



news

Your Donations Are Working!

1,325 acres of farmland conserved in 2005

Money donated by our members over the past year supported ASA as we moved an unprecedented number of conservation projects to completion. Seven committed landowners worked closely with Teri and ASA staff to conserve 1,325 acres of quality farmland across Washington County in 2005. This conserved land helps support 8 farm operations as cropland and pasture. ASA now holds easements on a total of 5,433 acres across Washington and northern Rensselaer counties.

ASA's 2005 successes were made possible first and foremost by the committed landowners who came to ASA expressing interest in keeping their land permanently available to agriculture.

The following are profiles of a few projects we closed on in 2005. In each of these cases, the landowners donated all or part of their development rights.



Photo: Cliff Oliver

Harold Spiezio and Shirley Mulligan at the Mulligan Farm in Jackson. Mrs. Mulligan promised her late husband John that the farm where John was born would remain in agriculture. She contacted ASA about placing an easement on the property before selling it to long-time family friend, Harold Spiezio, Jr. "I worked off and on with John and Shirley on the farm for forty-seven years, since I was a kid. It was John's wish that it never be developed. I promised him that I'd never let that happen and I'm happy to be able to keep my promise." The Mulligan Farm was conserved with assistance from The Conservation Fund.



Photo: Cliff Oliver

Jeffrey and Linda Gaess with two of their hunting dogs on their 122-acre farm in Easton. "Washington County is a diamond surrounded by sprawl and it must be protected in order to preserve farming, nature, recreation, commerce, and keep taxes lower," says Jeffrey Gaess, who donated his development rights in order to conserve his land. The Gaesses rent a portion of their cropland to a neighboring farmer. The remainder is managed wildlife habitat.

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“We believe having local farms and farmland is vital to our future.”

The Agricultural Stewardship Association is a non-profit land trust founded in 1990 by local farmers, agribusiness representatives, and conservationists to protect land for agricultural use in the Washington County, New York region. We accomplish this mission through our land conservation and stewardship programs and public education efforts. To date, we have protected over 5,400 acres of farmland in the county.

ASA receives funding from its members, The Conservation Fund, the New York Conservation Partnership Program and private foundations. The New York Conservation Partnership Program is administered by the Land Trust Alliance Northeast Program with support from the State of New York.

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A message from the Board President



At the annual meeting in April, I will be stepping down as board president of ASA, a position I have been honored to hold for the past 6 years. It has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my entire life and among those of which I am most proud. At times it seems like just yesterday that I joined the board; at other times I can't remember life before ASA.

I became aware of ASA because of Joe and Pam Cali. The ASA board used to meet in the basement of Battenkill Veterinary where I was a partner. We had also donated an easement on our 200-acre farm in 1999.

As a dairy veterinarian, I was helping, in my own small way, to keep agriculture viable in the area but the effect was fairly limited in its scope. When I came to ASA, I wanted the challenge of having a positive, long-term impact on farming. I knew that protecting farmland was one of the best ways for me to help ensure the future of agriculture in Washington County.

My work as a business management consultant and managing a veterinary practice taught me that I would need great people around me in order to achieve ambitious goals. The all-volunteer board was full of dedicated members of the ag community—as it is today. ASA as a volunteer organization had already closed on a few dozen easements protecting over 1000 acres of land. To continue making these remarkable strides, we needed more people on the board, we needed staff, and we needed funding. Over the past 6 years, we have achieved all of these goals.

ASA's board is full of very talented and dedicated people from all walks of life: farmers, attorneys, planners and business people. The board has taken ASA from an all volunteer organization to one with an extremely skilled staff. In 2003, we hired our first full-time Executive Director, Teri Ptacek, whose extensive experience in farmland conservation professionalized the land trust and enable ASA to accelerate our rate of land protection. The staff has since expanded, reflecting our success: Teri, Maria Trabka, Meegan Finnegan and Kerri Culhane each fill a critical role in fulfilling ASA's mission. We are well-positioned for the future. With Teri's leadership I am confident our staff will continue to excel; to grow and adapt to any changes and to continue getting the important land protection projects done in a timely and professional manner.

As we have gotten the word out about the importance of agriculture and the need for farmland conservation, the community has responded beyond my early imaginations. There is so much more to do, but we—ASA and the local community—should be very proud of our accomplishments. Together, we have conserved 5,433 acres of farmland in our community over the past 15 years.

As I turn over the reins to a strong and capable board, I am mindful of all we have achieved together, and how much more we have to work toward. Whenever you drive by a piece of land that is open and productive, or just beautiful and inspiring to look at, you may wish it could stay that way forever. If we work together, ASA can help make that wish possible.

Thank you all for your support. I'm looking forward to some time away, but I will keep ASA on my speed dial and will continue to provide my enthusiastic support.

David Horn, DVM
Board President



A bird's-eye view of 97 acres of high-quality farmland in the agriculturally rich Poultney River Valley, placed under easement by **Richard Hogan**. Mr. Hogan previously donated the development rights on another 183-acre property in 1997, and added another 15 acres to that easement in 2005. Thanks to Mr. Hogan, a total of 225 acres on scenic Rt. 22A in Hampton have been permanently protected from development to date.



Dr. Mannoiccio Mannoiccio donated an easement on a 94-acre parcel of farmland on scenic Rt. 22 in Granville. Dr. Mannoiccio and his wife, Nancy, came to the area in 1970, and have always rented their land to neighboring farmers. The Indian River, a popular fishing stream, runs through property. By placing a conservation easement on their land, the Mannoiccios have demonstrated their continued strong commitment to local agriculture and wildlife habitat.

ASA News & Announcements

Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Applications due April 1, 2006

ASA is accepting applications through April 1, 2006 for those interested in applying for the next round of state funding to purchase development rights on farmland. If you are an active farm operation containing productive soils, you may want to explore this program.

The Washington County PDR program, which is operated by ASA, ranks the farms and submits full applications for the top 2 to 3 ranking farms for funding from The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. Award monies are used to compensate landowners for up to 75% of the costs associated with easement projects, including the value of their development rights as determined by a qualified appraisal. To date, the Washington County PDR program has been awarded \$2.35 million to purchase development rights on 8 farms.

Farm applications will be evaluated based on:

- Agricultural Viability – quality of soils, percentage of crop land, other farms nearby protected by conservation easements
- Evidence of Significant Development Pressure
- Buffer to a Significant Natural Public Resource with important ecosystem or habitat value (such as the Hudson, Hoosic, Battenkill, or large wetland complexes)
- Long-term Prospects - farm management, succession plan

When development rights are purchased, the land continues to be privately owned and managed as farmland and

can be sold or otherwise transferred. However, a conservation easement will run with the land in perpetuity that limits its uses and restricts future residential or commercial development. The PDR Program seeks to ensure that farmland will remain available for agricultural production for future generations.

Please call the office at 692-7285 for an application form, or you can download the form from our website: www.agstewardship.org.



Photo: Cliff Oliver

The Anuszewski family received PDR funding to conserve their Easton farm last fall.

Thank you for your vital support!

The board and staff of the
Agricultural Stewardship
Association would like to
extend our sincerest thanks
to everyone who made
contributions in 2005.



Foundations

The Conservation Fund
The Bender Family Foundation
Norcross Wildlife Foundation

Government Grants

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets
New York Conservation Partnership
Program*
Member Item grant from Betty Little

Charitable Remainder Interest

Curt and Fleur Strand

Cream of the Crop

Anonymous (4)
Norman and Gertrude Allen
Allenwaite Farm, Inc.
Nancy and Alan Brown
Jeffrey and Linda Gaess
Philip Gitlin and Melody Mackenzie
Barbara Linell Glaser
Constance Kheel
Ruth Leys
Tom Moses
Peg Olsen
Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Pawlick
Kathy and Hugh Roome
Snyder, Kiley, Toohey, Corbet & Cox, LLP
Dan and Deko Stone

Benefactor

James and Marilyn Alcott
Bruce T. and Elizabeth A. Miller
Shirley M. Mulligan
Odd Duck Farm
Richland Farms
James R. and Gretchen D. Ruhl
Peter Veale and Mary Dalden Veale
Alexander and Marine Zagoreos

Sustaining

Anonymous (1)
Randall Adams
Stephen Alcorn
Ronald and Felicitas Anderson
Gordon Ashton
Robert James Beattie
Douglas and Linda Bischoff
Michael and Wendy Bittel
Pamela and Joe Cali
Black Creek Valley Farms, Inc.
Renee Bouplon
Don and Tracey Boyd
Peter R. Brooks
Garrett and Kelly Brown
Sheldon Brown - Woody Hill Farm
Caffry & Flower, Attorneys at Law
Grace Campbell
Gene and Jean Ceglowski
Jean Clark
Columbia Land Conservancy
Molly and Brendan Coogan

Kerri Culhane and Jason Black
Leslie J. De Groot, MD
Ethna Duffy
Bill Eberle
David Ebershoff
Alexander Ewing
Gerard and Anna Falotico
Bill Figlozzi and Margaret Waterson
George E. Foster
William Frazier and Joann Pickett
Caroline Eastman and Bertram H. Freed
Glens Falls National Bank and Trust
Company
Elizabeth Gordon and Thomas Christenfeld
Ari Gradus and Diana Reh Gradus
Granville Veterinary Service
Terry Griffen and Peter Deming
Pete Hanks
Hubbell Realty Services, Inc.
Seth Jacobs and Martha Johnson
Kenneth and D. Nancy Johnson
Jon Katz and Paula Span
Tom Kerr
Jim Klein and Sangeetha Sagar
Landview Farms, LLC
Ralph Lee and Casey Compton
Josh Levy and Julie Simms
Chris Lincoln and Tammara Van Ryn - New
Minglewood Farm
Louis E. Marchaland
Mary Ann and John T. Mitchell
Jim and Anita Perry - Perry's Orchard
Miriam W. Peters
Lisa Randles and Remus Preda
Teri Ptacek and Andrew Kelly
Sean and Sandy Quinn
William Ralston and Joan Bleikamp
Ron Renoni and Naomi Meyer
Robert Weir Dairy
Rojan Farms, Inc.
Glenwood Rowse
Edith B. Schiele
Ray and Mary Ann Short
Donald and Donna Skellie
Rolf Sternberg
Janet and Clifford Stewart
William and Angela Sturgis
Jane C. Suttle
Gary Sytsma
The Chronicle - Mark Frost
The Phantom Laboratory
Marguerite Takvorian-Holmes
Throop Integrity Builders
Peter T. Throop
Maria and David Trabka
Up & Over Farm
Ann T. Whalen
Mary Ellen Williams
Anne and Ethan Winter
Helen Young
Mike and Kathy Zdeb

Supporting

Anonymous (3)
3-Corner Field Farm
Linda Anderson and Rod Wilson
Deborah Andersson

Andland Farms
Lorraine J. Merghart Ballard
Ellen Biggers, MD
Booth's Blend Compost
Jonathan and Judith Bridge
Janet Britt and John Dajka
Arthur F. Brod Jr.
Davis and Jamie Cherington
Laura Caldwell
Jerry Cosgrove and Judy Anderson
Martha Culliton and Rick Kranz
Al Dekrey
Judy and David Doonan
Raymond and Marti Ellermann
John and Connie Gilbert
George Gramlich
Tom and Rulyn Graves
George and Carol Green
James and Linda Green
Hi Brow Farms, LLC
Field Horne
Ideal Dairy Farms, Inc
Kings-Ransom Farm
LeBaron Valley View Farm
Legacy Partners, LLC
Ray and Shirley Lerman
Christel and Colin MacLean
Bruce McAllister
Mrs. Elizabeth Meer
Anthony L. Montague
George and Ellen Mulvaney
Mike and Donna Nolan
Harry Orlyk
David Owen
Josh and Marion Peko
Yvonne Porter
Linda and Richard Randles
Will and Steph Randles
Burton W. Richmond
Marjorie and Joseph Robertson
Barney Rubenstein and Sandra Scroggins
Paula J. Sawyer
Allen and Barbara Schwartz
Dr. Seegers
Jennifer Small and Michael Yezzi - Flying
Pigs Farm
Mr. and Mrs. J.B. Sobing
Gary Stine and Nina Lockwood
Stone Hill Farm - Greg and Ellenor Hansen
James and Amy Stott
Jim and Kay Tomasi
David and Ann Townsend
Rey Wells
Paul H. and Barbara P. Wiley
Kerry Woods and Catharine Lewis
Becky and Jeffrey Wright Sedam

Friends

Anonymous (3)
Andrew Pate Design
Jay and Heather Bellanca
Lila Brown
John and Pam Brownell
Carl W. Cipperly - Fra-Mar Farms
Jim and Beth Clark
Bob and Carol Clay
Mary Jane Connor

Clem and MaryDee Crowe
Elm Spring Farm - the Tudors
Joe Finan
Jeffrey and Fran Goldstone
David Grahame Shane and Regina Wickham
Catherine M. Hamlin
Barbara Hennig
David and Nancy Higy
Don and Kathy Idleman
Kristin and Joel Lilley
Lisa Manzi
Bliss and Robbie McIntosh
Virginia McNeice
Lester and Eleanor Migdal
Pearl C. Moody
Jeff Morton and Penny Lewsey
Patricia M. Nestle
Annette Nielson and Dan Garfinkel
O.A. Borden & Sons, Inc.
Christopher Pierce and Thomas Defrantz
Mary and Robert Pratt - Elihu Farm
John and Carol Rich
Suzanne Seay and Rachel Gartner
Norma J. Skellie
Sally P. Small
Susan and Stephen Snyder
Shelly Stiles
Beth Trabka
B. Martin Warner and Joan Warner
Mary M. Withington

Bequests

Barbara Hennig

Contributions in Memory of

Conrad Link by James and Gretchen Ruhl
Bradden Rowse by Barbara Glaser

Landscapes for Landscapes Sponsors

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The Stoverly
Throop Integrity Builders
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Windy Hill Sawmill
North Country Xerographics, Inc.
Randles Advisory Services LLC
Something's Brewing

* The New York Conservation Partnership Program is administered by the Land Trust Alliance Northeast Program with support from the State of New York.

Volunteer Opportunity

Monitoring of Conservation Easements Every Wednesday

Would you like to:

- Get outdoors and hike over hill and dale?
- See the lands protected by easements in Washington and northern Rensselaer counties?
- Enjoy close-up views of trees, wildflowers, rocks, wildlife, farm animals, and crops?
- Make observations and note changes from year to year?

Then join Meegan and Maria every Wednesday for easement monitoring hikes. We will leave from the ASA office in Greenwich at 9:30 am, weather permitting. In order to accommodate volunteers that can't make it during the week, we'll also be monitoring easement properties on Saturday, March 25th at 9:30 am.

Monitoring our 45 conservation easements is a responsibility that ASA must fulfill on a regular basis. Interviews with owners, site visits, written records and photographs are the primary tools used to document changes in use of the properties. Our goal is to visit each easement site once a year prior to the onset of the autumn hunting season. As the number of easements grows, we'd like to build up the corps of



Cornell Farm in Hoosick, one of the 45 farms ASA monitors annually.

volunteers trained in easement monitoring methodology and protocol.

If you'd like to join us, call by noon the previous day to find out the logistics for the next day. Dress appropriately and bring food and water. Good physical condition required. Photography, GPS, and mapping skills are especially helpful.

Besides helping with an ongoing conservation need, it's a great way to get out and see the land!

Thank You Volunteers!

Jonathan Bridge, GeoTrans, Inc., for computer guidance and donating a server

Thomas Christenfeld, Chef for our major donor dinner

Larry Sconzo and Laurie Simons, for the use of Maple Ridge during Landscapes for Landsake

Janine Lazarus, for curating Landscapes for Landsake

Stephen Alcorn, graphic design for Landscapes for Landsake

Tamarra Van Ryn, for facilitating a visioning session with the Board

Clifford Oliver, for photography

To our easement monitors: Clem and MaryDee Crowe, Jim Green, Tim Gusek, Seth Jacobs, Al Klein, Robbie and Bliss McIntosh, Annie Miller, Don and Daniel Minkle, Mary Ellen Williams.

To our volunteers at the Landscapes for Landsake show: Richard Ahigin, Jim Andrews, Matt Chlinger, Kate Crow, Mary Dee and Clem Crow, Michaela D'Acchille, Ellie Fitzgerald, Sam Fitzgerald, Dillon Horn, Kathy Idleman, Annelise Kelly, Ian Kelly, Annie Miller, Jim Shantz, Mary Tallon, Mary Ellen Williams and Ben Zipperer

Meg Southerland and Kate and Brian Ziehm, Landscapes for Landsake decorations

The Benefits of Becoming an ASA Volunteer

Our volunteer monitors have told us in their own words about the what it is they enjoy as volunteers for ASA.



“For those of us who love the land but don’t own it, volunteering for ASA is a great way to ensure a beautiful and productive future for our community.”

— Annie Miller



“In my early years I sold real estate with a specialty in farm sales and later was chair-woman of the Greenwich Town Planning Board. Having seen many farms disappear and be developed, I am thrilled to see land conserved and to be a part of preventing unwanted development.”

—Mary Ellen Williams.



“Becoming an ASA volunteer is something that non-landowners can do to help support farming and preserve the landscape we love and enjoy.”

– MaryDee and Clem Crowe



“We enjoy meeting the people who donate their easements. Taking a walk around a property each year is a nice reminder of our shared commitment to protecting farmland.”

– Robbie and Bliss McIntosh



“You get out and have a chance to see land you might never have had an opportunity to see. I enjoy meeting the landowners who choose to conserve their farms. With their foresight and integrity they are protecting the environment for all of us.”

– Jim Green

**Want to volunteer with ASA?
Call Meegan at 692-7285 to discuss
different volunteer opportunities,
either in the office or in the field.**

Planning a Future for Farms

A 1-Day Conference about Local Planning & Agriculture, Easton, NY

Local governments play important roles in supporting a future for farming in the region. This unique conference focuses solely on local planning and agriculture and will profile agricultural trends and issues as they relate to local planning and highlight examples of town actions in support of farms. This event is designed for town boards, town and county planning boards, zoning boards of appeal, farmers, rural

landowners and others interested in supporting farms in Rensselaer, Saratoga and Washington Counties. Encourage your local representatives to attend!

ASA is a co-sponsor of the conference and is participating in its planning and program. You can download the registration form from our website or call us for more information.

Save the Date for ASA's Annual Dinner!

April 27th

**Our Annual Dinner will be held on April 27th
at B&B On the Green in Hudson Falls!**

Invitations will be mailed out in late March, or you
can check our website in coming weeks to find out more.

We hope to see you on April 27th!

<http://www.agstewardship.org>



SPRING 2006



YES! I want to join ASA in supporting land conservation
and stewardship in the Washington County region.

Name _____

(Please print your name as you would like it to appear in our annual report.)

Check here for "anonymous."

Mailing address _____

City/Town _____

State _____ **Zip** _____

Friend \$30

Supporting \$50

Sustaining \$100

Benefactor \$500

Cream of the Crop \$1000+

Enclosed is an additional donation of

\$ _____

for ASA's easement stewardship program.

I would like to volunteer.

Please contact me at the following e-mail address or telephone number:

Thank you!

ASA Awarded Two Major Challenge Grants!

We recently received great news from two generous donors who together have pledged challenge grants totaling \$330,000 over three years to support ASA's farmland protection activities. In order to receive these funds we need to raise the same amount from the community. Every dollar that you give to ASA will match a dollar from these grants.

The challenge grants and matching funds will enable ASA to accelerate the pace of land conservation and dramatically increase the quantity of farmland protected at a critical time for our region. We are confident that with your help we can meet our goal of protecting 10,000 acres by 2010.

These challenge grants are a vote of confidence in ASA's mission, and a significant investment in the future of our farms. A big "thank you" goes out to our donors who are challenging all of us to make a commitment to farmland conservation in our community.

Ways you can help:

- Make a special 3-year pledge commitment to ASA
- Check with your employer about matching YOUR donation to ASA
- Remember ASA in your estate planning
- Encourage friends and neighbors to support ASA
- Give a gift in honor of a special person
- Continue making regular contributions to ASA



Agricultural Stewardship Association
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VISIT ASA ON THE WEB!

**WE LAUNCHED OUR NEW
WEBSITE IN FEBRUARY:**

<http://www.agstewardship.org>

You can view a slideshow of local farms, download our landowner's guide to conservation easements, find technical information about conservation options and read about our how we are achieving our mission.