

To: The Ancram Town Board
From: The Ancram Conservation Advisory Council
Subject: CAC Year End Report for 2015
Date: December 30, 2015

2015 Achievements and Activities

1. Ancram Natural Resources Conservation Plan (NRCP)
 - Completed the Ancram Natural Resources Conservation Plan – 50 copies purchased and donated to community members and to our grantors. NRCP posted on the Ancram website. Kim presented to the Town Board in early 2015.
 - Managed project finances and payments for Hudsonia’s consultant work.
 - Accepted Lynne Perrella’s generous offer to do an exhibit on the NRCP. Provided general input on the exhibit and presentation in preparation for the February 21, 2016 event.
 - Ancram was included as an exemplary community in terms of their NRCP document in the book, *Creating A Natural Resource Inventory: A Guide for Communities in the Hudson River Estuary Watershed 2014*.

2. Culvert Replacement Grant
 - Reviewed Andrew Meyer’s culvert assessment study and attended the community presentation.
 - Provided supporting letter with grant expressing our town’s commitment to environmental stewardship, our success in achieving Natural Resource Conservation goals and our commitment to work on the proposed project.
 - Ancram wins \$220,000 for culvert replacement – in large part because of the reputation and success of an active CAC. (With major thanks to Colleen’s brilliant grant writing!)
 - Erin Robertson served as CAC representative on the Culvert Committee.
 - Reviewed 3 engineering proposals and recommended an engineer with environmental qualifications based upon the environmental requirements of the grant.

3. Biodiversity Map
 - Hudsonia completed a preliminary mapping for the entire town.
 - CAC starts to chip away at the 454 specific sites that Hudsonia identifies as needing to be assessed in the field.
 - Raised over \$600 in private donations to Hudsonia for the Ancram biodiversity map.

4. Regional Work
 - Participated in the CAC Columbia County Roundtables providing leadership to other new CACs.
 - CAC asked the Town Board to vote on and pass a Climate Change Resolution, closely modeled on the Cooperstown Climate Change Resolution and endorsed by our Rep.

Chris Gibson. The Town Board passed a Climate Change Resolution for Ancram on May 21, 2015. CAC writes letter to Chris Gibson letting him know that Ancram passed the Climate Change Resolution.

- Jamie presented the work of Ancram's CAC at a regional Greene and Columbia County meeting for conservation advisory councils in Catskill, New York.

5. Public Environmental Educational Memos and Community Help

- Sent out Hudson River Estuary and DEC memo on stream buffers and arranged for hard copies to be given out at Town Hall.
- In January prepared and distributed memo on "Invasive Plants Awareness in Ancram."
- In April updated and sent memo to public on "ALTERNATIVES TO BURNING BRUSH: SPRING BAN IS ON!"
- As per citizen's request in September, prepared and sent out memo "New Glyphosate Cancer-Link Warnings for Homeowners."
- In November, prepared and sent to Art for circulation "New Glyphosate Problems for Farmers."
- Provided information about special habitats for Long Lake Community's Fall newsletter.
- Provided information on over-wintering animals and their habitats for Long Lake Community's Winter newsletter.
- At the request of Jerry Marcus, went to his property to identify potential hog weed – plant identified as wild lettuce.
- Prepared and sent out in advance questions on environmental stances to candidates for Ancram public office and participated in the Meet the Candidates session asking questions about opportunities for environmental conservation in Ancram.
- Provided major participation in the Ancram Kids Camp in terms of organizing sessions on environmental education. Jane Meigs provided session on the special conservation areas of Ancram and maps of the NRCP, Choral reviewed numerous environmental educational films and provided list of appropriate films to the Camp director. Anne Rader provided 2 sessions on birds, Colleen Lutz a session on aquatic habitats and Kim Tripp led a plant id field trip to Old Croken. Barbara Docktor took photographs of Camp for the NRCP upcoming exhibit.

6. Prepared these recommendations and input to the Ancram Town Board:

- As per Art Bassin's request, provided information on LED lighting alternatives. Kim Tripp serves on a newly formed LED committee.
- Reviewed with Art Bassin and Gerry Fultz how Ancram might use the potential sewer grant.
- Recommend delayed mowing at the Town Hall property. (Field mowed for Helicopter landing).

7. CAC ongoing Training

- Requested and received grant money from New York State DEC to cover the costs for a ½-day training in biodiversity assessment with Hudsonia. Long Lake community generously offered their land as a training location in exchange for sharing our plant information. Participants included David, Jane, Hillsdale CAC members, Jamie, Choral, and Kim.
- Colleen Lutz gives CAC training on Hudson Valley invasives and citizens effort to iMap invasives.

PLANS FOR 2016

- Prepare for presentation/opening of the NRCP exhibit on February 21, 2016.
- Ongoing advisory role for Town Board, Planning Board, and the public on environmental issues and concerns.
- Biodiversity map – continue our work visiting the 454 sites that Hudsonia identified as requiring confirmation of the habitat type.
- Continue to implement recommendations of the Natural Resource Conservation Plan.
- Improve CAC's role as advisors to the Planning Board on applications with environmental concerns.
- Develop recommendation papers on various subjects including reducing use of lawn chemicals.
- Continue to provide information to public about the importance of biodiversity assessment and mapping.
- Provide information to the Town Board and the community on the Climate Smart Community Program and help Ancram become a Climate Smart Community to help educate the community about climate change issues and to put Ancram in a better position to benefit from climate change programs and funds.
- As requested, meet with CLC to provide our recommendations on county-wide public environmental educational needs for other Conservation Advisory Councils.
- As per request of Roe Jan Library, provide environmental educational program at the library in concert with the Copake and Hillsdale CACs.