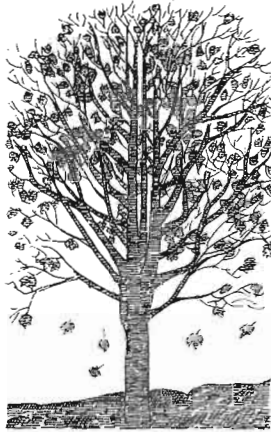


MOHONK  
CONSULTATIONS  
on the  
EARTH'S  
ECOSYSTEM

THE  
HUDSON  
RIVER  
BASIN  
PROGRAM

Summary Report  
October 1980 to  
June 1982

Lake Mohonk,  
New Paltz, New York 12561



## THE HUDSON BASIN AN ECOSYSTEM MODEL

The Hudson River Basin is one of thirty-three land-river systems in the United States. These regional systems are home for more than one half of the nation's population. In general, they have similar developmental patterns, and increasingly their people and institutions share a common set of problems and concerns for the future.

The Hudson Basin is the largest of the U.S. land-river systems in terms of population density: 20 million people (10% of the U.S. population) live in the 25,000 square miles of the Basin. The region's population density is growing at an ever-increasing rate. The decisions of the next decade will determine the future of the Hudson Basin and its ecosystem for generations to come. A unique opportunity exists for the people and institutions of this river basin. By working together they can shape a desirable and economically viable future and at the same time serve as a model for other land-river ecosystems of the nation.

It is within this context that Mohonk Consultations presents this summary report of its continuing Hudson Basin Program.

## THE GROWTH OF THE HUDSON BASIN REGION

The population growth of the Hudson Basin through the 1940's was relatively uniform, and was concentrated in and around the metropolitan centers. The 1950's and 60's brought unprecedented growth and change. Social, economic, and technological develop-

ments induced people to shape the Hudson Basin to new purposes, without the benefit of a plan or design.

In two decades the population doubled in one half of the region's 22 counties. 2.3 million homes were constructed. Large scale projects were initiated, especially in transportation. The region's unifying focus shifted from the river to the expanding highway system.

Commissions and research projects studied the emerging issues and formulated directions for response. Greater public awareness and improved decision making were identified as key factors in solving and preventing the recurrence of major ecological problems in the region.

In the belief that the issues and decisions of the 1980's in the Hudson Basin will require a new type of regional consultation and decision making process, Mohonk Consultations initiated the Hudson Basin Program in October of 1980.

#### THE HUDSON BASIN PROGRAM:

Continues the century-old tradition of Mohonk and the Smiley family of clarifying and demonstrating the interdependence of people with one another and with their natural environment through scientific research, consultations, and land stewardship.

-Brings together institutions and knowledge in a policy oriented approach to considering the Hudson Basin region and to increasing the involvement of people in shaping its future.

-Addresses a basic underlying cause of ecological issues and concerns, namely:

Our ability to transform the ecosystem has devel-

oped at a much greater rate than our ability to understand the ecosystem and the effects of our actions on it.

#### YEAR ONE

The first year of Mohonk Consultations' Hudson Basin Program (October 1980-81) focused on the Mid-Hudson area. This decision was based on the following:

-Each of the Mid-Hudson's seven counties experienced significant population and housing growth during the 1970's. The 1980 Census indicates an increase in the rate of growth, and further acceleration of growth in the decade ahead.

-The economic base of the area is rapidly changing in its orientation as high technology, service, tourism, and recreation industries develop. The scale of this base is also changing as linkages with New York City, Canada, and Europe grow.

-There is renewed interest in the Hudson River, and major changes are anticipated in land use and in the value of historic sites and neighborhoods.

In the initial program year, more than fifty leader-decision makers from the Mid-Hudson were consulted. These represented a wide range of interests, public and private, and included education, communications, civic associations, banking, development, industry, planning, ecology, philosophy, and government.

Several interdisciplinary meetings were held at Lake Mohonk and in Mid-Hudson communities. In June of 1981 at a meeting with Mid-Hudson bankers, ecosystem concerns were explored. Revitalization, especially of the Mid-Hudson's urban centers, was identified as a priority.

The theme of revitalization took on new dimensions as interviews and meetings with people in the Mid-Hudson progressed. The need for revitalization of a sense of local and regional community, pride, and spirit was seen as fundamental. Still others said, "There can't be a community without a community story"; the region's people seek an identity that can be discovered and celebrated as their "story". . . the story of the human venture in the Hudson River Basin.

This first year culminated in a major conference of thirty leaders from the Mid-Hudson on October 13 and 14, 1981 at Lake Mohonk. The theme was "Revitalization - The Hudson River Basin".

#### REVITALIZATION THE HUDSON RIVER BASIN

The conference agenda was a synthesis of the interests and concerns of all involved in the year's effort, and reflected an over-riding goal of developing a shared perspective and agenda for the Hudson Basin region. Three areas of revitalization were considered:

1. Place: urban centers-suburban-rural . . .  
the land and the river.
2. Community: the people, their cultures,  
organizations, and institutions.
3. Story: the human venture in the Hudson  
Basin - past, present, and future.

During the conference, formal presentations were given in each of the three agenda areas. Conference participants worked in small groups to synthesize the content of the presentations, their own knowledge, and the purposes of the Hudson Basin Program into a series of recommendations.

At the close of the conference, the participants endorsed the principles and approach of the Hudson Basin Program, and they recommended that the program be continued. All expressed their interest and selected a core group which would further clarify and develop the recommendations developed in the conference.

A summary of the Hudson Basin Program was presented at the annual meeting of Mohonk Consultations at Lake Mohonk in June of 1982.



#### THE HUDSON BASIN PROGRAM FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The recommendations of the October 1981 Revitalization Conference have been developed, refined, and organized into the following categories:

- I. Transforming the Hudson Basin with  
Greater Care.
- II. Nurturing a Sense of Local and Regional  
Community within the Hudson Basin.
- III. Understanding the Hudson Basin Ecosystem.

I. Transforming the Hudson Basin with Greater Care.

1. Urban revitalization.

The survival and growth of the region's urban centers, especially the cities, but also the towns, is fundamental to any preferred growth scenario. Yet, the centers all lost population during the 1970's when the region as a whole had a population increase. An effective case must be made on behalf of the urban centers, highlighting their role in the region, for example as focal points for population growth and services; as points of linkage for regional systems; and as a symbol of the history and traditions of the people who built the region.



A regional program is recommended which will focus attention on the role of the urban centers in the region and which will provide practical workable approaches to their revitalization. The program would include case histories of economically successful and ecologically responsible revitalization-development ef-

forts in the Mid-Hudson; current and future sources for financing revitalization; and related economic and social issues.

2. Tourism — a growth industry in the Hudson region.

Of the industries in the region tourism is seen as a priority concern.

The expansion of Stewart Air Base into a major international airport and increased bus tours from New York City are now generating a growing tourism base. Public and private interests are exploring opportunities in everything from large, self-contained resorts to bed and board networks to cultural and musical festivals. The question is whether outside forces or the people of the Hudson Basin will determine the direction of tourism.

A series of consultations at Lake Mohonk on the development of regional tourism is recommended. This program would consider the types of tourism which would promote the historic, scenic, and recreational resources of the region while preserving and enhancing the quality of life and the Hudson Basin's ecosystem. These consultations can facilitate regional coordination of supportive services such as transportation and lodgings, as well as of information and promotion.

3. Mohonk Awards.

A regional awards program is recommended. This would generate community involvement in identifying outstanding efforts as well as provide positive motivation and concrete models for those interested in com-

munity development, revitalization, and identification.

Different categories would be established so that a variety of age and interest groups could participate.

## II. Nurturing a Sense of Local and Regional Community within the Hudson Basin.

### 1. A regional communications process.

The Hudson Basin Program was endorsed as a demonstration of the efficacy of a communication approach which consults rather than one which gives out answers and proclamations.

An expanded regional communications program, incorporating the consultation process and designed to reach all people of the region is recommended. This would facilitate:

- defining a shared agenda in the Hudson Basin region.

- communicating the emerging issues of the 1980's within a regional context which shows their inter-relationships, impact, and implications.

- removing barriers to communication and creating new linkages between peoples in terms of geography, culture, and interests.

### 2. Networks.

A regional network of community groups and organizations is recommended which can bring people together to identify common problems; learn together and avoid repetition of mistakes; improve communication and community involvement; find more creative and complementary ways for people to work together (for example, planners, developers and ecologists; public and private sectors).

### 3. Communications workshops.

The media/communications people and educators have a potentially powerful role in nurturing a sense of community and in involving people in the future of the Hudson Basin. Therefore, a series of communications workshops for media specialists and a series for primary and secondary school educators are recommended.

The region's community, public, and nonpublic colleges were seen as appropriate sponsors for this program.

## III. Understanding the Hudson Basin Ecosystem.

### 1. The Way of the Hudson -- The Hudson Way . . . a regional perspective.

The theme "there can't be a community without a community story" generated an enthusiastic response during the Revitalization Conference. The participants recommended that major effort be given to developing a story of the Hudson Basin which would create regional pride and be a rallying point for action.

In meetings following the October 1981 conference, the discussions repeatedly returned to the need to discover and celebrate the evolving story -- the story of the human venture -- in the Hudson Basin.

Several steps are recommended to develop the story.

The first is to convene an inter-disciplinary group to give shape to the concept of "story" and to design a process for involving the people of the region in "telling" the story. Individuals and institutions with knowledge of and expertise in the following would be invited:

- the biophysical . . . the geological history; the

diversity of life forms; the natural beauty and environmental integrity of the region; the physical, life supporting resources; the land and the river.

-the cultural . . . the history and accomplishments of the region's peoples; their roots and traditions; their role in the development of the region and the nation; life in the Hudson Basin today.

-the cognitive . . . the ideas, ideals, and knowledge which have guided the unfolding of the human venture in the Hudson Basin, past, present, and future.

The second step is to identify people, organizations, and institutions that have already collected information and materials, and invite them to share their presentations.

The third step is to develop a process which would reach and involve the widest possible range of people (by age, geography, economics, education, work, culture, and interests). A provisional version of the story, ideally in audio-visual form, would be presented in community settings throughout the region. People would be invited to comment, correct, and add to the story. This would become a continuing regional process of telling the story of the Hudson Basin.

## 2. Decision Making.

The need for improved institutional decision making and better anticipation of the effects of change continues to be a major issue.

One example of the lack of coordinated, future-oriented decision making is now being seen in the deterioration of the infrastructure (roads, bridges, facilities, etc.), which is needed for the economic growth of the region.

A consultation program is recommended to review

current policy development and decision making, and to facilitate the establishment of a regional decision making process, including:

-A regional perspective (story) and sound knowledge base.

-A regional system capable of coordinating the various levels of the public and private sectors.

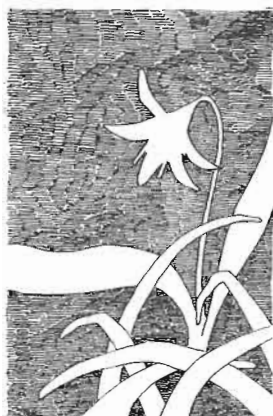
-New tools and models of policy development and decision making which can provide context and anticipate the impact of change.

## 3. Emerging Issues for the 80's.

A continuing monthly forum at Lake Mohonk is recommended in order to identify, clarify, and communicate emerging issues and their implications for the region's ecosystem. Relevant issues would include those which are found in many communities as well as those which are regional in scale. Particular issues would be explored in the framework of a regional overview and in relationship to other priority needs and problems.

An important aspect of this forum would be provision for "off the record" discussions of potentially polarizing issues. Where adversary relationships do develop, the forum would offer a consultation process to find common ground and reconciliation of opposing views.

Many people of the Hudson region made substantial contributions of time, effort, and interest in order to develop the recommendations presented here. Taken together, these recommendations outline a process of involving the people of the Hudson Basin in the shaping and sharing of the region's future. The implementation of this Hudson Basin Program will require the knowledge, commitment, and time of many individuals and organizations.



For more information on ways to participate in the Hudson Basin Program, please write to:

Mohonk Consultations, Inc.  
Lake Mohonk  
New Paltz, New York 12561

Conference Participants  
Revitalization - The Hudson River Basin  
October 13 - 14, 1981

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Mr. Arthur G. Adams, President<br>Hudson River Navigation Co.<br>Mahwah, New Jersey   | Mr. Paul Martin<br>Communications Consultant<br>New York, New York  |
| Mr. Thomas Berry<br>Center for Earth Studies<br>Riverdale, New York   | Mr. Terrence A. Maxwell<br>Executive Director, SCORF<br>Kingston, New York  |
| Dr. Robert T. Brown, President<br>Ulster County Community College<br>Stone Ridge, New York  | Mr. Louis V. Mills, Executive Director<br>Hudson Valley Regional Council<br>Goshen, New York  |
| Miss Kathleen Burton, Program Coordinator<br>Rural Ulster Preservation Co.<br>Kingston, New York  | Mrs. Roberta Mills, President<br>Orange-Dutchess Garden Club<br>Goshen, New York  |
| Mr. Richard J. Cassidy, President<br>Decision Research Corp.<br>New York, New York  | Mr. Vincent J. Moore, Executive Director<br>Adirondack Park Agency<br>Raybrook, New York  |
| Mr. Robert N. Chambers, President<br>Mid-Hudson Savings Bank<br>Fishkill, New York  | Mr. Sean O'Brien<br>Public Affairs Coordinator<br>WGHQ Radio Station<br>Kingston, New York  |
| Dr. Alice Chandler, President<br>State University of New York<br>College at New Paltz, New York   | Mrs. Caroline Raymond<br>Planner and Consultant to Hudson Basin Project<br>Poughkeepsie, New York   |
| Dr. John J. Connolly, President<br>New York Medical College<br>Valhalla, New York   | Mr. Leslie J. Rollins, Executive Director<br>Dutchess County Cooperative Extension<br>Millbrook, New York                                 |
| Mr. Anthony P. Costa, President<br>Inter-County Savings Bank<br>New Paltz, New York   | Miss Penny Ryan<br>Secretary, Mohonk Consultations, Inc.<br>New York, New York  |
| Mr. Bradford G. Davis, Vice President<br>Marine Midland Bank<br>Poughkeepsie, New York  | Mrs. Klara B. Sauer, Executive Director<br>Scenic Hudson, Inc.<br>Poughkeepsie, New York  |
| Professor Leonard B. Dworsky<br>Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering<br>Cornell University, Ithaca, New York                   | Miss Sandra Shapard<br>Assistant to the Dutchess County Executive<br>Poughkeepsie, New York   |
| Mr. Harry Gianneschi<br>Vice President for Development and Public Affairs<br>State University of New York<br>College at New Paltz, New York | Mr. A. Keith Smiley<br>Board of Managers, Mohonk Consultations, Inc.<br>Mohonk Lake, New Paltz, New York                                  |
| Mr. Burton Gold<br>Stewart Associates<br>Poughkeepsie, New York   | Dr. Charles W. Stokes<br>Professor Emeritus, Educational Administration<br>State University of New York<br>College at New Paltz, New York |
| Assemblyman Maurice D. Hinchey<br>New York State Legislature<br>Albany, New York  | Mr. Kenneth R. Toole<br>Dutchess County Commissioner of Planning<br>Poughkeepsie, New York  |
| Mr. Joseph P. Jordan, President<br>Fishkill National Bank<br>Beacon, New York   | Mr. Glen Van Bramer, Director<br>Richmond Gardens<br>Poughkeepsie, New York   |
| Mr. Eric Kiviat<br>Research Associate<br>Bard College, Annandale, New York  | Mr. Edward Waters, Vice President<br>Marist College<br>Poughkeepsie, New York   |





