

Esopus Creek News

Summer 2011

Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program Newsletter

A quarterly publication of Cornell Cooperative Extension Ulster County

Esopus Creek - Broadstreet Hollow - Woodland Valley - Stony Clove - Fox Hollow - Birch - Beaverkill - Little Beaverkill - Peck - Bushnellsville - Bush Kill

AWSMP Helps to Replace Washed-out Culvert on Traver Hollow

In June work began on the replacement of the stream-crossing culvert on Bradkin Road over Traver Hollow Creek in the Town of Olive. The previous seven foot diameter culvert washed out during the October 2010 flood. The loss of the culvert prevented residents who lived on the upper end of Bradkin Road from accessing their homes.

Agencies at the state and local level collaborated to install a new 25'4" x 9'5" rectangular box culvert designed to withstand a 50 year storm event. The Town of Olive took the lead in the actual installation of the culvert with support from a number of partner agencies. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation District provided surveying and engineering design expertise with support from



Traver Hollow culvert replacement on Bradkin Road.

REMEMBERING BRUCE DUFFY

We are sorry to report that Bruce Duffy, one of our advisory council members, passed away on August 10, 2011. Bruce Duffy's commitment to Catskill rivers and their trout fishery was strong and true.

When DEP initiated a community based program for stream management in the early 1990's, Bruce was among a small group of local anglers who took the time to introduce the new staff to the beauty and issues confronting Catskill Rivers. Bruce routinely took time away from his day job to attend meetings, workshops and trainings, and to participate in plantings or other projects.

Despite the differences between Trout Unlimited and NYC DEP over the Shandaken Tunnel discharges, Bruce always stayed at the table working to find common ground in the arena of stream management and he continued to support the overall program.

Even the name of the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program was affected by Bruce. Beth Reichheld of the DEP Stream



(Duffy—Continued on page 4)

the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC).

To alleviate the immediate problem of emergency access to residences on Bradkin Road, the Towns of Olive and Shandaken got DEC's permission to put in a temporary crossing at another site further up Traver Hollow Road. With access restored, albeit temporarily, work began on a more permanent solution.

A number of agencies provided their support to the project. The Town of Woodstock lent a pumper truck to the Olive Highway Department so they could pump out the water from the project site. Funding for the project was provided by Cornell Cooperative Extension through

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We're on the web!

www.ashokanstreams.org



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Ulster County

6375 Rt. 28

Phoenicia, NY 12464

phone: 845-688-3047

fax: 845-688-3130





Recent Public Events in the Ashokan Watershed



The Ashokan Watershed program has been very busy this spring and summer. Below are some of the public programs that took place from April-July. For more information about our education programs contact Elizabeth Higgins at emh56@cornell.edu.

April

A **training on rain gardens** was held in Phoenicia on April 2nd. The training was led by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County's Agriculture Team Leader, Teresa Rusinek. CCE will be installing a raingarden in the Ashokan Watershed this year.

The **second Ashokan Watershed Conference** was held at the Emerson Resort on April 9. Over 80 landowners and local agency staff attended this year's conference. In keeping with the flooding events of October and December, the theme was on preparing for and mitigating flooding and erosion problems. Featured speakers included Dan Zarrow of the Northeast Regional Climate Center (see feature on page 5); and Jim MacBroom, Sr. Vice President of Milone and MacBroom. The conference program is available on our website. We will be offering this conference again next spring!

On April 30th a group of volunteers assisted in **restoring a riparian buffer** in the Town of Shandaken. This project is a part of the Catskill Streams Buffer Initiative Program (CSBI). Contact Adam Doan for more information about this program (688-3047).

June

On June 8th AWSMP staff participated in **Bennett Elementary School's Earth Day celebration**. Students in grades 4-6 took soil samples and examined erosion and turbidity in the small streams running through the school's Nature Trail.

Braving the rain and cold, on June 11, a group of seven volunteers, including another small delegation from the Catskill Mountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited, worked together to **restore a streamside buffer in the Town of Olive**. Even with the less than desirable weather conditions over 300 plants were installed to create a stable riparian buffer. This was another CSBI project.

On June 23, a group of over 30 community leaders and agencies working in the water-

Ulster County Creek Week, September 17—25

Family Program: Tour of stream recreation areas, including a youth learn to fish day. In collaboration with the Lower Esopus Watershed Partnership we will feature sites from Shandaken to Saugerties. Most walks and activities will be under 2 hours and suitable for families.

Saturday, Sept. 17, 9:30am—9pm,

Home Stormwater Management Class: Learn about rain barrels, rain gardens, permeable paving and other techniques to improve stormwater management on your property. Special emphasis on how to combat erosion stemming from gravel or dirt driveways.

Tuesday Sept. 20, 6:30pm—8:30pm, AWSMP Office

Environmental Film Night: "Chattahoochee from Water War to Water Vision". Award winning documentary film about how groups in Alabama, Florida and Georgia have managed conflict over a shared water resource. Wednesday, Sept. 21, 7:00pm, AWSMP Office

Volunteer Tree Planting: Help the Catskills Stream Buffer Initiative program install native plants at a restoration site. Saturday, Sept. 24, 9:00am—12:30pm, meet at the AWSMP Office.

Check out our website for more Creek Week Events

www.ashokanstreams.org or go to the **Ulster County Creek Week page**

<http://ucenvironment.org/ulster-county-creek-week/>

May

The Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program partnered with the Catskill Mountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited for a successful **volunteer stream clean-up** on May 11. The volunteers cleaned seven public access locations in the Esopus and Stony Clove Creek. The Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC) provided trash bags and gloves as well as beautiful wooden bookmarks for the volunteers. The DEP operations staff hauled the trash away!

shed met at the Emerson Resort and Spa in Mount Tremper, NY for a **visioning session to plan the future structure and purpose of the Ashokan Watershed Advisory Council**. The recommendations from this session are being further refined by a sub-committee and will be incorporated into the program.

July

Cory Ritz of UCSWCD, Deron Davis of USDA-NRCS and Elizabeth Higgins of CCE Ulster

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Featured Stream: The Stony Clove Creek



Left: A map of the Stony Clove and its relation to other areas in the Ashokan Watershed

Below: The Stony Clove near Chichester. Note the eroding bank on the left and the turbid water in the stream

The Stony Clove Creek is not stocked by the NYS DEC. The Stony Clove Rod and Gun Club, however, stocks the creek annually with brown and rainbow trout. Due to limited public access in the lower reaches, most people who have fished on the Stony Clove either own property along its banks or have received landowner permission.

Most of the Stony Clove's watershed is covered by forest (14% coniferous, 73% deciduous). Less than 1% of the land is impervious surface (pavement, driveways, parking lots, etc.). This is good because impervious surfaces increase runoff which raises the level of pollutants in the water and increase the risk of flooding and

To help our readers get to know the Ashokan Watershed better, the *Esopus Creek News* will be featuring a different stream in the next few issues. Our first featured stream is the Stony Clove Creek, which has been studied extensively by DEP and its partners over the past several decades. [The Stony Clove Stream Management Plan](#) was developed by the Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District in 2003 outlining many of the areas of concern in the Creek and making recommendations for its management. Links to the plan and more information are included at the end of the article.

The headwaters of the Stony Clove Creek are in scenic Notch Lake, in Greene County. From there the Stony Clove flows along State Route 214, passing Devil's Tombstone campground, past the communities of Lanesville, and Chichester, and ends at the confluence with the Esopus Creek in the hamlet of Phoenicia. Along the way it grows with the contribution of a number of significant tributaries including Myrtle Creek, Hollow Tree Brook, Warner Creek, and Ox Clove.

Approximately 80% of the 32.3 mi² Stony Clove Creek Watershed falls within the Greene County towns of Hunter and Lexington while the remaining 20% falls within the bounds of the Ulster County towns of Shandaken and Woodstock. The whole of the Stony Clove Watershed lies within the boundaries of the Catskill Park. Land around the creek is owned either privately or by New York State as part of the Catskill Park Forest Preserve. The valley was a



site of extensive manufacturing and logging in former years. It is hard to believe now, but in the 1800s Chichester was a company town that, at its peak, employed over 300 employees at a furniture factory, and a railroad ran along the Creek!

Steep headwater streams like the Stony Clove are renowned for supporting healthy populations of native trout. Researchers from USGS and DEC have found in the past that the Stony Clove supports a diversity of different aquatic species. Brown and rainbow trout tend to be found in the lower sections of the Stony Clove.

erosion. However, because of the narrow valley that the stream runs through, most of the developed lands and roads in the Stony Clove Watershed are adjacent to the stream, and contribute to some of the erosion and turbidity problems in the creek.

The annual precipitation received by the Stony Clove is quite high even by the standards of the Catskills region. Average precipitation ranges between 50 to 60 inches per year, compared to the 40-50 inches received in most of the other

(Stony Clove: Continued on page 6)



Ashokan Watershed Recreation Corner: Rochester Hollow Trail in Shandaken

Located on Matyas Road in Big Indian, NY, the Rochester Hollow Trail is an excellent venue for a variety of activities adjacent to a stream in the Ashokan Watershed. The trail supports recreational activities year round as it is suitable for hiking, mountain biking and is well regarded as a venue for cross country skiing and snow-shoeing in the winter. With designated campsites near the trailhead and a lean-to at the end, it is very accessible for families wishing to try “primitive” camping. This is an excellent place for families to make camp and spend a day walking the trail or playing in the stream and at night making s’mores and telling ghost stories.



Upon entering Matyas Road from Route 28 it is not immediately obvious that the road will lead to a state trailhead. However, if one continues up the road to its end they will find a gravel parking area and the DEC trailhead kiosk. The trail is approximately 3 miles in length, with about two of the initial miles being at times rather steep inclines. Beyond the initial 500-1000 feet, the trail is smooth and well-groomed. It is bordered on either side by state forest preserve land.

Within 500 feet of the trailhead there is a small campsite with space for pitching a tent. The Rochester Hollow stream is a short walk away and parallels the trail for most of its course. Those who climb the trail will be rewarded with a monument to John Burroughs, a Roxbury, NY native and late 19th–early 20th Century naturalist and author who is credited with helping to spark the modern environmental conservation movement. If one continues up just a little further, the trail plateaus and eventually begins to descend toward its conclusion. At this plateau you will find the ruins of what appears to be a manor house foundation and retaining wall. This is an excellent area for a picnic lunch and photo opportunities.

A newly constructed lean-to rewards those willing to back-pack the trail. The “Jim Smith Memorial Lean-to” is dedicated in memory of longtime Catskills Trails Supervisor James O. “Jimmy” Smith Jr. Jimmy was responsible for the construction and maintenance of trails, lean-tos, kiosks, bridges and many other facilities found within the Catskill Forest Preserve and still in use today.

For more precise details on this location as well as other recreational opportunities in the area, please visit Ulster County’s new interactive recreation map (see box below).

Ulster County has developed a new county-wide recreation map! Paper copies of the map are available in our office and at various locations in the County.

An on-line version is available at:

<http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/recreation/index.html>

(Duffy—Continued from page 1)

Management Program recalls Bruce’s insight that the proposed “Stream Corridor Protection Program” was too regulatory in tone. He noted that it didn’t represent what DEP was really trying to accomplish. As a result of his insight, DEP staff changed the name to the “Stream Management Program”.

Over the years, Bruce helped organize numerous planting projects in the Esopus tributaries and participated in clean ups. He watchdogged problem areas and notified DEP or AWSMP staff of river instability issues that needed attention and were out of roadside view and therefore unlikely to be discovered.

Bruce was someone who, when a problem required an effort, would undertake it himself with volunteers. Reichheld recalled the time he and TU Ashokan-Pepacton Chapter took down overhanging trees on the lower Broadstreet Hollow – a key trout spawning reach - before they went into the river causing a log jam and exacerbating erosion near homes. Bruce, with the Ashokan-Pepacton Chapter, took it upon themselves to replant the riparian area of the Broadstreet Hollow Stream Restoration Project. Those trees are doing

amazingly well!

Bruce also helped bring funding into the region in 1998, securing a grant from TU National to purchase stream survey equipment and to conduct training of volunteers to advance trout habitat studies. He was the recipient of many awards, including the “Stream Champion Award” by Trout Unlimited, National.

Helpful and quick to share time and information is how Bruce is remembered by the Ashokan Watershed Staff. Bruce was quick to share a good fishing site with a new resident, or recommend a good hike. Those of us who participated in the Leaping Trout Art Project witnessed the immense amount of work he put into cutting out the aluminum trout panels that provided the basis for the art projects. And helping to advance the project. He also contributed a trout of his own “**Winter Trout**” that highlighted his passion for trapping and outdoor sports. Bruce was a strong advocate, through his involvement with the Federated Sportsmen’s Clubs of Ulster County for hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities in Ulster County.



In the last few years Bruce was softer spoken, yet as a member of the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program’s Advisory Council, he was still very active, taking time away from his day job to attend Ashokan Watershed Advisory Council meetings providing his insight on grant applications, stream projects, research needs and overall support. We could always count on Bruce to be there, and will miss him a great deal.

Photo Credit: (above) “Winter Trout” by Bruce Duffy; photograph by Mark Loete

Watershed Science: Recent Research on Precipitation

On April 9, Dan Zarrow from the Northeast Regional Climate Center housed at Cornell University gave a presentation about the implications of climate change and increasing precipitation patterns and the effects they could hold for the Ashokan Watershed. He summarized the impact of the trends as "The wet get wetter and the dry get drier."

According to a 2009 report by the U.S. Global Change Research Program, of the six climate regions across the continental United States, the Northeast has seen the greatest increase in heavy precipitation events (67%) over the last 50 years. Zarrow also pointed out that this trend is likely to continue, as more very heavy precipitation events are likely for the nation as a whole and especially the Northeast.

There have been 50 years of scientific data relating to rainfall and other precipitation patterns collected in the Phoenicia area. Mr. Zarrow showed that for the Phoenicia area, an average 24-hour 2-year storm currently dumps about 3.10 inches of precipitation. In other words, Phoenicia can expect to see a rainfall event of 3.10 inches approximately once every two years. More accurately, there is a 50% chance of a 3.10 inch rainfall event in any given year. The 24-hour 25-year storm for Phoenicia is 5.66 inches and the 100-year storm has been calculated to be 7.90 inches. The new work published by the Northeast Regional Climate Center shows a general increase in these extreme rainfall statistics across New York and New England when compared to the last region-wide study, Technical Paper 40, which was completed in 1961.

Less precipitation will fall as snow and more as rain. By the end of the century, the

southern and western parts of the Northeast could experience as few as 5 to 10 snow-covered days in winter, compared with 10 to 45 days historically. Decreased snowfall and increased rainfall would have negative effects on stream flows in the Catskills. Lack of snowfall will prevent streams and groundwater sources from receiving a slow sustaining release of water through the winter and spring. Instead there will be more intense storms, which will sporadically dump large quantities of water into the system. This type of scenario increases the potential for large, damaging floods. However, streams will return to base flow relatively fast once the rain stops.

Modeling predictions indicate that in the next century we will see more extreme stream flows that will cause streams to flow higher in winter, likely increasing flood risk, and lower in summer, exacerbating drought. However, the exact levels of precipitation, duration of floods and droughts, as well as average temperature for any particular region in the future is uncertain. Given the sheer number of variables involved, it is difficult to forecast what conditions will be like in the Ashokan Basin 100, 50 or even 20 years down the road. However, what is assured is that conditions that have been steady in the Catskill region for many years will sharply and quickly change. Residents should do their best to prepare for what are almost certain, inevitable changes.

For more information about climate change, precipitation levels and how it may impact the northeast region please visit the Extreme Precipitation in New York and New England website at <http://precip.net> as well as the Cornell Climate Change blog at <http://blogs.cornell.edu/climatechange/>.

(Events: Continued from page 2)

County offered a Saturday morning **class on erosion for streamside landowners**. This was a repeat of the training held during the Ashokan Watershed Conference in April. Topics covered included: what stream erosion is, what causes it, and the effects that it can have on the landscape as well as water quality. They also taught property owners some criteria to use to assist them in determining whether or not their property is vulnerable to erosion and steps they can take to lessen their risk of erosion.

The AWSMP staff manned a booth and had a display on turbidity at the **Woodstock Library Festival**.

Highway and UC Department of Public Works staff from the watershed communities and Ulster County attended a **tour of project sites in Woodland Valley to discuss best manage-**

ment practices. As a part of this training, UCSWCD staff covered use of the USGS streamstats website for easily getting data needed to properly size stream projects.



Above: Cory Ritz leads highway managers on tour of projects in Woodland Valley

(Culvert: Continued from page 1)

the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program Implementation Fund. Funding for the program was provided by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Before heavy equipment can be used in a stream, the water must first be diverted around the project area. Town of Olive highway crews put in a temporary culvert to divert the water around the project site and used the pumper truck from Woodstock to pump out the excess water where the culvert would be placed. An excavator was used to lift and gingerly place the massive culvert into its position along Traver Hollow. Great care was used to align the culvert with the stream channel in order to reduce the threat of erosion on the streambank and to provide a more natural passage for the water. Extensive use of heavy equipment was used to make the correct gradient called for in the engineering design plans.

When completed the project allowed residents to access their properties from Bradkin Road off of Traver Hollow Road instead of taking the long route to the temporary crossing. It also provided direct access to DEC campsites along the creek. The new culvert is designed to withstand major flood waters and is placed in such a way that it will not impede the movement of fish or other aquatic wildlife through the stream channel. It will also create public access to a well-maintained gravel road through the forest preserve that is excellent for walking, jogging, bicycle riding or other recreational activities.

This project would not have been possible without the collaboration between numerous public agencies and the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program. AWSMP looks forward to continue working with the Town of Olive and other municipalities as well as state and local agencies to provide solutions to critical infrastructure needs and other issues.





Calendar of Upcoming Events

From August—October we will be seeking public comment on possible stream access and recreation projects. Please see our website www.ashokanstreams.org for more information or contact Elizabeth Higgins at emh56@cornell.edu.

August 2011

Program Booth, Native Plant Printing, and Stream Table Demonstration at the Ulster County Fair, August 5th

Program Booth and Stream Table Demonstration at Shandaken Day, August 27

September 2011

Highway Managers Meeting, September 8

Program Booth and Stream Table Demonstration at the Olive Day Celebration, September 10

Shandaken Area Flood And Remediation Initiative (SAFARI) group meeting September 15

Ulster County Creek Week Events (September 17-24) - see page 2 for more details

October 2011

AWSSMP Implementation Fund Grant Proposals are due October 7

Advisory Council Meeting (end of October)

The Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program wishes to extend its heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers who made our spring plantings and stream clean-up a success. However, we still need volunteers for plantings in the fall and other projects. If you are interested in being included in our list of volunteers to contact for projects Call (845) 688-3047 ext. 1# or email Gretchen at

gretchen.rae@ashokanstreams.org

(Stony Clove: Continued from page 3)

parts of the Catskills.

The two primary issues of concern in the Stony Clove are turbidity and flooding (particularly in Phoenicia). Turbidity is the suspension of clays and other fine sediments in the water which turn the water a murky brown color. The Stony Clove Creek has been identified as one of the primary sources of turbidity to the Esopus Creek in the Ashokan Watershed frequently running turbid long after the other streams are running clear. This is because the valley through which the Stony Clove Creek runs is very high in glacial clays and they are easily transported by the water. There are also several places where there are very large bank failures that contribute to the problem. Turbidity, besides being unsightly, degrades fish habitat and reduces the quality of drinking water. The Stony Clove is part of the network of streams that provide drinking water to millions of people in New York City. The Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program is planning to undertake some stream improvement projects in Chichester to help reduce the amount of turbidity. Work is scheduled to begin in 2011 and will run through 2013.

Flooding is another concern in the Stony Clove Watershed. Twice in 2010 the Stony Clove ran over its banks in downtown Phoenicia, flooding Main Street. The geology, topography, weather patterns of the Stony Clove Watershed and the development patterns in Phoenicia all contribute to making the community of Phoenicia very vulnerable to flooding. The AWSMP program staff is working with the Town of Shandaken and others to identify ways to reduce the impact that floods have on Phoenicia residents.

Additional information about the Stony Clove can be found in the resources below. We have also featured projects in the Stony Clove in some of our past newsletters.

1. **The Stony Clove Stream Management Plan:** <http://www.catskillstreams.org/stonyclovesmp.html>
2. <http://www.chichesterville.net> Historic pictures and information about the hamlet of Chichester, NY
3. **For more information about planned stream projects in the Stony Clove Creek contact Cory Ritz, Ulster County SWCD** cory.ritz@ashokanstreams.org.



Above: Main Street Bridge over the Stony Clove in Phoenicia.

Other AWSMP Program Updates

AWSMP WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Bobby Taylor was recently hired as the new Stream Technician for Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation District. Bobby, a Phoenicia native, graduated from SUNY Cortland in 2008 with a B.S. in Geology. He interned with AWSMP for several summers during college and as an SCA intern in 2009. Most recently he was the CSBI Coordinator for the Rondout-Neversink Stream Management Program. This summer Bobby and a group of Ulster County Community College interns have been performing an assessment of Birch Creek. The data from these assessments will be used to develop a stream management plan for the creek.

AWSMP welcomed back intern

Graham Markowitz. Graham interned with the program last summer and loved it so much he has come back for more! Graham, who hails all the way from the Sunflower State (Kansas to the rest of us) has recently graduated from Emporia State University with a B.S in Geology. Graham is an avid fly fisherman and spends most of his free time fly fishing the Esopus and exploring other trout-filled streams in the Ashokan Watershed.

AWSMP welcomed **Brent Gotsch** to its summer staff roster. Brent is a contract employee with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County focusing on education and outreach projects for summer 2011. Brent is a recent graduate from Binghamton University's Graduate School and now holds a Master's of Public Administration (MPA) degree. Brent previously interned with the Rondout-Neversink Stream Management Program in his hometown of Grahamsville, NY.

GRANTS AWARDED IN 2011

The following 16 projects have been awarded grants by the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Implementation Fund in 2011. The final round of grants for 2011 is in October. The deadline for applications is **October 7th**. Please

contact Elizabeth Higgins (emh56@cornell.edu) for more information.

Mini-Grants (\$10,000 or less)

Town of Woodstock, two grants—(1) for a hydrologic study of the Van Hoagland Bridge; (2) for a small bank repair project in the Beaverkill near the Van Hoagland Bridge.

SUNY New Paltz, 3 grants - (1) to conduct a study on the role of suspended sediment in the ecology of Warner Creek; (2) for a study researching the characterization of suspended sediment in Warner Creek; and (3) for a study to identify the effect of water chemistry on Didymo blooms in the Esopus.

Bennett Elementary School—for a watershed detective program

Ulster County DPW—to send a staff person to a training on stream restoration techniques

Matching Grants (up to 25% match of a total proposed budget, with a maximum of \$100,000)

Syracuse University—to resurvey sites on the Stony Clove that were predicted to be high risk for erosion during the 2001 stream assessment..

United States Geological Survey—to provide 1 more year of funding for the Beaverkill gauge and 3 years of funding for a gage on Warner Creek to measure suspended sediments.

Municipal Grants (Up to 90% of the funds to municipalities to support infrastructure projects consistent with stream management plan objectives)

The Town of Shandaken, five grants—(1) to reduce turbidity and improve water quality (Chichester site 1); (2) to halt erosion of a streambank which is threatening homes in Chichester (Chichester site 4); (3) for a flood mitigation plan for Shandaken and the hamlet of Phoenicia; (4) for an engineering analysis and design for flood mitigation project in the Stony



New AWSMP staff members (left to right) Graham Markowitz, Bobby Taylor, Brent Gotsch

Clove in Phoenicia; (5) to install a flood mitigation project based on the design funded.

The Town of Woodstock, two grants—(1) For the additional cost to replace the Van Hoagland Bridge with a bridge that is sized appropriately; (2) to remove large woody debris blockage on the Beaverkill in Mink Hollow

CATSKILL STREAMS BUFFER INITIATIVE (CSBI)

Catskill Streams Buffer Initiative Applications for 2012 are due by **January 15, 2012**. If you have questions about the application process please contact the Catskill Streams Buffer Coordinator for this area, Adam Doan, by phone at 845-688-3047 or via email at adam.doan@ashokanstreams.org.

STREAM RECREATION ACCESS IMPROVEMENT

Based on the survey and results from public meetings, a committee has drafted a set of recommended projects for the Ashokan Watershed. Final selection of projects for funding will be made in October. Please see our website (www.ashokanstreams.org) to review the projects and provide comments. For more information contact Elizabeth Higgins (emh56@cornell.edu).



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Ulster County



ASHOKAN WATERSHED
STREAM MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM



6375 Rt. 28

Phoenicia, NY 12464

Phone: (845) 688-3047

Fax: (845) 688-3130

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Editors

Brent Gotsch, CCE Ulster County
Elizabeth Higgins, CCE Ulster County

INVASIVE ALERT: GIANT HOGWEED

Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) has been discovered in the Town of Woodstock. Hogweed is an invasive species and is listed as a noxious weed by the Federal government. Hogweed can cause severe blistering of the skin if its sap combined with moisture and sunlight comes into contact with the skin. Simply brushing against the plant is enough to create sap-skin contact.

Unlike the better-known poison ivy or poison oak which tend to clear-up on its own after a few days with little lasting evidence, Hogweed has been known to cause extremely painful blistering and permanent scarring of the skin. It has also been known to cause severe eye irritation and in some cases, blindness.

Hogweed can grow upwards of 12 feet or more. Its hollow, ringed stems grow 2-4 inches in diameter and have dark reddish-purplish blotches. It has large compound leaves which can grow more than 5

feet wide and its white flower heads can be up to 2 ½ inches wide. It is commonly confused with cow parsnip, wild parsnip and angelica.

If you believe that you have Giant Hogweed on your property do not attempt to remove it yourself. Please contact the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation at 845-256-3111 and tell them that you suspect you have hogweed on your property. If you have access to a digital camera you can email pictures of the plant to ghogweed@gw.dec.state.ny.us and a DEC specialist will confirm if your particular plant is in fact hogweed.

For more information about Giant Hogweed and links to other resources please visit the DEC website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html>.

Photographs courtesy of New York State Department of Environmental Conservation



Hog weed can grow between 7 and 14 feet tall (above). It also has white umbrella-shaped flower clusters that can grow up to 2.5 feet wide (below).



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