Save the date! Community Forum on Wildlife Pathways will take place April 26th at BIRE's Water Ecology Center

Mark your calendars for our annual Community Forum! This year's forum—Keeping Nature Connected: Building Wildlife Pathways in the Highlands—will take place Sunday, April 26th from 1-4pm at Clarkson University's Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries Water Ecology Center at Denning's Point State Park (199 Dennings Ave, Beacon, NY).

Come learn why keeping our lands and waters connected is so important—for us and for our wildlife—and how you can help in these conservation efforts. More information on the forum and early-bird registration is available on our website.

Girl Scouts to lead cleanup at Nelsonville Preserve on April 25th
April will be a busy month! We are partnering again with the Hudson Highlands Girl Scouts to host an invasive species removal day at Nelsonville Preserve as their annual Earth Day community service event, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 25th. The Preserve, which is owned by the Village of Nelsonville and protected by the Open Space Institute, has always been local treasure cherished by many in our community.

Please note the event is pending approval of the Nelsonville Village Board at their monthly meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 18th at 7:30pm at the Nelsonville courthouse. Please plan to attend and show your support!

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**We heard you! Granite Mountain Preserve trails to be reblazed**

We are thrilled to have had so many hikers visit Granite Mountain Preserve since the new trail system opened this past fall. Thanks to your feedback, we are updating the existing trail blaze colors to create three same-color loops, which should be more hiker-friendly. The changes will be made this upcoming weekend, thanks to a group of intrepid Boy Scouts and volunteers (let us know if you are interested in joining them!).
We look forward to sharing a new print and digital trail map early next week. In the meantime, please recycle any old trail maps you may have.

Connect with nature using iNaturalist

We've teamed up with the Putnam Valley Free Library to offer a training on the popular nature apps iNaturalist and kid-friendly Seek. The workshop will take place Thursday, February 27th, from 4-5:30pm in the Library's community room. Come learn how to capture and share your nature observations, all while contributing to community science! We're also planning a series of iNaturalist hikes on Granite Mountain over the summer, during which you'll be able to put your new skills to use.

Thank you for caring about our water!

Thanks to those of you that completed the Philipstown-Cold Spring Water Impact Survey. We had a tremendous response, and it’s clear that you care about ensuring clean water for our community as much as we do. We look forward to sharing the results of the survey and more updates as we work to formalize a Water Protection Coalition over the coming months.

In the meantime, please get in touch if you'd like to get more involved with our water work. We have a few water-related workshops and convenings in the works, and we'll have water quality monitoring volunteer opportunities available later this year.

The Clean Water Initiative is funded by a Conservation Catalyst grant from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program, a partnership between the Land Trust Alliance and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Join the Pollinator Pathway in Philipstown
The Philipstown Garden Club has teamed up with local conservation organizations, including HHLT, to launch a Philipstown Pollinator Pathway initiative to encourage residents and neighbors to establish pollinator-friendly habitats in their gardens.

PGC will host a launch event—Gardening for the Birds and Bees: Toward a New American Gardening Tradition—on Sunday, March 1st from 1-3pm at the Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison. The event will include a lecture by Kim Eierman, author of "The Pollinator Victory Garden: From Home Gardening to Pollinator Pathways" and workshops led by the PGC Horticulture Team and Master Gardeners. The event is free and open to the public, with no advance registration required. We hope you'll attend to learn how you can join the Pollinator Pathway!

Learn how birds will be affected by climate change—and how we can help—this weekend

The Putnam Highlands Audubon Society and Philipstown Garden Club are presenting "Survival by Degrees" this upcoming Sunday, February 9th from 2-4pm at the Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison, with featured speaker Hannah Waters, Senior Associate Editor for Climate Change at Audubon. Hannah will share findings from the new Audubon study "Survival By Degrees: 389 Bird Species on the Brink"
More news on the State Parks expansion across the Highlands

Following Governor Cuomo's **exciting news** that New York State will preserve 4,000 additional acres of parkland in the mid-Hudson Valley this year, our Executive Director, Michelle Smith, was interviewed on **WAMC Northeast Public Radio** about our **partnership with State Parks** to conserve 150-acres in Putnam Valley that will expand Fahnestock State Park (see map below). Listen to learn more about what this expansion means for our region and why connecting conserved lands is so important.

Michelle was also interviewed in **The Highlands Current** and The Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership's **"Beyond the Boundary"** publication about the expansion.

![Map of Hudson Highlands Land Trust Addition to State Parks in Putnam Valley](image.jpg)

Blooming Grove develops Community Preservation Plan
Building on their recently completed Open Space Inventory (which was developed as part of the Cornwall-Blooming Natural Heritage Project, in partnership with us and the Orange County Land Trust), Blooming Grove has proposed a Community Preservation Plan to preserve priority lands in the town. We applaud the town for taking swift action to protect their open space, as less than 4% of their land is currently conserved. The draft plan was presented during a public hearing earlier this week. Read more in the Times Herald-Record.

HHLT protects the Hudson Highlands for all of us. You make it all possible. Thank you for your support!

DONATE NOW

The Hudson Highlands Land Trust protects and preserves the natural resources, rural character and scenic beauty of the Hudson Highlands.

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