



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sarah Small
Program Assistant
Lake George Land Conservancy
518-644-9673

May 11, 2005

Students Take Part in Arbor Day Celebration

(Putnam, NY)—Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students from St. Mary's School in Ticonderoga got their hands dirty while doing a good deed. On Thursday, April 28, the students joined Lake George Land Conservancy staff, Sarah Small and Chris Krahling, and Lake George Association staff Karin Badey, at Gull Bay Preserve in Putnam in honor of Arbor Day. Students planted fifty tree seedlings at the preserve's entrance to help resolve some erosion and drainage problems, and got the chance to examine some of the preserve's unique natural resources.

The preserve, which is owned and managed by the Lake George Land Conservancy, has erosion issues caused primarily from human disturbance, particularly from people accessing its natural resources and consistent (illegal) ATV use. The trees planted by the students will act as ground stabilizers, helping with water drainage and to decrease soil erosion. This, in turn, will aid in protecting the health of the Lake George watershed as a whole.

“Because the preserve is open year-round to the public,” said Sarah Small, the Conservancy's program assistant, “this stabilization project was an important step in maintaining the health and safety of the property. We want people to be able to come and enjoy its beautiful landscape without having to worry about damaged and eroding trails.”

In addition to planting trees, the students were led by Lake George Land Conservancy and Lake George Association staff on the preserve's trails to explore its spring-time treasures—vernal pools, and its great blue heron rookery. With nets and bug boxes in hand, students discovered amphibian egg masses, lots of newts, and a variety of other creatures of the forest. The migrating great blue herons return to Gull Bay Preserve's nesting area each spring to raise their young and leave around June and July. There were several already sitting on nests.

Students Brooke Connor and Lea Gipson said of the day's activities, “While we were hiking we were learning about many different species of animals and how to protect their habitat—it was definitely a wonderful experience!”

The event was a collaborative effort between the Lake George Land Conservancy and the Lake George Association, in an effort to reach out and educate communities in the northern region of Lake George. Anyone who is interested in learning more about the preserve or about either organization is encouraged to call the Lake George Land Conservancy at (518) 644-9673, or the Lake George Association at (518) 668-3558.

The mission of the Lake George Land Conservancy is to preserve the world-renowned water quality of Lake George and the rare plants and animals within the lake's 150,000-acre watershed by permanently protecting natural lands through conservation easement and fee acquisition.

The Lake George Association is a not-for-profit membership organization of people interested in working together to protect, conserve, and improve the beauty and quality of the Lake George Basin.

###