

GREENE LAND TRUST

protecting the many places that make
Greene County special



Summer 2025

Voluntary Land Protection Agreement Secures Local Natural Heritage



A sunny day at the Abeel Overlook property where 56 acres of ecologically significant land along the Kaaterskill Creek is now protected. Photo credit: Karen Edmondson

Greene Land Trust, in partnership with Jimmy and Micaela Bulich, is proud to announce a voluntary land protection agreement that will safeguard the Abeel Overlook LLC property - 56 acres of ecologically significant land in Catskill, NY.

This acreage sits along the Kaaterskill Creek, which is home to a unique array of native species and habitats. The newly established voluntary agreement, also known as a conservation easement, will permanently protect the land, guaranteeing that it will remain undeveloped and in a natural state for future generations.

This significant agreement not only preserves the natural beauty and biodiversity of the region but also serves as a model for collaborative conservation initiatives in the Kaaterskill corridor.

For more information about voluntary land protection agreements and the Abeel Overlook property, [check out the full press release on our website](#).

Conservation Q&A: What are Voluntary Land Protection Agreements?

Voluntary land protection agreements, sometimes referred to as conservation easements, are legal tools through which landowners intentionally limit certain types of development on their property to protect natural, agricultural, or cultural resources for future generations.

Unlike government-imposed restrictions, these agreements are entered into willingly by private landowners, often in partnership with conservation organizations, land trusts, or government entities.

For example, the newly established agreement between Greene Land Trust and Abeel Overlook LLC covers 56 acres of important habitat, guaranteeing that this treasured

landscape will remain undeveloped and ecologically intact in perpetuity. Under the agreement, the landowner retains ownership and traditional uses of the land—such as sustainable agriculture, forestry, or recreation—while agreeing not to subdivide, clear, or develop the land in ways that would compromise its natural values.

In the face of escalating environmental pressures—including habitat loss, climate change, and urban expansion—such voluntary agreements have become cornerstone strategies for ensuring the long-term health of ecosystems and the communities that depend on them.

For more information about voluntary land protection agreements, or to explore how your land might be protected, contact Greene Land Trust at info@greenelandtrust.org.

Steward's Corner

Contributed by: Justin Wexler, GLT Stewardship & Acquisition Manager

The morning chorus of birdsong has been noticeably quieter of late, as the raucous spring and early summer birdsong transitions to the rising and falling buzzy calls of morning cicadas (*Neotibicen tibicen*) and other insect species. When the sun warms the earth and the treetops, the morning cicadas are joined by the ear-piercing calls of the lyric cicada (*Neotibicen lyricen*) and other annual cicada species. The calls of our annual cicada species mark the middle of summer. Unlike their periodical cicada cousin species, annual cicadas emerge every year. (Our next massive emergence of periodical 17-year cicadas is scheduled for 2030). By late summer, the cicadas will have been joined by katydids and a host of other noisy nocturnal insect species.

If you would like to learn more about our forests after dark, please join us for a night walk at Brandow Point on the evening of August 30th; tickets are available on [Greene Land Trust's website](#).



A rainy day at Cocksackie Creek Grassland Preserve.

Photo Credit: Ryan Jewett, Instagram: mountainadjacent

With the arrival of midsummer, the black raspberries and gooseberries have already ripened, followed by blueberries and huckleberries in dry, acidic woodlands and swamps and by blackberries and mayapples at forest edges. And the young of many mammals, born in the springtime, are now independent and exploring their world, so keep a sharp eye on the road when driving to avoid hitting naïve young foxes, raccoons, woodchucks, and other species. Many young birds, having fledged, are also busy exploring the world, and if you listen closely you might get to hear an adolescent bluebird, song sparrow, or other bird species practicing singing in the bird equivalent of a cracking pubescent voice!

Although the midsummer season is a time of celebration with the ripening of our wild and cultivated fruits and the successful rearing of so many animal species, it is also the time of year when the death of our elms from aggressive disease is most evident. Elm yellows or elm phloem necrosis has been spreading throughout the region for several

years, wiping out yet another family of tree species from our ecosystems. (Pay attention when driving to any trees that have suddenly turned yellow, marking the untimely loss of yet another one of our native American, slippery, or rock elms). And sadly, this year is the first year that we have observed beech leaf disease on the beech trees of Hannacroix Creek Preserve, Brandow Point, and other Greene Land Trust conservation easements and nature preserves.

For those who regularly visit the Mawignack Preserve, you may have noticed the loss of our parking lot kiosk. We are working hard to restore the kiosk to its former glory, with a new trail map and other information on the rich cultural history and ecology of this unique nature preserve. With that said, we would like to remind all trail users at the Mawignack Preserve that swimming is not allowed, that dogs must be leashed and in control at all times, and that if the parking lot is full, please do not park on the shoulder of the very narrow road. Greene Land Trust, which is mostly run by volunteers, works hard to provide public access to the places that make Greene County so beautiful while protecting and supporting the wild species that also call our neck of the woods home. So, it is important to remember and to respect our few rules in place that keep our public preserves in order.



A sunny day at the entrance to the Mawignack Preserve.

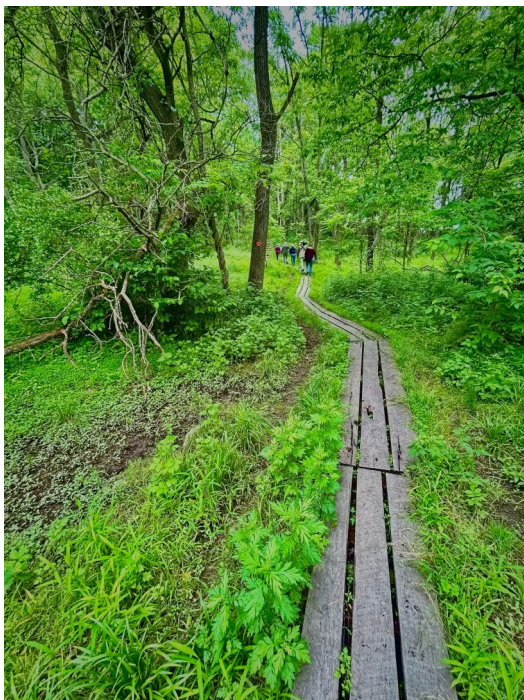
32 Species at Mawignack

Contributed by: Ryan Jewett, GLT Board Member

“H e’s extraordinary!” a woman called out, as a cerulean blue Indigo Bunting greeted the group.

It was a cool, gray Father’s Day morning as our small group gathered at Mawignack Preserve for a birding walk, led by former Greene Land Trust board member and bird expert Larry Federman. Following friendly introductions and a fair amount of bug spray, the group observed 10 species even before setting foot on the trail. This included persistently vocal Red-eyed Vireos, Robins, and the intermittent churr of a Red-bellied Woodpecker.

Locals pointed to a known Bald Eagle nest high in a pine tree near the preserve entrance, but the massive nest seemed to be dormant. Embarking on the trail, the group walked slowly, stopping at various hot spots, where Larry shared a wealth of knowledge on bird calls, behavior, and flight characteristics.



After reaching the muddy banks of a quiet Catskill Creek, we were greeted by a Yellow Warbler, who challenged us as he moved branch-to-branch and tree-to-tree, often directly overhead, but hidden among the late spring foliage, frustrating those of us trying to see him up close through binoculars.

The morning yielded 32 different bird species, valuable insights to apply to future outings, and a mindful experience that connected strangers through the simple act of looking for birds. Highlights included spying a Robin sitting on her nest, multiple Orchard Orioles among Sycamore trees, and a vibrant red Scarlet Tanager who gave the group a proper goodbye just as we were leaving.

Bird watching at the Mawignack Preserve with GLT.
Photo credit: Ryan Jewett, Instagram: mountainadjacent

Strategic Plan Update

T hank you to everyone who participated in Greene Land Trust’s community survey earlier this spring! Your input helped guide us as we developed our strategic plan.

We were happy to learn that community members enjoy our quiet and clean trails, the educational programming at Brandow Point, and our annual art show and sale, *Seasons of Greene*, which highlights local landscapes created by regional artists. The community feedback was also helpful in looking for ways to improve our services. There were requests for more volunteer opportunities, increased community engagement, and a larger social media presence.

These comments contributed to the goals we set out in our strategic plan. A pamphlet detailing these objectives will be available to the public soon—keep an eye out for this publication in your email inbox and on social media!



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Annual Fundraising Raffle

Greene Land Trust is hosting its annual fundraising raffle in conjunction with the *Seasons of Greene VI* art show and sale. This year's **first prize** is *The Grove of Woven Light*, an oil painting by regional artist Kevin Cook, shown above (16" x 20", \$1,600 value). The **second prize** is a handmade *Autumn Colorsplash Quilt* by Colleen Gerwitz, shown below (Queen, \$900 value) and the **third prize** is \$500 cash.

This raffle supports Greene Land Trust in maintaining trails at its preserves, protecting and conserving The Willows, offering educational programming, and identifying and obtaining easements on additional properties with significant natural resources.



1 Ticket: \$20
6 Tickets: \$100
15 Tickets: \$250

Tickets can be purchased via PayPal or credit card using the QR code.

The raffle drawing will be held **Sunday, October 26, 2025 at 6pm** during the closing reception for the *Seasons of Greene VI* art show at the Athens Cultural Center. The reception will be at the Athens Cultural Center. You are invited to the reception but do not need to be present to win.



A Big Welcome

Greene Land Trust would like to extend a warm welcome to its two newest board members: **Jennie Allen** and **Ryan Jewett**. We look forward to the new energy and ideas that come with new members!

Get to Know the Board

Learn about the Greene Land Trust board members on our website! We've added brief bios to the [Leadership](#) page.

Seasons of Greene VI

Greene Land Trust is hosting its sixth annual art show and sale this fall. Visit the Athens Cultural Center from September 26th – October 26th to view local landscapes painted by acclaimed regional artists. A portion of all painting sales goes to support the work of GLT to assist in helping protect these beautiful landscapes forever.

Purchase by Mail

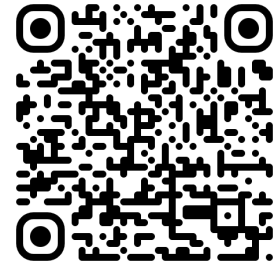
Raffle tickets may also be purchased by mail. Make checks payable to Greene Land Trust and mail the check to:

Greene Land Trust
 P.O. Box 387, Coxsackie, NY 12051

Please include mailing address or email. Purchased raffle tickets will be mailed or emailed to you.

Upcoming Events with GLT

- ◆ Summer Night Walk with Justin Wexler: **Aug. 30th at 8pm**
- ◆ Forest Bathing Walk with Beth Rennig: **Sept. 20th at 10am**
- ◆ Catskill Farmers Market: **Sept. 21st at 10am**
- ◆ *Seasons of Greene VI*, Opening Reception: **Sept. 27th at 4pm**
- ◆ Forest History Talk with Michael Kudish: **Sept. 28th, Time TBD**
- ◆ Coxsackie Farmers Market: **Oct. 1st at 4pm**
- ◆ *Seasons of Greene VI*, Closing Reception & Raffle Drawing: **Oct. 26th at 4pm**



Scan the QR code to see GLT's Eventbrite page and sign up for one of our programs today!

Looking for Volunteer Opportunities?

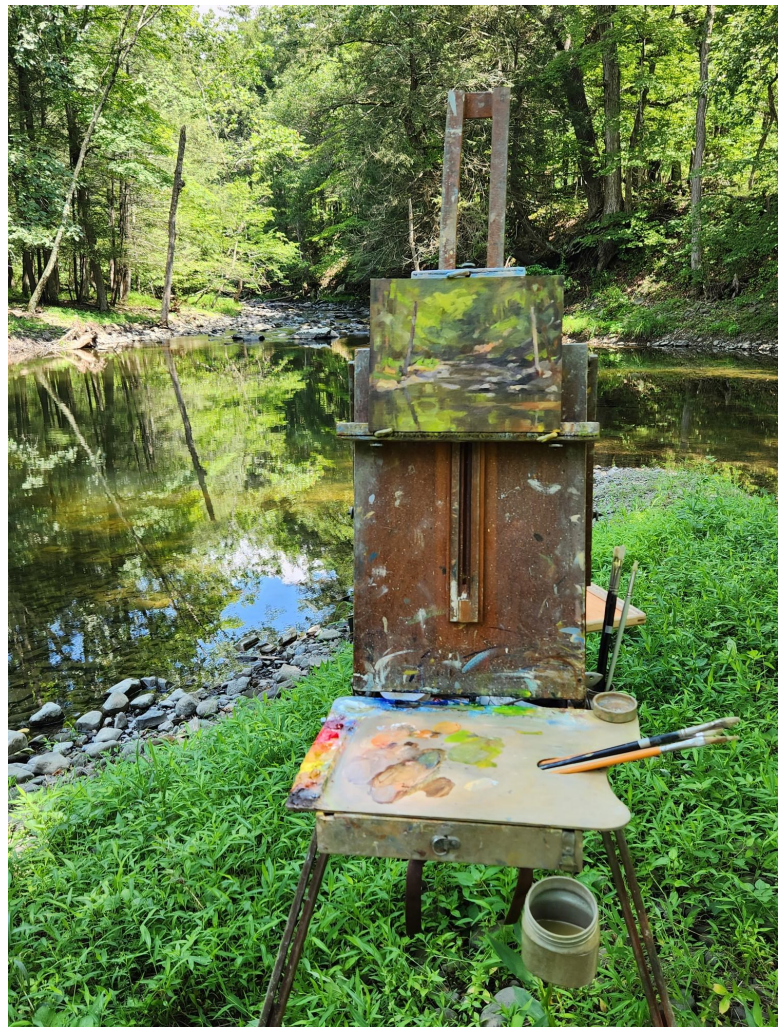
Contact Justin Wexler at steward@greenelandtrust.org to learn more about volunteer opportunities with Greene Land Trust!

Interested in supporting GLT? Become a member!

Visit our [website](#) or scan the QR code for a secure, easy way to send your member gift today. Provide a one-time gift or join the growing number of GLT sustaining members by signing up to provide a regular, monthly gift!



Tip: Open your camera app on your phone and hold it over this QR code. Click the Paypal link that appears to make your donation. You can pay with a credit card without making a Paypal account!



A beautiful day for plein air painting: regional artists attended a paint out at Potic Creek in preparation for the upcoming *Seasons of Greene VI* art show and sale. Photo and painting by GLT board member, Jim Coe.