

Watershed Agricultural Council

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

Watershed Agricultural Council

www.nycwatershed.org





Looking south from Stamford into Schoharie and Delaware Counties.

2013

was a milestone year for us as we celebrated WAC's 20th year of incorporation. Two decades ago, WAC started as a fledgling group of concerned farmers, foresters, and businessmen dealing with increased regulations stemming from the new Surface Water Treatment Rule of the Safe Drinking Water Act. Today, we're a dynamic organization dealing with nonpoint source pollution using sound agricultural and forestry best management practices, as well as a thriving land trust. Little did we know that, over time, we would set the standard, and become the national model, for surface water systems management with international interest and impli-



cations. We appreciate the magnitude of this effort, one of epic proportions put forth by many people, many organizations governmental and private, regulatory and environmental. The Watershed Agricultural Council embraces that public-private partnership between watershed farmers, foresters, and landowners and the City of New York.

Yes, we took time to celebrate this milestone on Friday November 8th, but on Monday the 11th the work continued. The need for clean potable water for New York

City will never cease. The best way to ensure that continuous supply is proven to be through successful partnerships involving many stakeholders taking into account both rural and urban economies and lifestyles.

My hope is that we have laid a strong foundation based on collaboration and mutual respect. Upon this base, I see the Watershed Agricultural Council continuing to champion the type of environment necessary to maintain a clean and pristine water supply for the City and ensure a thriving watershed community where we can live, work and play.

Fred Huneke
Chairman, Council of Directors



Board chairman Fred Huneke speaks with U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand at SUNY-Delhi.

Every Drop Counts

The ripple effect of 20 years of supporting working landscapes is clean drinking water, pristine forests, and pure food produced in the Catskill/Delaware and Croton Watersheds. We affectionately call this our “Blue & Green!”

We have infused over \$186 million into the regional economy, preserved 22,914 acres of farmland through conservation easements, have developed more than 1,000 acres of Forest Management Plans, and have worked with over 400 farms constructing water quality initiatives throughout the 2,000-square-mile watershed area in the past 20 years.

Our regional communities depend on these working landscapes and New York City residents depend on our effective delivery of our targeted water quality programs.

The Watershed Agricultural Council has a commitment to positively impact the environ-

ment and to positively impact the economy both today and tomorrow. We recognize the importance of growing, changing, and adapting our efforts.

As a snapshot of 2014, we will start a 5-year commitment to conserve an additional 10,000 acres of farm and forest, as well as pilot a new Forest Conservation Easement initiative that will focus on water-quality through working landscapes. We will roll-out a robust regional watershed education program that will span both watersheds with staff located in our Westchester County office. Finally, we will continue to grow and emphasize our regional efforts to support working landscapes and “buy local” initiatives by re-shaping our Economic Viability Program and Pure Catskill campaign.

Through our efforts and partnerships with countless individuals and organizations, we have become a regional leader and na-

tional model for watershed protection programs. However, we cannot do it alone.

I invite you to become a dedicated steward of our land, water, and food by giving to our new fundraising campaign, “Every Drop Counts.” Your donation has a ripple effect on working landscapes throughout the watershed communities.

Hilltop Hanover Farm Director Lucille Munz (at right) addresses American Farmland Trust president Andrew McElwaine and the AFT NYS Advisory Committee, of which Cashman and Huneke are members. The group talked about the importance of working landscapes to protect water quality and farmland for future generations as part of a two-farm tour in the Croton Watershed.

You can donate easily online at nycwatershed.org/donate.

Thank you for protecting our “Blue and Green!”

*Sincerely,
Craig J. Cashman
Executive Director*



Executive Director Craig Cashman presents commemorative signage to DEP Commissioner Carter Strickland (center) with Board Chairman Fred Huneke at the Delaware County Fair in August. View this, and other videos, on the Council's website.



THANK YOU FOR BEING STEWARDS OF THE LAND, WATER AND FOOD WE ALL ENJOY

THANKS TO OUR 2013 BUSINESS SPONSORS:

- Catskill Mountain Forestry Services
- Energy Services Provider
- Farm Credit East ACA
- Lost Lake, Inc.
- Natural Resource Defense Council
- Robinson Excavating
- Rettew Engineering

HELP US PROTECT FARM AND FOREST LANDS IN 2014
nycwatershed.org/donate

We also thank these individuals for their shared vision: John & Tara Collins • Chris & Judy DiBenedetto • Richard Giles & Holley White • Eric A. Goldstein • David Haight
• Marilyn & Fred Huneke • Randy & Lucci Kelly • Linda Kruhmin • Collin & Erica Miller • Marc & Carrie Neeves • Art & Linda Reed
• Steve & Sylvia Reed • John Riedl • Heather Ross • Kenneth & Elaine Smith • Constance Snyder • John & Beth Verhoeven • Pamela Young

Over the last 20 years, the City of New York and federal programs have invested over \$186 million in clean water projects and farmland protection in the New York City Watershed. The Council has funneled much of this money directly into local watershed communities through salaries, construction projects, and direct marketing support for farm and wood-products businesses.

FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL EXPENSE	FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL EXPENSE
2013	\$11,605,065	2002	\$9,794,663
2012	\$12,840,967	2001	\$6,574,732
2011	\$15,659,051	2000	\$6,012,996
2010	\$12,160,629	1999	\$6,833,454
2009	\$12,269,278	1998	\$6,653,919
2008	\$10,799,923	1997	\$5,286,390
2007	\$13,938,798	1996	\$5,086,422
2006	\$11,927,985	1995	\$2,629,129
2005	\$15,457,392	TOTAL	\$186,187,364
2004	\$10,641,429		
2003	\$10,015,142		

REVENUES JULY 1, 2012 – JUNE 30, 2013

Federal	\$654,039	(5.6%)
Donated Services	\$294,770	(2.6%)
Foundations & Other Grants	\$0	(0.0%)
Interest and Gain/loss of Asset Sale	\$260	(0.0%)
NYC DEP	\$10,655,996	(91.8%)
Total	\$11,605,065	(100.0%)

In 2013, the Council and City of New York renewed their contract relationships for another four years. Between 2014–2019, we will invest \$63 million (\$34 million dedicated to the Agricultural and Forestry Programs and \$29 million in the Easement Program) into the region, bringing the 25-year total investment closer to \$250 million in watershed protection programs.

EXPENDITURES JULY 1, 2012 – JUNE 30, 2013

Forestry Program	\$1,246,581	(10.7%)
Easement Program	\$2,859,651	(24.6%)
East of Hudson Program (Croton Watershed)	\$1,039,297	(8.9%)
Agricultural Program		
BMP Implementation & Construction	\$3,538,754	(30.4%)
Nutrient Management Planning	\$711,975	(6.1%)
Farm to Market/Outreach Programs	\$465,197	(4.0%)
Program Administration & Depreciation	\$1,491,427	(12.8%)
Donated Services	\$294,770	(2.5%)
Total	\$11,647,652	(100.0%)



Laura Phoenix signed her Conservation Easement with the Watershed Agricultural Council in early 2011. Her 55-acre property is home to Country Meadows Equine, a boarding, training and lesson facility. She purchased the property in 1996 and dreamed that the land would stay out of development,

making it an easy decision to sign a Conservation Easement with WAC. "There were two reasons that we signed a Conservation Easement: 1) to protect the land from development and 2) to help us financially. The easement process took just over a year. Staff were honest, easy to work with, and made the

process clear. My suggestions to anyone who is looking to sign a Conservation Easement are to know your plans for your property and to plan your easement for the future."

—Laura Phoenix

8 Conservation Easements


"The sale of our Conservation Easement to the Watershed Agricultural Council provided us with the fiscal means to invest in our farm, retirement, children, and grandchildren. The Council's Easement Committee consists of farmers, so there is a mutual understanding between the farmer and the Committee on the importance of farming

as a way of life. It has been a welcome relief that the City of New York recognizes the importance of farming as a livelihood through its continued support to all the programs offered within the Watershed Agricultural Council. The easement provided a means for us to preserve our heritage and to perpetuate our conservation

principles which have always been a part of our family."

—Linda and Gerald E. DeWitt
(with granddaughter Annie)



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape in Delaware County. A large, irregularly shaped pond is the central feature, surrounded by green fields and dense forests. A dirt road curves along the left side of the pond. In the background, there are several farm buildings and more forested areas. The overall scene depicts a working farm with a focus on water quality protection.

A conservation easement on this Delaware County beef and hay operation protects water quality leading into the Pepacton Reservoir.

In 2013, the Easement Program spent \$1,411,014 on conservation easements with 3 landowners on 560.5 acres. As of December 31, 2013, the Council currently holds 22,914 acres with 151 landowners, making it one of the largest private land trusts in New York State. To date, the Easement Program has spent \$41 million protecting working landscapes, family farms, and regional economics of farmers and forest professionals who depend on watershed lands for their livelihoods.

Accomplishments of the Last 20 Years

ECONOMIC DRIVERS

- A strong local economy based on clean water and working landscapes.
- NYC DEP's investment in WAC's programs over last 20 years = \$186M (Multiplier Effect @3x = \$528M).
- Watershed protection has blossomed into a water quality management industry where WAC employs 50 people directly, 25 through agency contracts, and hundreds more through third-party construction contracts.
- The region's future economy depends on strong farm, food and wood product businesses.
- Pure Catskills marketing campaign enters its 11th year.
- Pure Catskills Marketplace, an online store for regional products, to launch Fall 2014.

CLEAN WATER CHAMPION

- Helped DEP to sustain its Filtration Avoidance Determination for two decades.
- Continued working with DEP to administer and implement watershed protection programs.
- WAC as champion of watershed, foodshed and viewshed.
- Program success due to voluntarily engagement, strong local leadership and consistent funding and support from New York City Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Forest Service, the U.S.D.A. and other granting sources like New York State Agriculture & Markets.
- Long-standing relationships with private landowners and regional partners.

FARM & WOODLAND PROTECTOR

- Over 22,000 acres in conservation easements protecting working landscapes and clean drinking water for nine million New Yorkers.
- New pilot program for forestry easements in 2014.
- Council is one of New York State's largest land conservation agencies and largest agricultural Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program statewide.
- International model for Payment for Environmental Services (PES) for watershed management.
- Successful solution through public-private partnerships.

The Watershed Agricultural Council celebrated its 20th anniversary milestone in November with an award presentation honoring five watershed leaders in agriculture, forestry and land conservation. Held at the SUNY-Delhi Farrell Hall, the evening balanced historical recounts from Eric Goldstein, NYC Environment Director at the Natural Resource Defense Council, and NYC DEP Deputy Commissioner Paul Rush with award presenter viewpoints and award recipient anecdotes. With the help of Vecc Videography, the Council chronicled many perspectives about its work over the last two decades in a short-form documentary which can be viewed at nycwatershed.org.



Jan Surface, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (at left) and Tom Snow, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (at right) congratulate Fred Huneke (center) on receiving the Watershed Steward Award that honors a vocal advocate of the Council's mission of protecting water quality, embracing land conservation, and promoting working landscapes in agriculture and forestry.

It is my pleasure to help sponsor this event since I have worked with WAC's farming and forestry programs almost from the beginning. The programs have been, and continue to be, beneficial to me along with a multitude of other landowners in the NYC watershed. My donation is not for publicity but to show my gratitude for the great programs and services WAC provides for us living and working in the NYC Watershed.

—Randy & Lucci Kelly

Catskill Mountain Forestry Services, Roxbury

It's been a rewarding and challenging 20 years of partnering with the Watershed Agricultural Council to keep agricultural businesses environmentally sound and economically viable in the New York City Watershed. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County appreciates the work of a talented team of agencies and staff that want farms to prosper, and manage the land and water resources well for the county, region and New York City.

—Jeanne M. Darling

Executive Director, CCE-Delaware County



Dr. Ken Jaffe of Slope Farms, Meredith, accepted the Pure Catskills Business Award presented by American Farmland Trust's NYS Director, David Haight. Richard Giles of Lucky Dog Organic Farm, Hamden, also received the award designed to publicly recognize strong business leaders for their achievements in natural resource, regionally based businesses. A complete video of the event and the individual acceptance speeches can be found online, along with an overview of each award recipient under "Success Stories," at nycwatershed.org.

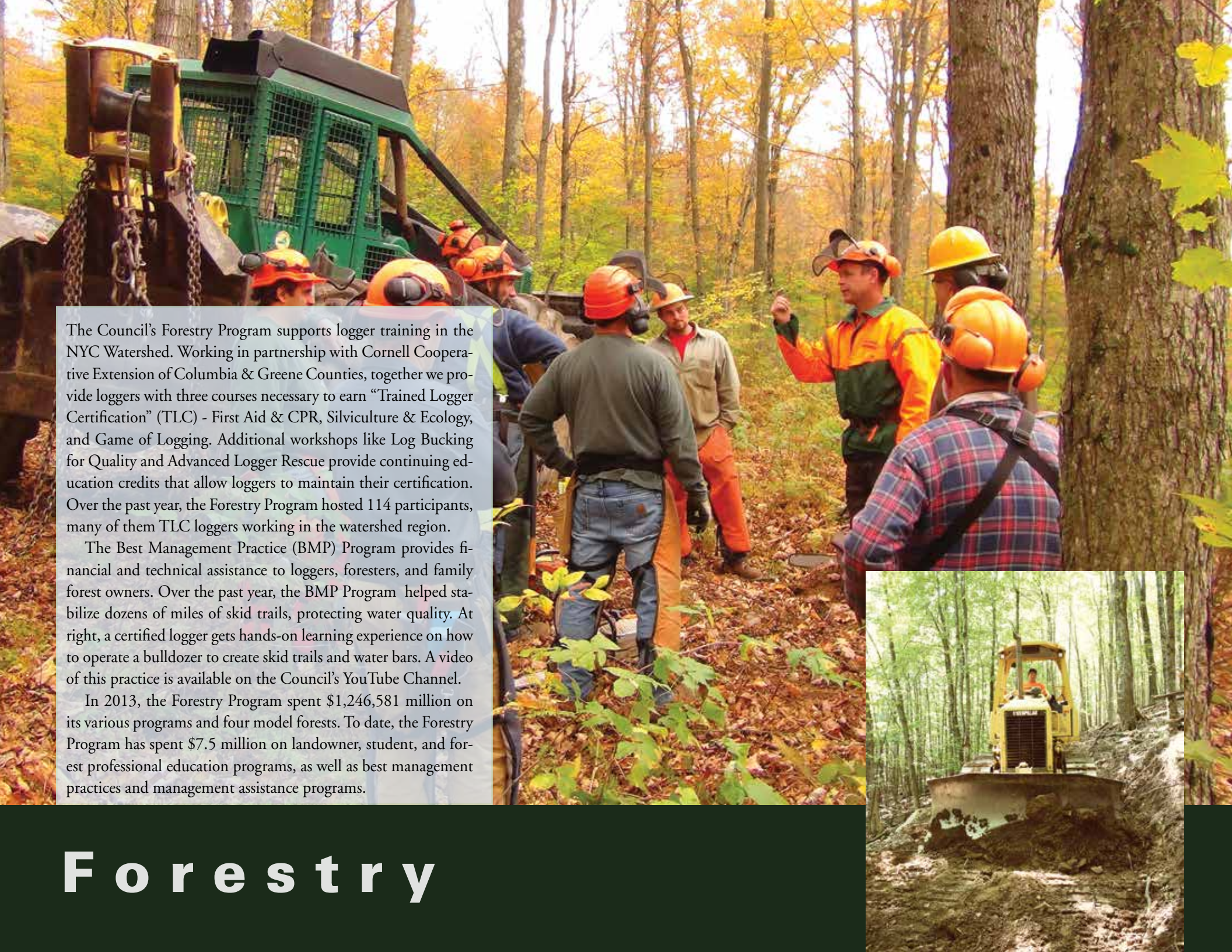
The Darling Family of Dar-View Farm, Delancey, accepted the first-ever Watershed Agricultural Program Award. The 7th-generation family farm has been a working dairy since 1849. The award publicly recognizes a regional farmer participating in the Watershed Agricultural Program for achievements in sustainable agriculture, strong business contribution, and clean water efforts. The Council's first board chairman, Richard Coombe of Thunder View Farm, presented the award and recounted many struggles and challenges the Council faced early on.



Dr. Dan Palm of Stamford (at left) became the ninth recipient of the Karl Connell Award which recognizes individuals for their wisdom, guidance, and leadership in promoting forest stewardship and protecting water quality. Marcus Phelps, the 2004 award recipient, presented the award to Palm's niece, Katie.



The Council's 20th celebration brought out friends old and new. DEP Land Acquisition Project Manager Charlie Laing (at left) catches up with NYS Assemblyman Pete Lopez of District 112 (center) and DEP Chief, Natural Resources Division Ira Stern (at right).



The Council's Forestry Program supports logger training in the NYC Watershed. Working in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia & Greene Counties, together we provide loggers with three courses necessary to earn "Trained Logger Certification" (TLC) - First Aid & CPR, Silviculture & Ecology, and Game of Logging. Additional workshops like Log Bucking for Quality and Advanced Logger Rescue provide continuing education credits that allow loggers to maintain their certification. Over the past year, the Forestry Program hosted 114 participants, many of them TLC loggers working in the watershed region.

The Best Management Practice (BMP) Program provides financial and technical assistance to loggers, foresters, and family forest owners. Over the past year, the BMP Program helped stabilize dozens of miles of skid trails, protecting water quality. At right, a certified logger gets hands-on learning experience on how to operate a bulldozer to create skid trails and water bars. A video of this practice is available on the Council's YouTube Channel.

In 2013, the Forestry Program spent \$1,246,581 million on its various programs and four model forests. To date, the Forestry Program has spent \$7.5 million on landowner, student, and forest professional education programs, as well as best management practices and management assistance programs.

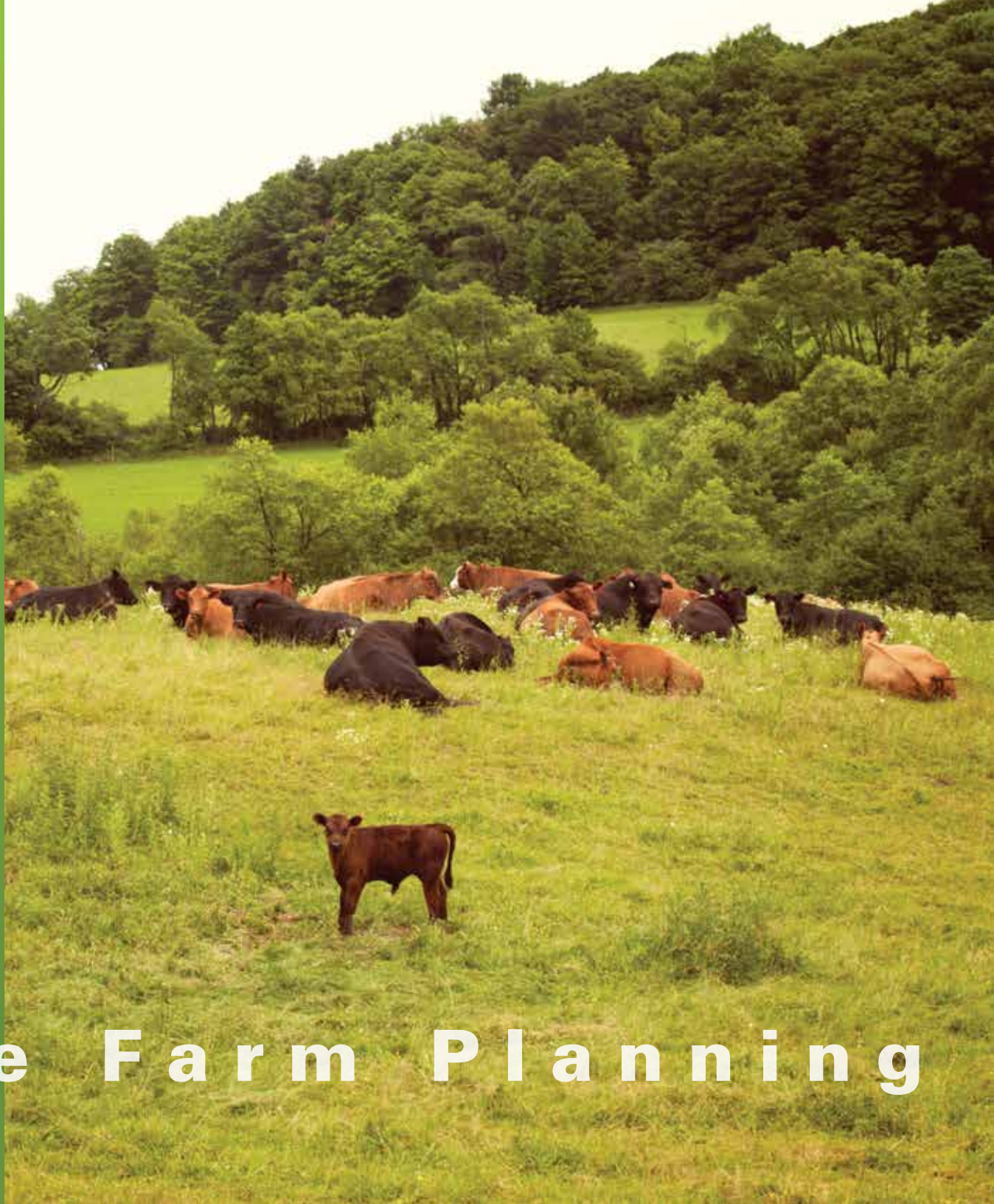
Forestry





"My farm has greatly benefitted from the improvements made possible by the Watershed Agricultural Program. Continuous-flow troughs are a godsend in winter with a herd of horses. Good drainage helps to keep everything more manageable as well as better looking!"

—Heleen Heyning
West Wind Farm



Whole Farm Planning



The Watershed Agricultural Program recently installed a concrete pad and roof over the Byebrook Farm calf hutch area (at left) in Bloomville, Delaware County. Not only does this roof help prevent calf manure run-off into the nearby ditch, its translucent panels allow light to shine on growing youngstock. On rainy and snowy days, the bedding stays dry, grain stays fresh, and the calf caretaker is protected from the elements. The roof also provides shade protection and cooler temps on hot summer days. The concrete pad makes for easy manure clean up and disposal, too.



At the Sherwood Dairy in Delhi, muddy, wet conditions make for an unhealthy environment for the cows, farmer, and water quality (above). After installing a covered barnyard and additional drainage and diversions (at left), the farm operation has clean, happy, healthy cows, dry feed, and clean run-off water to the Cannonsville Reservoir downstream.

This year at Akinridge Farm in Dutchess County, the Council installed nearly one mile of fencing to exclude horses from a pond and stream corridor. The solar-powered watering system is the third of its kind installed by the East of Hudson Program. Solar panels are often a more cost-effective way to power a well pump than delivering conventional electricity to remote areas. Horses can find water at 1 of 3 troughs that the Council installed as part of a 3-pasture rotational grazing system developed in an area that used to be one 11-acre field. The farm cares for 100-plus Thoroughbreds rescued from auction, horses that would otherwise be destined for slaughter. To adopt a horse, visit akindalehorserescue.org for more information.

In 2013, the Agricultural Program spent \$4,250,729 on its farmer-focused, land conservation programs in the Catskill/Delaware Watersheds. The East of Hudson Program spent \$1,039,297 last year in the Croton Watershed.

To date, the Agricultural Program has spent \$85 million on farmer education, on-the-ground construction and on-farm best management practices, technical assistance, and economic viability programs. An additional \$7.6 million has been spent at Croton Watershed farm operations.





Greene County Council of the Arts cultivated local food eaters through its Sprouts Program this summer. The program, sponsored in part by Pure Catskills, helped children understand where their food comes from and what it means to eat healthy, local foods.

Pure Catskills, CADI and SUNY-Delhi fielded a Big Apple Crunch Team last October. Nearly 300 students, faculty and supporters bit into one of five apple varieties supplied by Pure Catskills member Middlefield Orchards of Cooperstown. The Big Apple Crunch, hosted by Grow NYC, set a world record of one million people participating in an apple-crunching event.



Pure Catskills made lots of friends when it teamed up its member munchies with Brooklyn Brewery's libations at the *Edible Hudson Valley* magazine's get-together at the Peekamoose Restaurant and Tap Room, Big Indian.

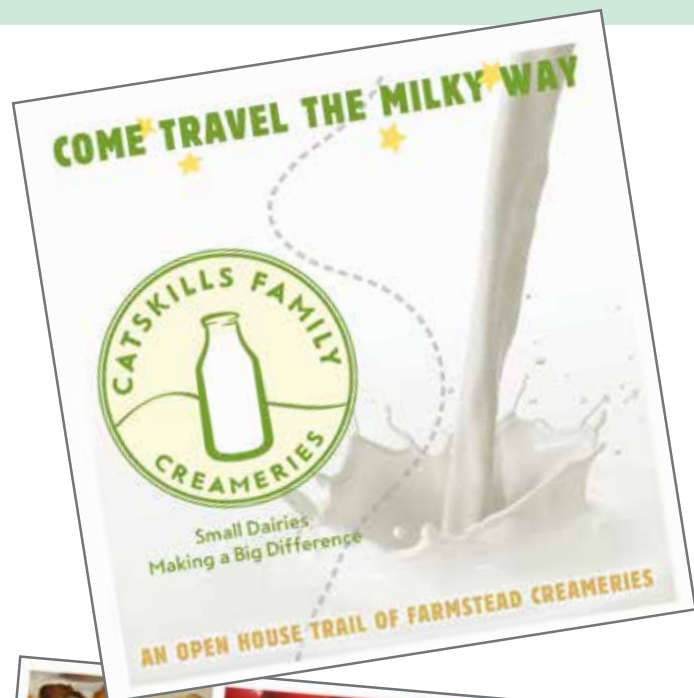
At Channery Hill Farm, farmers share the tips and tricks of preserving during a Catskills CRAFT Field Day. Over 100 farmers and food system advocates attended CRAFT meetings in 2013. The monthly meet-ups create peer-to-peer mentoring opportunities that build a lasting farming community bonded through hands-on learning.



Farm to Market

18

The Farm to Market Program collaborated on two key economic initiatives in 2013. With the Center for Agricultural Development and Entrepreneurship, the program provided marketing and start-up support to the newly created Lucky Dog Local Food Hub. The Hub provides transportation services for Catskill products delivered to New York City wholesale buyers. A second initiative, Catskills Family Creameries, brought together eight regional farmstead dairy producers, all Pure Catskills members. The value-added dairy group is exploring collaborative marketing, distribution and educational activities like the “Come Travel the Milky Way” open house trail that attracted over 3,000 people to the region last July. These small family farms produce gelato, butter, yogurt, soft cow’s and goat’s milk cheeses, hard cow’s cheese and fluid milk. Find out more at catskillsfamily-creameries.com.




LUCKY DOG LOCAL FOOD HUB


They Want It. We Have It. Lucky Dog will get it there.

OPPORTUNITY
New York City buyers are looking for Upstate products. If you are a small to mid-size farmer looking to grow your operation and expand into new markets contact the buyers from the list below. The Lucky Dog Local food hub will transport your products to the city.

Explore your opportunities with the Lucky Dog Local Food Hub.



To date, the Farm to Market and Outreach Programs have spent \$4.5 million connecting producers and consumers. In 2013, the combined marketing outreach totaled \$221,022.



This 2013 Annual Report is a publication of the Watershed Agricultural Council, a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to promote the economic viability of agriculture and forestry, the protection of water quality, and conservation of working landscapes through strong local leadership and sustainable public-private partnerships. 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 environmentally friendly paper.

Cover photo: Derrick Kelly
p2 Ryan Naatz
p3 Tara Collins
p5 Carrie Davis, Tara Collins
p7 Cynthia Dunne
p8 MacKenzie Waro & John VanBenschoten
p9 MacKenzie Waro & John VanBenschoten
p11 Tara Collins
p12 Tara Collins, Darling Family, Drew Harty, Heather Hilson
p13 Heather Hilson
p14 Cynthia Dunne
p15 Watershed Agricultural Program Staff
p16 Scott Boyce
p17 Kristen Morley, Tara Collins, Greene County Council of the Arts, Eleanor Blakeslee-Drain
p18 Andy Ryan
p19 Connor Young & Rob Birdsall

This farm's easement protects working landscapes around streams entering the Cannonsville Reservoir.



NONPROFIT
US POSTAGE PAID
WALTON NY
PERMIT NO. 250

33195 State Highway 10, Walton, NY 13856



Follow us on Facebook

