

STEWARDSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS

Stewardship is the proactive process of maintaining a property's natural values as required when conserving an easement or acquired land. As WLC has two staff, this effort falls to a core group of dedicated volunteers, some who even have essential chainsaw skills. WLC's SUNY New Paltz intern, Jillian Eggers, an avid outdoors person, took part in a recent concerted stewardship effort on Ricks Road, where the WLC maintains a 30-year old conservation easement. This easement is valued for its open agricultural fields and stupendous view of Mount Guardian's southern face, where the conservancy has acquired 90 acres over the past twenty years. Thanks to Jordan Voelker (Limber Tree Services), several volunteers, including WLC staff/board, decades of growth were chipped and removed from between the road and field and opened up the spectacular viewshed. Despite the intensity of pulling thorned invasives through deep snow, everyone enjoyed themselves and strengthened or created friendships through the process. At the end of the day, seeing Mount Guardian's ridgeline, knowing that there now was a substantial difference in how every passerby would experience this view, was enormously satisfying. Stewardship ensures that these special places remain protected for future generations to enjoy and appreciate forever, just as we do now.

To get involved with WLC volunteer opportunities contact Program & Outreach Coordinator, Ellie Reese, ellier.wlc@gmail.com.



Ricks Road Crew

PROFILES IN PARTICIPATION



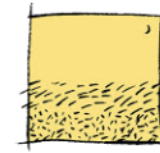
The Skaggs Family

NYC weekenders who love being together outdoors, the Skaggs family discovered WLC's "First Saturdays on the Trail" and made them a regular family activity. Learning from experts in a range of topics, they appreciate how the naturalists have encouraged their children's curiosity, and the friendly welcome they feel from locals. Gretchen noted, "We love it. It's the highlight of our month," and has led the family to become WLC volunteers.

"We are always looking for opportunities to have our kids volunteer. Since they both really love nature, we can combine giving back to the community while enjoying nature," says Gretchen. The whole family volunteers for Bioblitz and Longyear Farm Day. "I think it's important for the kids to see that we are doing it too, and it gives our family a deep connection to one another." Kevin adds, "I just love at BioBlitz that our volunteering supports a scientist while we learn to use the iNaturalist app. Our participation helps our family understand the Catskills conservation needs, enhanced by seeing it over a number of seasons. It's just a wonderful thing."

Said their daughter, "At Longyear Farm Day there were a lot of different things you could do - help with the hay rides, even with the rabbit." Added her brother, "I got to ferry food back and forth from the kitchen and arrange it on the buffet table."

The Skaggs feel that WLC makes volunteering easy for everyone by outlining specific tasks, as well as being enthusiastically welcoming with volunteers of all ages and skills. Notes Gretchen, "We go on hikes all the time, but doing something together as a family for a great cause, for a great reason, for research, where we learn, help the community and raise money - that is important as well."



WOODSTOCK LAND
CONSERVANCY

LAND LINES

SPRING 2019



MacDaniel Road Rainbow. Photo: Kelly Sinclair



INSPIRATION FROM ULSTER COUNTY

We are a small land trust with a big mission, and we benefit from the expertise of many environmental leaders. Amanda LaValle, a Woodstock native who has led U.C.'s Department of the Environment under Mike Hein's leadership, has significantly aided our work, always willing to take our calls and advise on all kinds of natural resource issues. Our County has demonstrated great leadership in natural resource management, and has inspired our own focused initiatives. They've created map layers within the Ulster County Parcel Viewer web application to help protect land/water and site locations for projects, including renewables. Their database assists local municipalities in implementing their own green infrastructure projects, using design elements that mimic nature and the natural water cycle to reduce surplus water.

The County's Climate Action Plan (in draft) seeks to reduce County operation emissions 25% by 2025, ultimately aiming for carbon neutrality. A follow-on Climate Change Adaptation plan will aid municipalities in resiliency and adaptation planning to protect our essential water resources and infrastructure from flood damage. A County-wide culvert assessment, funded in part by a grant from NYS DEC, and using hydrological modeling will be used to right size culverts, enlarge capacity for high water events, and also afford a pass-through for aquatic life. WLC relies on all of their work in our own care for our Woodstock/Saugerties (Eastern Catskills) service area.



Ashokan Rail Trail, opening Fall/Winter 2019



Former Ulster County Executive, Mike Hein



This year we honor Mike Hein's service as a three-term Ulster County Executive who showed unrivaled leadership in environmental protection among counties statewide. Ulster was designated both the most environmentally responsible and the only "net carbon neutral" county in New York, earning worldwide recognition in National Geographic Magazine for its environmental achievements in 2016. The County also won the 2017 NYSDEC Environmental Achievement award. Key accomplishments included first NYS county government with 100% of its electricity generated from renewable resources; construction of utility-scale solar generation; and creating a county-wide EV charging network for both County fleet vehicles and the public. Mike's vision and achievements toward creating a connected, county-wide rail trail network offers health, recreation, and sustainable tourism benefits as well as potential alternative transportation options to cut our reliance on fossil fuels.

Vernal Fling, May 18, 2019, 5:00-7:30pm, Byrdcliffe Barn.
More info at vernalfling.com

RECREATIONAL TRAILS

With a capacity crowd, Jeff Olson, nationally known trails planner and Tim Weidemann, U.C. Deputy County Executive and Co-chair of Kingston Land Trust's Greenline committee, presented how local communities can create and support bikeable and walkable transportation networks. Members of the audience were from a wide-range of area municipalities, and also included members of the Woodstock "Complete Streets Committee," which is being established based on the recently-adopted Woodstock Comprehensive Plan. Some committee members were there and thrilled to learn from these experts, but also connected with potential new committee volunteers. Links to the break-out session ideas, the presentations and a Radio Kingston audio of the program can all be found on-line at

<http://www.woodstocklandconservancy.org/programs/active-transportation>

And with our increasing efforts area-wide to create recreational trails, we are pleased to be assisting the Open Space Institute (OSI) in the Bluestone Wild Forest (BWF) with their recent 208-acre acquisition expanding a trail network that will connect large tracts of existing BWF lands, which includes Onteora Lake, to one another. A variety of locals are involved including Fats in the Cats, and Overlook Bicycles. To learn further details on OSI's project please join us May 7th, 6:00pm, for an information session at Kingston's Senate Garage.

We are also pleased to share news of an 11-acre land donation we received late last year from Jeremy Harlow and Ray Tekosky which will be known as Jones Preserve. Through these neighbors' generosity, others will benefit from the conservation of this forested land at the southern base of Ohayo Mountain. In the coming year we will be preparing a management plan to consider the trail opportunities that we might create there.

Many of you have helped WLC advocate for more recreational trails, and our work together has created enormous momentum. We are deeply grateful for your support of this key part of WLC's mission and invite your continued participation.