



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 17, 2022

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Hudson Highlands Land Trust Expands Canopus Creek Preserve By Acquiring 240 Acres of Land Within Appalachian Trail Landscape

The Hudson Highlands Land Trust, Inc. (HHLT) has expanded its Canopus Creek Preserve with the addition of 240 acres of undeveloped land that was once part of the resort, dude ranch, and rodeo grounds known as "Cimarron Ranch" from the 1930s to the 1960s.

This expansion brings the Preserve's total acreage up to 310 acres—protecting an important forest core that is linked to the Appalachian Trail (AT) biotic corridor and includes vital wildlife habitats. Conservation of the property also safeguards drinking water and protects climate resilient land. Over the next year, HHLT will focus on removing junk cars and debris found on the land, while also exploring visitor parking as well as trail development, linkages and extensions, including those that will help alleviate visitor-use pressures on heavily trafficked sections of the nearby AT.

This project was supported in part by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Wild East grant program and NYS Land Trust Alliance Conservation Partnership Program funding.

Katrina Shindledecker, HHLT's Executive Director, said: *"With its proximity to the Appalachian Trail, excellent wildlife habitat, and iconic scenic beauty, protecting this landscape forever is a significant success for HHLT and the communities we serve. We've worked closely with partners, including the Town of Putnam Valley and the NY Highlands Network, for over 10 years to bring our dream of protecting this land to life. We're thrilled to be able to steward this land and provide expanded recreational opportunities for people across the Highlands region."*

Linde Ostro and Scott Silver, Canopus Creek Preserve neighbors, said: *"We are thrilled that the Hudson Highlands Land Trust is protecting one of the largest undeveloped pieces of land in Putnam County. Cimarron Ranch is a beautiful place, bordering Sprout Brook and home to many species of birds and other wildlife that enrich all our lives."*

The former Cimarron Ranch has been a community conservation priority for over a decade—it is highly ranked in the Town of Putnam Valley's Comprehensive Plan, as well as the regional Croton-to-Highlands Biodiversity Study and The Nature Conservancy's resilient land mapping tool. The property and its adjoining lands are also rich in high quality drinking water resources and rare plant species.

Canopus Creek, which runs through the Preserve, provides habitat for an array of wildlife, including trout and American eels, which use the waterway as a migration route. The surrounding land is ideal habitat for wood and box turtles, which are both New York State Species of Greatest Conservation Need. This land provides a vital habitat corridor between adjacent protected parcels owned by the NY Department of Environmental Protection and Putnam County.

As with its other preserves, HHLT will take a community-based approach to stewarding the newly expanded Canopus Creek Preserve. HHLT will work with neighbors and the local community to address use, visitor management, and habitat needs.

ABOUT HHLT

The Hudson Highlands Land Trust is a community-based, accredited, nonprofit conservation organization with a mission to protect and preserve the natural resources, rural character, and scenic beauty of the Hudson Highlands. www.hhlt.org

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