TOWN OF CORTLANDT MASTER PLAN

CHAPTER 4: NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive and critical areas.

A. INTRODUCTION

Cortlandt is blessed with natural resources that are both diverse and accessible, comprising elements of great value and significant ecological importance. From the Georges and Oscawana Islands on the Hudson River shoreline to the Croton Reservoir and Dam, from Teatown Lake Reservation to the Blue Mountain Preserve and on many other properties, both publicly and privately owned, a network of open space and natural features afford the Town's residents with a unique opportunity to live in one of the most beautiful places in the lower Hudson River Valley.

Together with the possession of these natural resources is the responsibility to be a good steward for lands within the town and an advocate for sound environmental planning. Development and construction can adversely affect natural resources and wildlife habitats. Stormwater runoff from developed areas can cause on- and off-site pollution of groundwater, soils, wetlands, water bodies and watercourses or erosion of steep slopes and stream banks. Leachate from septic systems, runoff from lawns including fertilizers, pesticides and animal wastes and runoff from roads containing salts, oil, and gasoline and engine coolant are all potential sources of pollution.

Croton River Gorge in Croton-on-Hudson

Conservation design is a relatively recent planning technique which Cortlandt has embraced in substantive ways. The implementation of Wetlands, Steep Slopes and Tree Cutting Ordinances have all served to help protect these natural resources and to call public attention to these important issues. Recent upgrades in the EPA's Stormwater regulations established important guidelines for the Town to follow. The Master Plan calls for a continuing review of all regulations written for the protection of the Town's natural resources to make these regulations compatible with best engineering practices and the latest science available. This will provide for flexibility in design to address the environmental sensitivity and minimize the impacts of development within the Town and to provide for long range maintenance and management of these natural resources. Development can and should be planned in such a way, that to the greatest extent possible, the Town maintains high quality of its water resources and soils and continues to provide a natural habitat for its native wildlife.

B. BASE STUDIES SUMMARY

1. Existing Town Legislation

The Town of Cortlandt Code currently has various pieces of legislation to conserve and/or protect natural resources as follows:

- Chapter 175: Flood Damage Prevention
- Chapter 179; Wetlands, Water Bodies and Watercourses
- Chapter 253; Sludge and Hazardous Material
- Chapter 259; Steep Slopes
- Chapter 283; Tree Cutting
- Chapter 301; Diversion of Watercourses
- Chapter 307; Zoning for Cluster Development, Aquifer Protection District and Special Reuse and Conservation Development

As identified in the updated Base Studies, the inventory of natural resources in the Town of Cortlandt generally includes geology, topography, soils, biodiversity, wetlands, water resources, vegetation and wildlife. Local geologic deposits found in the bedrock formations include emery, granite and limestone, which were the source of early mining activities conducted in various areas of the Town. The Town's topographic features include steep slopes on mountains and hillsides; and low-lying wetland areas all within a variety of drainage basins with streams connecting to the New York City watershed and/or directly to the Hudson River. Several kinds of soil types are found in the Town of Cortlandt, most of which are glacial in origin.

Developed areas of the Town have experienced changes in soil characteristics due to the clearing of land and the cutting or filling of the natural topography. The two major drainage basins in the Town are the Upper Hudson River and the Croton River/Croton Reservoir. The many sub-drainage basins include the Peekskill Hollow Brook, Sprout Brook, Furnace Brook and Dickie Brook, among others.

The dominant forest type that covers undeveloped areas in the Town is a mix of deciduous forest, composed of broad-leaved trees and various evergreen species. Depending on soil, ground water and topographic features, the under story of shrubs and ground covers are diverse and provide for a large number of wildlife species. In particular, the Hudson River is an extremely productive estuary that supports an abundant array of wildlife and is one of five designated major Critical Environmental Areas in the Town.

Watershed protection is crucial to the water quality of the Croton Reservoir, the Indian Brook Reservoir, the Croton-on-Hudson Aquifer and the Peekskill Hollow Brook, all of which serve as sources of public drinking water. As required by the New York City Watershed Memorandum of Agreement, the Westchester County Department of Planning in cooperation with the watershed communities is in the process of preparing The Comprehensive Croton Watershed Quality Protection Plan for Westchester County.

Biodiversity science and its application have made major strides in recent years. A current study, "Croton to Highlands Biotic Corridor" project is scheduled for completion in the Spring of 2004. When the study is completed and adopted by the Town Board, its recommendations should be evaluated for possible incorporation into the Town of Cortlandt Master Plan.

C. OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The following objectives and policies are intended to support and augment existing Town policies and to help achieve the goals of protecting environmentally sensitive and critical areas from inappropriate development and to the greatest extent possible, preserving the Town's high quality of its water resources, steep slopes, vegetation, and natural habitat for its native wildlife, including protected, rare and endangered species.

OBJECTIVE: Establish ground and surface water quality control measures and water quality monitoring programs to assess and control non-point source water pollution within all watersheds.

As identified in the base Studies, at least 10 water bodies in Cortlandt are on the list of non-point source nominations pursuant to the New York State Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Control Law and they are:

1) Westchester Lake/Wallace Pond
2) Dickey Brook/Loundsbury Pond
3) Petersons Pond
4) Furnace Dock Lake
5) Furnace Brook from Route 9 West to the Hudson River
6) Lake Meahagh

7) Twin Lakes
8) Colabaugh Pond
9) Cortlandt Lake
10) Peekskill Hollow Brook from the Westchester Putnam Border to the Peekskill Water Supply Intake on Pump House Road.

The major types of nonpoint source pollution in the Town are septic systems and/or sewage treatment plants; lawn chemicals; urban runoff such as soil erosion from improperly contained construction sites or salt and petroleum based residues from roadways and parking lots; and household wastes, such as dishwashing detergent.

Policy 54: Establish a comprehensive program for the cleanup of polluted water bodies.

Through use of the Storm Water Phase II Management Controls in coordination with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Town should implement a comprehensive program for the cleanup of polluted water bodies. It is recommended that this program focus on the control and abatement program for nonpoint sources of pollution and coordinate and utilize County, State and New York City Department of Environmental Protection resources to conduct such a program.

The main objectives of the program would be to:

- Conduct periodic water quality monitoring.
- Develop management programs to mitigate the cause and effects of nonpoint source pollution.
- Keep current the list of polluted water bodies and monitor and test.
- The Town should pursue Hudson River Estuary Plan Funds and other available grants to fund such a control and abatement program for nonpoint sources of pollution.
- Strengthen enforcement of existing regulations to prevent nonpoint source pollution and coordinate with other involved governmental agencies.
- Give top priority for new sewers to the Town's existing higher density areas.
- Work with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection to control and reduce nonpoint sources of pollution within the NYC Watershed for the Croton Reservoir, including implementation of the Comprehensive Croton Watershed Water Quality Protection Plan.
- Work with the City of Peekskill, the Towns of New Castle, Yorktown, Philipstown and Putnam Valley and the Villages of Croton-on-Hudson and Buchanan to control and reduce nonpoint sources of pollution within these municipal watersheds for the protection of public water supplies.
- Reference and require the use of the "Westchester County Best Management Practices" and the "New York State Guidelines for Urban Erosion and Sediment Contro"l to control soil erosion and sedimentation in all new development in the site plan and subdivision regulations including mandating water quality controls for storm water runoff.

- Consider applying new New York City watershed regulations to other areas of the Town.
- As required by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, develop a town-wide storm water management plan.
- Consider regulations to provide for proper maintenance and disposal of domestic and agricultural animal waste. (i.e. pooper-scooper law)
- Educate the public about preventing water pollution by not dumping grass clippings and yard waste in or near wetlands, water bodies and watercourses and by the proper disposal of household chemicals, motor oil, batteries, tires, etc.
- Require the removal of junk and debris from wetlands and wetland buffers.

Policy 55: Adopt stand-alone Storm Water Phase II Management Control Ordinance as recommended by the NYSDEC and EPA.

In order to protect the Town's water resources from an increase in the quantity of runoff and a decrease in the quality of storm water runoff from new impervious surfaces the Town should continue it's implementation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Phase II Storm Water Management Control Ordinance. These new regulations would be added to the Town's Subdivision and Site Development Plan Regulations to require that each new subdivision and site development plan include a storm water management plan. Such a plan would have to mitigate the impact of the proposed land use on water quantity and quality, both on-site and off-site within the receiving watershed. As a reference guide for the new storm water regulations the Town should consider the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Storm water controls. (See Section on Utilities).

Policy 56: Adopt low-impact development and "green building" design standards in the Town's Subdivision and Site Development Plan Regulations.

Low impact development is a method to address on-site storm water management that is being implemented by federal agencies as well as state, county and municipal governments for regulatory compliance and water resource protection.

Low impact storm water development utilizes a combination of planning and design strategies, and conservation approaches and techniques to reduce site development impacts.

The objective of low impact storm water development is to maintain the hydrologic cycle within a project by using small scale Integrated Management Practices (IMPs) throughout a site, on buildings and for infrastructure improvements. Common IMPs include impervious surface reduction and bio-retention (the use of the plant soil complex for storm water management), grass swales, rain gardens, roof gardens, permeable pavers and amended soils.

It is recommended that the Town amend its Zoning Ordinance and its Subdivision and Site Development Plan Regulations to incorporate low impact development and "green building" standards for new development to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces and off site storm water runoff by such methods as shared parking lots and driveways, increasing the amounts of required landscaping, using pervious paving materials and other IMPs.

Policy 57: Evaluate Design and Maintenance of both Municipal and Private Storm water Drainage Systems.

An important element in controlling excessive runoff of sediments and contaminants is the condition and efficacy of the system of catch basins, water quality control basins, detention basins and other storm water controls installed to do the job.

With the establishment of the Town's Geographical Information System, Town owned drainage systems should be inventoried and mapped as part of a regular maintenance program. Simultaneously, the Town should be planning needed improvements to the design and operation of storm water drainage systems.

The design, landscaping and maintenance of storm water drainage systems should be carefully evaluated by the Town, based on best management practices and other local ordinances to provide for ecological function, to mitigate visual impacts and to maintain drainage controls needed for each area.

With the approval of new development, applicants should provide the Town with an electronic copy of plans (including necessary GIS data) for new storm water control structures to add to the Town's database and mapping of infrastructure.

Policy 58: Promote proper maintenance of on-site waste water (septic) systems.

Maintenance of septic systems is necessary to prevent clogged leachate beds, which can result in a breakout of septic waste water to the surface of the ground. Runoff from breakouts can pollute nearby lakes, ponds and streams.

Assuming proper maintenance, septic systems are designed to function adequately for many years, after which repairs or replacement may be necessary. To help ensure that property owners maintain their septic systems properly, the Town should conduct periodic Town-wide public educational programs to inform residents of the need for septic system maintenance and to show them proper maintenance methods. Such a program was conducted by the Save Our Lakes Committee in 1999.

As recommended under Policy #1 a regular testing program of lakes, ponds, streams and groundwater will enable the Town to determine how well septic maintenance programs are working and where problems still remain.

As recommended by the Save Our Lakes Committee, the Town should consider adopting a mandatory septic system maintenance ordinance. Such an ordinance could include the concept that properties with septic systems must show recent maintenance (within the last 2 years) from a Westchester County licensed contractor prior to receiving any new building permits or Certificates of Occupancy from the Town's Department of Technical Services – Code Enforcement Division.

Policy 59: Promote periodic testing of well water.

A public education and testing program should be organized and sponsored by the Town for areas that depend on well water. Homeowners and businesses in these areas should be sent a notification explaining why it is in their interest to have their wells tested. The cost of the testing is relatively inexpensive.

Furthermore, a relatively small number of homes and businesses would be involved. At the same time it would ensure homeowners and businesses that their water is safe to drink and would give the Town valuable information about potential groundwater pollution.

OBJECTIVE: Improve enforcement: evaluate and update local environmental laws to further protect the Town's natural resources.

The Town ordinances regarding ecologically sensitive wetlands, water bodies, watercourses, steep slopes, trees, wildlife, vegetation, biodiversity should be reviewed on a regular basis by Engineering and Planning staff and updated to insure that the ordinances represent the best science and engineering standards available.

Policy 60: Revise the Wetlands, Steep Slopes and Tree Ordinances and require biennial reviews of these ordinances by Town Staff to ensure the are up-to-date.

The following notes are recommendations for the Town's three core environmental ordinances:

Wetlands:

- Prohibit the future use of wetlands for storm water detention to mitigate increased runoff generated by proposed development resulting in potential adverse impacts on water quality and quantity, sedimentation and wetland ecology.
- A "functional assessment" should be required in all applications involving all wetland and wetland buffer disturbances to determine appropriate mitigation.
- Vernal pools should be addressed in the newly revised Wetlands ordinance.
- To protect wetlands from increased storm water runoff, permanent upland sedimentation traps, pollution filters, water quality basins and detention basins should be required between the storm water discharge and wetland buffer areas. These safeguards, recommended by the Westchester County Soil and Water Conservation District, should reduce potential adverse impacts on wetland systems.
- Require wetland delineation for pending development applications to be updated every two (2) years.

- When wetlands disturbances are unavoidable, the approval authority will recommend appropriate mitigation which may include replacing lost wetlands. Mandate the creation of replacement wetlands at a ratio of 1 to 2.0 as mitigation of any loss of existing wetlands and develop standards for the construction, monitoring (for up to 15 years) and maintenance of replacement wetlands.
- The creation of new or replacement wetlands should be located in appropriate areas that to the greatest extent possible avoid disturbance to large trees, steep slopes, rock outcrops and threatened and endangered wildlife species. New wetlands should also consider impacts on existing soil types and drainage patterns.
- Increase the reduction in the lot count formula for wetland buffers to include 50% of the wetland buffer which will also help protect wetlands.
- Strongly discourage disturbances in buffer areas. This will be considered only after it has been proven that encroachments are unavoidable.

Steep Slopes:

- Strongly discourage the disturbance on steep slope areas over 30% and greater than 5,000 contiguous square feet with no other alternative.

- Restrict the height of cuts on steep slopes for erosion control and visual quality purposes.

Tree Ordinance:

- Provide standards for saving and protecting trees during construction and for providing replacement trees, such as requiring the preparation and implementation of a Tree Preservation Plan. A Tree Preservation Plan should include the establishment of a tree replacement ratio and minimum tree size and allowing the planting of replacement trees in other areas of the town

- For new construction, prohibit clearing of trees for an area not to exceed twice the foundation size on a new home.

- Require tree removal permits on all properties for the removal not more than 3 trees over 12 inches in diameter in one year.

- Increase the penalty for violations of the Tree Ordinance to the maximum allowed by State law.

Policy 61: Create a comprehensive environmental ordinance for the Town.

Coordinate and organize local environmental protection and preservation ordinances and regulations under one umbrella entitled, “Town of Cortlandt Natural Resources Preservation and Protection Ordinance”.

For easy and quick reference and use of the Town's environmental regulations, (which will include reference to the lot count formula in the Zoning Code) it is recommended that such regulations be organized under one umbrella section of the Town Code. The comprehensive environmental ordinance should reference the Lot Count Formula. This umbrella ordinance should also provide for the elimination of redundancy and compounding of controls.

Policy 62: Adopt a Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.

It is recommended that the Town adopt their own Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance which will contain the Westchester County's Best Management Practices Manual and the New York State Guidelines for Urban Erosion Control and Sediment Control, and the NYS Stormwater Management Design Manual. The stand-alone ordinance will provide even more controls than exist currently in Best Management Practices and/or the NYS Guidelines for Urban Erosion and Sediment Control to mandate the use of soil erosion and sedimentation controls during construction including enforcement provisions, inspection fees, performance securities and regular inspections. The Soil and Sediment Control Ordinance would be included in the proposed umbrella environmental protection ordinance.

Policy 63: Clarify and cross-reference all applicable Local, State and Federal performance standards and pollution control regulations.

Performance standards and pollution control regulations regarding air quality; water quality; hazardous materials handling, disposal, and storage; solid waste; and other items are contained in State and Federal regulations. Certain sections of the Code of the Town of Cortlandt should reference these regulations, as appropriate. This policy also proposes that the Town adopt more stringent local performance standards for items currently regulated by the Town, if State and Federal standards are inadequate.

The Town should revise the performance standards in the zoning and subdivision ordinances accordingly. Successful implementation of local performance regulations will require enforcement, penalties for violation, and an educational program for citizens.

Further, in some instances, existing State and Federal regulations may be inadequate. The Town should undertake technical studies to evaluate these regulations to determine instances in which inadequacies exist. In cases where State and Federal regulations are found to be inadequate, the Town may wish to establish more stringent requirements. An example of one such area of concern is the use of insecticides, fertilizers, and pesticides on lawns, farmlands, golf courses, etc. (As indicated in the Base Studies, lawn chemicals were cited as primary pollutants of Wallace Pond, Dickiebusch Lake/Lounsbury Pond, and Twin Lakes, identified in the Westchester County nonpoint source pollution survey.)
Stricter performance standards for lawn chemicals may be particularly important in Critical Environmental Areas. It is also noted that Westchester County has recently adopted a Pesticide Notification Law which Cortlandt strongly supports.

Policy 64: Encourage the adoption of the "Croton to Highlands Biodiversity Plan" recommendations.

In order to incorporate biodiversity information into local and regional land use decisions the Wildlife Conservation Society's Metropolitan Conservation Alliance is preparing the "Croton to Highlands Bidiversity Plan" project as a collaborative, inter-municipal effort with the four towns of Cortlandt, New Castle, Putnam Valley and Yorktown.
Larger applications to the Planning Board will require biodivisity assessments. It is anticipated that land use planning and conservation recommendations for maintaining biodiversity, ecological function and landscape connectivity will be completed by Spring 2004.

Please see the Addendum to this Master Plan for a full copy of the "Croton-to-Highlands Biodiversity Plan" written by Michael W. Klemens and Nicholas A. Miller of the Metropolitan Conservation Alliance, Wildlife Conservation Society. When the study is completed and adopted by the Town Board, its recommendations should be evaluated for incorporation into the Town of Cortlandt Master Plan.

Policy 65: Participate in the Westchester County Endangered Species Program

The Town should participate in the Westchester County Endangered Species Program, which will include among other things, an inventory of wildlife and plant species on Town and County property/parkland and a wildlife and plant preservation plan. A local Wildlife and Vegetation Preservation Ordinance, which should be contained in a Comprehensive Environmental Protection Ordinance, can establish guidelines for new development that reduce and mitigate the potential impacts and risks on the town's biodiversity resources. Such guidelines would include: ecological standards for proposed mitigation of impacts on native plant species, soil types, slopes, drainage, water resources and wildlife habitats.

Depending on the nature of each individual site, as determined by a biodiversity assessment, certain biodiversity features deemed to be important can be preserved as a result of the application process for new development. The Planning Board should supply applicants with biodiversity guidelines and should encourage using biodiversity assessments to plan projects.

Box Turtle at Hudson Highlands Gateway Park

Policy 66: Establish a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) to provide for greater protection of shore land areas.

The Town's coastal zone along the Hudson River has been designated a Significant Habitat Area by the NYSDEC and most of it has been proposed as Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance (SASS) by the Department of State.

To establish a comprehensive strategy for the protection and improvement of this unique coastal area, the Town should prepare and adopt a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) pursuant to the Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act of the State of New York.

Rezoning of the waterfront area should be done in conjunction with the preparation of the LWRP. The Town should coordinate with neighboring municipalities that have waterfront redevelopment plans already in place such as Peekskill and Croton-on-Hudson.

The Town or its designee can help offset the cost of creating a LWRP by applying for a Federal grant through the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, which was created by the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972. In addition, technical assistance is available from the State and from the Greenway Council.

See also Visual Quality.

Policy 67: Expand the Town's Aquifer Protection Ordinance.

Identify and map additional aquifers and aquifer recharge areas in the Town and evaluate their relative importance. Some of this information is available through the U.S. Geological Service (USGS). In addition, provide funding for any further research that may be necessary to supplement the USGS data. The Aquifer Protection Ordinance should be expanded to include additional aquifers or aquifer recharge areas that are determined to warrant protection. This ordinance should also be referenced in the new Comprehensive Environmental Protection Ordinance.

Policy 68: Adopt zoning regulations and land use controls within the NYC and Peekskill Hollow Brook watersheds.

As recommended in the "Comprehensive Croton Watershed Quality Protection Plan for Westchester County," when completed and adopted by the Town Board. Consider adoption of similar regulations in the Peekskill Hollow Brook Watershed. When the Comprehensive Croton Watershed Quality Protection Plan for Westchester County is complete, the Town Board's adoption of the Croton Plan should constitute an addendum to the Master Plan.

In addition, The Town should adopt land use controls within the area of the NYC Watershed to incorporate proposed water quality controls. For example, zoning regulations can restrict certain land uses which may impact ground water such as dry cleaners, laundromats and storage of petroleum products.

The Town should also explore adopting similar land use regulations that could be beneficial for other watershed areas such as the Peekskill Hollow Brook.

Policy 69: The Town should seek to designate additional Critical Environmental Areas (CEA).

The Town should seek to designate additional Critical Environmental Areas (CEA) on a local level including areas such as Gregory Pond area, the Salt Hill area, and the areas near the Croton Reservoir and near the Peekskill Hollow Brook, which are not already covered by existing CEAs. Existing CEAs are available for review in the Base Studies.

Development proposed in designated CEAs is subject to a more in-depth review than other areas. Specifically, proposed development wholly or partially within or substantially contiguous to a CEA under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), requires the lead agency either in the Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) or a DEIS to consider potential impacts on the characteristics of a CEA. Based on the sensitive environmental features identified in the Base Studies, it is recommended that the Town seek CEA designation for such areas as the Gregory Pond wetland, for the Salt Hill area, for areas near the Croton Reservoir, areas near the Peekskill Hollow Brook, and adjacent watershed lands and for all State designated freshwater wetlands and streams.

The Town should map the proposed CEAs, taking the State and County criteria into account, and seek CEA status for these areas. Although Cortlandt's existing environmental regulations apply to all parts of the Town, CEA status would provide an additional measure of protection for these environmentally sensitive areas by ensuring that any proposed development is fully evaluated for potential impacts.

OBJECTIVE: Continue to monitor and control activities at the County Sportsman Center and the Sprout Brook Ash Disposal Facility.

Protect the Town's natural resources from known sources of potential pollution such as monitoring the County Sportsman Center and development of a response plan for the County's Ash Disposal Facility if contamination is present in Sprout Brook. In addition, seek stricter regulations for the transport of ash to and from the ash disposal facility to prevent potential air pollution.

Policy 70: Continue to support environmental monitoring of the Westchester County Sportsman's Center to prevent lead contamination of the soil.

As identified in the Base Studies, the target range of the Sportsmen's Center in Blue Mountain Reservation is adjacent to Furnace Woods Elementary School, the Blue Mountain Middle School and residential areas. Due to prior lead contamination of the soil at the Sportsman Center, the proximity of the target range to schools and homes in the area makes it a potential public safety hazard.

It is recommended that County officials continue to conduct environmental monitoring of the lead contamination of the soil at the Sportsman Center and to keep the Town of Cortlandt informed on a regular basis.

Policy 71: Lobby the County to establish a response plan for the Westchester County Ash Disposal Facility and to develop a plan for closure, remediation and maintenance.

The Town should lobby Westchester County to develop a response plan for the possible contamination of Sprout Brook from the adjacent Westchester County Ash Disposal Facility. Due to concerns about potential contamination from the Ash Disposal Facility the Town has obtained and reviewed water and air monitoring reports from Westchester County to determine the impact the facility has on the environment.

The Town should lobby the County to promulgate stricter regulations regarding the transport of ash to and from the facility to eliminate ash residue from trucks being left on town roadways and neighboring properties.

Westchester County's Ash Disposal Facility is scheduled to close by 2009. The Town should strongly oppose any effort to extend this facility beyond the 2009 scheduled close. The Town of Cortlandt should insist that the County work closely with Town officials in its plans for the closure of this land fill, long term ground water and surface water monitoring, and a remediation plan for any potential pollution. The County should also provide regular reports in connection with all of these issues (in layman terms) for the Town's review. In addition, the County should now be discussing with the Town the long term maintenance and use of this property after 2009.

OBJECTIVE: Coordinate environmental protection measures with regional and neighboring communities.

Policy 72: Coordinate environmental protection measures with those of neighboring communities and with regional agencies.

Regional groups and agencies and neighboring communities have the potential to affect environmental resources in Cortlandt, as our actions can affect our neighbors. This is particularly true of upstream locations, which can affect the water quality of the Town's streams, lakes, and ponds. For example, inter-municipal cooperation is critical in the development of aquifer protection plans. A comprehensive strategy is also needed to guarantee the preservation and enhancement of the Hudson River coastal area. As discussed above, it is recommended that the Town take the waterfront plans of neighboring municipalities into account when preparing its Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP). In addition, the Town should continue to support the Hudson River Greenway Council and Scenic Hudson Inc. in its efforts to protect and enhance the natural resources of the Hudson River and its tributaries.

The Town should also continue its work with neighboring communities on the Croton to Highlands Biotic Corridor Project. The ultimate goal of this study is to provide information that could be included in each municipality's adopted land use regulations in order to preserve and enhance biodiversity on a regional scale.
Stream walk programs should be used to document stream conditions and to share this information with neighboring communities within protected watersheds. Likewise, the Town is involved in formulation of the regional Comprehensive Croton Watershed Quality Protection Plan for Westchester County with other watershed communities and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection and Westchester County Planning Department for the protection of the NYC watershed. Regional watershed protection should also be provided for the Peekskill Hollow Brook Watershed.

Policy 73: Continue to support the efforts of local environmental groups to help monitor and protect the watershed(s).

The Town of Cortlandt is fortunate to have many civic minded citizens living here. The Plan acknowledges the efforts of many organizations and volunteers in continuing to assist the Town, County and State in their efforts to protect this unique area of the Hudson Valley. These efforts should be coordinated with the intent of the Phase II Stormwater Regulations.

Policy 74: Investigate alternate energy sources.

Alternate energy sources could include the use of hybrid energy vehicles for municipal uses, methods to conserve energy at various Town owned locations including Town Hall. Some methods to be explored include solar panels and wind farms.

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OPEN SPACE

For policies concerning Open Space, see Chapter 1 Open Space