

SUMMER 2026

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# PRESERVATION POST





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**The mission of the Orange County Land Trust is to preserve water resources, critical habitat, rural and urban farmland, scenic viewsheds, and ecosystems in and around Orange County for the benefit of all who depend on them.**

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Dear Friends,

It is a privilege to recognize Kathy Moser, Commissioner of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, as our 2026 Benefit Reception Honoree.

Kathy recognizes that our parks and public lands are not only ecological, historical, and recreational assets, but vital spaces for enjoyment, wellness, and connection, and for over three decades she has advanced projects and policies that protect and expand access to these lands.

Kathy is no stranger to the Orange County Land Trust. In fact, she worked closely with our founder Lou Mills on the acquisition of the Lower Bashakill and Moonbeams Preserves over 25 years ago during her time with The Nature Conservancy.

We are forever committed to securing a place for future generations where agriculture flourishes and communities have access to clean drinking water, fresh air, and recreational opportunities. We also recognize the growing pressures across the country involving fast-tracked, energy and water-depleting data centers and other ill-thought developments enabled by those who have little regard for open space, agriculture, wildlife, and public lands, other than as a means to profit.

Fortunately in New York, we have leaders like Kathy Moser who value open space, agriculture, natural resources, and outdoor recreation for all. We look forward to working toward that end in collaboration with these dedicated leaders, as well as with our partners in conservation.

Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

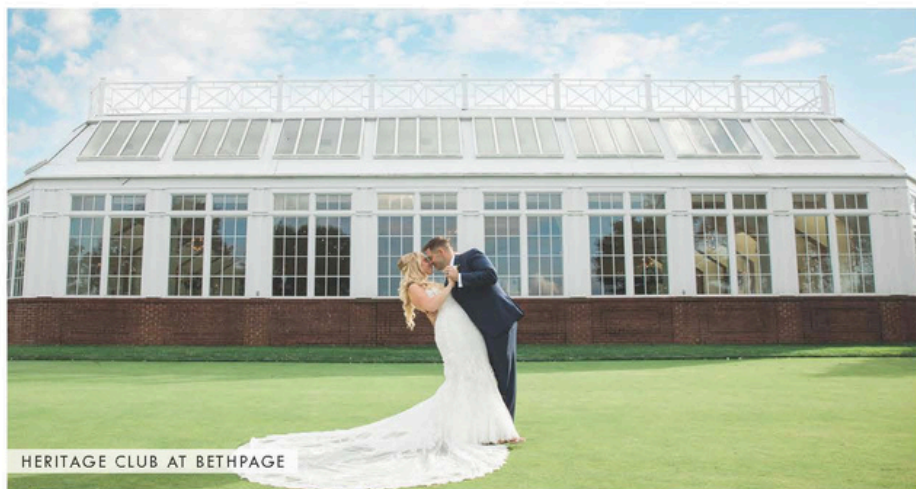


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## *Congratulations to Kathy Moser*

Acting Commissioner of NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation



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# 2026 LAND PROTECTION NEWS

## **Neversink River Corridor, Town of Deerpark**

OCLT finalized two conservation easements with private landowners that resulted in the protection of 421 acres of land within the Lower Neversink River Watershed in the Towns of Deerpark and Forestburgh.

The properties contain a contiguous expanse of forest, wetlands, and streams, as well as 1,150 feet of frontage on the Neversink River. A portion of the conserved land also abuts the Neversink River Unique Area. The projects received funding from grant programs through the Open Space Institute and The Nature Conservancy.



## **Sisters of the Presentation Property, Town of New Windsor**

A recently completed conservation easement now protects 13 acres of forest within the Brown's Pond Watershed in New Windsor. This protected buffer will help maintain water quality of Brown's Pond, also known as Silver Stream Reservoir, a backup drinking water source for the City of Newburgh. The project was made possible through a partnership with Orange County Water Authority, who secured vital grant funding from the NYSDEC Water Quality Improvement Program.

### **Latini Forest, Town of Deerpark**

The City of Port Jervis acquired the 462-acre Latini Forest that borders the Port Jervis Watershed Park and Recreation Area, with a permanent conservation easement and public access easement conveyed to OCLT.

The forest is located within the City of Port Jervis's drinking source watershed and contains streams that flow into reservoir 1, all of which have been added to the Port Jervis Watershed Park to expand trails and public access, courtesy of the Outdoor Club of Port Jervis. Situated along a ridgeline to the northeast of Port Jervis, the forest offers multiple scenic vantage points overlooking the City, Town of Deerpark, and Shawangunk Ridge. The project received funding from the NYSDEC Water Quality Improvement Program, Open Space Institute, and The Nature Conservancy.



### **South Mountain - Hi Tor Corridor, Town of Clarkstown**

OCLT has acquired two properties comprising 16 acres of woodlands and streams in northern Rockland County, including the West Branch of the Hackensack River. OCLT will continue to manage and steward the properties in perpetuity. The properties were previously owned by The West Branch Conservation Association, an all-volunteer conservation organization that formally dissolved in 2026.

### **Reforestation at Lower Bashakill Preserve, Town of Deerpark**

5,000 native trees were planted along 10 acres of floodplain at Lower Bashakill Preserve in Cuddebackville. The trees, which were planted in specialized tree tubes to help protect them from damage, will help establish forest cover, create wildlife habitat, and improve water quality in the Basher Kill, a tributary of the Neversink River. The reforestation was the result of a partnership between OCLT and The Nature Conservancy.

As one of The Nature Conservancy's planned 15 reforestation projects throughout the state this year, the Lower Bashakill Preserve project represents the third largest in terms of acreage and trees, and is the only project taking place outside of the State's North Country region.

The species of trees planted include: Red maple, Sugar maple, Gray birch, Sweetgum, Black tupelo, Red pine, Eastern white pine, Northern red oak, American sycamore, Swamp white oak, and Black willow.



### **Farmland Protection**

OCLT is partnering with four farms in the region to submit applications for farmland protection funding. Three applications will be submitted for funding through the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets's (NYSDAM) Farmland Protection Implementation Grant program and one application for USDA-NRCS's Agricultural Land Easement Program funding has been submitted. In addition, OCLT is seeking funding from the NYSDAM's "Farmland Protection Staff Capacity Grants Pilot Program" to expand its farmland protection efforts.



### **Quassaick Creek Greenway**

OCLT continues to assist Scenic Hudson and local stakeholders on the planning and implementation of the Quassaick Creek Greenway Plan, which envisions the development of an accessible trail system that improves neighborhood access to nature in the city where residents can learn about the ecology of the Quassaick Creek and its watershed, explore local history, and recreate as a community.

Visit [www.quassaickcreekgreenway.com](http://www.quassaickcreekgreenway.com) to learn more.

*Credit- Kyle Sanduski*

The Crist Family is proud  
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space and protecting local  
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# ABOUT THE HONOREE

## KATHY MOSER

ACTING COMMISSIONER

OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Kathy Moser was nominated by Governor Hochul to serve as Acting Commissioner of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) in September 2025. A lifelong New Yorker, she previously served as Chief Conservation and Policy Officer at the Open Space Institute (OSI), an East Coast land trust based in New York. At OSI, Acting Commissioner Moser directed the Parks, Stewardship and Government Relations programs. Before taking on that role in June 2020, she was OSI's Senior Vice President of Parks and Policy.



Prior to OSI, she served as Deputy Commissioner for Natural Resources at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) from December 2011 to August 2019, where she oversaw the agency's portfolio in Lands and Forests, Fish and Wildlife, and Marine Resources.

Acting Commissioner Moser has also worked as Managing Director for Strategic Initiatives at the World Wildlife Fund and held senior positions at The Nature Conservancy in New York State (Acting State Director) and in its International Program (Regional Director for Central America) from 1992 to 2009. Her career began in 1985 with the Peace Corps, where she managed Cerro Uyuca, a newly established protected area in Honduras. She has also been a board member for the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy and the New York League of Conservation Voters (Capital District).

Acting Commissioner Moser holds an undergraduate degree in botany and a master's degree in forest productivity, both from Duke University. She is fluent in Spanish.

Acting Commissioner Moser is married with three daughters, lives in Albany, and spends early mornings rowing and bird watching on the Hudson River.

*Credit: Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation*



*Greenwood Property, Sterling Forest State Park - Photo by Andy Hart*

**CONGRATULATIONS TO  
ORANGE COUNTY LAND TRUST  
AND COMMISSIONER KATHY MOSER**

*The Palisades Interstate Park Commission proudly supports the Orange County Land Trust and its mission to preserve water resources, critical habitat, farmland, scenic viewsheds, and ecosystems in and around Orange County.*

*PIPC joins you in honoring Commissioner Kathy Moser for her outstanding leadership, lifelong commitment to conservation, and dedication to protecting open spaces for future generations.*

*PIPC commends OCLT on a fantastic year and looks forward to working together in the years ahead.*

# PARKS AND HISTORIC SITES CELEBRATES A REVOLUTIONARY YEAR

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation is enjoying an exciting and meaningful year – 2026. New York State Parks is leading the nation in commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. New York State Parks welcomes more than 86 million visitors annually, and those visitors support local economies in communities across the state. For every dollar invested into parks, ten dollars are reinvested back into communities. Parks and Historic Sites drive tourism, support small businesses, create jobs, and most importantly, improve quality of life.

Within a short drive, visitors can experience historic sites, golf courses, trails, campgrounds, marinas, ocean beaches on Long Island; the Hudson River Valley; Finger Lakes gorges; Thousand Islands river views; Letchworth – called the Grand Canyon of the East; Niagara Falls, the oldest state park in the nation and so much more. The diversity of landscapes is what makes New York’s park system so special. This year the “Revisit the Revolution” travelling exhibition will travel across the state showcasing artifacts, interactive exhibits, and programming that commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



Credit: Kerry Sciafani Photography

## GET OUTSIDE

Being outside contributes to wellness of body, mind and spirit. New York’s expansive and diverse park system is led by its people – the staff, volunteers, partners, patrons, local communities, and supporters – who care deeply about these places. OPRHP team passion and commitment is unmatched, and that dedication is visible every day across the entire park system.

Whether someone wants hiking, history, wellness, recreation, arts and culture or simply a quiet place to recharge, they can find it in New York State Parks. We encourage visitors to take advantage of several great planning tools:

- **Parks Map** – Highlights affordable outdoor recreation and cultural experiences at State Parks and Historic Sites statewide
- **Camping Guide** – Showcases campgrounds, amenities, and recreational opportunities across the park system
- **New York State Parks Explorer App** – Helps visitors discover activities, events, alerts, and themed experiences at parks and historic sites statewide

These resources help families discover new destinations, activities, events and experiences across the state.

### **CELEBRATE AMERICA 250 AND BEYOND**

The 250th anniversary of the American Revolution presents an extraordinary opportunity for reflection, education, and engagement. New York was at the center of the Revolution – strategically, militarily, politically, and socially. The goal is not only to commemorate the Revolution, but also to tell a broader and more inclusive story of New York’s history through an “Our Whole History” lens.



Credit: OPRHP

That includes recognizing the unfinished revolutions that shaped our state and nation:

- Women’s rights
- Civil rights
- Labor movements
- LGBTQ+ rights
- And many other stories that deserve greater visibility

The 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of our nation is also a reminder that New York is home to more Revolutionary War sites than any other state.

OPRHP manages 45 state historic sites and parks connected to the American Revolution — including the nation’s first state historic site — Washington’s Headquarters in Newburgh. These sites are hosting festivals, reenactments, concerts, special exhibitions, family programming and offering dynamic programs, showcasing preservation projects and sharing digital resources. New experiences are being added daily and can be found at [parks.ny.gov](https://parks.ny.gov).



Acting Commissioner Moser at Lake Taghkanic State Park for “I Love My Park Day.” Credit: OPRHP

There are interactive kiosks sprinkled throughout the state highlighting New York’s rich history in the American Revolution. Visitors can explore 28 different themes involving high-profile players like George Washington and French allies while also examining the perspectives of women, Indigenous communities, enslaved and free Black people and Loyalists. In partnership with the State Education Department, OPRHP is also marking the Semiquincentennial by looking back at the Revolution with highlights of stories seldom told.

This year also marks the beginning of our Enslavement to Freedom focus. In 2027, we will commemorate both the arrival of the first enslaved people in 1627 to what would become the United States, and New York State’s gradual emancipation two hundred years later. These efforts underscore the essential role our parks and historic sites play in telling the full and honest story of New York and our nation. The 250th is not a single event. It is a multi-year statewide commemoration continuing through 2032.

### **GENERATIONAL SERVICE**

Parks serve all generations – it’s in our nature. In the age of technology, it is more critical than ever to get children outside and off their devices.

Spending time outside has proven benefits for physical health, mental wellness, stress reduction and social connection.

Environmental educators provide incredible programming across the state, from guided hikes and lantern walks to wildlife learning and stargazing events. Programs like Connect Kids continue to grow every year by helping schools bring students to parks and historic sites at no cost. OPRHP also accepts the National Park Service's Every Kid Outdoors initiative, helping fourth graders and their families with free access to parks – providing a connection with history and nature. And for families looking to visit often, the Empire Pass remains one of the best values in the state – paying for itself in roughly eight visits and giving access to all State Parks for an entire year.

Accessibility and affordability remain priorities for OPRHP. The Golden Park Program provides free weekday access for New Yorkers age 62 and older. The Lifetime Liberty Pass honors veterans and Gold Star Families with free access to State-operated parks, free greens fees at OPRHP golf courses, swimming facilities, and discounts on camping and cabins.

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

OPRHP is deeply grateful for the patrons and partnerships. At the end of the day, parks and historic sites belong to the people of New York – and it's the people who truly make this system special.

Every day, in every region, bureau and division, OPRHP staff care and keep places that matter deeply to New Yorkers. That comes with professionalism, a commitment to public service, and pride to continue to ensure our parks and historic sites remain welcoming, safe and inspiring for generations to come.

We'll see you out there!



Acting Commissioner Kathy Moser at Olana State Historic Site. Credit: OPRHP



LiRo-Hill Congratulates *Kathy Moser*  
Acting Commissioner  
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Rendering by Stantec

OPRHP, REHABILITATION OF LAKE SEBAGO WITHIN HARRIMAN STATE PARK



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*BKSK Architects is proud to support the Orange County Land Trust and its continued commitment to land conservation. We are pleased to congratulate honoree Kathy Moser in recognition of her dedication and impact.*

# IN REMEMBRANCE

This past year we mourned the loss of two beloved members of the Orange County Land Trust family with the passings of Mary Yrizarry and Francis Wickham.

Mary Yrizarry was a past President and member of the Orange County Land Trust's Board of Directors. A lifelong conservationist, Mary played a pivotal role in the protection and establishment of Sterling Forest State Park, and she continued to advocate for the stewardship of the greater Sterling Forest region for the benefit of people and wildlife alike.

Francis Wickham, a longtime member of OCLT's Board of Directors, played an essential role in the development of visitor improvements at OCLT preserves. Francis designed and constructed the interpretive kiosks that greet visitors to this day. A testament to his commitment to conservation, Francis was particularly mindful of his environmental footprint, prompting him to utilize locally-sourced, naturally rot-resistant wood in everything he constructed.

As we further our mission long into the future, our memories of Mary and Francis, as well as their legacies, will continue to live on.



The late John and Mary Yrizarry



The late Francis Wickham



Sterling Lake, Sterling Forest State Park  
Credit: Evelyn Preuss/Getty Images



## OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

### **Qualified Charitable Distributions from your IRA**

If you're 70½ or older, you can transfer up to \$108,000 directly from your IRA to OCLT without paying income tax. If you're 73 or older, your gift can also count toward your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)—helping you meet IRS rules while making an immediate impact on OCLT's mission.

Contact your IRA administrator to request a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA to OCLT.

### **Donating Appreciated Stock**

When you donate appreciated stock, you can bypass capital gains taxes and receive a full fair market value deduction for your gift, which is calculated as a percentage of your adjusted gross income (AGI). It's an easy and efficient way to leverage your portfolio growth to help advance the protection of our most important lands for the benefit of generations to come.

### **Donor Advised Funds**

Charitable giving through a donor-advised fund (DAF) is easy: You can make an outright gift to OCLT and/or designate OCLT to receive all or a portion of the fund value upon the termination of the fund.

### **Corporate Giving**

Many companies will match your donation dollar for dollar, enabling you to double your impact. Contact your employer's HR department for a matching gift form, fill out the employee portion, and submit to OCLT.

### **The Conservationist Club- Monthly Giving**

Support conservation all year long by joining OCLT's Conservationist Club with your monthly gift. With monthly gifts by credit card or electronic bank transfer, you can set up your recurring gifts in a way that's simple and convenient. At year-end, OCLT will mail you a summary of your gifts.

### **Planned Giving and Bequests**

Leave a gift to OCLT in your will, trust, or estate plan as a member of OCLT's Heritage Circle.

Please consult your financial or tax professional for advice about charitable giving options that work best for you.

For more information, please contact us at 845-534-3690 extension 1. Thank you for considering a gift to OCLT!



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Thank you to Acting  
Commissioner Kathy Moser and  
the NYS Office of Parks,  
Recreation, and Historic  
Preservation for your  
dedication to the parks,  
historical sites, and natural  
heritage we all share.

*David and Caroline Hamling*

**We applaud Commissioner  
Kathy Moser and thank Orange  
County Land Trust for the  
incredible work they do!**

**Will Brown and Barbara Felton**

Congratulations to Kathy  
Moser and thank you for  
standing up for our parks,  
public lands, and open  
spaces when it matters  
most.

- Marlena Lange

With our public lands and  
forests under threat, we are  
so grateful for New York's  
commitment to the  
protection and stewardship  
of our parks and trails.

Thank you Acting  
Commissioner Kathy Moser  
for your leadership.

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## Congratulations Kathy Moser

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Congratulations to Commissioner Kathy Moser on her well-deserved selection as the OCLT Honoree for 2026!

-Andrea Nilon

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CONGRATULATIONS

## Kathy Moser

Your lifelong commitment to conservation is an inspiration.

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## CONGRATULATIONS OCLT

Your vision and guidance has made my dream of protecting Sugar Loaf Mountain a reality. The public will have access forever to enjoy the surrounding land and its panoramic vistas.

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Thanks for all that you do,  
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Congratulating our dear friend

**Kathy Moser**

and thanking our partners at  
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for all they do in service of parks,  
trails, and access to nature.



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protects land for people,  
for wildlife, *forever*.

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**congratulates**  
**KATHY MOSER**

Acting Commissioner of NYS Office of Parks,  
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and our planet.





The Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Orange County Land Trust share a deep commitment to caring for creation and our neighbors. We congratulate Kathy Moser on being honored for her commitment to the protection of natural resources and our parks.

Congratulations and thank you to the staff and board of the OCLT for their devotion and hard work in helping preserve our precious environment.

*Paula Spector and the Spector Family.*

Thank You Orange County Land Trust for All Your Land Conservation Efforts Over the Years!

Ronald and Sandra Kossar

McLaren | an affiliate of KCI sends our congratulations to Kathy Moser, Acting Commissioner for NYS Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in your new role. Your leadership in preservation of NYS's national resources is unparalleled as is your commitment to land conservation through land trusts across NYS.

We are grateful for Commissioner Kathy Moser's dedication to the protection and stewardship of New York State's world class park system.

-Bud and Mary Breheny

Congratulations to Kathy Moser, Acting Commissioner!

ANDRON CONSTRUCTION is proud of our past work with NYS OPRHP, partnering in the rehabilitation of parks and historic sites.

We celebrate the OCLT and their mission to preserve and protect our natural land and water resources.

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To Kathy Moser, a brilliant, honorable, articulate and seasoned advocate for historic preservation, parks, trails and open space. We are so lucky to have her in such a crucial office, serving all New Yorkers.

Peter Bienstock

Kathy, congratulations on your award, and we are so fortunate to have you appointed NYS Parks Commissioner. No one is more deserving of both!

Bill and Francie Schuster

**Congratulations  
to the Honoree and OCLT!**

Mrs. Angelo J. Ingrassia  
and Maria Ingrassia

**Here's to open spaces!**

-Wayne and Sam Decker

Honoring founding members,  
Bob Augello, Ann Botshon, Mary  
Yrizarry, and Lou Mills.

- Marty Borko

PKF O'Connor Davies  
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Orange County Land Trust.

Congratulations to this year's  
Honoree!

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FOR THOSE WHO LISTEN**

*-William Shakespeare*

Jenna and Andrew Field

In memory of our dear friend, Jerry  
Novesky, a great guy and  
quintessential Renaissance man.  
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Keith Stewart and Flavia Bacarella

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Theodore Roosevelt



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Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail  
joins Orange County Land Trust in  
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We look forward to continuing  
our work with our partners at New  
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The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail is a future linear park, spanning 7.5 walkable, bikeable miles between New York's Village of Cold Spring and City of Beacon that will serve as a solution for managing tourism in the region and will make the beauty that surrounds us more accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

**Learn more about the Fjord Trail at [hhft.org](http://hhft.org)**

 Hudson Highlands  
Fjord Trail