

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 2, 2022

CONTACT: Carrie Stickán, Communications and Outreach Coordinator

carrie@mohawkhudson.org, (518) 436-6346 ext. 103

Staff Changes Reflect Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy's Growth

Delmar, NY—The Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy (MHLC) continues to grow to meet the challenges of conserving the Capital Region. As the Conservancy begins its 30th year, staffing changes will help MHLC meet the needs of their unprecedented growth. The changes include promoting a current staff member to Associate Director, adding a new position of Project Manager of Bender Melon Farm, and a new hire fulfilling the Stewardship Coordinator position.

"These exciting changes are a dynamic way to start the new year," says Mark King, Executive Director of the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy. "We are now better positioned to accomplish our many goals, expanding MHLC's impact in the region to better serve our communities."

- **Sarah Walsh is promoted to Associate Director of the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy.** During her five years as Conservation Director, she oversaw land stewardship and property acquisitions. Sarah was instrumental in many notable MHLC accomplishments. She has been actively pursuing the Conservancy's vision of connecting the Catskills to the Adirondacks. Passionate about equitable access to nature, Sarah is the driving force behind the 2021 Nature Bus service that connected city of Albany residents with outdoor destinations in the region. She orchestrated partnerships with Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and community organizations. Within the organization, Sarah initiated the Conservancy's Indigenous Land Acknowledgement and assisted in developing the organization's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. Sarah earned a bachelor's degree in Wildlife Science from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) and a master's in Science Education from University at Albany. As the Associate Director, Sarah looks forward to taking MHLC to the next level as a leader in regional conservation.
- **The Conservancy welcomes Erick McCandless to the team in January 2022 as the new Project Manager for the Bender Melon Farm Preserve.** Erick will help tackle efforts to transform the 175-acre Bender Melon Farm Preserve into a community asset. Upcoming projects include extending trail systems, site cleanup, and environmental restoration. Erick was an early member of the Conservancy in the mid-1990s and later served on the Board of Directors (2004-2009). He has a B.S. from SUNY ESF in Environmental Resource Management and master's degrees from Penn State in Forestry and in Operations Research. With an impressive educational background, decades of relevant career experience, and institutional knowledge of MHLC, Erick has hit the ground running and is ready to unleash the potential of Bender Melon Farm Preserve.

- **Marshall Lefebvre will be joining the MHLC as the Stewardship Coordinator in February 2022.** Originally from southwestern Pennsylvania, Marshall holds a B.S. in Conservation Ecology from California University of Pennsylvania and has worked most recently as a research technician with the NYS Hemlock Initiative at Cornell University. In his new job starting later this month, Marshall will monitor MHLC's conservation easements, oversee maintenance of the 22 public preserves, and manage MHLC's more than 150 dedicated volunteers. Marshall's passion for community building and cultivating human/land connections will be well-suited for establishing vital relationships with landowners and managing MHLC's large fleet of volunteers.

Thanks to public support and the Capital Region's commitment to a greener future, MHLC can continue to build on local conservation successes. Stay tuned for more exciting announcements and special events planned for MHLC's 30th anniversary.

The Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy (MHLC) is a nonprofit conservation organization working to preserve the natural, scenic, agricultural, and cultural landscapes in Albany, Schenectady, and Montgomery counties. Since its founding in 1992, the Conservancy has protected more than 12,500 acres of land, including over 2,500 acres open to the public for hiking, cross-country skiing, and other educational and recreational opportunities. To learn more, visit www.mohawkhudson.org.