



For Immediate Release

January 5, 2023

CONTACT:

Kyle Semmel
Communications Manager
(716) 687-1225 ext. 112
ksemmel@wnylc.org

The Land Conservancy Officially Purchases Cattaraugus County Forest, the Janet Gallogly Allegany Wildlands

The Western New York Land Conservancy is pleased to announce that it has officially purchased a spectacular 185-acre forest in Cattaraugus County. Named the Janet Gallogly Allegany Wildlands, it is located near Allegany State Park, and it is home to a rich diversity of plants and animals. Although it is not yet open to visitors, the Land Conservancy will soon build a walking trail system for the public to enjoy, keeping the forest open as a publicly accessible nature preserve.

Last year, the Land Conservancy and the Friends of the Allegany Wildlands developed an ambitious plan to save the forest, raising funds to purchase and steward the land. The Hotchkiss family originally purchased the land from the Holland Land Company in the early 1800s; their descendants married into the Moore family and, later, the Sluga family. Though they had several strong offers, the Slugas voted unanimously to sell the property to the Land Conservancy. “By selling to the Land Conservancy we knew we’d get to share this special place with others,” Steve Sluga said, “but also that we’d have some control over what happened to it. That was important to us. We didn’t want to see the forest exploited. This public nature preserve is the best-case scenario for us, and we couldn’t be happier.”

Nancy Smith, the Executive Director of the Land Conservancy, added: “The Janet Gallogly Allegany Wildlands is an astonishing forest that’s already connected to thousands of acres of protected state land, making it a huge step toward the long-term goal of establishing the Western New York Wildway, our ambitious proposal to protect, connect, and restore our region’s largest forests.”

The WNY Wildway will link the vast forests of northern Pennsylvania to Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, and ultimately across the state to the Finger Lakes, the Adirondacks, and beyond. It will be part of the Eastern Wildway, which stretches from the Gulf of Mexico all the way to Canada. The Wildway will allow wildlife to roam across the landscape as they once did, it will allow plants and animals that have disappeared from our region to return home, and it will allow them to move around to find suitable habitat as climate changes.

That connectivity to the Wildway spurred the Gallogly Family Foundation to donate to the campaign. The foundation's Executive Director, Kasey DeLuke, also a Land Conservancy board member, said at that time: "We are extraordinarily pleased to assist the Land Conservancy in their efforts to save the Allegheny Wildlands. Our goal, like theirs, is to keep the momentum for landscape-scale conservation of the type envisioned by the Western New York Wildway going strong for years to come. We believe the Wildway is a gamechanger for our region." The preserve is named after the foundation's co-founder, Janet Gallogly.

The Western New York Land Conservancy is a regional, non-profit land trust that has protected more than 7,000 acres of land with significant conservation value in Western New York for the benefit of future generations. We envision a future in which forests, farms, meadows, and waterways are connected, cherished, and protected in Western New York. Our clean air, clean water, and fertile soils will equitably support the health and wellbeing of future generations of every living thing. The Land Conservancy is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. For more information on upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, or the mission of the Western New York Land Conservancy, please call (716) 687-1225 or visit wnylc.org.

###