



Protecting Nature's Gems-*One Acre at a Time*



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The Campaign for Whiskey Island & Northern Great Bear - a Community Success

Friends of Great Bear and Central New York Land Trust announce the success of the Campaign for Whiskey Island and Northern Great Bear, thanks to the local community who worked to preserve this land for recreation and conservation. On September 29, 2017, 130 acres of Great Bear Springs Recreation Area in Volney, New York, was transferred from private ownership to the nonprofit CNY Land Trust. CNY Land Trust will in turn transfer the land to the Town of Volney, to keep as part of Great Bear. This land purchase is possible because of generous and enthusiastic local support throughout the year-long fundraising campaign.

Over 200 individuals gave to the Great Bear campaign, joined by businesses and organizations. Fulton Savings Bank led the way with a \$20,000 gift. Other key donations came from Sunoco Ethanol, Community Bank NA, Pathfinder Bank, Novelis, Page Trucking, Oswego County Federal Credit Union, and the John Ben Snow Foundation. In March, the Richard S. Shineman Foundation, a catalyst for change in Oswego County, awarded CNY Land Trust a \$50,000 campaign challenge grant. The central New York community embraced this special giving opportunity.

“We asked for your help and your response was overwhelming! You rose to the challenge and \$50,000 was raised before the July 31st deadline,” said Margaret Bocsor, Friends of Great Bear, “Your individual contributions were added to generous donations from banks, corporations, local businesses and community organizations to send the campaign over the top.”

Great Bear Springs Recreation Area comprises approximately 444 acres along the east bank of the Oswego River, with access from County Route 57, between the Village of Phoenix and the City of Fulton. Friends of Great Bear and the Central New York Land Trust, two local organizations with a deep commitment to the land, partnered to raise \$165,000 to acquire Whiskey Island and Northern Great Bear, put up for sale in 2015.

“Protecting Northern Great Bear and Whiskey Island will keep Great Bear Springs Recreation Area intact for permanent public enjoyment,” said Richard Drosse, Friends of Great Bear Coordinator, “We have volunteers from across Oswego County who help maintain trails for the Recreation Area. Now we can say not only does the community care for Great Bear, we have protected it, too.” Great Bear Springs Recreation Area features a mix of forests, fields and wetlands with almost eight miles of marked trails, accessible to people of all ages and physical

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abilities year round, free of charge. Hikers, bicyclists, equestrians and more find an opportunity for healthful outdoor activity.

“The community came together in less than a year to achieve this remarkable accomplishment for outdoor recreation and land conservation,” said Meredith Perreault, Executive Director, CNY Land Trust, “Now we invite everyone to celebrate!” The Friends of Great Bear and CNY Land Trust are sponsoring a celebration for all ages at Duskee’s Sports Bar and Grill, 8 Bridge Street, Phoenix, New York on October 25, 2017 from 6pm to 9pm. Please RSVP by October 16t to GBSRA17@gmail.com. For more information about Great Bear and the celebration, please go to the websites, FriendsOfGreatBear.org and CNYLandTrust.org.

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