

Lake George Watershed Coalition

Project Proposal Submission (Completion) Instructions

Applications for review by the committee should contain the following information:

- **Project / Initiative Title**

Berry Pond Sustainability

- **Submitting Organization and Contact(s)**

Lake George Land Conservancy

Contact: Sarah Hoffman, Communications and Outreach Manager or
Nancy Williams, Executive Director

- **Lake George Watershed Conference priority**

Clarify the project's alignment with the *LGWC – Future Priorities* document; reference the priority advanced by the project.

This project supports priorities B, D, & I of the LGWC Future Priorities document, towards the protection of stream corridors and wetlands, and to promote ecologically healthy land-use.

- **Project Summary (Benefits) Statement**

Include project concept, goals, objectives, deliverables, as well as expected outcomes; identify any critical environmental issues addressed.

Identify the project's environmental benefits as well as its educational and research benefits; include its impact to the watershed. Denote whether the project uses innovative technologies, if it can serve as a model for other projects and/or whether the project uses proven technologies and resources with previously demonstrated success in past practices.

As the members of the Lake George Watershed Coalition are well aware, the West Brook Conservation Initiative is a crucial and groundbreaking project for the Lake George basin. As a non-profit partner in the Initiative, the Lake George Land Conservancy took on the protection of the 1,436-acre Berry Pond Tract in January of 2008 in order to prevent further ground water pollution entering West Brook in the sensitive upland areas of the property.

Berry Pond includes the headwaters of West Brook, a tributary that has a significant impact on the water quality of Lake George. This single acquisition connects nearly 10,000 acres of protected land, linking New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Prospect Mountain, The Nature Conservancy's recently acquired Finch, Pruyn & Co., Inc. parcels, and other land owned by the Village and Town of Lake George. The tract is one of only two tracts specifically targeted in DEC's Lake George Open Space Conservation Plan for purchase.

-continued

LGLC has since worked with Lake George Village to create access into Berry Pond from their Rec Center's hiking and cross-country ski trail system. The public is now able to enjoy this free, valuable natural resource: over four miles of trails for passive recreational use in addition to snowmobiling. The overlook trail ascends 1711 feet to the view of Lake George and the southwestern Adirondacks, while another trail continues west to Berry Pond itself and beyond into a variety of natural habitats. LGLC undertakes all maintenance and stewardship of the property and its trails. The property is also available to schools and scientists who wish to use the property for scientific research on its flora or fauna.

LGLC was able to purchase the Berry Pond Tract (Berry Pond) for \$2,654,000. This purchase was made possible in part through a loan from the Open Space Conservancy (OSC), for which LGLC continues to pay principal and interest.

At the time of purchase LGLC was led to believe that New York State would in turn purchase the land from LGLC within two years, or three at the most. That was two years ago. We are now facing a very uncertain future as Gov. Paterson has proposed a moratorium on all land purchases by the state, even those previously promised to land trusts like LGLC. Berry Pond is not the only property for which we had an agreement with the state for purchase and are now left holding for an unknown amount of time.

- **Project Description**

Describe the project, including deliverables, key resources (labor and non-labor), time line and evaluation measures (success criteria); demonstrate project readiness in terms of staff, resources, project schedule, permits and other funding.

All necessary communications and legal processing has been completed for Berry Pond. Maintenance of the trail system, including posting trail signage, providing informational maps and brochures, and stewardship of the trails to ensure safe usage by hikers, is carried out by LGLC's summer stewardship assistants.

The impact of the preservation of Berry Pond will be best felt at the completion of the Gaslight Village renovation. The Berry Pond property will remain preserved in its natural state in order to prevent further ground water pollution entering West Brook in the sensitive upland areas of the property. The combination of conservation of the upland forest area along with the development of the sediment containment ponds will ensure a reduction in pollution entering the lake. Once the storm water containment / filtering system is in place and West Brook reconfiguration is completed the amount of pollutants and sediment entering the southern basin will be reduced by 90%.

- **Project Budget**

Provide the project budget information, including major costs (labor and non-labor); identify multi-year funding requirements (e.g. long term O & M) and the potential for phased implementation. Include the % of total budget requested from LGWC and how the local match will be provided.

LGLC is asking for \$100,000 from the LGWC, which is 4% of the initial purchase price. Costs incurred by LGLC include not only the purchase price but also closing costs, legal defense, stewardship, and insurance. Financial assistance from the LGWC will go directly towards the acquisition loan.

10% of the purchase has already been paid for, funds which can also be used towards the local match.

A phased payment would also be acceptable and helpful since we expect to be holding the property for several years to come.