the property's stunning array of lakes, rivers, streams, views, and forests would be attractive to developers, OSI approached the owner of the tract, Houston-based NL Industries, hoping to convince the company to sell. NL continued to press for conditions that were unacceptable to OSI in the past, namely, insisting that OSI acquire the industrial and mining portions along with the unmined lands and seeking a release from the State for any liability that might arise from past mining operations.

Martens persisted, with the financial support of the Park Foundation, talking with a string of company officials over the years until in December 2002, he was summoned to Houston for a face-to-face summit with corporate executives. After a marathon session, Martens and OSI had a deal, segregating from the acquisition the former titanium mine that NL will retain. On April 30th, OSI signed a contract to purchase 9,646 of NL's 11,200 acres through the organization's land acquisition affiliate, the Open Space Conservancy.

In pursuing the acquisition, Martens recognized the potential for the Tahawus deal to serve as a model, stretching limited acquisition capital through creative financing arrangements involving several partners, allowing multiple uses of the area's resources, and preserving jobs to benefit the local economy.

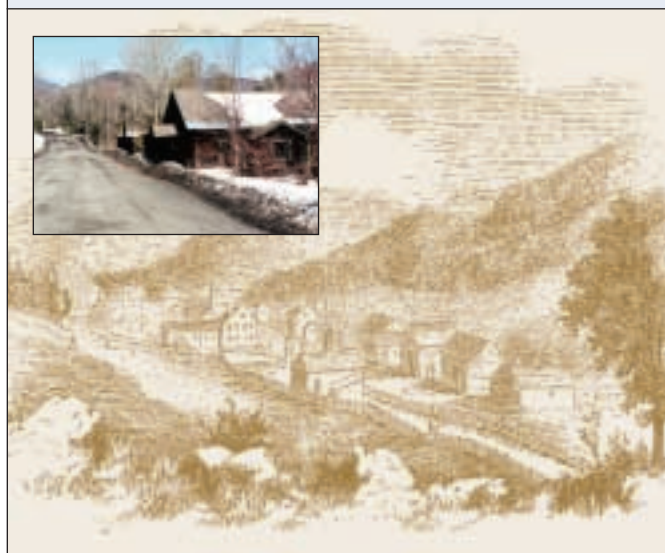
Less than a month after the purchase agreement was signed, Governor George Pataki announced that the State would acquire 6,000 acres in fee to add to the "forever wild" Forest Preserve, as well as an easement on another 3,500 acres to be managed as sustainable forest. Martens then negotiated a \$5.9 million 12-month interest free loan from the State Revolving Fund of the State Environmental Facilities Corporation. The loan, the first ever provided to a New York State non-profit, allowed the Open Space Conservancy to purchase the property and hold it while the State appropriates funds to acquire the fee and easement. After the state

*(continued on page 8)*

In September 1901, the mining Village of Adirondac was witness to Presidential history when Teddy Roosevelt was a guest of the Tahawus Club, the State's oldest fishing and hunting club. Vice President Roosevelt was out hiking in the High Peaks when an Adirondack guide delivered tragic news — President McKinley was dying from an assassin's bullet. Roosevelt quickly embarked on his famous "midnight ride to the Presidency" from Tahawus to North Creek, where a train was waiting to take him to McKinley's bedside.



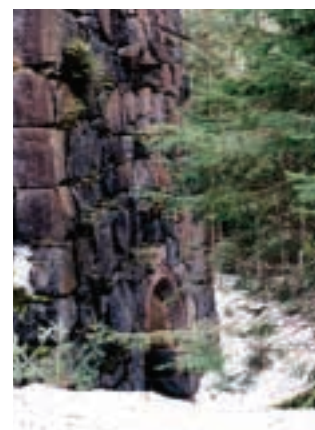
Recent photo of Adirondac Village, above, and as it was sketched in the 1860s



Etchings courtesy The Hudson: From The Wilderness to the Sea by Benjamin Lossing (Black Dome Press)



First bridge over the Hudson



Evidence of early mining activity at the Tahawus Tract



An OSI grant helped protect Tug Hill (above), located in the Northern Forest

The Nature Conservancy

1892

Adirondack Park created by NY State Legislature.

1894

NY State Legislature passes "forever wild" amendment protecting all State lands in Adirondack Park.

1901

Theodore Roosevelt visits Tahawus property and makes famous "Midnight Ride to the Presidency" from Village of Adirondac.



## A FORESTER SPEAKS

*Many people don't believe that forest resources can be both utilized and conserved — that you can cut trees without destroying the forest. I think you can, and we're seeing more and more large-scale acquisitions by land conservation groups, particularly in New England, with the goal of saving the forests and protecting wildlife populations that require large unbroken expanses of forest.*

*It can be expensive to buy these large tracts. Conservation organizations are turning to foresters because they need capital to realize their ambitious conservation goals. Well-managed forests can provide a financial return while sustaining environmental values. The trick is to find the right balance.*

*In recent years foresters have learned new ways to carefully nurture forests. This "natural forest management" approach tries to mimic natural changes and forces that shape forests. The result can be forests that are healthier with a broader range of native plants and animals.*

*The hardest job is to explain the importance of managing forests well. Certification, which ensures that forest management meets established conservation standards, has become a useful tool. It has helped foresters understand the role of conservation forestry while increasing the general public's confidence in sustainable forestry.*

*It's an exciting time to be a forester. The conservation community is reaching out to us, and with every phone call, we're getting a little better at telling our story.*

Mike Ferrucci can be reached at [mferrucci@iforest.com](mailto:mferrucci@iforest.com) or 203-483-4316.



Debbie Ferrucci

Mike Ferrucci

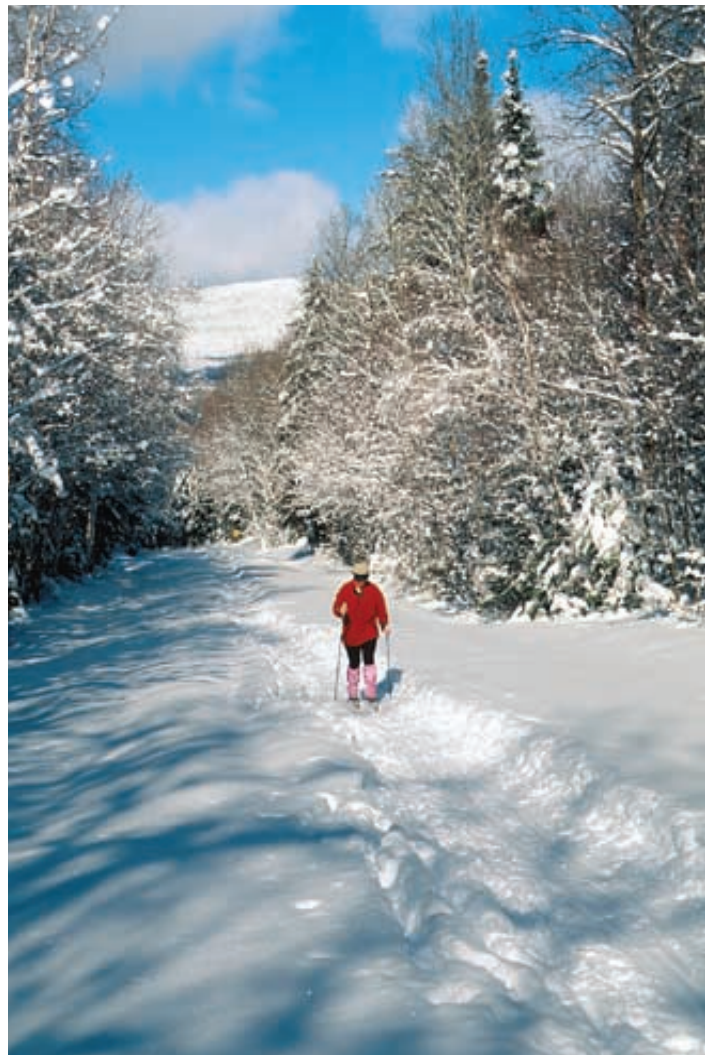
Mike Ferrucci is the founder of Interforest, LLC, an international forestland management company that specializes in sustainable forestry. Mike, who also lectures at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, has helped evaluate large scale forest conservation projects for OSI's Northern Forest Protection Fund.

*(continued from page 7)*

purchase is completed, OSI still needs to raise another \$3 million through fundraising efforts and the sale or lease of working forestlands.

In a simultaneous but unrelated deal, OSI has secured most of the development rights of the 1,600-acre Last Chance Ranch, which lies to the northwest of Mt. Marcy, thereby ensuring that the most popular access corridor to the High Peaks remains pristine and wild.

With the Tahawus Tract and the Last Chance Ranch protected, the wild and historic legacy of the Adirondacks has been enhanced, and the conservation community has yet another example of the importance of perseverance and creativity. 🌲



Ned Therrien

Winter Recreation in The Northern Forest

1941

Onset of World War II rekindles interest in titanium ore.

1942

NL Industries begins mining operation.

1989

NL ceases mining operations after extracting 40 million tons of titanium.



## THE NORTHERN FOREST THE CONSERVATION CONTEXT

OSI's purchase of the 9,646-acre NL tract is part of a larger movement by conservationists to protect large landscapes in the Northern Forest, a 26-million-acre expanse of largely private forestland that spans the northern tiers of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York. The forests are the ecological, economic and cultural mainstay of the region. They provide jobs and raw materials, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities for millions of residents and visitors, and ecological benefits such as clean water and air.

But the Northern Forest faces profound changes. Since the early 1980's, the pulp and paper industry has been undergoing a global restructuring. Forest products companies that historically were dominant owners of forestland in the region have been selling off land and manufacturing facilities to bolster sagging balance sheets and shift resources to warmer regions where trees grow faster. Nearly 6 million acres, or almost 20% of the region's land base, has changed hands over the last decade.

In response, local and national conservation groups and government agencies have been engaged in large-scale land purchases. Beginning in 1998 with the Conservation Fund's \$75 million purchase of 295,000 acres in three states from Champion International, national and regional land trusts have completed some of the largest conservation purchases in the nation.

In two recent deals supported by OSI's Northern Forest Protection Fund, The Nature Conservancy purchased for \$45 million 241,000 acres of land adjacent to Baxter State Park in Maine, and the Trust for Public Land bought for \$43.2 million 171,500 acres of forestland in northern New Hampshire.

But despite these important contributions, the future stewardship of forests, mountains and streams in the Northern Forest remains uncertain. Land continues to be bought and sold at a dizzying pace, and mill closures, development deals, subdivisions, and liquidations continue to reshape the economic and environmental character of the region.

### OSI'S NORTHERN FOREST PROTECTION FUND

In 2000, OSI, through its affiliate the Open Space Conservancy, established the Northern Forest Protection Fund (NFPF) to provide grants and loans to land trusts working to permanently protect large forested landscapes in northern New England. The Fund was capitalized with \$12 million in grants from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and Surdna Foundation.

The Fund's goals are to: establish ecological reserves; protect working forests; and secure public access and recreational opportunities. The Fund is guided by an advisory board of leading business, forestry and environmental leaders from the region and has developed a model evaluation process to determine which projects maximize public benefits across a landscape.

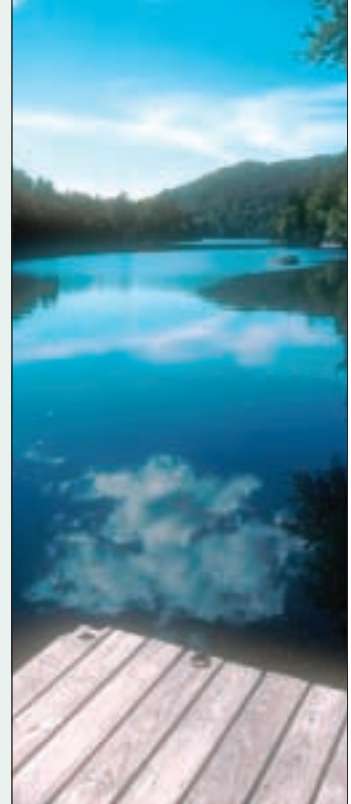
To date, the Fund has awarded eleven grants and two loans for interim and permanent financing totaling \$10 million to eleven projects that will protect approximately one million acres, including such famed landscapes as the Debscoveys in Maine, the headwaters of the Connecticut River in New Hampshire and the Tug Hill Plateau in New York.

The Fund's impact has extended beyond funding. The Fund's requirement that projects meet sustainable forestry standards has spurred the adoption of improved forest practices within working forest easements and led, in some instances, to start-of-the-art forest management strategies.

Go to [www.osiny.org/northernforest](http://www.osiny.org/northernforest) for more information

#### The Northern Forest

##### Tahawus Tract



Above, Henderson Lake

Ned Thierion

1994

OSI begins talks with NL Industries.

2003

NL agrees to sell OSI nearly 10,000-acre Tahawus Tract.

# MAIN STREET

## Ball Fields and the Privilege to Play



OSI's Philipstown Park, the grounds of a former private school in Putnam County

“Recreation is phenomenally important in this day and age when we have an epidemic of undiagnosed obesity, we’ve got ten year old diabetics, a tremendous need for socialization, and a disparity between boys and girls where we still haven’t achieved parity.”

—Barry Tindall, director of public policy at the National Recreation and Park Association

“When I was growing up, there was always a place to play,” says Marty DiCola, who runs the Cortlandt Soccer Club in Westchester County, New York. Times have changed.

Last Spring, DiCola had to make a choice: cancel soccer practices or find a field, any field. So he called an institution that thrives on training, the U.S. military, which provided a field at a nearby National Guard training site.

The scarcity of ball fields is a problem in many towns in New York, particularly in suburbs where land values are sky high. Faced with limited options, coaches are scrambling to determine who gets to play where, creating a pecking order for the opportunity to play, breathe fresh air, and be part of a team. In Rockland County, some Little Leagues are so oversubscribed that kids are being waitlisted.

A lot of kids want to play ball. Girls are participating more, thanks in part to Title IX, the federal law written to give girls equal opportunities. Suburban populations are exploding. Parents, concerned about the obesity epidemic and the potential impact of mind numbing video games, are urging their kids to get outdoors. Schools are adding sports they haven’t offered before, like rugby, lacrosse, and field hockey.

Often looked at as amenities, parks are often the first to get cut when budgets are strained. “Recreation is phenomenally important in this day and age when we have an epidemic of undiagnosed obesity, we’ve got ten year old diabetics, a tremendous need for socialization, and a disparity between boys and girls where we still haven’t achieved parity,” says Barry Tindall, director of public policy at the National Recreation and Park Association.

Marty DiCola agrees. “A lot of life’s lessons get played out on a ball field,” he says. Limited open space will require parents, coaches, schools and other forces to get involved and find solutions. Environmental groups can and do help. Scenic Hudson has bought land for recreation and the Trust for Public Land has built a whole program around reviving city parks. The Open Space Institute has acquired many small parks that are now used for recreation, including the Philipstown Park in Putnam County and others throughout the Hudson River Valley.



The Philipstown Department of Recreation in Putnam County uses the grounds of a former monastery acquired by OSI for its “Little Kickers” program.

# TRANSITIONS

## OSI welcomes Kim Elliman and Peter Howell



Jon Evans

Peter Howell, left and Kim Elliman, right

The Open Space Institute continues to expand its geographic and programmatic scope to include New Jersey, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. In addition to the *where*, OSI has also changed *how* we protect critical landscapes. In the past three years, OSI has initiated both the Northern Forest Protection Fund and the New Jersey Conservation Loan Program, which offer grants and loans to other nonprofits working to protect landscapes threatened by fragmentation.

The *who* of OSI is also changing. In September, we welcomed Kim Elliman and Peter Howell. Now CEO, Kim Elliman was president of OSI in the 1990s when, working in concert with the Trust for Public Land, OSI negotiated the landmark deal to protect Sterling Forest, a 15,800-acre acquisition that comprised the largest addition to New York State parkland in 50 years. As director of OSI's Conservation Loan

Program, Peter Howell will work with Kim to build on OSI's conservation finance program for priority areas that are at risk. Having directed environmental grant-making programs at the Wallace Funds and Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Peter will bring invaluable knowledge and expertise to OSI.

## Goodbye, Denise

In its 3-year history, OSI's Northern Forest Protection Fund has helped protect almost 1 million acres through twelve separate transactions with conservation partners. Expending \$10.5 million, OSI has leveraged \$160 million in public and private funding. We have Denise Schlener to thank for instituting a rigorous standard for land transactions and raising the bar for integrated forestry (see page 9).

We wish Denise the best of luck as she moves on to Washington, D.C. to head up the Trust for Public Land's Chesapeake Field Office.



Denise Schlener

## Environmental Community Loses Two of Its Best Advocates

This summer, the environmental community lost two of its founders and champions. Had it not been for Frances Reese and Richard Pough, the Hudson River Valley and the history of environmental conservation would be far different.



Scenic Hudson

Franny Reese

Franny Reese, 85, was one of the founders and long time chair of Scenic Hudson. In early 1964, she led efforts to protect Storm King Mountain, an iconic landmark in New York's Hudson Highlands.

Richard Pough, 99, had a long and distinguished career as a champion of wild birds and wild places. He helped create the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, wrote bird guides for Audubon, and was founding president of The Nature Conservancy. Pough also founded the Open Space Institute in 1963.



The Nature Conservancy

Richard Pough

## SUPPORT OSI'S WORK TO PROTECT IMPERILED LANDSCAPES!

☐ I have enclosed my tax-deductible contribution made payable to the Open Space Institute.

☐ \$50    ☐ \$100    ☐ \$250    ☐ \$500    ☐ \$1,000    ☐ Other

☐ My company's matching gift is enclosed.

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