



Southern Madison Heritage Trust

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Serving the six towns of Brookfield, Eaton,
Georgetown, Hamilton Lebanon, and Madison

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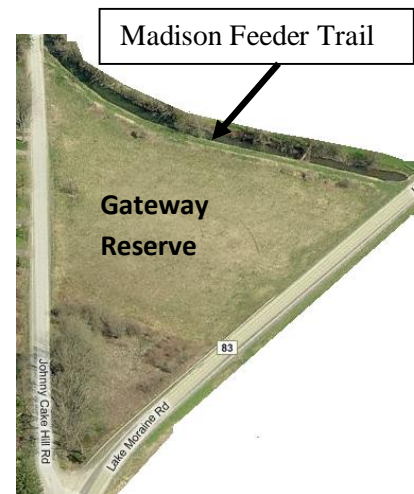
August 11, 2014

Greetings from the Board of Southern Madison Heritage Trust.



Good news in every area of our work -- that is our message to you this year. We want to report on the progress of our new property, on the Conservation Easement on another, and on our growing partnerships locally and beyond.

The Gateway Reserve in the Town of Madison, one mile North of the Village of Hamilton, a 4.4 acre parcel purchased with donor funds last year, and pictured here in an aerial view, has been the focus of funding by the Mid-York Foundation and the Land Trust Alliance. These funds will be used for a Management Plan; parking for visitors; a walking path to provide easy access to the Madison Feeder Trail, as well as to other sections of the Reserve; and educational opportunities for elementary school students. Named for its "gateway" characteristics, this parcel at the intersection of Johnnycake Hill Road and Lake Moraine Road, connects the Madison Feeder Trail to the east to Payne Creek and west through a Chenango Canal Association owned property to Route 12B.



SMHT has been successful in getting grants from the Mid-York Foundation and the New York Office of the national Land Trust Alliance to provide improvements for public access to the property and the Madison Feeder Trail. A small parking area, fencing, an information kiosk, benches and wetland improvements are envisioned. These funds are dedicated to the improvements and long-term stewardship of the property and may not be used for normal SMHT operations. For this reason, we need to continue fund raising to support our activities.

A second property in Madison, 25.6 acres, now has a Conservation Easement on it because of the forethought and generous efforts of a landowner. This property has additional educational potential, borders the Madison Feeder and has a wonderful waterfall. We envision this property to be a destination reached via the Madison Feeder Trail from the Gateway Reserve. There are significant challenges in achieving this goal. The feeder trail is on the side of the feeder opposite the property, requiring a bridge or boardwalk from the trail to the conserved property. We will need to work with the NY State Canal

Authority to get permission for this construction. In our initial contacts, the Canal Authority has already expressed interest in improving public access to the trail and nearby properties and we will be pursuing this goal next year.

SMHT board members partner with a variety of non-profits and landowners in New York, in the course of our work to preserve open space and natural resources. We work regularly with the Chenango Canal Association, the Chenango Land Trust, the national Land Trust Alliance (LTA) through the New York State section of the LTA, The Nature Conservancy, and New York State Parks and Trails.

Because we have a **strong educational component** in our mission, we offer a full outdoor program to



the 5th graders at Hamilton Central School, shown exploring the stream at the Leland Reserve. This program completed its seventh year in the spring. The teachers at Hamilton Central School are enthusiastic about continuing the program. We were contacted by a SUNY Morrisville professor who assigned a class project to design landscape plans for the Gateway Reserve. We are regular recipients of Colgate Upstate Institute Summer Fellows. Our partnerships extend to local municipalities, in particular the Village of Hamilton and the Town of Hamilton. A strategic plan for the six-town region was prepared for SMHT by the Cornell Planning Department. It guides our goals and activities and provides data which can

assist in the current Hamilton Town Comprehensive Planning process.

As SMHT becomes more visible in our six-township community, we are fortunate to receive inquiries from a number of other non-profits, landowners, etc. A trail maintenance project with folks from Heritage Farm is being planned, another great partnership we anticipate. We work closely with our neighbor to the south, the Chenango Land Trust and we are recognized as an active and pioneering all-volunteer land trust by the Land Trust Alliance.

Grant funds we have received are dedicated to property stewardship and improvements and may not be applied to operations. We require assistance from generous donors to cover our operating costs, such as liability insurance for properties open to the public, our 5th grade program with the Hamilton Central School, outreach to the community, printing and similar office costs. As an all-volunteer organization, 100% of donations are used to run the organization. We cover travel and LTA meetings at our personal expense.

No newsletter is complete without a request for support. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to SMHT. Your donation will help enable SMHT to continue its valuable work of conserving open space in our six-town area. Check out www.SMHT.org for more information about us and our activities.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harvey L. Kliman". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Harvey L. Kliman, President