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Visit the Skaneateles Lake website: [skanlakeinfo.org](http://skanlakeinfo.org)!



**Missed a Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Onondaga Program? We have a library full of videos to keep you informed this winter...so grab a warm beverage and check out some of our most popular videos!**

- [Landscaping for Shorelines](#)
- [Transitioning Your Lawn to a Meadow](#)
- [Road Salt Impacts on Water Quality](#)
- [The Ups and Downs of Skaneateles Lake](#)

For the full collection of educational videos [click here](#) or on the button below.  
Stay tuned for new programs coming in 2024!

### CCE Onondaga Educational Programs (YouTube)

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## **FINGER LAKES LAND TRUST COMPLETES LARGEST PROJECT TO DATE WITHIN THE SKANEATELES LAKE WATERSHED**

In early October, the [Finger Lakes Land Trust](#) (FLLT) announced it has protected 690 acres at Jackson-Noel Farms in the town of Spafford, Onondaga County. With nearly two miles of scenic frontage on State Route 41, this is the largest conservation project completed in the Skaneateles Lake watershed since the establishment of New York State's Bear Swamp State Forest.

Owned by Bill Jackson and Jeri Noel Jackson, the property is now protected by three separate conservation easements held by the FLLT. The easements allow for continued agricultural use, require the maintenance of vegetated stream buffers, and conserve more than 200 acres of woodlands on the farm.

Located in an area of increasing development pressure, the property includes a mosaic of fields and forests including steep hillside creeks containing 8,500 feet of streambank. Several creeks on the property flow directly into Skaneateles Lake, the unfiltered drinking water supply for 200,000 people, including the city of Syracuse.

Bill and Jeri grow high-quality organic hay sold locally and in the state of Virginia where they own an equestrian-related general store. Since purchasing their first farm parcel in 2016, they have taken great measures to amend soils on the property to grow orchard grass, timothy, clover, and rye.

The farm connects to a growing complex of conserved land within the Skaneateles Highlands including the FLLT's Hinchcliff Family Preserve, one of the organization's most beloved and well-visited nature preserves, which also connects to their High Vista Nature Preserve. The farm is also located in close proximity to the Staghorn Cliffs—a striking feature on the east side of Skaneateles Lake, where the FLLT has conserved nearly 2,000 feet of shoreline.

Additional conserved lands in this area include two state forests and approximately one dozen tracts of farmland protected with conservation easements granted to the FLLT, the New York Agricultural Land Trust, and Cortland County. With the completion of this latest project, the FLLT has now conserved more than 2,945 acres within the Skaneateles Lake watershed.

“We’re very grateful to Bill and Jeri Jackson for conserving their farm,” said Land Trust Director of Conservation Max Heitner. “It is a beautiful property and we couldn’t be happier to secure it for continued agricultural use and water quality protection in the Skaneateles Lake watershed.”

Funds for two of three perpetual conservation easements to protect the property came from the state’s Farmland Protection Implementation Program (FPIG), administered by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. Additional funding for the third easement came from contributions to the FLLT’s Finger Lakes Forever capital campaign.

Conservation easements are voluntary legal agreements that permanently limit

future land use in order to protect the land's conservation value. Lands subject to conservation easements remain in private ownership, on local tax rolls, and available for traditional uses such as farming and hunting.

By working cooperatively with landowners and local communities, the Finger Lakes Land Trust has protected over 30,000 acres of the region's undeveloped lakeshore, rugged gorges, rolling forest, and scenic farmland. The FLLT owns and manages a network of over 45 nature preserves that are open to the public and holds perpetual conservation easements on 183 properties that remain in private ownership.

The FLLT focuses on protecting critical habitat for fish and wildlife, conserving lands that are important for water quality, connecting existing conservation lands, and keeping prime farmland in agriculture. The organization also provides programs to educate local governments, landowners, and residents about conservation and the region's unique natural resources.

Information on the region's premier destinations for outdoor recreation may be found at [www.gofingerlakes.org](http://www.gofingerlakes.org), a resource created by the FLLT to encourage people to get outdoors. Additional information about the Finger Lakes Land Trust may be found at <http://www.fllt.org>. Photo credit Matt Champlin.



## PROTECTING YOUR LAND: CONSERVATION OPTIONS FOR LANDOWNERS

**When:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023

**Time:** 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM

**Where:** Skaneateles Library, 49 East Genesee Street, Skaneateles, NY 13152

*No registration required*

Join the Finger Lakes Land Trust for a free workshop that will cover options available to landowners to protect and preserve the legacy they have created for their land.

Amy Olney, Conservation Projects Manager, will discuss the Land Trust's work in the region and conservation tools such as easements and potential funding opportunities in the Eastern Finger Lakes. There will be plenty of time for questions.

Click [here to view the flyer](#) or [here for more information](#).

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## News from the Central New York Land Trust!

The Central New York Land Trust recently announced the acquisition of a 144-acre parcel in the Skaneateles Lake watershed. The project was funded by the NY State Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) Program, which aims to protect drinking water, improve water quality, conserve aquatic habitats, and ensure climate resiliency.

The CNYLT is working with The Nature Conservancy to procure funding to plant several thousand trees on the site in order to reforest highly erodible areas identified on the property. This first phase is intended to prevent soil erosion and keep sedimentation from entering the lake. For more information about the newest preserve, please visit: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/press/128485.html>

Additionally, the [Skaneateles Lake Association](#) and [M&T Bank](#) provided funding to CNYLT to help combat hemlock woolly adelgid HWA (*Adelges tsugae*) at both the Michele and Margherita Albanese Preserve and High Hickory Wildlife Sanctuary on Skaneateles Lake.

HWA are invasive insects that are decimating our Eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) trees throughout NY State. The cascading effects of losing our hemlock trees is immeasurable and potentially devastating to riparian forests along our lakes, rivers, and streams.

Eastern hemlock are essential to riparian zones, which are often highly erodible, steep landscapes. Their root systems provide the framework for soil and sediment stability, and they are important filtration systems for excess

nutrients that could otherwise overwhelm our lakes and promote toxic algal blooms. The dense canopy created by hemlock stands helps regulate water temperature, which further mitigates algal growth and provides a stable habitat for aquatic animals such as brook trout and salamanders.

*Right photo, pictured from left to right: David Dubois (Land Steward), George Spak (Private Cert. Applicator), Henry Dul (Land Steward), Simon Solomon (Executive Director CNYLT), Rose Anne Gay (Volunteer), and Buzz Roberts (Vice President Skaneateles Lake Association).*

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## Get Ready for Winter: Check Your Home Heating Oil Storage Tank

October is here and colder weather is approaching. As a result, it's the perfect time for homeowners to make sure that their heating oil storage tanks are free of (potential) leaks or spills prior to acquiring their first shipment of fuel oil for the upcoming heating season. To avoid leaks or spills, consider working with a company that provides a service contract to maintain tanks and heating systems. **If you are a homeowner, it is to your advantage to get your tank (s) inspected annually as it can prevent impacts to human health and our environment from leaks and spills.**

Make sure to report any actual spill or leak of fuel oil to the **DEC Spills Hotline**

at **1-800-457-7362**. For more information on home heating oil tanks, DEC's website provides information regarding [Underground Heating Oil Tanks: A Homeowner's Guide](#).

Did you know that?

- More than two million homes in New York are heated by fuel oil.
- Spills can result in basement contamination, damage to personal belongings, and contamination of groundwater, wells, soils--often leading to pricey cleanups that are rarely covered by homeowners' insurance.



## Municipal Training Opportunities

With partners, NY Sea Grant is planning the ***Crosswalking Water Resources for Climate Smart Communities*** local government training workshops. To reach communities in New York's southern/eastern Lake Ontario basin, we are holding the same workshop at two venues. See below for more information.

**This workshop is geared towards planning, zoning and municipal boards, supervisors, mayors, code enforcement officers, conservation advisory boards, and floodplain managers, but anyone interested in learning more about some federal and state programs and how they can be utilized to**



**maintain and enhance water resources and floodplains is encouraged to join us!**

For most municipalities, this local government workshop fulfills state law required training for local planning officials. A certificate of participation may be requested for the number of hours of attendance.

To register, click on the location that works best for you!

1. [Auburn, NY](#)

November 2, 2023; 9:00am-4:30pm

Holiday Inn, 75 North St, Auburn, NY 13021

Registration fee: \$35

Registration link:

[https://pub.cce.cornell.edu/event\\_registration/main/events\\_landing.cfm?event=2023Crosswalk\\_LG\\_Wrksp\\_Auburn\\_112](https://pub.cce.cornell.edu/event_registration/main/events_landing.cfm?event=2023Crosswalk_LG_Wrksp_Auburn_112)

Register by October 28, 2023

Click [here for the Auburn agenda](#).

2. [Watertown, NY](#)

November 16, 2023; 9:00am-4:30pm

Hilton Garden Inn, 1290 Arsenal St, Watertown, NY 13601

Registration fee: \$45

Registration link:

[https://pub.cce.cornell.edu/event\\_registration/main/events\\_landing.cfm?event=2023Crosswalk\\_LG\\_Wrksp\\_Wtrtn\\_112](https://pub.cce.cornell.edu/event_registration/main/events_landing.cfm?event=2023Crosswalk_LG_Wrksp_Wtrtn_112)

Register before November 6, 2023

## **Explore State and Federal Funding: Municipal Infrastructure Roundtable Discussion**

**Date:** Thursday, November 9, 2023

**Time:** 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM EDT

**Location:** Howard G Sackett Technical Center, *Conference Rooms A and B in the back building*, Glenfield campus of Jefferson-Lewis BOCES; [836 State](#)

## [Highway 12, Glenfield, NY 13343](#)

### REGISTRATION

**Description:** Are you interested in learning more about funding and financing municipal infrastructure in your town or village? Join the Syracuse University Environmental Finance Center (SU-EFC), the NYS Tug Hill Commission, Lewis County, and the River Area Council of Governments (RACOG) to learn about funding opportunities for safe and clean water management and other community investments from state and federal agency representatives. **Lunch will be provided.**

#### **Presenters will include representatives from:**

- New York State Homes and Community Renewal
- New York State Departments of State, Health, & Environmental Conservation
- New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation
- US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development

Following lunch, individual consultations with funders will be available to address your specific project funding questions and needs. Additionally, attendees will get a first look at a new quick guide for town boards on special district formation developed in partnership with the NYS Tug Hill Commission. We hope to see you there!

**Questions?** Please contact **Jes Eckerlin**, [jeschn01@syr.edu](mailto:jeschn01@syr.edu)

#### **Who should attend:**

- Consulting engineers
- Fiscal advisors
- Water and wastewater utility managers
- Municipal board members
- Elected officials
- And others interested in clean and safe water for New York communities!



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