



MOHAWK  
HUDSON  
LAND  
CONSERVANCY

*Saving Special Places*

# Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy

## 2010 Annual Report

### President's Report - Judy Thomson

A strong board and advisory council are important to guide and support the work of our staff and volunteers. To that end, 2010 saw the appointment of five new board members with solid conservation and board backgrounds to complement the competent board members who have been serving. The Advisory Council meets twice a year and provides guidance and support throughout the year.

The Board members are a committed group of interesting and fun people. Their day jobs include business owners, land conservation professionals, horticulturist, lawyer, educators, public managers and dedicated volunteers. They willingly share their wealth of knowledge so that truly the whole is much greater than the sum of its parts. Not only are they actively involved in the governance of the MHLC, they also volunteer much time and energy stew-

arding the land, planning and attending special events, leading hikes and sharing their passion for saving special places locally with family, friends and colleagues. The Board also takes a leadership role in securing the financial resources necessary to maintain the organization and acquire and protect land.

I want to thank our Executive Director Jill Knapp, our Financial Manager and Program Coordinator Helen Smith, our Development Coordinator Kate Murray, our Advisory Council and Board, land donors and the many financial supporters and volunteers who have helped the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy save and protect special places throughout the our area. Together, we have protected 2500 acres in perpetuity and are well-positioned to continue saving more land for our children and grandchildren for many generations.

#### Board of Directors

Judy Thomson, *President*  
Sherry Hawley, *Vice President*  
Dan Lewis, *Treasurer*  
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Peter Bakal  
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#### Advisory Council

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Charles Buchanan  
Ginny Carter  
Dan Driscoll  
Chuck Manning  
John Privitera  
Ted Putney  
Peggy Sherman  
Mike Sterthous  
Peter Ten Eyck  
Henry Tepper  
Maggie Vinciguerra

#### Staff

Jill Knapp,  
*Executive Director*  
Kate Murray,  
*Outreach & Development  
Coordinator*  
Helen Smith,  
*Program Coordinator*

PO Box 567  
Slingerlands, NY 12159  
518-436-6346  
[www.mohawkhudson.org](http://www.mohawkhudson.org)

### Executive Director's Report - Jill Knapp

2010 was a year when we set the stage for future protection, as well as making significant improvements to current properties. We completed the acquisition of a 287 acre parcel in New Scotland in February and then focused our efforts on stewardship activities -- making improvements to properties we had acquired in previous years.

We knew 2010 would be the last year of Dan Driscoll's service as a board member and chair of our land stewardship committee. All of his experience and knowledge had to be captured and transferred. This was a formidable task given that Dan was the last founding board member. Dan was up to the challenge and worked hard to mark property boundaries, build bridges,

open new preserves to the public and transfer his knowledge to others so our work will continue uninterrupted.

In 2010 we developed a new strategic plan to guide us for the next five years; received a grant from the Bender Family Foundation to help us be more strategic in our land protection efforts; and applied for grants from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program to assist with land protection efforts and expand our outreach to community organizations.

None of this could have been accomplished without the support of our board, staff, volunteer and donors. Thank you all for your support in 2010!

## Land Protection

We completed the acquisition of a 287 acre parcel in February 2010 at the top of Wolf Hill in New Scotland. This parcel was donated by Katherine and John Barber of Seattle WA. With the donation of this parcel, the entire ridge line of this portion of the Helderberg Escarpment is now protected. The view of this parcel is readily visible from the Rt 32 bypass in Bethlehem.



Progress was made on our Strategic Land Acquisition Plan thanks to a \$10,000 grant from the Bender Family Foundation. Mapping showing significant parcels for protection within two of our priority areas, Wolf Hollow/Hoffman's Fault in Glenville and Vly/Black Creek Marsh in New Scotland, was completed. This is a great tool to guide us in future protection efforts.

## Land Stewardship

Land Stewardship activities were in high gear in 2010. At long last, we installed professionally developed signs on the kiosks at many of our preserves, thanks to the generous donation from Mike and Marcie Love. Many of our properties have become well known and are being enjoyed by hundreds of individuals yearly. We find it fun to see how many four-legged friends sign in at our preserves, too.

In April we opened Mosher Marsh in the Town of Amsterdam. This is our first property which consists largely of shrubby old fields and wetland habitat, providing new challenges for trail maintenance.

Volunteer Scott Lewendon took charge of our Schiffendecker Preserve in Glenmont in the spring. As a licensed landscape architect, with professional experience in trail development, Scott provided us with exceptional knowledge and skills to help us develop trails and install improvements at this preserve. With the help of other volunteers and support from the Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District, Scott provided oversight of the installation of a bridge by Andrew Tillinghast from Delmar Troop 75, working on his Eagle Scout badge; removal of some invasive buckthorn trees that were replaced with native hawthorn; and the installation of steps to improve safety and reduce erosion at the entrance to the preserve.

Numerous volunteers under the leadership of board members Peter Bakal and Dan Driscoll, extended the trails and completed two bridges at the Normans Kill West Preserve. Doug Cochrane, and his volunteers built a flight of stairs as his Eagle Scout project, that improved the trail loop and made the steep slope more negotiable. With these improvements, this preserve, located in the heart of Bethlehem, has become one of our most popular places for a brisk walk.

A new parking area, preserve entrance, and trails were cleared for the Winn Preserve in Knox with the help of volunteers from Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS) in Stuyvestant Plaza Albany. These improvements will be completed in 2011.

Volunteers from SABIC in Selkirk spent a day at Bennett Hill working on the main trail to reduce gullies and improve drainage. We are also indebted to Steve Crookes for mowing the field adjacent to the parking area.

In December, volunteers spent a chilly day building and then hauling 25 small (but extremely heavy!) board walk sections to the Swift Preserve. The segments were laid out to improve access and reduce trail erosion in this wetland preserve. Funding for the materials came from the Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District.



# Thank You to Our Supporters for a Great Year in 2010!

## Stewards Circle Gifts of \$1000 or more

### Visionary \$5,000+

William Brooks  
David & Sandra Geisinger  
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Mike & Marcie Love  
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Sherry Hawley  
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Dan Lewis  
Robert Lynk, DVM  
Tom & Kate Murray  
Ted & Sherry Putney  
Dan Rain  
Peggy Sherman  
Bob & Helen Smith  
Doug Tallamy  
Steve & Judy Thomson

#### Businesses:

A Perfect Blend  
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Albany Devils  
Albany Legends  
Albany Symphony Orchestra  
Albany Valley Cats  
Angela's Pizza & Pasta  
Artforms Gallery & Framery  
Athos  
Backyard Birds  
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Bethlehem's Little Helper  
Blairhouse Interiors Group  
Blue Plate Restaurant  
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Carrabba's Italian Grill  
Carrapoli's Restaurant  
Century House  
Coccadotts  
Colonial Cleaners  
Cotton Hill Studio  
Country Flowers  
Daydreams of Delmar  
Delmar Dog Butler  
Delmar Wine & Liquor

Eastern Mountain Sports  
 Emack & Bolio's  
 Empire State Youth Orchestra  
 Fabio's  
 Franklin Tower  
 French's Hollow Fairways  
 Garden Bistro 24  
 Gobblers Knob  
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 Hokkaidos  
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 Shaker Heritage Society  
 Shampoodle  
 Ship, Copy & More  
 Spectrum 8 Theatres  
 Stock's Tea  
 The Floral Garden  
 The Stockade Inn  
 Troy Landscape & Supply  
 UAlbany Performing Arts Center  
 Valoze Greenhouse

## Community Outreach

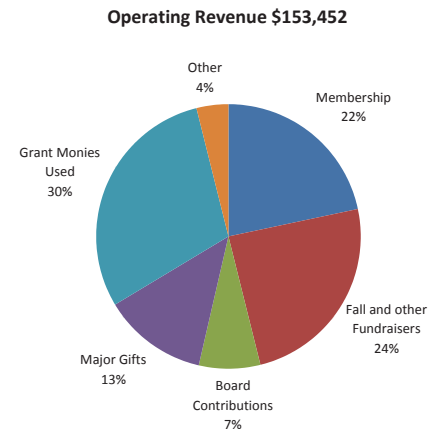
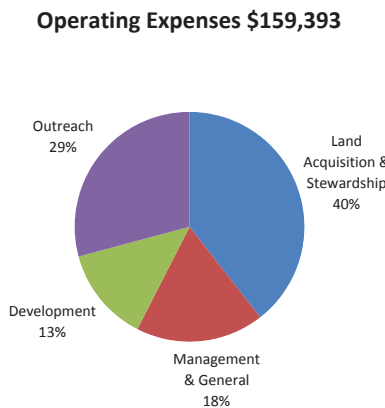
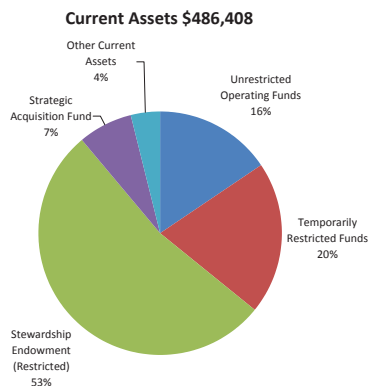
MHLC continued its spring and fall hikes in 2010, visiting properties protected by MHLC as well as other public properties. In June MHLC participated in National Trails Day and held events at five of its properties in Delmar. MHLC and its FORT committee participated in the Town of Bethlehem's Memorial Day Parade and handed out information about MHLC. In addition to our quarterly newsletter, we started using email blasts for more timely contact with members about events and important issues. Working with the Fort Orange Garden Club, we hosted a presentation on potentially devastating forest insects and diseases to increase awareness of these invasive species.



## Financial Report

In 2010, MHLC implemented a long-term investment strategy for its endowment funds with the support of a professional advisor. Earnings from these funds are available to help with annual maintenance work at preserves and expenses associated with easement monitoring.

2010 saw strong increases in assets and operating revenue and only a moderate increase in operating expenses. Grants continued to support many stewardship and some staff expenses. We continue to work on increasing sources of unrestricted operating funds. Our stewardship endowment principal increased by \$21,000.





Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy  
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Slingerlands, NY 12159

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## Looking Forward

**MHLC developed a new strategic plan in 2010 to direct its activities for the next five years.**

Five goals were established:

1. Strategically conserve additional land within Albany, Schenectady and Montgomery counties. MHLC will put additional emphasis on land protection efforts in areas that it has identified as priorities.
2. Through effective stewardship, ensure the perpetual protection and management of preserves and easement-restricted lands. MHLC will develop long term management objectives for its properties recognizing such issues as invasive species, habitat improvement, and public access.
3. Increase community awareness of and support for land protection and stewardship. MHLC will use a variety of formats to keep members and the public informed of its activities and importance of sound land use planning.
4. Achieve financial stability. Raise sufficient funds for land conservation and stewardship, operations, and other initiatives. MHLC must develop increased, diversified, and sustainable funding sources in order to fulfill its mission.
5. Increase organizational effectiveness. MHLC will increase efforts to build and retain a strong board of directors and advisory council, develop strategic partnerships, and use volunteers effectively in order to fully implement the Land Trust Alliances Standards and Practices.

