



# **Federated Conservationists of Westchester County, Inc.**

## ***2014 Annual Report***

This report highlights a few of our new and continuing efforts of the past year towards a greener and more sustainable Westchester during 2014.

### ***Education:***

Perhaps biggest achievement for FCWC this year was Westchester Climate Change Summit that we co-sponsored with Pace Law School and Sustainable Westchester in September. This Summit drew a sold-out crowd and covered topics pertaining to the science behind climate change, best practice examples of what regional communities are doing to prepare for climate change, and adaptation and mitigation to climate change impacts.

Also in 2014, FCWC once again participated in the EagleFest as a collaborator, and enjoyed a beautiful day providing information about Westchester's environment to attendees of this event. We also attended tabling events at Westchester's Earth Day, Building Blocks for Energy Efficient Homes at the Westchester Home Show, and at two Whole Foods Markets where we shared information on actions Westchester residents can do to increase our sustainability and to mitigate climate change. In addition, we continued to co-sponsor the popular Conversations on Conservation programs, which included topics on composting and citizen science this year.

We also co-sponsored and partnered on a variety of forums and seminars to raise awareness about environmental and sustainability issues impacting Westchester County including topics such Long Island Sound, health and environmental impacts of hydrofracking and natural gas transport, and additives and chemicals that are present in beauty products.

### ***Meetings:***

Our Annual Meeting was held in June this year at the Kathryn W. Davis Riverwalk Center in Sleepy Hollow. This year, FCWC was able to present two exceptional people with our Green Seal Award: former Commissioner of the Department of Community Development and Conservation for the Town of Greenburgh Thomas Madden and Dani Glaser, founder and CEO of Green Team Spirit. Mr. Madden was given this Award for his instrumental leadership in the development of new environmental standards for the town, including the adoption of green building code for new site development, revisions to the Energy

Star code, energy improvement financing for commercial properties and a Smart Growth Development Study, focusing on mixed use development, as part of the Town's comprehensive plan update. Ms. Glaser was recognized this year because of her environmental leadership and advocacy in the areas of business, government, and non-profits. Ty Ingram, a senior from White Plains High School, was awarded the Edith G. Read student award for his impressive Advanced Science Research Project on algae turf scrubbers that can be used to treat wastewater.

We also held a Federation Meeting in May, which brought together our member organizations to network and share resources. Newly appointed chair of the Environment and Energy (E&E) Committee for the Board of Legislators, Catherine Parker came to the meeting to describe some of her plans for the E&E committee, and to hear from FCWC Federation Members on what environmental topics were important to them. About 20 of our member organizations were represented at this Federation Meeting.

A new initiative for 2014 was the creation of a Trails Advocacy Group to improve, connect, support and expand Westchester's network of regional and local trails and pathways. We joined forces with Friends of Westchester County Parks to bring this initiative to life. So far we have held two meetings and have decided to create a comprehensive map of all biking, walking, and horse trails throughout the County.

### ***In the Community:***

Beyond our educational programming and advocacy work, we were also involved in the wider environmental community in Westchester this year. We worked with Ann-Marie Cunningham to bring the Long Island Sound Science Festival to the Sound shore communities in October. We also joined in on conversations with the Sustainable Westchester on the topics of waste management and climate change vulnerability. We attended several Board of Legislator meetings to monitor the progress of the proposed Sustainable Playland plan (later withdrawn). We continued our participation with Long Island Sound Citizens Advisory Council.

### ***Communications:***

During the past year, we have continued to increase our reach with a variety of different communications. We completely revamped our website to provide additional space for information that is of interest to our members and supporters. We published our monthly E-News and used twitter and Facebook to keep our members and the community up-to-date on environmental issues and events that are happening throughout the county. We have continued publishing a series of blog posts (on our website- [www.fcwc.org](http://www.fcwc.org)) entitled 'Westchester Going Green' that feature green aspects of Westchester's municipalities. In addition, our Federation Calendar has provided a venue where we advertise environmental events happening all over the county.

### ***Advocacy:***

Advocacy remained a main component of FCWC's work during 2014. Examples of our advocacy work include:

- Continuing to advocate for a ban on hydrofracking in New York State.
- Submitting a letter in support of statewide Anti-idling legislation proposed by Assemblyman Abinanti
- Providing written public comments about the concerns of Spectra Energy's proposed expansion of Algonquin Pipeline to FERC
- Writing a letter to the Mayor of Tarrytown to encourage the preservation of open space in the Historic Commons Zoning District along the Hudson.
- Sending a letter of support for plastic bag ban for Pleasantville and New Castle
- Meeting with the Energy and Environment Chair Catherine Parker to discuss options for bioheat and banning #6 heating oil in Westchester
- Writing a position paper concerning the inclusion of the Curator position eliminated in the proposed 2015 Westchester County operating budget; this position was ultimately put back in the budget.

### ***Looking Ahead in 2015:***

The Federated Conservationists has survived five decades. That is 50 years of bringing together diverse interests and moving the County's environmental agenda forward. When discussing what the theme of our year was going to be, we discussed that it is impressive that a small environmental non-profit was able to last for this long. We owe it all to the grassroots activism that has been the backbone of this organization since it's

## **2014 FCWC Board**

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Sara Cashen  
Robert Funicello  
Sharon Pickett  
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### **Staff**

Alicia Molloy  
Katharine Munz

inception back in 1965. We want to ensure that as we move forward we support all of those who are in the grassroots in any environmental organization.

In 2015, our main topics of work will be on climate change, pushing for a County-wide ban on plastic bags, and a new and increased focus on the open spaces that are really the backbone of Westchester's environment.

We are eager to continue to meet environmental challenges in Westchester County, but we cannot do this without your support. Please consider supporting FCWC with a gift donation, any denomination helps. FCWC needs you to join us in our efforts to preserve our environment and work towards a more sustainable Westchester.

## Message from the Presidents

Federated Conservationists of Westchester County had a remarkable year in 2014, and it is our great honor to report on the progress that our organization has achieved. We would not have been able to get this this point, on the verge of a huge milestone – 50 years, without the support from so many individuals and organizations. Our greatest achievement, and the highlight, of 2014 would have to be the all-day climate change summit in September. The ‘Westchester Climate Change Summit’, hosted by FCWC and Pace University Law School's Center for Environmental Legal Studies, brought experts on a variety of environmental subjects to a sold out audience of students, elected officials and the concerned public,. Specifics that were discussed included coastal resiliency; regional examples of solution/strategies; a climate showcase community; microgrids; climate management through land use planning and regulation; and ways to achieve more energy independence. To follow up the summit, FCWC has planned a series of workshops on the issue of climate change throughout 2015. We're also proud to have continued our co-sponsorship of the increasingly popular Conversations on Conservation series. This past year's topics included food waste composting and citizen science.

It is through the diligent effort and commitment from our supporters that FCWC can remain vital and continue to grow. When our Program Director went on maternity leave in October, we were fortunate to be able to hire a young, talented, and passionate interim Program Director, Kate Munz. After evaluating our needs for our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, we decided that it would be beneficial to keep both on staff to help develop and refine our upcoming programming. Kate has helped revamp our website to evolve with our needs and the demands of those who seek information about Westchester's environment. She is also bringing new and innovative ideas to grow our membership and strengthen the relationships that already exist.

FCWC's Board of Directors have each contributed to this year's success. They have volunteered their time, expertise and talents to plan programs, make important connections, write position statements, advice policy

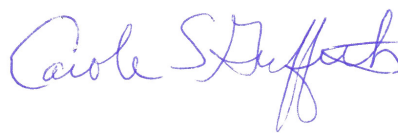
and support the staff. Without them, we wouldn't have been able to accomplish as much as we have. In 2014, we welcomed two new Board members to our ranks, Chris Riley, an audit manager for a Fortune 500 Company and Sara Cashen, who comes to us from the non-profit world and previous work with Westchester County. We are excited to have them aboard and look forward to what they will bring to FCWC.

But mostly, we are grateful for the financial and programming support from our individual members and member organizations. After all, FCWC is a federation, uniting all of those who care in one resonating voice for the environment.

As we close the door on 2014, and look to our 50<sup>th</sup> year, we turn our focus to a number of environmental issues facing Westchester County. True to our founding principles – of offering local solutions while still maintaining a global outlook, in 2015, we will be focusing on how climate change will impact areas of Westchester including our shorelines and parklands, advocating for a County-wide plastic bag ban, educating the public about water quality in Long Island Sound, promoting use and conservation of Westchester's open spaces, all while encouraging sustainable behavior and environmental stewardship from our residents of Westchester County.

Here's to 50 years and counting. We look forward to celebrating our past and future accomplishments with you.

Sincerely,




Carole Griffiths and Jason Klein

## FCWC Thanks our 2014 Supporters

We gratefully thank our many individual and organizational members and donors for their support.

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*\$1,000+*

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Green Mountain Energy

## Member Organizations and Partners

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 Bedford Garden Club  
 Bronx River Parkway Reservation Conservancy  
 Bronx River Sound Shore Audubon Society  
 Central Westchester Audubon Society  
 Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation  
 Committee to Save the Bird Homestead  
 Cortlandt WATCH  
 Croton Arboretum & Sanctuary, Inc.  
 Community Watershed Clean Water Coalition  
 Friends of Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary  
 Friends of Hilltop Hanover Farm  
 Friends of Marshlands, Inc.  
 Friends of Rye Nature Center  
 Friends of Trailside Nature Center  
 Friends of Westchester County Parks  
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 Tri-State Transportation Campaign  
 Untermeyer Gardens Conservancy  
 Watershed Agricultural Center  
 Westchester Land Trust  
 Yonkers Environmental Coalition  
 Yonkers Land Conservancy

We wish to apologize for any mistakes or omissions we have made in recognizing our supporters. Please let us know of any corrections. You may also find our list of supporters on our website: [www.FCWC.org](http://www.FCWC.org).

### Become a Member!

#### Individual Membership

- ☐ \$20 Student/Senior
- ☐ \$35 Basic
- ☐ \$50 Contributing
- ☐ \$100 Sustaining
- ☐ \$250 Patron
- ☐ \$500+ Benefactor

#### Organizational Membership

- ☐ \$50 Not for Profit  
(under 100 members)
- ☐ \$100 Not for Profit  
(over 100 members)
- ☐ Other Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make your tax deductible checks payable to FCWC and mail to:

**Federated Conservationists of  
Westchester County, Inc.**

E House ~ 78 North Broadway  
White Plains, NY 10603.



## Our Golden Anniversary

We are pleased and proud to say that 50 years ago, Federated Conservationists of Westchester County Inc. (FCWC) was founded. The idea for this organization began when concerned citizens and environmental groups from across the County wanted to create a strong, unified voice for combating pollution, preserving Westchester's natural resources and important open space, and making sure environmental concerns are included in local land use decisions. In forming the organization, FCWC's goals were to promote environmentally sound planning and decision making throughout the county, and to educate the public and government officials on the need to protect Westchester's environment.

Over the past five decades, FCWC has educated its members, government officials, businesses, and the public on a wide range of environmental issues. It fulfilled this educational role using its newsletter, "Westchester Environment" in the past, and currently uses its electronic newsletter, FCWC's E-News. FCWC also offers workshops, frequent conferences, speaking engagements, roundtables, and testimony at countless hearings before governmental bodies and agencies. FCWC has provided crucial input to county planning studies. FCWC's input has led to increased environmental sensitivity in decision making, and ongoing issues such as sewage disposal. Throughout its history, FCWC also has been a leading voice for adequate funding for county parks maintenance and for purchasing additions to the park system.

FCWC has offered local solutions to global issues. We have expanded our role as a bridge builder between the environmental and business communities and worked to bring all stakeholders together surrounding these important environmental, social, and economic issues.

It is because of our established reputation as a knowledgeable and responsive environmental organization, and our rich history in the county, that citizens, elected officials, community leaders, and business professionals look to us for an informed view on issues affecting the region. As an umbrella organization, FCWC is uniquely well suited to foster

the exchange of resources and ideas from local environmental groups and to channel their efforts to maximize our collective outreach.

We'll be holding a variety of events during our golden year, and we hope you'll join us to celebrate our accomplishments and toast to our future. Thank you for being part of our history and working side by side with FCWC to protect Westchester County's environment.

FCWC is a 501(c)3 organization dedicated to providing leadership that educates people about environmental issues, problems, and solutions; advocates sound decision making; and works with groups and individuals to protect Westchester's natural resources.