

2008 Annual Report



**SCENIC
HUDSON**



**“Scenic Hudson is once again the
right organization,
at the right place,
at the right time,
when the quality of life of
the Hudson Valley is at stake.**

Scenic Hudson knows how to get the job done.”

—RAND WENTWORTH, PRESIDENT, LAND TRUST ALLIANCE



SOUND INVESTMENT

Yields Powerful, Lasting Results



President Ned Sullivan (left) and Board Chair Frederic C. Rich.

In turbulent economic times, we're all looking to invest in organizations we trust. Because of its proven leadership and consistent achievement of tangible outcomes, Scenic Hudson is my top philanthropic priority.

Scenic Hudson has a track record of saving land along the Hudson River from inappropriate development and creating parks that bring people to its shorelines. These range from a small waterfront park in downtown Yonkers that's now a magnet for Westchester County schoolchildren to more than

2,000 acres of critical natural lands in the Hudson Highlands. And when Scenic Hudson wins a battle to stop sprawling development, we know the public—both in the valley and New York City—will benefit from access to the river, cleaner air and water, reduced traffic and healthy local food.

Scenic Hudson has a visionary plan—Saving the Land That Matters Most—to protect another 65,000 acres that meet the state's highest standards for scenic, ecological and agricultural lands worthy of conservation. Collaboration with 16 local land trusts as well as government agencies is part of our road map for success. By conserving the region's world-class beauty, Scenic Hudson is laying the groundwork for sustainable economic growth based in part on recreation and tourism. I can't think of a better way of commemorating the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson's voyage of discovery.

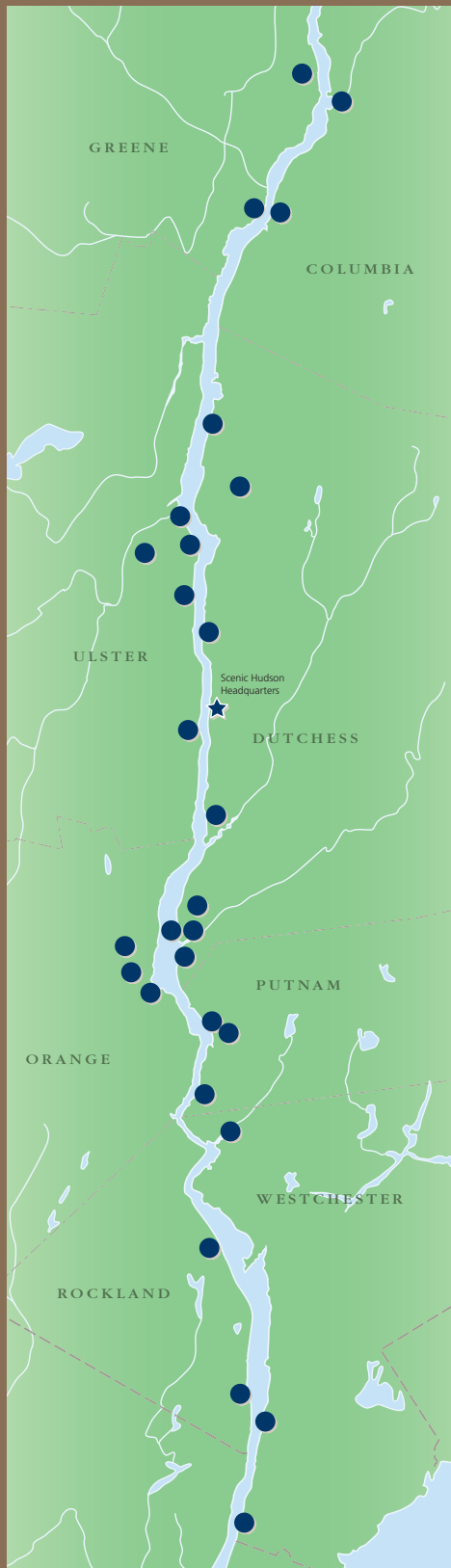
Scenic Hudson's farmland program has conserved nearly 8,000 acres of rich agricultural land in Orange, Dutchess, Ulster and Columbia counties. The wonderful foods from these farmlands are trucked short distances to farmers' markets and restaurants from New York City to Albany. The world-class farmlands of the Hudson Valley will play a critical part in a sustainable future for New York City.

Our supporters' charitable dollars are highly leveraged. Last year Scenic Hudson protected nearly 1,400 acres while bringing in more than \$6 million in new state funds to be reinvested in land.

Please join me in supporting the organization that is having the single greatest impact in saving New York City's great green backyard and the place many of us call home.

Frederic C. Rich, **Board Chair**

Scenic Hudson has a visionary plan



Scenic Hudson has a long track record of creating public parks and preserves throughout the Hudson Valley.

A track record of success

Over the last 45 years Scenic Hudson has been a force for large-scale conservation in the valley, protecting more than 25,000 acres of iconic vistas, habitat-rich forests and wetlands, and working farmland. At the same time we've created or enhanced 40 parks and preserves stretching from Westchester and Rockland counties to the Capital Region.

Our visionary plan for the valley's future

Despite the current real estate market, the Hudson Valley faces an ever-growing tide of development pressure. Recognizing that we are the stewards for what is truly an irreplaceable national treasure, Scenic Hudson has launched an essential plan to **Save the Land That Matters Most**.

Engaging key state and local leaders, and employing the latest mapping techniques, Scenic Hudson experts pinpointed 65,000 acres of the highest scenic, ecological and agricultural significance. To conserve these critical landscapes—the most ambitious land-protection initiative in Hudson Valley history—we've forged strong partnerships with local, regional and national land trusts as well as governments, businesses and individuals.

Our land trust partners also deliver experience, results

Recognizing that the success of our ambitious plan to Save the Land That Matters Most requires strong partnerships, Scenic Hudson is collaborating with 16 land trusts and conservation organizations with superb track records. We've spent a combined 450 years protecting natural treasures in the Hudson Valley and across New York State:

Audubon New York • Columbia Land Conservancy • Dutchess Land Conservancy • Esopus Creek Conservancy • Greene Land Trust • The Highlands Coalition • Hudson Highlands Land Trust • Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy • The Nature Conservancy, Eastern New York Chapter • New York-New Jersey Trail Conference • Open Space Institute • Orange County Land Trust • Trust for Public Land, New York State • Wallkill Valley Land Trust • Westchester Land Trust • Winnakee Land Trust.



Union Square
Greenmarket

Farms protected by Scenic Hudson provide healthy, local produce to the Hudson Valley—even reaching New York City’s bustling farmers’ markets. Our farmland protection program safeguards the economies and landscapes of rural communities, enables farmers to keep growing food profitably and mitigates climate-change impacts of transporting food around the globe.

A leader in the valley and nationwide

Adding great credibility to our leadership role in Saving the Land That Matters Most—and reflecting our status as a national pacesetter in land preservation—Scenic Hudson recently became one of the first land trusts to be awarded accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. For land-preservation organizations, this is the gold seal of professionalism. It recognizes that we meet the highest standards in our work.

To achieve this honor we underwent an extensive external review of our management, systems and policies. It means we’re at the top of our game when it comes to saving land for public benefit.



We're ramping up our acquisitions to Save the Land That Matters Most



University Settlement Camp

City of Beacon, 91 acres

Facilitated purchase by NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation of camp with fields and wooded slopes on Mount Beacon. Also acquired five acres on Fishkill Creek, aiding creation of shoreline trail.



Brooks Farm*

Town of Marbletown, 45 acres

Made possible launch of new dairy operation. Protected in collaboration with NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets, Open Space Institute and Ulster County.



Black Creek Corridor*

Town of Lloyd, 82 acres

Protects 4,200 feet of shoreline and critical wildlife habitats within vernal pools, hardwood swamps and hemlock forest.



Hyde Park Trail Buffer

Town of Hyde Park, 48 acres

Protects carriage road passing through rolling woodland. Provides key buffer for part of 10-mile trail linking popular historic sites.



Davenport Farm*

Town of Marbletown, 325 acres

Ensures farm's prized soils continue yielding produce sold throughout the region. Protected in collaboration with Open Space Institute, NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets and Ulster County.



Dominican Camp

Town of Hyde Park, 72 acres

Preserves scenic gateway to town's historic sites, views from Scenic Hudson's Black Creek Preserve, wetland habitats. Creates vital link in Hyde Park Trail; offers sweeping Hudson River views, potential river access.

*Conservation easements

This year we went into overdrive, completing 27 percent more transactions—and conserving 34 percent more acres—than last year.



Black Creek Corridor

Town of Esopus, 167 acres

Protects nearly a mile of Black Creek shoreline, stunning waterfalls, rock ledges and intact forest. Located between Black Creek Preserve and John Burroughs Sanctuary.



Mount Merino

Town of Greenport, 102 acres

Increases to 1,250 acres scenic lands viewed from Olana we've safeguarded. Adds to 122 acres preserved on Mount Merino by Columbia Land Conservancy.



Red Hook Farmland*

Town of Red Hook, 224 acres

Partnered with town to preserve four contiguous farm properties. Increases to 1,900 acres town farmland conserved with Dutchess Land Conservancy, Winnakee Land Trust and local and county governments.



Stonington Farm*

Town of Clermont, 232 acres

Brings to 522 acres the "critical mass" of working farms we've protected in town dependent on agriculture-based economy.

On the horizon— even greater success

Building on this year's success—14 acquisitions encompassing 1,386 acres—our land-protection experts have set even more ambitious goals for FY 2009: 20 transactions safeguarding 2,200 acres.

Currently in the acquisition pipeline we have more than 30 properties requiring \$30 million to protect for future generations. These include publicly accessible Hudson River waterfronts, iconic vistas, working farms and wetlands supporting an astonishing variety of wildlife.

Already in FY 2009 we've protected 470 acres on two working farms as well as 117 ecologically diverse acres along the Hudson River in Columbia County. We have transactions pending in Putnam, Orange, Ulster, Greene, Columbia and Albany counties. At the same time, we're helping communities create new parks in Westchester, Rockland, Dutchess, Ulster and Albany counties.



We use our parks and preserves to connect people to the Hudson River through exciting events like our first-ever Movie Night at Foundry Dock Park in Cold Spring, Putnam County, and a kayak trip from Esopus Meadows Preserve in Esopus, Ulster County. This year in Beacon, Scenic Hudson educators introduced 500 schoolchildren to nature at our local parks.



We're working to guarantee a healthy, economically vibrant Hudson Valley

We stand up for the Hudson Valley in three ways—by making sure new development respects environmental needs, by bringing people to the river and by sharing our expertise.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY

At public hearings we urged citizens of **Yonkers** to speak out strongly against developers' plans to cover their waterfront with a virtual wall of high-rises, cutting off access to the river and marring views of the Palisades—the city's natural skyline.

In **Tarrytown** we're working with the village, county and a developer to complete designs for an exciting waterfront park that will replace an 80-year-old asphalt plant. In nearby **Sleepy Hollow**, we're turning the Kingsland Point Bathhouse into a center for river-related activities.

ORANGE COUNTY

As a member of the Port Authority's Citizens Advisory Panel for **Stewart Airport**, Senior Vice President Steve Rosenberg has led efforts to ensure the expanded facility will protect our natural and historic treasures and provide direct economic benefits to the City of Newburgh.

DUTCHESS COUNTY

Shortly after we released an ecological assessment of a proposed 951-unit development in **Pine Plains**—showing how the project would cause widespread harm to wildlife habitat—the developer announced it was revising plans substantially to respond to our concerns. But the devil's in the details, so we're working with local partner Pine Plains United to ensure the project fully meets the community's goals.

We provided a leadership grant to transform the 120-year-old **Poughkeepsie** Railroad Bridge into Walkway Over the Hudson, the world's longest elevated public park, which will link 30 miles of rail trails in Dutchess and Ulster counties.

ULSTER COUNTY

A Scenic Hudson study showed that the 1,750-unit Hudson Landing Project in **Kingston** would have unacceptable visual impacts from the Hudson River and Dutchess County, violating both state and local waterfront policies.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

In **Stockport** a new six-acre Scenic Hudson park soon will showcase panoramic views of the Hudson River and Catskills.

THROUGHOUT THE HUDSON VALLEY

We went all out to introduce people to our parks, hosting 48 events—160 percent more than in FY 2007. Activities ranged from a yoga class at Scenic Hudson Park in **Irvington**, Westchester County, to a dragonfly-discovery hike at Shaupeneak Ridge in **Esopus**, Ulster County.

We provided support to help five riverfront communities create new or improved waterfront parks as a lasting commemoration of the 2009 Quadricentennial. Ranging from two to 80 acres, the parks are in **Hastings-on-Hudson** and **Cortlandt** (Westchester), **Nyack** (Rockland), **Tivoli** (Dutchess) and **Bethlehem** (Albany).

And 80 percent of the recommendations in our recent comprehensive review of the NYS Department of State's Coastal Management Program—which oversees development along the river's shores—have already been adopted.

The return on your investment in Scenic Hudson is enormous

By supporting our campaign to **Save the Land That Matters Most**, you'll help achieve these far-reaching and enduring benefits for the environment and region.

**Protect
water quality**

**Improve
air
quality**

**Protect farms
and healthy
local produce**

**Protect
wildlife
habitat**

**Promote
tourism**

**Preserve
scenery**

**Protect
cultural/historic
sites**

**Prevent
sprawl**

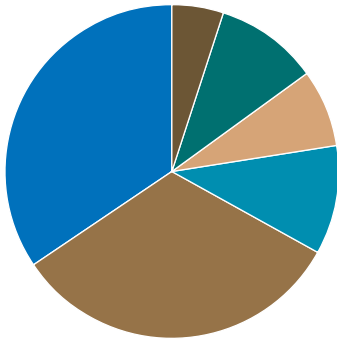
**Preserve
land**

Scenic Hudson's Beacon Point Park in Beacon, Dutchess County, is a great example of how we leverage your support. Our multi-year collaboration with sculptor George Trakas, Dia:Beacon and Minetta Brook has transformed this industrial dumping ground into a unique scenic and cultural attraction.

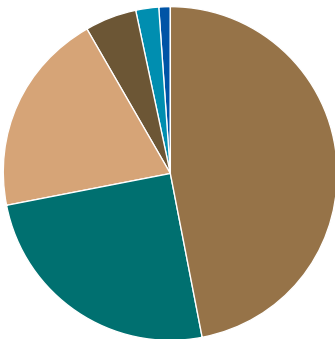
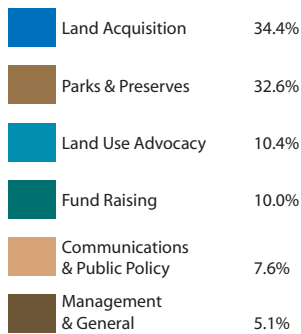


Financial Overview

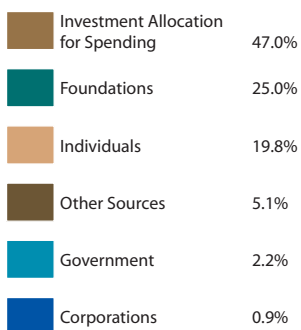
Consolidated results for Scenic Hudson and The Scenic Hudson Land Trust for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, show program growth for the period. Total operating expenses were \$11.1 million, up 4.8 percent from \$10.6 million spent in FY 07.



Consolidated Operating Expenses



Consolidated Operating Revenues



Scenic Hudson

Operating expenses totaled \$5.7 million, an 8-percent increase over the prior year, and operating revenues totaled \$5.9 million, a 10-percent increase over the previous year. To accelerate protection of the Hudson Valley's vanishing landscapes and create new parks with public access to the river, the organization added seven professional staff positions during the year. As a result of this growth, we soon will be opening new parks in Westchester, Dutchess, Ulster and Columbia counties.

The Scenic Hudson Land Trust

Operating expenses totaled \$7.1 million, up 2 percent from the previous year, and included \$2.3 million to purchase conservation easements on eight properties protecting 805 acres. The properties comprise important farmland as well as land that contributes to the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. In addition the land trust purchased five properties protecting 478 acres for \$3.9 million. The purchase of two properties on the Hudson River was sponsored by Kathryn Wasserman Davis with funds from The Shelby Cullom Davis Foundation. The land trust conveyed five conservation properties along Fishkill Ridge and at Stockport Flats to New York State.

Financial Structure

Scenic Hudson maintains two endowments: The Lila Acheson and DeWitt Wallace Hudson Valley Land Preservation Endowment (\$145 million at year-end FY 08) used to support capital costs and expenses related to land acquisitions and conservation easements, and a board-designated fund for general operating expenses (\$7.9 million at year-end FY 08). The assets are pooled in a diversified portfolio supervised by an Investment Committee. Total investment return was -4.3 percent for FY 08. Investment returns annualized since inception were 8.4 percent versus the benchmark at 8 percent. The board sets a spending rate for the endowments; since FY 99, this has been 5 percent of the past 12 quarters' rolling average value. The board engages Marks Paneth & Shron, LLP, to perform an independent audit.

Although lands owned by the land trust are eligible for tax exemption, Scenic Hudson paid \$218,594 in property taxes and payments in lieu of taxes in FY 08 and \$258,931 in FY 07.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

	June 30, 2008	June 30, 2007
Land areas (at cost)	50,311	50,176
Cash and investments	174,465	180,334
Other assets	23,767	22,720
Total assets	248,543	253,230
Liabilities	6,989	852
Net assets	241,554	252,378
Total liabilities and net assets	248,543	253,230

[in thousands]

THANK YOU SUPPORTERS

HUDSON RIVER STEWARDSHIP SOCIETY

INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE INCLUDED
SCENIC HUDSON IN THEIR ESTATE OR
THEIR LONG-TERM FINANCIAL PLANS

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Gifts of \$100,000 and above

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The Shelby Cullom Davis Foundation §
Dyson Foundation §
The Estate of Margaret R. Fraser
The William Randolph Hearst Foundations
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Gifts of \$50,000 and above

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The New York Community Trust
Frederic C. Rich
Cindy and Thomas Secunda
Abbey K. Starr Charitable Trust
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The Seth Sprague Educational &
Charitable Foundation
Julia N. Harte Widdowson and Nigel
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Gifts of \$10,000-\$24,999

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TD Banknorth Charitable Foundation
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Gifts of \$5,000-\$9,999

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Mr. and Mrs. James R. Cameron
Claire C. Carter and Peter C. Gould
Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corp.
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Jonathan Ewig and Linda Novosad Ewig
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Gifts of \$3,000-\$4,999

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Emily J. Klein and Thomas Sugiura
Alison and John Lankenau

Marist College
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Richard and Susan Randolph

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Ned and Tara Sullivan
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Anton F. Wilson and Andrea Rock
Mr. and Mrs. Doug Wilson
Penelope Wilson
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RIVER CHAMPIONS

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American Sugar Refining, Inc.
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Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Berger
Peter Bloom and Janet Greenfield
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“Scenic Hudson looks forward to taking part in the festivities commemorating the 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson’s epic voyage. But after the fireworks have faded, the breathtaking landscapes we protect in our campaign to Save the Land That Matters Most will provide a lasting legacy for generations.”

—Ned Sullivan

Scenic Hudson, Inc.

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