



Sam's Point Preserve in a series of transactions that culminated in 1997. According to OSI's president, Joe Martens, the two highest summits in the entire 245-mile **Shawangunk Range** are located at the *Sam's Point Preserve*.

The preserve is managed by The Nature Conservancy. In addition to developing the *Conservation Center*, The Conservancy provides public hikes, manages hunting on the *Preserve* and works with a corps of more than 60 local volunteers on trail maintenance and other aspects of stewardship. "Our conservation partnership has resulted in **Sam's Point** being managed both for recreation and protection, and the *Conservation Center* will provide a wonderful opportunity for people to gain better appreciation for the **Shawangunks**," said Martens. (photo below, of tourists at *Ice Caves* entrance, about 100 years ago.)

The **Northern Shawangunks** are widely-recognized as one of the most important sites for biodiversity conservation in the northeastern United States. The **Ridge** supports more than 35 natural communities, with five that are globally-rare. *Sam's Point Preserve* is home to the world's



best example of a dwarf pine ridge community, where more than 30 rare plant and animal species can be found, leading The Nature Conservancy to designate the **Ridge** as one of Earth's "Last Great Places" for landscape-level biodiversity conservation.

"This new center will help people who visit the **Shawangunks** better understand this distinctive and fragile ecosystem and the importance of protecting it," said Carol Ash, Executive Director of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission, and manager of the neighboring *Minnewaska State Park Preserve*.

Funds for the project are from public and private sources, with a substantial grant from the Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act.

Sam's Point Preserve is open year round. For information on programs, call the *Preserve* at **845-647-7989**.

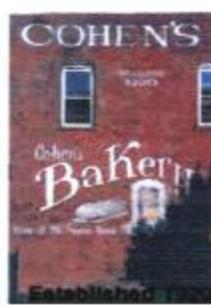
For more information on The Nature Conservancy and the work being done by the Eastern New York Chapter on the **Shawangunk Ridge** and beyond, please contact Sharon Pickett at **914-244-3271 ext. 27**, and visit the Nature Conservancy's web site at **www.nature.org**.

The Nature Conservancy is a leading international, nonprofit organization that preserves plants, animals and natural communities representing the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. To date, the Conservancy and its more than one million members have been responsible for the protection of more than 14 million acres in the United States and have helped preserve more than 83 million acres in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific.

Founded in 1963, the Open Space Institute, Inc. (**www.osiny.org**) is a nonprofit land conservation organization that has protected more than 18,000 acres in the **Shawangunks** and 90,000 acres throughout New York.

Through its Northern Forest Protection Fund, OSI has assisted in the protection of close to 600,000 acres in NY, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. OSI recently launched its New Jersey Conservation Loan Program to protect threatened landscapes in New Jersey.

Log on to **www.osiny.org** for more information about the *Sam's Point Preserve* and the *Open Space Institute Shawangunk Ridge Land Protection Program*. 



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