



Bill Ulfelder © Jonathan Grassi

From Our Executive Director

Thanks for all that you have done to support The Nature Conservancy and our critically important mission during the pandemic. Working with heart and grit, we have launched new initiatives to tackle climate change and conserve healthy lands, waters, and oceans. This includes a new partnership with SUNY-ESF's Center for Native Peoples and the Environment to do more thoughtful conservation that brings together Western and traditional science, benefiting all of nature, including humanity. We helped launch the NYC Urban Forest Agenda to increase the benefits of the urban forest and help ensure they reach all New Yorkers. And we are promoting soil health, which has a fundamental role to play in the health of local communities and in tackling climate change.

Bill Ulfelder, Executive Director



Robin Kimmerer, PhD, leads the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment. © SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Embarking on a Pathbreaking Partnership with the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment

The Nature Conservancy in New York is embarking on a new partnership with the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment (CNPE) at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), in Syracuse. The partnership seeks to promote what CNPE's director, Robin Kimmerer, PhD, calls "two-eyed seeing"—combining traditional ecological knowledge and science alongside Western science. (Kimmerer is a botanist, an enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and author of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*.)

The aim of this partnership is to create a more reciprocal relationship with nature and promote more thoughtful and long-lasting conservation solutions that serve all of nature, including humanity. This approach, and telling a more complete

history of the places where we work, can also help address a history of colonialism and exclusion of Indigenous Peoples from natural resource decision-making.

One of the first projects in the collaboration will be a "Re-Story-ation" effort aimed at creating a new narrative on Conservancy preserves, one that restores Indigenous Peoples' engagement with their ancestral homelands and gives voices to their perspectives in interpretation, education and stewardship practices.

"We are thrilled to embark on this transformative partnership," says Bill Ulfelder. "Robin Kimmerer's work teaches us about restoration and reciprocity and provides hope for a different way forward based on Indigenous relationships with the living world."

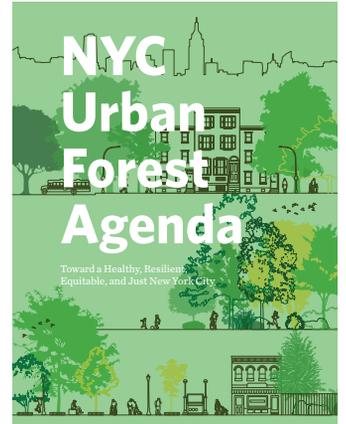
DONATIONS:

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Clockwise, left to right: Gregg Sargis joined The Nature Conservancy in 2006. © Jessica Sargis; Canandaigua Lake © Katri Haantera; Agriculture plays an important role in the Finger Lakes' economy. © courtesy of Sunnyside Farms

Number of tree species
found in the five boroughs



The NYC Urban Forest Agenda details ways the city's forest can thrive and deliver its benefits to all.

Promoting Regenerative Agriculture in the Finger Lakes

Meet Ecological Management Director Gregg Sargis

Your pilot program helps farmers around Owasco Lake adopt regenerative agricultural practices. What are these practices, and why are they so important?

Regenerative agriculture focuses on rebuilding soils for the benefit of farms, farmers, and local and global ecosystems. Practices such as planting cover crops, reduced- or no-till planting, and crop rotations can make the difference between soils that store carbon and soils that release it into the atmosphere. These practices also help prevent soil erosion, which means deeper, richer topsoil for farms and cleaner water for nearby communities. Regenerative practices also make farms more resistant to drought and better able to handle the flash floods that are becoming more common as our climate heats up.

What kind of outreach has your program been doing?

We've started working closely with a group of 10 farmers in the region to understand the technical and social challenges they face in adopting these practices. Throughout the pandemic, they've been going to virtual workshops and trainings organized and designed by The Nature Conservancy. We're also branching out to other communities to see if farmers in other parts of the Finger Lakes face similar challenges. It's a region where more than 400,000 acres are under cultivation for row crops alone. So changing the norms around best management practices can have a big impact.

What are you seeing take root?

Our goal is for the farmers we're working with now to involve other farmers so that these practices become the norm in their communities. I'm happy to say the farmers we work with have been very engaged and interested. They want to tell their story, grow healthy food, and do right by the land and water by keeping their topsoil on their fields. They understand that these practices are a win-win for farmers and for the environment.

Championing the Canopy

"Can you imagine having an asset valued at more than \$5.7 billion without a clear, funded plan or sufficient leadership to care for it?"

This thought preoccupied New York division cities director Emily Nobel Maxwell when she and her team considered the Big Apple's urban forest. There are more than seven million trees on public and private land across the five boroughs—but there was no coordinated approach to sustaining and expanding this valuable resource.

To help solve that problem, the Cities team brought together nearly 50 groups to co-create the NYC Urban Forest Agenda, released in June. It's a plan to better protect, maintain, and expand the New York City urban forest in ways that justly and equitably deliver trees' environmental and health benefits to all.

Read the agenda and learn more about this work at nature.org/futureforestny