Public Conservation Areas

COLUMBIA
LAND CONSERVANCY
Honoring the Land’s Original Stewards

It is with gratitude and humility that we acknowledge Public Conservation Areas are located on the ancestral homelands of the Mohican people, who are the Indigenous peoples of this land. Despite tremendous hardship in being forced from here, today their community resides in Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community.

This land is near the homelands of other Indigenous peoples and First Nations, including the Schaghticoke First Nations. Indigenous peoples continue efforts to reclaim and steward the land today. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all.

We hope that when you visit, you’ll adopt an attitude of care for the land and tread lightly on these sites, so that generations to come can enjoy them.

Accessibility

Public Conservation Areas are open for all, and CLC believes the outdoors should be accessible and welcoming for everyone. If you have suggestions for improving site accessibility, please contact us at info@clctrust.org.

Land acknowledgment language provided in part by the Stockbridge Munsee Cultural Affairs Department.
Public Conservation Areas

Please note: as in many rural areas, addresses in Columbia County may not work well with GPS systems or Google Maps. Several roads have alternate spellings, and address numbers may not align perfectly. More details are provided in each site’s description.

Borden’s Pond
1628 Route 203, Ghent

Drowned Lands Swamp
645 County Rte 3, Ancram

Greenport
319 Joslen Blvd, Greenport

Hand Hollow
4079 County Rte 9 or
451 Gale Hill Rd, East Chatham

Harris
105 Bloody Hollow Road, Austerlitz

High Falls
540 Roxbury Road, Philmont

Ooms
480 Rock City Road, Chatham

Overmountain
138 Catalano Road, Ancram or
503 Carson Road, Ancram

Schor
58 Cemetery Road, Canaan

Siegel-Kline Kill
1452 County Rte 21, Ghent
How to have a great experience.

• Be kind to other visitors. Everyone is welcome, and there is no one right way to respectfully enjoy the outdoors.

• Observe all site rules. Swimming is prohibited. Wading is fine, as is allowing your dog to swim. Camping, open fires, and alcohol consumption are also prohibited.

• Keep all dogs on a leash, and pick up after them. Some visitors are frightened of dogs, and many sites are home to sensitive wildlife that can be disturbed by off-leash pups.

• Hike only on marked trails, and park only in designated parking lots.

• Contact CLC for permission if you would like to hunt, fish, or fly a drone.

• Contact CLC to get a permit if you are interested in holding a special event, having a large group outing at a site, or if you would like to use a site for commercial purposes, such as photography.
Stay connected, and get involved.

Share your experience
If you have fun while you’re out adventuring, share your photos! CLC is on Instagram @clctrust and each Public Conservation Area has its own Facebook page.

Collect data
You can collect important information using free apps like iNaturalist, eBird, and iMapInvasives. Be sure to look for the sites on iNaturalist and eBird.

Become a volunteer
The land needs you! Whether you’re interested in maintaining trails, improving habitats, or collecting important scientific data, there’s a role you can play. CLC also offers trainings for volunteers so that you can learn new skills. Email info@clctrust.org to find out more about how to get involved.

Make a gift
CLC relies almost entirely on donations from people like you to ensure that sites stay safe and open, and to fund projects like habitat restoration. CLC is a registered non-profit, and an accredited land trust, so you can rest assured your funds are going to good use. Visit clctrust.org/give to make a donation.
Where should I go to...

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Looking for an ADA-accessible hike? Visit Greenport’s Access for All Trail, a 1.5-mile out-and-back trail that leads to a beautiful scenic overlook of the Hudson River.
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Visit clctrust.org or email info@clctrust.org for more information about getting permits for hunting and fishing.

Email info@clctrust.org for information about foraging.
Borden’s Pond
1628 Route 203, Ghent

Notes on directions
Though its address is Ghent, Borden’s Pond is located just outside the village of Chatham.

The site
62-acre Borden’s Pond is home to 1.6 miles of forested trails and a small meadow. Though it’s close to the village, Borden’s Pond is home to varied wildlife and forests, sloping stream-side trails, and Catskill Mountain views. There is not, however, a pond! When the dam that created the pond breached in 2006, CLC allowed the stream to return to its natural course, and part of the site is now a wetland.

The trails
The trails at Borden’s Pond are primarily packed earth, with some rocks. The Streamside Trail is flatter, while the Witch Hazel Trail has one short, steep incline.

Site history
In 1997, a group of citizens united to form Borden’s Park Preserve to protect this site. Through community fundraising and two major grants, the initial 52-acre park was purchased in 1998. In 2005, Borden’s Park Preserve transferred the property to the Columbia Land Conservancy.
What might you see?

Monarch butterflies

Tamarack trees

White-breasted nuthatches
Drowned Lands Swamp
654 County Route 3, Ancram

Notes on directions
The exact address number may not correspond with your GPS - be on the lookout for the entrance sign.

The site
Drowned Lands Swamp includes 1.5 miles of trails through wetlands and forests. Much of this site is part of the Harlem Valley wetlands complex, one of the largest wetlands in New York. The site has an interesting history - local folklore recounts stills operating during Prohibition. Reportedly, still operators used the flagpole at the top of Old Croken to notify potential buyers when batches were ready. This site has a heavy black fly population, so you may wish to visit outside the summer months.

The trails
The trails at Drowned Lands are primarily packed earth, with some rocks. The Streamside Trail can be muddy, and the Summit Trail includes a steep incline.

Site history
In 1995, the Salisbury Bank and Trust Company of Connecticut generously donated approximately 100 acres of land to CLC. CLC enlarged the site in 2000 through an additional acquisition.
What might you see?

This view

Sensitive ferns

Virginia rails
Greenport
319 Joslen Boulevard, Greenport

Notes on directions
Please do not park on the road, or in neighbors’ parking lots.

The site
Greenport is over 700 acres in size, and includes over seven miles of trails. The site includes stunning Hudson River and Catskill views, forests, and meadows. A trail connects the site to Harrier Hill Park, owned by Scenic Hudson. The remains of a once-active brickyard can be seen along the Yellow Trail.

The trails
Trails of all types exist at Greenport - packed earth, mowed grass, and a 1.5-mile Access for All Trail that is wheelchair-accessible. Please consult the site map for more details.

Site history
In the early 1600s, prior to European settlement, Mohican Indians lived and hunted in the woods along the Hudson River. In 1661, the land was “purchased” from the Mohicans by a Dutch settler and used for farming and changed hands several times. In 1992, the Open Space Institute (OSI), in collaboration with CLC, purchased the original 400 acres of Greenport Conservation Area. In 2013, OSI conveyed the property to CLC.
What might you see?

Hudson River views

Bald eagles

Osprey
Hand Hollow
87 Gale Hill Road or
4079 County Road 9, New Lebanon

Notes on directions
For easier access to Meizinger Lake, park at the Gale Hill Road entrance.

The site
This 447-acre property includes nearly three miles of trails. Much of the site is forested, but visitors can also explore an open meadow and kayak or fish in Meizinger Lake. There is an active beaver population near the County Road 9 entrance, as well as a heron rookery.

The trails
Hand Hollow’s trails include a grass path, packed earth, and gravel turnpikes. Trails may be muddy after rain.

Site history
Hand Hollow is named after the Samuel Hand family who migrated from Massachusetts to settle in New Lebanon Springs in the late 1700s. The Hand Hollow Conservation Area includes a patchwork of former small family properties. It was made possible through the vision and generosity of the Rickey, Meizinger, and Winch families, as well as many community donors who value protecting open space.
What might you see?

Great blue heron rookery

Beavers

Song sparrows
Harris
105 Bloody Hollow Road, Chatham

Notes on directions
Though its address is Chatham, the site is located just outside the village of Austerlitz. There are also two Bloody Hollow Roads - be sure you are traveling to the intersection with Stonewall Road.

The site
This 76-acre forest includes two miles of trails. The site is home to a hemlock forest, a pond, ledges that provide habitat for bats, and old stone walls.

The trails
The trails at Harris are primarily packed earth. The site includes several temporary pools and puddles, and trails may be muddy after rain.

Site history
The first recorded non-Indigenous occupants of the property were the Gott family, Revolutionary War veterans. The land was likely farmed during the 1800s, and perhaps earlier; visitors can still see remnants of old stone walls and foundations from the trails. The Curtis family purchased the land from the Gotts, and owned it for nearly half a century, using the land to cultivate crops like potatoes, rye, and buckwheat. Gordon Harris purchased the property in 1966, and donated it to CLC upon his passing.
What might you see?

Spotted salamanders

Bat ledges

Woodpeckers
High Falls
540 Roxbury Road, Hudson

Notes on directions
Though its address is Hudson, the site is located in the village of Philmont.

The site
High Falls Conservation Area includes 1.5 miles of trails that wind through hemlock ravines, alongside the Agawamuck Creek (“Creek of Many Fish” to the Mohicans), and to an overlook of Columbia County’s highest waterfall.

The trails
The trails at High Falls are primarily packed earth, with some rocks. There are some short inclines throughout the site.

Site history
High Falls and the Agawamuck Creek have been an important part of Philmont’s development. In the early 19th century, hydropower was the chief source of energy for industry. Access to hydropower via the falls led to the growth of a bustling village called Factory Hill, later named Philmont. In Philmont’s heyday, the waterfall provided power for 17 mills. The dam above High Falls, which was built in 1845, is visible from the viewing area.
What might you see?

Spring wildflowers

Cedar waxwings

The falls
Ooms
480 Rock City Road, Chatham

Notes on directions
Rock City Road is a somewhat winding road, please be careful as you approach. There are several small pull-offs in addition to the main parking lot. Please do not park along the road.

The site
Ooms includes 3 miles of trails on 180 acres, and offers visitors year-round opportunities to enjoy the rolling grasslands around Sutherland Pond. This pastoral landscape captures the essence of Columbia County.

The trails
The trails at Ooms are primarily mowed grass paths. Be cautious that after a rain, the site may be muddy.

Site history
Sutherland Pond takes its name from a family that lived across the property on Rock City Road for many decades beginning in the 1880s. In the 1950s, the Ooms family arrived from the Netherlands and began a dairy operation on the fields surrounding the pond. In 2001, the Open Space Institute (OSI), in collaboration with CLC, purchased this 180-acre parcel from the Ooms family. More than 100 neighbors contributed funds toward the purchase. In 2013, OSI conveyed the property to CLC.
What might you see?

*Great blue herons*

*Bobolinks*

*Turtles*
Overmountain
138 Catalano Road (Kite Hill) or 503 Carson Round (Round Ball Mt.)

Notes on directions
Catalano Road may variously appear as Catalonus, Cattalino, or Catalino Road on your GPS system.

The site
The Overmountain Conservation Area is the largest Public Conservation Area in the Columbia Land Conservancy’s portfolio, at 1,700 acres in size. It includes grasslands, forests, wetlands, and spectacular views of the Catskills and Taconic Mountains.

The trails
The trails at Overmountain are diverse. Those using strollers can access the gazebo using the Kite Hill trailhead, while other trails are rockier and more rugged. Consult the site map for more details!

Site history
CLC acquired the property in three phases, starting with the bargain sale purchase of Round Ball Mountain from the Kitchen family, followed by the donation of Fox Hill by the Baxt family, and culminating with a gift of 1,300 acres from the Gilmore family.
What might you see?

Bobolinks

Kestrel

This view
Schor Conservation Area includes 2.5 miles of trails on 233 acres of land, including a picnic shelter, a small pond, and a spectacular scenic overlook of the Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountains.

The trails
The Yellow and Green Trails, as well as the pond loop, are primarily flat surfaces. The Red Trail, which leads to the summit view, is rockier and steeper.

Site history
The Schor Conservation Area was made possible by the generosity of Jonathan Schor, an early Trustee of the Columbia Land Conservancy and a much-loved member of the Red Rock community. His vision was instrumental to establishing Public Conservation Areas. Columbia County will forever benefit from his deep and abiding love of the land and community. It was Jon’s clear vision and passion that led him to place conservation easements on much of his land, and upon his death, to bequeath his property to CLC and establish this Public Conservation Area.
What might you see?

Red efts

Scarlet tanagers

Wood thrushes
Siegel-Kline Kill
1452 County Route 21

The site
Siegel-Kline Kill includes 1.5 miles of trails and features a native plant meadow and a trail that passes through a floodplain forest. Small spur trails lead to the Kline Kill, where visitors can fish.

The trails
The trails at Siegel-Kline Kill are either mown grass or packed earth, and are primarily flat. The banks of the Kline Kill are rocky.

Site history
The property was once part of a dairy farm, with a farmhouse located near the present-day parking lot. George Kittle operated the farm from the late 1960s to the late 1980s. His family grazed dairy cows, grew corn and hay, and sold cattle. Today, a portion of the field is in the process of being converted to a native plant meadow.

The Siegel-Kline Kill Conservation Area is named after prior owners Bob and Susan Siegel. The acquisition was made possible through individual gifts, primarily from the Ghent community, and a no-interest loan from the Norcross Wildlife Foundation.
What might you see?

Downy woodpeckers

Dame’s rocket

Little green heron
Thank you
CLC thanks the supporters and funders that have contributed to these sites.

Alan Devoe Bird Club
American Farmland Trust
T. Backer Fund, Inc.
The Capital-Mohawk Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management*
Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District
Columbia County Sportsmen’s Federation
Fields Pond Foundation
Alexander and Marjorie Hover Foundation
The Hudson River Bank & Trust Foundation
Hudson River Estuary Program*
Hudson River Valley Greenway*
Ellsworth Kelly Foundation & Jack Shear
Phoebe W. Haas Charitable Trust
The Land Trust Alliance*
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
The Nature Conservancy
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation*
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation*
Norcross Wildlife Foundation
Prospect Hill Foundation
Quailwood Fund of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation
George Rickey Foundation, Inc.
Salisbury Bank and Trust Company
State Senator Stephen Saland
Trout Unlimited
Wellspring Foundation

*The Environmental Protection Fund is administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and funding from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program and New York’s Environmental Protection Fund.

About the Mascots
Each of CLC’s Public Conservation Areas features a unique mascot created by local artist Roberta Wilson.