



REDISCOVERING THE FALL KILL

Major Hudson River Tributary Gets Much Needed Attention

NYS DEC Estuary Grant helps raise awareness about and clean up of Fall Kill Watershed

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Located approximately 80 miles from New York City and in Dutchess County's population center, the Fall Kill watershed is experiencing intense growth and resultant water quality degradation and flooding issues.

The Fall Kill is a major tributary of the Hudson River and enters it as a third order stream approximately 1.5 miles downstream from the City of Poughkeepsie's drinking water intake. Its watershed encompasses parts of five Dutchess County municipalities: almost 30% of the town of Hyde Park, 35% of the City of Poughkeepsie and parts the towns of Poughkeepsie, Clinton and Pleasant Valley.

Unfortunately, this important tributary and its watershed have been largely ignored for quite some time. In fact, it has even been completely surrounded by concrete walls in some places of the City, turning it into more of a drainage way than the critical natural resource that it is.

For the last six months the Fall Kill Watershed Committee has focused on implementing several of the major conservation goals published in its 2006 management plan including raising awareness, clean ups and restoring its streambanks.

Local youth get involved

Through cooperation with Catharine Street Community Center, New Hope Community Center, and the NYS DEC Eel Monitoring project, City of Poughkeepsie youth are seeing the creek in a new light. They've conducted research on eel populations with DEC staff, are learning about the importance of macroinvertebrates in the stream's food web and are also learning about how pollution affects not only the creatures that live in the stream but also the humans who live near it and use this important water resource.

Members of the committee and many volunteers worked to plant a riparian (streamside) buffer along the banks of the Fall Kill and the Hudson River at the mouth of creek near the Mid Hudson Children's museum. Staff from the Children's Museum, students from Vassar college and Committee volunteers planted 30 native trees and shrubs thanks to the DEC's "Trees for Tribs" Initiative. These trees will help cool the water, prevent erosion and add beauty to a highly visible stretch of the stream.

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