



FILLING THROUGH THE GRENKERS:

THE SCIENCE AND
POLICY
CHALLENGES
OF CONSERVING
SMALL WETLANDS
IN THE HUDSON
VALLEY

October 28, 2008
Staatsburg, NY

The Hudson River Environmental Society, New York State Department of
Environmental Conservation Hudson River Estuary Program and the Hudson
River National Estuarine Research Reserve Program and Cornell University

Present:



We use multiple mailing lists for our conferences. If you receive more than one brochure, kindly pass it along to a colleague.

Hudson River Environmental Society
6626 Stitt Road
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www.hres.org



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FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS:

SMALL WETLANDS are some of the most ecologically and economically valuable habitats in the Hudson Valley - but they are also one of the least protected. Recent Supreme Court decisions have potentially left “isolated” wetlands (those without a permanent surface water connection to larger water bodies) vulnerable to development. However, these so-called “isolated” wetlands are rarely isolated from an ecosystem perspective. Isolated wetlands are nutrient sinks, and because most are connected to other water bodies through subsurface flows, their loss could potentially have negative effects on downstream water quality. In the Hudson Valley, small wetlands are important habitat for plants and animals, and are key to maintaining the Hudson River’s globally important amphibian and reptile diversity.

While small wetlands were afforded some federal protection in the past, recent Supreme Court decisions have raised questions about the extent of those protections. Application of these recent decisions remains in flux, and federal jurisdiction might only apply to wetlands that are adjacent to or form a “significant nexus” with navigable waters. The new standards suggested by these decisions have created confusion that could be clarified over time through additional legislation, promulgation of rules, and case law. Recently, the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers have jointly issued legal memoranda that interpret some aspects of the 2006 Rapanos decision.

In the meantime, state and local governments are determining if, and how, they will act to conserve isolated wetlands that are “falling through the cracks.” Small wetlands are directly threatened by dredging, filling, draining, and dumping, and indirectly by pollution and altered hydrology within their drainage areas. Some local governments in the Hudson Valley are creating programs that conserve or protect small wetlands using a variety of approaches.

About the cover images:

Spotted salamander and other species of mole salamanders live in forests, but require isolated pools for breeding.

Because they are isolated, woodland pools are typically dry for part of the season, and are usually fishless. These conditions provide excellent breeding and nursery habitat for amphibians.

Photos by Laura Heady.

THE SCIENCE AND POLICY CHALLENGES OF CONSERVING SMALL WETLANDS IN THE HUDSON VALLEY

Tuesday, October 28th, 2008

8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Norrie Point Environmental Center

Staatsburg, NY

This conference will provide local government officials, planners, engaged community members and consultants with the understanding, tools and information they need to appreciate and conserve small wetlands in the Hudson Valley. The conference will start with a scientific overview of the ways in which isolated wetlands and their functions contribute to the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the Hudson Valley landscape. The overview will include special consideration of how climate change could affect small wetlands and their functions. Conference speakers will then provide an update on the most recent regulatory guidance pertaining to small wetlands. Finally, the conference will explore small wetland conservation through local authority and provide examples of Hudson Valley initiatives. Speakers will be available throughout the day to share information.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Hudson River Estuary Program

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s Hudson River Estuary Program seeks to restore and maintain the Hudson’s extraordinary natural heritage through programs that conserve natural resources, clean up pollution and promote use and enjoyment of the river.

The Hudson River Environmental Society

The Hudson River Environmental Society (HRES) was founded in 1970 as a nonprofit membership organization to foster research on the Hudson River environment and related coastal area, provide a forum for communication and cooperation among researchers, and make the results of environmental research available and accessible to concerned citizens and public officials.

HRES works to facilitate and coordinate research in the physical, biological and social sciences such as environmental engineering, resource management, urban and regional planning and other disciplines in the Hudson River region. Equally important, HRES serves as a dynamic channel of communication within the research community.

P R O G R A M

8:30 Registration and Coffee

9:10 **Opening Remarks**

Roy Jacobson

Hudson River Environmental Society

Fran Dunwell

Coordinator, Hudson River Estuary Program, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

Willie Janeway

Regional Director, Region 3, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

9:30 - 10:45 **Small Wetland Science**

James Gibbs

SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

10:45 - 11:00 Break

11:00 - 11:45 **Climate Change and Small Wetlands**

John Kusler

Association of State Wetland Managers

11:45 - 1:00 Lunch

1:00 - 2:15 **Federal and State Policy**

John Connell

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NY District

Tim Post

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

2:15 - 2:30 Break

2:30 - 5:00 **Local Conservation Programs**

Introductory Remarks

Laura Heady

Hudson River Estuary Program, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation /
Cornell University

Local Authority

Drayton Grant

Grant & Lyons, LLP

Local Examples (panel)

Supervisor Edward Brancati and Bruce Barber, Wetlands Inspector, Town of Lewisboro

Rich Guthrie - Greene Land Trust and Greene County Habitat Advisory Committee

Mark Peritz - Joy of Building and Town of Woodstock Planning Board Chairman

Dave Clouser, PE, PLS - Dave Clouser & Associates and Town of New Paltz

Conference Partners



Cornell University



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GETTING THERE



The **Norrie Point Environmental Center** is located at the Mills-Norrie State Park in Staatsburg, Dutchess County and serves as the headquarters of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Hudson River Research Reserve. The Center is on the Hudson River and is reachable via the New York State Thruway, Route 9 or the Taconic State Parkway.

Norrie Point Environmental Center
 256 Norrie Point Way
 Staatsburg, NY 12580
 phone (845) 889-4745
 fax (845) 889-4749

Please visit www.dec.ny.gov/lands/37889.html for precise directions from your location. Parking is available at the site.

Public Transportation:

Norrie Point is about 10 miles south of Rhinecliff and about 10 miles north of Poughkeepsie. From the south, trains come into Poughkeepsie (Metro North and Amtrak) and from the north to Rhinecliff (Amtrak). Taxis or a car-ride must be arranged from the trains stations.

www.amtrak.com
 Metro North Hudson Line: www.mta.info/mnr/index.html

Car Pooling Information:

www.rideshare.us use look-up-code: SmallWetlands



FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS:

	Until 22 Oct.	After 22 Oct.	On-Site
Registration.....	\$ 35.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 50.00
HRES Members [†]	\$ 30.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 45.00
Students*.....	\$ 20.00		\$ 25.00

[†]You may enroll in HRES now using this form and receive the member rate for this conference.
 *Scholarships will be available for High School & College/University Students who apply to the Society by the registration deadline. hres@nycap.rr.com

Early registration and payment is encouraged by October 22nd. Checks should be made payable to the Hudson River Environmental Society.

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- \$750 Corporate

Checks should be made payable to HRES and *are* tax deductible. HRES is a non-profit IRS 501(c)(3) corporation, Federal ID #23-7078474

Completed registration should be mailed with payment to:
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Total Enclosed \$ _____

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