

# RIDGE TIMES



The Official Newsletter of the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy, Inc.—a 501(c)(3) Corporation

February, 2012 Vol. II, Issue 1

[ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org](http://ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org)

## 2011: An “Event-Full” Year for Chestnut Ridge Park!

The Chestnut Ridge Conservancy has proclaimed 2011 a huge success with the reintroduction of the park to a whole new audience of Western New Yorkers.

The summer of 2011 was particularly eventful, thanks in no small part to a very cooperative Mother Nature. The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra kicked it off with a very well-attended concert on July 1. Patriotic music was the



order of the day, and an estimated 5,000 people enjoyed a magnificent evening of Sousa and sunshine. Our dedicated CRC volunteers passed the hat and distributed American flags. The

Conservancy collected more than \$4,100 dollars from the generous crowd.

In July, the Conservancy (led by Public Outreach Chairman **Ron Michnik**) held its first free outdoor movie on the sledding hill. The 1942 classic *Casablanca* was shown in hi-definition to a small but enthusiastic audience. The free popcorn and a magnificent sunset for the attendees were big hits as well.



In August, our second movie was *The Princess Bride*. The addition of s'mores and beverages were quite popular with the significantly larger family crowd. The Conservancy wishes to thank **Arthur's Hardware** and **Arthur's Home Furnishings** for their generous donation that made these movies possible. We also wish to thank the many volunteers

that set up, manned the booths, and cleaned up afterwards.

We plan to have more movies this summer and look forward to seeing you and your friends there.



### Other 2011 CRC Accomplishments

- Established a permanent office in the former first-aid room at the Casino.
- Installed map dispensers throughout the Park to house CRC-produced maps of **Chestnut Ridge Park** showing paved roads, shelter locations, and points of interest.
- Developed and installed three pet waste disposal stations as prototypes for park-wide installation.
- Installed a concrete pad for a memorial bench paid for by the friends and family of Chestnut Ridge Park enthusiast **Thomas J. Browne**.
- Installed a concrete pad around the perimeter of the flagpole at the Casino in preparation for lighting the flag and surrounding it with a garden.
- Mounted a vintage (1938), handmade oak toboggan in the Casino. Thanks to **Carolyn Mooney** who donated this treasure in memory of her father who built it.
- Provided a generous contribution to the *Greater Niagara Frontier Council of the Boy Scouts of America* in support of their massive **Legacy 11** project to refurbish our beautiful park. See pages 4-5.



### Volunteer Position Available

General Secretary to take CRC board meeting minutes, transcribe and distribute them to board members. Expansion to paid position is possible. Email resume and cover letter to [secretary@ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org](mailto:secretary@ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org).



## Calling All Volunteers!

Organizations rely heavily on volunteers; the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy is no different. Your generous donation of time can be very rewarding. If you have not been contacted in the past and are interested in volunteering, please send your name, telephone number, and email address to [volunteers@ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org](mailto:volunteers@ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org). We will make sure your name is on the list of Chestnut Ridge Conservancy volunteers.

When volunteers are needed for various CRC-sponsored events, you will be notified via email. If you wish to help, we will find a way for you to contribute. Many thanks for your support of the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy.



## Transitions ...

Congratulations to **Mark C. Poloncarz** on his victory in the November Erie County elections. We also wish to congratulate newly appointed Parks Commissioner **Troy Schinzel** and Deputy Parks Commissioner **Dan Glowacki**. We look forward to continuing the collaborative CRC/county relationship with the new administration.

We also wish to express our sincere gratitude to outgoing County Executive **Chris Collins**, Erie County Parks Commissioner **James Hornung**, and Deputy Parks Commissioner/CRC Board Member **Stan Jemiolo** for their ardent support and unwavering commitment to the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy cause.

## CRC Capital Project Plans

The Chestnut Ridge Conservancy exists to help keep our park vibrant and beautiful. One of our objectives is to identify capital projects (big and small) that would improve the park and then help to make them happen.

The following is a partial list of projects in the works:

### MINOR PROJECTS

#### Completed:

- Park Maps & Mailboxes
- Pet Waste Disposal Stations

#### Underway:

- CRC Office Renovation
- Flagpole Landscaping & Lighting
- Thomas E. Brown Memorial



### MAJOR PROJECTS

- Trail Mapping & Signage
- Park Signage & Lighting
- Meditation Garden
- Park Information Center
- Casino Murals Restoration



Sincere thanks to CRC Founding Trustee Jack Bertsch of **Polymer Conversions, Inc.** for his generous contributions and his extensive legwork in bringing both the Map Mailboxes and the Pet Waste Disposal projects to fruition.

## About the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy

### Mission Statement

*The Chestnut Ridge Conservancy was formed to support the restoration and preservation of the rich natural, recreational, and historic resources that comprise Chestnut Ridge Park.*

### Chestnut Ridge Conservancy, Inc.

P. O. Box 1376

Orchard Park, NY 14127

web: [ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org](http://ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org)

email: [info@ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org](mailto:info@ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org)

Facebook: [Facebook.com/ChestnutRidgeConservancy](https://www.facebook.com/ChestnutRidgeConservancy)

Our office is located at the Casino in Chestnut Ridge Park.

Ridge Times Editor: William C. Even, Marketing Consultant

*The Chestnut Ridge Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) corporation.*

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### Board of Trustees

Chairman: Raymond Fabiniak

President: John C. Bailey

Vice President: Ed Starosielec

Treasurer: Jack Bertsch

Directors: Janet Benjamins

David M. Buyer

Erin Grajek

Marilyn Heim

Justine LeFauve

Michael Merritt

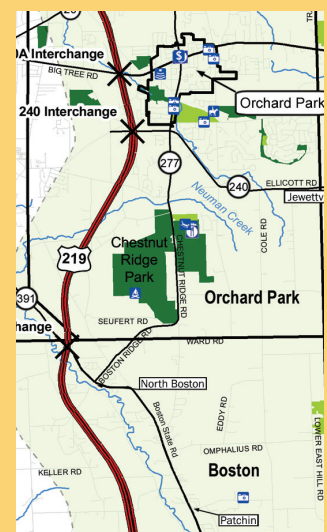
Ronald J. Michnik

Diane Morse

Michael Neumeister

Paul Powell

Bill Thornton



## CRC Board of Directors Biographies

Our board is comprised of fifteen dedicated volunteers who donate their time, talent, and resources to help make our organization and our park the best they can be. We will profile several of our trustees in each newsletter.

### John Bailey

Orchard Park native John Bailey is President and one of the Founding Trustees of the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy. John has a law practice in Orchard Park and serves as the Orchard Park Town Attorney. He is a playing member of the Orchard Park Symphony and serves on its board of directors. He is also chairman of the Orchard Park Economic Development Committee.

John's involvement with the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy grew out of the **Economic Development Committee Strategic Plan Project** which identified a restored Chestnut Ridge Park as a vital economic engine for the town economy.



### Jack Bertsch

CRC Founding Trustee Jack Bertsch is the Founder and President of **Polymer Conversions Inc.** Based in Orchard Park, PCI is a contract manufacturer to the medical industry, with 100 employees and \$12 million in annual sales.

Jack is a veteran of the U.S. Navy. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Boy Scouts of America Greater Niagara Frontier Council. He is also a supporter of the Ilio DiPaolo Scholarship Fund, the Buffalo Zoo, The USS Slater DE766 Museum in Albany, The Boys and Girls Club of Orchard Park, the Orchard Park Little League, and numerous other volunteer groups.



### Marilyn Heim

CRC Founding Trustee Marilyn Heim is a long-time banker and currently holds the position of Vice President and Branch Manager at M&T Bank in East Aurora.

This civic-minded Orchard Park resident has served twelve years on the board of the Orchard Park Chamber of Commerce, including three years as President. Marilyn serves on the Board of Directors at Hawk Creek and the Western New York Land Conservancy, and is the assistant treasurer of the Orchard Park Symphony.

### David M. Buyer

One of the CRC's Founding Trustees, Dave brings to the Conservancy over 45 years of diverse experience that includes military intelligence, corporate business management in both large and small companies, elected/appointed local and state government positions, business consulting, and undergraduate college teaching. A retired Orchard Park Town Councilman, he is currently an adjunct Professor at both Daemen College and Erie Community College where he teaches undergraduate Business and Human Resource Management courses.



### Erin Grajek

Orchard Park village resident and CRC Board Member Erin Grajek grew up in East Aurora. Chestnut Ridge has been an important part of her life as her family has lived in Orchard Park for well over 50 years.

A Canisius College graduate, Erin is currently the Director of Marketing at the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens. Erin is also a volunteer with Buffalo Spree, Shea's Performing Arts Center and served on A Taste of Buffalo's board of directors for many years.



### With Gratitude ...

Sincere thanks to **Jim Keefe** of **The Bonadio Group** for donating tax preparation services to the CRC again this year. Donations like these allow us to use your donations on actual improvements to the park instead of administrative expenses.

## Questions About the Park?

While the Conservancy is always happy to take your questions about the park, very often the best place for answers is the Erie County Parks Department.

Whether you wish to reserve a shelter or the Casino for a private affair, or you want to share your ideas or concerns about the park itself, you can:

- Call the Erie County Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department at **(716) 858-8355**
- Visit the Erie County Parks, Recreation and Forestry website at **[www2.Erie.gov/parks](http://www2.Erie.gov/parks)**





## The CRC Helps The Boy Scouts' Legacy 11 Project

During the 2011 Columbus Day weekend, over 800 Boy Scouts camped out at Chestnut Ridge Park and spent three days performing service and completing numerous work projects to benefit the park.

Projects performed by the scouts as part of **Legacy 11** included teaming up with the Safari Club to construct a 75 foot fishing pier on the lake at which has been closed to the public for over 30 years.

The scouts also rebuilt the deck area and applied new paint to a bridge located at the lake near the Commissioner's Cabin. A badly deteriorated bathroom facility was transformed by the scouts into a winter warming station. New walls were built, the roof replaced, interior tables and benches were constructed, and a wood heating stove installed.

A crew of scouts worked diligently on the Deputy Commissioner's Cabin, completing interior and exterior repairs. The cabin, which could not be rented due to damage, received new windows and doors, a new paint job, and repairs to the roof.

Scouts built picnic tables and benches to be used throughout the park. They refurbished dozens of tables and benches within shelter areas and planted trees.

Scouts also performed trail work on the Eternal Flame hiking trail. They cleared the trail for a new entrance, repaired areas damaged by erosion, marked the trail with new flame trail markers and installed twelve informational nature signs. The intent of the signs is to educate hikers as they walk along the trail. In total, scouts performed over 15,000 service hours through during **Legacy 11** for the County Parks.

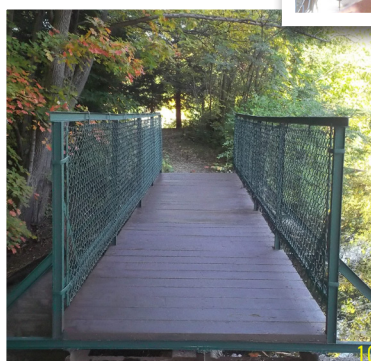
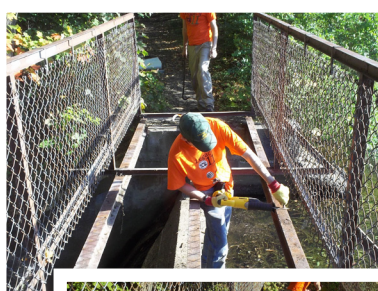
*Ed. Note: The CRC's generous contribution helped to feed the scouts and purchase some of the building materials.*



Article courtesy of Mona Lloyd. Page 4 photos courtesy of Mike Merritt.



## A Look at Legacy 11



Bridge Work

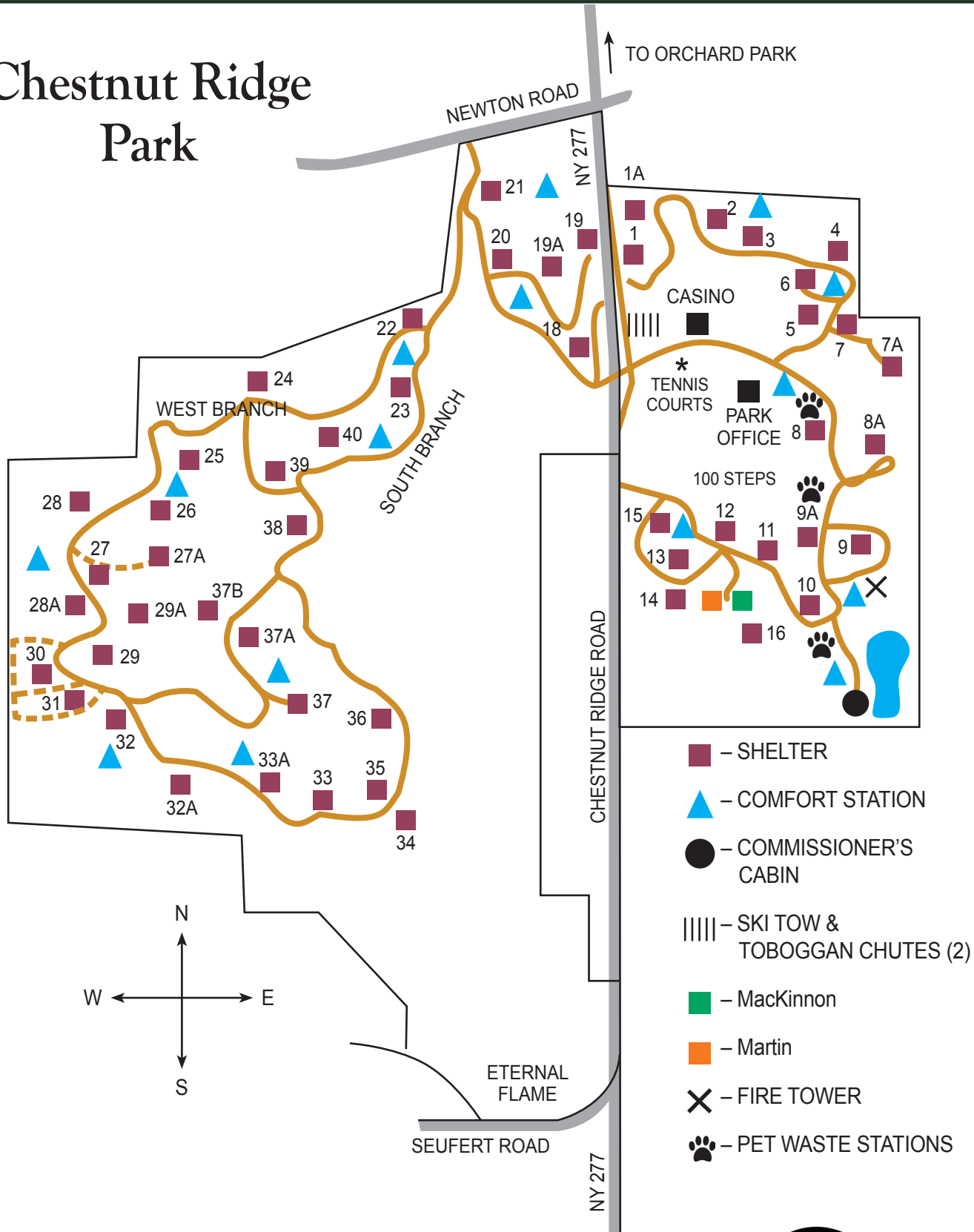


Fishing Pier



Warming Station

# Chestnut Ridge Park



Enjoy this map with compliments of the  
Chestnut Ridge Conservancy.

Please join us at [www.ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org](http://www.ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org)







# CHESTNUT RIDGE *Conservancy*

In an effort to assist the County of Erie in restoring and maintaining Chestnut Ridge Park in the midst of budget cuts and rising expenses, a dedicated group of concerned citizens has come together to form the ***Chestnut Ridge Conservancy***.

This not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization was established to support the restoration and preservation of the rich natural, recreational, and historic resources that comprise our own Chestnut Ridge Park.

We are working with the Erie County Parks Department to:

- Define projects that need to be completed
- Raise funds through the generosity of corporations, community groups, and citizens
- Sponsor events to raise awareness and encourage county residents to take advantage of the park's facilities and scenery

**We need your help to carry out our mission!**

*Please consider donating to our worthy cause. Simply complete the form below and include it with your check made out to ...*

## Chestnut Ridge Conservancy

P. O. Box 1376

Orchard Park, NY 14127

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please add me to your email mailing list.

Email: [info@ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org](mailto:info@ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org)

Web: [ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org](http://ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org)

Facebook: [Facebook.com/ChestnutRidgeConservancy](https://www.facebook.com/ChestnutRidgeConservancy)

## Will You Help Us Revitalize Chestnut Ridge Park?

The **Chestnut Ridge Conservancy** is working to restore our local treasure. Your assistance is critical! Please select your membership level and return this slip with a check for your tax-deductible contribution made payable to ***Chestnut Ridge Conservancy***.

**Thank you for your support!**

Join on-line at:

[ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org/membership](http://ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org/membership)

### Annual Membership Levels:

Sustaining Membership	\$100
Household Membership	\$50
Individual Membership	\$30
Community Groups	\$125
Conservationist	\$500
Preservationist	\$2,500
<hr/>	
Small Business	\$1,000
Company	\$2,500
Corporate	\$5,000

Conservationist, Small Business, Preservationist, Company, and Corporate levels will be recognized on the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy Patrons board inside the Chestnut Ridge Casino.

### ***I Would Like to Volunteer!***

I am interested in helping with:

- ☐ Fund Raising
- ☐ Events Planning
- ☐ Event Setup, Cleanup, and Activities
- ☐ Administrative Tasks



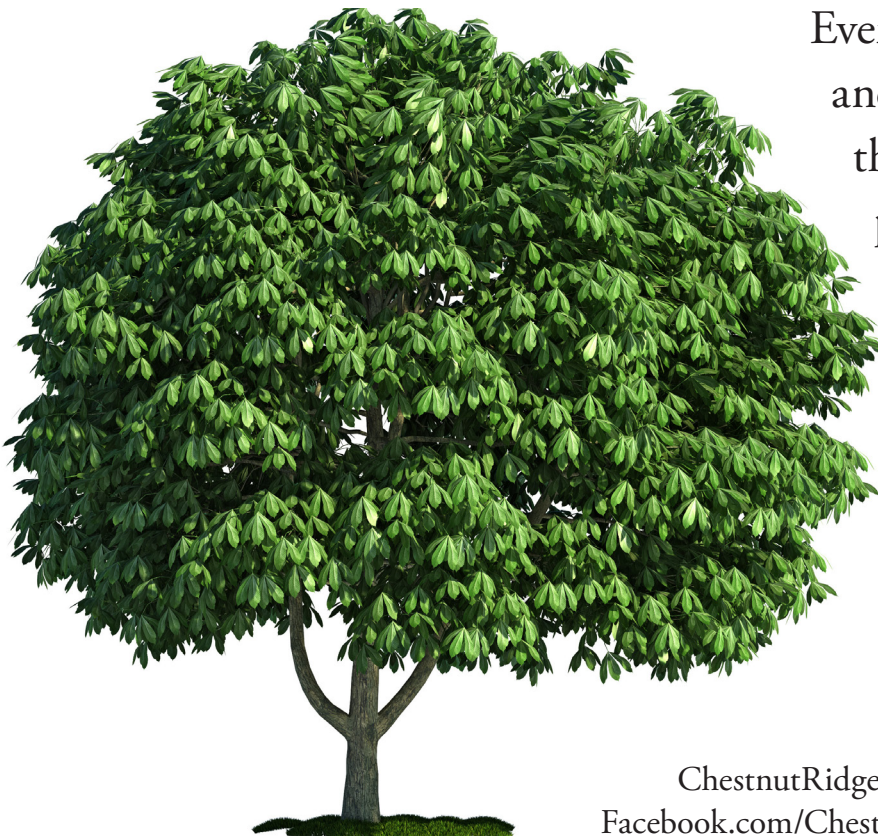


# CHESTNUT RIDGE *Conservancy*

## *Save the Date!*

### *Chestnut Ridge Conservancy 2012 Annual Meeting*

- Saturday, May 12, 2012 at 11:00am
- Chestnut Ridge Park—shelter TBD
- Refreshments and Lunch will be served



Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend and learn more about the park and the successes of the CRC over the past year.

For details, Like us on Facebook and join our mailing list.

We look forward to seeing you in May!

ChestnutRidgeConservancy.org  
Facebook.com/ChestnutRidgeConservancy

