

Land Trusts and You

by Elaine Koral

Do you own real property and are you concerned about preserving it for the future? Perhaps you have a farm and would like it to remain a farm forever. Maybe you have some undeveloped land with a particular scenic or environmentally important feature which you would like to shelter from future development. You might be thinking about a particular section of your land or the entire property. You need to know whether you can do this and still retain ownership. You have heard about saving taxes by doing this but do not really understand how it works.

The Mendon Foundation will be presenting a series of articles on the subject of land preservation starting with an article on how to begin the process. Future articles will discuss specific options you can pick from and their tax consequences.

If the idea of land preservation appeals to you and you want to learn more about what you can do with your own property, the first thing to do is to ask yourself a series of questions that will help identify your goals. It will also give you a reference point for conversations with your attorney, accountant, and the land trust should you wish to explore the idea further.

THE FIRST STEP:

First consider what it is about your property that is important to you. Does it have any special natural or historic features? Is it a habitat for wildlife? Perhaps there is a "special" place on the property that has meant a lot to you and you would like to preserve it for future generations to enjoy. Maybe you have been farming land that has been farmed for generations and you want to insure that the land always remains agricultural. When you view your property in these terms, you can choose whether a portion of the property or the entire parcel needs protection.

Consider what kind of protection is needed. For example, if your land is undeveloped and you want it to remain as a habitat for wildlife, then a very restrictive protection technique might be appropriate. If you have a farm and want the land to remain agricultural

your restrictions could allow the land to be used for those purposes only.

Also ask yourself, "How much control do I want to retain?" A conservation easement is one tool which you could use if you want to continue owning the land. We will discuss this particular option in future articles. Do you live on the land and do you want to continue doing

cont. on page 2.

• Mendon Foundation • Mission Statement

The Mendon Foundation is a non-profit corporation established to:

PRESERVE, protect and enhance the scenic, natural, recreational and structural resources in the Town of Mendon and directly adjacent properties,

MAINTAIN a responsible stewardship of assets and properties held or controlled by the corporation,

ESTABLISH and promote local environmental education on issues pertinent to the preservation of natural resources in the Town of Mendon,

ESTABLISH and promote programs to monitor the natural resources in the Town of Mendon.

As we succeed in these objectives, we enhance property values for all Mendon property owners. The Foundation is supported by membership fees, grants and other contributions. Donations to the Mendon Foundation are tax deductible.

Proceeds are used to cover easement acquisitions, monitoring and communications.

All labor is volunteer.

Land Trusts and You (cont.)

so? There are ways of doing this by using easements or by gifting the land in your Will. Perhaps you own land that you only use occasionally for recreational purposes. You enjoy the land but find paying the property taxes a burden. An outright gift of the property may be the solution for you.

As you start answering these questions, an idea will take shape as to what you want to achieve. It could very well be that there are several techniques that would allow you to accomplish your goal. How do you decide what option or combination of options is best for you. Your personal financial situation could be the deciding factor. Do you need relief from property or income taxes now or are you more concerned about future estate taxes? Some options allow you to reduce income taxes and estate taxes. A primary concern may be that you will need to raise cash now or sometime in the future. Through "bargain sales" you can raise cash and still protect your land. Another technique would be to sell your land after a conservation easement is in place. You may want to set aside some of your land for sale as building lots to meet future cash needs or to provide building sites for your children. Keep in mind that the value of your land may have appreciated considerably and when you sell it, you will have to pay capital gains tax on the difference between what you paid for it and what you sold it for.

Certainly there are many things to consider in formulating a plan for the future of your land. A successful plan will take into account you and your family's personal needs, financial situation and concern for the preservation of your property. The Mendon Foundation is available to help you. We can supply resource materials and we are available to you to discuss your situation. Should you decide to employ a land preservation technique, the Mendon Foundation will work closely with you and your advisors on projects that the land trust will become involved with. If you are interested in talking to someone at the Foundation, please contact one of the Board members.

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Our Beautiful Logo!

The Mendon Foundation would like once again to thank Cathy Cairo for her outstanding design work on The Mendon Foundation's logo. We have received many compliments on our logo and wish to acknowledge Cathy's creative talent and contribution.

Thanks Cathy!



We Need Your Support

The Mendon Foundation was established during September 1992. It is young and growing and is run strictly by volunteers. If you can lend your time and talents to the Foundation we can find an activity you would enjoy doing. For example, if you enjoy rolling up your sleeves and working outdoors, we will need volunteers to restore and maintain the Lehigh Valley Linear Trail. The Lehigh Valley Linear Trail will be a major undertaking for our organization and we will require any and all volunteers to be successful.

Maybe you'd prefer to contribute articles to the newsletter or work on fundraising or educational activities. Whether you can contribute a little or a lot of your time either once or on an ongoing basis, we would like to hear from you. To find out more, please complete the form on the back page of this newsletter and mail it in.

Cash contributions are always welcome. A substantial endowment will have to be created to carry out the organization's Mission Statement and your donation helps us to obtain that goal. The Foundation currently is supported solely by private donations and grants so your contribution is very important to us. Should you wish to donate a noncash item, please call a Board member.

Community support and involvement will make this a successful and dynamic organization. Show your support by becoming a member today.



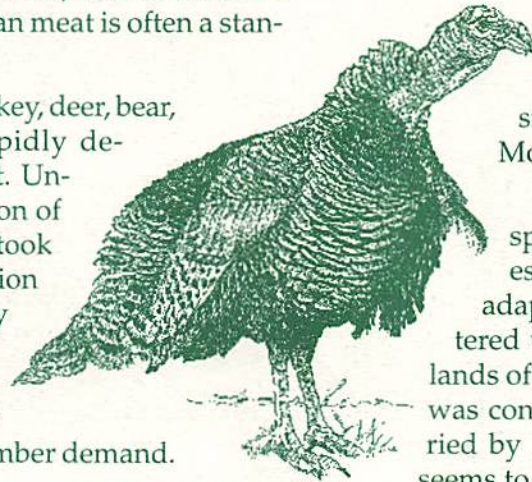
The Wild Turkey

by John Hauber

The wild turkey, *meleagris gallopavo*, is unique to the New World: a bird with cousins in the Americas but having no real relatives in the rest of the world.

Where would the first, not to mention present day, Thanksgiving celebration have been without this spectacular species? Tradition certainly suggests the turkey as a centerpiece for many occasions, and in modern health conscious America, this lean meat is often a standard alternative for protein.

Common in colonial days, turkey, deer, bear, and waterfowl populations rapidly decreased as needed habitat was lost. Unregulated harvest and introduction of imported poultry diseases also took their toll. By 1850, this exploitation had extirpated the wild turkey from New York. By the late 1800's, 75% of New York land was in agriculture, and the rest of turkey habitat was cut to meet lumber demand.



Not until the late 1940's did remnant flocks in Pennsylvania cross the border into southwestern New York. Many farmers had abandoned the relatively infertile soils of the southern tier, and once again those acres became acceptable turkey habitat. Sportsmen, too, had insisted on regulations which would allow hunting opportunities but still maintain a healthy population of the hunted species. A new concept, Conservation (wise use through sustained yield) had renewed social interest and responsibility in our natural resources.

Immediate interest in expanding turkey populations resulted in the raising and release of over 3000 game farm birds during the 1950's. Not really geared to survive the rigors of the wild, these releases failed due to predation, disease, weather, and a suspect genetic makeup. Only one such release resulted in a qualified success. That population increased to about 50 birds, and although related to the wild bird in appearance, they soon took residence at the edge of a village. Raiding gardens and roosting on porches was not long tolerated. Some readers may remember the antics of "Morris," a gobbler of similarly questionable lineage that intimidated children and chased Volkswagen bugs in Irondequoit. Suffice it to say, these actions are hardly desirable for the highly sought after game bird.

After such disappointing beginnings, a reassessment of the issue resulted in an effort concentrating on the success already shown: The natural bird. Why not just give them a boost? About 1959, the advent of trap and transfer of wild birds began. Moving groups of natu-

rally occurring birds to new areas with acceptable habitat proved to be extremely successful. Over the next 35 years, wildlife staff moved over 1300 birds by groups of 10-15 to all the primary range of New York. Successful releases were soon providing stock themselves. Birds were also exchanged with other states and provincial agencies to help establish turkeys elsewhere. One such exchange with Vermont was soon expanding back into New York.

Locally, releases were made throughout Steuben County as well as in Yates, Wayne and Genesee Counties. Birds moved into Monroe County from all sides, and they are now found in nearly all Monroe townships.

Generally the turkey was thought to be specific to extensive acreage of mature forests, but the turkey has shown its ability to adapt to a variety of conditions. Even the scattered wood lots and predominant agricultural lands of the Lake Plains are occupied. Here there was concern for its survival due to diseases carried by local species. The continued expansion seems to dispel that concern.

Over the years, some individuals have wanted to hasten the expansion faster than the D.E.C.'s plan allowed. Such efforts with game farm birds may actually set back occupation by wild birds. Not only do the game farm birds not survive as noted above, but also are inferior genetically. Further, the State will not release wild trapped birds where game farm ones have been liberated.

The success of the trap and transfer program has been exemplary. Turkeys now exist in all primary and secondary ranges of the State, even areas that probably never had them. The thrill of hearing and seeing this magnificent bird is once again a reality for New York's residents. Many Thanksgiving tables are once again set with the species that started it all: The wild turkey.

A Foul Fowl?

Colonists and settlers across the New World recognized several different species of the wild turkey. They relished the opportunity and occasion to feast on this large, naturally occurring bird of the Americas.

However, there was one of this grouping of turkeys which smelled bad, tasted terrible and was considered foul. Can we imagine that our forebearers actually were talking about another species altogether—the turkey vulture?

The Lehigh Valley Linear Trail Project

by Elaine Koral

Running east to west through the midsection of the Town of Mendon is an old railroad bed that once was part of the Lehigh Valley Railroad line. The Mendon Foundation will be working in conjunction with the Monroe County Parks Department to develop this section of the rail bed for recreational use.

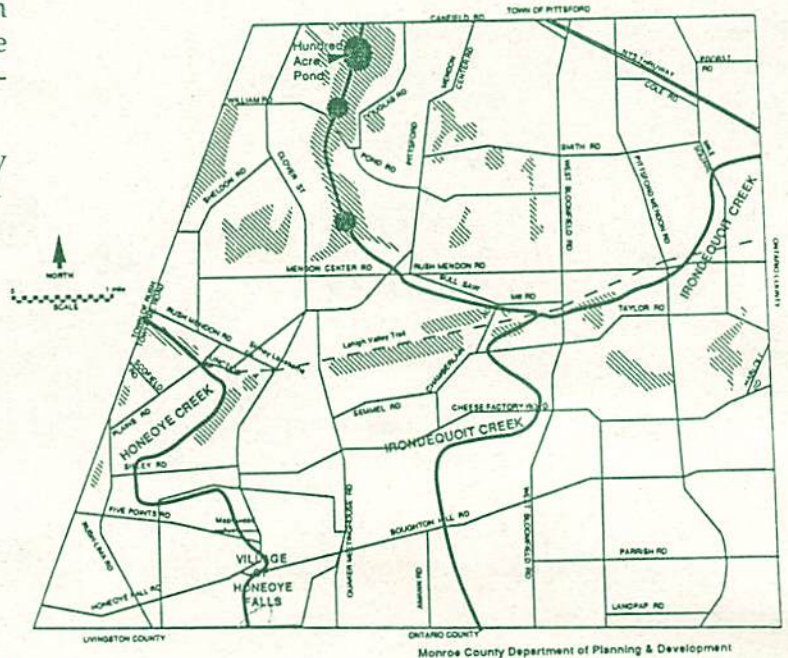
The name of the project will be the Lehigh Valley Linear Trail. The Foundation's objective will be to convert the old railroad bed into a linear park that can be used for specific recreational purposes. These uses include: pedestrian, equestrian, cross country skiing and bicycling activities. It will take approximately five years to develop the trail to its full potential.

The first portion of the trail to be worked on will be the area between Route 64 and west to Chamberlain Road. The Route 64 section will accommodate parking and easy access to the trail.

Another section of the trail features the site of the historic Rochester Junction. This historic site was a busy railroad junction from the late eighteen hundreds until the end of World War II. Freight and passenger trains including the famous "Black Diamond" used this junction during its operation. The junction included the railroad station, hotel and other buildings as well as a baseball diamond. The site was located near the intersection of Junction and Plains Roads. This area of the trail offers some unique possibilities for future trail development.

TOWN OF MENDON MONROE COUNTY NEW YORK

-  Wetland
-  POND
-  STREAM



This trail project is the Mendon Foundation's biggest project to date and we are very excited! Due to the scope and nature of this project we will need volunteers for all types of work. If you are interested in helping with the trail project, please complete the form in this newsletter and mail it in or call one of the Board of Directors.

New Computers!

The Mendon Foundation has received two computers through the generosity of Chris McVicker, President of the Flanders Group.

The Foundation is excited about this donation as it will enhance our capability in the compiling and retrieval of information on membership, fund raising, accounting, land projects, and more!

The Board of Directors would like to express their appreciation for this gift and certainly urge everyone to consider contacting Chris McVicker for your insurance needs at:

The Flanders Group
6 Tobey Village Office Park,
Pittsford, N.Y.



John Langlois, Editor

John Langlois is a native of the Rochester area and has lived in Mendon for the past 2 years. He is a retired Vice President of Manufacturing for a local electronics firm. His primary hobbies are fishing and golfing.

Elaine Koral, Contributing Editor

Elaine Koral is a native Rochesterian and has been a resident of Mendon for four years. She has worked in the field of estate and trust administration for the last fourteen years. Gardening and biking are her hobbies.

Mendon Foundation Celebrates

The Mendon Foundation, a land trust dedicated to the preservation of Mendon's rural atmosphere, celebrated its second year of community service with a picnic at Mendon Ponds Park on June 17. The group also planted a four-foot Austrian pine near Stewart Lodge. Dr. Franz Seischab, a professor at Rochester Institute of Technology, led the picnickers on a tour of Devil's Bathtub. Seischab described the history of the formation and pointed out a variety of trees, shrubs, ferns and mosses that make their home in the surrounding area. In two years, the foundation has preserved one parcel of land and is currently in various stages of securing additional acreage. The group sponsored a

lecture series and publishes a biannual newsletter to keep Mendon's citizens up to date on local environmental issues. The foundation also received a grant from the Rural New York Grant Program for a multi-phase project with HF-L's senior economic classes to develop a trail along Honeoye Creek through the Village of Honeoye Falls.



Admiring their recently planted Austrian pine are Mendon Foundation Board Members (left to right) Carl Foss, Jeanne Loberg, Chris Campbell, Susan Katz and Eileen Dobrowski.

"We are still a young organization, but are quickly gaining support," said board member Susan Katz. "Our Picnic in the Park is a thank-you for that support. The newly planted Austrian pine will grow as the foundation grows, branching out and here for all to enjoy in the generations to come."

Our New Headquarters!

The Mendon Foundation continues to grow, thanks to the support of our members and the community. We are establishing a new headquarters at 3905 Rush Mendon Rd. We are very excited about this move. It will enable us to consolidate resources and give us a home base from which to operate. Thanks to all our members for their continued support.

Open Meeting Nov. 16th

The Mendon Foundation will hold an open meeting Nov. 16th at 7:30 P.M. at the Mendon Fire Hall on Rt. 64. This meeting will be held in the public meeting room to update the community in general and our members as to specific projects and our need for volunteers. We hope to see you there!

YES, I am interested in The Mendon Foundation.

- I would like to become a member of the Foundation.
- I would like to be a volunteer for the Foundation.
- I would like a Foundation member to contact me.
- All of the above.

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