

PROJECT HISTORY AND SPECIAL THANKS

■ The conservation area is named after two families who have been in the area for generations. The pond is named after the Sutherland family, who lived across from the conservation area on Rock City Road in the 1800's. ■ In the 1950's, the Ooms family arrived from the Netherlands and began a dairy operation on the fields surrounding the pond. ■ Prior to being established as a Public Conservation Area, the Ooms family generously allowed the community access to the pond for fishing and swimming. ■ The pond, which has been expanded over the years, has served many community functions. Ice harvested from the pond was sold to neighboring households and in the Village of Chatham for refrigeration. A community beach was opened on the northern shore of the pond, providing an earlier generation with a place to learn to swim.



■ This project would not have been possible without support and funding from numerous individuals and organizations in the community and, in particular, the Open Space Institute, Alan Devoe Bird Club, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.



SITE HISTORY

■ In 2001, the Columbia Land Conservancy, in conjunction with the Open Space Institute, purchased this 180-acre parcel from the Ooms family to permanently ensure its availability to the public. More than 100 neighbors contributed funds toward the purchase. CLC has developed a management plan for the property, which focuses on balancing public access and wildlife conservation.



MANAGEMENT

■ Properties that CLC manage provide the public with access to rural lands and natural habitats. People of all ages use the Ooms Conservation Area as an outdoor classroom and for recreational opportunities. ■ Management of this conservation area emphasizes grassland bird habitat protection, which has been threatened by incompatible development and reforestation from the loss of family farms.

NATURAL COMMUNITIES

■ The Ooms Conservation Area contains diverse plant and animal communities. The upland meadows south of Sutherland Pond provide habitat for birds such as bobolink, eastern meadowlark, and northern harrier. ■ Great blue heron and bittern often seek shelter and food among the cattail and common reed in the southwest corner of the pond. A variety of migrating waterfowl use Sutherland Pond as a stopover. Below the surface, the pond is teeming with life. Bridle shiner, blue-gill, and bass share the pond with muskrat and beaver as part of the intricate aquatic food web of the pond. There is an osprey nesting platform 150 feet from the southern edge of the pond.

DIRECTIONS

480 Rock City Rd, Chatham, NY

■ The Ooms Conservation Area is located two miles north of the Village of Chatham on Rock City Road. From Route 295, take Hartigan Road north (this turn is marked for the entrance to the south-bound Taconic State Parkway, Hartigan Road continues past the entrance ramp). Turn left onto Rock City Road. The main parking area is .3 mile on the left.

SUPPORT CLC

■ The Columbia Land Conservancy is a nonprofit organization and relies on the financial support of individuals to conserve the farmland, forests, wildlife habitat, and rural character of Columbia County, strengthening connections between people and the land. CLC owns or manages several Public Conservation Areas that constitute a public park system for the County. It has worked with some 200 local families to protect over 23,000 acres of land. CLC provides outdoor and educational activities to thousands of participants every year. CLC also works to support and strengthen agriculture by matching landowners looking to have their land farmed with farmers seeking land and through a corps of experienced farmers who mentor landowners and new farmers. CLC also assists the County and its towns in a variety of land use planning efforts.



If you enjoyed your visit to the Ooms Conservation Area at Sutherland Pond, or another of our other Public Conservation Areas, please consider a tax-deductible contribution to CLC.



PO BOX 299, 49 MAIN STREET, CHATHAM, NY 12037
518 392 5252 T 518 392 3099 F www.clctrust.org

printed on recycled paper

OOMS CONSERVATION AREA AT SUTHERLAND POND CHATHAM, NEW YORK



OWNED AND
MANAGED BY THE
COLUMBIA LAND
CONSERVANCY

OVERVIEW

■ The 3 mile trail system at the 180 acre Ooms Conservation Area provides visitors with year-round recreational opportunities in a highly scenic setting. Traversing the rolling grasslands around Sutherland Pond, the trails reveal a pastoral landscape that captures the essence of Columbia County.

■ This property is owned and managed by the Columbia Land Conservancy (CLC), for public access and habitat conservation.

GREEN TRAIL

2.25 miles – Allow 60 minutes

■ The Green Trail loops around the pond, providing a moderate hike. The trail leads from the parking area, past the informational kiosk to the picnic area looking out over the 35-acre pond. Fishing areas and benches dot the northern edge of the pond. ■ The trail follows the edge of the pond leading west and crosses a boardwalk leading into an open field. ■ The trail then climbs steadily through the open fields towards the gazebo. From the gazebo the Catskill Mountains are visible to the west. ■ The trail continues south from the gazebo, descending through a mixed forest, before emerging into the fields. The trail then ascends to another scenic vantage point before returning to the pond's shore.

RED TRAIL

.75 mile – Allow 25 minutes

■ A spur off of the Green Trail, this trail follows the hedgerows, which provide habitat and shelter for a variety of small animals and birds that feed along the edges of the open meadows. The eastern bluebird nesting boxes along the trail were built by volunteers.

POND ACCESS

■ Hand carried boats are best launched from the pull-out opposite George Road. Gasoline powered motors are not allowed.



HOURS AND REGULATIONS

- CLC properties are open year-round, dawn to dusk.
- Admission is free.
- Park only in the designated parking area.
- Pets must be on leash.
- Dog owners must remove dog waste from the site. Leaving dog waste on the site is harmful to wildlife and creates a major annoyance to site visitors and CLC maintenance staff.
- "Carry in, carry out." In an effort to minimize human impact on the conservation areas, no trash receptacles are located at the site. Take your trash with you when you leave.
- People are not allowed to swim.
- Motorized vehicles are not permitted on trails unless they are part of an official CLC program.
- Audio equipment or radio use is allowed with earphones only.
- Please respect the plants, animals, and artifacts at the sites as they make these properties special. Do not remove them from the site.

HUNTING AND FISHING

- There is no hunting at the Ooms Conservation Area at Sutherland Pond.
- Fishing (including ice fishing) is a permitted use. New York State regulations and license requirements apply.

CAUTION: Deer ticks are common in Columbia County, and can carry diseases. Take precautions while outdoors and check carefully for ticks after leaving.

VOLUNTEER

CLC has worked with hundreds of volunteers who have contributed valuable time and energy to help us improve and maintain access to the county's natural landscapes. If you enjoy the outdoors and would like to take part in CLC's Public Conservation Area projects, please contact CLC.