

Greenway Ecological Standing Committee
Grantee Status Report

Status Report Date: March 18, 2016	
Project Title: Niagara Escarpment Legacy Project	
Organization: Western New York Land Conservancy	
Report Prepared By: Jajeon Rose-Burney	
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Project Start Date: March, 2013	Project Anticipated Completion Date: June, 2015

1. Describe what progress you have made toward each of your grant objectives since your last status report. Did you meet your goals for this period? Please be specific.

This is our final status report for this project. The main objectives of this project include:

- Establish a study area and identify the corridor, based on the abrupt topological and hydrological gradient at the margins of the Escarpment, that will encompass the conservation efforts.
- Use existing maps and aerial photography to identify significant natural and cultural features of the Escarpment.
- Conduct a “windshield survey” to further refine and ground truth the mapping;
- Conduct detailed field inventories in representative areas that may represent special habitats.
- Prepare maps that identify the most important (from an ecological and cultural standpoint) areas of the study area.
- Identify opportunities to engage public and private-sector stakeholders in resource stewardship activities.
- Prepare a plan for the restoration and use of the Niagara Escarpment complete with project descriptions and milestones that will guide the implementation of the plan.
- Identify ecological, cultural, and recreational corridors and potential corridor linkage opportunities with the Niagara Greenway.

Each of these objectives has been completed. A final report was published in May, 2014, coinciding with a public presentation of the project results. The final report can be downloaded here: <http://wnylc.org/land-protection/current-projects/niagara-escarpment-legacy-project/>

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2. How did you measure your progress since your last status report? What kind of data have been collected to determine whether progress is being made or not being made? What results have been obtained since your last status report?

The Land Conservancy has completed all project objectives. The project team collected data through desktop analysis of available reports and GIS data, ecological inventories of properties on the escarpment, and from participants at three stakeholder meetings and a public presentation. A full summary of the findings can be reviewed in Chapter 4 of the final report. A few key findings are below:

- Several species of plant, bird, and amphibians found along the Escarpment are on the state threatened lists and several more are listed by New York State as of special concern.
- The Escarpment's unique hydrology and geology create conditions that are suitable for rare ecological communities.
- There are many threats to the Escarpment, including urban growth, invasive species, and industrial contamination.

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3. What challenges have you encountered since your last status report? How are you addressing these challenges?

The key challenge since completing this project is the difficulty in protecting, either through fee simple acquisition or conservation easement, the high priority properties identified by the project. The Land Conservancy has discussed conservation options with the two owners of the two highest priority properties. In each case, the owner is currently not interested in selling the land for the appraised value. One owner is not interested in a conservation easement, while the other is currently considering it. The Land Conservancy may develop a more robust outreach program to gauge interest of other Escarpment property owners. If funded this could begin in 2017.

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4. Are you on schedule to complete your project in the proposed timeline? If not, please explain why you are ahead or behind schedule.

The project was completed on time in 2014.

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5. Please use the table below to report your expenditures since your last status report. Include in-kind support from other resources have you used since your last report below the table. Please explain any differences between anticipated and actual expenditures. Attach copies of any relevant receipts or invoices to this report.

Budget Categories	GESC-approved budget	Funds or in-kind support from other resources	Total expenses to date	Remaining balance
Salaries and Benefits	55,000	0	55,000	0
Travel	0	0	0	0
Equipment	0	0	0	0
Supplies	0	0	0	0
Meetings	0	0	0	0
Printed Material	0	0	0	0
Consultants	261,673	0	261,673	0
Other	0	169,900	0	0
Total Funds	261,673	169,900	261,673	0

Funds from other resources include:

- 2012 New York Environmental Protection Fund/New York State Conservation Partnership Program administered by Land Trust Alliance: \$38,400 for a two year long project focused on stewardship, habitat restoration and acquisition along the Niagara Escarpment.
- 2011 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: \$119,000, including \$67,000 for habitat restoration and \$52,000 used in October 2011 to complete first Niagara Escarpment acquisition.
- 2011 HSBC: \$11,000 for operating costs in coordinating land projects (grant originally \$18,000—utilized \$7,000 to complete first Niagara Escarpment acquisition).
- Rotary Club of Lockport: \$1,500 for signage at the Niagara Escarpment Preserve.

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6. What progress toward your objectives do you expect to make before your next status report? Please be specific.

The project is complete and no additional status reports are required. The Land Conservancy will continue to work to protect priority properties along the Escarpment.

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7. Please include 1 to 2 photographs with dates and short descriptions taken since your last project report.



Participants at the final project presentation in May, 2014.



Alvar woodland along the Escarpment.

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