

Planning for Biodiversity

Strategies for Developers and Municipalities



Tuesday, April 29th, 2008, from 5 - 9 p.m.
Marist College, Cabaret (Student Center)

The **Hudson Valley Smart Growth Alliance** is a regional partnership of diverse interests including environmental, land conservation, and economic development organizations, builders, realtors, tourism officials and planning agencies who have come together to build consensus on smart growth principles and promote local and regional solutions to sprawl.

Hudson Valley Smart Growth Alliance Endorsing Organizations

- Builders Association of the Hudson Valley
- Catskill Center for Conservation & Development
- County of Orange Planning Department
- Dutchess County Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
- Dutchess County Association of Realtors
- Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation
- Dutchess County Department of Planning & Development
- Dutchess County Planning Federation
- Dutchess Land Conservancy
- Farm Development Corporation
- Hudson Highlands Land Trust
- Hudson Valley Sustainable Community Network
- Marist College Bureau of Economic Research
- Matthew Bialecki Associates
- Mid-Hudson Pattern for Progress
- Mohonk Consultations
- Pace University Land Use Law Center
- River City Abstract
- Scenic Hudson
- Spectra Environmental Group, LLC
- Warwick Quality Communities Project
- Westchester Land Trust
- Winnakee Land Trust
- Woodstock Land Conservancy



Fern on Outcrop
Photo by Laura Heady

PROGRAM

5:00 - 5:45

Registration, Networking Reception with Refreshments

5:45 - 6:00

WELCOME

Manna Jo Greene

Environmental Director, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc.

Elmore Alexander

Dean, School of Management at Marist College

6:00 - 6:45

Effective Preservation of Biological Communities: Local and Regional Strategies Hudson

Combating Sprawl through Conservation Planning requires leadership and action at all levels of government. Because the majority of land use decisions occur at the very local level, it requires an informed and engaged citizenry. If we want to combat sprawl we need economically viable and socially acceptable alternatives.

Ecosystems and decision making do not exist on the same scale and ecologically-friendly planning techniques are not enabled by local regulations.

Michael will present a 10 point Biodiversity Conservation Checklist that communities can use to prepare a Plan of Conservation and Development and associated ordinances and funding to enable the cohabitation of humans and wildlife.

Michael Klemens, Ph.D.

Director of Conservation Science, Scenic Hudson
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A member of the scientific staff of the American Museum of Natural History since 1979, Dr. Klemens' pioneering approach to balancing the needs of ecological and human communities has led to interest in his work internationally.

Having authored numerous publications, including the recent book *Nature in Fragments: The Legacy of Sprawl*, Dr. Klemens holds a doctorate in conservation biology and ecology from the University of Kent, in the United Kingdom. He earned his master's degree in zoology and bachelor's degree in education from the University of Connecticut.

Discovering that tangible conservation results require scientific research conducted within a social, political and economic context, Dr. Klemens was motivated to establish the Wildlife Conservation Society's Metropolitan Conservation Alliance (MCA) in 1997.

Through the MCA he has translated biological data and conservation concepts into planning tools that achieve multi-town conservation compacts. The MCA has created five such compacts with communities in New York and Connecticut and provided technical assistance and outreach to more than 90 municipalities in the Hudson Valley and beyond. He is the recipient of the 2007 Achievement Award from the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association for "integrating complex ecological systems into regulatory land-use decision-making.

In 2008 Dr. Klemens joined Scenic Hudson. Among his chief duties will be to help Scenic Hudson urge developers to protect and enhance existing habitats and to identify opportunities for restoring degraded areas and to increase Scenic Hudson's participation in regional efforts to protect and restore biodiversity and respond to climate change.



6:50 - 7:20

Proactive Planning for Habitat Conservation:
Strategies and Success Stories from Greene County IDA

In Greene County, the Industrial Development Agency (GCIDA) has been setting exciting new standards for the conservation of natural resources as a component of development projects.

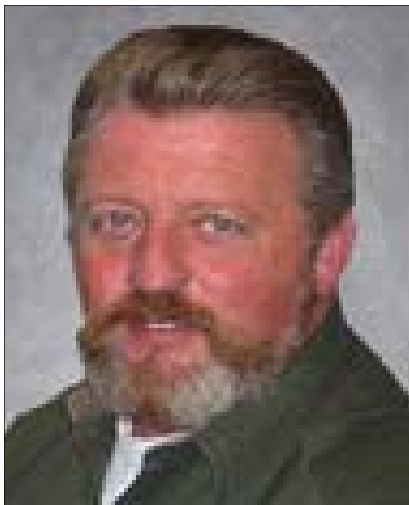
While many communities have traditionally awakened to the need for open space conservation long after development has occurred, the GCIDA is committed to ensuring that effective open space conservation is done at the time of development, with the cost of conservation borne by the developer and not the community.

René will present the GCIDA's conservation accomplishments on its past two business park projects, as well as planned conservation on its new destination retail project.

The presentation will also cover the activities of the GCIDA's Community and Environmental Programs Division, which aim to help private development projects in Greene County meet these same high standards.

René VanSchaack

Director of Community and Environmental Programs Division,
Greene County IDA
rene@greeneida.com



After 18 years with the Greene County Soil & Water Conservation District, René VanSchaack was recently hired by the Greene County Industrial Development Agency (GCIDA) as Director of its new Community and Environmental Programs Division.

In his new position, René coordinates all of the GCIDA's environmental activities including SEQRA and permitting, and also works to assist local communities with natural resource management issues.

René is also co-founder and Executive Director of Greene Land Trust and is the principal of Community Natural Resource Solutions, a consulting firm he started to help communities and private clients address natural resource management in a proactive yet practical manner.

7:25 - 7:55

Municipal Perspective:

Habitat Assessment Guidelines/Conservation Analysis

By providing site specific information, habitat assessments improve a town's ability to make better planning decisions, establish consistent standards for development proposals and protect significant biological resources. SEQRA can be a useful tool to preserve habitat, using information provided by habitat assessment.

A flexible planning process, open environmental review, community involvement, and collaborative decision making contribute to the success of SEQRA review and biodiversity protection.

Karen Schneller-McDonald

Hickory Creek Consulting
katykill@frontier.net



Karen Schneller-McDonald has over 26 years' experience in natural resources planning, wetland delineation and mitigation, environmental impact and habitat assessment, and research on wetland functions and values.

Ms. Schneller-McDonald has worked with more than 25 towns in the Mid-Hudson Valley as an ecological consultant/wetland specialist with Hickory Creek Consulting, and as a biodiversity outreach coordinator with Green Assets, a program of the Shawangunk Ridge Biodiversity Partnership.

Lauren Kingman

Town of Milan Planning Board
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Mr. Kingman was a member of the 2000-2001 Milan Master Plan Committee. He is currently a member of the Milan Planning Board to which he was first appointed in 2001. He chaired the Zoning Board of Appeals in 2003. From January 2004 through 2007 he chaired the Planning Board.

Mr. Kingman holds a BS in engineering from Cornell University and a Certificate in Landscape Design from the Institute of Ecosystem Studies.

He has participated in several workshops of the Pace University Land Use Law Center and completed the Pace Land Use Leadership Alliance Training Program.

8:00 - 8:30

Tools for Protecting Nature in Your Community

Municipal agencies in New York have primary authority for land use planning, and decisions made at the local level have significant, lasting impacts on regional biodiversity. In the past, there was little biological information available to assist communities with making informed decisions about their future growth.

Recognizing this need, the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program developed a biodiversity outreach program and worked with many partners to provide science-based information, land use tools, and technical assistance to Hudson Valley communities.

Laura will highlight the conservation and planning resources available to land use planners, and present local examples of how these resources have been used to advance protection of our region's rich natural heritage.

Laura Heady

Hudson River Estuary Biodiversity Outreach Coordinator,
NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program
ltheady@gw.dec.state.ny.us



Laura earned a B.S. in Environmental Science from Rutgers University in 1993, and a M.S. in Biology in 1998 from Idaho State University, where she studied habitat use by pygmy rabbits, a species of conservation concern endemic to the Great Basin Desert.

She moved to the Hudson Valley in 1999 and began work on Blanding's turtle conservation efforts. Before joining the Hudson River Estuary Program at NYSDEC in 2006, she spent four years at Hudsonia teaching biodiversity assessment and habitat mapping to local decision-makers.

As Biodiversity Outreach Coordinator at the Estuary Program, Laura is working with local and regional partners to integrate biodiversity and habitat protection into conservation plans and smart growth strategies. She is also leading a new Woodland Pool Conservation Program for the estuary watershed.



Wood Frog
Photo by Laura Heady

8:30 – 9:00

Questions and Answers

Smart Growth Principles

1. **Thinking Regionally, Acting Locally.** Support local, community-based planning and land use decisions while strengthening home rule with training programs for board members and voluntary regional coordination through the Greenway Compact.
2. **Protecting Our Landscape Legacy.** Adopt protection measures for farmlands, important open space, parks, and critical natural and wildlife areas that create connected greenspace systems across municipal boundaries and through the region.
3. **Building Close-Knit, Interconnected Communities.** Encourage compact, mixed-use development patterns in and around existing centers and in locally identified priority growth areas, linked to more cost efficient infrastructure and public services.
4. **Respecting the Past, Building for the Future.** Ensure that new development is compatible with existing community character, preserves and rehabilitates historic buildings and districts, and creates enduring value through high quality design.
5. **Giving Growth Back its Good Name.** Promote economic development including agriculture and tourism, employment opportunities, and a full range of housing options that are consistent with Smart Growth principles and use green building techniques whenever possible.
6. **Making Connections More Convenient.** Provide a wider variety of transportation choices, including walkable neighborhoods that can support public transit, to reduce auto-dependency, traffic congestion and pollution and allow better access to jobs and services.
7. **Streamlining Without Sacrificing Quality.** Make the development process more predictable, fair and cost effective through updated community plans, codes and design guidelines, coordinated review process, inter-agency cooperation, and incentives for Smart Growth practices.

Biodiversity Conference Endorsing Organizations

- Builders Association of Hudson Valley
- Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation
- Dutchess County Planning and Development
- Hudson Valley Regional Council
- Nature Network
- New York Planning Federation
- New York State Department of State
- Regional Plan Association
- Sustainable Hudson Valley

Sponsored by:

Dutchess Land Conservancy

www.dutchessland.org/



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HUDSON RIVER SLOOP
CLEARWATER, INC.

www.clearwater.org



Hudson River Valley Greenway

www.hudsongreenway.state.ny.us

Bear Mountain—Hudson Highlands

Photo courtesy of Paul Elconin



Hudson Valley Development Group

www.hvdg.com

www.brookinwaterland.com

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COLLEGE



New York State DEC
Hudson River Estuary Program

www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4920



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