



Mohonk Consultations

NUMBER 23 • 2013

LET'S TALK IT OVER AT MOHONK: A TRADITION OF CONNECTING PEOPLE THROUGH DIALOGUE

What Mohonk Consultations DOES and WHY

What does Mohonk Consultations do anyway? Should it matter to anyone? In fact, Consultations has planted positive 'seeds' of long-term change up and down the Hudson Valley since 1980. We do this by bringing together groups and individuals in the historic Mohonk Mountain House Parlor to "consult" with each other and find solutions to perceived problems. We consider 'successful' the Parlor consultations that jump-start viable initiatives to serve the public good. Thus the discussions we facilitate are taken into the realm of practical actions in our region by a host of people outside of our organization.

This newsletter highlights the flourishing effects of four of our consultations: a ground-breaking model CSA (community supported agriculture), the Phillies Bridge

Farm Project; the Hudson Valley Watershed Alliance; the Hunger Project, coordinated by UlsterCorps; and the spread of the Transition Town movement to the largest towns in Ulster County.

Yet, to properly understand Consultations' real effects the story of its start and place is important too. In fact, the legacy of Mohonk's work of 'consultations' began with the founding Mohonk Smileys who followed Quaker practices of forging their own 'inward testimony of the Spirit' into outward and practical, positive action. Bringing people to the calm of the mountaintop and seating them in the majestic space of the Mohonk Parlor - out of the hurly-burly of their daily grind - is considered an important part of the legacy. . . .

See our centerfold for the rest of this story.



SAVE THE DATES – You are invited to the Mohonk Mountain House Parlor for these 2013 events. Reservations are required.

2013 Distinguished Environmental Achievement Award Ceremony

Honoring Paul C. Huth, Director Emeritus of the Daniel Smiley Research Center of the Mohonk Preserve, Mon, April 22, 2013, 5-8 pm

2013 Fall Conference A Watershed Moment: Changing Climate and the Future of Our Water Resources

Mon, Nov. 11, 2013, 9-4 pm
For more information on these events, see pp. 2 & 3.

Historic Mohonk Mountain House Parlor built in 1899. It replaced the Office wing of 1881 that included the old Parlor where the early 'consultations' were held.



Paul gathering data in the woods with John Thompson (photo by Tim Shuipis)

Honoring Paul C. Huth for His Invaluable Environmental Work & Leadership

On Earth Day 2013, April 22, Mohonk Consultations and the Mohonk Preserve will jointly host the presentation of Mohonk Consultations' 2013 Distinguished Environmental Achievement Award to the Preserve's Director Emeritus of Research, Paul C. Huth.

Under Paul's leadership for nearly four decades, the Preserve's Daniel Smiley Research Center (DSRC) tackled the challenges of large-scale ecosystem protection by continued long-term baseline monitoring, ecosystem studies, managing collections, and continuing the legacy of Paul's mentor, Daniel Smiley. Paul worked with Dan from 1974 until Dan's death in 1989, when Paul became the Preserve's Director of Research.

As a lifelong naturalist, Paul has made science accessible to thousands of Preserve visitors and Mohonk Mountain House guests through his engaging lectures, educational naturewalks, and DSRC tours. Paul noted, "One of my greatest pleasures has been . . . in adding to the Preserve's legacy."

"I am proud of what the Preserve has accomplished in its 50 years; proud to carry the torch of dedication embodied in so many who have contributed; and proud of being a participating steward of unique records and lands," Paul reflected. For the future, Paul said he hopes that many of his [own] "educational articles and papers on diverse topics at the Research Center will be scanned and made more available on the Web."

"Paul Huth is a walking encyclopedia of the flora and fauna of the Shawangunk Ridge," said Mohonk Consultations' Vice Chair Sandra Smiley. "His many years of working alongside Dan allowed Paul to absorb the essence of Dan's commitment to maintaining a balance between human activities and a healthy natural environment."

Paul will be presented with the Award at a program at Mohonk Mountain House Parlor, Mon., April 22, 2013 from 5 to 8 p.m. The event will include a "virtual field trip"; a nominating speech by Preserve Director of Conservation Science, John Thompson; a keynote presentation by Mohonk historian, Larry Burgess, Ph.D., Director of the A.K. Smiley Public Library in Redlands, California; and a reception featuring light fare.

Registration at \$50 per person is required, with part of the proceeds benefitting Mohonk Consultations and the DSRC. Register online at our web site or mail a check payable to Mohonk Consultations to: Mohonk Consultations, Attn. Huth Award, 1000 Mountain Rest Rd, Lake Mohonk, New Paltz, NY 12561.

Local and Statewide Views of Renewable Energy

Consultations' Conference November 2012

Our November 12, 2012 conference at Mohonk Mountain House explored the status of renewable energy technologies in New York State. These included solar, wind, and geothermal sources and the innovative re-use of bio-waste. The crowd of over 120 enjoyed a day of stimulating presentations, discussions and question and answer sessions on technical updates and practical applications.



NYS Assemblyman Kevin Cahill
Photo by Loma Tychostup

Keynote speaker and the Chair of the Energy Committee of the New York State Assembly, Kevin Cahill assured us of his commitment "to setting up a state-wide sustainable energy planning process that would integrate energy efficiency issues with development planning," and gave a status of the implementation of solar, wind and geo-thermal systems statewide. He explained some current problems such as power plant infractions, unclean energy

brought from other states and the need to level the playing field among energy producers. Electric grid modernization, expansion of net-metering and transmission to a distributive network system are needed.

But above all, he stressed that "human power is the most important form of energy." Solutions to some of our current problems, he noted, include energy conservation at the simplest level in the home and work place, and more education on sources of energy other than fossil fuels.

Most instructive were local business owners who described



Solar panels at Lifebridge Sanctuary in Rosendale
Photo by Patty Matteson



Fossil-free plowing by Ulster County Draft Horse Association participants
Photo by Patty Matteson

models of both conservation and innovation that most homeowners, farmers and businesses can implement. Barbara Valocore of Rosendale's Lifebridge Sanctuary, Jim Ottaway of the Taylor Biomass Gasification project, Tom Smiley of Mohonk Mountain House and from Four

Winds Farm in Gardiner, farmers Jay and Polly Armour have all put these practicalities into direct action to lessen their use of fossil fuels.



MOHONK CONSULTATIONS

The purpose of Mohonk Consultations is to bring about a clearer understanding of the interrelationships of all life on earth, emphasize the need for sustainable use of all the earth's resources, including humans, and support the development of practical means to do so.

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To receive notice of our events, check mohonk-consultations.org, where our newsletters are also available as .pdf files.

To join our mailing list contact us at mohonkconsultations@hvi.net, 1000 Mountain Rest Road, New Paltz, NY 12561, or (845) 256-2726.

A Watershed Moment: Changing Climate and the Future of Our Water Resources

A Fall Conference presented by Mohonk Consultations & the Hudson River Watershed Alliance, Mon., Nov. 11, 2013

In the Hudson Valley region, climate trends indicate that our communities will experience stronger storms and wetter weather. The increased incidence of flooding and the need for more careful water management are complex challenges already being faced by many local towns and villages. In Mohonk Mountain House Parlor, this conference will bring together concerned citizens and representatives of community organizations, businesses, local government, and higher education to explore how we can together best adapt to this dimension of climate change.



Photo by Simon Gruber

Forge Hill Rd. Bridge, over Moodna Creek in Windsor, NY, which was cut in two by Hurricane Irene flooding.

Addressing water quality issues
in the context of stream management goals and increased flooding



Photo by Patty Matteson

Pond at Brook Farm Project, New Paltz, NY

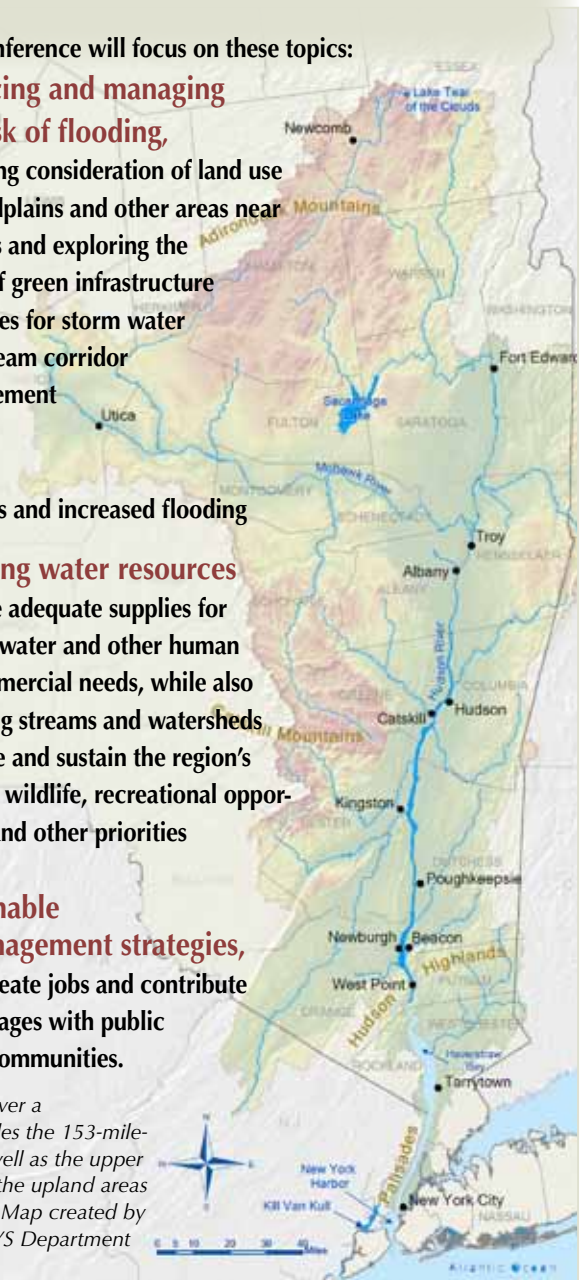
The conference will focus on these topics:

Reducing and managing the risk of flooding, including consideration of land use in floodplains and other areas near streams and exploring the value of green infrastructure strategies for storm water and stream corridor management

Managing water resources to ensure adequate supplies for drinking water and other human and commercial needs, while also protecting streams and watersheds to restore and sustain the region's fisheries, wildlife, recreational opportunities and other priorities

Creating community-based, sustainable water resources, planning and management strategies, that can enhance the region's economy, create jobs and contribute to our overall quality of life, including linkages with public health, fitness, and the well-being of our communities.

The Hudson River's entire watershed spreads over a 13,400-square-mile geographic area and includes the 153-mile-long, tidal, main stem of the Hudson River, as well as the upper New York harbor, the Hudson's tributaries and the upland areas of the Hudson Valley. Hudson River Watershed Map created by Clare Dunn, Hudson River Estuary Program, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, 2009



SOWING SEEDS

Mohonk Consultations Plants

PHILLIES BRIDGE FARM PROJECT

Leading the Area's Turn to Sustainable Agriculture



Photo by Maggie Cheney

A rainbow illuminates the Phillies Bridge Farm Project fields.

Mohonk Consultations has a long history—28 years—of supporting local agriculture and our food supply that continues to this day. Our ‘Working Group on Family Farms’ developed in the mid-1980s to help small-scale, Hudson Valley family farms that contribute to a healthy economy, secure food supply, stable property taxes and the preservation of regional identity.

Following a series of conferences and publications, MC agreed to sponsor the start of the Phillies Bridge Farm Project in 1995. First farmed in 1702, the property consists of 65 acres of rolling farmland and woods in Gardiner, NY. Thanks to a lease agreement between Consultations and James and Mary Ottaway, and the guidance of Dan Guenther, Helen Vukasin and Gail Greene and others, the farm project was used to demonstrate small-scale, sustainable agriculture. This Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm was one of the first such operations in the Hudson Valley. It gained IRS 501 (c) (3) nonprofit status and was able to accept the Ottaway’s generous gift of the land.

Almost two decades later, the Farm is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors, an Executive Director, a Farm Manager, and an Education Director. In 2011 they fed their “200-member CSA; donated 16 CSA shares to our Farm to Families partner agencies for use in nutritional and outreach programs; shared approximately 15 percent of our total crop yield, reaching over 1,000 area residents.” They offer a seven-week Farm Camp, train young farmer interns, host benefits, do outreach, demonstrations and research, and are a source of local organic produce for neighboring restaurants. “Our programs impact a large geographical area, from New York City to Albany,” they say, “with a focus on Ulster County where the farm is located. Participants include homeless teenagers, second home-owners, local families, single parents, area farm-workers, and everyone in between.”



THE MOHONK LEGACY



The Mohonk Mountain House was created in 1869 by Albert K. Smiley and his family. In 1883 they began a tradition of hosting a series of conferences in the Mohonk Parlor, where stakeholders were invited to collectively ‘consult’ with each other and figure out new practical solutions for problems in the world. In addition the Mohonk Smileys continued their practice of serving the public good by creating new organizations. That story is told chronologically to the right...



A.K. Smiley Public Library

These early Smileys gave the non-profit A.K. Smiley Public Library building (1898) to the City of Redlands, California.



The middle family led separate en which star now celebr

HUDSON RIVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE

Protecting the Hudson River Watershed

The not-for-profit group, the Hudson River Watershed Alliance (the Alliance) was incubated and developed in part through a series of Mohonk Consultations water-focused events beginning in 2003. The follow-up 2004 Conference agenda included keynote speaker Bill Matuszeski from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay who described his organization’s work as a model. The Alliance’s Steering Committee was named at Mohonk Mountain House in 2005.

Among the key supporters of this process was conservationist Fran Dunwell, the Hudson River Estuary Program (HREP) Coordinator at the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Dunwell envisioned a non-governmental organization to partner with HREP and a network of community-based regional watershed planning groups for every part of the Hudson River. The Alliance, with HREP support, is helping to build this network in the Hudson Valley. Simon Gruber, President of the Board of Directors of the Alliance, noted “the grassroots vision of HRWA’s original founders fits perfectly with the HREP’s focus on encouraging community-based watershed planning.”

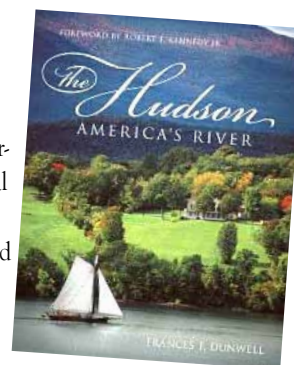
Governed by a 15-member Board of Directors, it provides education and networking opportunities for watershed groups, municipal officials, scientists and others involved in watershed planning and protection. A range of other organizations work on the Hudson River and related issues, but the Alliance is explicitly meant to address the entire watershed.

(continued on page 6)



Photo by Simon Gruber

Pete Seeger aboard the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, which he co-founded in 1966 to lead the campaign to clean up the Hudson River.



Dunwell is author of Hudson River Highlands (1991) and with Robert F. Kennedy Jr., The Hudson: America's River (2008).

S FOR CHANGE

Positive Changes in the Present

THE HUNGER PROJECT

Ending Hunger in the Hudson Valley

This new initiative arose from a 2009 forum for 80 people, representatives from all dimensions of the regional food web including farmers, business people, community organizations, town supervisors and social services agencies to explore the growing problem of hunger in the region and to learn about each others' work and concerns.



Photo by Beth McClendon
UlsterCorps Glean Team volunteers picking 42 bushels of apples at Little Dog Orchard, Clinton-dale, NY for distribution to local food pantries and soup kitchens.

The following Fall conference launched a new collaborative activity, the Hunger Project, coordinated by UlsterCorps, a county-wide nonprofit organization. The Project is a coalition of local workers and volunteers from local gardens and farms, gleaners, processors, storage facilities, food pan-

tries and soup kitchens working together to bring fresh food to more people in our Ulster County communities.

In the last three years UlsterCorps has built a corps of volunteers to assist. The work is in collaboration with Family of Woodstock, Woodcrest Community, The Queens Galley, Cornell Cooperative Extension, RVGA, Phillies Bridge Farm and others. Over 25,000 pounds of produce, 840 quarts of fruit, and 80 gallons of cider have been distributed.

High school students from Ulster County BOCES New Visions Health Career Explorations program have also been engaged. They are addressing issues that inhibit the use of free school lunches and have joined in mapping the location of grocery stores, food pantries and farmers markets around the county. All Ulster County loop buses now carry a map of these sources of food by bus routes.

UlsterCorps created an interactive food system map charting connections among stakeholders, showing who is involved, where connections exist, and where further work is needed.



Photo by Fabia Wargin
RVGA Farm-to-Food Pantry Program, Sweet Corn Processing, Sept. 22, 2009, Woodcrest Community, Rifton, NY. Gill, RO Davenport, Saunderskill and Davenport Farms donated over 4,000 pounds of delicious sweet corn.

TRANSITION TOWNS

Focusing Region on Environmental Sustainability

In 2011 Mohonk Consultations presented an introductory forum plus a full-day conference on the rapidly spreading Transition Town movement. The April forum, "Communities in Transition: Local Strengths, Local Resilience" was an inspirational prelude to our November conference with Tina Clarke, Transition trainer.

Considering climate change, the energy crisis, and unstable economies, Mohonk Consultations held these events with the intention to "initiate a region-wide dialogue to build local collaboration and create practical solutions toward resilience."

The founder of Communities in Transition, Rob Hopkins, via a video clip of a recent talk, discussed the rising cost of oil and the eventual dissipation of supplies, saying "we've designed our ... entire way we live around it The degree to which we are dependent on oil is really the same degree of our vulnerability."



According to one attendee, "Mohonk Consultations' 2011 Forum on Transition Towns was a pivotal moment that fanned the flame under the Mid-Hudson Valley's movement toward environmental sustainability. The Forum coalesced like-minded people, dedicated to safeguarding the Earth and committed to caring for each other in challenging times. Advocates' excitement was palpable..."

While there is no one model for Communities in Transition, it's about making small efforts that can lead to larger steps towards implementing resilience, such as community supported agriculture, locally owned and oper-



In 2012, the new Mid-Hudson Valley Transition Hub catalyzes and empowers the work of ten thriving Transition Towns. (<http://transitionmidatlantic.org/>)

ated alternative energy sources, local currencies that strengthen local economies, alternative sources of information and transportation, re-tooling, and more.

<http://www.transitionus.org/>; <http://www.transitionmidatlantic.org/>

A group of Mohonk's now five-generation in the creation of three more, non-profit, enterprises including Mohonk Preserve, led as The Mohonk Trust in 1963 and celebrates its Fiftieth Anniversary.



Mohonk Consultations was formed in 1980 to provide a forum for collective discussions so that motivated public citizens could discover new ways to benefit the Hudson Valley and its people.



Brook Farm Project, begun in 2004, is a CSA (community-supported agriculture) and educational farm.

Hudson River Watershed Alliance

(cont'd from page 4)



WHAT IT HAS DONE:

- Presented annual conferences addressing science, policy and educational issues related to water resources, land use, and biodiversity, and how individuals and organizations can help protect our watersheds;
- Convened Roundtable workshops for local watershed groups to learn from each other, including educational speakers on water resources science and technical issues, and provided technical support to individual groups;
- Sponsored an ongoing monthly breakfast series in New Paltz, the Omelet, with educational speakers and networking opportunities;
- "Developed the Hudson River Watershed Atlas, a set of digital maps designed to enable users to visualize, explore, assess and better understand the natural resources and built systems of the Hudson River Estuary watershed."

(See <http://www.hudsonwatershed.org/atlas/index.html>).

Rik Flynn's 2012 Award Celebration

The ceremony and honoring of Rik Flynn, co-founder of UlsterCorps with Beth McClendon, was a great celebratory moment on June 7, 2012. The Parlor was packed with 80 supporters. Ev Mann, founder and director of the Center for Creative Education in Kingston, NY, gave a loving homage to his colleague and friend and to UlsterCorps' work. The golden spring sun invited all out on the East Porch afterward to enjoy mingling and the pink Mountain Laurel in flower around the lake cliffs. See UlsterCorps.org for more information.

UN National Year for Water Cooperation and Quinoa

The United Nations proclaimed 2013 as the International Year for Water Cooperation, calling on people everywhere to support actions through local, national and international cooperative efforts to safeguard and protect the world's water resources. The Year was launched by a global conference in Zaragoza, Spain, Jan. 8-11, 2013, focusing on mediation, negotiation and the role of "water diplomacy." The theme Year aims to bring wider attention to best practices regarding water allocation decisions, upstream and downstream impacts of water pollution and water extraction, construction and management of new infrastructures, dealing with illegal extractions and over-exploitation of surface and groundwater and more. Water is our most precious resource and is indeed, the Water of Life.

Spearheaded by Bolivia, 2013 was also declared the International Year of Quinoa. Considered sacred by the Incas, this high protein grain can be grown at altitudes of up to 12,000 ft, and has been maintained, protected and preserved by the Andean indigenous people through their traditional knowledge and practices of living well, in harmony with nature. Quinoa contains a balanced set of amino acids for humans, making it an unusually complete foodstuff. It is gluten free and considered by many Jews to be kosher for Passover. The Year seeks to focus world attention on the nutritional, economic, environmental and cultural properties of quinoa as well as on the role that quinoa can play in providing food security and nutrition, central to the eradication of poverty.

Sources: http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/water_cooperation_2013/index.shtml
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/note6367.doc.htm>



Mohonk Consultations prints its newsletter on 100% recycled paper.

Carol Cruikshank: Our Gratitude to a True Friend & Staunch Supporter



A Mohonk cottage was the summer home for Carol and her family until she was 52 years old. At age 5 she won a photo contest with her picture of Skytop reflected in the lake. She has been taking inspiring shots

around the property ever since. As a result of growing up in the company of Dan & Keith Smiley, who led her through caves and up mountains, Carol continues to help keep the Mohonk traditions alive by supporting the organizations that they founded. The Board of Mohonk Consultations is very grateful for Carol's support in carrying on Keith's vision.

Consultations' News

NEW ONLINE OPTIONS

We have added two efficient online features to our website at <http://mohonk-consultations.org>.

- A DONATION BUTTON is now available that links to an online donation window via our portal with NYCharities.org.
- THE REGISTRATION PROCESS for our events is easier now that you can register online and pay any fee in the process.

Please let us know if you have questions.

SAVE TREES Help Us Go Green!

We encourage you to receive your newsletter only by email rather than in print.

As each year passes, we find our annual newsletters are more in demand. We like to print hard copies of the newsletter to personally give to people who may not have heard of Consultations' work. But each year the costs of printing and mailing rise.

For those of you who now receive a paper copy in the U.S. Mail: **please notify us** at mohonkconsultations@hvi.net, or drop a note in the U.S. Mail, if you would like to receive your copy electronically as a pdf file. If you don't notify us, you will continue to receive a paper copy in the regular mail. Thank you.

2012 CONTRIBUTION LIST

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Photo by Patty Matteson



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Or, fill out the coupon below and send it to: Mohonk Consultations, 1000 Mountain Rest Road, New Paltz NY 12561

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2013 FALL CONFERENCE

A Watershed Moment: Changing Climate and the Future of Our Water Resources

A Conference co-sponsored by Mohonk Consultations and the Hudson River Watershed Alliance

Monday, November 11, 2013, 9 - 4 pm

Mohonk Mountain House Parlor



A damaged road, an overturned truck, flooded farm fields in the black dirt region in the Wallkill River flood plain, southern Orange County, NY. Photo by Simon Gruber

Climate trends indicate that our communities will experience stronger storms, wetter weather, more flooding and the need for more careful water management. We will bring together concerned citizens and representatives of community organizations, businesses, local government, and higher education to address these issues and explore how we can best adapt to these complex dimensions of climate change.

For more information on this event, see p. 3.