

CATSKILL MOUNTAINKEEPER

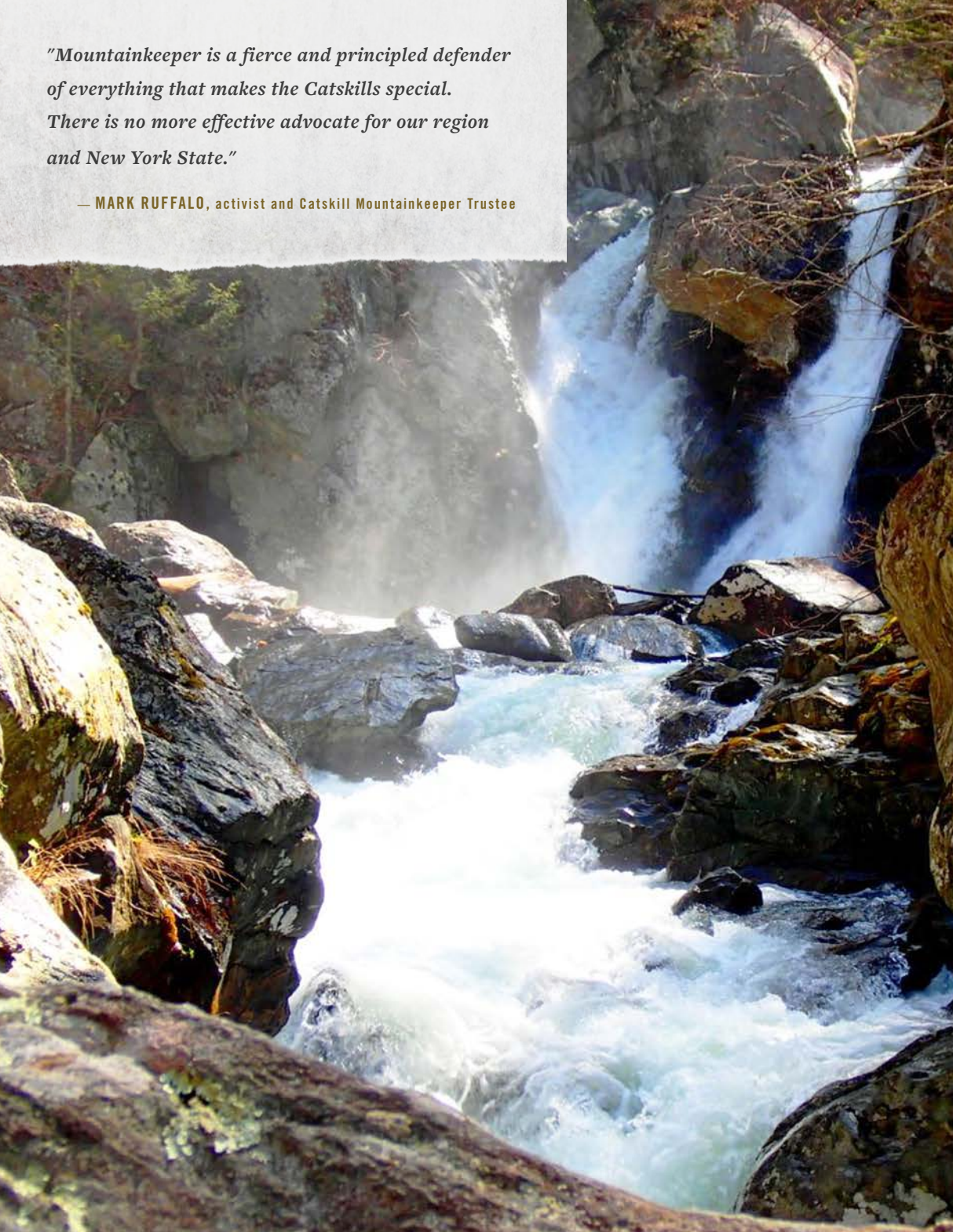
STAKEHOLDER REPORT

2015



"Mountainkeeper is a fierce and principled defender of everything that makes the Catskills special. There is no more effective advocate for our region and New York State."

— MARK RUFFALO, activist and Catskill Mountainkeeper Trustee



FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



This report is for all those who share our commitment to protecting the beauty and vitality of the Catskill region, and advancing a vision of a sustainable future that supports healthy, vibrant communities.


Naturally this includes those who live in the area year-round or have vacation homes here, as well as the many visitors who come to our amazing forests and waterways to relax and recharge while hiking, fishing, swimming, biking, skiing, and exploring the many charms of our small towns and villages.

It is also for the millions of New York City-area residents whose taps deliver clean, drinkable water thanks to our pristine upstate reservoirs. And it is for those who may never have traveled here, but are heartened just knowing that the Catskills landscapes that have inspired artists and writers for centuries are protected for future generations.

Primarily though, this report is for Catskill Mountainkeeper's supporters and activists, who provided critical funds and people power to help drive the important progress described in these pages—including our great, odds-defying victory in the New York State fracking fight.

Mountainkeeper's unique blend of expert advocacy, political savvy, and unyielding determination played a pivotal role in securing this historic win, and we are building on that momentum right now in our ongoing campaigns to protect the Catskills' unique natural heritage, empower our communities, free New York from fossil fuels, and move to a clean and sustainable energy future.

With appreciation,


Ramsay Adams

TAKING ON BIG OIL & GAS

FIGHTING EXTREME ENERGY EXTRACTION

MOUNTAINKEEPER CO-FOUNDED THE EXTREME ENERGY EXTRACTION COLLABORATIVE (E3C), WHICH BUILDS COOPERATION BETWEEN GROUPS FIGHTING FRACKING, MOUNTAINTOP REMOVAL, TAR SANDS, URANIUM MINING, DEEPWATER DRILLING, AND INDUSTRIAL BIOMASS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. TWICE YEARLY E3C SUMMITS BRING TOGETHER ORGANIZERS, ACTIVISTS, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF FRONTLINE AND “BIG GREEN” GROUPS TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, DEVELOP COMMON STRATEGIES, AND ADVANCE COLLABORATIONS. IN 2015, MOUNTAINKEEPER HELPED ORGANIZE PRODUCTIVE SUMMITS IN BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI—THE REGIONAL END POINT FOR MUCH OF THE COUNTRY’S OIL AND GAS—AND EPPING, NORTH DAKOTA—THE HEART OF THE BAKKEN OIL FIELDS.

FREE NEW YORK FROM FOSSIL FUELS!

If the energy giants get their way, our region will be inundated by fracked oil and gas via a sprawling network of new and expanded pipelines and compressor stations, a surge of “bomb trains” filled with highly flammable oil, and an armada of barges carrying oil down the Hudson River. This fossil fuel invasion threatens to destroy our climate, smother local economies, and poison our land and water, while exposing communities to the risk of devastating spills and explosive accidents.

Mountainkeeper is mobilizing our over 40,000 supporters and online activists to fight back through a new Free New York from Fossil Fuels! campaign, which is providing critical momentum for our advocacy at the state and federal levels, and in the courts. It is also helping our team build a steady drumbeat of public pressure on key decision makers to protect us from these threats, which have largely flown under the radar. Top priorities include fighting the Pilgrim, Constitution, and Kinder Morgan pipelines, and empowering local communities to keep bomb trains and barges at bay.

This campaign is making a difference. On November 12, we scored a huge victory when Governor Cuomo vetoed the Port Ambrose Liquefied Natural Gas project, a massive deep water port proposed just 19 miles off the shore of Long Island. Mountainkeeper helped rally a big public outcry against this reckless project, which would have threatened coastal communities, damaged marine ecosystems, harmed fishing and tourism, and displaced a wind farm proposed for the very same spot.

NEW YORK FRACKING BAN

NEW YORK’S HISTORIC BAN ON FRACKING BECAME OFFICIAL WITH THE JUNE 2015 RELEASE OF THE FINAL STATE DOCUMENT NECESSARY TO SEAL THE DEAL. MOUNTAINKEEPER LED THE WAY IN MARSHALING THE MASSIVE PUBLIC OUTCRY THAT CONVINCED GOVERNOR CUOMO TO DO THE RIGHT THING AND PROHIBIT FRACKING, AND WE ARE NOW FIGHTING EFFORTS TO CIRCUMVENT AND OVERTURN THE BAN.

Standing with OUR ALLIES

Mountainkeeper is lending expertise and exporting our successful New York campaign strategies to the fracking fight in other states and Canada. We helped allies in Maryland launch a health-focused campaign that resulted in a 2½ year fracking moratorium, and are working closely with diverse partner groups in California’s intense fracking fight.



PROTECTING WILD LANDS & PROMOTING THE OUTDOORS

Mountainkeeper is dedicated to protecting and enhancing the Catskill Park, the crown jewel of our region and one of the largest and most ecologically diverse natural areas in the East. Through our participation in the Catskill Park Coalition, which we co-founded, Mountainkeeper helped spur the New York state legislature to approve a first-ever appropriation for the park of \$500,000 in early 2015 to fund essential repairs and improvements that will help safeguard these spectacular wild lands for future generations.

A related focus is our work to bolster tourism—the number one economic driver in the Catskills—by promoting our region’s extensive outdoor recreational resources. In 2015, as part of the Trailkeeper.org partnership, Mountainkeeper helped enhance the Trailkeeper.org website with a new design and additional features to help people plan their day in the Catskills. As a result, it’s now easier than ever for residents and visitors alike to use our region’s spectacular public trails and locate nearby restaurants, hotels, and other businesses.

A VISITOR CENTER for the Catskill Park



Mountainkeeper helped our beloved park get its first-ever visitor center—the Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey Catskill Park Interpretive Center—in July 2015. Named after a true environmental hero, this beautiful new facility raises the profile of this iconic park, and enhances the visitor experience by providing a welcoming space to learn about the region’s abundant natural resources.

HOLDING THE LINE ON CASINOS

MOUNTAINKEEPER WAS SUCCESSFUL IN STAVING OFF AN INVASION OF MULTIPLE LAS VEGAS-STYLE CASINOS CLUSTERED IN THE CATSKILLS, AND OUR TEAM IS NOW WORKING TO ENSURE THAT THAT THE SINGLE NEW CASINO PERMITTED FOR OUR REGION—THE MONTREIGN RESORT CASINO, PART OF THE LARGER ADELAAR RESORT BEING BUILT IN KIAMESHA LAKE—HAS THE MOST POSITIVE IMPACT POSSIBLE ON THE AREA.

I ♥ THE CATSKILLS

Governor Cuomo has announced a \$5 million 2016 ad campaign that will promote the many glories of the Catskills to potential visitors from around the world. This effort dovetails with Mountainkeeper’s ongoing efforts to grow ecotourism here, and our team played an important role in helping convince the Governor to make this investment in raising the region’s profile and building a stronger and more sustainable economic future for our communities.



POWERING OUR GREEN ENERGY FUTURE



Mountainkeeper's RenewableNY program is helping transform the state's energy landscape by demonstrating that a clean and prosperous future built around efficiency and renewables is well within reach.

The cornerstone of this program is the Solar Outreach Initiative, a massive new campaign that is making it easier and more affordable for people and businesses in 15 New York counties go solar. Early in 2015, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) awarded a three-year \$1.85 million dollar grant to Mountainkeeper and our partners at Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition, Sustainable Hudson Valley, and Cornell Cooperative Extension Tompkins County to launch this campaign, which is writing the book on how to role out community solar on a large-scale.

The Initiative's community-based education and outreach campaigns simplify and streamline the consumer experience of going solar from start to finish, and its bulk purchasing programs significantly reduce costs for consumers and installers alike. Another component is a comprehensive on-the-job-training and job development program that should create 134 new clean energy jobs.

Overall, this Initiative is expected to save participating consumers \$500,000 in energy costs each year, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 496 metric tons annually. This work aligns with Governor Cuomo's Reforming the Energy Vision (REV) strategy to build a next generation energy system that is clean, resilient, and affordable for all New Yorkers, and Mountainkeeper is proud to help lead in transitioning to a clean energy future.



Going Solar AT HOME

Gregg Swanzey and Emma Sears are installing a solar system on their 92-year-old Dutch Colonial home in Kingston. Because they live in a designated historic district, the system is being designed to minimally impact their home's look and feel while providing up to 125 percent of their electricity usage. "Going solar is a natural choice for us. We've done the research and looked at installers but the timing and the numbers didn't add up," said Gregg. "Thanks to the Solar Outreach Initiative and the tax credits available, the incentives are lined up the right way, right now."



Photos courtesy www.solarize-hudsonvalley.org

*"I'd put my money on the sun and solar energy.
What a source of power!"*

— THOMAS ALVA EDISON

FARMING AND FOOD

Mountainkeeper's team is building a more vibrant and sustainable regional food system that feeds our local communities, supports our farmers, and builds our food-related economy—the region's second largest industry.



CATSKILL EDIBLE GARDEN PROJECT

THE CATSKILL EDIBLE GARDEN PROJECT GIVES KIDS HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE IN GROWING FRESH AND HEALTHY FOOD THROUGH AN INNOVATIVE PROGRAM THAT HAS ESTABLISHED EDIBLE GARDENS IN 6 AREA SCHOOLS.

BY TEACHING STUDENTS HOW TO GROW AND PREPARE FRESH FOOD, THE PROGRAM FOSTERS HEALTHIER EATING HABITS AND EXPOSES KIDS TO POSSIBLE FOOD-RELATED CAREERS. IT ALSO PROVIDES SUMMER INTERNSHIPS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS, AND DONATES HUNDREDS OF POUNDS OF PRODUCE TO FOOD PANTRIES, EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO HELP THEIR COMMUNITIES.

IN 2015, THE PROGRAM HELPED REINVIGORATE SULLIVAN COUNTY FEDERATION FOR THE HOMELESS' LARGE GARDEN, PROVIDING HEALTHY FOOD FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED A HELPING HAND.

INTERN SPOTLIGHT

"My Mountainkeeper internship was one of the best summers of my life. I enjoyed working in the gardens to help children understand that food comes from the earth (not the supermarket!) and expose them to healthy eating at a young age. It was also rewarding to work with the farmer's market to help provide local produce to an underserved community. I am studying to become a Registered Dietitian, with a focus on using healthy foods for healing, and my internship gave me an even stronger appreciation for our connection with food for cultural, social, and health reasons."

— ARIANA JULIET KAMINSKI, 2015 Catskill Edible Garden Project summer intern



Eat Healthy SULLIVAN COUNTY FARMERS' MARKETS

MANY PEOPLE IN OUR REGION LACK DIRECT ACCESS TO FRESH, HEALTHY FOODS; IN FACT, THE USDA HAS DESIGNATED SULLIVAN COUNTY A "FOOD DESERT." MOUNTAINKEEPER IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE THROUGH OUR EAT HEALTHY SULLIVAN COUNTY FARMERS' MARKET IN MONTICELLO.

AT THE MARKET, PEOPLE CAN SHOP USING VOUCHERS FROM ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS THAT LOWER THE COST OF FRESH PRODUCE FOR ELIGIBLE LOW-INCOME SENIORS, WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN. THE PROGRAM ALSO SUPPORTS LOCAL FARMERS BY HELPING THEM OBTAIN THE CERTIFICATION NEEDED TO ACCEPT THESE FOOD BENEFIT COUPONS.

IN 2015, THE PROGRAM EXPANDED WHEN MOUNTAINKEEPER TOOK OVER THE STRUGGLING LIBERTY FARMERS MARKET, WHICH SERVES A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE REGISTERED FOR FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.



MOUNTAINKEEPER: POWERED BY PEOPLE

Mountainkeeper's base of over 40,000 supporters and online activists provide the people power that makes our programs so effective.

In 2015, Mountainkeeper action alerts inspired our activists to send over 10,000 messages to decision makers urging them to stop pipelines and bomb trains, and to allocate funds for essential Catskill Park maintenance and improvements.

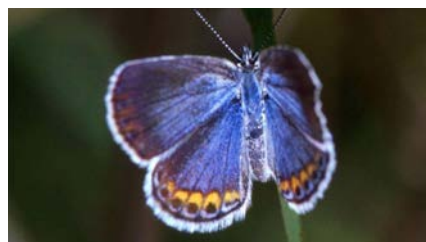
Mountainkeeper also works to increase public participation at rallies and demonstrations, like the one above in Albany.

www.catskillmountainkeeper.org

MOUNTAINKEEPER'S WEBSITE OFFERS A WEALTH OF RESOURCES INCLUDING PROGRAM INFO, CAMPAIGN ACTIONS, REPORTS, REGIONAL NEWS, AND AN EVENT CALENDAR.



Mountainkeeper's dedicated Facebook community shares information and inspiration. We're online every day sharing campaign updates, breaking news, and photographs of our glorious Catskill mountains, wildlife, lakes, and rivers, along with recreational resources like hiking trails and swimming holes. In 2015 we gained over 3,000 new fans and broke the 12,000 friends mark!



Catskill Mountainkeeper
July 28 · Edited ·

GOOD NEWS! The endangered Karner blue butterfly is making a comeback in upstate New York. The butterfly has seen a 90% decline in the last 15 years due to habitat loss and wildfire suppression in the pine barrens. The successful recovery efforts included planting lots of blue lupine, the only plant Karner caterpillars eat. Read the story here: <http://www.wnyc.org/story/storied-butterfly-makes-comeback/>



Mountainkeeper's Youtube channel (youtube.com/catskillmountainkeeper) showcases our short campaign advocacy videos, which have been viewed tens of thousands of times on social media. Our wonderful "Catskill Park" documentary can also be seen at Youtube.



We have over 11,500 Twitter followers.



Mountainkeeper's 960 Instagram followers ❤️ our beautiful photos.

2015 A YEAR TO CELEBRATE

Mountainkeeper Trustee & Solutions Project board member
MARK RUFFALO rallies the crowd at Catskill Brewery



THE SOLUTIONS PROJECT RAISES A GLASS TO MOUNTAINKEEPER

In August, The Solutions Project honored Mountainkeeper's work to advance a green energy future at a festive celebration that brought more than 1,500 people to the Catskill Brewery in Livingston Manor.



20TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY

Earlier this year, our friends at Patagonia honored Mountainkeeper's work to free New York from fossil fuels at an event that drew nearly a thousand people for the 20th Anniversary of the outdoor apparel company's flagship store in Manhattan.



Showcasing the Region's Bounty

OVER THE COLUMBUS DAY WEEKEND, MOUNTAINKEEPER CO-SPONSORED THE TWO-DAY TASTE OF THE CATSKILLS FESTIVAL—TRULY THE "EVENT OF THE SEASON" FOR OUR REGION. THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL BROUGHT THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE TO DELHI'S HISTORIC MAPLE SHADE FARM TO SAMPLE LOCAL FOOD, BEER, AND WINE, AND LEARN ABOUT MOUNTAINKEEPER'S WORK.

Mountainkeeper Executive RAMSAY ADAMS with comedian & actress SUSIE ESSMAN, the event's celebrity host



Mountainkeeper received the Catskill Center for Conservation's 2015 Alf Evers Award For Excellence in honor of our leadership in protecting the Catskills.

OUR DIVERSE AND DYNAMIC PARTNERS

Mountainkeeper's over 40,000 supporters and online activists • Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition • Building Equity and Alignment for Impact Initiative • Californians Against Fracking • Catskill Center for Conservation and Development • Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy • Catskill Mountain Rail Trail • Center for Discovery • Citizens Against the Pilgrim Pipeline-Saugerties • Climate Justice Alliance • Californians Against Fracking • Coming Clean Collaborative • Concerned Health Professionals of New York • Cornell Cooperative Extension Sullivan County • Cornell Cooperative Extension Tompkins County • Delaware Highlands Conservancy • Delaware Riverkeeper • Earth Guardians New York • Earthjustice • Earthworks • Extreme Energy Extraction Collaborative • Frack Free Catskills • Green Village Initiative • Hudson Riverkeeper • Indigenous Environmental Network • Maurice D. Hinchey Catskill Interpretive Center • Morgans Outdoors • Natural Resources Defense Council • New Yorkers against Fracking • New York-New Jersey Trail Conference • New York State Energy Research and Development Authority • No LNG Coalition • Onondaga Nation • Open Space Institute • Pure Catskills • Sane Energy Project • Shandaken Community Gardens • Sierra Club Mid-Atlantic Chapter • Solutions Project • Stop the Constitution Pipeline • Sullivan County Center for Workforce Development • Sullivan County Public Health Services (WIC Program) • Sullivan County Rural Health Network • Sullivan County Visitors Association • Sullivan Renaissance • Sustainable Hudson Valley • Transitions Woodstock • Water Defense • Woodstock Land Conservancy • Woodstock Transition NY

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Catskill Mountainkeeper programs are made possible thanks to the generous financial support of our friends and stakeholders, and so we hope you will consider making a tax-deductible gift to help power our team in the coming year.

Our Trustees oversee stewardship of all gifts to Mountainkeeper, and we are proud that 95 cents out of every dollar contributed goes directly to fund the work of our programs to protect our natural heritage and empower communities.

Ways to Give

You can make a secure online credit card donation at:
WWW.CATSKILLMOUNTAINKEEPER.ORG/DONATIONS

– or –

send a check made out to Catskill Mountainkeeper along with your name and address to:

**CATSKILL MOUNTAINKEEPER
PO BOX 1000
LIVINGSTON MANOR, NY 12758**

To make a gift of securities or donate by wire transfer, please call us at 845.439.1230 for instructions.

Please consider providing meaningful legacy support of our work for years to come by including a gift to Mountainkeeper in your will or trust, or through your retirement or life insurance plan.

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Special thanks to Jeff Yin, Susan Emmet Reid, Stephen Mills, and Rita Barol for donating their expertise



Catskill Mountainkeeper
P.O. Box 1000
47B Main Street
Livingston Manor, NY 12758



CatskillMountainkeeper.org
(845) 439-1230
info@catskillmountainkeeper.org

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