



FCWC

Federated Conservationists
of Westchester County, Inc.

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Join Our List

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Keep up with us!

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



Membership Drive



Dear FCWC Community:

We are privileged to live in a County that has amazing natural open spaces just outside our doorstep, available to us due to the hard work of past concerned residents and activist groups.

We want to thank you all for your

January 2016

Our Mission and Vision

Our mission is to provide 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.

FCWC envisions a county in which an environmental ethic defines and shapes all public and private decisions affecting natural resources.



A Pledge for a Greener Westchester

Board of Legislature Signs Climate Smart Community Pledge



On December 14th, 2015 a [resolution](#) to adopt the Climate Smart Community Pledge in Westchester County passed the legislature with a nearly unanimous, 16 - 1 vote.

The Climate Smart Community Pledge outlines goals for the County to become more energy efficient, climate change resilient, and waste-conscious. This resolution was spearheaded by the legislature's Environment & Energy (E&E) Committee. The E & E committee " reviews all public policies that affect Westchester's energy needs, rate of consumption and cost to taxpayers, and seeking ways to improve how we go about reducing Westchester's energy needs through public education, proposing legislation or working with the County administration on energy initiatives."

The Climate Smart Community Pledge consists of 10 pledge elements, including;

1. Pledge to be a Climate Smart Community.
2. Set goals, inventory emissions, plan for climate action.
3. Decrease community energy use.
4. Increase community use of renewable energy.
5. Realize benefits of recycling and other climate-smart solid waste

support of FCWC, and remind you of the impact you made as member.



Renew today!

**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.



Check it out!

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

management practices.

6. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the use of climate-smart land-use tools.
7. Enhance community resilience and prepare for the effects of climate change.
8. Support development of a green innovation economy.
9. Inform and inspire the public.
10. Commit to an evolving process of climate action.

Discussion on the Climate Smart Community Pledge at the County level began back in October 2015. At the first meeting on the subject Mark Lowery, Climate Policy Analyst, NYS DEC Office of Climate Change made a [presentation](#) on supporting community climate action through the Climate Smart Communities Program. He cited the inevitable need for a plan to deal with issues such as sea level rise, inconsistent precipitation, and heat extremes; and plans for mitigation to the corresponding risks such as hazards to residents, stressed infrastructure, and negative agricultural and ecosystem effects.

The road to this achievement was paved by the 29 communities in Westchester County that first took the pledge. These prior commitments by communities allowed for the Board of Legislators to come to the consensus that this pledge should be a county-wide resolution, which Legislator Catherine Parker noted in an early committee meeting.

This pledge, together with Westchester County's comprehensive Climate Action Plan, will offer a solid roadmap on how we should be addressing threats associated with climate change.

At FCWC, we are very proud of this step at the county-level towards making it a healthy and green place to live.

[>> Read on our blog](#)

Something is Stirring at Westchester County Airport

Proposal to Change Part of the Restrictions on Westchester County Airport

By Carolyn Cunningham, FCWC Co-Treasurer



GIS Certificate Course at Purchase College

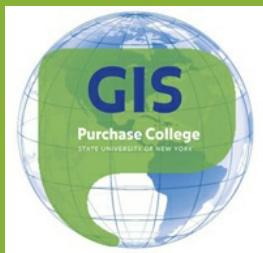
Using Cloud Based Online GIS Platforms

Purchase College Certificate Program

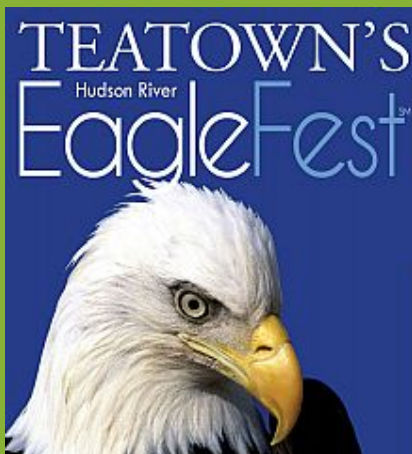
This course will introduce students to a geospatial software and data available on "the web" - much of which is freely available and can be used to support a wide range of government and community-based GIS mapping efforts.

**Registration, course syllabus,
and other information is available
using [this link](#).**

Semester starting:
February 23rd, 2016



Teatown's 2016 EagleFest Tickets On Sale Now!



Saturday, February 6th

The County Executive has recently proposed to the Board of Legislators (BOL) to adjust how the passenger cap on how commercial passengers - in place since 1984 - will be measured. Instead of having a limit of 240 passengers for every half hour, the 240 passenger restriction will be averaged across the whole 24-hour day. This will create a bank of potentially 11,520 passengers a day, and can be drawn on in peak times allowing the airlines to exceed the 240 current passenger per half hour limit. The cap of 4 commercial flights per half hour appears to remain the same.

The following history of Westchester County Airport explains FCWC's concerns with this proposal. We believe this proposal should have a full environmental review to explore the range of impacts it may engender; and - more data is needed on the current numbers of commercial flights and passengers per day and per hour to better understand the potential increased impacts. Finally, the danger of changing even part of the current restrictions that have been "grandfathered" by the FAA, and are so beneficial to the County's environment and quality of life, needs to be explored, and assurances must be made before the BOL should consider changing anything.

History:

Westchester County Airport (WCA) was built during the 1940s as a small airport for National Guard use, well before strong environmental regulation was the norm. By the early 1980s commercial use of the airport had grown so much that noise from the flights was affecting residents for miles around WCA, especially at night. The increased level of disturbance caused Westchester County to pursue a mandatory curfew at the airport - an action that was met by a suit that the County lost. The court maintained that the County did not have adequate evidence of the noise problem at that time, which was the impetus for the current noise monitoring program at the airport.

After the court imposed an injunction, the commercial airlines settled in a voluntary legal agreement meant to address the public's concerns. The 1984 agreement placed a limit on the numbers of flights and passengers at the airport, restricting the airlines to 4 operations and 240 passengers per half hour. This agreement, came to be known as the TCA (the "Terminal Capacity Agreement"), was finally written into the county code as a law in 2004 (now known as TUR "Terminal Use Restrictions"). The vote on this law was passed unanimously by the Board of Legislators (BOL), including then Legislator Astorino.

The 2004 TUR law continues to limit WCA's growth, protect Westchester's environment, property values, and keeps the area around the airport "livable." The current restrictions at WCA would not be permitted now by the FAA, since a federal law in 1990 preempted all local control of size of airports. But since ours predated the 1990 law, our restrictions have been "grandfathered" (and permitted) under the law.

A Slippery Slope:

The expansion of an airport facility results in increased noise and air pollution,

**Eagle Headquarters:
Croton Point Park**

Grammy award-winning musician, entertainer, singer-songwriter TOM CHAPIN to perform at EagleFest this year!

Stop by FCWC's table to say hi!

Discounted Pre-Sale General Admission tickets available

Get your tickets today!

Cuomo to boost environmental fund

**Making News:
New Investment in the Environmental Protection Fund**

Governor Cuomo announced this week, a bold multi-part commitment to clean water and reliable infrastructure as he unveiled parts of his upcoming state budget proposal. A historic \$300 million budget for the Environmental Protection Fund and \$100 million for water infrastructure investments

Via LoHud

Read Full Article

storm water drainage from increased paved surfaces, cutting of trees, and in the case of WCA, disturbance of the Kensico buffer zone and possible spills of deicing fluids into the reservoir (spills have already occurred).

However, it is most important to remember that once the current law is changed there is no going back; future amendments may occur, such as removing the cap on the number of planes or "operations" per half hour. This proposal may open the door to removal of all or part of the FAA-grandfathered status.

FCWC will be looking for others to get involved. If you are interested and wish to learn more, or have any questions, you can call our office at [\(914\) 422-4053](tel:9144224053).

Wrap-Up of 2016 County Budget

Final 2016 Westchester County Budget

By Kate Munz, Member Relations Coordinator

On December 18th, 2015 the County Executive signed the 2016 County Budget, setting the course for spending this year. Hotly contested, the County Executive's original proposal for the 2016 budget included deep slashes to many public services, with conservation being one of the biggest targets.

The original proposed plan laid out cuts to 14 positions between the Department of Conservation and Department of Planning, including all of the county park curators and five members of the planning staff; and it reduced support for environmental organizations such as the Greenburgh Nature Center. Additionally, the plan would jeopardize groups offering legal services for Westchester's poorest residents and county-supported art programs by drastically cutting funding.

But now, after three lengthy and passionate public hearings, the final 2016 County Budget has been signed, which contained mostly good news. All currently filled Curator positions were reinstated, ensuring that for at least one more year residents will get to enjoy the fun and necessary nature programming. Unfortunately though, Lenoir Nature Preserve did not receive its full-time curator, only one year after it was filled, and neither did Croton Point Park. All five planning positions that were slated to be cut were also reinstated. Additionally, Greenburgh Nature Center received 70% of their expected income from the County.

We were also pleased to see that many of the other worthy causes also had funding restored, these included issues such as affordable legal services and art programs.

The advocacy and passion of the entire community, especially from those with deep connections to the County Parks, certainly helped to make sure these positions were included in the final 2016 County budget. We thank everyone who wrote an email, made a phone call, signed a petition, or spoke at the public

hearings. Your voices made a difference!

[>> Read on our blog](#)

UPCOMING 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.

Walkable Westchester with Jane Daniels

Sponsored by: Bedford Audubon and the Friends of FDR State Park

When: Wednesday, January 13, 7PM

Where: Katonah Village Library, 26 Bedford Road, Katonah

Bedford Audubon and the Friends of FDR State Park Welcome Jane and Walt Daniels for Free Public Lecture on Walkable Westchester. Refreshments will be served at 7 pm and the lecture will begin at 7:30 in the Garden Room. No registration is necessary. Please bring a reusable mug to help us reduce our ecological footprint. For more information visit www.bedfordaudubon.org/events.html.

The State of the Climate of New York: March and Rally

Co-Sponsored by: Grassroots Environmental Education and many others

When: Wednesday, January 13, 10:30AM

Where: West Capitol Park, Albany, NY

New York needs to invest in energy conservation, energy reduction, wind, solar and geothermal (e.g., heat pumps) not oil, gas, coal, fossil fuel infrastructure, or nukes. Join other advocates as the Governor delivers his formal address. Information about buses can be found [here](#). To learn more visit <http://gelfny.org/>.

From Behind the Plow: Berry Brook Farm and Rivertowns Farm Markets Bring the Field To Your Table

Sponsored by: Sierra Club Lower Hudson Valley and Greenburgh Nature Center

When: Wednesday, January 13, 7PM

Where: Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Road, Scarsdale

How are small local farms transforming our food system to bring fresher, healthier, more diverse and delicious food to our tables? Why are loyal customers coming to Rivertowns Farm Markets through rainy springs and sweltering summers? How does a CSA fit into this mix to enable farmers to feed their own family as well as the community? Enjoy a taste of winter produce and have the opportunity to sign up for a CSA share! Program in partnership with GNC. Refreshments by Sierra Club at 7:00, program starts at 7:30. For more information www.sierraLowerHudson.org.

Movie Night: The Marion Lake Story

Sponsored by: Saw Mill River Audubon

When: Thursday, January 14, 7PM

Where: Black Cow Coffee House, Croton-on Hudson, NY

Shot over a seven year period, The Marion Lake Story tells the compelling story of how a community on the east end of Long Island, N.Y. came together to clear their lake of the highly invasive phragmites. They educated themselves, raised money, hired wetlands biologist Steve Marino to plan the eradication, and the result is a bio-diverse habitat for native birds, plants and rare turtles. Running time is 28 min. Stay for an informal discussion afterwards with local people working on invasive species control in Croton and elsewhere in northern Westchester. Find out how to identify and control invasive plants on your own property and local efforts you can join to remove invasive species in Audubon sanctuaries and local parks. For more info click [here](#).

Winter Wildlife

Sponsored by: Greenburgh Nature Center

When: Saturday, January 30, 2PM

Where: Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Road, Scarsdale

A naturalist introduces some of the Nature Center animals with a focus on winter survival techniques. This entertaining and informative program allows visitors to hear, see, smell and touch many of our fascinating, furry, feathered and scaly friends. Recommended for ages 5 and over. Members \$5/person, Non-members \$8/person. For more information <http://greenburghnaturecenter.org>.

Guided Bird Walk

Sponsored by: Committee to Save the Bird Homestead

When: Saturday, January 30, 3PM

Where: 624 Milton Road, Rye, NY

Join us for a special guided bird walk. Christopher Mignone, Vice President of Central Westchester Audubon, will lead an indoor walk using the beautiful photographs of birds by Nadia Valla on exhibit, followed by an outdoor walk on the adjoining Meeting House and Bird Homestead grounds. Admission free. Donations gratefully accepted.

Hudson River Eaglefest

Sponsored by: Teatown Lake Reservation

When: Saturday, February 6 9AM- 4PM (snow date Sunday, February 7)

Where: Croton Point Park

So much to do at EagleFest! Local musical acts performing in the Eaglet Stage tent including a performance by Grammy award-winning singer songwriter Tom Chapin * Numerous viewing sites all along the Hudson River * Bus Tours to viewing sites * Children's activities & storytelling * 25 participating environmental

organizations * Food offerings by local restaurateurs, RiverMarket Bar and Kitchen and Wobble Cafe and more! For more information, click [here](#).

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