



CONSERVANCY NEWS

Summer 2012

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www.RELandConservancy.org

Our 25th Anniversary

Rondout Esopus Land Conservancy is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Since 1987, RELC has preserved more than 3,000 acres of forests, farmland, and riparian land from future development, ensuring that the vistas and natural resources that we see today will be preserved for generations to come. Here is a brief chronology of what we have accomplished through the hard work of our dedicated volunteers, generous conservation easement donors, and the communities we serve.

1987

Rondout Valley Land Conservancy, Inc. was founded by Nancy Copley, Philip Davis, Paul Downs, Harry Hansen, Eric Hertz, John Novi, Jack Schoonmaker, Ira Stern, Whitley Strieber and Seward Weber.

RELC received its first conservation easement donation, from the Gorton family. The easement covers 120 acres on Old Kings Highway in Stone Ridge.

RELC also worked with a local developer who purchased an historic farmhouse on Dug Road in Accord. The acreage was divided into two lots and a second house was built, with the remaining land and creek frontage placed under a conservation easement. Local realtor Betty Kawalchuk donated the sales commission from the sale to RELC, marking our first significant cash donation.

1988

The IRS approved RELC's application for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

Ira Stern and Francine Hertz donated a conservation easement on 22 acres on Tow Path Road in Accord. The property on the Rondout Creek contains ruins of the old D&H Canal.

Nancy Copley donated conservation easements on her 70-acre property on Dug and Lang Roads, including five separate permitted residential sites. The site contains a small lake and important wetlands.

Continued on page 2.



"The Cave" an historic limestone mine entrance at Williams Lake

Photo: Zail Win

RELC to Protect 105 acres at Williams Lake

RELC has entered into a memorandum of understanding with Hudson River Valley Resorts LLC (HRVR) under which HRVR will donate a conservation easement covering approximately 105 acres of property adjacent to the former Williams Lake Hotel in Rosendale, NY. Use of the property will be limited to non-motorized recreational activities, with a provision for two small service buildings to support those activities. Ecological research and conservation education activities will also be permitted.

The land includes several historic limestone mines and the remains of structures that were an integral part of Rosendale's Natural Cement industry in the 19th and late 20th Centuries. Some of the former mines are hibernation areas for the Eastern Small-footed bat, (*Myotis leibii*, State-listed Special Concern species), Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*, State and federal-listed Endangered Species) and other cave-dwelling bats. In addition, the property provides habitat for the Pied-billed grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*, State-listed Threatened species), Jefferson's Salamander (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*, State-listed Special Concern species), Marbled Salamander (*Ambystoma opacum*, State-listed Special Concern species), and the Blue-Spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma laterale*, State-listed Special Concern species). Overall, the Williams Lake property supports a rich bio-diversity of flora and fauna.

The proposed conservation easement is adjacent to a separate conservation easement that will be donated to Wallkill Valley Land Trust to continue the path of the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail northward to Kingston and an existing conservation easement donated to RELC in 1999 by Ms. Anita Williams Peck. Overall, the rail trail easement will

create, for the first time, a continuous public access rail trail from Gardiner to Kingston.

"We are very excited about adding land adjacent to our existing 411-acre conservation easement near Williams Lake," said RELC president Rob Rominger, "the combination of the two adjacent conservation easements will substantially increase the level of protection of land surrounding the bat hibernacula for endangered species and provide a large tract for agreed upon recreational uses."

Tim Allred, project manager of HRVR, said, "We are thrilled to see tangible evidence of our commitment to conservation and thank RELC for being such a great partner. This new easement certainly focuses on the protection of the "priority one" bat hibernacula and is an extremely important moment in the protection of the federally-endangered Indiana bat population. However, the easement also protects multiple wetlands (including the "Baitfish Ponds"), stands of rare limestone woodland and remnant industrial artifacts from the cement mining that occurred on the property, including cement kiln walls and "The Cave," a large mine opening used during races by cyclists and trail runners."

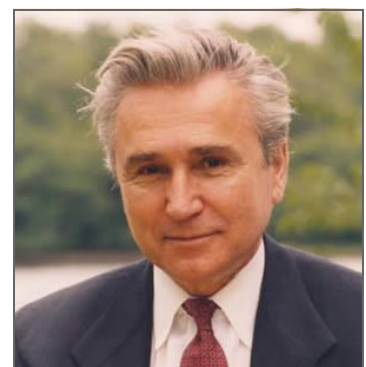
RELC Contributes \$25,000 to Rail Trail Trestle Restoration

RELC recently awarded a \$25,000 grant to Wallkill Valley Land Trust and Open Space Conservancy in support of their efforts to restore the Rosendale Rail Trestle as part of its efforts to expand the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail that will eventually run from Gardiner to Kingston.

Conservancy to Honor Rep. Maurice Hinchey

RELC will honor Congressman Maurice Hinchey for his lifetime support of land conservation, agricultural and environmental issues at its 25th Anniversary celebration on September 15th. Rep. Hinchey will retire from Congress in December after representing NY's 22nd District for ten terms.

Rep. Hinchey has been a strong advocate for American agriculture, focusing on protecting family farms and the safety of the food supply. He is a firm defender of America's natural resources, especially our national parks and wilderness areas. Rep. Hinchey authored legislation that would designate more than nine million acres of federal land in Utah as permanent wilderness, thereby protecting some of the nation's most spectacular landscapes, rare pictographs and fragile lands.



Rep. Hinchey is a leader in efforts to protect drinking water and the environment from the risks of hydraulic fracturing. He is a coauthor of the FRAC Act, which would mandate public disclosure of chemicals used in frack fluid and close a loophole in order to allow the EPA to regulate fracking activities under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The congressman also authored the appropriations language that led to the current EPA study on hydraulic fracturing.

Rep. Hinchey has worked to position upstate New York as a leader in the high-tech, clean energy manufacturing sector. With the goal of establishing a national and international hub for solar energy research, development and manufacturing, he led the effort to establish The Solar Energy Consortium.

Rep. Hinchey led the effort to preserve Sterling Forest, the last significant area of open space in the New York metropolitan region and an important regional watershed. He also introduced legislation that created the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.

Before entering Congress in 1993, Rep. Hinchey served 18 years in the New York State Assembly. Rep. Hinchey was raised in Manhattan's Lower West Side and served in the U.S. Navy. He attended SUNY New Paltz and earned a masters degree. He has three children and lives in Saugerties, NY.

See invitation on Page 2

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RELC
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Working with landowners to preserve special open places

1988, continued

RELC received significant gifts from the Kaplan Foundation, the NY State Council on the Arts, Betty Kawalchuk, and Sidney and Brenda Reiss.

1989

In an attempt to block the proposed development of Parc Europe, a large amusement park in Wawarsing, RELC attempted to purchase the nearby Gordon Davenport Farm. The Parc Europe project was never consummated.

Ira Stern was hired as RELC's first executive director.

Eric Hertz and Whitley and Ann Strieber donated a conservation easement covering 130 acres on the Saunderskill in Accord.

Whitley Strieber donated a conservation easement on ten acres on Hemlock Road in Accord.

Clarence and Jane Hansen donated a conservation easement on two historic farms on Old Kings Highway and Lucas Avenue in High Falls covering approximately 350 acres. The late Mr. and Mrs. Hansen are the parents of Harry Hansen, a RELC founder.

A 50-acre conservation easement was donated by Robert and Vivian Toan covering property on the Esopus Creek on Ashokan Road in Marbletown.

RELC received a \$60,000 grant to conduct a hydrology study of the Shawangunk Ridge.

1990

Lawrence Friedman and Michele Hertz donated an easement covering about six acres on Stony Kill Road in Accord.

Elizabeth Bradow donated 16 acres of land located near the Vly in Marbletown. RELC placed a conservation easement on the property and sold it to a neighbor. Separately, John Kander donated a conservation easement on adjacent property.

1991

Virginia Smith Boyce Schoonmaker donated the former post office on Creek Road in Alligerville to RELC for use as its headquarters; the building is now named in her honor.

Ginny Luppino designed RELC's logo.

Gertrude Suepfle donated a conservation easement covering 49.5 acres of farmland and nine ponds on Peak Road in Marbletown. Mrs. Suepfle recently celebrated her 100th birthday and still resides in the historic farmhouse.

Lois Weidner Langthorn donated a conservation easement in memory of her husband Charles, covering 254 acres of forest in Olive.

Charles and Nancy Sass donated a conservation easement covering 46.7 acres, including important wetlands, on Lapla Road in Marbletown.

1992

RELC renovated its headquarters building with generous support from local contractors and furniture donated by IBM.

Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy invites you to join us in celebrating our 25th year

**Saturday, September 15th
3:30 to 5:30 pm**

**Feather Farm
2545 Lucas Avenue, High Falls
(just south of Rest Plaus Road)**

**Refreshments and light fare
All are welcome!**

Walter and Lila Croen donated an 11-acre conservation easement on Tow Path Road in Accord. The Rondout Creek property is adjacent to land that RELC already protects.

John and Jane Bierhorst donated a 1.2-acre conservation easement on Watson Hollow Road in Olive. The property is on the banks of the Esopus Creek.

Dewitt and Marjorie Hasbrouck donated a 65-acre conservation easement on Mohonk Road in Marbletown, including creek frontage.

1993

Mrs. Margaret Warren notified RELC that she named RELC the principal beneficiary of her estate, including 70 acres in Denning. RELC's Warren Society was later established in her honor.

1994

Susun Weed donated a 55-acre conservation easement in Sauger-ties on Fish Creek Road. The property includes interesting rock formations and natural gardens.

1995

Heritage Energy donated a heating system for RELC's headquarters.

Louis Resnick gave seed money to start an endowment fund for RELC that continues to this day.

Renee Hertz donated a 2.7-acre conservation easement in Raycliff Estates in Accord.

1996

James Eddy, Barbara Hart and Joanne Click, along with Junius Eddy, donated an easement covering a buffer zone along the Esopus Creek on Stillwater Road in Marbletown.

College Auxiliary Services (SUNY New Paltz) donated an easement on a 66-acre parcel on Beaverkill Road on the Marbletown/Olive Line. This property is adjacent to the Ashokan Center.

James and Marjorie Dunbar donated an easement covering 79.8 acres on Ashokan Road in Marbletown. The property is on the Esopus Creek.

1997

Rene Bouplon was hired as executive director.

1998

The Estate of Bowen Northrup donated a 56-acre conservation easement on Bogart's Lane in Stone Ridge. The property includes forest and farmland surrounding an historic stone house.

Gary Tinterow & James Joseph donated a 14-acre conservation easement off Rose Hill Road in Marbletown, adjacent to The Vly, an important wetlands system.

1999

Ulster County Construction Company, Inc. (Anita Peck, President) donated a 411-acre easement adjacent to Williams Lake in Rosendale in honor of Walter Williams. This conservation easement is the largest in RELC's portfolio. We are in discussions with the Hudson River Valley Resorts to add a further 105 acres into an adjacent conservation easement. (See article on Page 1.)

Janet Leas and Leslie Mather donated a 60-acre farmland and forest conservation easement on Buck Road in Marbletown.

The estate of Alice Dunbar donated a conservation easement on 44 acres on Ashokan Road in Marbletown. This property abuts the Esopus Creek.

Anstiss Morrill donated a conservation easement on 61 acres on Burr's Crossing in Rosendale. This contains high cliffs over the Rondout Creek.

2000

Isobel Contento donated a conservation easement on 40 acres of farmland and forest on Stony Road in Accord.

Francine Hertz donated a conservation easement on 120 acres on Stony Road in Accord. This forested property contains beautiful views of the Rondout Valley and abuts the Saunderskill Creek.

2001

Virginia Schoonmaker donated a conservation easement on her 20-acre farm in on the Rondout Creek in Alligerville. It is adjacent to the post office property that she had previously donated for use as RELC's office.

2002

Muriel Smolen donated a 105-acre conservation easement on Eagles Nest Road in Hurley.

Martin Hird donated a conservation easement on 8.9 acres on Route 213 in Olivebridge. The property includes a buffer along the Tongorekill Creek.

Floyd and Phyllis Glinert donated a 56-acre conservation easement on Van Wagner Road in Esopus. The historic farm is on the banks of the Rondout Creek.

Keith Abell donated a conservation easement on Beaverkill Road in Marbletown. The easement provides a buffer zone along the Esopus Creek.

2003

Arthur Weyhe donated an easement on 224 acres in Marbletown and Hurley. The property includes important wetlands, farmland and forest.

2006

Barbara Arum donated an easement on 21.6 acres on Hill Road in Accord. The property includes important wetlands, flora and fauna.

2007

RELC received a bequest from the estate of Renee Hertz. Mrs. Hertz's family includes RELC founder Eric Hertz, Ira and Francine Hertz, and Michele Hertz and her husband Lawrence Friedman, all of whom have played an important role in RELC's success.

RELC sold the home and land donated by Margaret Warren to the NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection to use as watershed buffer, allowing it to return to its natural state.

2009

RELC received a conservation easement donation from Neeraj Bewtra on 90 acres on Beaverkill Road in Marbletown. The property includes forest along the Esopus Creek.

Ron and Barbara Schade donated an easement on 18 acres on Burr's Crossing in Rosendale, including property along the Rondout Creek.

RELC initiated a two-year project to complete new "baseline" reports that document property conditions on all its easements in accordance with new Land Trust Alliance standards and practices. Josh Clague prepared most of the new reports with GIS photography and mapping, partially funded by an LTA grant.

2010

Peter Hales and Maureen Pskowski donated a 21-acre conservation easement on Old Kings Highway in Marbletown. The Rest Plaus Historic District is an area in which RELC has protected nearly 500 acres.

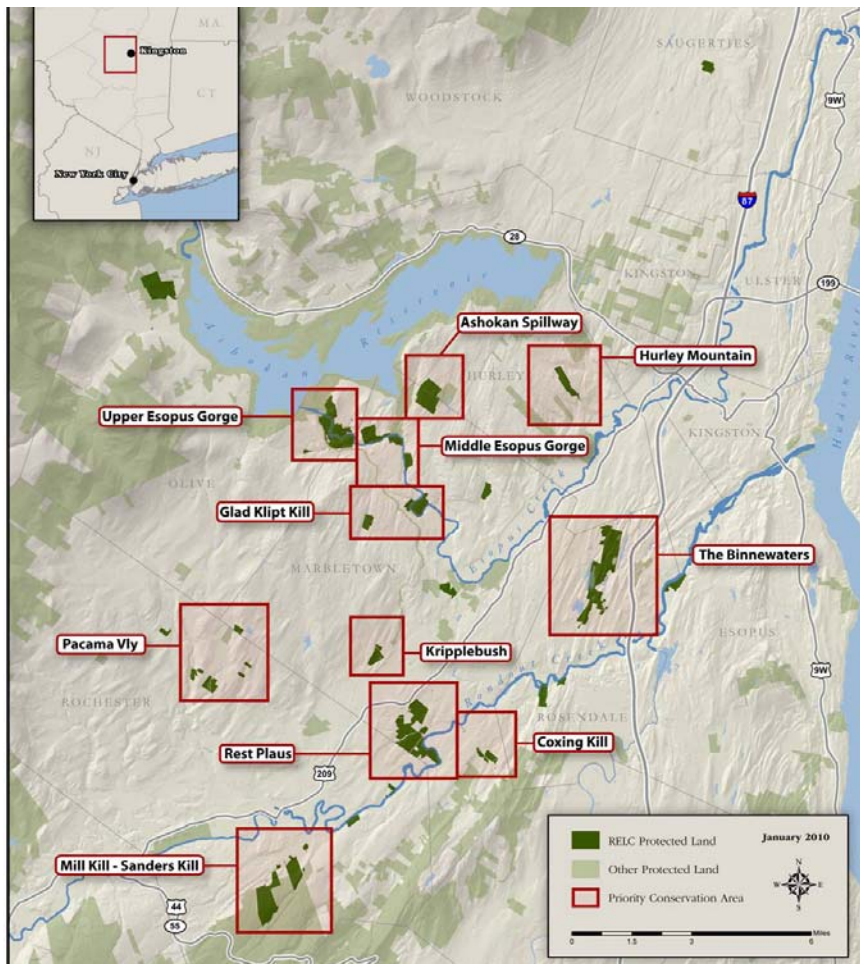
2011

Hans Fetscherin donated a conservation easement on 4.4 acres on Lang Road from Hans Fetscherin. This property is adjacent to some of the lands that were protected in 1989.

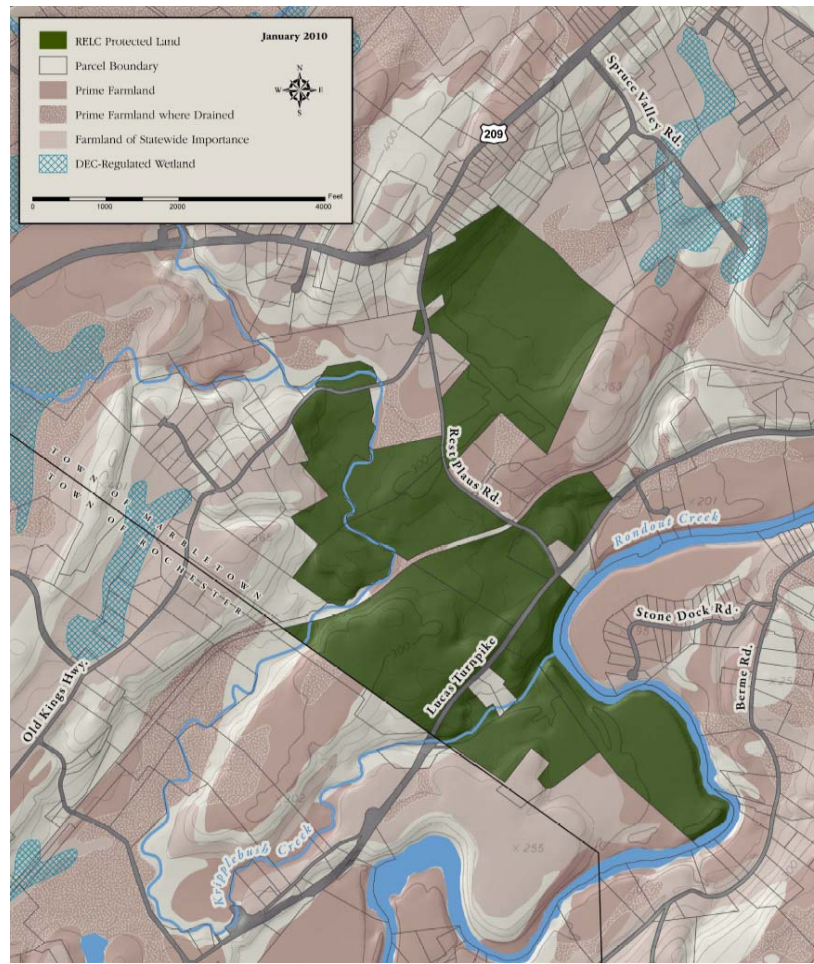
2012 – Our 25th Year

RELC announced plans to seek accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance.

RELC donated \$25,000 to Walkkill Valley Land Trust to support WVLT's efforts to restore the Rosendale Railroad Trestle for use as part of a planned rail trail expansion.



A map of our conservation easement locations



Rest Plaus Historic District, Marbletown

What is a Land Conservancy?

A land conservancy, or land trust, is a local non-profit organization dedicated to the permanent preservation of open space lands such as agricultural, forest, watershed, and other natural and scenic land. The 1,500 or so land trusts in the United States share a common commitment to using voluntary initiatives in the protection of undeveloped lands and work directly with private landowners by offering tools such as conservation easements, some of which permit agricultural business activity and limited development. RELC generally concentrates west of the Shawangunks and south of Route 28 in Ulster County.

RELC's Conservation Properties

These maps show the properties that the Conservancy has protected in perpetuity. If you would like to discuss preserving your land, please call Rob Rominger 845-626-7174 or email: info@RELandConservancy.org

Thank you Josh Clague for preparing these maps.

What is a Conservation Easement?

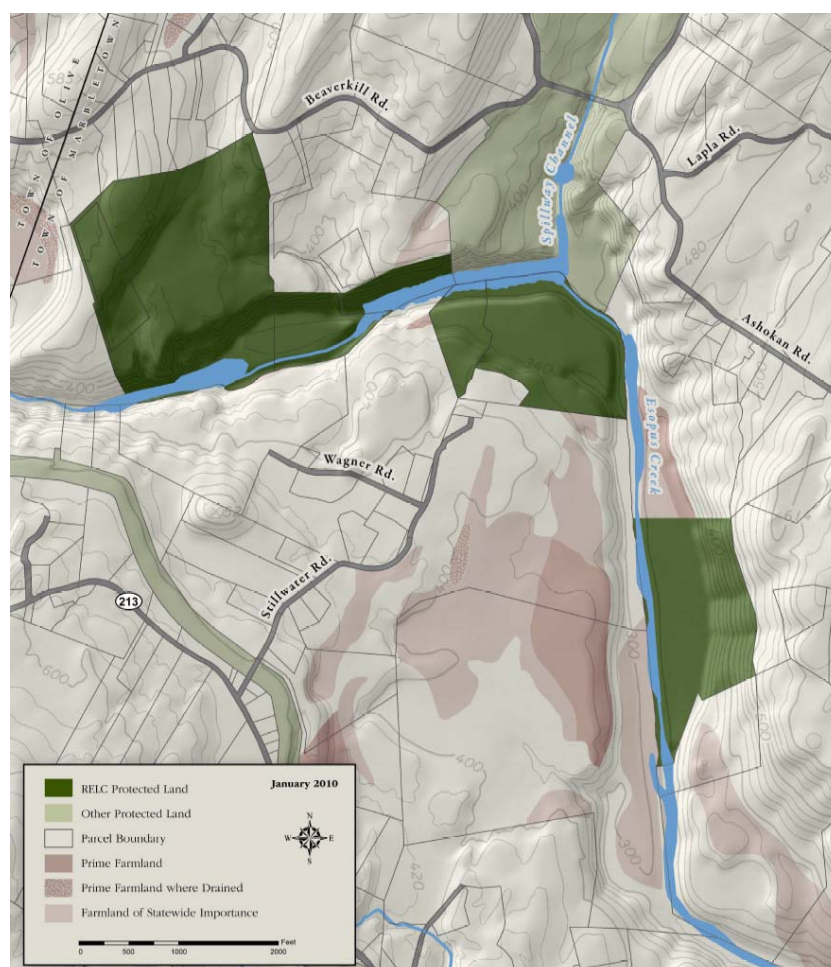
A conservation easement is given in perpetuity and runs with the title to the property. It is donated to the land trust, which monitors the property periodically and can legally enforce the easement terms. In many cases, the donation of a conservation easement can provide significant federal and state income tax deduction. Conservation easements can also provide an efficient way to reduce costly estate taxes on family lands. RELC can work with individual landowners to develop long-term plans for the preservation and development of a property in a way that maintains the property's value while preserving its character. We can also work with groups of landowners to protect and enhance areas so that neighbors collectively determine the future of their area.

A land trust operates solely in the private sector working directly with private property owners. The backbone of private land preservation is the "conservation easement," which is a legally binding, voluntary agreement between a land owner and a land trust. This agreement protects the land from future haphazard development by specifying where development can take place (if future development is desired). In this way, natural and scenic features of a property can be preserved while a reasonable amount of development can occur on the part of the property that has the least natural and scenic value.

To learn more, visit our website, www.RELandConservancy.org



Upper Esopus Gorge



Middle Esopus Gorge



CONSERVANCY NEWS

A word of thanks to our recent donors, whose generosity is greatly appreciated.

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Deceased.
Please advise us of any errors or omissions.



Photo: Stefan Lisowsky

Hiking in the Levy/Moncrief Easement, Accord

Join us!

Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy depends upon your support to keep our open country land productive and beautiful.

- | | | | |
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Please make your check payable to "RELC" and mail your tax-deductible contribution to:
Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy, Inc.
PO Box 144
Accord, NY 12404

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Copies of our financial statements can be obtained by contacting us above.



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