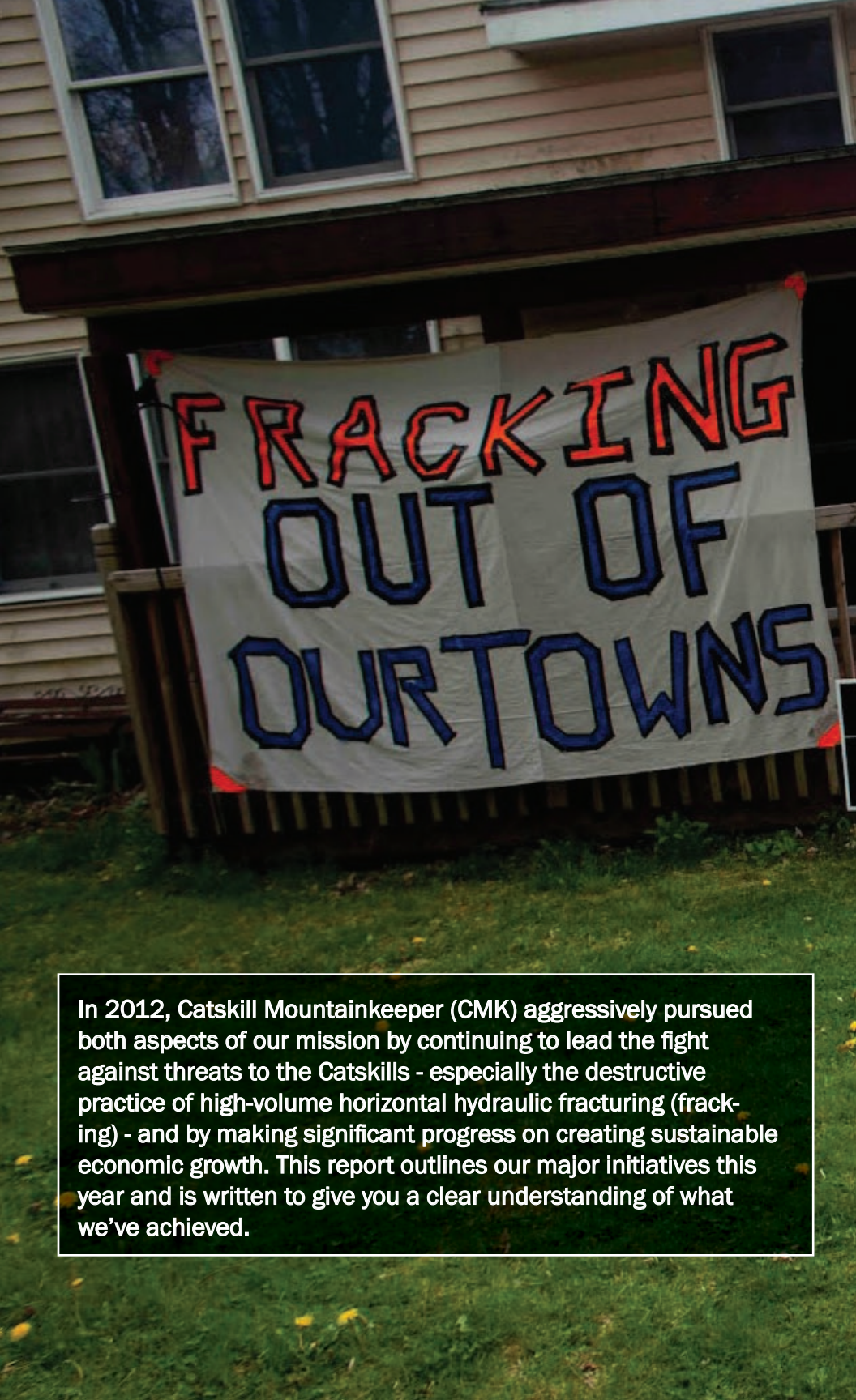


Catskill Mountainkeeper

2012 Report to Stakeholders



In 2012, Catskill Mountainkeeper (CMK) aggressively pursued both aspects of our mission by continuing to lead the fight against threats to the Catskills - especially the destructive practice of high-volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing (fracking) - and by making significant progress on creating sustainable economic growth. This report outlines our major initiatives this year and is written to give you a clear understanding of what we've achieved.

Our Fight Against the Destructive Practice of Hydraulic Fracturing

Back in 2007 when we started, fracking was a relatively new technology that was not on our radar (or anyone else's). We were concentrating on protecting the Catskills from massive development, and promoting the spectacular resources that make our area so special. It wasn't until a farmer walked into our office in Youngsville and told us about how landmen were trying to lease land for natural gas exploration that we started to understand what was happening. What started for us as an exploration of what fracking would mean to our area, has turned into a massive statewide and national campaign to ban it.

As 2012 ends, we have effectively kept fracking out of New York State for the last 5 years. However, the threat of fracking in New York is still very significant. Governor Cuomo has ordered that the state restart the regulatory process that is drafting the Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS), the rules under which fracking would be governed in New York State. The expressed reasons for the restart of the process are to allow the State to prepare an internal review of the health impact of fracking and make sure that the SGEIS can withstand a legal challenge.

Unfortunately, the type of health review that is being proposed by the Governor is woefully inadequate to protect the public health and CMK and our many allies have called for the State to do a comprehensive and rigorous Health Impact Assessment (HIA). An HIA is the gold standard of health reviews because it distinguishes itself from other kinds of public health investigations by using quantitative, qualitative and participatory techniques and is the only process that will give the Governor and the people of New York the facts and data necessary to make science based decisions about fracking.

Despite our substantial achievements to date, the outcome of our fight on the state level is uncertain, which is why we have ramped up our efforts to give communities the opportunity to arm themselves with appropriate protections against the harms of fracking before serious impacts occur.

This year Catskill Mountainkeeper filed amicus briefs on behalf of the Central New York towns of Dryden and Middlefield, which sought to prohibit fracking within their boundaries. In February 2012, in two separate cases, State Supreme Court judges ruled in the towns' favor. These are landmark decisions that affirm the right of home rule throughout New York State and beyond.

Catskill Mountainkeeper will be partnering with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to launch The Community Fracking Defense Project, which will provide legal and other assistance to people who want to prevent fracking in their communities.

Catskill Mountainkeeper is in the process of hiring a Community Land Use and Zoning Organizer to work with NRDC to:

- Assist in drafting local laws and land use plans that control the extent of fracking within their borders and/or limit the harmful effects of fracking.
- Work to re-assert communities' rights to protect themselves under state law.
- Defend relevant zoning provisions and other local laws that are challenged in court.



Our Fight Against Hydraulic Fracturing : Regional and National Efforts

Catskill Mountainkeeper has continued to raise our national profile, as other states look to us to help them replicate the success we've had so far in preventing fracking. We are at ground zero in the fight against fracking and New York State has quickly become the blueprint for how to fight fracking. Although New York remains our clear focus, Catskill Mountainkeeper supports various efforts in the larger region and at the federal level, which have the potential to affect the situation here at home.

Delaware River Basin

We have great news to share on our work in the Delaware River Basin, which extends from New York State through Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware to the mouth of the Delaware Bay, and provides fresh drinking water for millions. Catskill Mountainkeeper and our coalition partners have halted, at least temporarily, the start of drilling anywhere in the Basin. The federally designated Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) was expected to vote to approve fracking in November 2011. However, facing a tremendous level of activism, the commission backed down and indefinitely suspended its process. We are still awaiting a DRBC vote. If the Commission votes to approve fracking, Catskill Mountainkeeper will be involved in litigation under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

Fracking Ban in Vermont

Catskill Mountainkeeper was instrumental in Vermont passing a ban on fracking. Wes Gillingham, CMK Program Director, testified on the impacts of fracking before both houses of the State Legislature and

worked with Paul Burns of Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG), to develop a strategy calling for a statewide ban. Together they organized a panel discussion and forum in Montpelier to inform the public on the issue. In May 2012, Vermont passed a ban and the Governor signed it.

Our fight against fracking is part of a worldwide effort to halt climate change

This year we broadened our efforts to heighten awareness that the world needs to be weaned off polluting fossil fuels with their heavy carbon footprint and move toward renewable energy sources in order to avert catastrophic global warming. We have teamed up with other organizations throughout the country that are fighting extreme energy extraction like mountaintop removal in West VA, tar sands, the Keystone XL pipeline, uranium extraction for nuclear power, and deep sea oil extraction.

On April 23, 2012, Catskill Mountainkeeper helped sponsor a forum at SUNY New Paltz on "Extreme Energy and the Fight for Our Future" to educate the



public about the damage that is being done through extreme energy extraction and discuss the viable alternatives. We are currently in the planning process for two major strategy summits in 2013. Our goal is to move the narrative away from comparing one dirty energy source to another and toward implementing renewable energy alternatives. We are bringing together groups that include 350.org, Hudson Riverkeeper, Hudson Clearwater, Frack Free Catskills, Peaceful Uprising, United For Action, Sierra Club from New York and their regional coal organizer, Alliance for Appalachia, Coal River Mountain Watch and the Highlander Foundation.



At our annual Barnfest event this summer we featured Mark Z. Jacobson, director of Stanford's Atmosphere/Energy Program. He laid out a doable plan to forgo fossil fuels and convert the globe to sustainable renewable energy by 2030. Based on the findings of the research he did with Mark A. Delucchi, UC-Davis researcher, he said, "there are no technological or economic barriers to converting the entire world to clean, renewable energy sources...it is a question of whether we have the societal and political will." Jacobson's message is that we can do renewables now. We don't have to wait. They are efficient, economically feasible and will ultimately cost us no more than what we are currently paying.



2012 Rallies and Events

We sponsored and organized numerous events and rallies this year that have been key to holding off a decision to implement fracking. Some of the major ones included:

January 4th
State of the State
Rally Against Fracking
Albany, NY

July 28th
Stop the Frack Attack Rally
Washington, DC

August 27th
Don't Frack New York Rally
where we teamed up with 350.org and grassroots groups from all around New York State for a march and rally at the Capital in Albany, NY.



Sustainable Economic Growth: Promoting Agriculture in the Catskills

This year we made tremendous progress on our mission to champion sustainable economic alternatives in the Catskills. We implemented the first phases of our multi-faceted strategy to stimulate agricultural production.

We are focusing on agriculture because as our number two industry behind tourism, it has the strongest potential to fuel sustainable economic growth. But, unfortunately, our once vibrant agricultural economy has been in serious decline. The number of farmers has dramatically decreased and many consumers don't have easy access to healthy food. We are experiencing somewhat of an agricultural renaissance with new farms starting and existing farms expanding, but many farmers don't understand the current marketplace and are going out of business. Additionally, the majority of the new jobs in farming are going to people from outside our region.

To address these issues we have created a comprehensive program that focuses on four critical components – the farmer, consumer, retailers and the agricultural infrastructure.

CATSKILL FOOD INITIATIVE

Helping Farmers

In 2011 we undertook an exhaustive study of agriculture in the Catskills and found that the greatest impediment to growth for successful farmers was the lack of access to capital. In response to this need, we have just launched the Capital Access Loan Program to provide access to capital for farmers along with business planning services to make sure that they succeed.

To raise awareness of our local food systems, we sponsored our first farm to table dinner at Neversink Farm in July. Over 175 people dined on local produce that was expertly prepared by a James Beard award-winning chef. We will be expanding this program next summer.

Development of New Farmers' Markets

To address the need to increase access to healthy, local foods for underserved populations, Catskill Mountainkeeper has established two farmers markets at the Government Center in Monticello. The markets are 'Farmers Market Nutrition Program' (FMNP) approved, and market dates coincide with times and dates for WIC and Senior Assistance voucher pick-up. In addition to the produce sold at these markets, educational materials are distributed about nutrition and recipes. These markets also provide additional opportunities for area farmers to sell their produce locally.

We look forward to expanding these programs. We will be adding in additional components to support retailers and improve agricultural infrastructure once these first two segments of our program are fully functional.

Working with Consumers

The Catskill Edible Garden Project (CEGP)

In Spring 2012, Catskill Mountainkeeper launched the Catskill Edible Garden Project to raise awareness of the ways in which healthy, local food systems are important for healthy communities. To date, we have constructed four gardens in Sullivan County and have plans for more gardens next spring. This project is a partnership with Sullivan Renaissance, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Sullivan County, Green Village Initiative, and Slow Food UpDeRiVa.



Catskill Edible Garden Project

1

Educational Institution Garden Installation (Cornell Cooperative)

4

Total number of Gardens

6

Number of Students Employed in the Summer Garden Employment Program

35

Number of Pounds of Produce per Week that is donated to local food pantries and restaurants for local distribution

3,261

Number of Sullivan County Students involved in the Garden Project

Local Farms Participating in the Garden Project

- Berry Brook Farm
- Bethel Creamery
- Channery Hill
- Root 'N Roost
- Silver Heights Nursery
- Willow Wisp



CEGP Garden Youth Employment Program

In tandem with the Edible Garden Project we have created agricultural training for students (the next generation of farmers), which connects them with local farms and food businesses, teaches them about local food systems and production, and their importance to our communities. This summer we hired six high school students from three Sullivan County school districts – Sullivan West, Roscoe, and Sullivan County B.O.C.E.S. to maintain the gardens, harvest fresh produce and learn food preparation techniques.

The students also worked on local farms, assisted in farmers' markets and participated in agricultural events. They were trained to serve as "local food ambassadors" to their schools. Farms that participated in our initial season were: Berry Brook Farm, Bethel Creamery, Root 'N Roost Farm, Silver Heights Nursery and Willow Wisp Farm. This program is a partnership with Sullivan County's Center for Workforce Development.

Catskill School Garden-based Curriculum Integration

Catskill Mountainkeeper is currently working with our project partners and other local advocacy and educational organizations, such as Slow Food's Upper Delaware River Chapter, to develop and implement a garden based curriculum to be integrated into the curriculum of schools in our region.

Staying Connected

Trailkeeper Website - Promoting Catskill Tourism

This fall CMK and our partners launched TrailKeeper.org, a one-source resource for hiking trails, local area attractions and amenities in Sullivan County. The website has easy-to-access trail maps, hiker hints, tips and photos, recommendations for specific trails, and information about local shops, lodgings, restaurants and attractions. It promotes the Catskills as an attractive destination for the eco-tourist.

TrailKeeper.org is a partnership with the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, Sullivan County Division of Planning and Environmental Management, Sullivan County Visitors Association, and Morgan Outdoors. We were assisted by the Upper Delaware Council, Sullivan Renaissance, New York New Jersey Trail Conference, National Park Service, Sullivan County Community College Hiking Class, and many volunteers.



Website Redesign

Because communicating with you is a core part of our mission, at the beginning of this year we launched a complete redesign of our website. The website now has one of the most comprehensive libraries on fracking in the country and easy access to information about our other important programs. It is constantly updated with the latest information about what's going on in our region and we recommend that you check it often at www.catskillmountainkeeper.org



Our Supporters are Key

Supporter and Social Media Stats



Member Action

12,626

Total Number of Actions taken by Members

Including:

Emailing Petitions to State Legislators and State Officials

Signing Petitions

Signing Letters to Fracking Commissions



Fulfilling our mission to connect with people in the Catskills

After five years of building our grassroots base and forming coalitions with like-minded organizations in the western Catskills, last year we undertook a strategic initiative to begin the same effort in the High Peaks, and opened an office in Woodstock, NY.

Among our many accomplishments this year was to provide technical support to Ulster County in their successful implementation of a ban of fracking brine on country roads – the first of its kind; provide financial and

technical support for the nascent Phoenicia Community Gardens Group; serve on the Healthy Places subcommittee for Ulster County's Partners in Public Health Initiative; work with the Woodstock Land Conservancy, Ulster County Department of Environment, and the office of the Ulster County Executive to promote trail development and other outdoor recreational opportunities in the Catskills; promote "eat local" campaigns and lay the groundwork for a new Carbon Neutral Catskills program whose goal is to reach a net-neutral carbon footprint in the Catskills.

As you can see, 2012 has been a very full and exciting year at Catskill Mountainkeeper.

We can't predict the future, but we know that Governor Cuomo is pursuing fracking and that we have to continue to be relentless to protect New Yorkers from its destructive environmental and health effects. Our agricultural program has really taken root this year and requires continuing support to fulfill its promise and all of our other programs are critical to the future of the Catskills Region and continue to need significant resources.

Absolutely none of what we've accomplished so far could have been done without the time energy, volunteering and financial support you and others have provided. You are just as critical to us as our staff. Thank you for everything that you've done for us this year and in past years. As you approach your end-of-year giving, please make us an important part of your plans.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS:

Can be made online at
www.catskillmountainkeeper.org
or

By mailing a check to
Catskill Mountainkeeper
Post Office Box 381
Youngsville, New York 12791.

We also welcome you to stop by and visit us on Route 52 in Youngsville—or call us to make an appointment or volunteer at (845) 482-5400.

Best wishes for a joyous holiday season.



Catskill Mountainkeeper is a public charity, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to being the strongest and most effective possible advocate for the Catskill Region.

Research to Accomplish Our Goals

Economic Valuation Study for Public Lands in the Central Catskills

To identify the unrealized potential of our pristine wilderness, Catskill Mountainkeeper and our partners the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development and Catskill Heritage Alliance commissioned a study of the Economic Valuation for Public Lands in the Central Catskills. The study quantifies the current value of our public lands to our economy and identifies the undeveloped recreational opportunities that could be developed to further enhance our local and regional economy.

Half Full: A Study on the Future of Water

In June we completed our fourth collaboration with the Urban Design Lab, a program of the Earth Institute at Columbia University. The resulting report, Half Full: Water Future in the Western Catskills, highlights case studies on water and its uses within the ecologically unique, water-rich region of the Upper Delaware. Under our leadership, graduate students and their faculty advisors met with local farmers, community residents, government officials and environmental experts to review potential damage to aquifers and the river's ecology from gas drilling and other types of development, as well as the causes and effects of "too much water" seen in recent flooding throughout the region.



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