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Federated Conservationists of Westchester County

October 2014

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WESTCHESTER CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT



On Friday, Sept. 12, 2014 Pace University Law School's Center for Environmental Legal Studies and Federated Conservationists of Westchester County (FCWC) hosted a daylong conference on the impacts of climate change in Westchester to a sold out crowd at the New York State Judicial Institute at Pace Law School. The conference was co-sponsored by Sustainable Westchester.

Experts, including keynote speakers Dr. Cynthia Rosenzweig of the NASA Goddard Space Center and Professor Michael Gerrard of the Center for Climate Change Law at Columbia Law School discussed the formidable threats of climate change to the County and outlined solutions and strategies available to municipalities to address these threats.

Specifics of climate change that were discussed included coastal resiliency (Mark Lowery, Climate Policy Analyst, Office of Climate Change NYSDEC); regional examples of solution/strategies (Nina Orville, Ex. Dir. of SWEAC); A Climate Showcase Community, (Gray Russell, Sustainability Director of Montclair, NJ); Microgrids (Jordan Gerow, Energy and Climate Law Advisor, the Energy and Climate Change Center, Pace Law School); Climate Management through Land Use Planning and Regulation(Prof. John Nolon, Counsel to Pace's Land Use Law Center; NYS Climate Change Plan (Jared Snyder, Assistant DEC Commissioner for Air Resources, Climate Change and Energy); and ways to achieve more energy independence (Prof. Karl Rabago, Director of the Energy and Climate Change Center at Pace Law School).



Perhaps the most informative part of the Summit was the final section that included a panel discussion with the speakers and Pace Law School Dean Emeritus Richard Ottinger, moderated by Professor Nicholas Robinson. The audience had the opportunity to ask questions and the conversations exemplified how ready and eager

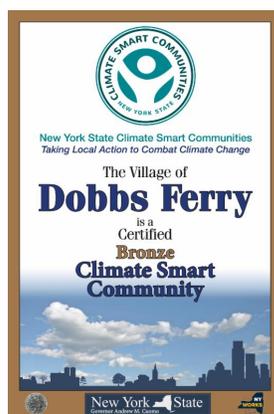
Westchester County residents are to take actions to combat and address climate change in their own backyards.

FCWC is planning a series of follow up workshops on the issue of climate change throughout the next year. Please contact the FCWC office at 914-422-4053 or fcwc@fcwc.org, if you would like information or for suggestions on these upcoming programs.

Westchester Going Green: Dobbs Ferry, A Climate Smart Community

by: Zack Kashdan and Kate Munz, Asst. Program Director

FCWC is examining the ongoing work that the many municipalities of Westchester County are doing in regards to sustainability, environmental protection and promoting a "green" energy economy in the region. We hope these short articles will not only provide you, our member, with information on what other municipalities are doing in the region but also encourage collaboration between each other in creating and promoting these projects. We believe this type of collaboration will be beneficial in promoting each other's projects and lead to a stronger more sustainable future for Westchester County.



The next municipality we'd like to feature in our 'Westchester Going Green' series is the Village of Dobbs Ferry for their certification as a Climate Smart Community - a New York State program dedicated to addressing climate change. As of April this year, Dobbs Ferry (along with five other municipalities - among them Albany and Cortlandt) were recognized by Governor Cuomo as the founding Certified Climate Smart Communities in New York. An achievement that is no small feat; to be certified, a municipality must take a ten element pledge to work towards the goal of greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction and climate adaptation. Most notably, while over 130 local governments have taken the very same pledge, Dobbs Ferry is among the few that have taken significant steps to address all ten pledge elements.

The steps in this program include:

- *The initial pledge to be a Climate Smart Community*
- *Setting goals, inventory emissions, and a plan for climate action*
- *Decreasing community energy use*
- *Increasing community use of renewable energy*
- *Realizing benefits of recycling and other climate smart solid waste practices*
- *Reducing greenhouse gas emissions through the use of climate-smart land-use tools*
- *Enhancing community resilience and preparing for the effects of climate change*
- *Supporting the development of a green innovation economy*
- *Informing and inspiring the public*
- *Committing to an evolving process of climate action.*

After the completion of the initial planning stages, which consisted of the formation of the Dobbs Ferry Energy Task Force and the creation of the municipal Green Team; the Village has continued the process by conducting energy assessments for most municipal buildings, and replaced half its street lights with LEDs (becoming the first municipality in Westchester County to

install significant numbers). To encourage renewable energy for local government operations, solar arrays were installed on two municipal buildings.

In addition, Dobbs Ferry has taken on another component of the Climate Smart Community pledge, addressing community land use, by focusing on improving safety for bikers and pedestrians. This step is expected to encourage a diversification of transportation modes used throughout the community.

The strength behind the Climate Smart Community New York State program comes from a focus on the convergence of environmental and financial benefits. While many of the program's elements reduce GHG emissions and strengthen climate change adaptation, these elements also have the opportunity to provide financial benefits. A handful of which include: savings in taxpayer dollars, improving operations and infrastructure, and positioning the municipality for economic growth.

Dobbs Ferry has completed the Climate Smart Certification program five years after taking the initial pledge. Some highlights of the results of Dobbs Ferry's efforts are: over 40% reduction in GHG emissions from municipal buildings and streetlights; and an estimate of \$1 million in expected savings for the village over the next 10 years. Dobbs Ferry is a leader among Westchester's municipalities in environmental action, earning their "bronze" status, the highest level awarded to date, among the Climate Smart Communities.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Family Hawk Day

Sponsored by: Hudson River Audubon Society

When: Saturday, October 4, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Where: Lenoir Nature Center

The hawk watch will take place between 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. A live hawk program with Jim Eyring, Master Falconer will begin at 1:00 PM. For more information on the event please visit www.hras.org.

Open to the Public Meeting "The Toxic Brew in our Yards"

Sponsored by: Rye Garden Club

When: Tuesday, October 7, 10:30 AM

Where: Rye Free Reading Room, 1061 Boston Post Rd, Rye, NY

Diane Lewis is a physician and the founder of the Great Healthy Yard Project and is the author of a book by the same name. The organization is an environmental non-profit group working to improve and protect the quality of our drinking water in order to help our families lead healthier lives. She has dedicated her work to teaching others in nuanced terms how chemicals end up in our drinking water, and what affects they have on our bodies, as well as teaching alternative ways to care for our lawns and gardens without harmful chemicals.

10:30 Open to the Public Speaker, followed by Member Lunch at the Square House. For more information visit the Rye Garden Club [calendar](#), or contact (914) 967-0480.

Environmental Legislation Roundup: Updates from our State & County Elected Officials

Sponsored by: Greenburgh Nature Center

When: Wednesday, October 8, 7 PM

Where: Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Road, Scarsdale, NY

Hear directly from our state and county elected officials about critical environmental issues facing New York, specifically Westchester County. Representatives from the Senate, Assembly, and the County Board are available for a follow-up Q&A and discussion. Program presented in partnership with the Sierra Club Lower Hudson Group; designed for adults and high school students. FREE and handicapped accessible. For more information: www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

Tarrytown Eco-Fair

Sponsored by: Tarrytown Environmental Advisory Council

When: Saturday, October 11, 10am

Where: Patriot's Park, 199 N Broadway, Sleepy Hollow, NY 10591

Please join us for an outing perfect for the whole family! In addition to the Village scarecrow making contest and the weekly farmer's market, there will be over 30 tables of food, environmentally friendly products, kids crafts, educational organizations, composting demos, face-painting, garden tips, and more. Last year's event featured a swap shop, Rescue-a-pet, and a free bike check-up so please stay tuned for updates at www.tarrytownenvironmental.com or on our [facebook](#) page.

FCWC will also be one of the tables in attendance!

Catskill Mountainkeeper Presents Taste of the Catskills

Sponsored by: Watershed Agricultural Council

When: Saturday & Sunday, October 11th-12th, 10:00 AM - 10:00 PM

Where: Maple Shade Farm, 2066 County Route 18 (Back River Road), Delhi, NY 13753

Music, fireworks, beer and FOOD! Come for the unveiling of Pure Catskills and over 30 members showcasing their products raised, grown and handcrafted from the wonderful natural resources of the region. Taste of the Catskills is a family-friendly event that brings together community, local food, and a whole lotta fun all weekend long. For more information visit www.nycwatershed.org/events_ag.html or www.tasteofthecatskills.com.

Trees for Tribs Planting at Brinton Brook

Sponsored by: Saw Mill River Audubon

When: Saturday, October 18

Where: Brinton Brook Sanctuary

We'll be doing another round of planting native trees and shrubs in Brinton Brook Sanctuary. This NYS DEC program helps streamside habitats of Hudson River tributaries. Want to help? Email, office@sawmillriveraudubon.org, or call us, (914) 666-6503, for more details.

Walkable Westchester

Sponsored by: Central Westchester Audubon Society

When: Wednesday, October 22 7:15 PM

Where: Presbyterian Church, 39 North Broadway, White Plains, NY

If you are a hiker, just out for a stroll, or bird watching, Westchester is a great place to be. Join Jane and Walt Daniels, Westchester residents who are avid hikers, as they take you on tour of selected parks around the county. Learn who donated land and how parks got their names. The book has a county-wide locator map and GPS coordinates. Copies of the book will be available to purchase. Refreshments served at 7:15pm. For more information visit www.centralwestchesteraudubon.org

Compost Bin Sale and Workshop

Sponsored by: Sheldrake Environmental Center

When: Saturday, October 25 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Where: Sheldrake Environmental Center, 685 Weaver Street, Larchmont, NY 10538

While school might be in full swing, have you thought about your composting education? Learn about composting at the Sheldrake Environmental Center's compost bin sale and workshop. The workshop is designed to help people get started with a backyard composting bin system - it's Composting 101! Learn how and where to set up the bin, what goes in (including yard and food waste), how to maintain it, and the best part which is when and how to harvest the nutrient-rich compost to use in your garden. The price for a bin with the free workshop is \$85. For more information, or to sign up for the workshop, visit the [Sheldrake Environmental Center's website](#).

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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