

# PECONIC LAND TRUST



## **For immediate release**

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### **PECONIC LAND TRUST IS THE RECIPIENT OF TWO GRANTS FROM THE NYS DEC AND THE LAND TRUST ALLIANCE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

*The two grants will provide funding in support of the Trust's stewardship initiatives, including funding for Charnews Farm in Southold.*

**October 2, 2009. Southampton, New York.** John v.H. Halsey, President of the Peconic Land Trust, is pleased to announce that the Trust has been awarded two grants from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Land Trust Alliance through the Conservation Partnership Program (CPP) of the Environmental Protection Fund. The awards were announced on Thursday, October 1, 2009 at a press conference in Albany.

"We are very grateful to the DEC and the Alliance for their support of our stewardship activities on Long Island. The importance of the CPP can not be understated, as its funding directly supports projects that are critical to land trusts and their missions. The funding we will receive through this year's grant program will enable the Trust to improve the management of Trust preserves and conservation easements that we hold, monitor and protect through our stewardship activities, as well as fund an important community project in Southold," said Halsey.

In a press release issued at the time of the conference, land trust representatives

applauded Governor David Paterson, the state Legislature, and state agency leaders for their efforts to secure this public funding for land trusts and their community partners.

In making the awards, Rand Wentworth, President of the Land Trust Alliance, said:

"New York State has demonstrated its support of local land trusts and their vital mission to save the places New Yorkers cherish and depend on for clean air and water, food, and recreation. I commend Governor Paterson, Commissioner Grannis, Senator Antoine Thompson, Assemblyman Robert Sweeney, and other members of the Legislature for ensuring the viability of the Environmental Protection Fund. The EPF and the Conservation Partnership Program are smart investments that will protect the air, water, and open spaces that are so vital to New York's economy and public health."

In addition, the Peconic Land Trust would like to thank our local legislators, Senator Ken LaValle and Assemblymen Fred Thiele, Jr., and Marc Alessi for their support of the EPF and the CPP programs.

As a result of the grants announced today, organizations throughout New York State, including the Peconic Land Trust, can also leverage nearly \$1.5 million in additional matching funds from community and private sources. To date, the program has leveraged over \$10 million in private and community funds, creating employment and advancement opportunities in the conservation field and conserving more than 11,000 additional acres of land.

The two grants awarded to the Peconic Land Trust are:

**Category: Capacity & Excellence: Stewardship: Peconic Land Trust Stewardship Plan.**

Project will update baseline documentation and management plans for the Trust's conservation easements and preserves in accordance with Land Trust Standards and

Practices. The Trust holds 83 fee properties on 1,233 acres and 98 conservation easements on 2,507 acres.

**Category: Conservation Catalyst: Charnews Farm Outreach Project.** Two-year project will enable the Trust to develop and implement a sustainable agriculture education program with North Fork community volunteers at the 23-acre Charnews Farm, protected in partnership with the Town of Southold's Farmland Protection Program. The project is inspired by the Trust's successful Quail Hill Farm, a popular community supported agriculture and apprenticeship program in Amagansett, on property donated to the Trust by Deborah Ann Light.

#### **About the Conservation Partnership Program**

The Conservation Partnership Program is a public-private initiative funded through the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and administered by the Land Trust Alliance, in coordination with Department of Environmental Conservation. Since 2002, the Conservation Partnership Program has invested in more than 275 projects benefitting 67 different land trust organizations across the state, from Long Island to Buffalo.

A total of \$1,417,500 in grants will be awarded through the Conservation Partnership Program to help local not-for-profits sustain critical programs. The funding will help create land trust jobs, strengthen key partnerships with local and state governments, and support programming that advances farm and watershed protection and other community projects across the state.

Forty-seven land trust organizations across New York will receive funds, including the Peconic Land Trust, North Shore Land Alliance, Manhattan Land Trust, Hudson

Highlands Land Trust, Mohonk Preserve, Dutchess Land Conservancy, Mohawk-Hudson Land Conservancy, Agricultural Stewardship Association, New York Agricultural Land Trust, Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, Genesee Land Trust and Western New York Land Conservancy. The full list of grant recipients can be found at <https://www.landtrustalliance.org/community/northeast/nyscpp>.

The Conservation Partnership Program, like other EPF programs, creates a powerful economic stimulus that spurs green community investments in every county in the state. According to government data, tourism such as visits to local farms, trails and nature preserves in the Hudson Valley alone annually generates \$4.7 billion in spending and \$300 million in local taxes, and employs 80,000 people. In a report released earlier this year, the Trust for Public Land says that it is widely understood that investments in conservation boost property values, support businesses, save energy and tax payer money, and safeguard natural ecosystems on which economic well being depends. With the grant awards announced today, land trusts will advance significant projects at a critical time for communities and businesses across the state.

**Conservation Catalyst Grants** provide critical funding for partnerships and community initiatives that connect people to nature, increase public involvement in community conservation, and help save special places prioritized in the New York State Open Space Plan. Land trust partnerships funded by the Conservation Partnership Program will involve local, state and federal agency partners, private landowners, municipalities, and other community service organizations. Land trust partnerships are a proven and highly cost-effective way for New York State to strengthen and build public support for its conservation programs.

**Capacity & Excellence Grants** are designed to increase organizational effectiveness while helping land trusts implement best business practices and prepare for national accreditation. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, recognizes land trust organizations across the country that have met rigorous compliance requirements and implemented *Land Trust Standards and Practices*, the legal, ethical, and technical guidelines for land conservation organizations across the country.

### **About the Peconic Land Trust**

The Peconic Land Trust was established in 1983 to conserve Long Island's working farms and natural lands. With the support of its donors, the nonprofit Trust has worked conscientiously with landowners, municipalities, partner organizations, and communities to conserve nearly 10,000 acres of land on Long Island. The Trust's professional staff carries out the necessary research and planning to identify and implement alternatives to outright development. While working to conserve the productive farms, watersheds, woodlands, and beachfront of Long Island, the Trust is also protecting the unique rural heritage and natural resources of the region. The Trust has Stewardship Centers in Cutchogue and Amagansett and its Main Office is in Southampton. *A common misperception, however, is that the Peconic Land Trust is the recipient of the monies raised through the Peconic Bay Region Community Preservation Fund (also referred to as the 2% land transfer tax or the Peconic Land Tax). This is NOT the case. The CPF tax is collected by Suffolk County and then redistributed to the five East End towns, the distribution of which is based on the location of the property from which the tax is acquired. For more information about the Peconic Land Trust visit [www.peconiclandtrust.org](http://www.peconiclandtrust.org) or call 631.283.3195.*

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