

# Ulster County Open Space Plan



## Resource Protection and Management



Adopted December 2007

The Ulster County Open Space Plan (2007) was adopted as an element of the Ulster County Comprehensive Plan. It was produced with the guidance of the Ulster County Legislature's Environmental Committee (Brian Shapiro, Chair) and Economic Development, Housing, Planning and Transit Committee (Hector Rodriguez, Chair).

The plan was developed collaboratively by the Ulster County Environmental Management Council and the Ulster County Planning Board  
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[www.co.ulster.ny.us/planning/ospace.shtml](http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/planning/ospace.shtml)

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# Ulster County Open Space Plan

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	1-1
The Setting .....	1-1
The Challenge .....	1-2
Related Plans and Policies .....	1-3
Why Protect Open Space? .....	1-4
Environmental, Social and Economic Benefits Protection	
Calculating the Benefits of Open Space	
The Importance of Regionalism .....	1-8
The Need for Collaboration .....	1-9
<b>2. Development of the Plan</b> .....	2-1
Planning and Environmental Analysis .....	2-1
Developing the Plan’s Vision and Goals .....	2-1
Strategy, Policy and Planning Tools .....	2-2
Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)	
Planning and Development Factors	
Stakeholder Participation	
Plan Vision and Goals .....	2-7
<b>3. Open Space Resources in Ulster County</b> .....	3-1
Resource Category 1: Protected Open Space .....	3-5
Land Trusts	
Resource Category 2: Water Resources .....	3-9
Watersheds	
The Watershed Approach Framework	
Wetlands	
Aquifers	
Surface Waters	
Floodplains	
Resource Category 3: Working Landscapes .....	3-20
Section 480 – Forestry Program	
Agricultural Districts Program	
Resource Category 4: Landforms and Natural Features .....	3-23
National Natural Landmarks Program	
Coastal Management Program and Scenic Areas	
Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans	
Scenic Byway Program	

**Resource Category 5: Ecological Communities** . . . . . 3-27

- USDA Forest Legacy Program
- New York State Natural Heritage Program
- Ecological Community Assessments

**Resource Category 6: Cultural and Historic Resources** . . . . . 3-29

- Heritage Areas Program
- State and Regional Preservation Planning

**Resource Category 7: Recreation Resources** . . . . . 3-31

- Public Parks and Facilities
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails and Paths
- Ulster County Transportation Plan
- Recreational Rivers
- Cultural and Heritage Tourism
- The Hudson River Valley Greenway

**4. Recommended Actions and Implementation** . . . . . 4-1

- The Management Framework and Work Program** . . . . . 4-1
- The Challenge: Fragmentation** . . . . . 4-1
  - Organizational Fragmentation
  - Resource Fragmentation
- The Response: Integration** . . . . . 4-2
  - A Role for Ulster County Government in Open Space Protection
  - The Roles of Ulster County Departments
  - The Role of Local Municipalities
- Open Space Protection Principles** . . . . . 4-4
- Recommended Actions** . . . . . 4-5
  - Strategic Actions: Leadership, Linking, Learning and Leverage** . . . . . 4-5
  - Resource Strategies** . . . . . 4-17

## Appendices

- Appendix A: Natural Resources Inventory
- Appendix B: Strategic Planning Resources
- Appendix C: Glossary
- Appendix D: Bibliography

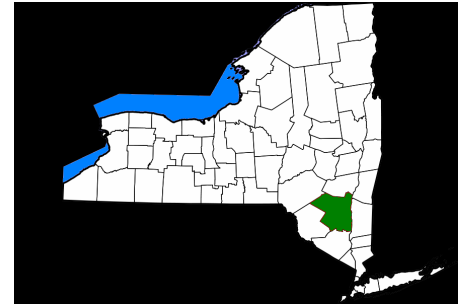
Please note: due to their volume, Appendices are not included in this printing of the plan. They are available as part of the plan’s website at: [www.co.ulster.ny.us/planning/ospace.shtml](http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/planning/ospace.shtml).

For more information about the plan, visit the website or contact the Ulster County Planning Board at (845)340-3340 or [planning@co.ulster.ny.us](mailto:planning@co.ulster.ny.us).

# I. Introduction

## The Setting

Nestled between the New York Metropolitan area to the south and the Albany area to the north, Ulster County was – and still is – a large part of that green area on many regional plan maps. The county remains a significant source of open space, recreation and water resources for a region that includes the major metropolitan areas of the state. The environmental conservation movement sprouted many roots here and it remains a part of our heritage. Ulster County is part of the Hudson River Valley Greenway as well as a National Heritage Area.



*Ulster County extends from the Hudson River to the Catskill Mountains and the county seat of Kingston is 90 miles North of New York City. Key facts:*

- *Over 32% of Ulster County is permanently protected.*
- *Nearly 90% of New York City's water supply passes through here.*
- *About 14% of the county is agricultural land.*
- *There are over 160 sites on the National Register of Historic Places and 27 historic districts in the county.*
- *The county is a major tourism and recreation destination.*

There are significant tracts of protected open space in the county, including Forest Preserve lands in the Catskill State Park and preserve lands on the Shawangunk Ridge. The county is also home to New York City reservoirs of the Catskill and Delaware systems. These are important sources of drinking water, providing New York City with the majority of its supply. Other water



Spring Clove, © Steve Jordan

resources, surface and ground, meet the daily needs of county residents and are critical to future development within the county. Glacial activity left behind broad outwash plains and scoured hilltops that today are the basis for unique vegetation, wetlands and vernal pools.

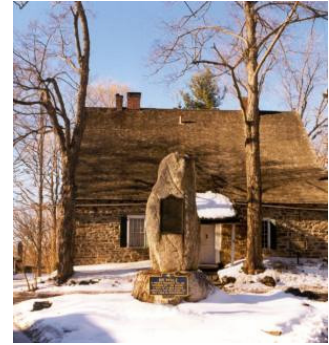
*The Shawangunk Mountains extend from northern New Jersey to the Catskills.*



*Ulster County is New York's largest producer of fresh market apples and corn, as well as a major grower of a wide variety of other fruits and vegetables.*

Ulster County is also home to significant agricultural activities. In the Rondout and Esopus valleys, there are some of the most productive agricultural soils in the state. The hills above the Hudson and the stony soils of southern portions of the county are excellent for fruit production as well as increasingly for wine.

As one of the first settled areas of the “New World,” the county possesses historic and archeological resources representing the full range of eligibility criteria according to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.



*The Jean Hasbrouck House is one of six built in New Paltz by the Huguenot refugees, who founded this community in 1678.*

There are several groups dedicated to research and conservation of open space resources in the county. These represent

significant technical expertise, funding capabilities, and sources of support for any open space protection effort.

## The Challenge

Over the last generation, Ulster County has experienced steady growth. From 1950 to 2000, the population nearly doubled. The pattern of growth during this period was focused away from existing centers with substantial increases in the southern areas of the county and in Saugerties to the north. As we move further into the 21st century, continued growth and development in the county that mirrors these trends may threaten our important open space resources and those “quality of life” elements that are articulated in nearly every community comprehensive plan. The “sprawl” pattern threatens farmland, historic landscapes and sites, recreation areas, biodiversity, water quality, and the natural beauty that make the county such an attractive place to live, work, and visit.



*The postwar development pattern of “sprawl” has negative impacts on agriculture, biodiversity, the cost of community services, and has created an isolated, car dependent lifestyle.*

The development activity now taking place illustrates that market forces combined with current regulatory controls are unable to curtail critical intrusions into our open spaces. Other barriers, such as limited availability of water and sewer infrastructure, also play a role in preventing a more compact land use pattern. These issues have become increasingly important as development proposals continue to accelerate in Ulster County.



*Weed Orchards Farm in Marlborough. See Section III, Working Landscapes, page 3-21 for information on the Agricultural Districts Program.*

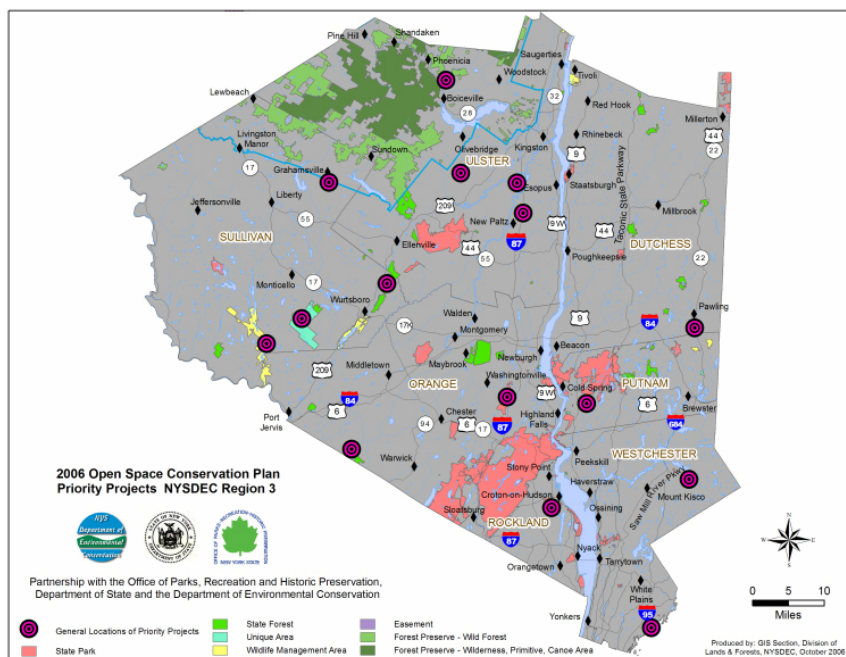
Fragmentation is the overarching challenge to open space protection in Ulster County. It occurs at many levels: disconnections between organizations and programs concerned with open space, discontinuity between ecosystems, and physical barriers between communities.

## Related Plans and Policies

All levels of government have policies and plans that affect open space in the county. This plan aims to integrate their goals and addresses these state, local and other county plans in its recommendations. Ulster County is part of the New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Region 3 and this plan recognizes the New York State Open Space

Conservation Plan's priority sites for protection (see map below).

At the local level, several Ulster County municipalities have developed plans for open space protection. Three municipalities – Gardiner, Marbletown and New Paltz – passed bond acts in November 2006 for a total of \$5.5 million to support the purchase of development rights to protect areas identified in their plans. At the Ulster County Government level, there



*This map shows the Region 3 priority projects (see purple dots) identified in the 2006 New York State Open Space Conservation Plan.*



*Born in the Catskills, John Burroughs (1837—1921) was an American naturalist and essayist important in the evolution of the conservation movement in the U.S. as well as Ulster County.*

are several plans and programs that consistently advocate for compact development around existing centers, discourage sprawl, and identify important corridors and systems of open space resources to be protected.

## Why Protect Open Space?

New York State has a long tradition of awareness, appreciation, and protection of open space. The conservation of land and water resources and preservation of important cultural sites dates back to 1850 with the designation of the first state historic site - Washington's Headquarters in Newburgh. The establishment of the state park at Niagara Falls in 1885 was not only New York's first state park but the first state park in the nation. The establishment of the Adirondack and Catskill parks followed shortly thereafter.

It was eventually recognized that open space issues could not solely be addressed on the state level but also needed a local perspective. In the furtherance of that goal, New York passed the Local Environmental Protection Act, Article 47, in 1970. Based on the authority granted in Article 47, the Ulster County Legislature established the Ulster County Environment Management Council in 1972.

Open space plans are part of the comprehensive planning process by law. The authority for addressing open space protection is also contained in Section 239-d of Article 12 of General Municipal Law (GML) relative to comprehensive plans. GML language directs comprehensive plans to consider agricultural uses, historic and cultural resources, coastal and natural and scenic resources and sensitive environmental areas.

*The Ulster County Planning Board submitted the county's first Open Space and Parks Plan to the Legislature in 1972. The Ulster County Legislature, at the February 12, 2004 session, by Resolution 84, directed the Ulster County Environmental Management Council (EMC) to coordinate the review and updating of the 1972 plan. The resolution gave the Ulster County Planning Board (UCPB) the role of approving the plan and charged the two entities with the responsibility of working together to develop and oversee a program and seek financial support for the implementation of the plan.*







*Spotted Salamander at Shaupeneak Ridge, Town of Esopus.*

The Ulster County Environmental Management Council's Open Space Committee and Ulster County Planning Board staff have worked in close cooperation to create this document. The plan is designed to create a system of strong linkages between the many issues, people and resources that need to work together to preserve open space. It considers social, economic, historic, physical and environmental justice issues and will provide a bridge between and reflect local, regional and state goals for open space and recreation.

### **Environmental, Social and Economic Benefits**

There are environmental, social and economic benefits from the protection of open space. The most obvious environmental benefit is the preservation of the beautiful landscapes that sustain our health and quality of life. But there are other important benefits, such as protecting the water supply from polluted runoff, sustaining local agriculture, reducing the use of fossil fuels by curbing sprawl, and maintaining the biodiversity of natural habitats.

Social benefits of protecting open space include maintaining diverse natural resources as opportunities for education, supporting

Comprehensive planning also considers affordable housing, transportation facilities, policies for improving the county's economy, and all other items consistent with protection, enhancement and orderly growth of the county. This plan is focused on open space and its relationship to these other areas.

An inclusive stakeholder process identified the need for a "living plan" (i.e., an ongoing program) for managing open space resources.



M. Campbell

*"Walkable" community centers with a range of housing and retail within walking distance such as Saugerties (above), Ellenville, Kingston, New Paltz, and Woodstock provide models for the more compact pattern of development recommended by this plan.*



Ulster County Chamber of Commerce

*Ulster County has numerous Community Supported Agriculture farms (CSAs) and Farmers' Markets.*

recreation, building community pride, and protecting public health. By directing growth to existing centers, open space protection has the added benefits of supporting a more “walkable” pattern of development that contributes to greater interaction within communities. Protecting agriculture – family farms, food security, food production capacity, and access to locally grown food – is a critical component of sustainability, particularly as energy and transport costs escalate.

There are also many economic benefits to open space conservation: reducing energy costs, enhancing real estate values; encouraging tourism and corporate (re)location, and the improved viability of “Main Streets.” Sprawl induces the construction and maintenance of new infrastructure; increased travel times, higher costs of public services, and the loss of agricultural lands and fragile lands, which are all long-term costs associated with unchecked development.

### Calculating the Benefits of Open Space Protection

A widely used method of calculating these costs is known as a Cost of Community Services study (COCS), which compares different land uses and their relative tax impact in relation to the public services they consume. COCS studies consistently find that residential development provides less tax revenue than it consumes in public service expenditures, whereas farm and open space lands contribute more to tax revenues than they use in public service expenditures.

COCS studies have limitations because they measure revenues and expenditures at a specific point in time, do not make distinctions between different housing and land use densities, and do not reflect changing property values or capacity to add development, which can alter the revenue and expenditure equations over time. Other methods, including Fiscal Impact Analysis, which calculates the multiplier effects of new development and



J. Schwartz

*Babe the cow (above) usually greets visitors to the Catskill Animal Sanctuary, a safe haven for neglected and abused farm animals. Just 25 years ago, Ulster County had about 165 milk cow dairy farms. According to Cornell Cooperative Extension, today there are five.*

## Box 1: What is Open Space?

This plan incorporates the two following definitions of open space:

New York State Conservation Law defines an “open area” as “any area characterized by natural scenic beauty or whose existing openness, natural condition or present state of use, if preserved, **would enhance the present or potential value** of abutting or surrounding development or would **establish a desirable pattern of development** or would offer substantial **conformance with the planning objectives** of the municipality or would **maintain or enhance the conservation of natural or scenic resources.**”

The New York State Open Space Conservation Plan defines open space as “land that is not intensively developed for residential, commercial, industrial or institutional use. It serves many purposes, **whether it is publicly or privately owned**. It includes agricultural and forest land, undeveloped shorelines, undeveloped scenic lands, public parks and preserves. It also includes water bodies such as lakes and bays.



*“In the Park” by Todd Samara, Kingston.*

**What is defined as open space depends in part on its surroundings. A vacant lot, community garden or small marsh can be open space in a big city. A narrow corridor or pathway for walking or bicycling is open space even though it is surrounded by developed areas. Historic and archeological sites are often associated with significant open spaces and are a part of our common heritage.”**

## What is Open Space Planning?

Open space planning is an ongoing **process** by which communities decide how to protect and utilize open space resources to provide the best possible and most sustainable environment. It is more than the acquisition of undeveloped land for its protection. Rather, it is an endeavor that involves the entire community in thinking about the importance of its current and future conservation, use, and development of the natural *and* built environments. This means that planning for open space and development go hand-in-hand. Identifying open space resources also involves identifying areas that can support appropriate development and then managing them together for the environmental as well as the economic and social well-being of the community.

Cost/Benefit Analysis, which looks at a range of factors, including non-market effects, should also be utilized for a fuller analysis of the impacts of development. However, we do need places for people to live. There is a delicate balance between open space conservation and growth. While the most rapidly growing places use “quality of life” to attract growth, they need to be mindful of maintaining it. Without the proper controls, the quality of life in Ulster County that has made it one of the fastest growing counties in New York State also threatens to destroy its character. Once lost to development, open space is impossible or difficult to retrieve and the

long-term costs can be immense. In addition, tourism and agriculture are two of the top revenue sources in New York State and important to the county's economy. Ulster County has particularly rich natural and historic resources that continue to offer potential for new, value-added and environmentally-friendly forms of agriculture, tourism and economic development.

### Box 2: The Hudson River

The Hudson River deserves special mention as one of Ulster County's most significant open space resources. In recent history, the Hudson has been the center of preservation efforts that include water resources, landforms and natural features, ecological communities, and cultural, historic and recreational resources as discussed in this plan.

The Hudson River's protection and development along it are viewed from a regional perspective as exemplified by the Hudson River Valley Greenway, the Coastal Zone Program, Local Waterfront Revitalization planning, and the Hudson River Estuary Program.

The abundance of natural resources, in combination with the economic opportunity represented by the Hudson, has made it a focal point for conflict in development decisions. As part of the delineation of Priority Growth Areas and Priority Conservation Areas, this plan recognizes that special attention needs to be paid to inter-jurisdictional issues and consensus building among all stakeholders.



*The Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge is one of two vehicular bridges crossing the Hudson River in Ulster County.*

## The Importance of Regionalism

Open space resource protection needs to extend beyond municipal boundary lines even as it respects Home Rule. To this end, programs such as the Coastal Zone Program, Hudson River Valley Greenway, and Agricultural Districts have been highlighted in the plan. These programs provide policy guidance and funding. They illustrate that collaboration among different levels of government, existing groups, and other entities can respect jurisdictional boundaries while they formulate and implement effective natural resource protection. The plan takes the position that county government is “right sized” to coordinate many open space protection efforts, capable of understanding local issues in coordination with and mindful of the larger efforts that may be needed. The plan also notes that as the understanding of the integration of natural resources continues to grow, so will the sophistication of needed resource protection efforts. Within this context, floodplain protection, climate change, invasive species and other resource protection



*Community involvement is essential to successful planning efforts and is central in the strategies of this plan.*

to concerns within their municipal boundaries. This plan envisions open space as a “system” of interconnected resources and areas that deserve protection. These transcend municipal and county boundaries.

This plan aims to create a bridge between communities – both spatially and functionally – by helping to coordinate the challenges of open space planning in such a large and varied county. The plan also recognizes that individual municipalities have different capabilities and desires. The differing capabilities needed for protection of open space resources and the complex array of resources available for open space protection require Ulster County government assistance.

challenges will require cohesive regional planning with inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination.

## The Need for Collaboration

There are many different issues to address in the protection of open space. Each community in Ulster County benefits from the quality of our region’s open space resources, but their plans are generally limited



*Located in the Town of Rosendale, Perrine's Bridge (built in 1823) is the second oldest covered bridge in the State of New York. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.*

## Stewardship

The term “stewardship” is repeated throughout this plan. It refers to treating the environment as a resource, our responsibility to wisely manage that resource, and our responsibility to future generations for the condition of that resource when we leave it.

### Box 3: Vital Statistics of Ulster County Open Space

**Size:** 1,126.6 square miles (721,024 acres)

**Location:** Kingston (county seat) is 90 miles north of New York City, 45 miles south of Albany

**Population:** 183,976 (2005 Projection, NYS Statistical Information System)

**Protected open space in Ulster County:** 227,434 acres (32%)

**Acres of County Parkland:** Two public parks, one with 103 acres and over 3,000 feet of frontage on the Hudson River (Ulster Landing Park) and one with over 115 acres and a 50-meter pool (New Paltz Park, Pool, and County Fairgrounds)

**Federal Landholdings:** 561.5 acres (Shawangunk Grasslands National Wildlife Refuge)

**State Landholdings:** Catskill Forest Preserve: 160,000 acres; Minnewaska State Park: over 12,000 acres

**City of New York Landholdings:** Ashokan Reservoir, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP): 9,000 acres, Rondout Reservoir, DEP: 1,300 acres

**Private Land Trusts and Other Nonprofits:** 16,245 acres

**Mohonk Preserve:** over 6,500 acres

**Ratio of People to Protected Open Space:** 1.285 acres per person



*“Rosendale” by Staats Fasoldt, Rosendale.*

## II. Development of the Plan

### Planning and Environmental Analysis

This plan identifies the critical need to understand the open space system from an inventory standpoint, including existing conditions and the role and importance of each of the resources. The plan recognizes that these resources exist within a context of development and growth and seeks to balance these factors and provide a basis for decisions regarding growth and conservation.



P. Parmalee

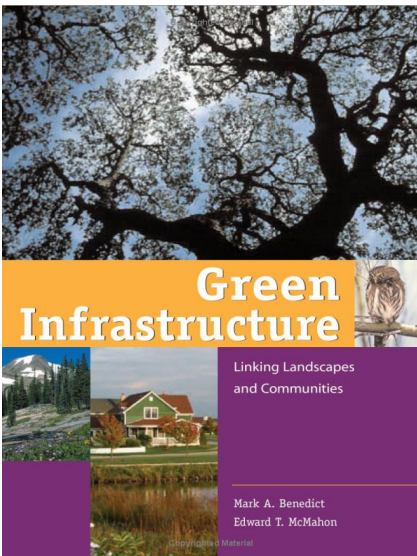
*Monitoring Stream Quality, on the Dwaarkill. For more information on Water Resources, see Section III, pages 3-9 to 3-19 and Water Resources Recommendations in Section IV, pages 4-19 to 4-21.*

To accomplish this, the plan establishes the Open Space Partnership and a management framework to enable an informed, collaborative decision-making process among a broad group of stakeholders. The Partnership is seen as a tool for decision-making and policy on priorities, what to protect, how much to spend and where, and on the means (legislation, regulation, funding, education, incentives, and coordination) to do so. (See Strategic Action 1, Leadership.)

### Developing the Plan's Vision and Goals

This plan is based on a combination of sound planning principles and stakeholder input. (For a statement of the Vision and Goals, see page 2-7.) The approach is to integrate conservation and development factors into shared decisions regarding open space protection (see Figure 1, next page). This is based on a number of current and well-established planning practices across the country. One early example of this method was Erie County's 1971 Open Space plan:

*"It is not enough to think only of conserving what we have. Conservation must be part of a larger effort to create what we want. In a time of massive change, the task must be to maintain a creative balance between the forces of conservation and the forces of development."*



*This publication above by Benedict and McMahon is a good primer on the subject of Green Infrastructure. See bibliography for a list of publications on the subject of open space planning and protection.*

Current sources of good integrated planning and conservation practice include the New York State’s Hudson River Valley Greenway approach, the Dutchess County “Greenway Connections” plan and the “Green Infrastructure” and “Smart Growth” plans gaining momentum nationwide. These planning methods advocate considering growth and conservation in relation to one another to foster a more sustainable, compact development pattern.

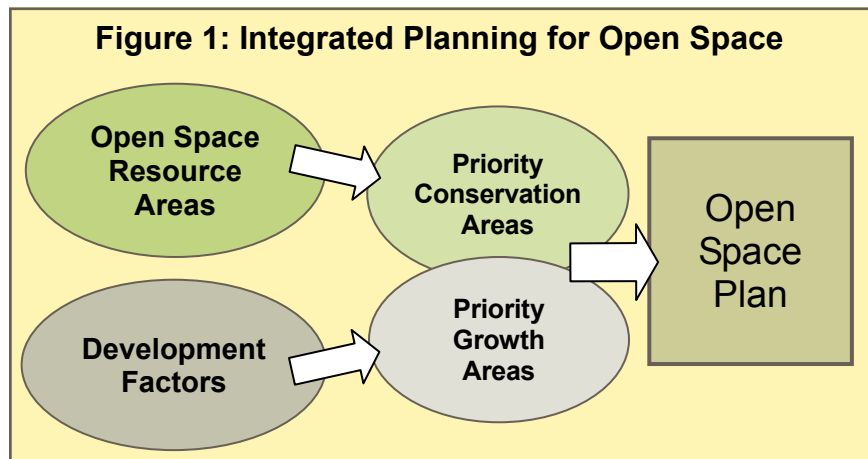


*“Greenway Connections” - the Dutchess County Greenway Compact Plan—contains valuable guidance and illustrations, like the ones above, on the subject of managing growth while protecting open space.*

## Strategy, Policy and Planning Tools

The plan seeks to accomplish open space protection through a focus on the use of a number of incentives and regulatory approaches as well as acquisition. The concepts include clustering and focused growth around downtown areas as well as maintaining the economic viability of open space uses such as agriculture and forestry. The plan seeks to address the way growth occurs as a primary means to protect open space. At the same time, it recognizes the value of acquisition of critical resource areas. To do

this, it calls for the identification of “Priority Growth Areas” and “Priority Conservation Areas” (see Figure 1) on the basis of ongoing mapping and analysis of natural resource areas and the potential for sustainable, compact development in and around existing centers.





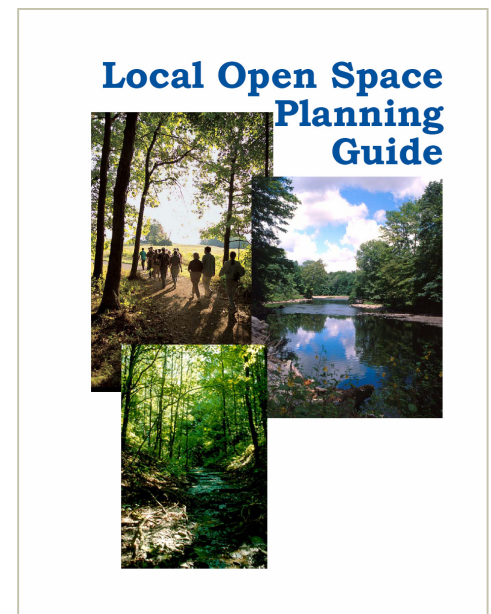
A range of planning tools and incentives are available to accomplish this. Tools combine existing policies, zoning and real estate practices, organizational and management techniques, design and construction methods, as well as legal and financial means to address the goal of protecting natural resources. There are many techniques available to localities, such as the purchase development rights (PDRs) or transfer of development rights (TDRs), zoning methods, including overlays, incentives, large lots, performance standards, and special use permits, clustering and planned unit development (PUDs). The toolbox also contains fees or special taxes that provide funds as well as critical area designations that employ additional environmental analysis and restrictions.

Where acquisition is proposed, in concurrence with the New York State Open Space Conservation Plan (2005), this plan recognizes that the county must deal fairly and openly with property owners, local governments and citizens in general on a willing seller/willing buyer basis. While the acquisition of public land and easements by the county government is a part of this strategy, it is not the focus of the recommendations of this plan.

### **Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)**

An NRI is a directory of natural resource information for a given area. It depicts (to the best of data availability) the locations and extent of various natural resources such as existing protected open space, wetlands, and agricultural land, among others.

The plan uses an NRI to integrate data from the county and local municipalities using a standard format based on the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Natural Heritage Program inventory. At the county level, the NRI is compiled with the use of state or federal level data and may not be accurate at the local level. In order to maintain an NRI for Ulster County that is as accurate as possible, data needs to be gathered at the local level as well.



*This guide offers guidance and many voluntary tools for municipalities. It was prepared jointly by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of State in collaboration with the Hudson River Valley Greenway, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. See bibliography for details.*

Local NRIs have two basic purposes:

- (1) to serve as a local planning and project review tool and
- (2) to be used as building blocks for county and regional planning as well as project assessment.

The EMC and Planning have compiled an initial NRI for Ulster County that contains a number of individual factor maps depicting each resource and its distribution; each map contains

information about the data source, data limitations, and an explanation of the map. This NRI will be constantly updated as new information becomes available. Local NRIs conducted by municipalities can be added to the county NRI using the standard format to continually refine information in the database.

This plan combines several individual NRI factor maps (see Map Book) in order to inventory the subject areas the legislature charged the plan to address:

- **Protected Open Space:** areas already legally protected (e.g., Catskill forests)
- **Water Resources:** surface, ground, watersheds, aquifers, floodplains, aquifer recharge areas
- **Working Landscapes:** agriculture, forestry, and mining
- **Landforms:** rivers, mountains, valleys, waterfalls, and scenic areas
- **Cultural and Historic Resources:** individual structures and sites, districts
- **Ecological Communities:** diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems, exceptional forest or plant communities, unique wildlife habitats, wetlands, shorelines
- **Recreation Areas:** parks (urban and rural), shorelines, fishing rights, trails

These resource areas are described in Section 3, Open Space Resources in Ulster County.

The NRI and Appendices discussed in this plan and shown in the Map Book are part of ongoing data collection programs managed by various departments in Ulster County Government.

Therefore, the information they contain is dynamic and their representation in map form is not being adopted as part of this plan. Rather, the policies for their collection, management and dissemination are the focus of this plan.



*Forest researchers looking at old growth forest.. Forest management involves several open space resource categories in this plan.*

## Planning and Development Factors

Land use patterns were analyzed - including transportation, recreation facilities, historic sites, utilities, vacant parcels, population and zoning densities, and other land use trends - to determine the potential for growth and development in the county.

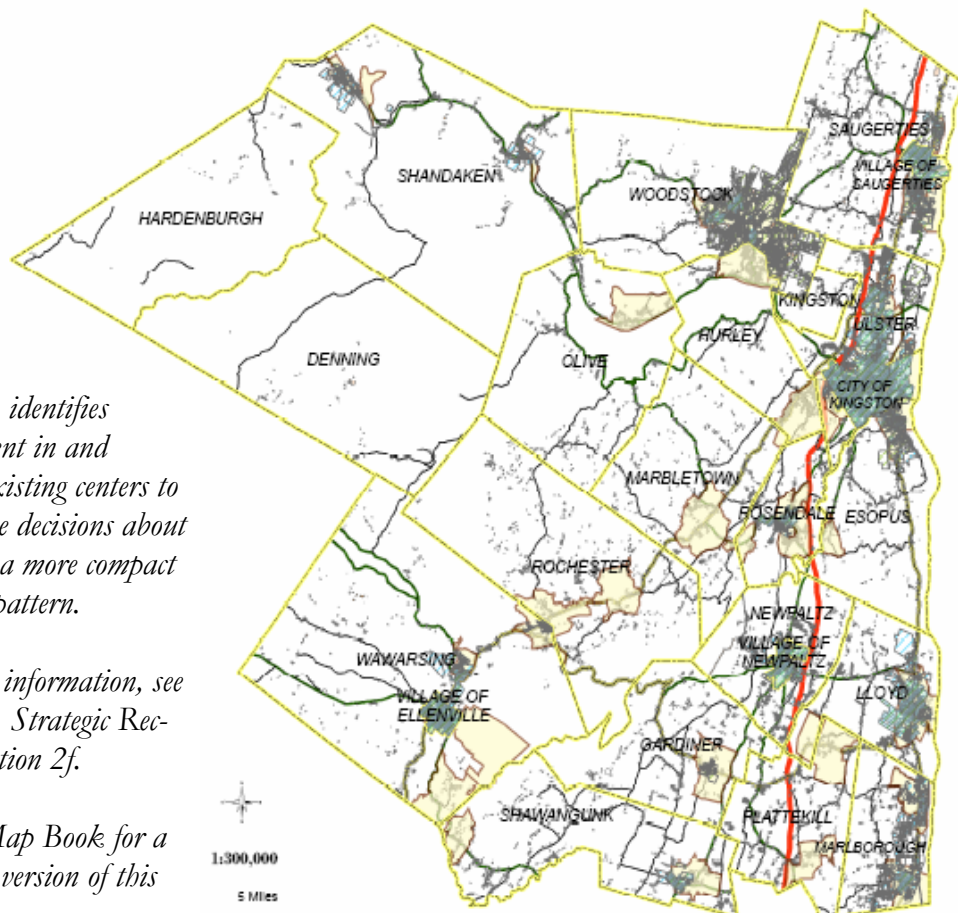
Maps and data were compiled to illustrate the following planning and development issues:

- **Development patterns:** vacant parcels, zoning densities, population densities
- **Transportation:** to identify connections between open space corridors, trails, and open space resources
- **Agricultural Districts:** regularly updated data on the certification and recertification of districts making agricultural landowners eligible for incentives and protections designed to forestall the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses
- **Soils:** for information on agricultural and development potential
- **Utilities:** water and sewer for information on growth potential
- **Development trends:** for potential development impacts of current zoning statutes, population changes

*This map identifies development in and around existing centers to help make decisions about achieving a more compact land-use pattern.*

*For more information, see Section 4, Strategic Recommendation 2f.*

*See the Map Book for a full-sized version of this map.*





C. Olney

*Volunteers doing trail work on Tanbark Trail, Shandaken.. Many open space resource protection and management activities rely on support from volunteers.*

## Stakeholder participation

Over 100 stakeholders participated in the planning process, including meetings with environmental groups, county and local officials, and other community representatives. With the help of these groups, open space resources were organized into 7 areas for the plan: water resources, working landscapes, protected open space, landforms and natural features, ecological communities (i.e., Biodiversity), historical and cultural resources, and recreation areas).

The stakeholder groups described the current resource management environment as “fragmented” and identified the need for a more systemic understanding and management of open space. When asked what the role of the county should be in open space protection, they called for coordination, leadership, funding, and making connections between layers of government (federal, state, and local), among sectors (nonprofit, public, and private), and across functional areas (land use, transportation, housing, economic development, health, education, etc.). These are reflected in the Strategic Actions in Section 4.

While protection of open space resources through purchase was discussed as an important goal, the main concern of the stakeholders was the fragmented management of open space protection. Access to recreational resources and the protection of cultural and historic resources were also named by stakeholders and integrated into the plan and Natural Resources Inventory. Stakeholders expressed a belief that the county should play a central role in developing strategies, policies, tools and technical assistance for open space resource management and protection.



Esopus Creek Conservancy

*Recreational resources are one of the seven resource areas in this plan. In addition to over 250 active recreational sites in the county, there are countless opportunities for passive recreation, boat launches, fishing, and hunting.*

## Open Space Plan Vision and Goals

### Open Space Protection Shall:

- Be founded on an understanding of natural resource limitations *and* sound planning policies.
- Be based on the needs and values of the people, places, and existing natural resources of Ulster County.
- Ensure legitimacy with the broad participation of stakeholders.
- Work closely with municipalities, as well as the private and nonprofit sectors.
- Create an ongoing collaborative effort between the Ulster County Legislature, Planning Board, EMC, Department of the Environment, Public Works, Information Services and other Ulster County departments, key stakeholder groups and other levels of government to develop decision-making and implementation plans.
- Provide ongoing guidance, monitoring, measurement, and status on progress toward achieving the vision.
- Be flexible to adjust to future circumstances, yet provide a framework of stability so that basic principles in the plan are not sacrificed.
- Be part of the larger ongoing comprehensive planning framework by balancing the need to maintain a healthy environment, thriving economy, affordable housing, and efficient mobility.
- Stimulate intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration.
- Provide a range of community design options to respond to environmental protection and varied lifestyle needs.
- Develop standards that use land resources efficiently.
- Use the best available data to guide decision making.
- Balance protection of environmental resources and community needs – and develop the complex tools needed to do so.
- Seek economic stability to be achieved through investment by a variety of interests: residential, agricultural, property owner, environmental, institutional, business community, labor, and others.
- Preserve crucial open space and transportation corridors for more compact and efficient land use pattern.

## Box 4: Tools For Open Space Conservation

There are many options available to landowners and municipalities for the protection of open space.

### Voluntary Programs

- Tax Incentive Programs
- Forest Tax Laws
- Agricultural Value Assessments
- Purchase of Development Rights
- Conservation Easements
- Federal Historic Structure Rehabilitation Tax
- Credits
- Gifts
- Fee

### Support Programs

- Agricultural Districts
- Designation Programs<sup>1</sup>
- Scenic Districts
- Scenic Byways
- National/State Registers
- Natural Landmarks

### Planning Programs and Methods

- Coastal Zone Management
- Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan
- Transportation Planning
- Local Planning
- Infrastructure development to prevent sprawl

### Protection by Fee Acquisition, Easement or Lease

- Not for Profit Organization
- Local Government
- County Government
- Federal Government
- State Government

**Note:** For additional details on these tools, see NYS Local Open Space Planning Guide (2002) at [www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/pdfs/openspaces.pdf](http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/pdfs/openspaces.pdf) (last accessed August 14, 2007)

### Land Use Regulations

#### Local Land Use

- Zoning: Overlay Districts, Large-lot Zoning, Performance Zoning, Incentive Zoning and Special Use Permits
- Site Plan Approval
- Subdivision Regulations: Cluster Development, Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), Conservation Subdivisions
- Recreation Fees, Recreational Land Dedication
- Historic Preservation
- Redevelopment
- Transfer of Development Rights
- State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) – Critical Area Designation (CEA)

#### State Administered

- Freshwater Wetlands Act
- Tidal Wetlands Act
- Coastal Erosion Hazard Area
- Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers
- Mined Land Reclamation

#### Federally Administered

- Wetlands
- Clean Water Act

#### State & Local Partnerships

- Shawangunk Mountain Scenic Byway
- Hudson River Valley Greenway

### Other Policies to Sustain Natural Resources

- Greenway Corridors
- Buffer Areas

<sup>1</sup> Though not legally binding, these designations do enhance protection.