



# Columbia County Trails Conference

Columbia-Greene Community College  
April 2, 2011

Conference Host:

**Columbia Land Conservancy**

Partnering Sponsor:

**Hudson River Valley Greenway**

Co-Sponsors:

**National Park Service – Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance**

**New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation**

**Parks & Trails New York**

With Special Thanks to:

Mark A. Castiglione, Acting Executive Director, Hudson River Valley Greenway

Scott Keller, Trails and Special Projects Director, Hudson River Valley Greenway

Elizabeth Campochiaro, Trails Coordinator, Hudson River Valley Greenway

Karl A. Beard, National Park Service-Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance

Nancy Stoner, Trails Planner, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Robin Dropkin, Executive Director, Parks & Trails New York

And

**Columbia-Greene Community College**

# Conference Agenda

9:00 - 9:30 a.m.                      Registration & Morning Refreshments – Exhibit Area

## Morning Session – Room 614 - Saland Forum

9:30 - 9:45 a.m.                      Welcome & Introductions:  
Ellen Jouret-Epstein, Community Projects Manager/CLC  
Peter R. Paden, Executive Director/CLC  
Karl A. Beard, NY Coordinator, National Park Service-  
Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance

9:45 -10:15 a.m.                      Keynote Speaker: Jeff Olson, Alta Planning  
**“The Future is a Bicycle”**  
Successful trail and greenway projects from around the world, the United States and New York State, and the social and cultural trends that are driving them. With visionary and real-world solutions for Columbia County communities.  
**Jeff Olson**, an architect and planner, is the east coast principal of Alta Planning and Design based in Saratoga Springs, New York. He has contributed to many local, state, national and international bikeway, pedestrian and trail projects. In the 1990’s, Jeff directed the national Millennium Trails Program and was previously the statewide Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator for New York State Department of Transportation.

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## Conference Agenda (cont'd)

10:20 -11:20 a.m.

**Regional Trails Panel:** Presentations from established trail networks from across the Hudson Valley region.

**Karl Beard, National Park Service/RTCA, Moderator**

**Julie Stokes, Board Member, Saratoga PLAN**

**“A County-wide Trails Strategy”**

The vision for a Saratoga County-wide trail system began with just two-people in the 1980's. From that grass-roots beginning, a local land trust, municipalities and an *ad hoc* “heritage trails” group obtained funding to create the county's first major rail-trail conversion that set the stage for a comprehensive County Trails Initiative spearheaded by Saratoga PLAN.

**Ruth Elwell, President, Walkill Valley Rail Trail**

**“Public-Private Partnerships: Advantages, Challenges, Successes”**

When Conrail was selling the old Walkill Valley Railroad right-of-way in 1983, municipal officials and citizens advocated to acquire the rail bed and transform it as a linear park. The Walkill Valley Rail Trail Association was incorporated in 1991 and the 12.2 mile trail officially opened in 1993. It is now being doubled and will ultimately traverse five municipalities.

**Marlene Bissell, President, Hudson Crossing Park**

**“Intermunicipal Cooperation”**

Community trail systems can be achieved with environmental responsibility *and* economic revitalization. This is the mission of Hudson Crossing Park, which is part of the Champlain Canalway Trail, and Marlene will share strategies to encourage intermunicipal trail development and community support – including patience, perseverance and positive energy!

## Conference Agenda (cont'd)

11:25 -11:55 a.m.

**Columbia County Trails Update:** Recent developments with Columbia County's two major trail initiatives.

### **Harlem Valley Rail Trail (HVRT), Columbia County.**

Citizens in the Towns of Copake and Hillsdale are working together to open more segments of the Harlem Valley Rail Trail in Columbia County.

**Lenny Collins, HVRTA Board** is a seven-year member of the board and Columbia County Chair. He is a member of the Kinderhook Trail Committee, Vice-President of the Friends of Kinderhook Trails, and a hiker, runner, cross-country skier and cyclist.

**Dan Haas, HVRTA Board** has been involved with HVRTA for 22-years and is past President and current Vice-Chairman of the board. A resident of Copake, he serves on the town Comprehensive Plan and Conservation Resources committees. Dan is a writer and special education teacher.

**Tom Carty, Hillsdale Comprehensive Plan Chair**, is working with local residents to extend the HVRT through the Hillsdale Hamlet. He currently oversees five town subcommittees and has worked on projects ranging from workforce housing to the recently completed Hamlet Plan, including State and National historic designations.

**Kinderhook-Stuyvesant-Stockport Intermunicipal Trail.** A multi-year effort to establish a mixed-use trail on a National Grid transmission corridor in the Town of Kinderhook has expanded to include the Towns of Stuyvesant and Stockport.

**Mike Kipp, Deputy Supervisor, Town of Kinderhook**, has been the town board liaison to the Kinderhook Trail Committee for three years. He has overseen its expansion into an intermunicipal effort and played a key role in working with all stakeholders. Mike is a cyclist, runner, walker and cross-country skier.

## Conference Agenda (cont'd)

- 11:25 -11:55 a.m.                      **Columbia County Trails Update (cont'd)**
- Sean Cummings, Town of Stuyvesant Trails Committee**, helped establish the committee to work on a town-wide trail network that builds on Stuyvesant's historic and natural riches, including their section of the intermunicipal trail. Sean is a planning board member, and a runner, walker, and birder.
- Ron Rich, Stockport Trails Committee**, established the committee in 2009 and serves as Chair. He is past chair of the town planning board. In addition to the committee's work on the intermunicipal trail, members are working with CLC and Scenic Hudson to establish a 1.6 mile connector trail between Scenic Hudson's Harrier Hill Park in Stockport and the Greenport Conservation Area, managed by CLC for the Open Space Institute. Ron is a runner and hiker.
- 12:00 -12:30 p.m.                      **Lunch Break – Room 611/612**
- 12:30 -1:00 p.m.                      **Poster Session – Exhibit Area**
- 1:05 -2:40 p.m.                      **Countywide Trails Visioning Session:** Breakout room assignments are by Letter, noted on each name tag.  
**Groups A,B,C,D – Room 611/612**  
**Group E -- Room 614 - Saland Forum**  
**Group F -- Room 502, Art Center (across courtyard)**  
**Group G -- Room 511, Art Center (across courtyard)**
- 2:45 – 3:00 p.m.                      **Wrap-Up & Next Steps -- Room 614 - Saland Forum**  
**Karl Beard & Ellen Jouret-Epstein, Moderators**