

Watershed Farm & Forest

WINTER 2011

Stewardship Programs of the Watershed Agricultural Council

Rasmussen Accepts 2011 Karl Connell Award

On November 4 at the Council's Annual Forestry Dinner and Silent Auction, Eric Rasmussen accepted the Karl Connell Award for his lifelong work with Catskills forestry. Rasmussen's passion for regional woodlands and public education manifested most recently with his donation of 142 acres for the Siuslaw Model Forest in Acra. The Karl Connell Award recognizes individuals for their wisdom, guidance, and leadership in promoting forest stewardship and protecting water quality. Eric is the eighth person to receive the Award since 2003.

Eric's formal education started with a two-year degree in forestry from Paul Smith's College, followed by a B.S. from the SUNY College of Forestry. Forever a student of the woods, Eric embraced the lessons an outdoor setting could provide. His informal education continues to this very day fed by his unending curiosity and willingness to explore new knowledge as it relates to forests and forest management.

In 1959, he assumed ownership and management of Lange's Groveside Resort in Greene County, NY. The resort's property included 142 acres of forest, field, ponds and streams which later evolved into the Siuslaw Tree Farm. Eric named the Tree Farm after the 630,000-acre Siuslaw National Forest (SNF) on the Oregon Coast where Eric worked before coming to Lange's. SNF has been available to countless resort guests who visit to explore, hike, bird watch, hunt or just observe. Similarly, over 10,000 sixth-grade students from Greene County visited Siuslaw Tree Farm through Environmen-

tal Awareness Days held there every year since 1970. Thousands of students ages 11 to 13 have learned about forests, wildlife, water quality and many other topics in a wonderful outdoor setting with the Catskill Mountains in the background. Some students later entered fields related to forestry and conservation as a result of this initial exposure on Siuslaw Tree Farm. Some even chaperone their own children as this program enters its 31st year.

The Siuslaw Tree Farm has also hosted numerous environmental symposiums and gatherings including:

- the first NYS Envirothon in 1991,
- meetings for the Society of American Foresters, the Capital District New York Forest Owners Association, the Hudson Mohawk RC&D Council, and
- programs for the Catskill Forest Association, the Northeast Deer and Elk Breeder Association, and Project Learning Tree.

For his dedication to education through Siuslaw, Eric received the 1999 New York State Tree Farmer of the Year Award, which is presented to a forest landowner who practices sustainable forest management. The award recognizes one who goes above and beyond to educate others about good forestry practices.

Eric's most generous act was his recent gift of his beloved Siuslaw Tree Farm to the Agroforestry Resource Center, an educa-



This year's Karl Connell Award recipient Eric Rasmussen (center) accepts a wood frame handcrafted by Jamie Fitzgerald Rustics from Tom Pavlesich, Forestry Program Manager (left) and Executive Director Craig Cashman (right). Over 120 people attended the 2011 Forestry Dinner featuring local foods at SUNY-Delhi's MacDonald Hall. Catskill WoodNet members, staff, local businesses and regional forest professionals donated over 50 items to the silent auction which raised \$4,332 for the Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund.

tion and research facility run by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County. It is his desire to ensure that Siuslaw will be forever available to those who wish to learn about the importance of forests and forest management and have a place to enjoy the tranquility and beauty that Siuslaw provides.

Eric's current memberships include the Society of American Foresters, New

York Forest Owners Association, and the Catskill Forest Association. He also serves on the Advisory Committee for the Agroforestry Resource Center whose mission is to "sustain the ecological, aesthetic and economic values of forested lands through education." This is the exact mission that Eric has always shared personally. Over the years, he has served the community in many roles as a Board member of Cor-

nell Cooperative Extension, as chair of the Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District, and as a formal and informal advisor to a whole generation of foresters and forest lovers whose lives and careers he has profoundly enhanced.

For more on Eric and fellow award recipients, visit our website under Success Stories > Forestry > Karl Connell Award.

Fourth Model Forest Established At Clearpool Education Center

On October 28, the Council and Green Chimneys, officially announced the designation of the Clearpool Model Forest at the Clearpool Education Center campus in Carmel, Putnam County. Clearpool is the fourth Model Forest site established in and around the New York City Water Supply Watershed region. It represents 264 acres of privately-owned forestland set aside to support environmental education and forest stewardship of the Croton Watershed.

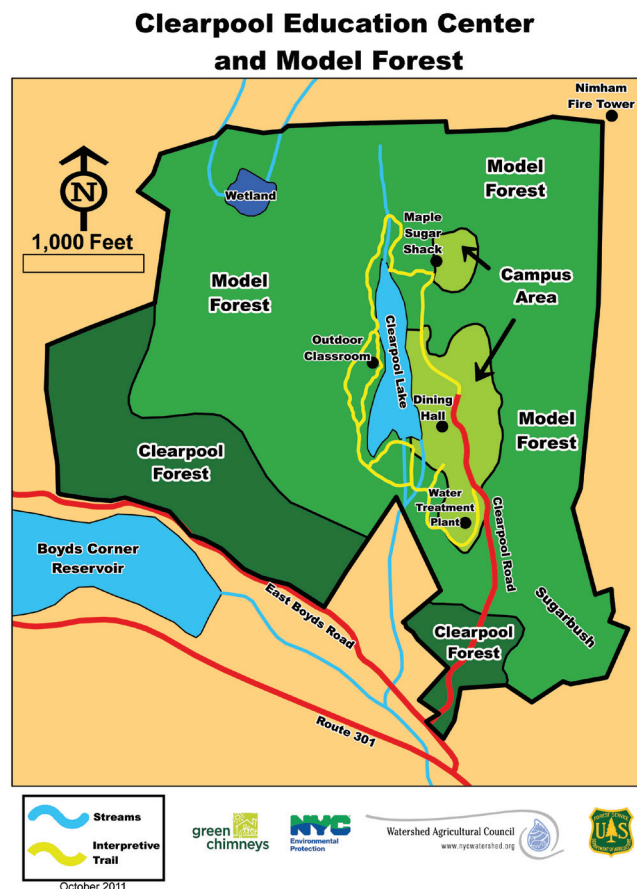
Green Chimneys' Clearpool Education Center emerged as an ideal Model Forest site in 2010 when the Council sought to establish a Model Forest in the Croton Watershed region of Dutchess, Putnam and Westchester counties. The Croton Watershed is one of three surface water sources for the New York City water supply, one of the largest surface water supply systems in the world, and provides a portion (10%–30%) of the City's daily water needs. Model Forests serve as outdoor classrooms to educate forest landowners, students, and the communities of the lower Hudson Valley about effective forest management and stewardship practices that are compatible with water quality protection—a critical issue for the Croton region.

The Model Forest educational experience includes water quality, biodiversity, forest ecosystems and human interaction with the natural landscape. As an established environmental education facility and vibrant forest set on 350 acres, Clearpool Education Center offers a venue for stakeholders and community members to learn about the issues that confront forests within the Croton Watershed. For over 100 years, Clearpool

has offered countless ecological resources and extensive wildlife for exploration and discovery. Its protected woodlands include over five miles of forest trails, a pond, lake, marsh, wetland, and an extensive stream system, all of which provide multiple habitats for a diverse population of plants, birds, and animals. The Clearpool Model Forest incorporates 264 of the education facility's 350 acres, making it the second largest Model Forest in the New York City Watershed region. The Council partners on three

other outdoor classrooms:

- Lennox Memorial Model Forest is an 80-acre site owned by Delaware County and affiliated with the 4-H Camp Shankitunk in Delhi, NY.
- Frost Valley Model Forest is a 240-acre site owned by Frost Valley YMCA and connected to its environmental education center in Ulster County.
- Siuslaw Model Forest is a 140-acre site in Greene County hosted by Cornell Cooperative Extension of



Acres comprising the Clearpool Model Forest was divided into forest "stands" by Council watershed forester Brendan Murphy who, in 2007, created the original forest management plan. The two main stands straddle the main road through campus and offer the greatest diversity for research. They will become the interpretive trail through the model forest and are accessible through the current trail system. A smaller stand located near three residences that border the main drive of Clearpool is designated for sugarbush (maple syrup) care and production.

Greene County and the Agroforestry Resource Center.

- For additional Model Forest information visit our website under Forestry > Research & Demonstrations

In early 2011, the Clearpool Model Forest Steering Committee guided the site planning process, the development of a forest management plan, and educational programming to be offered. The Committee is comprised of key representatives from Green Chimneys and Clearpool Education Center, Town of Kent officials, Putnam County Cornell Cooperative Extension, local environmentalists, foresters, educators, Quality Deer Management Association representatives, and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The group reports to the board of Green Chimneys and has been responsible for making all recommendations and final decisions on proposed projects within the model forest.

The Clearpool Education Center's sustainable forestry program is dedicated to promoting responsible forest stewardship in the lower Hudson Valley region by demonstrating sustainable approaches and sharing this information with landowners, students, forestry professionals, conservation organizations, and community members. Through hands-on programs, seminars and field-based experiences, the vision for the Clearpool Model Forest is to create broad public commitment by helping people to understand and experience the shared benefits that can be attained and preserved through properly managed forests. These benefits include protection of public and private water supplies; improved air quality; protection of biological diversity; increased recreational opportunities; and access to sustainably harvested forest products. A plan for site projects and initiatives to be completed in Year 1, 3 and 5 is currently in development. Some of these projects include ecosystem inventory; monitoring of water quality; development and mapping of hiking trails; building bridges and passages to facilitate access along trails; design of public programs and demonstrations; and structural improvements to maintain best management practices.



Pictured here are Back Row: Alan Schneider (former candidate for Putnam County Executive); John Schwartz (DEP); Brendan Murphy (WAC) Front Row: Susan Spear (Regional Director for Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand); Lou Tartaro (Town of Kent councilman); George Baum (Town of Kent Conservation Council); Fred Huneke (Council Board Chairman); Craig Cashman (Council Executive Director); Steve Knapp (Watershed Certified Forester); Jennifer Stengle (Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County) Kneeling: Joe Whalen (Green Chimneys Executive Director); Chris Hendershot (Program Director, Clearpool Education Center)

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:



Clearpool Education Center was founded in 1901 as a summer camp for disadvantaged inner-city children.

Today it is a top education resource for schools, a valued partner to human service organizations, and a true steward of the natural environment. After more than 100 years, Clearpool still offers the finest outdoor facilities and programs in the pristine surroundings that existed a century ago. Clearpool Education Center is part of Green Chimneys, a multi-faceted nonprofit organization that helps young people to maximize their full potential by providing residential, educational, clinical and recreational services that create and nurture connections to the community and the natural world. Green Chimneys services include an accredited special education school, residential treatment center, animal-assisted and nature-based therapeutic programs, public education and recreation programs, and community-based support for underserved youth and families. For more on the Council's newest partner in outdoor watershed education, visit www.greenchimneys.org.



Made possible with a generous grant from the Catskill Watershed Corporation in partnership with New York City Department of Environmental Protection.

EVERY DAY...

...2,000 square miles of upstate
 ...rain and melted snow percolate
 ...1 billion gallons of purified water
 So that you can have clean water

PROTECTED WATERSHED ▶



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Bonnie Ralston, SCA/AmeriCorps Environmental Education Assistant at NYSDEC Region 2 (below at right) designed this educational banner demonstrating water's journey from mountaintop to tap for Pam Ito (bottom left), Director of Children's Education at the Horticultural Society of New York (the Hort). The two worked together through a Catskill Watershed Corp. (CWC) educational grant targeting watershed education and City teachers. The Hort offered free water conservation training to seven schools in East Harlem. The Hort's customized water curriculum, which integrates standards defined by the New York State Education Department and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), traces the water cycle from the Catskill-Delaware watershed to New York City's public water system. The 60-minute training with hands-on interactive activities was specifically designed to meet classroom needs. Teachers learned about water collection in the Catskill-Delaware watershed; complexities of the New York City water supply system; everyday water

conservation; and rainwater harvesting. The workshop connected these topics and water-related activities to math, social studies, literacy, and science. Doing so demonstrated ways teachers can support teaching water not just as a "science," but in all subjects, providing them with a variety of projects for their students.

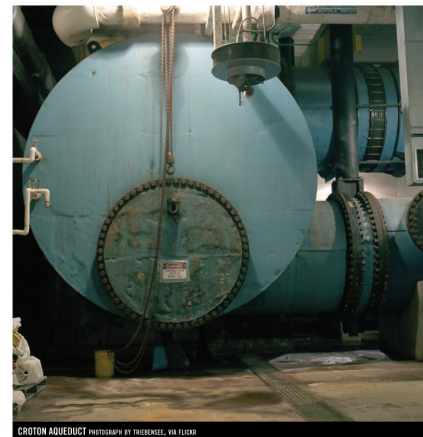
Over 100 educators attended the October workshop focused on sharing resources, teaching techniques and classroom tools. CWC, the Council and DEP collaborated with the Hort and DEC on the classroom banner images and con-

tent. Teachers also received water bottles and teaching resources from DEP and classroom posters and teaching tools from the Watershed Agricultural Council.

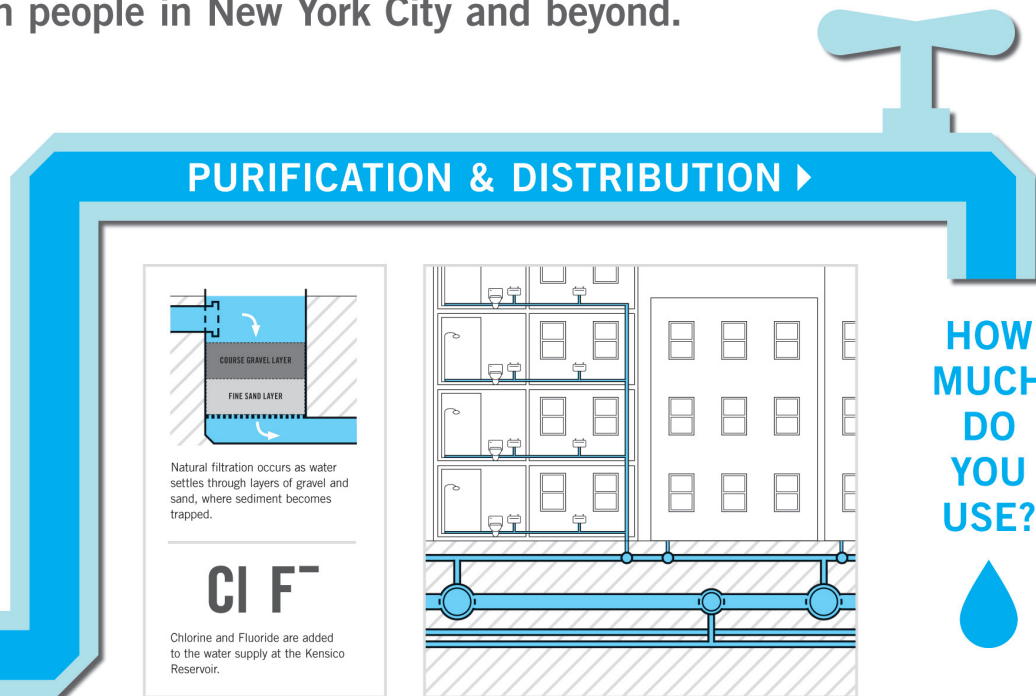
Teachers interested in water cycle banner and a subscription to *The Reservoir* bi-monthly teachers' newsletter, free of charge, should email their mailing address to communications@nycwatershed.org or call (607) 865-7090, ext. 226. Teachers can expect a package in six to eight weeks. Resources for download can be found at youandyourwatershed.org.



upstate forest and farmlands protect our New York City water supply.
 percolate through 3 watersheds into 19 reservoirs and 3 lakes.
 fied water flow to 9 million people in New York City and beyond.
 an water **EVERY DAY!**



TRANSPORTATION ▶



Farmer Flood Relief First Round Awarded

Thanks to the generosity of over 500 people, the Raise the Roof Farmer Flood Relief Fund recently awarded \$15,000 to farmers in need as result of the post-Irene/Lee storms and flooding. Since September, grassroots efforts contributed over \$25,000 to the Fund, with all money being granted to regional farmers demonstrating need not met by other federal, state or local funding sources. “The selection committee, comprised of local agricultural producers and growers, granted five awards

to cover farmers’ out-of-pocket expenses related to flood damage,” said Challey Comer, Farm to Market Manager. “Projects receiving reimbursement included lost harvest/products in the field; damaged equipment; and damaged farm structures.” Working as the fund’s fiscal agent, the Council looks to disperse all funds by December 31, 2011. Farmers in need are encouraged to download the application from purecatskills.com and apply immediately.

A special thanks to those groups, organizations and businesses that held fundraisers over the last three months:

- Ashokan Center**
- CADE**
- Catskill Center**
- Catskill Harvest Market**
- Catskill Heritage Alliance**
- Gowns for Greenbacks**
- Heather Ridge Farm**
- Kiwanis Club of Delhi**
- Livestock Foundation**
- Slow Food Upper Delaware**



Turning Mistakes into Blessings

We regularly outfit our field crew with a wearable calling card, usually a baseball cap with the Watershed Agricultural Council logo and website. It keeps the sun and sweat out of a planner's eyes, covers up bed head, and keeps tree sap from getting in our hair. The hat also comes in handy as a token of our appreciation during landowner visits. We're proud to wear and share the WAC logo, a symbol synonymous with clean water, working landscapes, and land conservation.

Unfortunately, we're sticklers for our logo. The water drop is blue, the swoosh grey and the lettering white. Sometimes you'll see it as all black or all grey, but we don't deviate. It's part of our brand. So, when our supplier botched not one, but two hat orders this year, we couldn't use them. The hat company didn't want them back and upon sending us the correct batch, they suggested we throw the misprints away.

As luck would have it, Assistant Conservation Planner Dan Vredenburg was looking for donations. "My mom does mission work with the Susquehanna Valley Presbytery which has a partnership with the Western Wollega Bethel Synod in Dembi Dollo, Ethiopia. The Behrane Yesus Elementary School, run by the Synod, has roughly 600 students, grades 1 through 8. The director needed caps, so Mom asked everyone she knew for baseball cap donations to send to the school. I figured I could stir up a few of the old WAC logo nylon caps to add to the used ones I was willing to part with. But I never imagined I'd be bringing home enough for the staff and one for each kid in the seventh and eighth grade."

In May, Diane Vredenburg (seated in top photo) sent out two large packages to the Synod—including 150 never-before-worn WAC baseball caps, mis-stitched with a blue upper swoosh. "The Council's donation is very much appreciated and was well received," said Diane. "It truly was a blessing for these poor people to receive caps to shield them from the hot equatorial sun." She sent us the school director's

letter and sincere thank you. We're glad we could put the misprint caps to good use, in a totally new way, far from the New York City watershed. But the real kudos go to Dan for "putting it out there" and Diane for her work with children and education.

If you participate in one of our programs and would like a Council hat (stitched with the correct logo embroidery), talk with your whole farm planner, watershed forester or land conservation specialist.



Greetings,

This is just to let you know that the hats you sent for us through Dan Vredenburg reached us and we have given these to our school staff, students, and School committee. They all appreciate your donation of the hats.

Since we have sun most of the year the hats helped us a lot. As a school director on behalf of the beneficiaries of the hats I would also like to thank you very much. I also highly appreciate Diane & Dan Vredenburg for their commitment to send the hats for our people.

With Best Regards!

Amanuel Tesfaye

BYES Director

Watershed Forestry Bus Tour Grants Available

The Watershed Agricultural Council's Forestry Program offers grants up to \$3,000 to groups organizing and implementing watershed and forestry-related field trips to the NYC water supply watersheds. These grants are open to any organization, community group, professional association, 4-12th grade classroom or other entity within New York City or the upstate regions of the Catskill/Delaware and Croton watersheds.

In 2011, 14 schools and community organizations planned and explored the watersheds through bus tours. Some organizations made solo trips, like the teens at Rocking the Boat and their visit to the Ashokan Center last January. Other groups introduced their community to another; 4th graders at Stamford Central School partnered with PS 33 to connect upstate and downstate students around a watershed-based theme – clean drinking water and how it gets from one place to another.

Teachers are encouraged to download the online application from www.nycwatershed.org/for_bustours.html and apply for a bus tour grant. Applications are due January 15, 2012. Funding for the bus tour program is provided by DEP and U.S. Forest Service through the Council's Forestry Program.

Whatever the teaching curriculum, a tour can be planned to match a teacher's goals. For example, these tours complement Trout in the Classroom activities by funding trout releases. The grant can also tie that experience with overnight environmental education facilities to encourage a deeper look at environmental sciences. Watershed tours are guided by your group's learning objectives.

If you are a teacher interested in planning a visit to the New York City watershed region to learn how New York City water quality is influenced by the working landscapes miles away, visit the Watershed Forestry Bus Tour web page or contact Jessica Olenych of Common Ground Educational Consulting at (845) 586-1600 (email jolenych@catskill.net).



I want to help protect working landscapes in the New York City Watershed and the clean drinking water we use every day. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation for \$_____ for the Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund.

Mail this form and your donation check to: Attn: Communications, Watershed Agricultural Council, 44 West Street, Walton, NY 13856.

Also, I'd like to receive regular updates from the Council. My email address is:

_____@_____.

Send me the following emails:

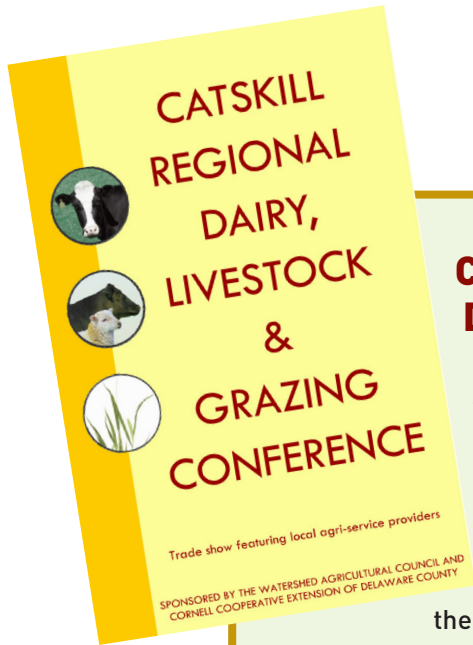
_____ *Water & Land*, a monthly update of Council programs and events

_____ *Pure Catskills* eBurst, a quarterly email on local food once a quarter

_____ *The Reservoir*, a bimonthly eNews for teachers and educators

_____ *Catskill WoodNet News*, a bimonthly email for wood products professionals

You can also send your eNews preferences to communications@nycwatershed.org, or text "WaterFarmForest" to 22828 on your cell phone.



SAVE THE DATE

CATSKILL REGIONAL DAIRY CONFERENCE

January 12, 2012 10 a.m.–4 p.m. (Snow Date: January 13)

Time to register for the Catskill Regional Dairy, Livestock and Grazing Conference. Through the Farmer Education Program, the Council and CCE-Delaware host farm experts sharing on topics like calf disease and diagnosis, specialty meat processing, and winter grass feeding systems. Download

the registration form from our homepage or Events>Agriculture, or call Kim Holden at (607) 865-7090, ext. 241.



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The latest Easement Program updates like:
 ● recently approved guidelines,
 ● upcoming meetings and agendas, and
 ● meeting minutes
 can be found on our website under About Us > Policies, Agendas and Minutes or check "Watershed Headlines" on our homepage at nycwatershed.org

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