

PURE  
CATSKILLS

# 2012 Annual Report

## Stewardship Programs of the Watershed Agricultural Council

### Honoring the Past . . . Celebrating the Present . . . Embracing the Future

This year is one of tremendous pride at the Watershed Agricultural Council as we celebrate our 20th anniversary. Our staff and board have been committed since 1993 to our mission “to promote the economic viability of agriculture and forestry, the protection of water quality, and the conservation of working landscapes through strong local leadership and sustainable public-private partnerships.”

Our 20th anniversary is a time to honor and reflect on what we have accomplished, celebrate the success that we have earned, and eagerly plan and embrace the future with both pride and dedication.

Two decades ago was a time of uncertainty for many throughout our region, with concern on many levels. On a Federal, State, and City level, the uncertainty revolved around whether a source water protection program could be successful enough to protect New York City’s drinking water supply. On a regional level, the focus revolved around if we could successfully implement watershed protection programs that protect New York City’s drinking water supply while centering our energy on economic viability and supporting working landscapes.

Experience has shown that local people, when given the opportunity and provided the necessary support, are most capable of resolving the problems affecting their area. The foundational success of the Watershed Agricultural Council and its watershed protection programs lies within the networking ties and relationship building developed and maintained throughout the watershed by both the Council’s Directors and staff.

For 20 years, Directors and staff have cultivated relationships with friends, neighbors, and stakeholders to establish credibility and trust in order to generate voluntary participation and move citizens beyond awareness to behavioral change. Ultimately, these ties develop a stronger stewardship ethic to become environmentally sensitive to land conservation and water quality.

Today as a result of the hard work and dedication through Council Directors, staff, partners and participants, we continue to meet our water quality standards working with over 300 watershed farms in our Agricultural Program, placing 1,082 management plans for privately owned forested properties totaling 150,000 acres in our Forestry Program, and conserving 23,000 acres of farmland through our Easement Program.

Since 1993, through the relationships with our primary funders, NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), USDA, and the U.S. Forest Service, the Watershed Agricultural Council has infused over \$175 million to support the economy of the region. In addition, we continue to take a leadership role in supporting and developing regional economic viability with the promotion of initiatives through the Farm to Market Program and Pure Catskills buy local campaign.

Anniversaries prompt us to look around and take stock of the people who share our journey. The opportunity to work with many talented people at the Council and throughout the watershed is one of the joys of leading this organization. As we examine the future, we will embrace innovation and partnerships, as well as our recognized role as a leader of water quality and economic viability initiatives.

It is a pleasure to share the Watershed Agricultural Council’s accomplishments and vision with you.



*Craig J. Cashman*  
*Executive Director*



# Working Together

## 2012 COUNCIL OF DIRECTORS

Fred Huneke, Chair, *Delaware*  
 David Cammer, Vice Chair, *Schoharie*  
 Gwen Deysenroth, *Delaware*  
 Chris DiBenedetto, *Greene*  
 Tom Donnelly, *Delaware*  
 Joe Eisele, *Delaware*  
 Sally Fairbairn, *Ulster*  
 Richard Giles, Secretary, *Delaware*  
 Wayland Gladstone, *Delaware*  
 Darby Hartwell, *Delaware*  
 R. Thomas Hutson, *Delaware*  
 Steve Reed, *Delaware*  
 John P. Riedl, Treasurer, *Schoharie*  
 Ken Smith, *Delaware*  
 John Verhoeven, *Greene*  
 John Schwartz, *NYC DEP*

## Revenues July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

Federal	\$695,182	(5.5%)
Donated Services	\$284,352	(2.2%)
Foundations & Other Grants	\$0	(0.0%)
Interest and Gain/Loss of Asset Sale	\$251	(0.0%)
NYC DEP	\$11,758,607	(92.3%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,738,392</b>	<b>(100.0%)</b>

## Expenditures July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

Forestry Program	\$1,178,494	(9.2%)
Easement Program	\$3,275,059	(25.5%)
East of Hudson Program (Croton Watershed)	\$891,465	(6.9%)
Agricultural Program		
BMP Implementation & Construction	\$4,699,540	(36.5%)
Status Reviews & Nutrient Management Planning	\$610,386	(4.7%)
Farmer Education & Farm to Market Programs	\$472,567	(3.7%)
Program Administration & Depreciation	\$1,457,492	(11.3%)
Donated Services	\$284,352	(2.2%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,869,355</b>	<b>(100.0%)</b>

Find more detailed financials, audit report and Form 990 at [nycwatershed.org](http://nycwatershed.org).

## Reasons for Giving

*“This year, I made a donation in honor of my father, Wesley M. Sterling, who passed away in September 2010. Years back, he bought a small parcel of land (15 acres) on Old Snake Hill Road in the town of Franklin. Once or twice a year, we would travel upstate to walk the forest, pick blueberries, and check the beaver dam that was once on the pond in the middle of the property’s riparian stand. Around 2005, I had a forest management plan done with Michelle (Merola) Peters. I am very interested in updating it, and continuing a relationship with the Fund in order to maintain the health of the forest and keep it lovely to come and visit.” — Kimbley Sterling*

We also extend our deepest thanks to these 2012 donors who share our commitment to working landscapes in agriculture and forestry: David Allen, Rebecah Altieri, Bay Ridge Group, David and Peggy Cammer, Heidi Dolnick, Jennifer Grossman, Dan Hudson, Michael Hughes, iGive.com, Don Kalibat, Edie Mesick, NYC DEP, Linda Reed, John Riedl, Kimbley Sterling.

It’s easy to protect farmland in the Catskills. Join us by giving to the Conservation Easement Stewardship Endowment Fund by mailing your check with the coupon below; giving online at [nycharities.org](http://nycharities.org); or scanning the QR code below and giving via your mobile phone.

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 Endowment Fund.

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

\_\_\_\_\_@\_\_\_\_\_

Send me the following emails:

- \_\_\_\_\_ *Water & Land*, features Council program updates and events the first Friday of every month
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Pure Catskills* eBurst, a monthly email on local food, farm, and wood products
- \_\_\_\_\_ *The Reservoir*, a bimonthly eNews for educators



Mail this form and your donation check to: Attn: Finance Dept., Watershed Agricultural Council, 33195 State Highway 10, Walton, NY 13856.

# Working Together for Working Landscapes

Agriculture and forestry are probably the two oldest industries in the United States. I like to think of agriculture as being the foundation industry upon which all other industries are built, and forestry as providing the building materials and fuel that gave earlier communities the ability to grow and expand. America's landscapes have been in a constant state of change for generations as we evolved from a rural agrarian society to a more urban one based on manufacturing and services. The loss of farm and forest lands was mostly ignored and considered the result of a changing society. It wasn't until the last 30 years, and more so in recent years, that the loss of farmland is occurring at ever-increasing rates. If we continue to ignore the loss of one of our most valuable resources at a time of increasing population, the United States could find itself in a very difficult situation. Statistics now show that between 2002

and 2007, 47,000 acres of farmland have been lost to development in New York State alone, amounting to 9,000 acres per year or 1 farm every 3 days. Once this occurs, farmland can never be reclaimed again.

From a water quality perspective, agricultural and forested land provides the best protection for municipal watersheds dependent upon surface water for their supply. Since its inception, the Council through its partnership with DEP has developed programming to protect the City's water supply. In so doing, we have inadvertently become part of a much larger conservation and land trust community. We share an awareness and concern for water quality and the preservation of agricultural lands across the country and perhaps even beyond our borders. Every organization involved in land preservation and water quality soon realizes that standing alone to provide education and advo-

cacy is like a single voice in the wilderness. It takes a collaborative effort with many voices to advocate for meaningful change.

At the same time, society has increased its concern over environmental issues and is now demanding that sound conservation practices be part of the economy's overall agenda. Organizations like the New York Farm and Food Alliance (a dynamic group of farm and community leaders, land trusts, local governments, and farmers) has come together to address the issues surrounding the agriculture and food industry. National organizations like American Farmland Trust (AFT) bring awareness of critical farm issues to the national scene.

At the local level, our Pure Catskills buy local campaign has brought together other local organizations, farmers' markets, and businesses. Pure Catskills has also elevated an awareness of localized agriculture and the

value of sound government policies to grow and maintain a strong, local, natural resource-based economy.

As we celebrate the 20th year of our incorporation and continue to maintain the Council's position as an influential conservation organization, I feel that we need to recognize our obligation to be a part of this collaborative effort to preserve agricultural lands. We also see the need to advocate for meaningful agricultural and forestry policies at all levels of government to assure that we not only have land to farm, but farmers to work that land. AFT says it right, "NO FARMS. NO FOOD." We add to that, "Good Food. Quality Wood. Clean Water."



*Fred Huneke*  
Chairman, Council of Directors



*Members of the American Farmland Trust Advisory Board toured Farm to Table Copackers, a custom processing and packaging facility in Kingston. Pictured (l-r): Lawrence Howard, Glenda Neff, Joan Hutchins, Jim Hyland, Deborah Lans, David Haight and Fred Huneke.*

PHOTO: FARMLANDNY.ORG

# Watershed Agriculture Protects Water Quality

In 2012, the Watershed Agricultural Program (WAP) implemented 250 Best Management Practices (BMPs) on 111 farms totaling \$1.97 million in the Catskill/Delaware Watersheds and 59 BMPs on 22 farms totaling \$578,130 through the East of Hudson Program. This includes all funding sources. The Program partners with local county Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to provide technical design and implementation of water quality BMPs. Active farm participants followed 273 Whole Farm Plans (WFPs) and 255 Nutrient Management Plans (NMPs) in the Catskill/Delaware Watersheds and 65 WFPs and 48

NMPs in the East of Hudson Program area. A percentage of the NMPs are reviewed and updated annually. Funding provided by New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the USDA and other sources helped the Program realize its goals.

The WAP continues to partner with NRCS to encourage conservation of natural resources through provisions of the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP). AWEP monies awarded in 2012 for structural BMPs totaled \$300,000. This was the final funding year for this grant which provided over \$1.5 million for water quality projects. A 2010 AWEP grant with a 5-year agreement awarded \$80,388 in 2012 to 12

new farm participants to assist in the development and compliance of Nutrient Management Plans. As a result of all AWEP Nutrient Management contracts, 33 AWEP participants received \$285,555. Another 50 farms received similar incentives funded by DEP.

Through the USDA Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), 29 acres in riparian forest buffers were enrolled in 2012. CREP helps fence animals out of the surface water supply and provides for more filter areas to improve water quality.

The WAP continues to partner with CCE to provide educational programs to area farmers. In 2012, 745 farmers and farm advisors attended 32 educational programs.

In 2012, the WAP introduced the Quality Management Assistance Program to increase on-farm water quality and economic viability by providing technical and quality assistance for existing and scheduled BMPs on participating farms. Program planners focus their efforts on six management areas: Prescribed Grazing, Calf Raising, Crop Production, Effective Pest Management, Manure Management, and Precision Feed Management. Staff and participants established goals to improve management in these areas along with increased profitability and BMP effectiveness. In 2013, additional participants will be selected, based on their needs identified in the Annual Status Reviews (ASR).

Webcrest Farm is a 438-acre dairy farm. Owned and operated by Ed and Donna Weber, the farm sits at the headwaters of the Little Delaware River in the Town of Bovina in the Canonsville Reservoir basin. The

business raises 52 Holstein milk cows and 38 replacements on an intensive, rotationally grazed, pasture system.

In the late 1980s, a 100'x104' 9-foot deep earthen storage pit served as a temporary retention

pond. (See photo below left.) Fed by a 30-inch gravity-driven steel pipe from a manure "hopper" inside the dairy barn, the storage pit emptied either through another 30-inch gravity pipe exiting the downhill berm or with

a manure agitation pump at the concrete access ramp. The original earthen storage pit was not designed to handle the addition of liquid milk-house waste. Years with a high annual rainfall created management and spreading



issues as well. The increased volume of unplanned liquid forced the Webers to load and spread manure in January on fields not accessible with the farm's high-capacity manure truck.

The solution came with the construction of a 70'x135' x10' deep, covered, concrete manure storage tank located on the same foot print as the original earthen storage. (See photo on page 4.) The new structure provides increased capacity from 365,000 gallons to 706,860 gallons (87,500 cubic feet).

The new storage is filled by the existing 30-inch, gravity-driven steel pipe from the manure "hopper" inside the dairy barn and receives the existing input of liquid milk-house waste. The storage access for agitation and unloading occurs on two hard surface ramps at either end of the structure. A new trailer-mounted, vertical access pump replaces the old manure agitation pump. Additionally, the entire structure is now covered, eliminating snow and rainfall accumulating within the storage. Completed just in time for snowfall, the new structure provides three months storage capacity and prevents forced spreading on sensitive or inaccessible wintertime fields.

The project was constructed by David Stanton of Walton. The WAP team included NRCS Planner Brandon Dennis, WAC Engineering Specialist Tim Hebbard, and Jason Skinner, PE.



*Water quality concerns at Carman Farm: 1) a spring flowed through the farm bringing manure runoff into the nearby stream. 2) the feeding area hosted high nutrient concentration; 3) manure cleanup was extremely difficult; 4) existing feeding practices promoted overgrazing and allowed animals stream access.*



*New facilities allow for manure to be collected, stored, and spread in accordance with a Nutrient Management Plan. The Whole Farm Plan incorporates water quality practices that prevent nutrient-laden run-off from entering nearby streams.*

The Carman Farm is a recent start-up, small livestock operation owned by Rodney and Peggy Carman. The couple raises beef, hogs and horses on 100+ acres. They market their beef and pork directly to consumers in and around the Walton area.

The farm posed several resource concerns including a

spring flowing through the farm's agricultural activities causing large amounts of manure runoff that flowed into the nearby stream. The winter feeding area, also in a hydrologically sensitive area, had no adequate filtering area for run-off before it reached the stream. Manure cleanup from this feeding area was extremely

difficult. Years of feeding in the same spot created a concentration of nutrients. Overgrazing and livestock access to streams also posed challenges to water quality.

In 2010, the Small Farms Program installed a riparian buffer with fencing, alternative water supply, and plantings. This sim-

ple BMP excluded the cattle and horses from the farm's streams. Additional grazing paddocks, another easy fix, alleviated overgrazing issues. Lastly, an outlet was constructed to capture the spring and pipe it safely underground, thereby preventing any clean water from reaching the manure pile and feeding areas. Roof runoff controls of clean water like drip trenches and gutters were installed on the existing barns to divert clean water away from the concentrated manure sources.

The second stage, funded through USDA's Agricultural Water Enhancement Program

(AWEP), included a covered manure storage and a covered feeding area to control the manure runoff from these areas.

The 40'x40' covered manure storage consisted of a concrete wall for containment, concrete floor to facilitate clean up, and space for three months storage of manure. A ramp allows easy access to empty the storage as part of the farm's Nutrient Management Plan.

A 30'x72' covered, concrete heavy-use area allows for the feeding of the beef herd through winter. The roof also excludes clean water from entering the area. A heated water trough

placed on the pad provides a sheltered place for animals to drink. Rodney installed headlocks at his own expense to help in feeding the cattle. Improved gravel access lanes between the structures now facilitate machinery movement of manure from the barnyard to the storage.

Both facilities allow for manure to be collected, stored, and spread in accordance with a Nutrient Management Plan. This allows for effective nutrient distribution across the farm's land base and prevents runoff of nutrient-laden water into nearby ponds and streams, thus improving water quality.

The project was constructed by SB Enterprises of Bainbridge. Owner Sam Byler and his crew worked extensively with the farmer and the planning/implementation team: NRCS Planner Dan Flaherty, SWCD Civil Engineering Technician Henry Sander, and Jason Skinner, PE.

The Carmans are pleased with the project outcome and feel that the improvements will help in their winter feeding and manure management. They also feel that water quality will be greatly improved with the BMPs implemented on their farm.



*The water quality issue on Tom Kaufman's beef farm in the Town of Delhi involved an existing 25' x 48' heavy-use area concrete pad, situated at the end of the barn and base of a hill. (See photo above.) The site allowed runoff water to collect where beef cows stepped off into pasture creating a very muddy situation. A pond 30 feet away downhill from the area received the sediment-laden runoff.*

*The solution called for a covered barnyard. (See photo at right.) New construction added 10 feet of concrete floor, a one-foot perimeter curb to catch runoff, and 4-foot corner buckwall. The floor space is roofed with clear sky panels, staggered at every third interval. A crushed-stone drip trench collects both roof water and sub-surface seeps, and drains clean water to the pond, keeping the animal walkway to pasture dry and stable. "I'm impressed with the quality construction," says Tom. "It will keep my cows more comfortable, the insulated water trough provides cows fresh water, and manure cleanup will be much easier with the buckwall."*



*The project was constructed by Loitsch Construction Co. of Otsego. The WAP team included WAC Assistant Planner Dan Vredenburg, DCSWCD Certified Engineering Specialist Jeffrey Russell, and Jason Skinner, PE.*

# Farming East of the Hudson

At the start of 2012—with 62 farms enrolled in the East of Hudson (EoH) Program, 250 BMPs on the books and five EoH Agricultural Program staff members—it was clear that priorities needed to be established for the Program to deliver water quality protection measures as efficiently as possible with the resources at hand.

This first year, a comprehensive prioritization strategy was implemented, not only for the EoH Agricultural Program but organization-wide. Through a peer-reviewed and Committee-approved process, the scheduling of BMP installation took on a whole new set of considerations. Each participant was now ranked according to water quality risk. Several factors were evaluated including soil phosphorus levels in

fields, the number of horses or livestock per acre, pasture and farm locations within priority reservoir basins. Once the farms are ranked, BMPs are prioritized based on the pollutant they were planned to control.

Riparian buffer establishment took the highest priority followed by the control of parasites and

phosphorus from animal waste storage areas. Thirty-nine structural and 20 non-structural BMPs were implemented on the most at-risk farms in 2012 totaling \$578,130. Of that, \$98,276 were non-WAC contributions in the form of landowner or USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program cost shares.

Fifty farmers gathered at Rainbeau Ridge Farm, Bedford, Westchester County for the first of two workshops on bionutrient-rich soils. Dan Kittredge (top) led the discussion positioning healthy soils as the foundation for productive plants. *INSET:* EoH Planner Susanne Sahler, speaker Dan Kittredge, and Lisa Schwartz, event host and EoH Program participating farmer.



*Riparian buffer work at this Westchester County farm turned a muddy, messy, sediment-laden waterway (inset) into a stable streambank and healthy ecosystem that benefits water quality (above).*



*BEFORE: This pile represents years of manure accumulation in a hydrologically sensitive area within the East Branch Reservoir basin. Storm water enters the pile area uncontrolled and leaves the pile untreated.*

*AFTER: This completed storage facility in Putnam County now effectively contains manure while directing runoff to a vegetated treatment area. A local plant nursery owner in need of compost now hauls out the material for free. The area adjacent to the facility was seeded and now serves as a buffer between the facility and a watercourse. Clean storm water from an indoor riding arena roof upslope from the facility is now diverted around the area with the installation of a drip trench and underground outlet.*

# Hands on Clean Water

Practicing sound forest management means cleaner water for downstream consumers. The Watershed Forest Management Planning Program developed and updated 79 forest stewardship plans encompassing more than 10,000 acres. Since 1996, 1,082 plans have been completed covering more than 150,000 acres.

The BMP Implementation Program provided technical support and financial assistance to loggers, landowners and foresters. Forestry Program staff worked with participants on 47 logging jobs to facilitate the stabilization of more than 72 miles of skid roads and trails. More than 2,300 water bars, 300,000 feet of re-graded skid trail, 900 yards of gravel and numerous additional BMPs were used to stabilize these disturbed soils. During 2012, the Forestry Program developed and implemented 22 plans for crossing watershed streams on active logging jobs. By promoting the use of BMPs, forest management activities will continue to be a negligible source of nonpoint source pollution. To date, more than 330 miles of skid roads and trails have been stabilized through the BMP Implementation Program.

During 2012, the Management Assistance Program (MAP) provided technical support and financial assistance to forest landowners to implement 39 forest stewardship projects. These projects ranged from Timber Stand Im-



provements (TSD) to the creation of early successional habitat for Species of Greatest Conservation Need, such as the American woodcock and chestnut-sided warbler. More than 400 acres of watershed forest were impacted through landowner participation in MAP this year. Since its inception in 2005, MAP has funded over 260 forest stewardship projects, impacting over 2,700 acres of watershed woodlands.

The Program also educated over 400 students through the Green Connections Program. Through the Watershed Forestry Bus Tours Program, more than 1,000 NYC students visited the watershed. The Program also hosted over 30 model forest educational events with stewardship partners. Wood-product utilization and marketing efforts promoted regional economic viability of over 70 wood-products businesses through the Catskill WoodNet/Pure Catskills branding campaign.

*ABOVE LEFT: The Hands-on BMP workshop continues to sell out every August. Check out the Forestry Program's 2013 TLC Logger Calendar for Trained Logger Certified educational offerings.*

*ABOVE RIGHT: Instructor Jake Rosa shows TLC Logger Erik Hansen how to operate the bulldozer at the Hands-on BMP workshop.*



*In October, 12 loggers built six, 20-ft. skidder-bridge panels during a one-day Trained Logger Certification Continuing Education Class at Axtell-Bradtko Lumber in Masonville, Delaware County. These panels are available at no cost to loggers in the NYC Watershed to be used on timber harvests that require a stream crossing. The Forestry Program trained more than 100 forest professionals through workshops on safety, forest ecology, and water quality.*



# Putting the Face on Buying Local

The Farm to Market Program made significant strides in 2012. Along with promoting the Pure Catskills buy local campaign's growing membership, the Program collaborated with others in support of the local food system, networking, educational efforts related to land access, beginning farming in the Catskills, and technical training related to marketing and business administration.

Pure Catskills membership grew to 207 in 2012, further strengthening the region's local food access and the community's ability to organize in support of growing demands for fresh, local products. Forty thousand copies of the *Guide to Farm Fresh Products* were distributed throughout the region. Improvements to PureCatskills.com now enable consumers to search for members by county. The "Fresh From the Catskills" campaign, made possible through a New York State Ag & Markets USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant, expanded the buy local effort for tomatoes, squash and holiday evergreens. Program staff also attended over 50 events at which Pure Catskills members and sample products were featured.

In March, the annual Farm to Market Connection brought together over 120 farm and food representatives from the Catskills and beyond. Curbside consulting sessions connected one-on-one participants with regional marketing and business development specialists. Workshops included hot topics like online marketing, culinary tourism, cooperative marketing and regional distribution.

Catskills FarmLink, an online resource connecting landowners with farmers seeking productive lands, celebrated two successful "links" in 2012. In April, Migliorelli Farm of Dutchess County expanded its operation by leasing an Ulster County farmstand. In June, a local farmer relocated her growing heifer herd to a 500+ acre farm in Bovina where she plans to begin milking in 2013.

Catskills CRAFT (Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training), a grassroots farmer-to-farmer networking group, offered seven events at which participating member and mentor farmers learned the tricks of seed starting, rotational grazing, and vegetable production, while networking and socializing.

The Program again received a \$15,000 grant from Farmhearts to continue the beginning farmer-focused initiatives started in 2011. In November, beginning farmer Eleanor Blakeslee-Drain accepted the Farmhearts fellowship position. Eleanor launched her own farm operation, Berry Brook Farm in Roscoe last year, from which she sold at the local farmers' market, direct to stores, restaurants and caterers, and through a 10-week CSA. Working with regional as well as national organizations, Eleanor will dedicate her fellowship to sharing her story as a beginning farmer in the Catskills while maintaining the programmatic mechanisms that offer land access, educational resources, training and networking opportunities to beginning farmers.

The Council approved a new tool for online selling, the Pure Catskills Marketplace, which is

scheduled to launch mid-year 2013. The Marketplace offers farm, food and wood businesses the opportunity to sell beyond the region through a web-based platform to be marketed and promoted through the Farm to Market Program.

To keep up with the demand of expanding markets, farmer

education and producer groups continued to inspire and inform regional farmers with workshops ranging from grazing, calf and nutrient management, raising poultry, and organic vegetable production, to using smartphones and tablets on the farm and at market.



*Supporters put a face to buying local at events like the Cauliflower Festival, New Green City, and the Delaware County Fair.*

# 23,000 Acres Under Easement and Counting

By the end of 2012, the Easement Program portfolio consisted of 127 original grantor easements covering 23,201 acres. Of these conservation easements (CEs), 125 covering 22,158 acres were purchased easements using funds from NYC DEP; 2 easements covering 1,043 acres were donated. The Easement Program closed on 9 purchased easements covering 1,337 acres in 2012 totaling \$2,025,155.

In November, the Council completed contract negotiations with DEP (effective September 2013) that will provide a total of \$29 million in new funding for the acquisition and stewardship of easements over the next 5 years. Of that, \$23 million will be dedicated to the acquisition and stewardship of additional agricultural conservation easements, while \$6 million in funding will go to the development of a pilot Forestry Conservation Easement Program focused on the acquisition of dedicated forestry CEs in the watershed.

Additionally, the Easement Program developed the following Stewardship Guidelines for farms under easement in 2012 as required by the 2010 Water Supply Permit Side Agreement (among DEP and the MOA signatories concerning DEP's continuation of its Land Acquisition Program):

- Agricultural Structures Greater than 5,000 SF Aggregate Outside an Acceptable Development Area (ADA)
- Application of Domestic Septic Effluent, or Commercial or Industrial Sewage Sludge for Agricultural Production Purposes
- Commercial Bluestone Mining
- Creation of Farm Support Housing in ADA

- Pesticide and Fertilizer Application for the Purposes of Forest Management
- Recreational Structures Outside ADA over 1,000 SF Aggregate

Development of the Guidelines included meetings with MOA Signatories, which provided MOA Signatories the opportunity to comment on draft versions of the Guidelines.

In 2012, the Easement Program continued to expand its Stewardship Program by creating a Stewardship Coordinator position. The position will be responsible for managing stewardship field operations including monitoring and management of ongoing stewardship projects.

During 2012, the Stewardship Program worked with landowners to manage over 50 ongoing stewardship projects, including implementation of timber harvests, bluestone quarrying, rights of way, agricultural structures, stream work, amendments, and violations on Council CE-encumbered properties.

*Thorn-Ridge Farm, Delhi, Delaware County where the Council coordinated a CE with the Huneke Family to protect 160 acres in the Elk Creek valley.*





*LEFT: Farmland in Conesville, Schoharie County where the Council acquired a conservation easement protecting 150 acres.*



*These photos, at center, show previously acquired conservation easements on properties viewed from aerial monitoring conducted in 2012. The Easement Program's continued commitment to land conservation has resulted in contiguous agricultural properties protected by conservation easements in the region.*



*RIGHT: View from a Conesville, Schoharie County farm where a Council CE conserves 160 acres.*

# 20 Years in the Making



The Watershed Agricultural Council turns 20 in 2013 and we're celebrating this milestone in a variety of ways. Want to share your watershed success story with us? Help us fill in our 20 years of history with your photos, perspectives and video. Simply send your contribution to us via email at [communications@nycwatershed.org](mailto:communications@nycwatershed.org).

Here's a quick look at what's coming this year:

- Launching the online store **Pure Catskills Marketplace** and promoting regional farm, food, and wood products businesses,
- Memorializing our history together through vintage video, project montages and an **interactive timeline** at [nycwatershed.org](http://nycwatershed.org),
- **Highlighting the clean water and economic impacts** of the Council's programs over the last 20 years,

- Installing **new signage** at the Council's three offices and at Crystal Falls Farm in Sullivan County,
- Sharing a **historical display** at the Delaware County Fair,
- **Honoring three individuals** for their work in promoting working landscapes, regional economic development, land conservation and clean drinking water,
- **Sharing our story** with schools, groups and visitors,
- **Recognizing staff and board members** for their milestone achievements.

Look for our monthly enews *Water & Land* for more details on our 20th anniversary celebration, or visit [www.nycwatershed.org](http://www.nycwatershed.org). You can help us share our story by passing along this annual report to a friend. And thanks for your help and support over the last 20 years. We've got more to do in the next two decades . . . together!



Follow us on Facebook

2012 Annual Report is a publication of the Watershed Agricultural Council, a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to support the economic viability of agriculture and forestry through the protection of water quality and the promotion of land conservation in the New York City Watershed region. The Council is funded by New York City Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service and other sources. The Council is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer. This issue is printed on 100% post-consumer paper, certified Ecologo, Processed Chlorine Free, FSC Recycled and manufactured by Cascades using biogas energy.



[www.nycwatershed.org](http://www.nycwatershed.org)

33195 State Highway 10  
Walton, NY 13856

NONPROFIT  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT #151  
KINGSTON NY

