

A Preliminary Assessment of Local Biodiversity Conservation in the HHH

Update on Stream Conservation Project



Irvington, Mt. Kisco, Somers,
Ossining, and Peekskill too!

More ELLA News

- We need your help!
 - Get PB and TB members involved
 - More results-oriented projects

Why do this?

- To get a handle on what communities are doing
- To look for novel insights or approaches
- To identify gaps in coverage
- To begin to think about a regional approach to conserving biodiversity

How did we do this?

- A LOT of time on the internet
- Phone calls

What did we look at?

- The legal approaches
 - A wetlands ordinance
 - What was actually protected
 - A stream ordinance
 - Steep slope protection
 - Any type of biodiversity standards
 - LOCALLY designated Critical Environmental Areas

What did we look at?

- Planning and Education
 - Did town have a comp plan
 - Updated within the last 5 years
 - Were there dedicated open space funds
 - Open Space Commission (OSC)
 - Was there a Conservation Board
 - Any sort of biodiversity training or regional planning
 - Hudsonia BAT, MCA Plans

How did we make sense of all of this?

- 1 point give for:
 - Comp plan updated within 5 years
 - Wetlands law
 - Wetland less than 0.5 acre protected
 - Stream law that protected intermittent streams
 - Buffer greater than 100 feet
 - Steep slope law
 - Habitat Assessment Guidelines
 - Biodiversity training
 - Biodiversity plan
 - Conservation Board
 - Open Space Commission
 - Dedicated Open Space funds
 - Locally designated CEAs

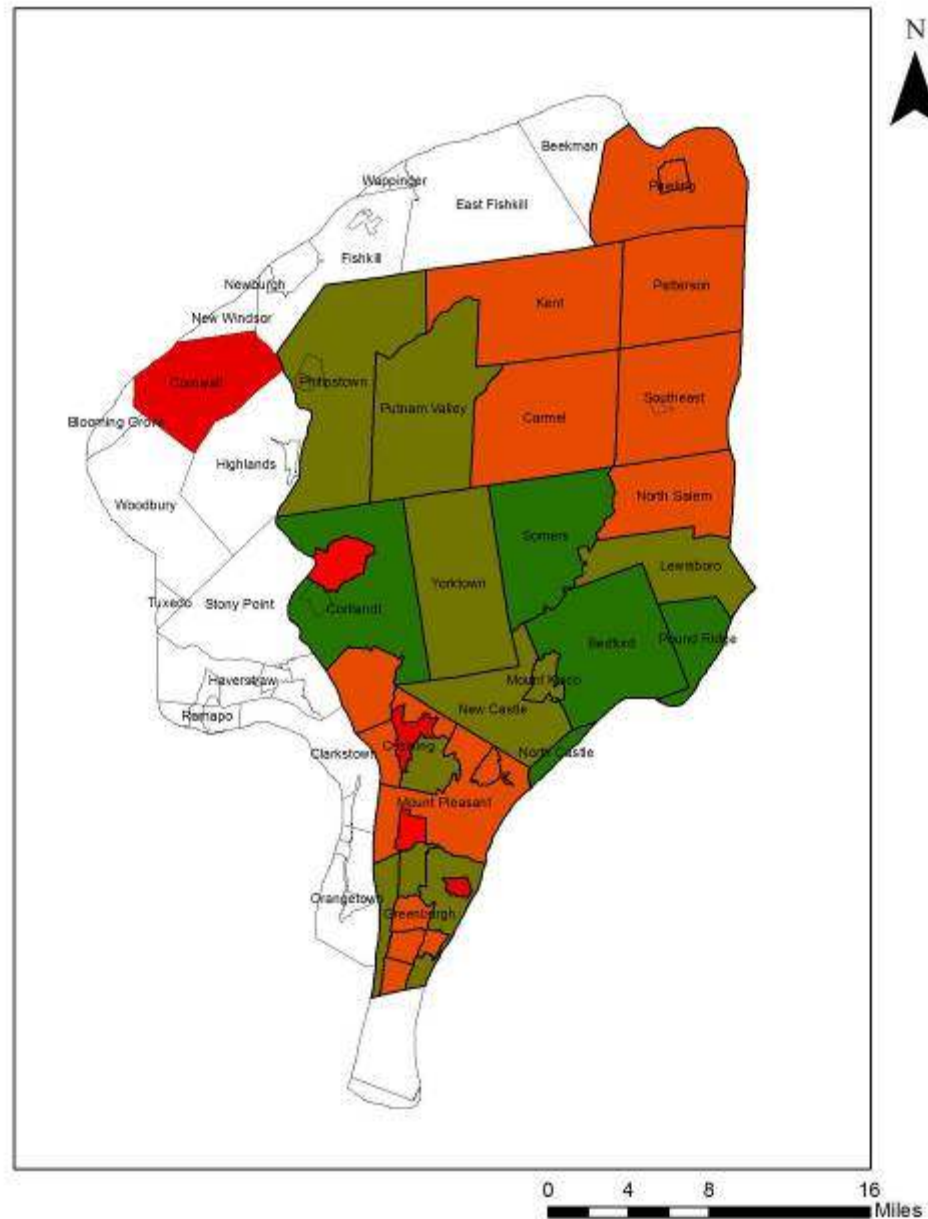
**Max of 13
points**

What did we find?

- Average score was 5
- Max was 10 (two towns) and minimum was 0 (4 towns)
- Towns generally scored higher than Villages/Cities
- Towns with lower population densities and higher income levels scored higher

Preliminary Biodiversity "Scores" for the HHH

Red = 0-2
Orange = 3-5
Olive = 6-8
Green = 9-12



The Good News

- 29 out of 33 (88%) municipalities had a wetlands law
 - Stream protection too
- 64% had steep slope protection
- Almost all the towns had a CAC
 - Elmsford, Southeast, Patterson

Areas for Improvement

- More CACs can become Boards
 - Only 12/33 (36%) were Boards
- More towns can form Open Space Committees
 - Only 24%, but 40% had dedicated funds
- Towns can designate CEAS
 - Only 9%
- Update Comp. plans
 - Only 21%
- Increase wetlands buffers
 - Only 24% went over 100 feet
 - Special provisions
- Develop some type of biodiversity assessment guidelines
 - Only 1 town (Cortlandt) had any type of standard
 - Better yet identify most important areas on your own!

Roadblocks to “Greenness”