Tompkins County Conservation Plan

2007

Part I: A Strategic Approach to Natural Resource Stewardship

Tompkins County Conservation Plan
Part I: A Strategic Approach to Natural Resource Stewardship

Prepared by the
Tompkins County Planning Department

Edward C. Marx, AICP, *Commissioner of Planning and Public Works*
Katherine Borgella, AICP, *Principal Planner*
Crystal Buck, AICP, *Senior Planner (through 6/07)*
Dariele Drake, *Principal Account Clerk*
Scott D. Doyle, AICP, *Senior Planner (from 4/07)*
Heather Filiberto, *Senior Planner (through 12/06)*
Kate Hackett, *Senior Planner (through 7/07)*
Sharon Heller, *Geographic Information System Analyst*
Joan Jurkowich, AICP, *Deputy Commissioner of Planning*
Jeanne Leccese, *Planner (from 4/07)*
Leslie Schill, *Senior Planner (from 8/07)*
Kathy Wilsea, *Secretary*

The Tompkins County Planning Advisory Board provided invaluable guidance during the preparation of the Conservation Plan. Members of the Planning Advisory Board who served on the Natural Features and Working Landscapes Subcommittee while the Plan was being prepared include:

Herb Engman, *Environment*
Tom Gerow, *At-Large*
Monica Roth, *Agriculture*
Andrew Zepp, *Land Preservation and Public Land Management*

The remainder of the 2007 Tompkins County Planning Advisory Board includes:

Dick Coogan, *Local Planning (non-urban)*
Fernando de Aragón, *Transportation*
Rick Couture, *Education*
Betty Falcão, *Human Services*
John Gutenberger, *Education*
Dave Herrick, *Facilities/Infrastructure*
Dooley Kiefer, *Associate Member*
Dan Krall, *Built Environment Design*
Gay Nicholson, *At-Large*
Martha Robertson, *Planning Committee*
John Spence, *Housing*
Michael Stamm, *Economic Development*
Scott Whitham, *Cultural/Historic Preservation*
Fred T. Wilcox, *Local Planning (urban)*

Foreword

In the Foreword to the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan (December 2004) I laid out the vision for the future that we had heard from the community over the two-plus years we spent developing the plan. That vision included the following statements:

- Rural communities are thriving, in large part due to sustainable use of agricultural and forest resources. There is increased diversity in the agricultural sector, often serving local and regional markets, and an emerging clean energy component based on renewable resources. Forest lands are conserved and managed to provide multiple benefits to water resources, sustainable yields of forest products, wildlife habitat, and reduction of greenhouse gases.
- A clean Cayuga Lake is the centerpiece of the community, and is fed by clear-flowing, green-belted streams. Public access to the lake is enhanced with new and improved parks, and a vibrant urban waterfront has developed in the City of Ithaca. Plentiful clean surface and ground water provides for domestic, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses.
- The landscape of the county looks much the same as it is today but public access to our natural wonders has been improved. Protected forests and natural areas increase from 13 percent to about 20 percent of the land, and about one-third of the county is active farmland. Within this landscape, outstanding natural features, including gorges, stream corridors, lakeshores, forested hillsides, wetlands, and wildlife habitats are protected, defining the natural character of the community, maintaining its scenic beauty, and sustaining its biological diversity.

The Plan identified 14 Natural Features Focus Areas containing concentrations of outstanding natural features in the County, and six Agricultural Resource Focus Areas representing the greatest concentrations of high quality agricultural soils and viable farming operations in the County. In order to protect and preserve the resources in those focus areas and move toward achieving the community's vision for the future, the plan included the following action items:

- Establish a program to protect and manage land for agricultural and forestry use in the focus areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan using tools appropriate to the functions of those resources.
- Establish an open-space program to protect or preserve the natural resources and recreational amenities in the focus areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan using tools appropriate to the function of those resources.
- Develop and disseminate educational information tailored to each Natural Features Focus Area and each Agricultural Features Focus Area.

This Conservation Plan is the mechanism for undertaking these actions. Volume 1 addresses the 14 Natural Features Focus Areas. Volume 2, to be developed in 2008, will look at the Agricultural Resource Focus Areas.

In this volume the issues are defined and strategies identified to address the priority conservation needs in the 14 Natural Features Focus Areas. Combined with a number of parallel efforts, also identified in the plan, this constitutes the "how" to achieve our conservation vision for Tompkins County. Key to the success of this effort will be the cooperative partnerships we have developed with other agencies and municipalities.

Edward C. Marx, AICP
Commissioner of Planning and Public Works

Tompkins County
Conservation Plan

Contents

1 Introduction
A Strategic Approach to Stewardship
Building Partnerships
Focusing Conservation Efforts
Understanding our Environment
The Focus Areas
8 Project Focus Areas Map
9 Implementation of Priority Actions
Principal Local Agencies
Priority Actions
Implementation Resources
16 Priority Protection Areas Description
23 Priority Protection Areas Map

Each of the fourteen Natural Features Focus Areas that are included in the Conservation Plan has an individual plan that provides detailed information about the unique characteristics of the area and outlines a tailored approach to implementation. These Focus Area Plans are available as separate documents.

Introduction

A Strategic Approach to Stewardship

Tompkins County is known for its magnificent landscapes and natural havens. Both local residents and visitors enjoy and appreciate Cayuga Lake; the many gorges, streams, and waterfalls; and our rolling farmland, fields, and wooded hillsides. Many Tompkins County residents also rely on these lands as a source of income.

Increasing rates of land development threaten to fragment the landscapes we value, and undermine the natural, recreational, economic, and aesthetic benefits they provide. If we wish to continue to enjoy these features of our community and sustain the benefits they provide, landowners, agencies and organizations, and local governments need to work together.

Good land stewardship, and the strong connection between landowners and their lands, provide a solid foundation for long-term preservation of the natural resources and working landscapes we value. Individual and highly localized efforts, however, cannot fully address the need for an integrated, community-wide, and strategic approach to protecting and managing these lands. New challenges, such as increasing development and invasive species, suggest that a more coordinated approach that spans property lines and municipal boundaries is necessary.

The accompanying Focus Area Planning Project draws information from various sources and brings together people from multiple perspectives to help establish a more strategic, integrated, and collaborative approach to stewardship of these areas.

Building Partnerships

Tompkins County is committed to working with landowners, agencies and organizations, municipalities, and the general public to protect the working landscapes and natural amenities that make this community a unique and wonderful place to live. Everyone has an important role to play, and we see ours as:

- Building public understanding of the importance of key resources and working landscapes in Tompkins County and the benefits they provide;
- Coordinating among the various stakeholders and between diverse issues;
- Providing access to data and information;
- Developing and promoting a strategic approach to conservation;
- Providing planning tools and other resources for implementing strategic conservation efforts; and
- Undertaking direct protection efforts, in cooperation with other levels of government and not-for-profit organizations.

Outreach to landowners, municipalities, agencies and organizations, and the general public has been a major component of this project and is critical for ensuring that the plan is relevant to and meets the needs of these partners. Ten public workshops, scattered throughout the county, were held in the spring and fall of 2006. Workshop participants were provided with detailed information about each focus area and asked to contribute their knowledge of the unique characteristics and challenges found in each area.

Members of the public, local officials, and agency representatives were invited to participate in series of public workshops.

Each public workshop also featured a series of information displays from various agencies and organizations involved in land conservation and protection. This provided participants with an opportunity to learn about existing programs and connect with staff and volunteers from local organizations. It also served to provide the public with the "big picture" of conservation activities and interests in the Focus Areas.

Local agencies and organizations participated throughout the process, played a critical role in defining the major protection and management issues, and helped determine what steps are needed to address these issues. Initial meetings with representatives from partner agencies helped identify existing efforts and better define the role for Tompkins County. These agency representatives also provided invaluable feedback at each stage of the planning effort and will be instrumental to the implementation of the plan.

Partner agencies include: Cayuga Lake Watershed Network; NYS Department of Environmental Conservation; Cornell University; Cornell Cooperative Extension; Finger Lakes Trail Conference; Cayuga Trails Club; USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service; Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District; NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation; Finger Lakes Land Trust; Ithaca College; the Tompkins County Federation of Sporting Clubs; and the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council.

Focusing Conservation Efforts

The *Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan* identifies fourteen Natural Features Focus Areas based on the location and concentration of natural resources, such as Unique Natural Areas, wetlands, stream corridors, public drinking water resources, Important Bird Areas, and hiking and multi-use trails and trail corridors. The *Comprehensive Plan*, including the fourteen delineated focus areas, was adopted by the Tompkins County Legislature in December 2004 after extensive public outreach.

These Focus Areas were identified to guide planning efforts and to provide a framework for strategic conservation. Focusing conservation efforts will promote the protection of the most environmentally sensitive areas and the unique natural gems that define this community. It will also help to preserve contiguous habitat, expansive recreation corridors, and blocks of viable working forests.

Understanding our Environment

Natural features, such as wetlands, forests, streams, and fields, are an important part of what makes Tompkins County a pleasant place to live. From clean water for drinking to habitat for animals, these features provide multiple benefits to our community. Each of the identified Focus Areas has its own unique character, which is reflected in the different key benefits that it provides. By identifying these key benefits we can better understand the unique conservation challenges and opportunities present in each Focus Area. This approach to conservation is highlighted in the *Comprehensive Plan*, which identifies as an action item to establish "an open-space program . . . using tools appropriate to the functions of those resources".

Together with the community, Tompkins County identified nine primary benefits provided by the landscape:

- Critical habitat and biodiversity
- Education and research
- Fishing
- Hunting
- Outdoor recreation
- Sustainable timber harvesting and agroforestry
- Sustainable agriculture
- Scenic views
- Water quality and flood mitigation

Major benefits associated with each Focus Area were determined based on the integration and analysis of information from multiple data sources, including the New York State Habitat Gap Analysis, the New York State Breeding Bird and Herps Atlases, and the Tompkins County Unique Natural Areas Inventory, among many others. These benefits are discussed in detail in the Focus Area Plans.

There are multiple issues that threaten the benefits provided by the natural resources in the Focus Areas. For example, water quality can be undermined by stormwater run-off and pollution, gravel extraction in streams, and improper maintenance of roadside ditches.

Protection and management issues for each of the nine benefits were identified based on: interviews with local, regional, and state agencies; review of relevant local and regional conservation plans, such as the Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Plan for the Allegheny Plateau; and environmental data sources, such as the on-line NatureServe Explorer scientific database.

Several major protection and management themes are particularly important in Tompkins County. A detailed discussion of protection and management issues is available in each Focus Area Plan.

Fragmentation of the landscape undermines habitat, forestry, and hunting opportunities. Maintaining large blocks of contiguous open space is critical for sustaining viable wildlife populations. Commercial forestry also benefits from larger connected tracts of forests, and hunters rely on large areas of undeveloped land for safe hunting opportunities. At the same time, deer favor the lush suburban landscape intermixed with forests, resulting in a drastic increase in deer populations in some portions of the county.

Water quality is critical for drinking water, recreation, habitat, and fishing opportunities. When water quality is degraded it becomes more expensive to purify water for drinking, fish populations decline and fish species composition changes, and public swimming areas are threatened. Stream buffers play a particularly critical role in protecting water quality and are an important part of the natural landscape. Aquifer recharge areas also play a critical role in providing drinking water.

The ***filling and degradation of wetlands*** is also a critical issue that affects water quality, flooding, and habitat. Wetlands are nature's filters and sponges. The loss of these key areas represents a dramatic change in the environment – one that has repercussions throughout a watershed and region.

Scenic views and tranquility can be undermined by development that is poorly sited. Tompkins County is well known for its scenic qualities and recreational amenities. These benefits support our thriving tourism industry and contribute to the quality of life of residents.

Although there are many ***recreational opportunities*** in Tompkins County, several issues limit access and threaten the future of these amenities. Lack of signs, maps and limited parking restrict access to the numerous trails in Tompkins County. Access to one of the major recreational amenities, Cayuga Lake, is limited and additional public access points are needed. In addition, the future of the Finger Lakes Trail is precarious. While portions of the trail are located on public land, most of it is located on private property with only informal and revocable permission granted by local landowners.

Biodiversity is threatened by invasive species, development, and fragmentation. A variety of habitats require special management and protection. Grassland habitat, for example, benefits from modified mowing practices. Vernal pools and fens are particularly sensitive to development and are some of the most diverse and interesting habitat areas in the County.

The purpose of compiling information about key benefits and associated issues is to provide landowners, agencies and organizations, and municipalities with a valuable resource to use in their efforts to make informed decisions about land management and protection. This information was also instrumental in identifying key actions that are needed to sustain and enhance the benefits provided by each Focus Area.

The Focus Areas

The Taughannock Creek Focus Area is located in the northwest portion of the County in the Town of Ulysses. Taughannock Falls State Park is the defining feature, with the falls, gorge, lakeshore and recreational amenities bringing thousands of visitors to this area every year. The surrounding landscape is largely agricultural grassland, with scattered pockets of forests and wetlands.

Taughannock Creek Focus Area

The Lakeshore Focus Area encompasses the entirety of Cayuga Lake in Tompkins County and its lakeshore, extending from the Town of Lansing on the east side of the Lake, south to the City and Town of Ithaca, and northwest through the Town of Ulysses. Cayuga Lake, one of the eleven Finger Lakes, is striking in its beauty, is widely used as a source of drinking water and recreation, has influenced the area's historical development, and continues to this day to help define the community's sense of place.

Lakeshore Focus Area

The Gorges Focus Area is located in the southwestern portion of Tompkins County and includes parts of the City of Ithaca and Towns of Ithaca, Newfield, and Enfield. Spectacular gorges and glens, hanging cliffs, and breathtaking waterfalls characterize much of the Focus Area, approximately 40 percent of which is publicly protected by inclusion in Robert H. Treman State Park and Buttermilk Falls State Park. These lands are also part of the area identified as a priority project in the 2006 New York State Open Space Plan as the "Emerald Necklace", an arc of forested hills and valleys that extends across three counties.

The *Gorges Focus Area*

The Wildlife Focus Area is located in the southwest corner of the County. This area is predominantly forested, with productive agricultural lands blanketing the valley. The Connecticut Hill Wildlife Management Area dominates the landscape and includes almost the entire western hillside along the Pony Hollow valley. The eastern side of the valley includes Newfield State Forest, Cliffside State Forest, Cornell University's Arnot Forest, and Tompkins County Forestry Lands. This area is also part of the "Emerald Necklace."

Wildlife Focus Area

The Van Buskirk Gulf Focus Area is a small Focus Area located in the Town of Newfield, just west of the border with the Town of Danby. From the southern portion of the Focus Area, a tributary of Cayuga Inlet flows north through a wide valley and then through the steep gorge walls that form the spectacular Van Buskirk Glen in the northern section of the Focus Area. This area is also part of the "Emerald Necklace."

Van Buskirk Gulf Focus Area

The Forest Lands Focus Area arcs across the southeastern portion of the County and includes five State Forests, stretching from the Danby State Forest in the Town of Danby to Yellow Barn State Forest in the Town of Dryden. The hillcrest and valley topography that characterize this Area provide a dramatic and picturesque landscape that shapes and defines this Focus Area. This areas is also part of the "Emerald Necklace"

Forest Lands Focus Area

The Sixmile Creek Focus Area extends along Sixmile Creek from Columbia Street in the City of Ithaca, southeast to Brooktondale. The two "legs" of the Focus Area extend from Brooktondale south along White Church Road, and north along Thomas Road. Much of the landscape in the Focus Area is characterized by forested hillsides and steep banks along Six Mile Creek, with extensive residential development along Route 79 and Coddington Road, and within the City of Ithaca and the hamlet of Brooktondale.

Sixmile Creek Focus Area

The Cascadilla Creek Focus Area extends from the City of Ithaca at the Cascadilla Creek Gorge, through the southern portion of Cornell campus, and to the Cascadilla Creek headwaters area at Thomas Road in the Town of Dryden. The two sides of the Focus Area have very different characteristics and functions, though they are tied together by Cascadilla Creek. The western half is characterized by the beautiful gorge and gorge trail, Cornell agricultural fields, and scattered wetlands. The eastern portion includes forestlands and a large wetland complex in the headwaters area.

Cascadilla Creek Focus Area

The Fall Creek Focus Area stretches from the City of Ithaca through the Villages of Freeville and Dryden, and to south of Dryden Lake at the Tompkins County line. It encompasses a wide range of landscapes, from the Cornell Plantations to the forested lands around Fall Creek to the recreational facilities at Dryden Lake. The Fall Creek and Virgil Creek stream corridors connect and define the area.

Fall Creek Focus Area

The Fens Focus Area spans the Town of Dryden and Groton, lies adjacent to the Village of Freeville, and includes portions of the hamlet of McLean. This Focus Area encompasses a wide range of landscapes, including forests, active agricultural lands, and many wetlands, swamps and fens. The Fall Creek and Beaver Creek stream corridors are key features of the landscape. Ecologically, its significance is apparent from the number of national and local designations within the area.

The Fens Focus Area

The Owasco Inlet Focus Area extends from the Village of Freeville north through the Village of Groton to the Tompkins County border. The Focus Area is characterized by its large wetlands and protected streams, which support a variety of plant and animal communities. Owasco Inlet is unique in Tompkins County, as it is the only major stream to flow north into Owasco Lake. Groundwater in this Focus Area is the public drinking water source for the Village of Groton, and surface water resources in the Focus Area are the primary tributary for Owasco Lake, the source of public drinking water for many residents in Cayuga County.

Owasco Inlet Focus Area

The Airport Ponds and Wetlands Focus Area is located in the Towns of Lansing and Dryden. A series of wetlands define this area and provide water quality enhancement and good bird watching opportunities. The nearby Sapsucker Woods and Lab of Ornithology, across Route 13 in the Fall Creek Focus Area, offer additional bird watching and learning opportunities.

Airport Ponds and Wetlands Focus Area

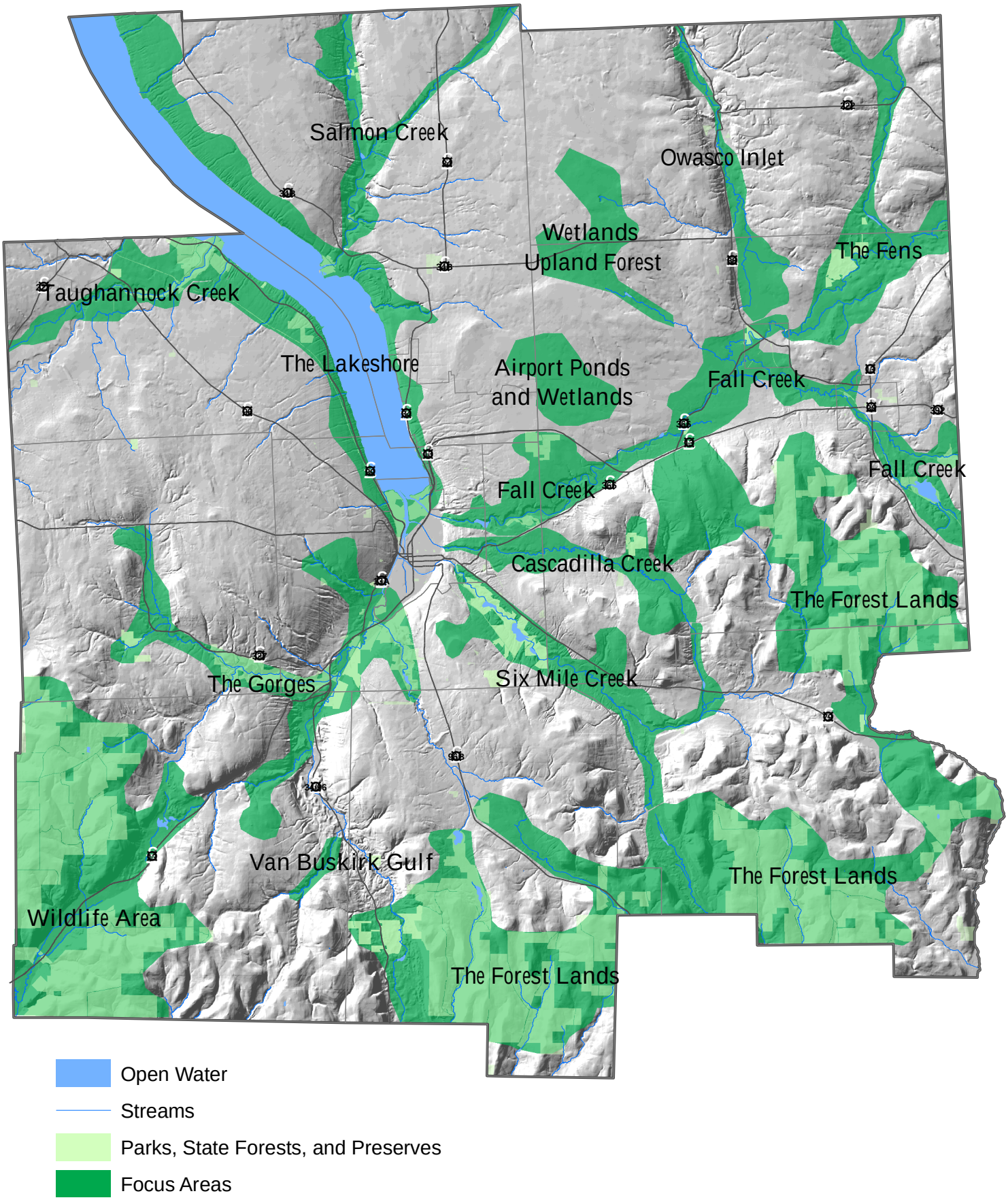
The Wetlands Upland Forest Focus Area lies within the Towns of Dryden and Groton and includes the headwaters of four watersheds (Owasco Inlet, Salmon Creek, Fall Creek, and East Cayuga Lakeshore). This small Focus Area is comprised of two distinct landscapes – large pristine wetlands in the low-lying areas and rich mesic forests in the adjacent upland areas.

Wetlands Upland Forest Focus Area

The Salmon Creek Focus Area is located in northern Lansing, extending from Route 34B near Myers Point north to the border with Cayuga County. The Salmon Creek and Locke Creek corridors are major landscape features. The area is known for its abundant fishing opportunities and its beautiful working landscape of fields and forests.

Salmon Creek Focus Area

Project Focus Areas



Implementation of Priority Actions

The Natural Features Focus Area Project has identified 35 priority action items to be initiated over the next five years. The action items have been established to bolster and coordinate the region's many existing conservation efforts. They are not intended to replace or replicate those efforts. The action items reflect the broad range of unique uses in the identified Focus Areas.

The action item categories (*Forestry*; *Hunting and Deer Management*; *Fishing*; *Water Quality*; *Outdoor Recreation*; *Critical Habitat and Biodiversity*; *Invasive Species and Native Plants*; *Rural Landowner Outreach and Education*; *Technical Assistance for Municipalities*; *Coordination of Existing Programs*; *Land Protection – Open Space System*; and *Recommendations to Other Planning Efforts and Studies*) are drawn from information gathered at public meetings, interviews with stakeholder agencies, and from a variety of planning analyses. **The order in which items are listed does not necessarily denote their priority of implementation.**

The intent is that these action items will be coordinated by the identified *Principal Local Agencies*. While it is anticipated that the Principal Local Agencies will act as the lead coordinator for the actions, in many cases other federal, state and/or local agencies will need to take on major responsibilities for implementing an action as well.

Principal Local Agencies and other conservation partners, such as interested municipalities, will be brought together twice a year to help coordinate and track implementation efforts as well as facilitate collaboration between these partner agencies.

Principal Local Agencies

Tompkins County is fortunate to have a number of agencies and organizations that work actively to promote conservation of the region's important natural resources. Each organization brings its own vision and approach to the task of protecting the unique places in Tompkins County.

Agency conservation efforts span the range of issues that are identified in this plan. One of the leaders in local land protection is the Finger Lakes Land Trust (FLLT), which has protected nearly 9,000 acres of the region's unique areas, many in the Focus Areas. FLLT holds 14 conservation easements on Six Mile Creek alone.

Academic institutions including Cornell University and Ithaca College lead the management of land for educational and conservation purposes in Tompkins County. These organizations and many others are committed to preserving the qualities that make Tompkins County the distinct region that it is today. Cornell's long-range master plan and Ithaca Colleges natural areas planning efforts reflect this commitment and highlight future stewardship goals.

Local conservation outreach efforts are led by agencies like Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) and the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN). Other agencies work to facilitate the protection of land for multiple uses including the long-term management of forests through New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) take the lead in assisting farmers in the protection of agricultural resources.

Local hiking opportunities are advanced through the work of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference (FLTC) that, with the help of volunteers of the Cayuga Trails Club (CTC), has built almost 880 miles of the Finger Lakes Trail, much of which lies in Tompkins County. Recreation efforts are also advanced by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation through projects that include the development of park master plans for state lands like the Alan H. Treman State Marine Park. The Tompkins County Federation of Sporting Clubs works to advance conservation and recreation through their efforts to bridge gaps between hunters and local landowners.

These existing efforts provide a strong foundation for implementation of the Conservation Plan's priority actions.

Priority Actions

Forestry

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Determine feasibility of a local forestry cooperative.	Tompkins County Planning Department
2. Assess the feasibility of establishing a Forestry District to provide tax relief for landowners that are actively managing their forests and are willing to commit to keeping their land forested.	Tompkins County Planning Department

Hunting and Deer Management

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Maintain a list of certified hunters interested in hunting on private land.	Tompkins County Federation of Sporting Clubs

Fishing

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Acquire and build additional parking areas for fishing access in Owasco Inlet and the Fens Focus Areas, as opportunities arise. Construct parking at least 100 feet from stream and use pervious paving materials where possible to limit the impact of new parking areas on water quality. Public access should be limited to less sensitive areas, particularly in the Fens.	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
2. Establish accessible fishing locations at publicly owned lakefront parks and creeks where fishing opportunities are already located, as opportunities arise.	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

Water Quality

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Initiate inspection and maintenance requirements for individual on-site wastewater treatment systems, as also recommended in the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan.	Tompkins County Health Department
2. Encourage semi-pervious paving, bioretention, and infiltration practices.	Stormwater Coalition of Tompkins County
3. Provide education about and access to hydrologically sensitive area data through the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) on-line interactive mapping tool.	Tompkins County Planning Department
4. Educate highway departments about the impacts of roadside ditching on water quality and water quantity, as well as on the spread of invasive species, and provide highway departments with information about appropriate best management practices to address this issue.	Cayuga Lake Watershed Network
5. Investigate and distribute information about techniques for controlling excessive water-borne bacteria originating from geese and other wildlife.	Cayuga Lake Watershed Network

Outdoor Recreation

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Provide maps and educational signage, perhaps in the form of an information kiosk, at State Forests to improve access to recreational resources and encourage appropriate uses.	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
2. Provide emergency responders with better trail maps to improve incident response time.	Tompkins County ITS
3. Create and distribute a guidebook for the county's recreational amenities that highlights trails, swimming areas, and bird watching opportunities.	To be determined
4. Reduce nighttime light and noise impacts on Buttermilk Falls by working with business owners on Route 13. This should be part of a longer-term strategy to establish local controls adjacent to all State Parks.	To be determined
5. Enhance Stewart Park amenities by improving the lakeshore areas, restoring historic buildings, developing trails, and upgrading park landscaping and facilities, as funding permits.	City of Ithaca
6. Work with responsible parties to dredge Cayuga Inlet Flood Control Channel and find an appropriate method for disposal of dredge spoil materials, as also recommended in the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan.	City of Ithaca
7. Establish launch facilities for canoes, kayaks, and other 'muscle-powered' boats along Cayuga Lake.	Multiple Agencies

Critical Habitat and Biodiversity

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Continue to conserve and enhance Cornell University Natural Areas, including the appropriate recommendations in the University's Comprehensive Master Plan.	Cornell University
2. Work with municipalities to protect wetlands and vernal pools smaller than 12.4 acres in size and not regulated by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.	Tompkins County Planning Department
3. Map small wetlands and vernal pools using data on Hydrologically Sensitive Areas.	Tompkins County Planning Department

Invasive Species and Native Plants

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Inventory and identify high priority areas for the control of invasive species.	Tompkins County Environmental Management Council
2. Establish a coordinated approach for distributing invasive species information to landowners throughout identified high priority areas.	Cornell Cooperative Extension
3. Develop and distribute a list of popular landscaping plants and appropriate native species substitutions.	Tompkins County Environmental Management Council
4. Conduct a comprehensive "natural lawns and gardens" campaign to limit the use of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizer, and increase the use of native plants in landscaping.	Tompkins County Environmental Management Council; Cornell Cooperative Extension

5. Develop a policy for using native plants for all county maintenance activities and on all county properties, and work with local municipalities to institute a similar policy.	Tompkins County Planning Department
6. Provide a wide selection of native plants as part of annual plant sale, and eliminate all invasive species from the sale.	Soil & Water Conservation District

Rural Landowner Outreach and Education

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Enhance existing rural landowner education efforts with an emphasis on sustainable forestry practices, impacts of ATV use, invasive species, wetlands management, grassland habitat, and targeted outreach to new rural landowners.	Cornell Cooperative Extension
2. Identify and coordinate the dissemination of information about grants available to private landowners for habitat management and enhancement.	Cornell Cooperative Extension

Technical Assistance for Municipalities

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Provide technical assistance to municipalities working on projects that implement the recommendations of the plan.	Tompkins County Planning Department
2. Provide training and information to municipalities on the full-range of conservation tools available, the Plan and the Natural Resources Inventory, flood plain management strategies, and vernal pool and small wetland habitat conservation.	Tompkins County Planning Department and Finger Lakes Land Trust

Coordination of Implementation and Existing Programs

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Convene a group of partners (Tompkins County Conservation Partners) involved in local conservation efforts twice a year. Meetings will facilitate regular information sharing as well as coordinated educational efforts such as periodic field trips for municipal officials to key sites in the Focus Areas.	Tompkins County Planning Department

Land Protection in Priority Areas

Action Item Description	Principal Local Agency(ies)
1. Protect priority protection areas through partnerships with agencies and municipalities by purchasing land and acquiring conservation easements (see Priority Protection Areas section for more information).	Multiple Agencies
2. Educate landowners about tax incentives available for conservation efforts through various formats including town/village newsletters with special emphasis on landowners within the open space system.	Finger Lakes Land Trust
3. Develop or identify a model conservation zoning ordinance for use in key portions of the Focus Areas.	Tompkins County Planning Department
4. Engage key land protection stakeholders to assess the financial resources available for land conservation and work to establish additional funding as needed.	Tompkins County Conservation Partners

Recommendations to Other Planning Efforts and Studies

There are several planning efforts underway that relate to this plan. Below are listed specific recommendations for those plans to consider as ways to further the goals of this plan.

Action Item Description	Lead Agency
1. Scenic Resources Inventory and Plan ▪ Work with municipalities to establish guidelines to reduce the visual impact of development along the lakeshore. Assess the feasibility of establishing tree conservation and building height regulations as part of this effort. ▪ Clear the view and add amenities, such as an interpretive signs or benches, to the Cayuga Lake overlook [aka Warren Overlook] along Route 89. ▪ Establish scenic view pull-off sites on Route 13 and at Ithaca Falls to allow drivers to safely enjoy these amazing views.	Tompkins County Planning Department
2. Stream Corridor Management Plan ▪ Provide assistance to landowners for stream buffer projects (such as planting willows along stream banks) and identify local partners interested in participating in projects. ▪ Manage streams to improve fish habitat by allowing fallen trees to remain, minimizing temperature increases, allowing detrital inputs by maintaining tree cover, and removing fish blockages such as that at the Newfield Depot Road Bridge. Focus Areas with particularly important streams for fishing include: Salmon Creek, Owasco Inlet, The Fens, and The Gorges.	Tompkins County Planning Department
3. Finger Lakes Trail Corridor Protection and Enhancement Plan ▪ Identify methods for tracking development, subdivisions, and land transactions along the trail. ▪ Work with municipalities to incorporate trail corridors into subdivision and site plan review processes. ▪ Where possible place identifying signs at trail/road crossings ▪ Put the Finger Lakes Trail on road maps of the county. ▪ Provide ample parking for Finger Lakes Trail users, especially along County roads.	Finger Lakes Land Trust and Trail Planning Partners
4. Unique Natural Areas Update ▪ Provide information to landowners and municipalities about key animal habitat areas through Unique Natural Areas (UNA) update. ▪ Conduct a detailed assessment of fens in the Fens Focus Area focusing specifically on fens located in UNAs, and including an assessment of the long-term viability. ▪ Identify key vernal pool habitat areas as part of UNA update and provide information and education about vernal pools in Tompkins County.	Tompkins County Environmental Management Council
5. Agricultural Resource Focus Area Planning ▪ Coordinate agricultural land protection and management efforts with land conservation efforts identified in the *Conservation Plan*, and identify opportunities to achieve multiple benefits from land protection projects.	Tompkins County Planning Department

Implementation Resources

There are several sources of funding available to implement elements of this plan. Some of the most suitable funding sources are listed below by the general category they fund.

Invasive Species

Aquatic Invasive Species Eradication Grant Program

Type: Invasive Species
Contact: Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
Website: http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/32861.html
Timeframe: Late June
Notes: This program requires a 1:1 match (i.e., the program will reimburse up to 50% of the project costs).

Habitat Restoration

Habitat/Access Funding Grant

Type: Habitat Restoration & Public Access
Contact: Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) – Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources
Website: http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4771.html
Timeframe: Early June
Notes: Funding for fish and wildlife habitat management and improvement of public access for hunting, fishing, trapping and other fish and wildlife-related recreation and study. Grant awards typically range from $1,500 to $15,000. Recipient must own the land or have permission to receive funding.

Land Owner Incentive Program (LIP): Grassland Protection and Management

Type: Habitat Restoration
Contact: Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
Website: http://www.dec.ny.gov/environmentdec/18809.html
Timeframe: Mid December
Notes: Funding for private landowner protection of grassland habitats. Grants provided for technical advice and financial incentives of $55 or $60 per acre per year to conduct the prescribed site management.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

Type: Habitat Restoration
Contact: US Fish & Wildlife Partners Program
Website: http://ecos.fws.gov/partners/viewContent.do?viewPage=home
Timeframe: Late September
Notes: Funding for private land habitat restoration (restoring wetland hydrology, native plantings, reestablishing fish passage). Maximum grant award is $25,000. This program requires a 1:1 match.

Outdoor Recreation

Environmental Protection Fund: Parks Program

Type: Parks
Contact: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Website: http://nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/grants/protection_fund.htm
Timeframe: Late Spring / Early Summer
Notes: Funding for acquisition, development, and improvement of parks, historic properties and Heritage Area resources. This program requires a 1:1 match (i.e., the program will reimburse up to 50% of the project costs).

SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users) Recreation Trails Program

Type: Trails
Contact: New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Website: http://nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/programs/recreation.asp
Timeframe: Mid October
Notes: Funding for urban trail linkages, trail accessibility and utilization of existing corridors for both motorized/non-motorized use. Awards range from $5,000 to $100,000. The typical match requires 20% of the total project cost.

Water Quality

Targeted Watersheds Grant Program

Type: Water Quality
Contact: US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Website: http://www.epa.gov/twg/
Timeframe: Mid - November
Notes: Funding for community-based protection, preservation and restoration of watersheds (i.e., wetlands, riparian corridor restoration, roadway maintenance). Grant awards typically range from $600,000 to $900,000. This program requires award recipient to pay 25% of project cost.

Water Quality Improvement Projects (WQIP)

Type: Water Quality & Habitat
Contact: Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
Website: http://www.dec.ny.gov/environmentdec/19001.html
Timeframe: Late October
Notes: Funding for aquatic habitat restoration and water quality restoration projects. Projects are given highest priority if they involve activities identified in watershed management plan/County Water Quality Strategy proposals or represent cooperation among MS4s. Grant funding requires 50% project cost match.

Wetlands

North America Wetlands Conservation Act – Small Grants Program

Type: Wetlands
Contact: US Fish & Wildlife – Bird Habitat Conservation
Website: http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/index.shtm
Timeframe: Early December
Notes: Prioritize projects that provide long-term protection of wetlands for the benefit of all wetlands-associated migratory birds. Maximum grant award is $75,000. This program requires a 2:1 or 3:1 match to be competitive.

Priority Protection Areas

The Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan envisions a future where "the protected forests and natural areas increase from 13 percent to about 20 percent of the land. Within this landscape, outstanding natural features, including gorges, stream corridors, lakeshores, forested hillsides, wetlands, and wildlife habitats are protected, defining the natural character of the community, maintaining its scenic beauty, and sustaining its biological diversity." The priority protection areas identified below provide a strategic approach for attaining this vision.

Roughly 20,000 acres have been identified as priority areas for protection over the next 20 years. These areas were identified based on a detailed analysis of the key resources in each focus area, public comments received at the ten meetings hosted in 2006, and comments received from agency representatives throughout the process. The priority areas include stream corridors and wetlands that play a particularly critical role in habitat and water quality conservation, *Natural Heritage Sites*, *Important Bird Areas*, in-holdings in the State forests, key lands adjacent to State parks, scenic areas along the lakeshore, and trail corridors.

The priority protection areas, along with trails and perennial stream corridors, are highlighted on the Priority Protection Areas map. The priority areas should be the focus of future protection efforts. A future connection between Robert H. Treman State Park and Connecticut Hill Wildlife Area is also generally identified on the map as a priority area. In addition, trails and stream corridors provide important connections, water quality benefits, and recreational amenities, and should be protected when opportunities arise.

Stream corridors that play a particularly critical role in habitat and water quality conservation are one of the key priority areas for protection.

Protecting the priority areas will require collaboration among multiple conservation partners including New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the Finger Lakes Land Trust, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District, Cornell University, Ithaca College, the City, Towns and Villages, Tompkins County, and willing landowners.

Important Bird Areas (IBAs) - The National Audubon Society, with the support of the American Bird Conservancy designate these locations as having significant importance to endangered/threatened populations of migratory birds.
Natural Heritage Site – An area representing specific natural resource information documented by the New York Natural Heritage Program (joint venture of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC)).
Unique Natural Areas (UNAs) – Tompkins County inventory of significant lands characterized by important natural communities, rare or scarce plants/animals, geologic importance and/or cultural significance. UNA designations are not regulatory and do not provide legal protection for an area.

The approach to protecting priority areas will vary depending on the interests of landowners, available grants and resources, and the protection goals. Securing conservation easements from willing landowners, for example, may be the most appropriate protection method for parcels that are already partially developed (these areas are noted on the map). Other areas, such as in-holdings in State forests or land directly adjacent to State parks might be more appropriate for future public ownership.

Below is a description of each of the key priority protection areas. The numbers in the list below correspond with the numbers on the Priority Protection Areas map. The order in which the Priority Protection Areas are listed does not necessarily denote their priority for protection.

Airport Ponds and Wetlands

1. The Cornell Natural Areas[1] provide a foundation for further protection of water resources and enhancement of educational opportunities in this Focus Area. Protect adjacent UNAs including several large wetland complexes. This land includes several key headwater wetland areas for tributaries leading to Fall Creek.

Cascadilla Creek

2. Conserve a large wetland complex in eastern portion of the Focus Area south of Ellis Hollow Creek Road. This is important for habitat and is identified as a Unique Natural Area and extends south into the Six Mile Creek Focus Area. There is increasing development in this area.
3. Extend the Cornell University Natural Area east along Cascadilla Creek to include a hydro-sensitive area.
4. Establish a trail along the inactive railroad bed to connect East Hill Recreation Way with Monkey Run to the north, with sensitivity to and compatibility with adjacent land uses.

Fall Creek

5. Expand Sapsucker Woods and provide a habitat and potential recreation connection to Fall Creek. Much of this land is already owned by Cornell University, but is not identified as a Cornell Natural Area. A potential trail connecting Sapsucker Woods with Monkey Run has been identified in this area, and should be established with sensitivity to and compatibility with adjacent land uses.
6. Increase protected areas along the creek corridor to protect key areas that are hydrologically sensitive. The primary area identified for stream corridor protection is between Cornell owned land near Rt. 13 and the Finger Lakes Nature Preserve in Etna.
7. Support the preservation of key portions of the Caswell Grassland Important Bird Area and adjacent wetlands in and to the west of the Village of Freeville. The wetlands are identified as Unique Natural Areas and are part of a large wetlands complex that extends north into the Owasco Inlet Focus Area.
8. Preserve key habitat for grassland species around Dryden Lake (Natural Heritage Site). Some of these lands are sensitive to disturbance by visitors, but there are some opportunities for expanding recreational opportunities as well.
9. Utilize aquifer study information to protect land surrounding the Dryden aquifer recharge area along Virgil Creek.
10. Create trails along old railroad beds to connect existing trails. These trails would extend from Monkey Run in the western portion of the Focus Area to the Dryden Lake Trail in the eastern portion of the Focus Area.

Lakeshore

11. Support opportunities for public waterfront access North of Milliken Point. The large mature forest found at the waters edge provides important ecological benefits.

[1] Cornell University Natural Areas in the Airport Ponds and Wetlands are not open to the public.

12. Preserve views of the lake cliffs north of Myers Point (along Sweazey Road south to Piney Lane). This is identified as a Unique Natural Area for its scenic characteristics including those from Taughannock Falls State Park and for important cliff habitat. The cliffs and the railroad limit access to the lake; however this area is identified as a priority waterfront access area and has two small sites for potential waterfront access.
13. Obtain undeveloped areas surrounding State and municipal open space around Myers Point. This land could provide additional waterfront access and public recreational opportunities. It is identified as a priority waterfront access area in the Cayuga Lake Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP). This land could also provide a buffer for the existing parkland. One of the few remaining wetlands in this Focus Area is located along the southern edge of Myers Point and provides important habitat and water quality benefits.
14. Retain the important views provided by the lake cliffs in the Village of Lansing, from the municipal border to just south of Burdick Hill Road. This is an important cliff habitat area (Natural Heritage site), and is identified as a scenic Unique Natural Area. In addition, this is identified as a priority waterfront access area in the Cayuga Lake Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP). Poison Ivy Point would provide an excellent lakefront recreation spot.
15. Maintain the Route 89 scenic corridor from Stewart Park to Glenwood Creek. Route 89 is part of the Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway and this section is designated as the scenic Glenwood Ravines and Lake Slopes Unique Natural Area. The hills along this road are visible from Cayuga Lake and are an important part of the scenic character of this area. The future Black Diamond Trail runs parallel to Route 89 – protecting land along this trail will provide for a better outdoor recreation experience.
16. Protect Waterfront near Cayuga Nature Center. This is currently a Girl Scout camp and an effort should be made to work cooperatively with existing owners to develop a long-term plan for this property. It is identified as a priority waterfront access area in the Cayuga Lake Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP).
17. Bolster land protection of the Cayuga Nature Center land. This area is identified as a Unique Natural Area, in part because of its scenic quality.
18. Establish linkages of the Black Diamond Trail. This proposed trail will connect Taughannock Falls State Park to Treman State Marine Park, Buttermilk Falls State Parks, and Robert H. Treman State Park.

Owasco Inlet

19. Provide a wildlife sanctuary in the southern wetlands complex that extends south into the Fall Creek Focus Area in and around Freeville. This is the headwaters for Owasco Inlet and includes two Natural Heritage sites.
20. Institute regional stream buffer protection. The 2006 New York State Open Space Plan calls for reducing the delivery of sediment and nutrients to Owasco Lake by increasing the amount of permanently preserved riparian buffer areas along the Lake and it tributaries. Hydrologically sensitive areas adjacent to the Inlet should be buffered. This includes land from East South Street south to Peruville Road.
21. Establish a trail corridor that connects Village of Freeville to Village of Groton.

Salmon Creek

22. Maintain Salmon Creek as an Important Bird Area and creek corridor. The Finger Lakes Land Trust Nature Preserve and the Bensvue Farm purchase of development rights project provide a strong foundation for conservation along the Salmon Creek Corridor. The northern portion of the Focus Area is identified as an Important Bird Area and provides important riparian forest habitat. South of the Nature Preserve there are extensive hydrologically sensitive areas along the creek.

Sixmile Creek

23. Expand City-owned Sixmile Creek Preserve. Several in-holdings remain in the Sixmile Creek Preserve. Protecting these will help buffer this important resource from future development. Much of this area is identified as a Unique Natural Area. Between the Preserve and Brooktondale there are extensive hydrologically sensitive areas along the Creek. These areas are important for water quality protection. Existing parcels to the east of the Sixmile Creek Preserve provide a foundation for future protection and should be connected to the Preserve to create a large area of contiguous open space.

24. Preserve the South Hill Swamp. According to local botanists, this is one of the most important Unique Natural Areas in the County.

25. Increase the critical mass of habitat that is provided by the land south of Middaugh Woods east of Brooktondale. This is a Unique Natural Area and Natural Heritage site with old growth forest that is becoming increasingly isolated from other habitat areas.

26. Preserve the Thomas Road wetlands. This large wetlands complex extends north into the Cascadilla Creek Focus Area.

27. Avoid development around Willseyville Beaver Ponds and wetlands along White Church Road in the southern portion of the Focus Area. This is a large wetland complex that extends south into the Forest Lands Focus Area. These wetlands and the Thomas Road wetlands complex are critical for maintaining downstream water quality and mitigating flooding. This is also an important habitat area. (See #39 in The Forest Lands.)

28. Investigate opportunities for future trail corridors. Along the southern portion of the Focus Area, the Coddington Road trail corridor extends along an old railroad bed. This trail would provide an extension of the existing South Hill Recreation Way and connect with the Ridgeway Swamp Trail and Finger Lakes Trail in the Forest Lands Focus Area to the south. This land is currently owned by NYSEG. The opportunity exists for an additional trail along the creek through Brooktondale.

Taughannock Creek

29. Expand Taughannock Falls State Park and protect the creek corridor. Between Jacksonville Road and Pennsylvania Avenue there are opportunities to expand the protected buffer along the creek and potentially add to the State Park land. The creek corridor in this area is also identified as a Natural Heritage site.

30. Continue the protection of Hart Woods. Existing conservation easements provide a foundation for conservation of this important wetland and old-growth habitat area. These wetlands also play an important role in water quality protection for Taughannock Creek.

The Fens

31. Consolidate protection efforts of the southern fens and wetlands. The southern portion of the focus area contains a large number of fens, many of which have been identified as Natural Heritage sites and Unique Natural Areas. Existing protection in this area is fragmented. Protect key areas of the Beaver Creek and Fall Creek Corridor to further protect these unique areas and create a large tract of contiguous open space.

32. Obtain and conserve the remaining large parcels of land around the Finger Lakes Land Trust Thurber Preserve to create a critical mass of habitat and preserve the remaining unprotected portions of the McLean Woods Unique Natural Area.

33. Identify and preserve key wetlands within the creek corridor between Stevens Road and Old Stage Road.

34. Preserve the Webster Brook wetland. Located in the northern portion of the Focus Area, this area is identified as a Unique Natural Area.

The Forest Lands

35. Protect the in-holdings in State Forest and Mount Pleasant areas critical for habitat, hunting, recreation, and general land management goals. In some locations, such as near the intersection of Irish Settlement Road and Hollister Road where a Natural Heritage site is found, the area of protection should be extended to include key resources.

36. Connect Mount Pleasant to Yellow Barn. Creating a connection between these two large open space areas will help maintain habitat connectivity. A key connection is located just east of the intersection of Mineah Road and Ringwood Road.

37. Connect Yellow Barn to Hammond Hill. A key connection is located along Irish Settlement Road.

38. Protect the West Branch of Owego Creek and potential Finger Lakes Trail route, with an emphasis on securing conservation easements from willing landowners. North of Potato Hill State Forest along the West Branch Owego Creek would provide an excellent addition to this small State Forest and could be used as a route for the Finger Lakes Trail. Protecting this land would also help to create a connection to Hammond Hill through the Town of Richford in Tioga County.

39. Secure the land along the Finger Lakes Trail corridor near Old Seventy Six Road to create a connection between Potato Hill and Shindagin Hollow. This connection is important for habitat viability and for the future of the Finger Lakes Trail.

40. Preserve Willseyville Creek Valley and Caroline Pinnacles. This valley contains a large wetland complex that extends north to the Sixmile Creek Focus Area. This is an important habitat area and is identified as a Natural Heritage site.

41. Connect Danby State Forest to Shindagin Hollow. This connection is important for habitat viability and could provide a route for the Finger Lakes Trail in the future.

42. Protect the Danby Fir Tree Swamp along Danby Road. This is an important headwaters wetland. Land currently protected through the Wetland Reserve Program provides a foundation for future conservation in this area and could be connected to the Danby State Forest.

43. Link the West Danby Morainal Valley south of the Lindsay Parson's Biodiversity Preserve to the Danby State Forest. Extensive wetlands and the creek corridor provide diverse habitat. In-holdings in the Biodiversity Preserve also contain important smaller wetlands and should be protected.

The Gorges

44. Safeguard the Coy Glen. This is identified as a Critical Environmental Area, a Natural Heritage Site, and a Unique Natural Area. Existing protected land in this area provides a foundation for future conservation.

45. Buffer land adjacent to Robert H. Treman and Buttermilk Falls State Parks from future development to expand recreational opportunities. Natural Heritage Sites and Unique Natural Areas that are adjacent to the park should be priority areas for protection.

46. Maintain the health of the Enfield Creek Swamp in the western portion of the Focus Area. This large wetland provides important habitat and water quality protection. Protecting this wetland along with the Enfield Creek corridor to the south would help to protect water quality in the Robert H. Treman State Park swimming area. This conservation area could provide an extension of Robert H. Treman State Park and a future route for the Finger Lakes Trail.

47. Connect the Finger Lakes Land Trust Stevenson Preserve with the Cayuga Trail Club Land. This is an important connecting link for the Finger Lakes Trail.

48. Coordinate landowner and agency preservation efforts in the Fisher Old Growth Forest. Existing privately protected open space in this area provides a foundation for future protection efforts. Maintaining a large block of open space in this area is critical for the long-term viability of this important ecological resource.

49. Sustain the Buttermilk Creek corridor south of Buttermilk Falls State Park. Protecting hydrologically sensitive areas along this section of Buttermilk Creek is particularly critical for maintaining water quality in the swimming hole at Buttermilk Falls State Park.

Van Buskirk Gulf

50. Acquire and protect land around Van Buskirk Gulf to preserve the uniqueness of the creek corridor.

51. Establish a connecting link to the Forest Lands Focus Areas. Maintaining connectivity with adjacent open space is critical for this small Focus Area. The grasslands along Tupper Road is identified as a Natural Heritage Site and provides an important connection with Danby State Forest.

Wetlands Upland Forest

52. Continue to support conservation easements and Cornell Natural Areas that provide a foundation for conservation in the southern portion of this Focus Area. The Townley Swamp Unique Natural Area is a large pristine wetland and should be protected. This wetland and other more scattered wetlands throughout the Focus Area are important for water quality protection in this headwaters area.

Wildlife Area

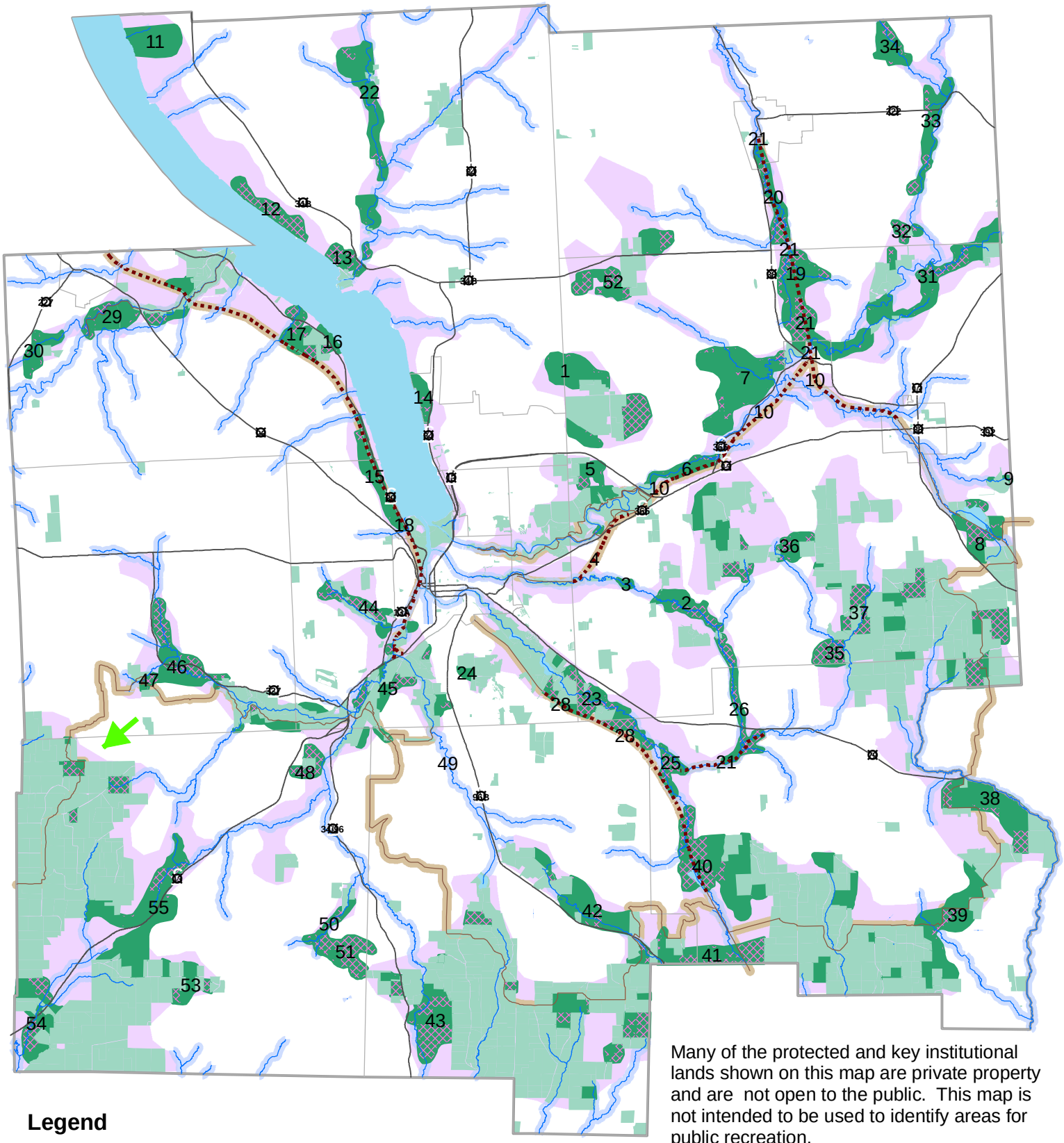
53. Preserve land adjacent to the Tompkins County Forests to maintain connectivity with the Newfield State Forest.

54. Protect key in-holdings in Connecticut Hill and the Newfield State Forest and create a connection between Arnot Forest/Newfield State Forest and Connecticut Hill. Development and land fragmentation in Pony Hollow is increasing. An opportunity for creating a habitat link between

these areas is the southern portion of the Focus Area around the Pony Hollow Creek Marshes and Swamp Unique Natural Area.

55. Encourage stewardship and adequate buffering of the Key Hill Swamp Preserve and Seven Spring Swamp Unique Natural Area along Sebring Road. Look for opportunities to link this area with the Newfield State Forest and Connecticut Hill.

Priority Protection Areas



Many of the protected and key institutional lands shown on this map are private property and are not open to the public. This map is not intended to be used to identify areas for public recreation.

Legend

- Priority Protection Areas
- Partially Developed Parcels within Priority Areas
- Future Trails
- Existing Trails
- Trail Corridors
- Open Space Connection to be Determined
- Perennial Streams
- Perennial Stream Corridors
- Lakes
- Natural Features Focus Areas
- Protected and Key Institutional Land*
- # The numbers labeled on the map correspond with the list of priority areas in the description.