

SAVE THE DATE!

TARGETED GRAZING WORKSHOP

Do you have purple loosestrife problems? Would you like to learn how sheep can help you get rid of this and other nuisance plant species? Columbia Land Conservancy, Hudson Mohawk R,C & D council, and NRCS will be offering a two-day workshop to demonstrate how livestock can be used to control invasive species. SUNY-Albany professor Gary Kleppel, has been conducting research on rotational targeted grazing techniques using sheep and goats for controlling invasive species and stimulating native plant regeneration. This will be a two day workshop taking place a week apart, in which Gary and his team will bring in fencing, sheep, and herding dogs to demonstrate the effectiveness of livestock grazing on invasive species. Gary will give a presentation on his research and then conduct a visit of the site to see the results of the sheep grazing after a week. The workshop is being planned for late June or early July. If you are interested in hosting the workshop please contact Nate Davis for more details at 518.392.5252, ext. 205 or nated@clctrust.org



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COLUMBIA LAND CONSERVANCY



518 392 5252 www.clctrust.org

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CONSERVATION PARTNERS GATHERING

August 20th 3:00 – 6:00pm

Joe & Diane Haley's Farm - Carpenter Road, Ghent

Join us for our 4th annual gathering in celebration of you! Come out for an afternoon to meet other easement landowners who have helped us protect over 5% of Columbia County. More details to follow soon!

NY State's Conservation Easement Tax Credit

As you may be aware, New York State enacted a conservation easement tax credit (CETC) which offers tax-payers, whose land is restricted with a qualifying conservation easement, an annual income tax credit. The CETC provides an income tax credit of up to 25% of the school district, county, and town real estate taxes paid on conserved land, up to an annual maximum of \$5,000 per taxpayer. The credit applies only to the land (not the value of the buildings or improvements) protected by the conservation easement.

To claim the CETC when filing your state income tax returns you will need the following information:

1. Location of the easement restricted property
2. Date the easement was conveyed
3. Recording information
4. Name of the agency holding the easement
5. NYS DEC identification number
6. County, town, and school district property taxes paid on the easement restricted land (obtained from tax bill or local assessor)

CLC can provide you with this information if you do not already have it.

Contact Heidi Bock
518.392.5252, ext. 202 * heidi@clctrust.org

Please note this information is provided for reference purposes only and depending on the particular circumstances of your easement conveyance, your easement may or may not qualify for the credit. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought. CLC cannot provide legal, accounting, or tax advice.

FOR OWNERS OF PROTECTED LAND

CONSERVATION

MINDED

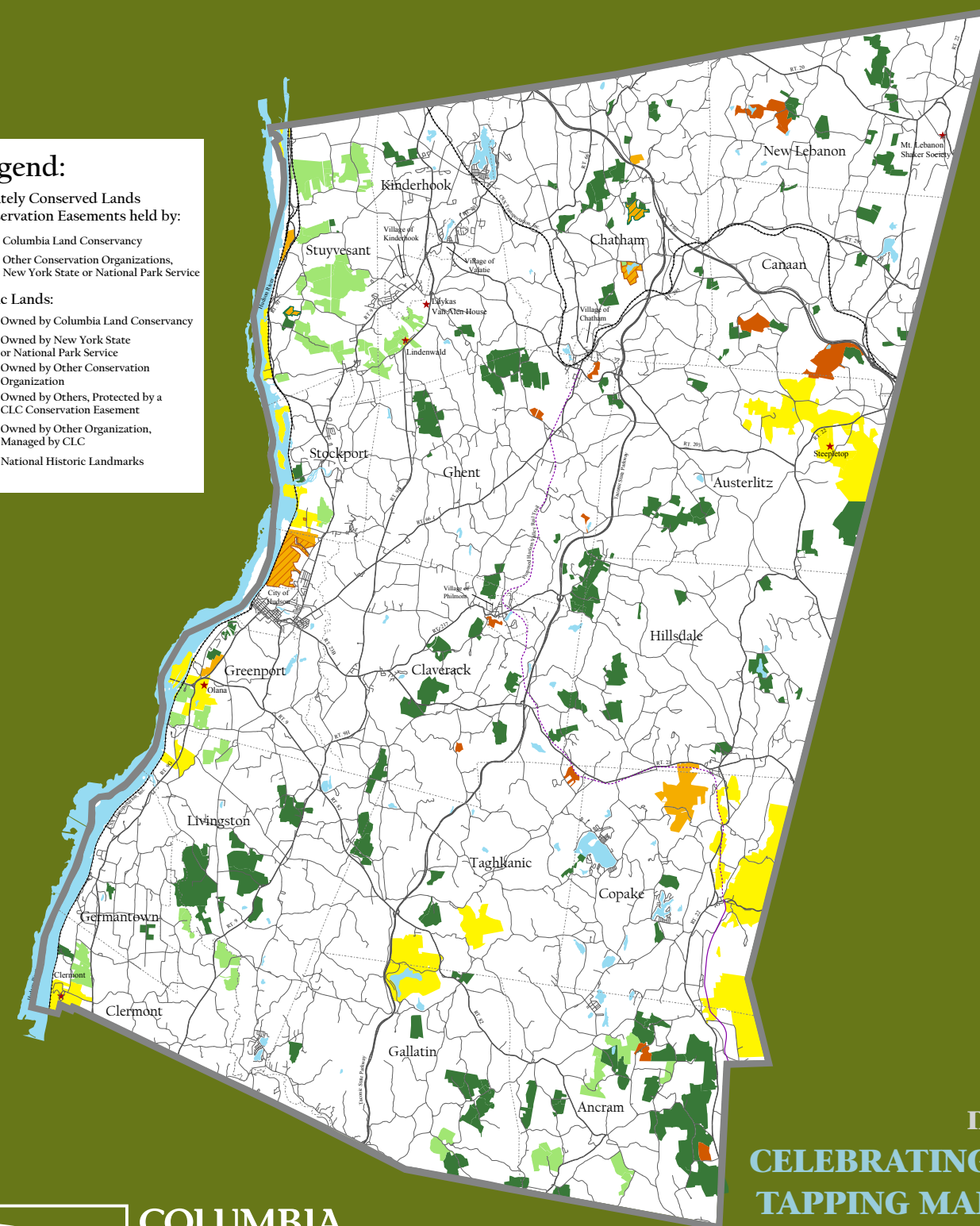
Legend:

Privately Conserved Lands
Conservation Easements held by:

- Columbia Land Conservancy
- Other Conservation Organizations, New York State or National Park Service

Public Lands:

- Owned by Columbia Land Conservancy
- Owned by New York State or National Park Service
- Owned by Other Conservation Organization
- Owned by Others, Protected by a CLC Conservation Easement
- Owned by Other Organization, Managed by CLC
- ★ National Historic Landmarks



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IN THIS ISSUE:
**CELEBRATING 25 YEARS
TAPPING MAPLE SYRUP
UPCOMING EVENTS**

Celebrating



of Conservation Easements in Columbia County



TAP

INTO YOUR PROPERTY'S RESOURCES

Since 1986, the Columbia Land Conservancy has been working with conservation-minded landowners like you to protect Columbia County's rich farmland, forests, and wildlife habitats for generations to come. Over the past 25 years, we have protected 21,135 acres of land. That is 5.14% of the land in Columbia County! In our first year of operation we conserved 125 acres; by year 10 we had protected 5,476 acres; and by year 20, the figure was 18,900 acres.

- We have protected land in every town in Columbia County.
- Our biggest year was 1997, when we protected 17 properties totaling over 3,000 acres.
- Chatham has the most protected properties, with 21.
- Ancram has the most acres of protected land, with 4,459 acres.
- According to an unofficial 2009 Land Trust Alliance (LTA) survey, CLC held easements on some 25% of all privately owned, conserved land in the Hudson Valley.

How does this measure up to the rest of the

Nation? Every five years, the LTA conducts a survey of all land trusts throughout the country. LTA is currently collecting data for the 2010 census. The study done in 2005 showed some interesting trends in the country and in our region. Nationwide, from 2000 to 2005 the total acres conserved by local, state, and national land trusts increased 54% to **37 million acres!** The number of land trusts grew to 1,667, an increase of 32% over the previous five years. Nationally, the northeast saw the largest increase of acres protected under easement in the same five year period. There were more protected acres in New York in 2005 than neighboring states of Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. The LTA predicts that if land trusts, together with private landowners, maintain the 2010 rate of 6 million new acres per year, a total of 43 million acres could be protected, which is an area the size of Florida!

But this is not just about the acres. It is testament to the commitment of thousands of individuals like you, who have taken steps to ensure that all of this land, which reflects the varied and bountiful natural resources of this magnificent continent, will be protected for future generations.

As one story goes, a young Native American hunter was out in the woods hunting and it was getting late, he set up camp and stuck his ax into a sugar maple tree. The next morning he awoke to find it wet and a puddle on the ground beneath it. When he collected the watery liquid and cooked with it, he noticed a sweet smell and taste to the liquid. Native Americans recognized the sap as a source of energy and nutrition and, later, used it as a trade item with early European settlers. They made a v-shaped incision into the bark of the tree and inserted reeds or concave pieces of bark that directed the sap into birch buckets or hollowed out logs. They placed hot field stones into the bucket bringing the sap to a boil. When boiled long enough, the sap crystallized and could be stored for longer periods.

Over the years, the method of making maple syrup has improved, but the basic process is the same. Advances in collection and processing methods have enabled larger producers to collect and process more sap, often as well as a series of tubing that collects in large tanks and using more sophisticated evaporators to control the quality of the end product.

Yet, the advances don't change the fact that sap only runs in the spring! Maple sugaring season typically starts in mid-to-late February when the sap starts to "run", when warm days, with temperatures above freezing, are followed by below freezing nights. If a tree is at least 10 inches in diameter it can be tapped without any damage and will continue to grow and produce sap annually.

Sap from the sugar maple is about 98% water and 2% sugar. To make 1 gallon of syrup, approximately 44 gallons of water needs to be boiled off. Once collected the sap is processed in an evaporator which typically consists of two or more large pans that sit over a fire of burning wood or other fuel to heat the sap. Before long you have maple syrup.

Sugar maple is the most common maple species in New York and was designated the state tree in 1956. In 2009, there were a reported 289 million maple trees in New York, but less than 0.5% of those are

tapped for maple production. According to the 2007 census by the US Department of Agriculture, Columbia County had 22 maple operations and produced 913 gallons of syrup. Overall, New York is the third largest maple producing state in the country, vying from year to year for second place with Maine, depending on the seasonal weather patterns.

Many landowners in New York State are unaware that maple syrup production can be a fun and potentially profitable business. With only a few trees and a basic understanding of how to collect and process the sap, you can produce your own high quality maple syrup. If you happen to own a large "sugar bush," you may be able to lease your forestland to a maple producer. Producing your own maple syrup or leasing your forestland to a maple producer might qualify you to receive an agricultural assessment, which would allow for a property tax reduction. This program is not as restrictive as the New York State Forest Tax Law program (480-a), which requires the landowner to develop and follow a forest management plan. For more information about getting involved in maple production visit www.cornellmaple.com.



25th Celebration - Goals & Activities

Join CLC in celebrating our 25th Anniversary as we:

- Increase conserved land to 25,000 acres
- Initiate 25 miles of new trails in Columbia County
- Increase our membership by at least 25%
- Add 2,500 acres of land to our Public Conservation Areas
- Offer 25 new education programs

In celebration of our anniversary we have an expanded program schedule for the year, including:

- Family Programs – knee- high naturalists, bird watching, fishing, bonfire and night hike, and a winter festival.
- Art Activities - guest artists teaching drawing, painting, and photography at our public conservation areas
- Guest Educators/speakers - animal tracking, wild food foraging, and astronomy
- Contests – Essays and Photography
- Self-guided Activities - nature quests, geocaching, and hikes
- Columbia County Outdoors – the publication of a guide book for outdoor activities

Have questions on land management or easement interpretation?
Thinking about activating reserved rights in your conservation easement?
Contact Heidi Bock
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