

## **The Carantouan Greenway Fund: Preserving Place, Protecting Purpose**

The Carantouan Greenway Fund holds a distinction that cannot be replicated. It was the very first fund established at the Community Foundation for the Twin Tiers. And fittingly, it represents so much of what our mission is built on: stewardship, vision, and a commitment to place that lasts beyond a single generation.

The Carantouan Greenway is a land trust with a bold and enduring purpose. Serving the Valley communities of Athens, Sayre, South Waverly, Athens Township, the Village of Waverly, and the Town of Barton, the Greenway believes in the right to clean air, clean water, and public access to both. Its vision is rooted in the idea that people should be able to fish, canoe, and walk along natural paths. They should be able to listen to the sounds of birdsong, breathe deeply in open fields, and find peace in the shade of our woods.

This work is not theoretical. It is tangible. The Greenway manages the 50 acre Wildwood Reserve in the Town of Barton, featuring a lake and nature trails. It works with municipalities to maintain walking and biking paths in Sayre and Waverly. All land holdings, titles, and easements are held in perpetuity. That means forever. And forever requires a plan.

In 2003, the Carantouan Greenway partnered with the Community Foundation to create a permanent endowment. It was a strategic decision rooted in foresight and a deep sense of responsibility. By establishing the fund, the Greenway ensured that stewardship and trail maintenance would have a sustainable financial base. It marked the beginning of a strong and lasting relationship with the Foundation, one built on shared values and a mutual dedication to this region's quality of life.

That partnership continues to grow. In 2023, the Greenway was also selected as a grant recipient from the Floyd "Vic" Hooker Youth Fund, another fund stewarded by the Foundation. This competitive grant opportunity supports nonprofits that serve youth in Tioga County, New York. With this funding, the Greenway installed interactive birch tree identification signs at Wildwood Reserve. These educational signs are designed to help students and visitors learn about native trees in a fun and engaging way, inspiring hands-on environmental education across the county.

The Carantouan Greenway Fund itself was seeded by a \$5,000 grant from the Mildred Faulkner Truman Foundation in honor of Destiny Kinal, a Waverly resident who served on the boards of both organizations. That gift came with purpose. Its earnings must benefit Tioga County, New York residents. Since then, others have stepped forward to support the fund, knowing their gifts will go directly toward protecting and enhancing the land and experiences that define this community.

As one of the Greenway's longtime leaders, Marty Borko, shared: "Many people have put in thousands of volunteer hours to establish this organization and get it to where it is today. These people are interested in protecting the environment while seeing the public get to enjoy it through the building of recreational trails for local residents. The organization realizes protecting the environment as well as keeping up the trails requires a long term commitment. What better

way to ensure the work of the Greenway continues for years to come than providing for its financial future.”

The Community Foundation plays a vital role in supporting efforts like these. By managing endowments, stewarding donor intent, administering competitive grant opportunities, and helping organizations plan for the long term, the Foundation ensures that important work like the Greenway’s can endure. Together, we amplify impact. Together, we make sure that trails stay open, reserves stay protected, and future generations inherit not just land, but legacy.

The Carantouan Greenway Fund is more than a financial asset. It is a promise kept. A partnership honored. And a powerful example of what happens when people invest in what matters most.