2016 Annual Report
Ulster County
Environmental Management Council (EMC)

EMC Background
When the Ulster County Department of the Environment was established in 2008, the Ulster County EMC was able to continue its primary role of reviewing and advising the County and local governments on environmental issues. In 2008, The Department of the Environment completed the County's first Environmental Plan which has been used as a management tool for multiple County departments' environmental activities. The EMC also began operating under the new Charter form of government in early 2009, which allowed for the EMC to continue providing essential networking and communication among the county's environmental commissions and boards.

Environmental Management Council
Fifteen of the twenty-four municipalities in Ulster County had active Environmental Council/Commissions in 2016 (See Exhibit A).

At the end of 2016 the membership of the Environmental Management Council Board included 10 town representatives, 4 at-large members and one ex-officio member for a current total of 15 members (See Exhibit A). Officers for the UC EMC for the 2016 year were nominated as follows: Chairperson – Dave Haldeman (by John Sansalone); Vice Chairperson – Cindy Lanzetta, (by John Sansalone); Secretary – Kristen Schara, (by Bill More). Throughout the year, attendance was excellent with a quorum at most meetings.

The goals of the Ulster County EMC are:

- To educate our members about environmental issues and the opportunities available to Towns through grants and other funding sources so that they can have a positive impact on the local environment
- To then educate our local Town boards (especially our Town supervisors) and Town citizens as to what is happening throughout the County and the ways they can seek to improve the local environment
- To interact with the County Department of the Environment (DOE), the County Energy and Environment committee, and the County Planning board
- To speak out on environmental issues
- To support environmental initiatives presented by the County Energy and Environment Committee
- To suggest to the legislature areas where we believe there could be legislative action
- To promote steps taken by Ulster County to protect our environment and make sure that the public is aware of these efforts

During 2016, the EMC hosted a few special presentations. These included:

a. Wallkill Valley Land Trust
b. Citizens Campaign for the Environment (regarding a ban on plastic bags)
c. Maintaining our Nation's Largest Water Supply (updating the New York City water system)
d. Beekeeping (importance of bees as pollinators, bee populations and the art of beekeeping)
e. Food recycling

Members acted as liaisons between the EMC and the environmental municipal councils and executive branches. The Secretary of the EMC documented in detail the information that was exchanged at each meeting in minutes and then the members shared the minutes with their municipal councils and executive branches. This method proved to be a successful communication tool for the EMC.

Letters from the council:

To the Energy and Environment Committee supporting efforts to enact a ban on the use of plastic bags

To the U.S. Coast Guard addressing concerns about the proposed movement of oil from Albany to NYC via barge (including the number of berths, the threat to local economies particularly tourism and recreation, noise and light pollution, and the threat to water quality)

Omega Retreat: May 6th/7th

Attended by 9 members, 2 DOE staff, 2 County legislators, the Chair of the Kingston CAC, and our facilitator.

We discussed:

- The EMC's target population
- Ways to help the legislature
- Our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to our environment
- We decided to work more closely with the legislature, our own CAC's, Town boards
- Discussed what the EMC would need in the future
- Established a near term to do list
- Listed emerging issues which we need to monitor or work on

Department of the Environment

The Department of the Environment (DOE) helped advance the county in the areas of sustainability, stormwater and natural resources.

Provided the Council with information on the following topics:

- The County's Green fleet
- Electric vehicle charging stations
- Climate Smart Communities and NYSERDA's clean energy grant proposals
- LED street lighting
- Solar installations both private and public as well as on landfills
- Updated information on resource and recovery including composting
- Waterways advisory council
- Foreclosed properties that are not buildable and the potential to preserve these lands
- Advised us of upcoming conferences and other environmental initiatives and grants

For more details of DOE activities refer to their annual report

Web/Communication Development
Ulster County Department of the Environment provided administrative support to the EMC, including posting minutes and agendas to the EMC website as well as maintaining and updating the website. In 2016, a new EMC website was created as part of County website: http://ulstercountyny.gov/environmental-management-council.

CreekWeek 2016
The 7th annual CreekWeek celebration took place on September 10-24th in 2016 and was sponsored by Ulster County Environmental Management Council and Ulster County Department of the Environment.

CreekWeek is intended to help build awareness and encourage the enjoyment of water and watersheds in Ulster County. Residents and visitors can use these events to learn more about what is just outside their door, learn something about how they can protect or improve the environment, enjoy time outside with friends and family, and to have fun.

In 2016, dozens of community organizations and CAC's from across Ulster County came together to offer a wide variety of educational, watershed based programming to Ulster County residents and visitors (See Exhibit B for a complete listing of the 2016 CreekWeek events).

Exhibit A

Municipal CACs and EMC Membership

1. Municipalities with Environmental Commissions/Committees (CAC):

Town of Esopus
Town of Gardiner
Town of Hurley
City of Kingston
Town of Lloyd
Town of Marbletown
Town of Marlborough
Town of New Paltz
Town of Olive
Town of Rochester
Town of Rosendale
Town of Saugerties
Town of Shawangunk
Town of Wawarsing
Town of Woodstock

2. Environmental Management Council Current Membership (End of 2016):

Town Appointments to EMC:

Name	Municipality
Stewart, Eric	Town of Marbletown
Littlefoot, Jim	Town of New Paltz
Karpova, Judith	Town of Rochester
Hauser, Emilie	City of Kingston
O'Donnell, Mary	Town of Saugerties
Mays, Jim	Town of Olive
Sansalone, John	Town of Gardiner
Schara, Kristen	Town of Hurley
Haldeman, Dave	Town of Shawangunk
Underhill, Sarah	Town of Wawarsing

At-Large Members of EMC:

Name	Municipality
Becker, Margot	Town of Marbletown
Lanzetta, Cindy	Town of Marlboro
Starke, Virginia	Town of Hurley
More, William	City of Kingston

Ex-Officio Representative: Director, Ulster County Department of Planning

Exhibit B
Events held as part of the 2016 CreekWeek:

- Kingston Fall Foliage Morning Kayak Tour
- Mushroom Ramble
- Wallkill River Watershed Alliance Boat Brigade
- Tour and ride of historic 9/11 fireboat "John J. Harvey" (4 events)
- Norrie Point Kayak Tour (6 events)
- Catskill Interpretive Center History Walk (2 events)
- Migrating Birds at John Burroughs Slabsides
- Clearwater's Family Day at Esopus Meadows
- Guided Tour of the D&H Canal Five Lock Walk (2 events)
- NYC DEP Family Fishing Day at Ashokan Reservoir
- NYC Watershed Science Technical Conference and Exhibition
- Wallkill River Festival
- Riparian Project Tour
- Veerkeerderkill Falls Trail Work
- Hudson River Lighthouse to Lighthouse Challenge, Rally and Walking Tour
- John Burroughs Slabsides Geology Ramble
- Hike up New Picnic Trail
- Rondout National Historic District Walking Tour
- Smithsonian Magazine's Museum Day Live!