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# CROTON WATERSHED CLEAN WATER COALITION



***The Days, Months and Years Go By:***

## **WHY UPGRADING SEWER PLANTS IS BETTER THAN RAW SEWAGE DIVERSION**

*By Oreon Sandler, PE  
Federated Conservationists  
of Westchester County*

It is instinctive to want to avoid human and animal waste in our drinking water. But, human waste is processed now in 107-wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) in the three watersheds, have been for almost a hundred years, and these outputs are sufficiently cleansed to eliminate the fear of disease. All these 107 plants are being upgraded now at NYC DEP expense. The output liquid, called effluent, will meet the more stringent US EPA Clean Water Act specifications for the year 2010 and thereby meet NYC DEP's quality demands for our drinking water.

If you seek the facts, you will find in the NYC DEP data that there are more harmful bacteria from animal wastes in the Catskill and Delaware water than in the Croton water. Croton water quality today seems to be misunderstood because too many facts are simply not known or ignored. My attitude comes from the NYC DEP website <http://www.nyc.gov/dep>. Look for the "Search" box and enter "Water Quality." The first set of contaminants to look for is

Cryptosporidium and Giardia. These pathogens from animal wastes are measured weekly at a number of sampling sites. The comparisons of figures for the Cat and Del as compared to the Croton facts are that these pathogens are generally twice as high in the Cat-Del than they are in the Croton. The accusation that people are drinking Croton water with human and animal waste is a serious allegation that isn't backed up with the data. There has been no problem in any

of the three watersheds by tracing human illness due to these pathogens, even for those with immune deficiencies.

The facts shown on the NYC DEP website indicate that the serious problem in the Croton is phosphorus, not the bacteria from human and animal wastes that everyone fears. Phosphorus is an entirely different problem and it is primarily from storm water runoff, typically called "non-point source." That is the overriding problem that needs solving, not diversion from these three upgraded plants. The Croton is impaired by excessive phosphorus and it is more serious than

phosphorus loading in the Cat-Del.

There are many who feel that phosphorus from WWTPs (point source) is the culprit. However, a joint DEP/DEC report recently on phosphorus loads to all the reservoirs stated that 85% of phosphorus loading to all the reservoirs came from storm water runoff (non-point) sources, not WWTPs.

The problem is that phosphorus promotes the growth of algae. When the algae subsequently die, the decaying process creates excessive carbon in the water, and that leads to another purported reason to build the big chemical

filtration plant on the Croton water supply. This free carbon combines with the chlorine from the chlorination process to create by-products, some of which are thought to be carcinogenic.

As algae deteriorate, the decaying process also consumes dissolved oxygen from the water, so the water body has less dissolved oxygen than that which fish would like, a condition called "hypoxia." We must get the phosphorus level

***Croton water quality today seems to be misunderstood because too many facts are simply not known or ignored.***

down to reduce the growth of algae. That is from storm water, not wastewater treatment plants.

The “home run” for both increased carbon and reduced dissolved oxygen is reducing phosphorus by reducing storm water runoff locations, 200 of which have been identified by John Keane and his Trout Unlimited crew. That effort would go a long way towards reducing algae growth in the reservoirs and improve the water quality. Westchester County has this point-source obsession and is missing the more serious phosphorus that is the Croton problem. The County should devote their energy and EOH funds to fixing the storm water runoff locations.

The provocative statement that “those folks in the Bronx and (Spanish) Harlem are drinking water polluted by human waste” is simply not true. The statement might get your attention, but it is one of many statements that have been promoted by Westchester County officials and others to frighten the public into the belief that this sewage diversion is necessary. The New Croton reservoir volume has been estimated to vary from 26 to 30 billions gallons at any one time. This little stream from the Yorktown WWTP is a rather small trickle at 1.5 million gallons per day. No one promotes dilution as a solution but this Yorktown plant output is simply too small to create a problem.

The Bronx and Harlem distribution piping is known to be the main source of discolored water. According to a leading water quality expert (Mark LeChevallier), in remarks made to the US EPA Stage 2 Microbial and Disinfection’s by-product health effects workshop, in 1999: “risks from distribution systems may be more important than risks from inadequately treated water - e.g., sewer lines adjacent to distribution systems lines may be a much bigger issue than poor quality water sources, depending on how well the distribution system is managed. The distribution system is a negative health effects contributor, possible greater on the east coast, because the systems are older.

Another provocative statement is that Westchester County administration and the NYS Attorney General office are racists. That is another leap. No one is calling anyone a racist even though this project has such a direct impact on these communities. It does seem unjust to take the sewage from upscale communities and dump it into the towns with minority and lower income folks. Moreover, they tell me that the Peekskill and Yonkers folks feel they weren’t in on the planning process for this diversion project, which is also unjust.

Why I opposed sewage diversion - it is all based on facts, and environmental protection, not emotion! Growth sewage diversion will harm the water reservoirs we are trying to protect. Sewer plants are being upgraded everywhere else to meet 2010 CWA standards. Subsequent damage from sewage diversion will be devastating to our drinking water. The long-term logic is the issue, not the short term.

***Subsequent damage from sewage diversion will be devastating to our drinking water. The long-term logic is the issue, not the short term.***

Sewage responsibility belongs in Yorktown and New Castle where it is created, not in Hudson River towns. Effluent from upgraded tertiary (3 step) plants as is planned for these three plants is substantially cleaner than what the WC secondary (2 step) plants produce. Why pollute the Hudson River unnecessarily? Upgrading preserves wetlands, streams and biotics as other E groups promote.

Homeowners pay substantially less to upgrade their individual onsite wastewater treatment system and the three plants in Yorktown and New Castle.

WC has seven wastewater treatment plants and most of these plants need to be modernized and automated before more raw sewage is added by this diversion scheme.

One of the most egregious cases of CWA violations at the Farm Settlement Yeshiva in New Castle could have been solved at least a decade

ago with a clustered aerobic onsite wastewater treatment system behind each building. The costs they would have incurred over this long period of negotiation would have been far less than what they have to invest now. And if they solve their violations on their own property with this suggestion, they avoid County annual sewer taxes forever.

Westchester County will implement additional and substantial raw sewage diversion phases if this first phase is consummated and their proposed underground pipes installed. All that will then be required is for developers in their new development for subdivisions, roads, and strip malls to simply collect sewage from all their new projects to one point, put in a new lift or pumping station to add more raw sewage to this diversion line. Then we will get even more pollution in the Hudson River.

These other County diversion phases will start the cycle all over again to accommodate the harmful sprawl development of northern Westchester. Then, we have higher density there also with more storm water runoff, more phosphorus in the water reservoirs, and that will

be a detriment of the Croton Watershed and to our drinking water quality.

There are many E groups opposing this diversion plan such as the Sierra Club, Corlandt Watch, Scenic Hudson, CWCWC and CEEP. Although Riverkeeper originally supported the concept of diversion, they have since added four demands for their support such as no future sprawl and no expansion of the Peekskill plant. These demands will be violated by the County's plans, in my opinion, as the County has rarely enforced the Clean Water Act violations. Riverkeeper will probably withdraw their support when these facts become known.

We must stand firm in protecting our water quality by insisting that the Yorktown plant and the two New Castle plants be properly upgraded in the same manner that over 100 other plants are being upgraded. NYC DEP will finance that solution according to the 1997 agreement signed by the County and NYC DEP. Homeowners will pay far less with Onsite Waste Treatment Systems. ■

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## **LESSONS IN SURVIVAL**

*by Suzannah Glidden*  
*Hands Across the Border*

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**F**ounded in the watershed town of North Salem (Westchester County), N.Y., and, more specifically, the lake community of Peach Lake, Hands Across the Border (HAB) has witnessed firsthand what many lake communities are struggling with—the pressures on infrastructure and water use that the change from a seasonal summer resort to that of a full-time, year-round community brings.

The group, seeing the need for further study of the best way to approach wastewater treatment in the community, then advocated for and eventually secured a wastewater study for Peach Lake. The study will be funded by East of Hudson (EOH) water quality funds and is recently underway. Hands Across the Border, along with Peach Lake Environmental Committee, DEP, Westchester and

Putnam County Planning comprise the study's Task Force.

HAB has also been extensively involved in the debate over the topic of sewage diversion, again advocating for appropriate studies to take place before expensive or one-sided decisions are made. After much debate and with a majority of Westchester Board of Legislators against diversion, a study of alternatives and the negative impacts of diversion has been approved and the Request for Proposal for it is being formulated. Simultaneously approved was the formation of the Citizens' Advisory Council to overview and input on the study process co-chaired by Marian Rose.

In the past year, HAB has been cited by the N.Y. State Assembly for its work on diversion; it also received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Westchester Board of Legislators in "recognition for Suzannah Glidden's outstanding contributions



for protecting the environment” and a Community Service award from the Peekskill (N.Y.) NAACP in “grateful appreciation of her service and devotion in the field of Environmental Justice.”

Her work with HAB and CWCWC provided enough experience for Suzannah to accept the request to run for Councilmember in North Salem on a Democratic ticket in a Republican stronghold. Her running mates were 11-year Councilmember Cynthia Curtis who was running for supervisor and Joel Fishman for councilmember. The ticket stood for environment protection and fiscal conservatism versus commercial development and government spending.

She received endorsements from *The Journal-*

*News and The Patent-Trader*. In spite of a tough few months, paralleled by the experience of fellow CWCWC board member Paul Moskowitz who was also running for office in his town of Yorktown, it was a large learning experience.

“We drew 46% of the vote, Cynthia 47%. I would say that the close results are substantive enough to put the long-term incumbency of the Sy Globerman administration on notice and to give hope to the candidates of the next election that victory is rightly attainable. I salute fellow environmentalists who ran and stood up for the issues that matter so dearly to all of us, and I hope for victories in all of our environment protection efforts.” ■

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## ***RETURN OF THE CONCERNED ALIEN*** ***from intercepted intergalactic e-mail***



*by David Ferguson*  
*HCFC*

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**D**ear Alpha - Here's some recent observations for your anthropology report. Once again, humanoid propose to dismantle a critical element of their life support system. As they say, "Wetlands are paved with good intentions." It seems to be part of a game they play called, "Form a Committee to Connect the Dots," often played after a disaster [of some sort].

- Ancient glaciers left the Croton a gift of soils and geology, an ideal natural filter.

- Croton water meets all health-based standards and is of higher quality than many filtered water supplies.
- An acronym called DEP, charged with protecting the water supply, stated that regulation of development would be "less stringent" with a filtration plant.
- Humanoid scientists established that increases as little as 10% in impervious surface — roads, parking lots, lawns, golf courses, buildings — damage the water bodies they drain into with many pollutants that filtration doesn't remove.

- We observe worried humanoids, known as developers, fearing regulations would stop new projects if no water filtration plant is at the terminus of the watershed to clean up all the pollutants flowing from the impervious surfaces they want to install.
- Yet all the governing acronyms, EPA, DEC and DEP, insist they will protect the watershed just as much with a filtration plant as without one.
- During very bad economic times, the City found \$243 million to improve parks in what's called "the Bronx," to be paid for by humanoids in other boroughs, where park budgets have been slashed, all because an official humanoid who represents those living around the park where DEP wants to build this huge plant, refused to allow the park to be "alienated." So DEP dangled \$200+ million of park improvements, enticing other Bronx leaders to support park alienation.
- During prosperous times, New York, one of the biggest cities in the world, could only find \$10 million to buy land to protect the whole Croton watershed, 20 times less than the City found to bribe communities not directly affected by the plant.
- Occasionally, some humanoids find the color of the water unattractive and the arch overseers called EPA will be raising the standards for certain by-products of disinfection. But there is another disinfectant, chlorine dioxide, that would eliminate color and meet future EPA standards. It is used in places on earth such as Europe, Canada and states called Texas, Washington and New York. And it requires no huge, \$1.5 billion filtration plant, but an estimated cost of \$100 to \$300 million. Using it here in the Bronx would prevent destruction of 300 mature trees and contamination of air

breathed by Bronx humanoids greatly afflicted with a lung disease called asthma.

- The plant will need enough power to run a small town, contributing to global warming, trapping energy in the atmosphere causing violent storms that endanger water supplies.
- The plant would concentrate pollutants at a choke point vulnerable to humanoid and mechanical failure as well as to terrorism.

*Far be it from me to tell you why these humanoids want to pay so much more for so much less protection, but there seem to be arrangements, that have so far eluded observation, allowing governing acronyms to favor a few humanoids who profit from paving the water source over the 9 million humanoids who drink and pay for that water..*

Far be it from me to tell you why these humanoids want to pay so much more for so much less protection, but there seem to be arrangements, that have so far eluded observation, allowing governing acronyms to favor a few humanoids who profit from paving the water source over the 9 million humanoids who drink and pay for that water. It appears to be a form of government where the more money you have, the more votes you can buy. The more votes you buy, the more money you have and so on. This brings on a condition where certain humanoids, like cells in a body politic, mutate, sending out erroneous instructions to produce what they call cancer, consuming the body that nourishes it.

Without doubt, an odd bunch. Where else in the galaxy are there beings with the ingenuity and foresight to construct a marvelous system of reservoirs and aqueducts, yet can't see that piece by piece destruction of this most valuable gift of safe, affordable water will come back to haunt

them unto their children's children? You might end your report with a quote from our Book of Books: Vengeance is mine, sayeth mother nature - in tears.

Salutations from your humble progenitor,

*U. Beta I. M. Curious*



# **THE BRONX'S POLITICAL LANDSCAPE**

**(the only landscape that will be left if the DEP gets its way)**

*by Fay Muir*

*Norwood Community Action*

With Bronx residents mounting strong opposition to the DEP proposal to site the water treatment plant at Harlem River, the local political figures worked hard to help defeat it. However, several months later, these very same political figures were found at the table, brokering a deal with DEP to support Van Cortlandt Park as a site if \$200 million [final figure: \$243 million] were allocated for parks improvement. Dealing with this type of chicanery makes for an uphill battle. Many meetings with the Borough President, Adolfo Carrion, with officials from the community and others within and without the Bronx, as well as with the City Council, forced site selection to broaden to at least three sites.

During this time, Mayor Bloomberg also revealed his disrespect for the law, when he responded to a question about Van Cortlandt Park, by saying "the EIS is not gonna stop this [the building of the chemical filtration/treatment plant]." So, the preferred site is evident, although not official. The upcoming steps for the

site include the Environmental Impact Statement and the Uniform Land Use Review Process [see the Oct./Nov. '03 issue.]

What will be our on-going strategy to combat political malfeasance and to triumph with alternatives to filtration? Continue to arm ourselves and others with information and educate as many people as possible on the science and the politics of the Croton filtration plant. I have worked with the Powerpoint presentation for Bronx audiences, working alongside one of our new Coalition members, Clean Water for the Bronx. We hope residents and officials alike will benefit from this and work with us to defeat the proposed water treatment plant for the Croton.

It has been a memorable year assisting other members of the Board with their battles and joining with them in stream monitoring. The data collected has helped DEC as well as town officials to fight development. On a final note for '03, I look back on this year with bittersweet feelings on the beautiful tribute to Jim Roberts and hope he is still guiding us wherever he may be. ■

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## **CADDISFLIES, MAYFLIES, AND STONEFLIES TAKE THE STAND**

*by Liz Hoskinson*

*Croton Watershed Clean Water Coalition*

A new vista opened to CWCWC, when in 2002, the organization initiated a local stream-monitoring program. With the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) badly understaffed, and waterways subsequently remaining unprotected and unmonitored, with no or little documentation of their health status, the CWCWC stream monitoring program, a brainchild of Marian Rose, would fill this gap and provide data for city and state agencies. This program would be in



keeping with the mission of CWCWC, since the streams and rivers that permeate Westchester and Putnam counties are the underpinnings of the outstanding Croton water.

Dr. Rose was definitely on to something. With a one-day intensive training course provided by Hudson Basin River Watch (HBRW) and Mianus Gorge Preservation, and with results to be recognized by the NYSDEC, nearly

15 volunteers were able to don waders, man a net and begin the stream monitoring process. Since that day in October, CWCWC has tested more

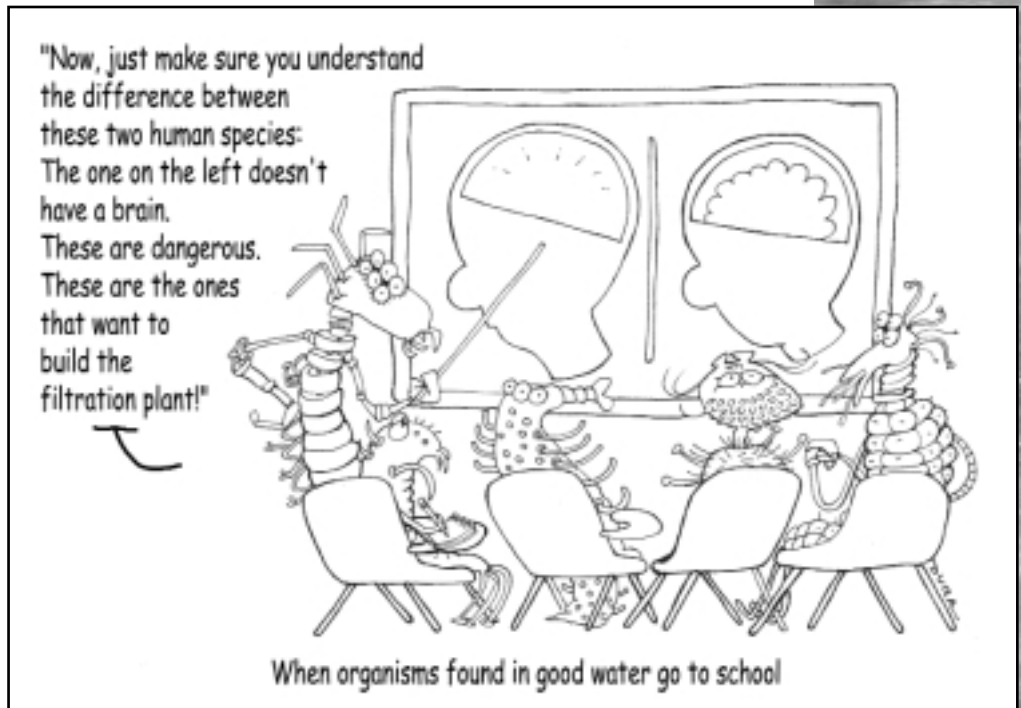
than four streams in the two counties. The samples are scrutinized for 'benthic macroinvertebrates,' or BMIs, the small creatures that call the stream home and whose relative abundance or paucity indicate stream health. Results have been utilized already in town planning meetings, and have been used to indicate baseline health of several streams whose futures are under a cloud due to developer encroachment.

Happily, many of the sites have shown a robust BMI population -- with a healthy population of caddisflies, stoneflies and mayflies -- and few of the inhabitants that a compromised stream can host, such as worms and crayfish. The streams also are relatively untouched by human activity, and are well-forested (second growth) and with thick undergrowth of bushes and grasses.

Before coming to a close, it is quite important to mention that the program has been the success it has been largely because of our outstanding volunteers, who have responded to CWCWC outreaches and have been invaluable to the program. We thank you - you know who you are! - and so hope you will continue to help us. CWCWC is planning to test in the spring of '04 and onward. Suggestions for

sites are always welcome, and anyone who would like to work on the program is equally welcome! Contact the CWCWC office for additional information.

Please attend a meeting on December 22 at Marian Rose's house, at which Natara Feller, a stream-monitoring expert from HBRW, will explain the intricacies of the chemical analysis of streams. CWCWC'S volunteers plan to apply this knowledge to the further monitoring of the Angle Fly Brook and its tributaries in Somers, N.Y. For further information, please call the CWCWC office at 914-234-6470. ■



## **ENGLISH AS A TRULY FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

### **A Guide for Native Speakers**

*By Marian Rose, PhD*  
*Croton Watershed Clean Water Coalition*

In order to assist the average citizen in understanding NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) interpretation of the English language, here are a few examples that we hope will prove helpful:

#### **Filtration Plant**

DEP's imagery is that of a benign method of cleaning water by allowing it to trickle through clean sand.

- In reality, it is a huge, 8- to 10-acre industrial facility housing upwards of 400,000 gallons of chemicals all labeled "hazardous" by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- If sited under the Mosholu golf course in Van Cortlandt Park (the Bronx), DEP's preferred site, it would cost upward of \$1.3 billion. The other two sites under consideration (Harlem River in the Bronx and Eastview, in Westchester County) would cost several hundred million more.
- Selection of the Mosholu site would entail the

destruction of a mature forest, and the blasting of a 100-foot hole into the bedrock over a period of 5 years. The devastating effects of such blasting on the neighboring community, which has among the highest asthma rates in the U.S., are hard to imagine.

- The plant would consume enough electrical power to satisfy the needs of a town of 50,000 residents. No back-up generator is included in the site plans; thus, after drawing heavily on an already over-taxed power supply, it will render neighborhood after neighborhood without water in times of blackouts. Can the City support this sort of social havoc?
- The Eastview site would mean the destruction of wetlands and forested areas. The considerable amount of effluent carrying chemical waste products would be sent to the already over-burdened Yonkers Sewage Treatment Plant on the Hudson where it would receive only secondary treatment.
- Eastview will also be the site for the proposed UV facility for the Cat/Del System. Is it wise to expose [assemble] all of NYC's future water disinfection facilities together in one spot?



### “Required Cost” of Choosing the Mosholu Site

To quote from page 18 of DEP’s Response to Public Comments on the Draft Scope for the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Croton Plant: “If the WTP were sited in Mosholu, the \$43 million in ULURP/SEQRA mitigation and the \$200 Million in acquisition/improvements to Bronx parks would be paid from *water rates* (emphasis added). This is justified as a *required cost* (emphasis added) of choosing the Mosholu site...”

As widely reported in the press, Bronx politicians were extremely reluctant to agree to the Mosholu site until Mayor Bloomberg offered them the \$243 million deal.

To the average, politically naïve citizen, the mayor’s offer might sound like the sort of thing one expects to occur in what we consider to be less desirable countries. In plain, non-DEP language, the mayor’s offer, the “required cost,” has all the attributes of a bribe. Ratepayers throughout the City will bear the cost

of the bribe. Those in the lowest income brackets will be most affected, through proportionally higher costs and poorer water quality. During a presentation made by DEP at the DeWitt Clinton High School on January, 31, 2003, Commissioner Ward stated: “There is a cost associated with building our water system. There is a cost that we all end up paying. And, without a doubt, today, the water system and its rates have a regressive effect on low-income households.”

### Filtration of the Croton is Needed to Protect Public Health

DEP’s April, 2003, flyer describing the NYC water supply system states: “NYC’s drinking water is of superior quality and meets all State and federal health-related standards. Color, an aesthetic condition (emphasis added), in the

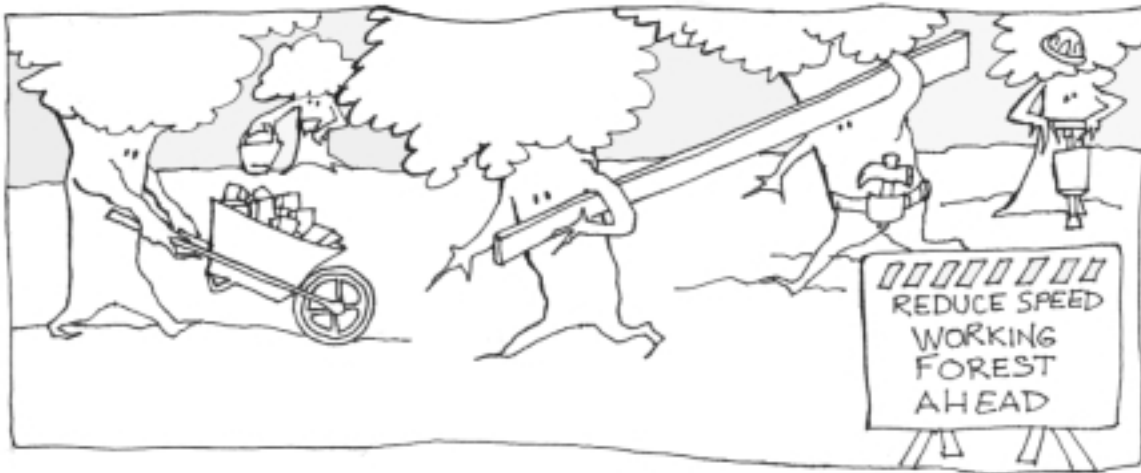
Croton and Groundwater Systems, may exceed the standard on a seasonal basis...” Interestingly, Croton waters have significantly less *cryptosporidium* and *giardia* than either the Catskill or Delaware systems. We recall that it was the 1993 disaster in Milwaukee when several hundred thousand people took ill with

cryptosporidiasis and more than 100 died, that largely drove the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to demand that all above-surface water supplies be filtered unless they could show compliance with strict regulations. Despite the higher levels of crypto, the Catskill/Delaware system is not being filtered

We recall that under New York State regulations, a filtration plant would allow for less protection of the watershed reservoirs and make development easier. Construction unions have thrown their considerable clout into lobbying for the plant. Building a plant would provide jobs for the unions and facilitate development in the watershed, a boon for realtors and developers, [but a permanent bust for area residents].

So, why is a \$1.3+ billion plant being proposed to solve a simple color problem when there are other, far less costly ways to take care of it? We leave the conclusion to our readers. ■





## **IS THE CLOCK RUNNING DOWN ON PROTECTING THE FORESTS THAT PROTECT OUR WATERSHED?**

*By Ann Fanizzi*

*Putnam County Coalition to Preserve Open Space*

In past issues, I have written extensively concerning the devastating residential and commercial developments that have occurred or have been proposed for Eastern Putnam County. However, this year, a new vocabulary has now entered our lexicon: “working forests,” “managed forests,” “Model Forests.” No longer viewed for their intrinsic value as protectors of biodiversity and water, forests have now taken a utilitarian function as economic goods, with their value calculated proportionally to their contribution to the economic mix.

Forests are ubiquitous in Putnam - all around us, framing our land, streams, lakes and reservoirs. They have been taken for granted, as we admired the beauty, giving visible evidence of the change of seasons, incomparable vistas and untold opportunities for active and passive recreation for both residents and visitors alike. Foremost, they have stood as ready guardians of our watershed.

But our forests are being threatened. First by development: Located in the Croton Watershed

and impacting the Middle Branch and Muscoot Reservoirs are Meadows at Deans Corners; Weston Chase; Campus at Fields Corners; the mega-retail center, 360,000-square-foot/Brewster Highlands; and the 495,000-square-foot industrial/warehouse/senior citizen town park known as Terravest, pose incalculable threats to the watershed. And in the wings are the coming

developments in Carmel: Camarda Park; Carmel Corporate Park; the Fairways and the Gateway/Summit Hotel Conference Center, whose impact will change the landscape of Carmel forever. Each of these developments required or will require eradication of huge acres of forest land, protectors of the Croton watershed.

Second by unexpected sources: private landowners. Private landowners, seeking economic gain from logging, are in the process of obtaining approvals to “thin” their forests, which many residents fear is a prelude to development.

Third by the DEC: This state agency recently added Mt. Nimham StatePark/ Multiple Use Area, a 1,000-acre swath in Kent comprising the Hudson Highlands

and impacting the West Branch to its three other “Model Forests” state sites. Designated experimental, the DEC’s Mt. Nimham “Model

***No longer viewed for their intrinsic value as protectors of biodiversity and water, forests have now taken an utilitarian function as economic goods, with their value calculated proportionally to their contribution to the economic mix.***

Forest” Plan proposes to deforest 40-60% of an 87-acre tract. Its purpose is to study the effect of various “silviculture” treatments on water quality and supply. Although outside the Croton, the announcement by the DEP that it also plans to harvest timber in the Cat/Del watershed and will lease lands in Western New York State for oil and gas exploration are further indications that economic gain has now taken center stage in policy decisions.

Alarms have been raised in both a January 3, 2003, news article by Mike Dombeck and by reports issued by the World Bank and the World Wildlife Fund that there is an inextricable connection between the preservation of forests and their watershed function. “Time is running out,” cautions the 114-page, “Running Pure” World Bank report. “Protecting forests around water catchment areas is no longer a luxury but a

necessity. When they are gone, the costs of providing clean and safe drinking water to urban areas will increase dramatically.” Given the looming water-scarcity crisis not only in our county but worldwide, we would do well to heed Domeck “The focus should be on how to let our forests do their job of producing high quality water ...given our water-supply problems, this should be the highest priority of forest management.”

In this small corner of the world, Putnam County, the tension between forest preservation, forest management and viability of the watershed is now being played out. It is a complex, nuanced issue, and currently lacking scientific consensus. Obviously, this issue, with its hidden pitfalls and competing pressures, will bring new challenges to the work of CWCWC and the Coalition to Preserve Open Space .■

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## ***STILL BUZZING THE AIRPORT***

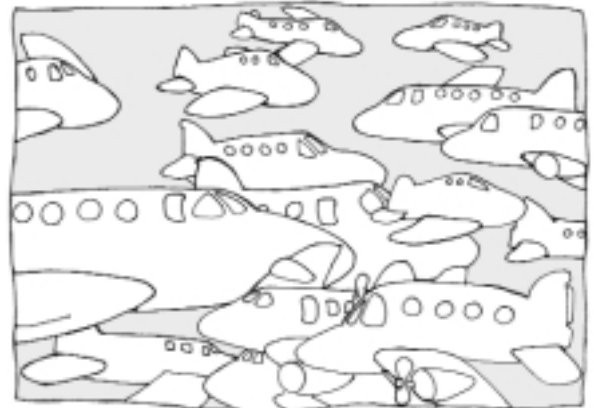
*By Karen Shultz*  
*Audubon -- Bronx River/South Shore*

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***Your action is needed to protect the drinking water for nearly half the population of New York State from the constant threat of Westchester County Airport Expansion.***

**T**he Westchester County Board of Legislators has passed a momentous resolution for non-expansion of the Westchester County Airport. We are especially delighted with the County Legislator’s press release of October 6, 2003, announcing the intentions of this resolution. This articulated the legislators’ encompassing policy and clearly stated that this resolution “is a clear and unequivocal statement of board policy - absolutely no more growth, no more expansion at the Westchester County Airport. Period. End of discussion.”

Although the legislators have promised a “no more growth” policy, any protection from additional flights was deliberately taken out of the original resolution that was first written by County Legislator George Latimer and signed on to by Michael Kaplowitz, Marty Rogowsky, and Sue Swanson. The reason that this was taken out



of the original resolution, according to Rogowsky, is that they wanted to wait until after the 2004 negotiations of the Terminal Capacity Agreement..

This agreement, also known as the TCA agreement, only covers about 20% of the airport. Since 80% of the airport can have unchecked growth, we should be concerned about any protection of 100% of the airport now. Since the legislators have control over leases and subleases at the airport, we would expect the legislators to make sure that any leases or subleases protect us from additional planes and flight capacities. We all need to specifically ask the legislators to please put this protection in place immediately,

as we are concerned that this kind of expansion could take place before the TCA agreement is in place.

Airports are about airplanes. If there is no protection from more flights at this airport, then the Kensico Reservoir, which is only 250 yards away, will be at further risk from increased pollution. This reservoir supplies 85 % of Westchester and 90% of New York City with safe, affordable water. By today's environmental standards, no airport would be allowed to be built 250 yards from the drinking water supply of 9 million New Yorkers. An increase in flights would only increase the likelihood of accidents and spills into the reservoir.

We need to help the legislators achieve the goals of no expansion now, during and after the TCA negotiations, because, despite the good intentions of the resolution for no growth, if there are larger companies, new airlines, anything representing more planes in the sky, we will have lost the battle of NO-GROWTH.

Increasing flights at night is the easiest way for this airport to expand. The policy of closed parking garages at night has always been under the control of the county legislators. Please ask the legislators to reinstate the curfew on the parking garage except for security vehicles, thus

discouraging the public from flying at night.

We must ensure that the county legislator policy resolution becomes a reality by making sure that the FAA and the aviation industry realize that this is a unique situation. Westchester County Airport cannot be treated like other airports in this country because it is uniquely adjacent (250 yards) from the drinking water of nine million people. It is imperative that the aviation industry and the FAA recognize and support the no expansion mandate to protect the integrity of the Kensico reservoir.

State Assemblyman Adam Bradley is going to introduce a resolution for a no expansion policy at this airport but he needs your help to get it passed.

Your actions can help: (1) Please write to Assemblyman Thomas P. DiNapoli, Chair of the Environmental Committee, and ask him to pass Mr. Bradley's resolution in the New York State Assembly calling for a permanent freeze of the footprint and capacity of the Westchester County Airport, with no additional flights, gates, hangars, parking or heavier planes. His address is: 837 Legislative Office Building, Albany, NY 12248. (2) Please also call your local Assemblyperson. The main number is (518) 462-6805. Thank you! ■

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## ***Some memories of my inaugural year with CWCWC...***

*By Steve Kaplan, PhD  
Clearwater*

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**W**orked with Marian to purchase a computer, software, and projector for presentations ... helped to strategize against mindlessly diverting sewage to Yonkers and Peekskill for the ostensible reason of "saving the watershed," while the real reason is for political expediency and growth. A number of CWCWC coalition members and other people joined hands in a coalition for sensible sewage policy with Hands Across the Border, NAACP, INTERLOC, Sierra Club, CEEP, and Clearwater ...

... Assisted in the use of the computer, software and projector for developing presentations with Oreon Sandler, Drew Claxton, Marian Rose and Suzannah Glidden. These presentations were made to the Westchester Board of Legislature, town and county

officials, and citizens in Peekskill, Yorktown, New Castle, Yonkers, and at the Board of Legislators in White Plains ...

... All of us together helped successfully to convince Mike Kaplowitz, legislator from Yorktown, New Castle and Somers, to at least appear more even-handed on diversion vs. upgrades ... I made an inspection trip with Oreon Sandler and others to view septic system upgrades to see if such upgrades could be helpful in avoiding some sewage diversions ... participated in one stream monitoring, and hope to do more this spring ... I attended many public meetings on Route #120; the Airport; Meadows and Deans' Corners; and Terravest, among others, submitted comments and speaking at some of these meetings.

It has been quite a ride. I suspect 2004 might be even more of one, but I know now to fasten my seatbelt. ■



OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2003

*Wishing you a peaceful and  
joyous holiday season*

*Your friends at CWCWC*



**Our Water, Our Future**

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Water Coalition  
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