



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Because you make amazing things happen

When what you love is close to home

I love this area, the people, the sense of community, and the land. Long ago, what seems like a lifetime ago, I visited my cousin here. I still remember a sense of peace, with the open, beautiful landscapes, seeing the pastures filled with cows and horses. I remember finding salamanders beneath rocks and watching a great blue heron land on a pond as we explored the wonders of nature and the outdoors.

In my early days at the DLC, Dick Kimball, our former Board Chairman, would often say, “Becky, you need to see the land from a different perspective.” And so he and his wife Hopeton would take me out on horseback, riding over hill and dale on trails across people’s land, through areas I’d never had the privilege of going before.

I vividly remember riding along, and suddenly, after following a winding woodland trail where nature’s critters abound, and crossing a stream, we came to an opening in the trees at the top of the hill. Suddenly, the landscape opened up. As far as I could see were rolling farm fields, divided by old stone walls, a few farm houses and barns tucked neatly into the landscape, mixed with woodlots and a forested hill crest. I was awestruck. Humbled. Entranced.

To this day, that view inspires me.

Remarkably, some 30 years later, not much has changed in much of our region from my early childhood memories...it still feels like the land I fell in love with way back then in the county that has become the place I consider home.

But that’s not to say it isn’t at risk.

I hear folks say it’s the work of the Dutchess Land Conservancy that has allowed so much of the land to remain open, free from haphazard development; it’s true we help landowners and communities conserve their land. Yet the real heroes in this story are those families who conserve their land and the community-support of people like you.

Thank you. It is because of you that the protection of something that means so much to all of us – the land and waters –is possible. We are all blessed to be part of a community that has a deep sense of pride in place, embraces and supports a rural quality of life, and that feels a civic responsibility to protect what we cherish most.

And as a result, the next generation will see and experience what you and I love, much as it is today.



Becky Thornton
President



“It was freeing to be on such an open piece of land with nothing built on it. This experience helped shape my sense of place as it showed that even in a growing population there is still land like this left and it will be untouched forever. In my plot of land, the natural and scenic beauty of it is irreplaceable.”

— Austin (Millbrook School Student)

“No matter what happens, it’s going to stay as farmland.”

— Verne Jackson



When land and family matter

Verne Jackson’s family has always taken the long view. One of the most successful dairy farms around, Verne’s grandparents William and Jennie, purchased the land in 1892 from her uncle, founding Shenandoah Farm, just 60 miles north of New York City.

When Verne’s father Wright returned from college, he expanded his purebred Holstein herd, and partnered with Cornell and the NYS Department of Agriculture on numerous progressive programs that helped enhance farm business practices.

In 1960, Wright’s sons Verne and Wayne took over as co-owners. Wayne passed away in 2013, leaving Verne and his sons, Will, Dan, Tom, Sr., and John, partners in the farm operation, each bringing a different talent to the business.

Working 800 acres to produce premium quality products, their 50 milking Holsteins yield over a ton of milk each day that they sell to Hudson Valley Fresh, a local dairy farm cooperative of which they are co-owners. In addition they raise 40 heifers and 30 steer. It’s a seven-day-a-week operation. But it’s way more than a job.

“This farm is important to me and my family, maybe more than you might expect,” explains Verne. “We look at this land as part of our family, it’s part of our community.”

When asked to explain further, John relayed what that ethic means. “Spending our lives on the farm, we know that you cannot take and take from the land without giving something back.”

Will added, “Imagine our shock when we learned that the land next door was about to go on the market for light industrial use. That land, all 40 acres of it, was part of our historic farm and it’s an important part of our operation. If it was converted to industrial uses, it would strain our current operation in a serious way.”

Verne and the boys agreed that the best option was to buy the land to secure its future as part of the farm. But making that happen wasn’t going to be easy.

“We knew the only possible way to purchase this land would be once it was protected as farmland—not for industrial uses. As farmers, we can’t compete with the price of industrial land—even if it should never be used for industry,” explains Tom.

Dan added, “After thinking about it, and talking to the DLC, we realized that if they could buy the non-farm development rights, forever protecting the land, we could afford to purchase it at the agricultural value.”

And that’s what happened. After months of hard work, and a grant from the Dutchess County farmland protection program, the DLC and its partners, Scenic Hudson and Hudson Highlands Land Trust, were able to conserve the land, and the 40 acres was purchased by Verne and his family.

“It’s tough in the dairy industry right now, and we need some good news,” explained Verne, continuing, “This was actually great news. Now the land has finally come home. No matter what happens, it’s going to stay as farmland. My dad and my grand-dad would be proud.”

Your support in 2017 enabled the DLC to work with fourteen other farm families like the Jacksons. These families often can’t wait, and once the land is gone, it’s gone for good.

Farmland matters, more than ever

- Only 3% of the earth is suitable for farming.¹
- For the past 30 years we have lost three farms a week in New York State to development. At this rate, our local and national food security is at risk.²
- We need to feed more in our community and local farms can help. Our county has a food insecurity/hunger rate of 10.2% and 16.6% of children.³
- One acre of high-quality NY farmland can provide up to 1,000 meals/year.⁴ The average person (based on 3 meals/day) eats 1,000 meals/year.⁴

¹American Farmland Trust’s 2016 “Cultivate New York: An agenda to Protect Farmland for Growing Food and the Economy.” For more details visit www.farmland.org/cultivateNY

²American Farmland Trust’s 2016 “Cultivate New York: An agenda to Protect Farmland for Growing Food and the Economy.” For more details visit www.farmland.org/cultivateNY

³According to Episcopal Charities Hunger Studies - episcopalcharities-newyork.org

⁴American Farmland Trust’s 2016 “Cultivate New York: An agenda to Protect Farmland for Growing Food and the Economy.” For more details visit www.farmland.org/cultivateNY

Thanks to you, partner conservation groups, and community support, over the past 17 years 39 farm families have protected more than 4,700 acres of highly productive, critical, agricultural land.

Farmland protection projects are often complex, taking a year or more to receive adequate funding. Dutchess Land Conservancy works in partnerships with numerous organizations to conserve these lands.

The historic Potts Farm in Red Hook



We couldn't be more thrilled

There was a time in the town of Red Hook when it wasn't clear if farming was something people wanted. The productive soils—some of the best in New York State—along with rolling fields, and acres of orchards and grape, were at risk much like in other Hudson Valley communities.

That began to change in 2007 when residents voted to invest in farmland conservation and establish a Community Preservation Fund as a way to keep a more balanced tax base, reduce the need for residential infrastructure, and conserve both its heritage and economic diversity. Funds are generated by a two percent transfer fee on the amount of real estate sales over the median sale price.

“The voters in Red Hook had the wisdom to institute a Community Preservation Fund a decade ago and those dollars provide the 25% local match for New York State Farmland Protection funds,” said Red Hook Supervisor Robert McKeon, “it’s a great investment.”

Don and Claudia Stickle are the most recent Red Hook family to conserve their 73-acre farm with DLC and Scenic Hudson using the Red Hook fund, state farmland protection money, and land trust match.

“We love this land and being part of the farming community in Red Hook. We appreciate so many people in the area enjoy and understand the importance of farms and having healthy, local food,” said Don, continuing, “it brings us great satisfaction to know that our son Michael, and his family, are able to live here too, along with Claudia’s dad. It’s a family farm in the truest sense of the word; we can count on the farm being here for generations to come.”

Don ran a successful dairy operation before taking over from Claudia’s dad almost 20 years ago. The farm, under his management has diversified to include vegetables, beef and hay in addition to apples.

“The Stickle-Potts family has cared for these beautiful fields and meadows for eight generations. We are thrilled they’ve chosen to protect it,” reflected Mr. McKeon. The Sticksles now join 33 other farm families in Red Hook who have taken a leadership role in local agriculture, bringing the total acres of conserved farms to 4,484.



Photo (left to right): DLC President Becky Thornton, Scenic Hudson's Seth McKee, Don Stickle, Town of Red Hook Supervisor Robert McKeon outside the Red Hook Town Hall.

Leadership starts here

Local town leaders play a central role in supporting farmland conservation as part of the economic vitality, quality of life, and health of their community.

Over the past 17 years, the towns of East Fishkill, North East, Milan, Pleasant Valley, Pine Plains, Red Hook, Stanford and Union Vale have benefited from the successful awarding of a total of \$11.3 million in NYS Farmland Protection funding with the assistance of DLC, conserving 2,500 acres. A local match of 25% is required.

In addition, Dutchess County has provided over \$5.25 million for these and several more (16 in total) successfully funded farmland protection projects. Local towns, Scenic Hudson, the DLC, other Land Trusts, area foundations and individual donors have generously helped provide the local match.



Providing rest stops for traveling birds

The ruby-throated hummingbird, the barn swallow, and the broad-winged hawk—birds so many of us love—fly thousands of miles each year on an epic migratory journey between North, Central, and South America, dependent on habitat, food, and shelter. It’s a flight pattern that’s been in existence for hundreds, if not thousands, of years.

Yet they, and others, are increasingly at risk.

According to a 2017 report from the National Audubon Society, over 300 species of North American birds are at risk of extinction with climate change and habitat loss as two of the main causes.

Throughout North America, and right here in Dutchess County, the conservation of farms, wetlands, streams, ponds, and woodlands is a critical part of ensuring habitat diversity. Our resident birds like the northern cardinal and barred owl, and migratory birds like the snow goose and American pipit, may need a safe place to stay in our own communities, as they migrate to and from their breeding grounds in the southeastern US, Mexico and northern Canada.

“Given changing weather patterns, protecting habitat that provides water throughout the year, a diversity of cover and food sources, and areas that provide resting locations for birds during their journey, is more than just a nice thing to do—it’s increasingly critical to their survival,” explained Julie Hart, DLC’s resident ecologist. Thanks to the support of our members and supporters, the DLC assists partner landowners, and communities, in habitat protection work.

There’s a growing awareness on the national and local level that land conservation can provide critical habitats for wildlife—as well as healthy places for people to live, work and play.

As Andrew Bowman, President of the Land Trust Alliance, the national nonprofit that supports land trusts, says, “It’s the right thing to do...it’s the smart thing to do.” Together we are picking up the pace, conserving important lands before they are lost to haphazard development, to make sure that’s part of our legacy too.

18,800
ACRES
OF FARMLAND



+19,400
ACRES
OF FORESTS



+3,200
ACRES
OF WATER



= 41,400
Acres Protected

- Large, contiguous, blocks of conserved land are important for species migration as well as resident wildlife.
- DLC has worked with local families and landowners to conserve what has become neighborhood conservation efforts, some totaling more than 7,000 acres, over the past 33 years.
- Interested in what you can do? Give Julie Hart, Senior Manager of Stewardship and Education, a call at 845-677-3002 for more information.

When high school ignites a passion

Did you ever wonder if what you were learning in High School would ever be real world applicable? Not being sure about what I wanted to study in college, I decided to take an AP Environmental Science class. It was interesting and fun - we learned things that are so apparent in our everyday lives - like how things like geology, soils, wetlands, plants and animals, are all interconnected.

It was great that we had the Dutchess Land Conservancy visit our class a couple of times so we could learn about what a land trust does and how they protect land.

We also learned about the history of the land, and how to be detective-like and figure out what the land had been used for. Like finding stone walls that used to fence in pastures and seeing an old aerial photo of where our school is. It turns out it was an old farm! It's weird to think that this whole place used to be all pastures and farm fields and now it's all school buildings and sports fields.

I'm really glad to know that there are land trusts and lots of other great organizations that are working to protect our land and make sure that our ecosystems and wildlife habitats are still there in the future. As a college major in Environmental Engineering, I don't yet know what kind of job I'll have, but I know my passion for the environment all started in high school.

Jarett Tanner - Arlington High School Senior



Photo Courtesy Jarett Tanner

School partnerships create new insights

Ava Goodale, the Science Department Chair at the Millbrook School, understands the importance of bringing the natural sciences to life. With kids spending as little as one hour outside each day, students often don't connect their studies with their lives and surroundings.

Ava also knows about land conservation because before she came to Millbrook, she worked at a land trust in Maine. Knowing that a large portion of the Millbrook School campus is protected in partnership with the DLC, Ms. Goodale conceived an idea to connect her environmental science class students to the land.

Her strategy, backed by research in the educational community, incorporated history, geology, ecology, and conservation with real-life examples of how to implement the knowledge to make science interesting and fun.

Ms. Goodale explains, "When students arrive at Millbrook, we want them to feel connected to their new place and learn how to interact with it responsibly. Our partnership with the DLC provides one such opportunity for this close relationship to place. At the end of the semester, several students commented on how their sense of place shifted from feeling like they were in the middle of nowhere to being in the middle of somewhere special and important."

Using DLC maps, each student was asked to choose a location on campus to research and analyze its natural resources including signs of wildlife, forests and their tree types, ridgelines, farm fields and its soils, and the school's marsh and the streams that feed it.

As a final step, each student developed a plan and determined the areas that were most important to protect and care for as wildlife habitat. Once they had drawn their own conclusions, a panel of experts (DLC staff, a teacher/attorney, and Millbrook School Zoo Director) answered questions to help clarify their observations and strategies for protection.

"Through this class, students were able to gain knowledge about environmental science in a real and meaningful way and deepen their sense of place as stewards of the natural world," added Ms. Goodale.



Dutchess Land Conservancy

joins conservation organizations every year to help inspire the love of the land and bring learning to life through partnerships with local schools. It's part of our commitment to ensure conservation will last in perpetuity as today's youth become the next generation to care for, and about, the lands we all love.



Richard Mattocks, an attendee and an environmental scientist noted, *“I went from 0 to 60 in a morning at the Online Mapping Training. Particularly of value to those in conservation and open space planning, the training provided me the ability to access a vast amount of available material by myself. Others will need help with the host of information that is readily available; this training will bring municipal and other government staff up to speed....quickly.”*

Designing with the land

Serving on a municipal board or committee is an important role in helping to ensure that the community’s vision is implemented in a thoughtful and strategic manner. Dutchess County’s 20 towns, eight villages, and two cities each have their own planning board and the task of keeping up-to-date and relevant can be daunting, especially to new members.

That’s where you come in. Thanks to your ongoing support, DLC annually joins Cornell Cooperative Extension, Dutchess County’s Department of Planning and Development, and the New York State DEC to present relevant information to local planning boards and other municipal officials, helping them to make informed decisions about land use in their town.

In addition, municipal officials are provided with a list of links to online mapping tools and other resources that help them assess land characteristics such as important farmland and natural resources such as streams and wetlands.

This past year, DLC continued to support local planning boards working with a group of officials ranging from newcomers to the planning process to those who had been serving the planning board for many years. Ten different municipalities participated in the training.



- **Development pressure is continuing.** In 2016, Dutchess County saw 87 residential development proposals with a total of 11,376 proposed housing units, and 82 non-residential proposals with a structure total of 7,281,177 square feet.⁵
- **Each planning board has the opportunity to promote farmland conservation funding from the state, or their town, as part of their strategy to balance a sustainable tax base.**
- **Planning boards rely on maps to evaluate a potential action that could negatively impact natural resources and community values.**
- **DLC works with others to help clarify conservation options for landowners, including assisting municipalities.**

⁵<http://dutchessny.gov/countygov/departments/planning/Major-Projects-Report-2016.pdf>



“The Dover Stone Church is a Dutchess County natural wonder. It also happens to encompass a variety of habitats in a relatively small area. This makes it ideal for birding as well as exploring” – Alan Peterson



Feeling really good simply by being outdoors

On a cool, rainy, day, a small group of people stood quietly, eyes aloft.

There was a calmness in the group, one of anticipation mixed with patience—the very essence of what so many birders hone over time.

Bird watching is now documented by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as one of the fastest growing pastimes in the United States. It’s also a great avenue to spend time in nature, with the side benefits of reducing stress and anxiety, increasing attention capacity and creativity, and simply making you happier, according to Jill Suttie, Psy.D.⁶

Evidence suggests that “we are physically and mentally more healthy when we are interacting with nature,” says researcher David Strayer, of the University of Utah.⁷

Over the past year, the DLC combined these concepts by providing a variety of programs, including birdwatching, to connect people to the special places in our region. On this particular day, the hike was led by Alan Peterson of the Waterman Bird Club, at Dover Stone Church Preserve owned by the Town of Dover and conserved by the DLC.

The Stone Church Preserve, with its cool ravine, rocky barrens, and upland forests, is a place of quiet beauty and diverse and unusual habitats—perfect for spotting an impressive variety of birds.

And the birds gave us quite a show. Migrating cormorants, soaring hawks, burbling winter wrens... the woodlands came alive, as we learned to quietly listen and “bathe” in the landscape’s damp air.

“It’s these types of partnership programs with others that make our region such a pleasure to live in,” explained Kris Anderson, DLC’s Stewardship Associate, who has come on a number of walks like this, often bringing her grandkids. “While we could go out and do this on our own, we enjoy the sense of community that nature and these programs provide. It makes the idea of protecting the land come to life in a way that we otherwise might not experience.”

- In 2017 the DLC held 23 educational programs in 10 different towns with over 613 attendees.
- Partnering with local groups, like the three bird watching programs hosted by the Waterman Bird Club, is a great way to bring the benefits of conservation and a sense of community together.
- If you have an idea for a community program give Julie Hart, Senior Manager of Stewardship and Education, a call at 845-677-3002. We’d love to brainstorm with you.

⁶How Nature Can Make You Kinder, Happier, and More Creative, by Jill Suttie, 2016, Greater Good Magazine UC Berkeley – https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_nature_makes_you_kinder_happier_more_creative

⁷How Nature Can Make You Kinder, Happier, and More Creative, by Jill Suttie, 2016, Greater Good Magazine UC Berkeley – https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_nature_makes_you_kinder_happier_more_creative

“The next generation has to be drawn into a more holistic approach to the vital role that land plays in producing everything we need. Without land there would be no food or shelter. Planet Earth is a scarce resource and unless and until we come to an understanding of what that truly means it will continue to be treated as a disposable commodity.” – Chris Wood



Photo: Barbara Beatty

Thank you to the DLC’s Advisory Committee:

Our Advisory Committee is our go-to for advice in varying capacities ranging from farming to finance. Thanks for your willingness to share your thoughts, guidance, and support!

Kathleen V. Augustine
Gayle Bontecou
Theodora S. Budnik
Russell L. Carson
David C. Clapp
Farnham F. Collins

Everett R. Cook, II
Wendy C. Curtis
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Constance I. DuHamel
Frank Martucci
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Oakleigh B. Thorne
Donald G. Tober
Dorothy S. Whitmarsh

Conserving the land is just the beginning



With each year comes the celebration of families who are conserving lands that matter to them, and to our community. We partner closely with each of the 400 families who have conserved their land, providing answers to questions related to their conservation agreement as well as advice on land and water management.

None of this land conservation work, and the work to ensure the land continues to be conserved for generations, would be possible without the support of people like you. Families like the Duncans, who conserved their 168-acre farm in Amenia, will now be able to have the peace of mind they need knowing that DLC is there for them, and their property, as a partner in conservation.

“Our family has owned and loved our farm for over 200 years. Living on a farm is a wonderful way to raise a family. Our three sons all helped with the farm work and learned where food comes from and developed a connection to the land and the animals it supports. Our sons and grandsons continue to help on the farm as their time allows.” – Don and Sharon Duncan, Duncandale Farm, Millerton

Land Protected in Dutchess County in Acres



Did you know?

- According to the most recent National Land Trust Census (out of 1,360 organizations), the DLC is in the top 3% nationally for the number of acres protected by easement, and in the top 1% nationwide for the number of easements held.
- In 2017 the DLC worked to conserve 27 properties and 4,700 acres, completing 10 projects totaling 1,150 acres by year-end. We now oversee the conservation agreements of 400 properties.
- National standards for land trusts require us to visit each conserved property at least once a year to ensure the conservation agreements are upheld.
- We provide support to conservation landowners throughout the year, free-of-charge, to help them stay current on management techniques.
- It takes about eight hours to prepare for, and complete, an annual site visit and related documentation of protected property. Funding to support this work comes from annual donations.

Together, having fun, sharing our passion for land and water, raising funds for conservation

Even a torrential downpour couldn't keep away almost 300 of you from our 2017 Spring Barn Dinner Dance at Bonnie Stedt's gorgeous Foxrace Farm in Amenia. Thanks to co-chairs Terry and John Regan, Victoria and Yuri Salmikoff, and Nancy and Bill Stahl, an amazing time was had by all, as celebrity Auctioneer Gordon Elliott charmed us into bidding high at our live auction.

And once again more than 375 of you joined us at Caora Farm in Millerton for our Annual Fall Country Luncheon. Hosts Mich Ferraro and Kathleen Weathers, and co-chairs Irene and Jack Banning, Encarnita and Robert Quinlan, and Coco and Tim Quinlan, welcomed everyone. Afterwards we all enjoyed watching the Border Collies as they herded a group of sheep through the hillside pasture.



Photos: Barbara Beatty and Mary Hilliard

People live on in their good deeds

With long-term conservation comes the need for compassion, vision, and the desire to change lives in a way we can only imagine. For some, it's the wildlife. For others, it's the farms and woodlands.

According to Quincey Tompkins Imhoff, the granddaughter of Faith Tompkins, it was the combination of all of those things that meant the world to Faith.

"I spent a lot of time with my grandmother in the last ten years and we would drive around. She loved the beautiful, rural, pastoral landscape and they conserved their land over 25 years ago. My grandmother had a long and happy life, and she was passionate about what a difference one person could make," continuing, "She used to say, 'People live on in their good deeds.' That's why I want people to know about her bequest" explained Quincey.

When Faith passed away, she included the DLC in her will so that what she loved, could remain here for generations to come. We wish to convey our appreciation, as well as respect, for all that Faith and her husband Jack did for conservation during, and now after, their lifetimes.

Quincey Tompkins Imhoff,
Faith Tompkins,
Doug Tompkins

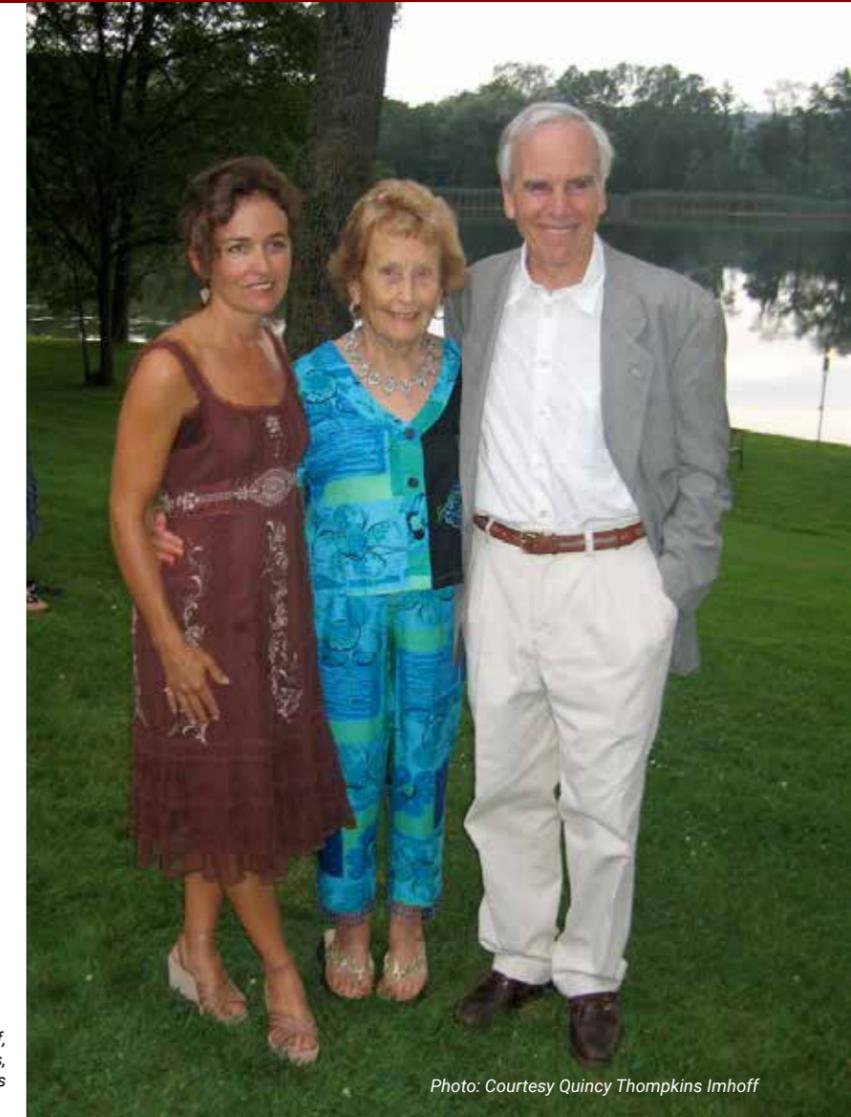


Photo: Courtesy Quincey Tompkins Imhoff

If you would like to include conservation and DLC in your will, we would be honored. Feel free to call Tara Kelly, Development Director, at 845-677-3002 to discuss different ways you can make a difference.

Thanks to you, more than \$157,000 was raised by our events for conservation!

Thank you to all donors

Thank you for making conservation possible. It's the gifts that happen day-in and day-out that are making it possible to protect the lands and waters that are so important to the rural character of our region.

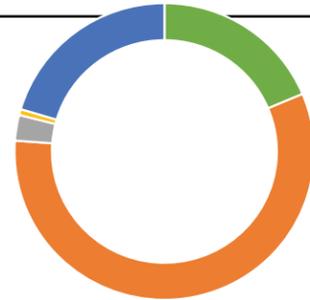
As a community-supported conservation organization, it's because of you that these amazing things happen.



Photo: Kathy Landman

Revenue

2017

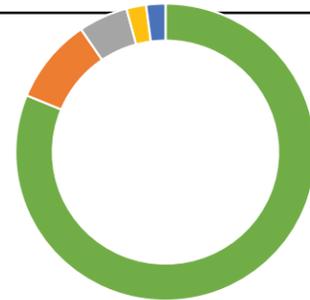


Individual Contributions	\$ 1,020,902
Grants	\$ 3,145,713
Special Events	\$ 152,894
Miscellaneous*	\$ 35,179
Non-Operating Revenue**	\$ 1,115,382
Total	\$ 5,470,070

*Includes Consulting Services, Donated Rent and Interest - Bank
 **Includes Investments, Stewardship Endowment Contributions and Income Tax Benefit

Expenses

2017



Land Conservation	\$ 3,450,486
Stewardship	\$ 393,541
Education	\$ 225,753
Administration	\$ 90,060
Development/Marketing	\$ 87,734
Total	\$ 4,247,574

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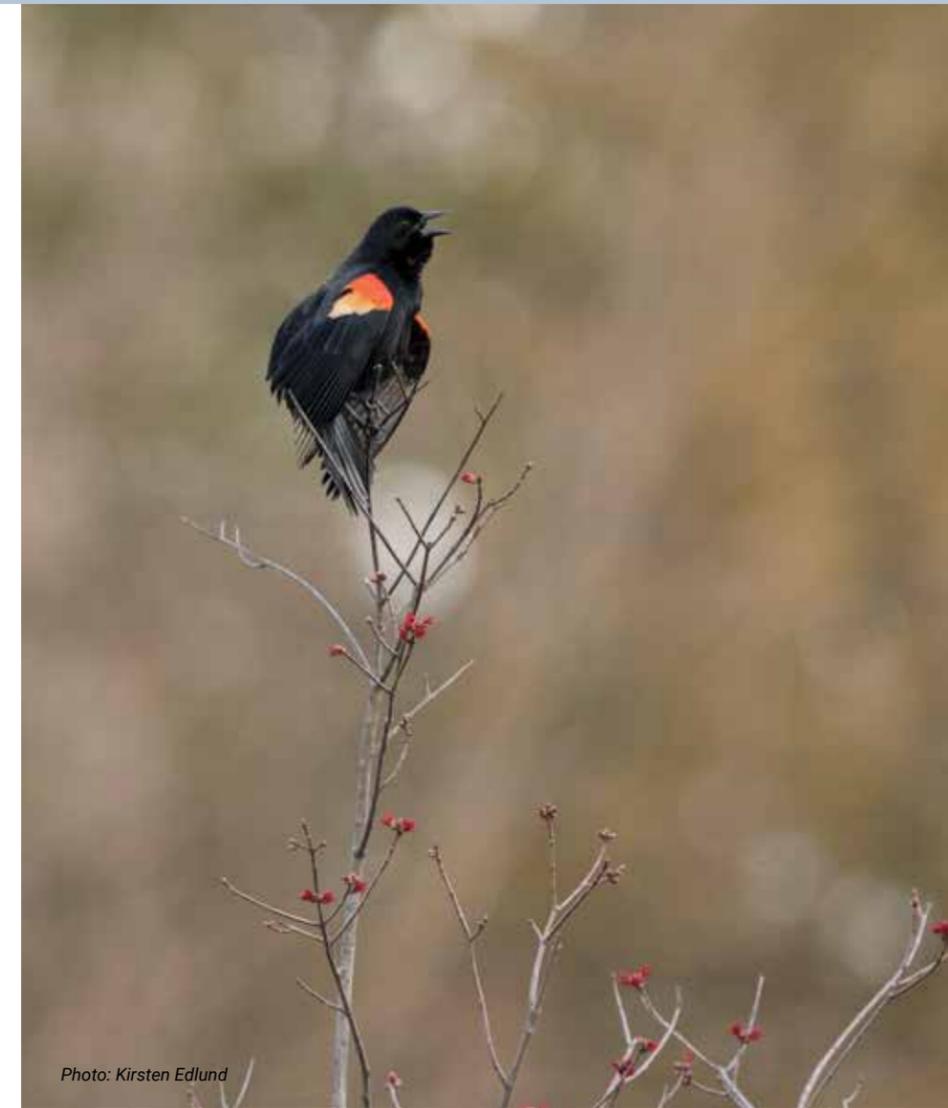


Photo: Kirsten Edlund

Dutchess Land Conservancy (DLC) is dedicated to preserving the scenic, agricultural and environmental resources of Dutchess County, New York, and the surrounding area.

DLC, as a private non-profit land conservation organization, carries out its mission primarily by obtaining conservation easements on privately held land and monitoring these easements in perpetuity. Conservation easements, acquired through either donation or purchase, are legal agreements limiting future development in order to protect land for conservation purposes.

In addition, DLC provides professional assistance to landowners and municipalities to encourage environmentally sound planning, and educates the public on matters of land conservation and stewardship.

**Conservation Easement Donors
and Property Owners as of
December 31, 2017**

Mr. Stephen Abel & Family - O. Vincent Abel Inc.
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Mr. Steven Berger and Ms. Cynthia Wainwright
Mr. J. Addison Berkey, III
Ms. Stephanie Bernheim
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Biezynski

Our very important partners - our Stewards of the Land - are essential allies who manage and steward their conservation easement protected properties into the future. (Please note that while some of our easment donors have passed away, we still list their names out of great respect for their commitment to land conservation.)

Ms. Kathryn Bigelow - 4 Legs Good Trust
Mr. and Mrs. James Bisceglia
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Bland
Mr. Stephen Blauner and Mr. Kenneth Shelley
Mr. and Mrs. Eric Bommer - Deep Hollow
Game Preserve LLC
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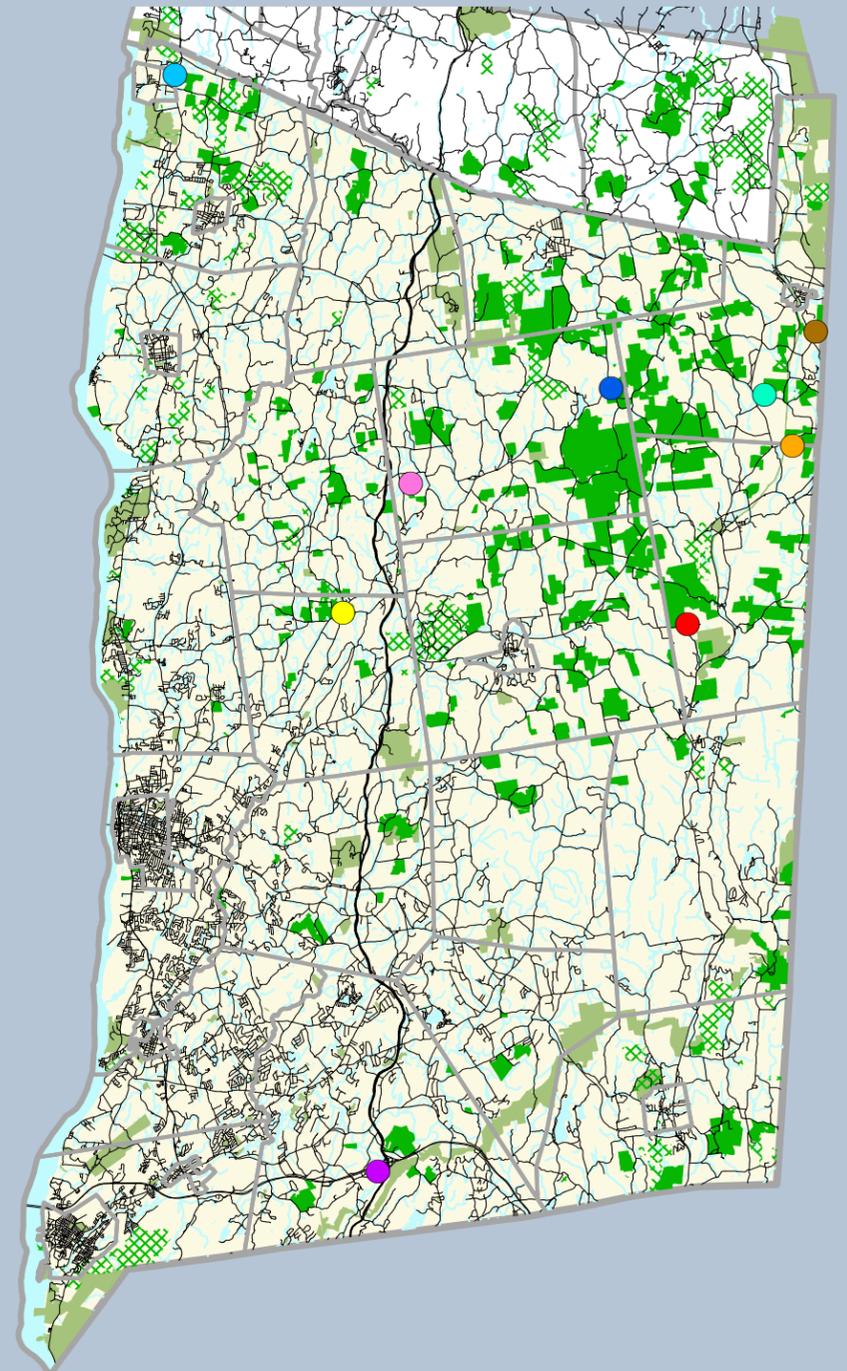
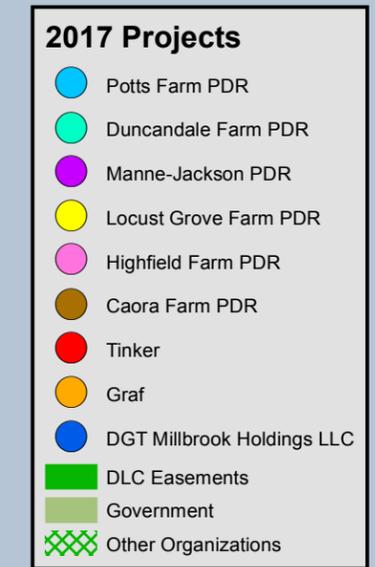
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