

## THE BUZZ AT WLC

The pace of activity this year is scaling new heights. In its 31st year WLC is covering a lot of bases. Our mission prioritizes conserving land and natural resources in our service area (Woodstock and the Eastern Catskills, including West Hurley, Town of Kingston, part of Saugerties, Shandaken and Ulster). The highly visible part of our work concerns our existing public preserves, our constant programming and our passionate advocacy. But behind the scenes at all times, we're exploring possible acquisitions which meet our criteria, and working hard to steward the lands we own.

Fortunately, over the years we've benefited from the generosity of land donors and the crucial financial support from many of you to help us care for these important lands and waterways in our service area. Together we've conserved well over 1,000 acres, including Zena Cornfield, Mt. Guardian, Overlook (with Open Space Institute, later conveyed to NYS DEC) and many other beloved places. The 2014 Niagara Bottling Cooper Lake proposal initiated our great interest in our Sawkill Watershed and protecting it for all our benefits. Since then we have worked collaboratively with municipalities, chiefly Woodstock, on this initiative and have renewed a Sawkill Watershed Stakeholders Group to support this effort in Woodstock, Town of Kingston and Town of Ulster.

For many years an all-volunteer organization, WLC is now staffed by a full-time Executive Director and a Program/Outreach Coordinator, and this year, for a few months, a part-time Stewardship Coordinator. Guided by an 11-person board, WLC benefits enormously from their dedication and the variety and countless hours of work that they all do. We are constantly juggling tough priorities with a boundless enthusiasm for taking care of this great region we call home, with an urgency compelled by the specter of climate change. We are enormously proud of our work. We love and know how fortunate we are to work in a community that values conservation. We thank you always for this commitment, as we again renew our request for your financial support, or if unable, your thanks. Wishing you all a wonderful Fall. Do join us October 12th for Longyear Farm Day. It's a community celebration not to be missed.

Maxanne Resnick, Executive Director



## LONGYEAR FARM DAY

Longyear Farm has been an active family farm, tucked away in the heart of Woodstock, for over 70 years. For six years Matt, Heather and Kathy Longyear have joined with WLC to create the spectacular autumn celebration Longyear Farm Day. In recent years, Mike and Meghann Reimondo have partnered with them to pull off this remarkable event. This "funraiser" is a community celebration for all ages, featuring opportunities to learn about the farm and the environment while enjoying activities for all ages, local foods and music. This beloved event is sponsored by a number of local businesses, for which we are very grateful. Join us on Saturday, October 12th from Noon-4:00pm. Raindate is October 13th. Ticket info at [www.woodstocklandconservancy.org/programs/longyear-farm-day](http://www.woodstocklandconservancy.org/programs/longyear-farm-day)

## VOLUNTEER ASHOKAN TRAIL STEWARDS NEEDED

WLC is seeking weekend volunteer trail stewards for 3-hour shifts, either at the Trailhead or as roving bicycle stewards, for the duration of this season. For further information please contact Kimberly Daley at [kimdaley1@mac.com](mailto:kimdaley1@mac.com) A required training will be held October 5th, 10am-1pm. Details with registration.

## ASHOKAN RAIL TRAIL OPENING

On Saturday, October 19th, 9 a.m., the first section of the spectacular Ashokan Rail Trail (ART) will open to the public, at Woodstock Dike Trailhead on Route 28 in West Hurley (diagonally across from West Hurley post office). Ulster County is initially opening 9 of the 11.5 mile trail, while construction crews complete work on the new Boiceville Bridge over the Esopus Creek and the two other major trailheads. The trail is 100% car and intersection free.

Initiated under former County Executive Mike Hein with completion by County Executive Pat Ryan, the ART is the culmination of more than seven years of negotiations, planning, design and construction, shepherded by UC Planning Department's Chris White and Dennis Doyle, and received unanimous approvals in 2015 by the UC Legislature.

Open to the public dawn-to-dusk, year-round, for non-motorized uses, including hiking, bicycling, running, nature observation, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and for on-leash dog walking, the completed trail is 10 to 12 feet wide. It is topped with a custom-engineered crushed stone aggregate and clay surface – created to protect water quality while ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities and limited mobility. Visitors will enjoy traveling through varied ecosystems and historical locales while taking in magnificent views from the northern shore of the Ashokan Reservoir. The ART is free – no NYCDEP permit is required.

Hundreds of local residents, families, business owners, professionals and community organizations, including WLC, Catskill Mountainkeeper, National Park Service's Karl Beard and members of "Friends of the Catskill Mountain Rail Trail" committee assisted at critical junctures during the seven years of advocacy and planning. Major funding for the trail was provided by NYC DEP, NYS DEC, Ulster County, Open Space Institute, Dyson Foundation, WLC and private donors. A NYS Land Trust Alliance Grant helped underwrite WLC's initial involvement in collaborative planning and communications, as well as an award-winning series of short videos about the benefits of the Ashokan Rail Trail. For further info: <http://ashokanrailtrail.com/>

## SPEAKING OUT FOR THE LAND

Though WLC isn't an advocacy organization, we do get involved when local activities spike community concern. In recent months, countless hours have been spent in this role.

### 850 Route 28 project

In May we first learned of a proposed precast concrete and steel manufacturing facility planned for a Town of Kingston site adjacent to Onteora Lake and the Bluestone Wild Forest (BWF) recreational trails, including lands recently acquired by Open Space Institute (OSI) with our local support. (The lands will be conveyed to NYS to expand the BWF trail network.) With great collaborative partners, including OSI, Catskill Mountainkeeper and others, and a passionate citizens group, Bluestone Forest, our joint efforts contributed in late August to the Planning Board's (PB) rescission of their Negative Declaration finding. Many felt that there had been insufficient environmental review for the project's impacts, so we welcomed the PB's decision. We will continue to review the Town Planning and Town Boards' activities on this project and share information with a large constituency – many who dearly love Onteora Lake and the trails at BWF. For further info: [www.woodstocklandconservancy.org](http://www.woodstocklandconservancy.org) or FB: Save Onteora Lake, Pickerel Pond and Bluestone Wild Forest

### Saugerties—Construction and Debris Dumping

In the spring neighbors reached out to the Town of Saugerties, WLC and Catskill Mountainkeeper(CMK) regarding the constant dumping of construction debris on Fel Qui and Goat Hill Roads from outside the Town of Saugerties and the Hudson Valley. They were concerned not only with the scale of the operation in their residential neighborhood, but also what might be contained in the debris and its effect on their water and properties. We joined this coalition to stop the operation, and generous neighbors funded an attorney through CMK to represent their interests. To date legal remedies have been difficult to enforce, but we are hopeful that current Supreme Court proceedings when complete will lift the "stay" on the Town's "Stop Work Order."

## PRESERVE NEWS



### Trees for Tribs at Zena

Join us at Zena Cornfield, Saturday, October 26th to help plant a streamside buffer as part of New York State's Trees for Tribs program. Their aim is to reforest tributaries (small creeks and streams) and to increase stream health as it flows into rivers, lakes and oceans. At Zena Cornfield we want to increase soil stability and biodiversity along the stream bank, trading out the non-native Mugwort for large woody shrubs, while offering another beautiful vista to enjoy.

We are looking for volunteers to plant 200 shrubs, to pull shrubs from pots, "tickle" their roots, and plant them in pre-dug holes. We'll apply weed mats around them, staking them down. Whatever your planting experience, all help will be appreciated. Monthly care will be needed for the coming years, ensuring that plants reach their full potential.

To volunteer, contact Jillian Eggers at [jillian.wlc@gmail.com](mailto:jillian.wlc@gmail.com), or call 845-791-0247. For Trees for Tribs info <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/77710.html>

### Show the Love at Sloan Gorge

WLC was recently awarded a trail improvement grant for Sloan Gorge from the NYS Conservation Partnership Program, administered jointly by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and NYS Land Trust Alliance. Monies will support three trail projects, including building stable rock stairs in two locations and shoring up a section of trail, and will be completed by a professional trail building company. They will also offer a multi-day trail building training program for up to 15 volunteers, helping us develop these skills locally for our future trail projects. If interested in the training, email [Maxanne.wlc@gmail.com](mailto:Maxanne.wlc@gmail.com). Schedule to be determined. This grant requires a 25% cash match – and your generous donations would be greatly appreciated.



# LAND LINES

## FALL 2019

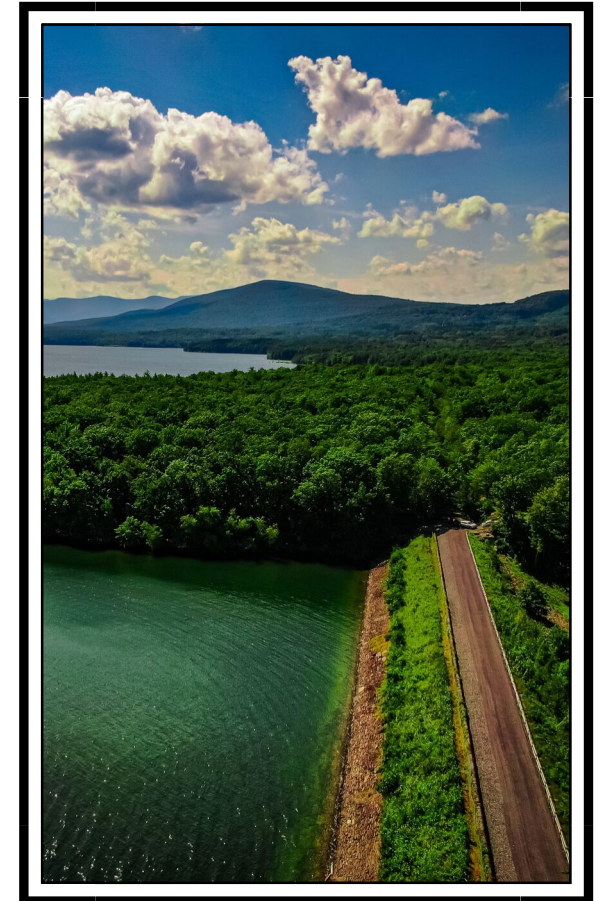


Photo: Ulster County

