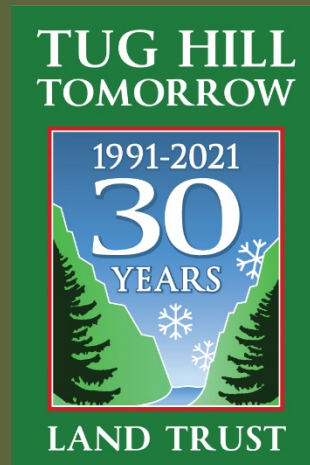


Conservation Easements 101: Fact vs Fiction

Wednesday, January 13, 2021

Online Zoom Webinar



The Tug Hill region of New York covers 2,100 square miles (1.38 million acres) between Lake Ontario and Adirondacks.

It is the third largest contiguous forested area in New York State.



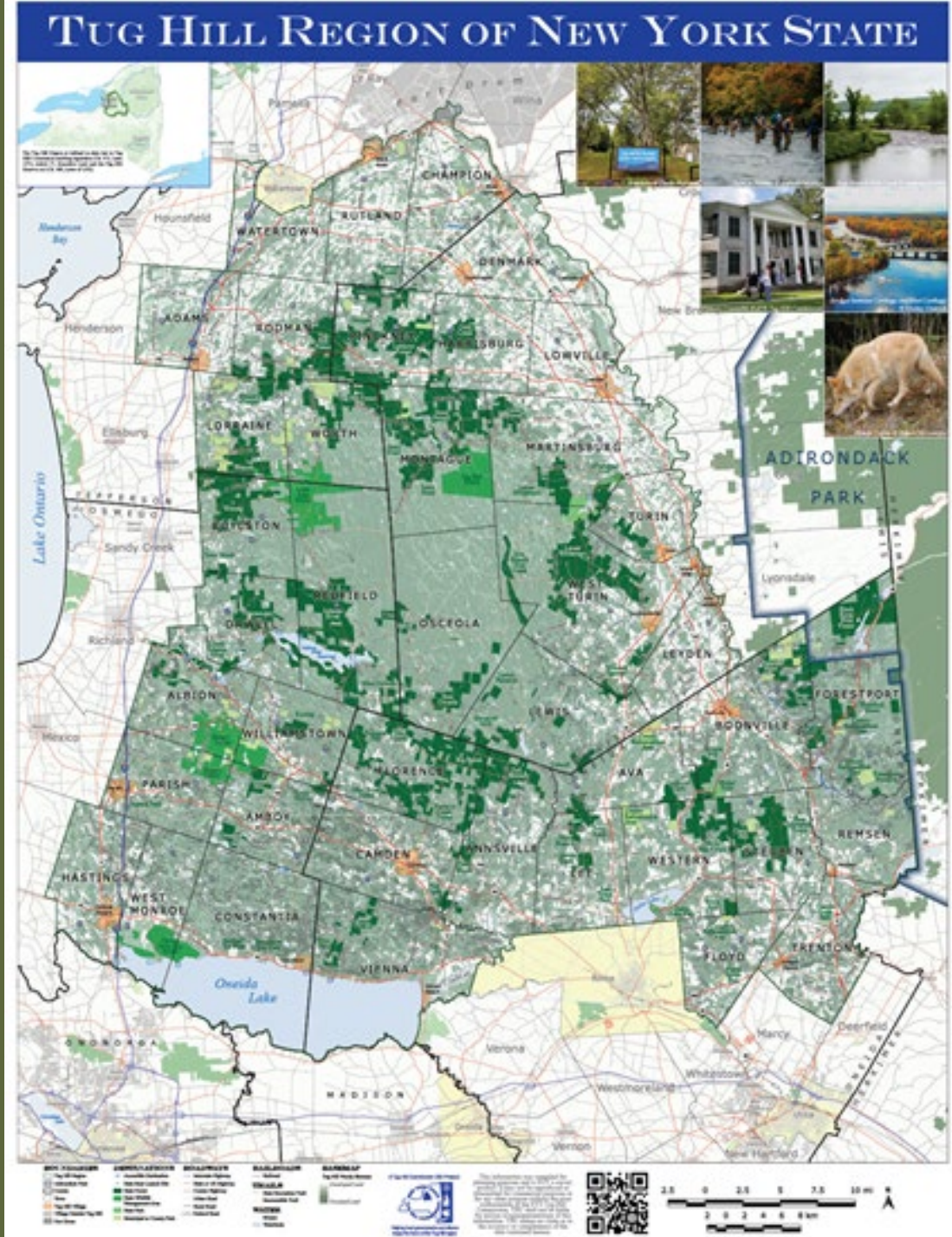
Mickey Dietrich, NYS Tug Hill Commission



Heart of Tug Hill stream – D. Kohr

The region is made up of 41 towns containing 18 villages, with ~104,000 residents, 50 people per square mile.

Town populations range from a low of 78 people to a high of 9,450 people. Two-thirds of region's population concentrated in villages around the edge.

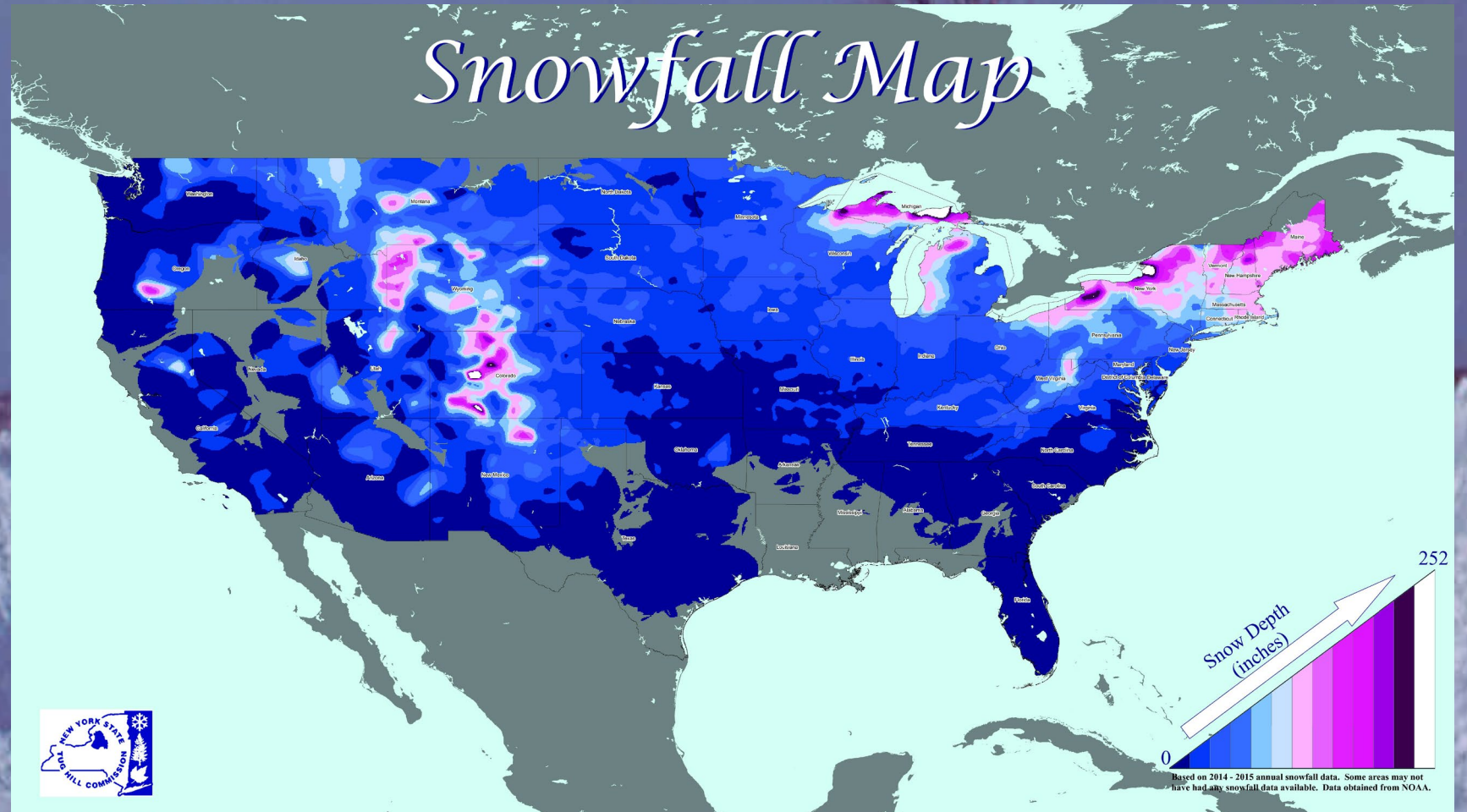


Rising from Lake Ontario at about 250-foot elevation to its west, the Tug Hill plateau rises to 2,000 feet on its eastern facing escarpment.



Tug Hill escarpment – G. Miller

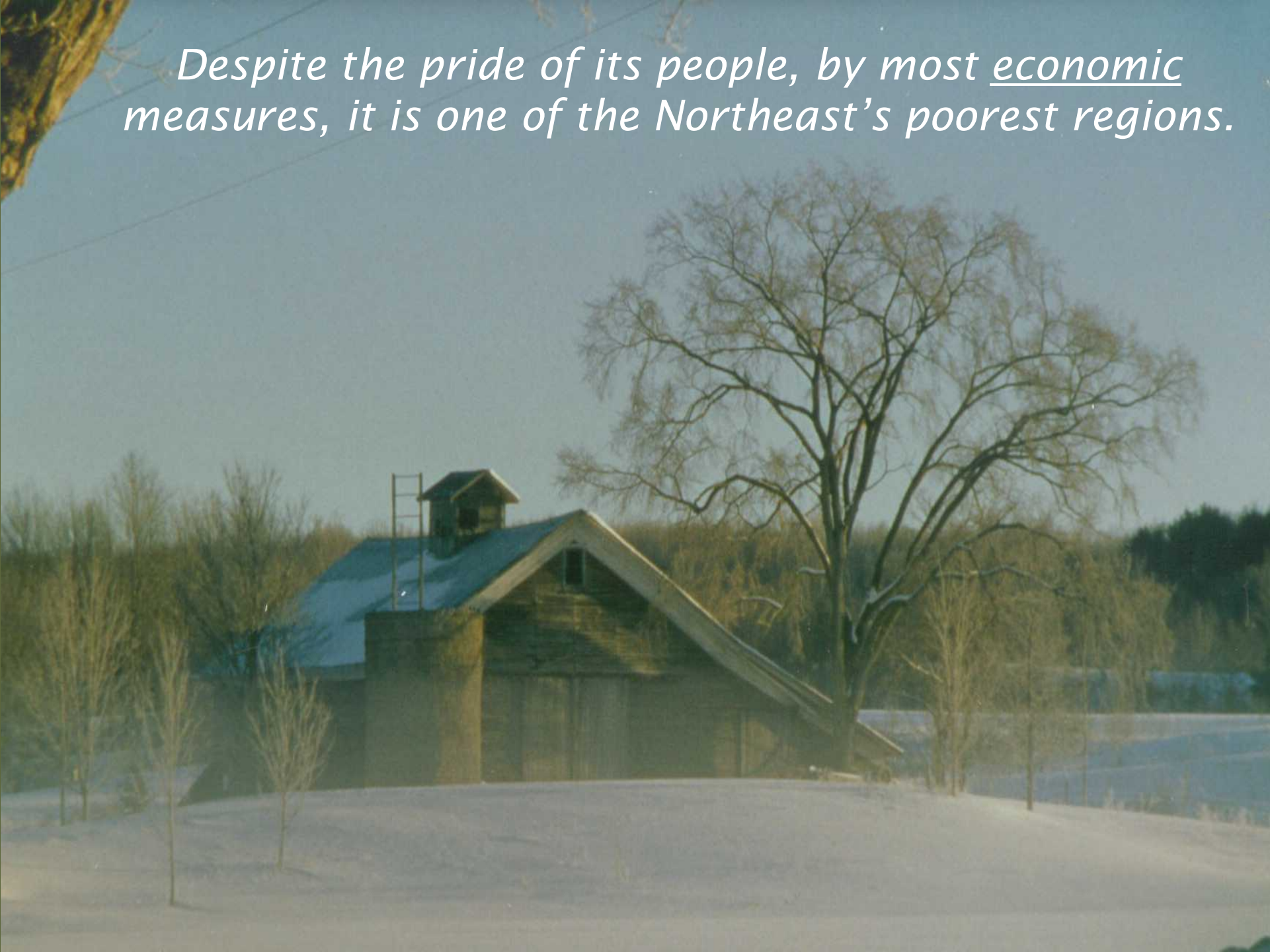
Lake Ontario and plateau combine to create an average annual snowfall of 200 inches, heaviest snowfall east of the Rockies.



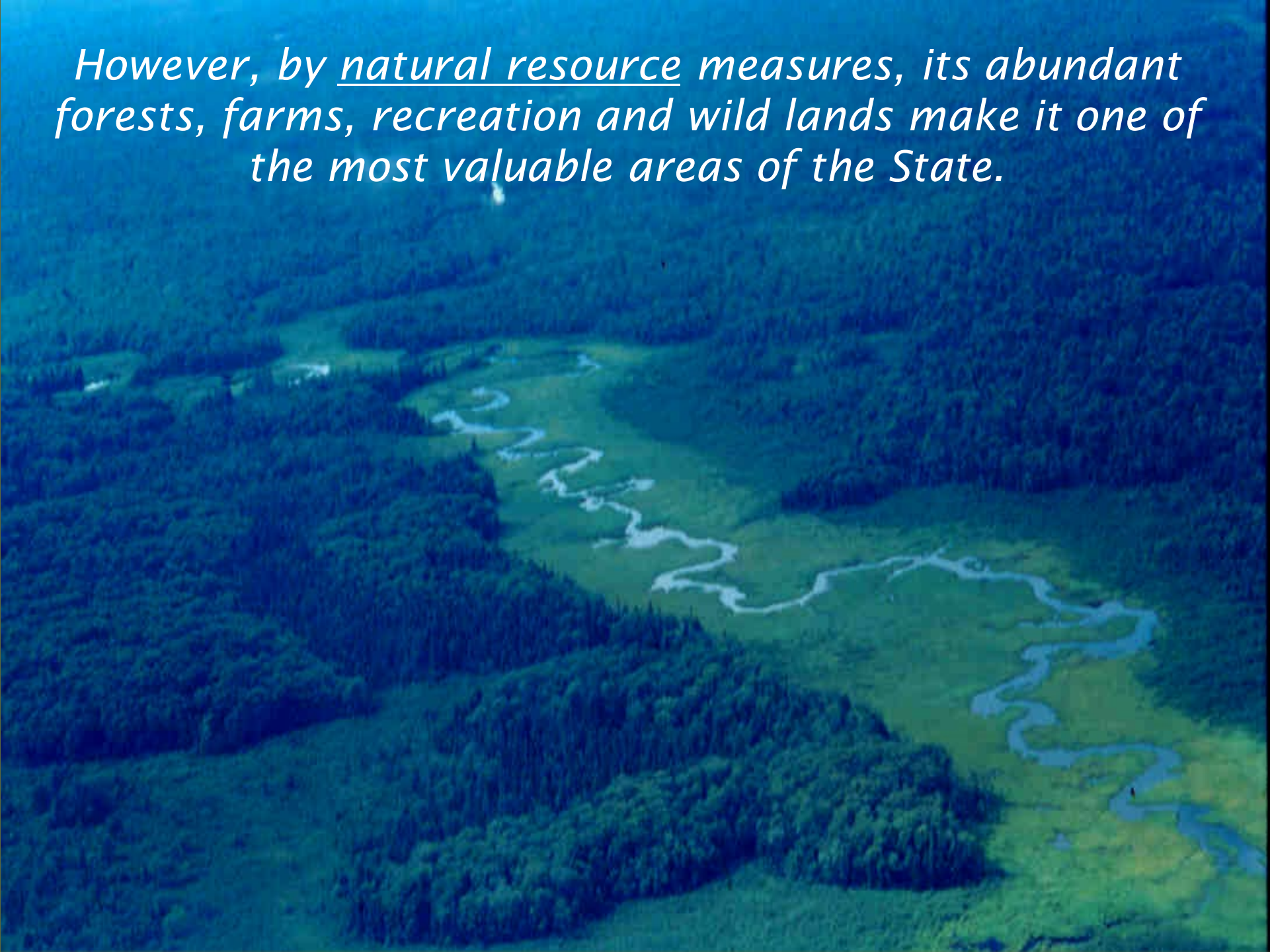
And some of the most sustained winds.



Despite the pride of its people, by most economic measures, it is one of the Northeast's poorest regions.



However, by natural resource measures, its abundant forests, farms, recreation and wild lands make it one of the most valuable areas of the State.



*Tug Hill's economy is based in
forestry, farming and outdoor
recreation.*

A working landscape!



The Measurables

- Approx. 73% of the Tug Hill region is comprised of forest land
- Approximately 400,000 acres in Agricultural Districts
- Nearly 10,000 jobs in the forest and agricultural sectors

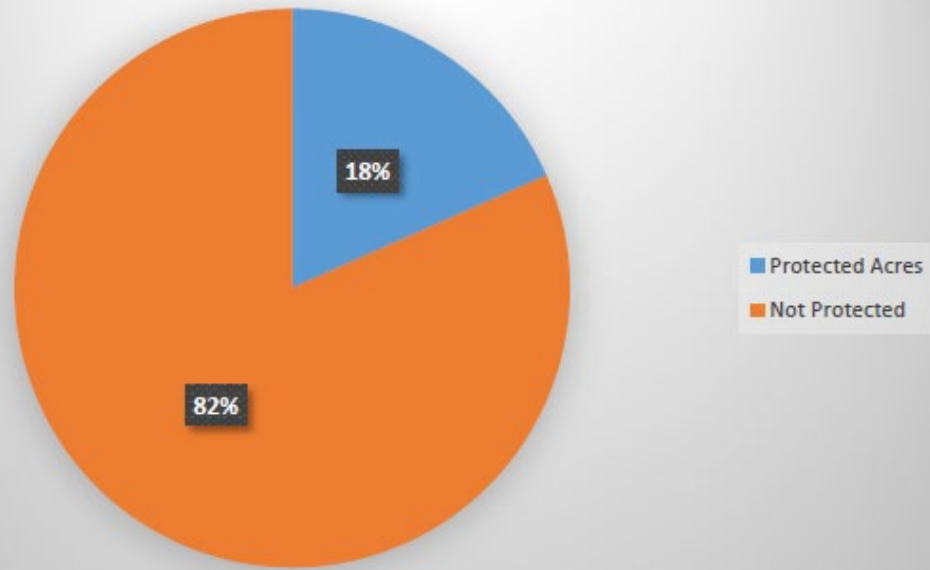
The Immeasurables

- Clean Water: Aquifer, Surface Waters as Drinking Water Sources for Communities (Cities of Rome and Oneida)
- Clean Air: Carbon absorption and cycling
- Recreation: Snowmobiling, skiing, snowshoeing, ATV riding, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, trapping, bird watching, photography...
- Wildlife Habitat: Deer, Bobcat, Bear, Fisher, Otter, Trout, Mussels...
- Scenic Views and Open Space: Rural landscape, fall colors, panoramic views

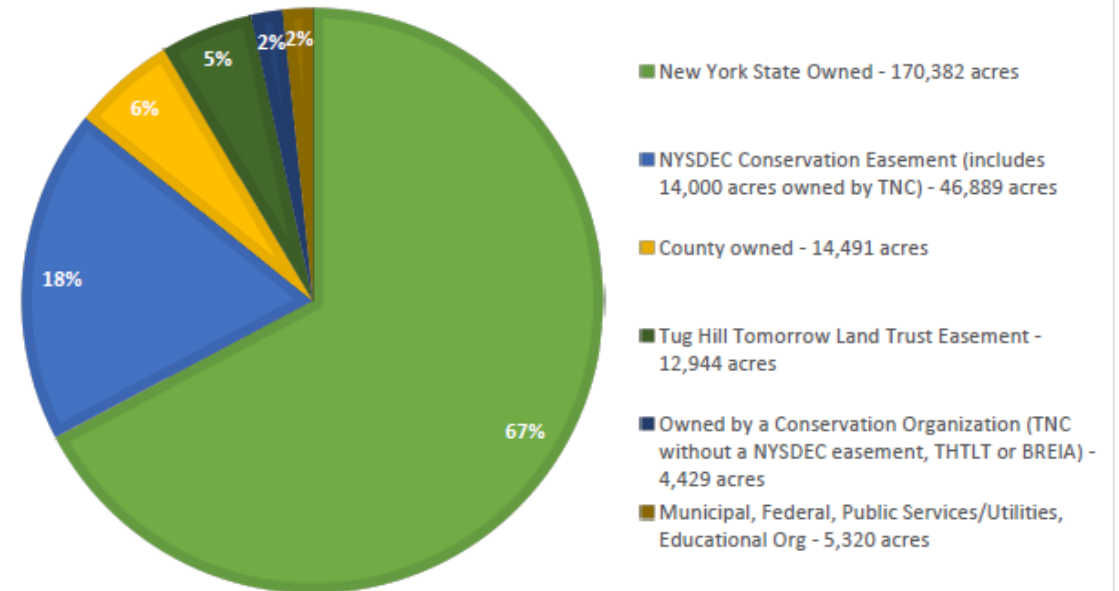
The Intangibles

- Availability to access for rest, relaxation, exercise and rejuvenation
- Community identity & values – Sense of place
- Connection to family history
- Connection to web of life

Tug Hill Protected Land vs Non Protected Land

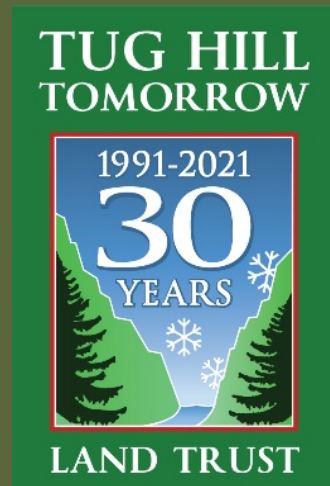


PROTECTED LANDS IN THE TUG HILL REGION
(PERCENT BY ACREAGE)



What is Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust?

- Regional, private, nonprofit organization
- Founded in 1990 by group of local citizens
- Incorporated as a 501(c)3 in 1991 (celebrating 30 years in 2021!)
- Serves Tug Hill portions of Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego and Oneida Counties



Mission

Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust's mission is to protect the wildlands, working forests and farms of the Tug Hill region and surrounding areas, and to promote appreciation of the region's natural and cultural heritage, for present and future generations.

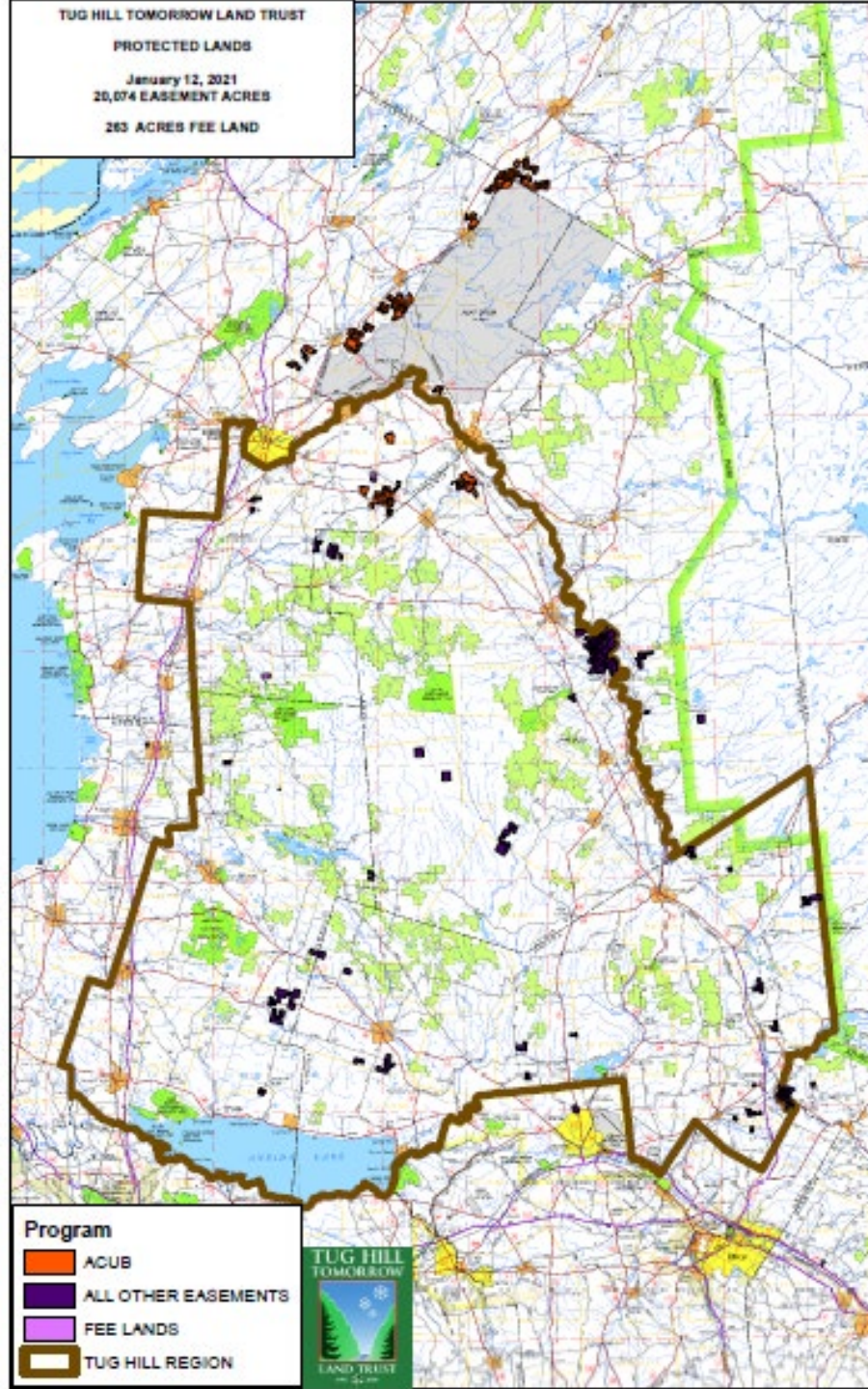
We do this through

*Land Protection
Outreach & Education*

Land Trust Background

- Over 90 land trusts in New York State, over 1,700 nationally
- Funding comes from individual donations, grants, special events
- 6 staff
- Office at the Zoo in Watertown
- 20,074 acres under conservation easement through four county area
- 263 acres owned in fee (Rutland and Lorraine)

TUG HILL TOMORROW LAND TRUST
PROTECTED LANDS
January 12, 2021
20,074 EASEMENT ACRES
263 ACRES FEE LAND





Conservation Easements 101: Fact vs. Fiction



Question #1

Is public access required on
a conservation easement property?

Fact: Public access is ***NOT*** required



Question #2

Who decides what is allowed in the conservation agreement?

Fact: Landowner and land trust work together

- Work with landowner to determine their vision of the property and resources to protect
- Restricts use of property to protect natural values
- Individually tailored



Question #3

Does a conservation easement take
the land off the tax rolls?

Fact: Landowner Continues to Pay Taxes

- Landowner continues to pay property taxes
- Eligible for an annual state income tax credit
- Special legislation in Tug Hill regarding state easements



Question #4

Does the land under a conservation easement have to stay in a “forever wild” condition?

Fact

Lots of variation on what can be done

- No two easements are alike
- Limits type and amount of development to protect natural values
- Majority are working farms and forests
- Not every property is suitable for a conservation easement
- Over 20,000 acres in easement



Millard Easement – West Canada Creek

Question #5

Why do landowners choose to do a conservation easement?

For the love of the land



Bill Gleisner – ACUB Project



Henry Parry – Parry Farm Camden

Protect Tug Hill Working Lands



Peace of Mind

Parry Farm Easement – Camden



Leave a Lasting Legacy

Community Benefits





Kelly Easement – Trenton

Tax Benefits

Income Tax Deductions

Federal income tax
deduction

NYS income tax credit

Lower Estate Taxes

Save the Special Places



Provide clean air, water, and open space for us ...



... and for our children

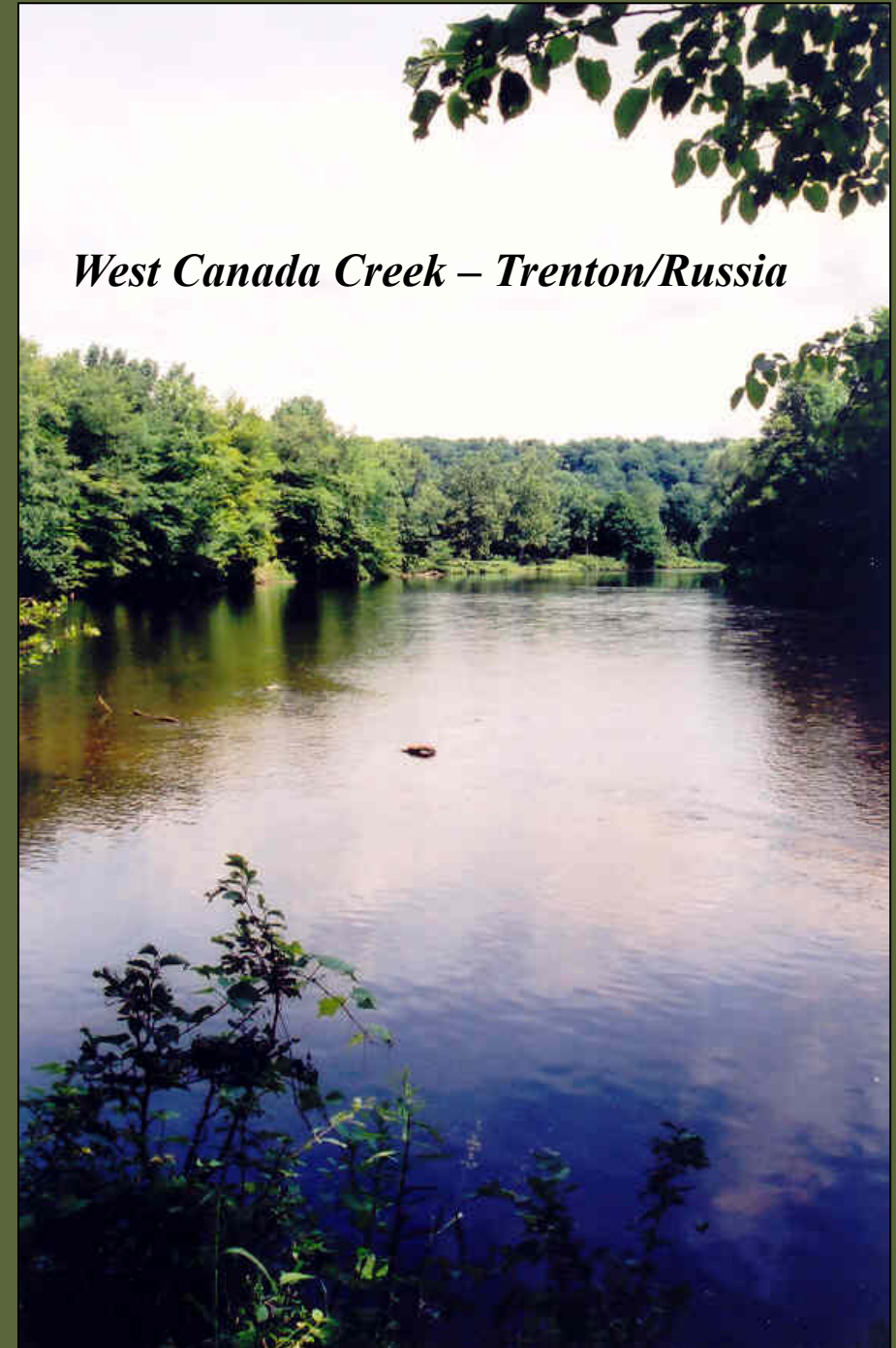


But that is not the end of the story.

Land trust's role

- Monitor the property at least once each year
- Enforce the terms of the conservation easement

West Canada Creek – Trenton/Russia



Summary...what is a conservation easement?

- Voluntary, *legal* agreement between landowner and land trust
- Limits the type and amount of development that can happen
- Conservation Easements are *forever*
- Filed with the deed and successive owners are bound by the terms
- Public access is NOT required
- Landowner continues to pay property taxes



Thank for joining us tonight.

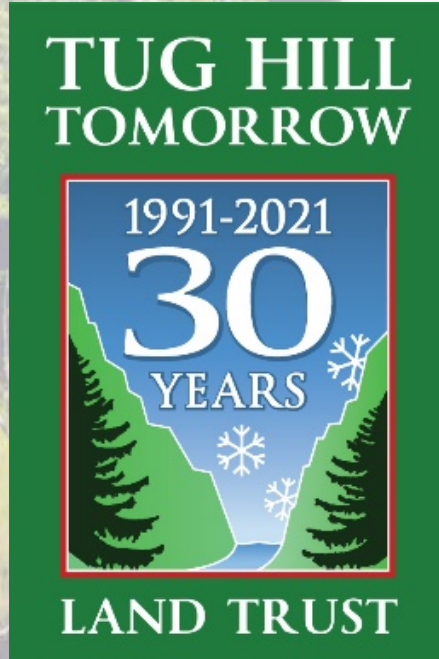
Two more upcoming webinars!

Wednesday, February 10, 7:00 p.m.
FARMLAND CONSERVATION

Wednesday, March 10, 7:00 p.m.
FOREST CONSERVATION

Register at www.tughill.org

Questions?



For more information
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