



Federated Conservationists <fcwc@fcwc.org>

E-News for April 2016

1 message

Federated Conservationists of Westchester, Inc. <fcwc@fcwc.org>

Fri, Apr 8, 2016 at 2:10 PM

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FCWC

Federated Conservationists
of Westchester County, Inc.

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Following us on social media is the
best way to keep up
with day-to-day announcements



Welcome Connecticut-
Westchester Mycological
Association.

April 2016

Our Vision And Mission

FCWC, founded in 1965, envisions a county in which an environmental ethic defines and shapes all public and private decisions.

Our mission is to provide leadership that educates about environmental issues, advocates sound decision making, and unifies groups and individuals to protect and preserve Westchester's environment and address climate change.

Westchester Municipalities Adopt 100% Green Energy

Westchester Power Program launches first-in-state energy aggregation

Something remarkable happened when the Sustainable Westchester team working on the community choice energy aggregation program opened the energy supply bids from leading energy service companies last month.

Clean energy won BIG!

In February 2015, the New York State Public Service Commission



COMA joins FCWC

The Connecticut-Westchester Mycological Association (COMA) joined FCWC in March and we are excited to begin working with this group of educators and recreationists!

Founded in 1975, COMA was established by a group of people who wanted to explore the world of mushrooms and to learn and share knowledge about the science of mycology. Through public education, field trips, publications and lectures, COMA helps to introduce people to the science of mycology. Collecting, identifying, and eating mushrooms are popular elements of the club's activities. COMA's primary goal has been to advance the science of mycology through public education, organized forays and field trips, publication, lectures, and nature study.

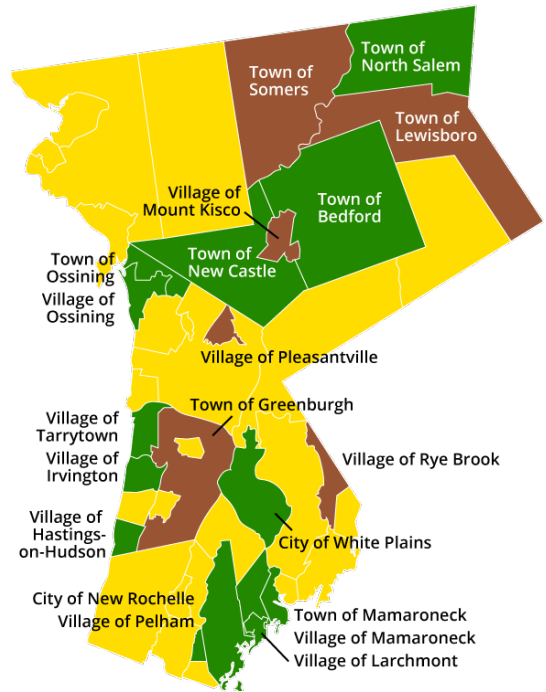
COMA members lead mushroom walks in Westchester and Rockland Counties, and throughout Southern Connecticut. The walks are held almost every weekend between May and early November. The club has conducted an annual survey of fungi at the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation for the Westchester County Department of Parks and records a comprehensive list of fungi collected on mushroom walks and their annual forays.

The next evening program offered by COMA will be on 'Mushrooms Around the World' on May 7. Gary Lincoff, author of *The Audubon Field Guide to North American Mushrooms*, will present a talk on an exceptional diversity of

approved Sustainable Westchester's petition to pilot a municipal energy aggregation program in Westchester County with an order that enabled this first-in-New-York effort.

What is a community choice or municipal energy aggregation program?

In states with deregulated energy supply markets, energy service companies may sell electric or gas supply to consumers. New York deregulated about twenty years ago. About seventy energy service companies are authorized to sell supply as a commodity to New York customers. Some are more scrupulous than others. Acquiring retail supply customers one at a time is expensive for the supply companies. As individuals, customers have no bargaining power with the suppliers.



When all the homes and small businesses in a city bid out their combined electric supply together, suddenly, economies of scale help both the customer and supplier reduce costs and increase rate choices. Community choice programs have been commonplace and successful in six other states, but now for the first time, in New York State as well.

Ever since the February order, the Sustainable Westchester's team hit the road to visit with dozens of city, town and villages all across the County. Municipalities that were interested in joining the aggregation program needed to adopt local legislation enabling them to proceed. Benefitting from great pro-bono advisers, the team prepared draft legislation and resolutions to assist the municipalities.

By the time the team sent out the Request for Proposals to the pre-screened supply firm, over 110,000 homes and businesses in twenty cities, towns, and villages were included as potential customers. This buyers group represents four out of ten county residents, a remarkable feat of collective action all by itself.

The day the bids were opened led to a startling realization that both the basic supply rate and the 100% renewable supply rates were below the 2015 benchmarks from ConEdison and NYSEG.

"Suppliers who really wanted to enter the New York aggregation market stepped up," notes Glenn Weinberg, the lead consultant. "In the end, buying 100% renewable energy green supply for the next two or three years will cost less than buying the basic, brown supply last year."

By the time the program goes live in May, over 70,000 homes and small businesses will be buying 100% renewable energy supply in the fourteen

fascinating fungi and equally fascinating cultures from around the world that employ mushrooms in daily living - for healing, as food, and in ritual. The starting time for COMA programs is 7:00 pm at the Friend's Meeting House, 4455 Purchase St., West Harrison, NY. The schedule for their mushroom walks will be released shortly.

To learn more about COMA and how you can get involved with this organization please visit <http://www.comafungi.org/about-coma/>

cities, towns, and villages that chose to make that option the default for their jurisdiction. These customers "going 100% green" represent three out of ten county residents and, astoundingly, two-thirds of the entire 110,000 consumers in the program.

"Collectively, our consumers choosing the green option will buy 650,000 megawatt-hours per year of certified renewable energy credits," states Leo Wiegman, Sustainable Westchester's Executive Director, "That amount is the energy output equivalent to adding 84,000 residential solar systems [LW2] in the county overnight."

"Our instant market for clean, non-fossil, non-nuclear energy supply is the largest collective action in New York to date to address climate change and create real market demand for clean energy." concludes Weinberg.

For more information, visit www.westchesterpower.org.

Read the full article on our [blog](#).

Meetings of Interest



Westchester Green Business- Certified for New and Future Members

April 15, 2016
8:00 am - 9:30 am

The Business Council of Westchester
800 Westchester Avenue
Suite S-310
Rye Brook, NY 10573

Join a small group of Westchester business leaders who have recently joined WGB-Certified and those who are interested in learning more about membership.

Get your ticket

Happy Healthy Lawns

By Larry O'Connell, FCWC Board Member

It is spring and in a few weeks summer will be here, and we celebrate these seasons by inviting friends and family to outdoor barbecues and festivities. We serve them delicious food and drink.

Other guests have already arrived at our banquet doorstep: crocuses, daffodils and tulips as well as squirrels, songbirds, robins, blue jays and butterflies and bees. "How are do we provide their meal?" Often with chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and other toxic materials via fertilizing lawns and gardens with commercial products.



As many of us realize, the chemicals in formulated, commercial fertilizers and pesticides are unhealthy, to us, our pets and the wildlife that depend on our responsibility to be stewards to our environment.

So, this spring and summer, let's go natural - let the dandelions flower - have you ever driven along an upstate parkway and seen the bright yellow dandelions contrast against the green grass - it is a wonderful and breathtaking sight. OK - if do not like dandelions, then bend down and trowel them out - good exercise!

At FCWC, along with universities and conservation centers, we suggest the best natural fertilizer is from mulch taken from past years' leaves, vegetable peelings, coffee grinds, etc. (no meat or egg products). You can ensure this fertilizer is healthy - "You served it to your children!"

The science on the toxicity of these chemicals is well known, but often hidden from us, the public, by the manufacturers and marketers. As just

Job Opening

Sustainable Westchester is Seeking Executive Director

Sustainable Westchester is seeking a qualified and experienced candidate to fill its paid full-time Executive Director position. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will have overall operational responsibility for Sustainable Westchester's programs, expansion, and execution of its mission. S/he will initially develop a deep knowledge of the field, core programs, operations, and business plans. Other key duties include fundraising, marketing, and community outreach.

For job posting, click [here](#).

one example, Professor Tyrone Hayes, of The University of California - Berkeley, studied the relationship of the herbicide atrazine on frogs. He found the chemical altered the endocrine system of male frogs that feminizes the male frogs, while the company that manufactured the herbicide claimed no ill effects - for frogs or people.

Other studies demonstrate that grass or lawns develop an addiction to fertilizers, requiring more and more each year, much like a heroin addict, to maintain their greenery, but are less hardy and sustainable. Other research show that sandy soil may require fertilizer; but the majority of Westchester County is not composed of sandy soil - so you are wasting your money and time.

Let us become stewards of our natural environment where the flowers, birds and bees want to come to our banquet without the worry of being sickened - just like our human friends and family. Let's not purchase commercial products - the wondrous land has been long before us without our assistance.

In closing, let us welcome our friends and neighbors to a healthy and bountiful banquet, just as we do for ourselves - by avoiding commercial chemical treatments to our soil and lawns.

**Member Organizations
You have a new benefit!**

**WESTCHESTER
Shared Resources Program**

New Initiative by FCWC for Member Organizations

As part of FCWC's 50th Anniversary initiatives we are introducing a FCWC Member Organization-only shared resources program.

An online directory, this searchable list will have items organizations are willing to loan out. This will enable better collaboration between environmental groups and smarter use of resources.

Each item will have details and contact information, allowing groups to make connections.

Long Island Sound Study Updates

By Tony Sorrell, FCWC Board Member

The Long Island Sound Study-Citizen's Advisory Committee (LISS-CAC) Quarterly Meeting was held on March 10, 2016 in New York City. Seventeen representatives from member organizations in Westchester, Long Island and Connecticut attended as well as representatives from the EPA and the NY DEC. The conversation at this meeting focused on nitrogen in Long Island Sound. Generally, nitrogen levels in the Sound are on a downward trend, which is the good news.

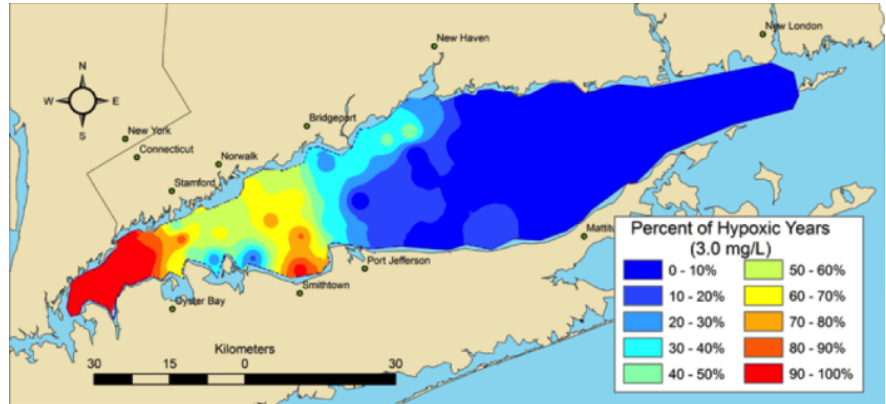
Mark Tedesco of the EPA LISS office presented on a Nitrogen Reduction Strategy overview and then James Tierney of the NY DEC presented the Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan. Participants were informed about nitrogen reduction outreach programs that took place in Galveston Bay, Tampa Bay and Puget Sound. It is suggested that best practices used in these areas could be implemented for an outreach and marketing program in the LIS region.

Hypoxia 20 year average



Check it out!

Take a look at our new page fcwc.org/shared



In Westchester, our sewage treatment plant upgrades are helping to reduce nitrogen levels, however more work needs to be done to address non-point sources of pollution such as storm water, septic, and turf fertilizer. Remediation alternatives like aeration and bio extraction still need to be explored to understand how they can help improve water quality in LIS.

Upcoming meetings and events

- 2016 Long Island Sound Research Conference on Friday, May 13, 2016 in Bridgeport, Connecticut
- 25th Annual Long Island Sound Citizens Summit on Friday, June 3rd at Stony Brook University's Student Activities Center
- LISS-CAC Science and Technology Advisory Committee (STAC) in NY, June 17, at Stony Brook.
- LISS-CAC quarterly meeting June 23 will be held in CT

Events

For a full list of our member organization's events and happenings, check out our Federation Calendar at www.fcwc.org/calendar. Remember to always confirm events before attending. Check back regularly as we are always updating.

Yoga at the Farm

Sponsored by: Friends of Hilltop Hanover Farm

When: 8 sessions starting Saturday, April 2, 9-10AM

Where: Hilltop Hanover Farm, 1271 Hanover Street, Yorktown Heights
Farmer and certified Yoga instructor Michelle Graham* will guide you through an 8 week mixed level (beginner-advanced), Saturday series, of the ancient, but classic practice of Hatha yoga. Bring your own mat.
Drop-in Fee/class: \$25 (payable at the door) or Series Fee: \$130 (Yorktown residents) - \$156 (Non-residents). For more information, click [here](#).

The Hidden Pollution of Rivers by Pharmaceuticals & Personal Care Products

Sponsored by: Bedford Audubon Society

When: Wednesday, April 13, 7-9PM

Where: 35 Todd Road, Katonah

As an Aquatic Ecologist, Dr. Rosi-Marshall conducts research on factors that control and influence how ecosystems function-including the "hidden" impacts humans have on our vital and threatened freshwater systems. Cost: Free. No registration required; we'll see you at 7pm for refreshments (please bring a reusable mug to help us reduce our ecological footprint) and the lecture begins at 7:30pm.

Green Ossining's Earth Day Festival

Sponsored by: Green Ossining

When: Saturday, April 16, 11AM-4PM

Where: Louis Engel Waterfront Park, Ossining

Bring your family and friends. Learn how to live a more sustainable life, visit artisan vendors, and enjoy food and live music on the Hudson River. The Festival has grown from roughly 300 attendees in its first year with an expectation to surpass last year's nearly 3,000 attendees. Join the Greater Ossining community in our annual celebration of Earth Day. For more information see <http://www.greenossining.org>.

The Great Saw Mill River Cleanup

Sponsored by: Groundwork Hudson Valley

When: Saturday, April 16, 10AM-1PM

Where: Throughout Westchester County

On this day of action, individuals and groups throughout the Saw Mill River Watershed, from Yonkers to Chappaqua, will mobilize to pick up trash and debris from in and along the river. Join us on keeping our waters clean! For more information: <http://www.groundworkhvh.org>.

Annual Earth Day Clean Up

Sponsored by: Tarrytown Environmental Advisory Council

When: Saturday, April 16

Where: Various Parks in Tarrytown

10 am - 12 pm - Meet at Patriots Park, Neperan Park

10 am - 3pm - Meet at Tarrytown Lakes

Coffee donated by Coffee Labs Roasters!

Tarrytown Lakes Nature Walk - 7:30am Led by Carole Griffiths
All ages welcome! For more information tarrytownenvironmental.org.

Hudson River Audubon's Spring Luncheon

Sponsored by: Hudson River Audubon

When: Saturday, April 16 12:30-3:30PM

Where: Pas-Tina's Ristorante, 155 S Central Ave, Hartsdale

Come hear a presentation by Frances Greenberg, HRAS Board Member entitled Through the Eyes of an Eco-Tourist: Costa Rica and Belize". Cost: \$32 per guest. For more information <http://www.hras.org>.

Pitch in for Parks

Sponsored by: Friends of Parks and Westchester Parks Department

When: Sunday, April 17

Where: County Parks throughout Westchester

Each April Friends and the Parks Department host Pitch in for Parks, the

largest one-day volunteer spruce-up of the parks in the county. Volunteers, working as individuals, families or large groups, take on special projects to help get the parks ready for the peak season. They paint, rake, prepare and plant flower beds, build footbridges and boardwalks in the woods, clear trails and shorelines, monitor biodiversity, restore wildlife habitats and remove invasive vines from trees. For more information contact: Volunteer Coordinator, Sara Cavanaugh (914) 231-4530 sara@friendsofwestchesterparks.com.

Lower Hudson Watershed Collaboration and Partnership Event

Sponsored by: The Hudson River Watershed Alliance and Center for the Urban River at Beczak

When: Thursday, April 21, 6-8PM

Where: 35 Alexander Street, Yonkers

Come and network and brainstorm with environmental professionals and concerned citizens about threats and opportunities in the region, such as sewage pollution, flooding, green infrastructure, and resiliency to climate change. Residents, students, community leaders, environmental professionals all encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be available, featuring Yonkers Brewing Company and light fare compliments of Tompkins Mahopac Bank and Pace University. The event is free and open to the public. Participating partners include: Groundwork Hudson Valley, Riverkeeper, Federated Conservationists of Westchester County, Saw Mill River Coalition, Bronx River Alliance, Pocantico River Watershed Alliance, Sparkill Creek Watershed Alliance, and Pace University. Please [RSVP](#) online.

Here Come the Migrants!

Sponsored by: Teatown Lake Reservation

When: Friday April 29, 6am

Where: Central Park

Join Charlie Roberto birding in Central Park to catch the first waves of migrating songbirds as they make their way North. Meet in the Teatown Parking lot to carpool at 6:00 am or at 7:15 am at Central Park West and 77th St. Free. Adults Only. Programs require pre-registration. To register, call [914-762-2912](tel:914-762-2912) x 110.

We hope you find the information contained within this E-News relevant and useful. As always, please keep in touch and let us know your thoughts and ideas regarding environmental issues throughout the County.

Sincerely,

Federated Conservationists of Westchester County

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