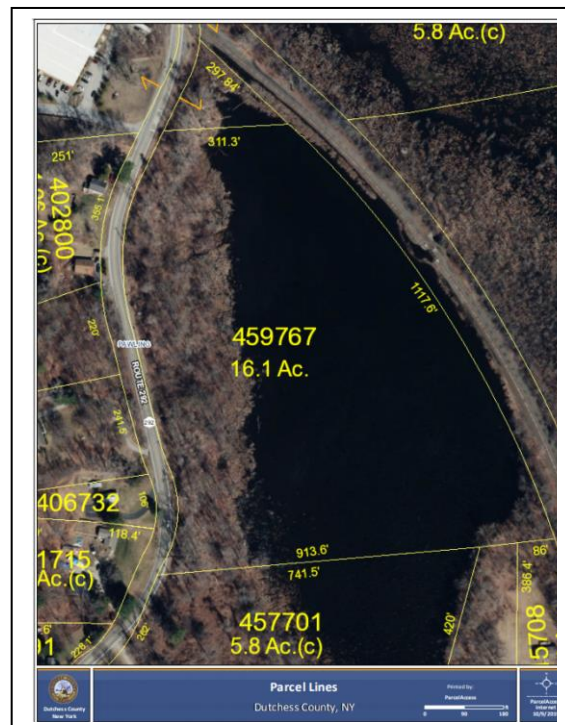


September 23, 2021

Hardej Project: 16.10 acres (donation). Date of acquisition 12/28/2018. There were no partners

The Hardej property consists of a parcel of 16.1 acres that borders the new Dutchess County/ New York State Maybrook Rail Trail and state route 292. This parcel also borders on protected federal lands including the Appalachian Trail. This acquisition encompasses wetland and deciduous forest, and is home for the American bald eagle, the Great Egret and the Great blue heron as well as well as black bear.. The pond was created as a result of a Beaver Dam, There is some phragmites at the northern and western border and water lilies on the pond. Some barberry is located in the extreme southern boundary. This acquisition allows for the addition to the already preserved federally owned land area and offers an expanse of unspoiled open space within the western borders of Pawling. It will also greatly enhance public enjoyment of the new rail trail.



Overall management goals:

Land-use planning for the Hardej preserve involves the control of its current use and to attempt to ensure its optimal use as a preserve using basic environmental concepts. This will include land conservation and the prevention and the mitigation of the overgrowth of invasive species of plants.

Threats:

The encroachment of phragmites and other invasive species in endangering the pond.

Human disruption of the bird habitat due to the rail trail

There are numerous advantages in protecting this wetland property. Wetlands have the ability to clean the water that flows through them, mitigate large flood events and recharge underground aquifers. They also offer a habitat for biodiversity.

Short Term Plans:

1. Erect Oblong signage along route 292 and along the rail trail
2. Contact the New York State Department of Transportation (in charge of the rail trail) to inform them of the fact that this land is a nesting area

Long Term Plans:

Careful monitoring through stewardship will be required. This will necessitate observing the use of the rail trail and to make sure the carry in/carryout rules are maintained. Since most of the preserve is wetland and bog it will be difficult to allow for human use. The good news is that the rail trail runs parallel to most of the preserve

Hardej Preserve



Maybrook Rail Trail

Photo of former rail line (Maybrook) which ran from Danbury, CT, to Hopewell Junction, Dutchess County, NY.

The line passed through Holmes, and served the Davis Iron Ore Mines. A few of the old sidings remain.

The new rail trail is part of the "Empire Trail" which connects NYC with upstate.





Area of Phragmites



Railroad embankment near rail trail