



# Share in the Success of Local Efforts to Protect the Hudson River Watershed



Learn what watershed groups are doing in your community!  
Below you can find accounts from many of our local watershed  
leaders about their successful efforts to protect local water  
resources, raise awareness about the watershed, and engage  
community members.



## **CASPERKILL WATERSHED ALLIANCE**

The Casperkill Watershed Alliance's most recent success story is directly related to our Dutchess Watershed Awareness Month efforts. Our rain barrel building workshop was extremely successful, with approximately twenty participants in attendance. Fourteen rain barrels were built! Members of the Casperkill Watershed Alliance and the Dutchess Watershed Coalition built their own rain barrels and assist others. Children and parents worked in teams. Most people were extremely happy with the process and the end result. Here is a link to a short video taken by a Casperkill Watershed Alliance member: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDYSn\\_woLFU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDYSn_woLFU)

Additionally, the Poughkeepsie Journal covered our event, the article was featured on the front cover of section B in the Sunday edition of the Poughkeepsie. The link to the pictures of the event are here: <http://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/gallery?Avis=BK&Dato=20090712&Kategori=NEWS01&Lopenr=907120801&Ref=PH&GID=hcLkKfuV6mGQkx4oAK+j/FiDaPxUBIAZsTZ1oQvwR3U%3D>

The article can be found at:

<http://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2009907120345>

- Cat Foley, Research Assistant at Vassar's Environmental Research Institute [ [cafoley@vassar.edu](mailto:cafoley@vassar.edu) ]

## **CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF GREENE COUNTY CATSKILL CREEK WATERSHED AWARENESS PROGRAM**

The success story of the Catskill Creek Watershed Awareness project is that we have actually been able to raise awareness through our efforts this year! We have utilized a combination of indoor and outdoor programming to recruit participants in this effort. During the winter and spring of 2009, we hosted a series of films about water and watersheds at the Agroforestry Resource Center. We also provided presentations on the Catskill Creek Watershed Awareness project to Town Boards in our target area. Town Board presentations inform elected officials and interested citizens about the project. During the summer of 2009, we have also been offering stream study programs at different locations on the Catskill Creek. These outdoor, interactive programs are attracting small groups of people who have an active interest in water quality protection. We have now generated a mailing list with over fifty participants and will be forming an advisory council in the fall.

- Elizabeth LoGiudice, Extension Educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County  
[ [eml37@cornell.edu](mailto:eml37@cornell.edu) ]

## **FALL KILL CREEK WATERSHED**

In August 2008, the Fall Kill Watershed Committee sponsored the first Fall Kill Creek Week. One of the activities of the week was conducting a Rapid Trash Assessment on four sections of the creek through the City of Poughkeepsie. Dutchess County Cornell Cooperative Extension's No Child Left Inside students conducted the assessment. Not only did these students clean out trash in each 100-foot section, they also counted and identified every piece. The results showed that most of the trash (41%) was plastic. The second most common type of trash was glass (33%), mostly from broken bottles. As these buckets of glass were being thrown out, the idea was tossed around that maybe something can actually be done with this glass, some sort of art project that would raise awareness of the creek. It was soon after Creek Week '08 that grants became available from the Dutchess County Arts Council for community art projects. What better way to raise awareness about the creek than have the community assist in gathering glass from the creek to be used in a piece of artwork installed in the Mid-Hudson Children's Museum, located right next to the Fall Kill. The grant money was secured and was supplemented by donations from local businesses. A local artist, Rachel Collet, was then hired, and the project: "Reviving the Fall Kill – Creating Treasure from Trash" got underway. As part of the project, on April 25, 2009 over 50 volunteers from the City of Poughkeepsie and neighboring communities came together to give the creek a much needed spring cleaning. They took over 3 tons of garbage out of the creek and along the way collected 7 buckets of broken glass. On that same day, the glass was taken to the Children's Museum where volunteers cleaned and sorted it by color. Rachel then took the glass back to her studio where she worked on creating the final art piece. On July 11, 2009 during Creek Week 2009, the piece was unveiled in a small celebration open to the public at the Children's Museum. The piece will stay at the Children's museum for the next year where, hopefully it will raise help to raise awareness about the creek and the pollution challenges it faces.

- Jennifer Rubbo, Fall Kill Watershed Coordinator at Clearwater [ [jen@clearwater.org](mailto:jen@clearwater.org) ]

## **FISHKILL CREEK WATERSHED COMMITTEE**

In the Spring of 2009, the Fishkill Creek Watershed Committee completed our 5th annual riparian planting (with plants provided by NYSDEC). We are now working with the local ADK chapter to create a water trail along Fishkill Creek for kayaks and canoes. However, our largest success has been participation in the Dutchess County Watershed Awareness Month in July of 2009. Many organizations and watershed groups have been working together on dozens of events to raise awareness of watershed issues. For more info visit the website [dutchessswam.com](http://dutchessswam.com). This coming Saturday (July 25) is the Fishkill Creek Festival in Beacon, NY. This free, family-friendly event will include live music, environmental displays and talks, kids activities, local politicians and more. You are all welcome to attend.

- Rick Oestrike, Fishkill Creek Watershed Committee member [ [ricker@fishkillcreekwatershed.org](mailto:ricker@fishkillcreekwatershed.org) ]

## **KINDERHOOK WATERSHED ALLIANCE**

The summer and fall of 2009-2010 will be busy for the Kinderhook Watershed Alliance. We will conduct three public stream monitoring workshops: Sunday, July 12th; (accomplished) Sunday, August 2nd, and Saturday, August 15<sup>th</sup>. We will continue to host and schedule two more presentations of "River Webs" film to increase awareness about riparian zones: Thursday, August 20th and other date TBA. We will continue outreach and education efforts at town board meetings of three largest municipalities within the watershed. We plan to conduct our third annual stream monitoring day with town board members from Town of Austerlitz. We will conduct outreach and education programs with the Columbia County Environmental Management Council and Columbia County Sportsmen's Federation. We have plans to develop a "Keepers of Kinderhook" website. A survey will be created to gather information from municipalities and others about the known benefits of streams, known risks, and known human impacts in the Kinderhook Watershed area. Through our outreach efforts, we will continue to solicit applicants for Kinderhook Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee to ensure broad base representation of all stakeholders. We have plans to meet four times with Kinderhook Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee who will represent the stakeholders' interests in the watershed in the development of a

watershed management plan. Finally, we will establish written ground rules and decision-making process of advisory committee.

- *Fran Martino, Kinderhook Watershed Alliance Coordinator* [ riverhaggie@peoplepc.com ]

### **LOWER ESOPUS WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP**

In the past year, the Lower Esopus Watershed Partnership (LEWP) has had a River Reconnaissance Report (RRR) conducted and completed by the engineering firm of Milone and MacBroom (MMI). We just received the final RRR yesterday although draft versions were circulated and a presentation was made at a public stakeholders meeting last October. The report suggested collecting additional data, which the Ulster County SWCD is in the process of collecting, for incorporation into a future addendum to the report. The next step for LEWP is to review recommendations made in the report, and obtain consensus for moving forward. LEWP intends to apply for DOS and DEC grant assistance for implementation of specific recommendations, and is in the process of determining the proposed scope of work.

- *Candace Balmer, Water Resource Specialist at RCAP Solutions* [ cbalmer@rcapsolutions.org ]

### **MOODNA WATERSHED COALITION**

The Moodna Watershed Coalition and other partners have sponsored several volunteer tree planting days, working with the NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program's Trees for Tribes program. A total of almost 1,000 trees and shrubs have been planted along the banks of the Moodna Creek at the north end of Schunnemunk Mountain State Park. Coalition members are also participating in an ongoing watershed planning process sponsored by the Orange County Water Authority with grants from the Hudson River Estuary Program.

- *Simon Gruber, Moodna Watershed Coalition member* [ sgruber100@verizon.net ]

### **ONESQUETHAW-COEYMANS WATERSHED COUNCIL**

Our success story is the completion of the watershed assessment by our volunteers and the consultant (May 2008), and the start of presentations to municipalities and the beginning phase of forming working groups of stakeholders to develop a watershed management plan. The watershed management plan is the result of a grant from the HREP. An ongoing challenge is to develop a base of active members.

- *Roy Lambertson, Onesquethaw-Coeymans Watershed Council* [ roymcl@aol.com ]

### **RONDOUT CREEK WATERSHED COUNCIL**

The Rondout Creek Watershed Council (RCWC) was formed in 2007 to implement a grant from the NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary program to OSI /Hudson Basin River Watch and Hudson River Sloop Clearwater for the incubation of a watershed protection group in the Rondout Creek Watershed. RCWC's accomplishments in 2008-09 include, the inception of a multi-stakeholder watershed awareness and protection group, the creation of a Watershed Awareness, Planning and Protection PowerPoint presentation, a detailed physical delineation of the central Rondout Creek watershed (from the Rondout reservoir to the Eddyville dam), the conducting of a daylong watershed awareness seminar for more than fifty people as well as stream monitoring training programs, the completion of a municipal questionnaire that was used to draft a State of the Rondout Report and an iterative crafting of an Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA). Meetings with Town Boards and Supervisors of Wawarsing, Marletown, Rochester and Rosendale within the watershed were held to gain support for the adoption of an IMA for the Development of a Rondout Creek watershed Management Plan. 3 of the 4 Towns have resolved to adopt the IMA; the fourth is underway. With potential future funding the Plan may be expanded to include the City of Kingston and the Town of Esopus in our protection efforts.

- *Victor-Pierre Melendez, RCWC Coordinator, Clearwater* [ victor@clearwater.org ]

### **STREAM ALLIANCE OF NORTHERN DUTCHESS**

We are making slow but perceptible progress in bringing the Stream Alliance of Northern Dutchess (SAND) into being. We've formed a steering committee consisting of representatives from the Red Hook, Rhinebeck, and Hyde Park CACs, and several interested community members who have special expertise in watershed issues. We had hoped to affiliate with a local land preservation trust, but the organization decided against it. Waiting for this decision slowed our planning and forced some rethinking about how to finance projects. SAND participated in Dutchess Watershed Awareness Month by helping out in general with publicity and by being one of the groups that helped out with the Rhinebeck WAM event on July 19. Going forward, we hope to work closely with local CACs to coordinate projects that cross municipal boundaries. We also hope to produce a watershed brochure with a map that can be distributed in the area to increase watershed awareness.

- *Sheila Buff, Stream Alliance of Northern Dutchess Coordinator* [ [sheilabuff@frontiernet.net](mailto:sheilabuff@frontiernet.net) ]

### **SAW MILL RIVER COALITION**

Rollin' on the River—an environmental “triathlon” was held April 19th and combined fun and work at Woodlands Lake on the Saw Mill River. We had three+ activities including a Roller Derby Demonstration from Suburbia Roller Derby—an all-woman’s roller derby group based in Westchester County, a lake clean-up spearheaded by the Hudson River & Beyond Kayaking and Canoeing Club, and invasive vine cutting along the river parkway by our Free-A-Tree tried-and-true volunteers. We had a rollin’ good time—and were serenaded by two bands—the Solar Punch, and Jeffrey Friedberg and the Bossy Frog Band. An AMAZING find that day was a snapping turtle specimen. A taxidermist from New Hampshire—who drove 5 hours from New Hampshire to examine it—said it had died within about an hour before we found it, was between 85-100 years old AND was one of the best specimens he has ever seen. The taxidermist is preserving it—and we hope to have it completed by the time of our Saw Mill River BioBlitz on September 25-26! Our Science Barge is another proud part of our work. The Science Barge—sitting at the mouth of the Saw Mill River right on the Yonkers’ Hudson River waterfront—is a floating sustainable urban farm powered by solar, wind, and biofuels, and irrigated by rainwater and purified river water. We grow fresh fruit and vegetables using re-circulating hydroponics and aquaponics. It’s open from mid-April through mid-October. Groundwork Hudson Valley moved the barge from New York City to Yonkers in November. It is open daily (Mon-Fri) to groups (schools, summer camp, youth, adults) and on weekends to the public. Students get their hands “dirty” planting seeds, composting, feeding fish, picking vegetables, and “generating” sustainable energy through interactive activities. We would LOVE to host the watershed group on the barge—maybe in conjunction with a meeting and also visiting Beczak Environmental Center. The Sawmill River Coalition is a project of Groundwork Hudson Valley.

- *Ann-Marie Mitroff, Director of River Programs for Groundwork Hudson Valley*  
[ [annmarie@groundworkhv.org](mailto:annmarie@groundworkhv.org) ]

### **WALKKILL RIVER TASK FORCE**

The Walkkill River Watershed Conservation and Management Plan, released in 2007, called for among many other recommendations an increased emphasis on Low Impact Development/Better Site Design measures in the local land development planning process. The Plan also called for increased resources to support education and outreach to local municipalities about these measures. Significant advances have been made toward these recommendations. The Orange County Land Trust was awarded a grant by the NYSDEC HREP to organize a Better Site Design Roundtable. In April, 2009 the OCLT brought officials from four Walkkill Watershed municipalities together to begin this process. Barbara Kendall from NYSDEC made a presentation before the officials from each town broke into groups to critique their current codes/policies and begin the process of a more comprehensive code review procedure aimed at making their towns more ‘BSD-friendly’. Concurrently, Orange County Soil and Water Conservation District has had noteworthy success in planning, designing and implementing BSD demonstration practices in cooperation with several local municipalities and other partners. Rain Gardens or related storm water filtering practices have been installed at Black Rock Forest in the Town of Cornwall (in cooperation with Orange County Cornell Cooperative Extension), in the Village of Walden, and at the City of Newburgh Water Treatment Plant. Additional RG’s are planned for installation this fall at The City

of Newburgh's Lake Washington public fishing area. Preliminary planning has been done, and funding has been applied for, to complete BSD practices at the County Government Center and the Middletown Campus of SUNY Orange. In addition, OCSWCD has worked with several municipal planning boards and developers to include BSD practices in new developments, including a suite of practices at a large home improvement center. Much more work and dedicated resources are needed to pursue the Watershed Plan's recommendations in a serious way, but these efforts are a good start.

- *Kevin Sumner, Orange County Soil & Water Conservation District* [ kevin.sumner@ocsoil.org ]

- *Karin Esme Roux, Orange County Land Trust* [ karin@oclt.org ]

### **WAPPINGER CREEK INTERMUNICIPAL COUNCIL**

The mission of the Wappinger Creek Watershed Intermunicipal Council (WIC) is to cooperatively address common issues that may affect the quality of the watershed. Municipalities within the watershed have agreed to work towards the following five goals: (1) Goal 1 – To draft and implement a Municipal Use Management Plan; (2) Goal 2 – To protect streamside buffer zones by ordinance, zoning, and/or incentives; (3) Goal 3 – To conduct stream assessments, cleanup projects, and/or revegetation projects; (4) Goal 4 – To increase public awareness of the Wappinger Creek Watershed; (5) Goal 5 – To meet regularly to share information. Over the past year the WIC has worked towards reaching these goals through several projects including working with Russell Urban Mead on a model Water Use Management Plan, working with Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County (CCEDC) to develop an ordinance matrix of all environmental related ordinances within Dutchess County (including riparian buffer and wetland ordinances), participating in planting projects through the DEC HREP Trees for Tribes Initiative and much more. A major accomplishment for the WIC this past year was working with Cornell University and CCEDC to develop and implement a survey of watershed residents and municipal officials. The Wappinger Creek Watershed Survey was sent to both residents and municipal officials within the watershed and asked questions that addressed not only the respondents' opinions and concerns but also their attitudes, beliefs, perceptions and possible misconceptions on water quality and water resources within the watershed. Over 800 surveys were sent out to residents within the watershed and there was a 26% response rate. Analysis of the results for the resident survey is currently underway and the group is still receiving responses from the municipal official survey. The WIC will hold a stakeholder meeting in October to present the results of both surveys and hopes to use this information to direct their outreach and education.

Another large accomplishment over the past year was the formation of the Dutchess Watershed Coalition and the first annual Dutchess Watershed Awareness Month. Beginning in October of 2008, members of the WIC, Fishkill Creek Watershed Committee, Casperkill Watershed Alliance, Fall Kill Watershed Committee, Stream Alliance of Northern Dutchess, Housatonic Valley Association, Friends of the Great Swamp, CCEDC, Clearwater, Vassar Environmental Research Institute and the Hudson River Watershed Alliance began planning over 30 events through out the month of July 2009 to educate residents on the importance of watersheds and how to protect them. The mission of the Dutchess Watershed Coalition is to "promote awareness and active participation of the community in the stewardship of the land and water resources of Dutchess County through educational and recreational events." The month included the WIC's second annual Wappinger Creek Week, July 12-18<sup>th</sup>, which successfully integrated bird walks, a creek walk, a history night, and participation in "Picnic in the Park". For more information about the Dutchess Watershed Coalition and/or Dutchess Watershed Awareness Month visit: <http://dutchesswam.com>

- *Carolyn Klocker, Environmental Resource Educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County* [ cak97@cornell.edu ]

- *Bruce Donegan, Chairperson of Wappinger Intermunicipal Council* [ polysciman526@aol.com ]