



The Stella Niagara Preserve

For: Niagara River Greenway
Ecological Fund Standing Committee

By: Western New York Land Conservancy

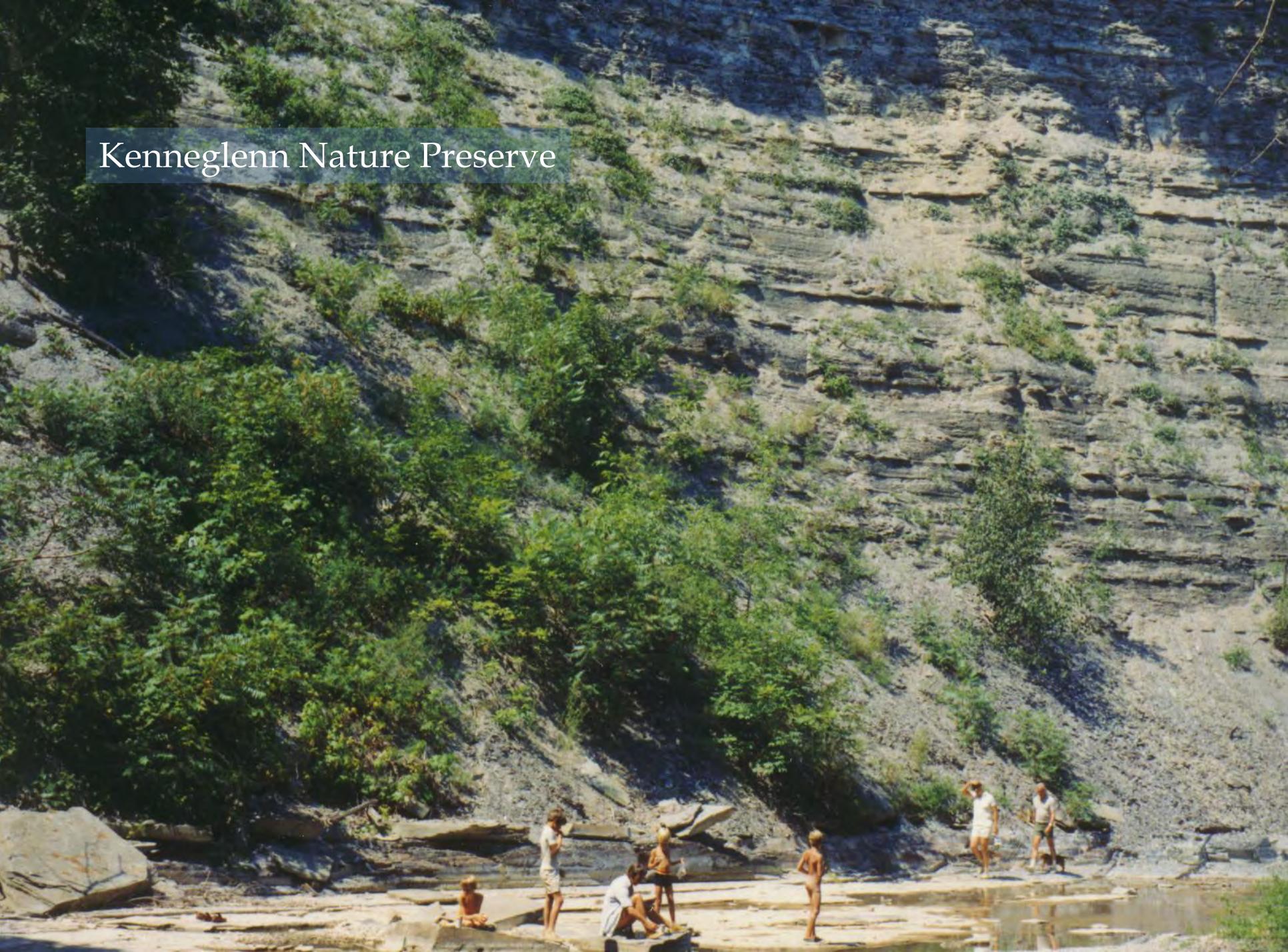
June 18, 2013

Western New York Land Conservancy



protecting & conserving land
for future generations

Kennegleann Nature Preserve





Brown's Marsh, Wellsville



Kenneglenn Nature Preserve



Singer Farm, Niagara County



Lake Ontario

★ Stella
Niagara
Preserve

Niagara Falls

Buffalo

Lake Erie





Property Boundary
(29-acre portion of
130-acre property)

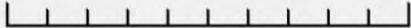
Stella Niagara
Education Park

Niagara River

Lower River Rd

Pletcher Rd

0 250 500 Feet



Data Source: Niagara County Parcels 2009

The Stella Niagara *property* is:

- 29 acres of **ecologically and culturally important** land in the Town of Lewiston.
- 1,474 feet of shoreline, the **third longest privately owned river frontage** in Niagara County.
- One of few **natural landing sites** between Niagara Falls and Lake Ontario.
- An **international priority** for protection.





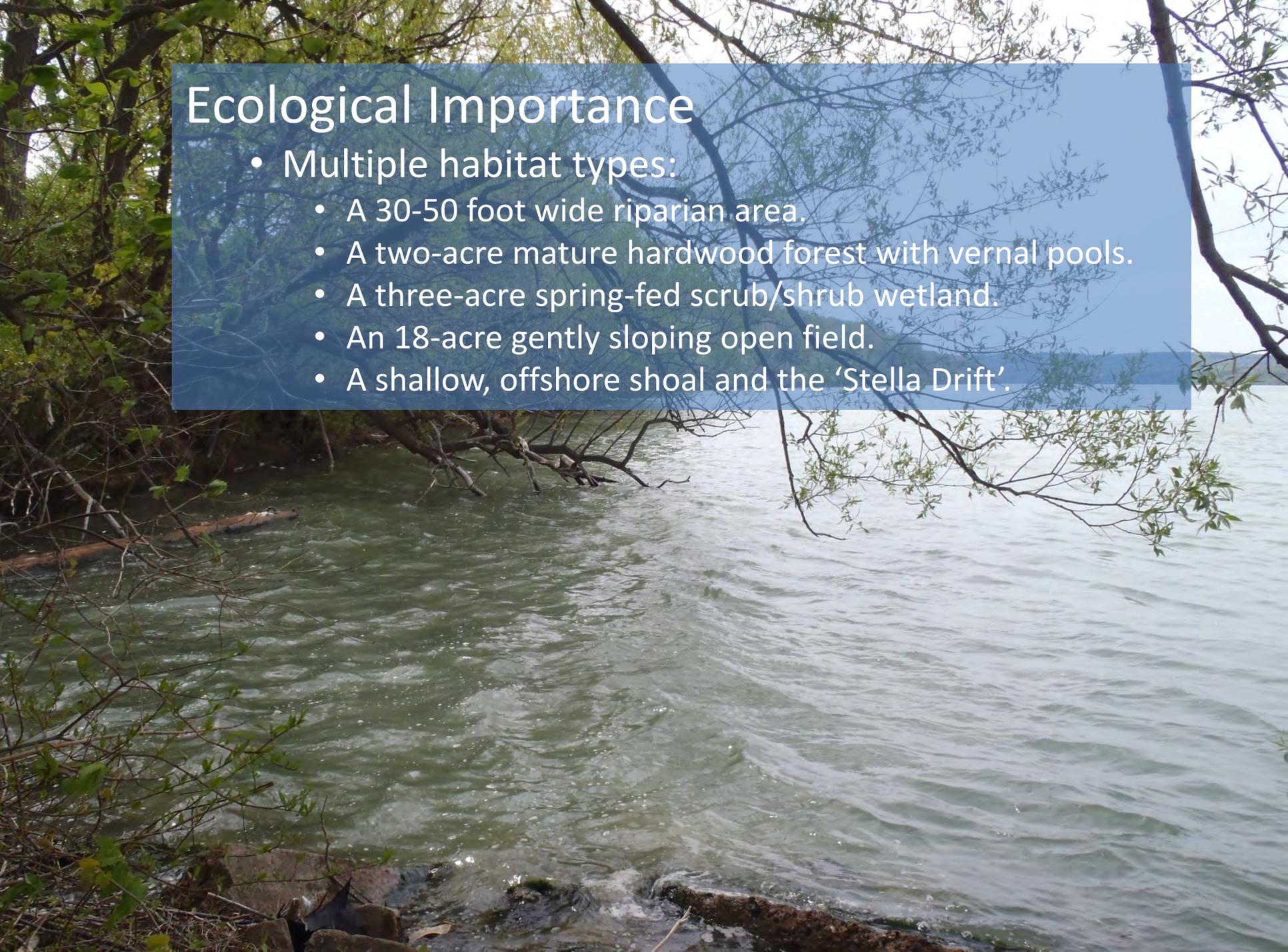
The Stella Niagara *Preserve* will be:

- The **first nature preserve** along the Niagara River to be owned and operated by a not-for-profit organization.
- **A model** for creating new, high quality public spaces along the Niagara River Greenway without burdening public agencies with increased costs.
- **A critical link** in the Niagara River Greenway and Olmsted's proposed necklace of open spaces along the length of the Niagara River.



Ecological Importance

- Multiple habitat types:
 - A 30-50 foot wide riparian area.
 - A two-acre mature hardwood forest with vernal pools.
 - A three-acre spring-fed scrub/shrub wetland.
 - An 18-acre gently sloping open field.
 - A shallow, offshore shoal and the 'Stella Drift'.

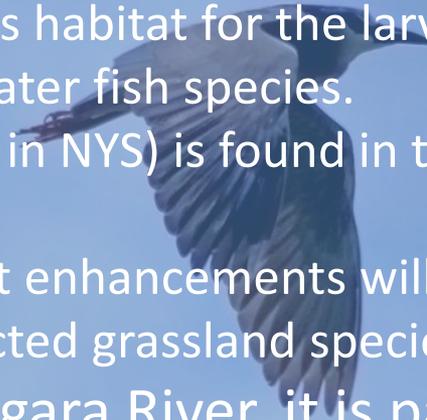




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Data Source: Niagara County Parcels 2009

Ecological Importance

- Supports rare, threatened and endangered species:
 - Lake Sturgeon (threatened in NYS) has been recorded along the shoreline of the property while feeding.
 - Offshore shoal provides habitat for the larval stage of several native warm water fish species.
 - Ninebark (endangered in NYS) is found in the riparian zone of the property.
 - “Native prairie” habitat enhancements will support several rare and protected grassland species.
- As shoreline of the Niagara River, it is part of an internationally designated Important Bird Area.
- Provides important ecological services.
- Was placed on the Niagara River Area of Concern priority habitat list in 2012.



Cultural Importance

- Haudenosaunee history
 - Archaeological evidence of continuous use.
 - An important canoe landing site.
- War of 1812
 - Landing site of the British during their invasion of the U.S. in 1813.
- Spiritual significance
 - Home to the Sisters of St. Francis since 1907.
 - Registered “Peace Site.”
 - The chapel “miraculously” survived several floods caused by ice jams, including a severe flood in 1955.

HOLDING IT UNTIL MAY 22, 1815

UNITED STATES DAUGHTERS OF 1812 NEW YORK STATE SOCIETY





The Land Conservancy will:

- Acquire the 29-acre private property.
- Open it to public access.
 - Create and improve a walking trail system.
 - Provide fishing and canoe / kayak access.
 - Place interpretive and wayfinding signage.
 - Hold events and hikes.
- Enhance 18 acres of grassland habitat.
- Continue stewardship of the property.



Project Cost

- Total project cost: \$3,170,959
 - \$25,000 for planning.
 - \$223,124 for construction.
 - \$2,310,185 for acquisition.
 - \$20,000 for administration.
 - \$592,650 for a stewardship fund (annual operation and maintenance costs are estimated to be \$29,633).
- The Land Conservancy is asking the Greenway Ecological Fund Standing Committee for **\$500,000 in 2013** for property acquisition.

Matching Funds

- Potential sources:
 - Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Fund (HERF)
 - NRG Niagara County Host Community Standing Committee
 - Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)
 - NOAA Great Lakes Area of Concern Land Acquisition
 - Hahn Family Foundation
 - Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
 - John R. Oishei Foundation
 - Private and Corporate Donors
 - DEC Fishing Access Easements

Project Schedule

- Phase 1: Planning and Fundraising (March 2013 through September 2014)
- Phase 2: Acquisition (October 2014 through December 2014)
- Phase 3: Design (January 2015 through March 2015)
- Phase 4: Construction (April 2015 through August 2015)
- Phase 5: Continued Operations and Maintenance (September 2015 onward)

Priority Criteria

- The Stella Niagara Preserve:
 - a. Preserves RTE species.
 - b. Has a strong scientific foundation.
 - c. Contributes to long term protection and enhancement of RTE species and their habitat.
 - d. Achieves multiple ecological goals.
 - e. Preserves Haudenosaunee features.
 - f. Involves a multi-stakeholder collaboration.
 - g. Is consistent with applicable resource management plans.
 - h. Includes efforts to seek matching resources.
 - i. Is time sensitive.
 - j. Has documented municipal and county support, among many letters of support.
 - k. Is feasible.

Letters of Support

- Sister Edith Wyss, OSF, Provincial Minister of the Sisters of St. Francis.
- Steven L. Reiter, Supervisor of the Town of Lewiston.
- William L. Ross, Chairman of the Niagara County Legislature.
- Senator George D. Maziarz, Vice President Pro Tempore, (R) 62nd Senate District NYS.
- Paul McKeown, Supervisor of Natural Resources, NYS DEC Region 9.
- Paul Jackson, President of the Niagara River Anglers Association.
- Loren Smith, Executive Director of the Buffalo Audubon Society.

Why Now?

- The project advances the goals of the Niagara River Greenway Plan at a critical stage in its implementation.
- The property is **threatened by development** and its acquisition is urgent.



With \$500,000 from the GESC in 2013 and 2014,
and \$2.171 million from HERF,
the Stella Niagara Preserve would be a reality.

Thank You!