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PRESS RELEASE

Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy’s Updated Preserve Signs Honor the Indigenous History of the Bozen Kill Conservation Corridor

DELMAR, NY – August 30, 2022: To properly acknowledge the rich indigenous history of the lands they protect, Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy (MHLC) has updated the permanent kiosk signage at the Bozen Kill Preserve in Altamont, New York and the Wolf Creek Falls Preserve in the Town of Knox, New York. The preserves are a part of the greater Bozenkill Conservation Corridor, a 400+ acre conservation corridor protected by MHLC that aligns with the organization’s larger vision of connecting the Catskills to the Adirondacks. The new signs, installed earlier this month, will be officially unveiled at an event scheduled for Friday, September 16, at noon at the Bozen Kill Preserve.

The updated kiosk signs were funded by Suzette Tanis-Plant, daughter of Doris and Henri Plant, who helped MHLC acquire the Bozen Kill Preserve nearly a decade ago. The 2014 acquisition was made possible by partnerships with Albany County and the Open Space Institute, support from The Nature Conservancy through the Doris and Henri Plant Land Acquisition Fund, and the Becker Family.

Suzette Tanis-Plant played a key role in the project to update the kiosk signs, becoming engaged after observing the old preserve signs’ narrow historical depiction of the land. With the groundwork established by their newly released Indigenous Land Acknowledgment (November 2021) and a desire to take meaningful actions to support it, MHLC gratefully accepted Tanis-Plant’s offer to fully fund new signage at the Bozen Kill and Wolf Creek Falls Preserves.

MHLC Executive Director Mark Kings states, “It is so important that we recognize the entire history of the lands the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy preserves. The arrival of Europeans in North America often overshadows the rich cultural history and unique perspectives of the indigenous peoples who inhabited these lands long before. This small step of recognition helps open our minds to a more accurate historical perspective and a deeper understanding of our past that can bring us toward to a more enlightened and inclusive future.”

In a statement she provided to MHLC, Suzette Tanis-Plant writes, “Asked to provide some words as to my engagement in this project, let me say we must not forget that land acknowledgment includes acknowledging indigenous wisdom. I, therefore, take this opportunity to stand back and highlight the wisdom-filled words of Luther Standing Bear:

“Nature was not dangerous but hospitable, not forbidding but friendly. Our faith sought the harmony of man with his surroundings. The other sought the dominance of surroundings. For us, the world was full of beauty. For the other, it was a place to be endured until he went to another world. But we were wise. We knew that man’s heart, away from nature, becomes hard.”
With this now in mind, I am all the more thankful that the MHLC is safeguarding places in nature which keep the human heart beating with sensitivity.”

The new kiosk signs at the Bozen Kill and Wolf Creek Falls Preserves now give visitors a broader historical view of the preserves. The Board and Staff of the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy would like to thank Suzette Tanis-Plant for her inspiration and contribution that brought this project to completion.

It is important to note that the prior completion of MHLC’s Indigenous Land Acknowledgment provided the foundation for the preserve kiosk sign revisions. For their valuable input and perspective that shaped MHLC’s Indigenous Land Acknowledgment statement, MHLC would like to express sincere gratitude to Heather Bruegl of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Kay Olan of the Mohawk Community, and David Arquette of the Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force. MHLC would also like to thank MHLC Board Member Bill Little and MHLC Volunteer Jeff Gregg, who were critical in getting this work done.

About Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy

The Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy’s mission is to conserve and steward lands and waters of the Mohawk and Hudson River Valleys for the benefit of people and the environment. We have protected more than 13,000 acres of land in Albany, Schenectady, and Montgomery Counties. Our conservation work protects natural resources to ensure clean water, clean air, and working landscapes for farming and forestry for a healthier Capital Region for current residents and for future generations. MHLC connects communities to the benefits of nature by offering a calendar of free outdoor events and free year-round access to 22 public preserves for hiking, cross-country skiing, and other educational and recreational opportunities. Please visit us online at www.mohawkhudson.org

In addition to this press release, please find the attached image:

Bozen Kill Preserve, MHLC photo
Wolf Creek Falls Preserve by Catherine Abida