



The Helping Hands Alliance

Westchester Land Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving land and communities in Westchester County. During the past 20 years, WLT has helped to protect over 6,400 acres of land –

building successful partnerships with citizens, businesses, and government to create lasting conservation solutions for the county. Our new corporate volunteer program will put teams of volunteers from area businesses to work on one-day projects that enhance the appearance, safety, and usability of preserved lands.

Through “hands-on” experience, the volunteers gain an understanding of the importance of preserving natural landscapes and the effective impact of their work. This helps reach our objective of creating stewards and informed advocates for these properties on the individual, community, and corporate levels. Through *HHA*, WLT will work with local land managers to arrange fun, and rewarding projects for volunteers of all abilities.

Acting as facilitator between the corporations and parks/preserves, WLT handles all project details making it easy to carry out this type of community service. We customize each project based on a variety of factors, such as location, level of difficulty, number of participants, etc. More than 7,100 volunteers from over 80 corporations have participated in a similar, award-winning program in New Jersey since 1996.

The *Helping Hands Alliance* program works for everyone involved:

- **Corporations** complete a volunteer service, which builds team spirit and morale for their employees and positive public relations with their community (banners, t-shirts, and photos provided).
- **Land managers** accomplish essential projects that require a team of helping hands; the local community is very appreciative of this effort.
- **Westchester Land Trust** achieves its mission of improving preserved lands and educating the public.

Examples of Activities:

- Trail clearing and trail marking (either with signage or paint)
- Removal of non-native bushes
- Fence and bog bridge (walkway) building
- Parking area preparation
- Restoration of river banks
- Garden preparation and building for sites that will be utilized as community gardens



Westchester Land Trust is the region's premier, and only accredited, land preservation organization. WLT conserves land in partnership with private property owners; helps communities create new parks and preserves; fosters sound land use planning; and seeks to connect people to the land.

Founded in 1988, Westchester Land Trust has protected more than 6,400 acres in 26 communities. WLT's primary method of protecting land is the conservation easement; the organization has completed 175 conservation easements, covering 4,280 acres. We work with landowners who donate their land which we then own and manage. We have 603 acres on

28 of these preserves, 14 of which are open to the public (eight have trails). We work with local, county, state and other governments to identify land worth buying, and then we help negotiate contracts and put together funding agreements. We've protected 1,538 acres on 14 such preserves and farms. Our goal is to reach 10,000 acres by 2012. WLT has also helped 15 communities raise \$35 million in local open space money, and has worked with them to buy and protect almost 2,000 acres, focusing on lands that are critical for the protection of drinking water, wildlife habitats and community character, and which provide needed recreational opportunities.

For more information, please contact Bobbe Stultz, director of Helping Hands Alliance program, at 914.241.6346 x22, or write to Bobbe@Westchesterlandtrust.org

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WESTCHESTER LAND TRUST'S CORPORATE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM