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## SUCCESS IS NOT THE PLANNING, BUT RATHER COMES FROM THOSE WORKING THE PLAN

By Chuck Parker, NYSCC President

The Council has a Board of Directors. We also have a services and financial review committee. The Council is also lucky to have an office staff that is hardworking and committed to the goals of the New York State Conservation Council. There is one more key element that guarantees success for the present and future of the Council. That is the work done by those who implement the process and plan, those who make it happen ... the membership of the New York State Conservation Council.

This is a key year for the Council with various changes being made. Many have gone through the planning process; now is the time for implementation, time to make it happen, time for you to become involved. We need you to work the plan; let us know what works and what doesn't. Here we go:

**Grassroots News:** After this month GRN is moving to quarterly publication with special editions as necessary. It will be supplemented by Constant Contact, an email marketing tool. The challenge here is those receiving GRN via regular mail may not be receiving information in a timely manner. *The solution is for those who do not have email to find someone in the group they are representing to get them the updates between newsletter publications.*

**NYSCC Fall Convention 2015:** Some major changes absolutely require the involvement of the membership (you).

- It is being held in Syracuse at the OnCenter (convention center) September 18 -20 in conjunction with a Fall Sportsmen's Show.
- We will be inviting the public to attend the general sessions, including those presentations given by DEC and others.
- Our meeting location will be separate from the sportsmen's show itself.
- For the first time hotel rooms for those attending the conference will be at a different location, requiring a short drive.
- The Council will receive \$1 for each paid admission to the show.
- Council representatives will enjoy free parking and show admission.
- At least one fundraiser is being held prior to the conference with the winner being drawn at the convention.

*Please remember we are still in the planning process for the Convention.* Some changes will take place and help is needed. Most likely the sportsmen's show will run Saturday and Sunday. Our convention will start on Friday; we may have to adjust our normal meeting schedule and presentations.

- Activities for spouses not participating in our meetings will have new venues to go see and choices to be made.
- Some tasks normally performed by our office staff will have to be done by the membership. Logistics will require individuals to step up to take on these tasks. They include:
  - Seeing that our booth space at the show is staffed by someone other than those required to attend our convention sessions.
  - One or two individuals to manage the fundraisers: Chinese auction, silent auction, any special convention fundraiser that might involve the public.
  - Someone to assist with registrations.
  - Someone to take on other miscellaneous tasks.

We are still planning, and you are correct if you think this is more than our regular convention; a lot rides on its success, and that success depends on you. Let's fully support this event. Bring a friend. Remember this event is during the height of the salmon run and Pulaski is roughly 40 miles north. You could plan for a fishing trip before or after the Council's annual meeting.

**Constant Contact:** This is a new communication tool for the Council that we will be using within the membership and those we reach out to (membership, legislators and various groups we work with). Transmitting an alert to the membership in the past involved sending many small groups of emails to complete the task. Constant Contact will simplify this procedure so we can send out one email to all we intend to receive it with just one click of the mouse.

**Other Changes:** There are a few. Those working on plans and changes for the Council need your involvement. Please support and help implement these changes. Question and comment where necessary. Be willing to step up and take on a task or present an idea without being asked. Be willing to say yes when you are asked to help. Don't sit back and do nothing. It is the membership of the New York State Conservation Council that makes it happen ... that's you!

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### WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE...



The **Adirondack-Catskill Chapter of Safari Club International** is looking for a disabled hunter for its Youth Hunt 2015. Youth ages 11-17, male or female with a severe disability (wheel chair or similar) should apply. All expenses will be paid by SCI. For more information, contact Bill Mayer at 518/284-2953

May 31 – **Columbia Greene FNRA 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Pig Roast** at Philmont R&G Club, 99 Railroad Ave in Philmont. Trap shooting at 10 am; dinner at 2 pm. Tickets and details, contact Mike Conway 518/537-5441.

June 6 - 10 am – 2 pm **Kids Fishing Derby at New Hartford Athletic Park**, Oneida Street in Washington Mills (Oneida County). Sponsored by Mohawk Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited and DEC. Fly tying, casting, prizes.

June 13-14 – **Crosman All-American Field Target Championship** at Rochester Brooks Gun Club in Rush, NY. Full schedule of events and registration information is available at <http://www.crosman.com/connect/crosman-field-target-championship>

Registration for the 2015 **King George Fishing Derby** July 10-12 on Lake George is now open. Adult & youth divisions for lake trout, largemouth bass and smallmouth bass; over \$15K in prizes. A full weekend of family fun including: multiple launch sites, live music, vendors, BBQ, children's rides, local promotional discounts, fireworks, giveaways, door prizes, and so much more. Please visit the website at: <http://kinggeorgefishingderby.com/>

**Teach-Me-To-Fish events** open to the public in western NY. Free lunch, rods & reels at each site.

June 6 10 am – 2 pm at East Aurora F&G Club, Luther Road, East Aurora. Info: Dave Smyczynski 716-364-9082

June 13 9:30 am – 1 pm at Tiff Nature Preserve, Fuhrmann Blvd., Buffalo. Info: Dave Barus 716-597-4081

June 27 Chestnut Ridge Park Lake, Route 240, Orchard Park. Info: Dave Barus 716-597-4081

June 20 Kids Fish Derby at Niawanda Park, Upper Niagara River, Tonawanda. Free; 8 am registration start, fishing 9 am – noon. Info: John & Kate White 716-998-4497

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR OUR 35th AWARDS PROGRAM**

The New York State Conservation Council, Inc. (NYSCC) is asking for your help in identifying New York State's outstanding conservationists for our 35th Awards Program. This is an ideal opportunity to honor those who have worked long and hard for our natural environment and who may not have been recognized for their efforts.



**Nomination Procedure:**

- ✓ Nominations are open to residents or groups in New York State, both professional and volunteer.
- ✓ A nomination may be submitted by an individual, a club, or an organization.
- ✓ Affiliation with the NYSCC, Inc. is not necessary.
- ✓ Nominations must be for individuals or groups that have been active during the past year and have exhibited ongoing interest in conservation.
- ✓ Please furnish complete information about the nominee. *Make it informative and to the point. Give facts, dates and accomplishments which support that nomination. Documentation is helpful.*

**Nomination Deadline:** August 1, 2015

**Mail applications to:** NYSCC, 8 East Main Street, Ilion, NY 13357.

For categories and additional information see our website: [www.nyscc.com](http://www.nyscc.com).



**Buck A Member Contributors:**

- Alden Rod & Gun Club, Inc., Alden
- Brunswick Sportsman's Club, Inc., Cropseyville
- Finger Lakes Conservation Club, Waterloo
- Pioneer Fish & Game Club, Hoosick Falls
- Rockdale Rod & Gun Club, Inc., Mt. Upton
- Seneca Lake Duck Hunters Assn., Dresden
- Southern Dutchess & Putnam Sportsmen's Assn., Fishkill
- Whitney Point Sportsmen's Assn., Whitney Point

**General Donation Contributor:**

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***New Members***


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- Niagara Musky Assn., N. Tonawanda
- Darren A. Smith, Gloversville
- Watervliet Fish & Game, Albany

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Board of Directors  
NYSCC Life Member since July 1990



**NRA**  
NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA  
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PATCHOGUE, NY 11772  
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Fax: (631) 475-8125  
E-mail: [jcushman@juno.com](mailto:jcushman@juno.com)

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of New York State Region 8

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- Monroe Co. Conservation Council
- Ontario Co. Fed. Of Sportsmen's Clubs
- Orleans Co. Fed. of Sportsmen's Clubs
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- Steuben Co. Fed. of Conservation Clubs
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Treasurer Dennis Race

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ADIRONDACK LAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION  
AS IT CELEBRATES 25 YEARS**

By Chuck Parker, NYSCC President

After an invitation was extended and being armed with a stack of new rack cards promoting the NYS Conservation Council I attended the May 8<sup>th</sup> ALA annual meeting’s social hour and dinner on Friday and its general session meeting on Saturday. The event was held at the Minnow Brook Conference Center at Blue Mountain Lake, and my mission was to promote the NYSCC. It wasn’t to be a hard sell, but more of a chance to meet some people, learn more about the Adirondack Landowners Association, and present information about the NYSCC as the opportunity arose. I met a group of like-minded individuals whose goals closely mirror those of the NYSCC.

During the opening remarks at the dinner my mind kept comparing the NYSCC’s mission statement on our rack card to what was being said from the podium: The “NYSCC’s mission is to aid in the formulation and establishment of sound policies and practices designed to conserve, protect, restore and perpetuate forests, wildlife and scenic and recreational areas with especial regard to the state of New York, to the general end that the present and succeeding generations may continue to enjoy and to use these great natural resources. We support the sound management and conservation of all the natural resources in New York State.”


I hope ALA’s membership sees the striking similarities of our mission to yours. And to the NYSCC membership, let me assure you that it was a pleasure to hear that the purpose of another group so closely mirrors our own.

The ALA 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary presentation, “Our Past, Our Present, Our Future,” on Saturday morning was insightful and on target. It is my hope that my meeting with the ALA membership, though limited, will foster an ongoing working relationship that I can assure you the Council will pursue. ALA members, please take the time to check the NYSCC out and visit our website, [www.nyscc.com](http://www.nyscc.com).

Congratulations to the Adirondack Landowners Association on celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. There is a feeling of satisfaction in just knowing that a group like the ALA exists and serves as sound stewards “to conserve, protect, restore and perpetuate forests and wildlife.” Thank you for your hospitality this past weekend; The Council looks forward to working together in the future.

**JOSEPH P. DEBERGALIS, JR.**  
*Board of Directors*

**NYSCC Life Member**



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## WHY THE DUCK STAMP IS WORTH THE EFFORT

Insights from Ducks Unlimited CEO Dale Hall

The federal duck stamp, formally known as the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, was created under the leadership of editorial-cartoonist-turned-federal-agency-chief Jay N. "Ding" Darling in 1934. As both a talented artist and the director of the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey, forerunner of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Darling personally designed the first duck stamp, which was issued at a cost of one dollar. This, in and of itself, represents a conservation milestone, but it is the times in which it occurred that make this story even more amazing.



In the early 1930s, America was reeling in the wake of the 1929 stock market crash and the onset of the Dust Bowl era. History reflects that 25 percent of America's workforce was unemployed. Many families stood in breadlines that stretched for blocks just to have a little something to eat each day. In the plains states, farmers and ranchers abandoned their life's dreams in the dust that engulfed their barns and homes. Some returned to the East Coast. Many headed west in hopes of finding a brighter future in California. The quest to feed their families drove everything. Bank closures had created panic in the everyday lives of hard-working people, who now hid what cash they had under mattresses or in coffee cans buried in the corn crib.

A dollar was a lot of money in 1934. It would buy flour, sugar, beans, and a chunk of fatback to feed a family for a week. So it is even more astonishing that waterfowl hunters, watching the populations of ducks and geese rapidly diminish as habitats dried up and blew away, banded together to ask the U.S. Congress to pass a law that required, for the first time, each adult hunter to pay one dollar for the purchase of a duck stamp in order to hunt waterfowl, which were a valued addition to many Depression-era tables. These hunter-conservationists also demanded that the proceeds from stamp sales go directly to habitat conservation.

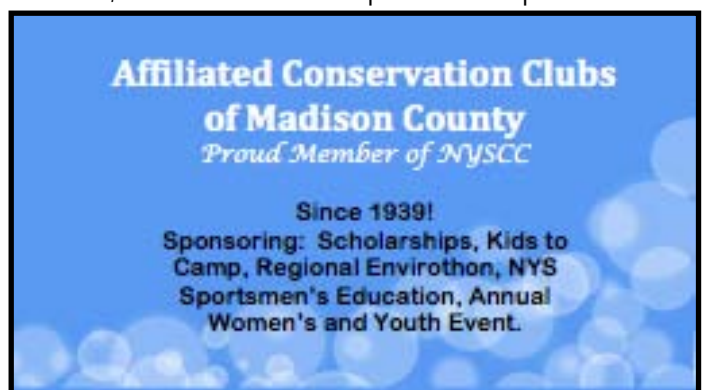
Since its creation in 1934, the federal duck stamp has raised almost \$1 billion and has allowed the purchase or lease of more than 6 million acres of wetlands, grasslands, and other waterfowl habitat. Ninety-eight cents of every dollar raised goes directly on the ground to conserve habitat that is protected under the National Wildlife Refuge System for the benefit of all Americans. Many refuges also provide hunting and fishing opportunities for millions of sportsmen.

The conservation impact of the duck stamp, however, had eroded significantly since its last price increase to \$15 in 1991. In fact, the duck stamp's purchasing power had dropped to the lowest level in its history.

That is why Ducks Unlimited and our devoted volunteers, led by Paul and Skipper Dickson of Louisiana along with our good friends Congressman John Fleming and Senator David Vitter, worked so hard to secure an increase in the price of the duck stamp from \$15 to \$25, with the \$10 increase committed to the purchase of conservation easements on private lands. This allows the land to stay in private hands while still providing conservation benefits to the American people.

The Federal Duck Stamp Act of 2014 was passed unanimously in both the House and Senate, and was signed into law by President Obama on December 18, 2014. This accomplishment speaks to the power of dedicated volunteers, the passion that drives us, and our desire to leave a legacy of abundant natural resources for future generations.

Has the duck stamp been worth it? Compare the devastating waterfowl population declines of the 1930s with the more than 100 million ducks and geese that migrated south this past fall. I believe the answer is clear.



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## NEW DEER HUNTING RULES ... WHAT'S NEXT?

By Bob Brown, Executive Program Director

I dare you to stand up at your next rod and gun club meeting and tell every member in attendance what you think the new rules should be for hunting whitetail deer in New York State. NOTE: Before you begin this challenge, it would be wise to remove your favorite ball cap and camo jacket and change into the garb of a professional hockey goalie, tighten your mask and have your hockey stick in a ready position, because the pucks will be flying any minute.

Relax! Gordon Batcheller, Chief of the Bureau of Wildlife, while speaking at a seminar for hunter safety training instructors, told the crowd that changes would not occur this coming fall and that DEC would hold informational meetings across the State to collect input from sportsmen.

We all share the love of deer hunting. However, our methods, goals and experiences developed over years of family tradition have reached down to become the mores of our soul. These feelings are strong within us but also different for each of us.

Despite our differences, each one of us would probably hope that someday we might shoot a "trophy" buck or at least have a shot at one at some point in our life. The truth of the matter is that most of us want to be out in the woods on our favorite "watch," or spending time with friends or relatives in hunting camp. I am most happy when I am hunting in a section of woods that is "pretty" to my eye and used by deer and other wildlife.

Throughout the non hunting months we all tune in to our favorite sportsmen's television shows to see big bucks harvested in a 30-minute segment. In these programs I observe a lot of hunters sitting in tree stands, whispering to their cameraman, saying all kinds of things that I would never say and expressing emotions I have never experienced outside of my bedroom. It is impossible for NYSDEC to regulate whitetails to the point where you can experience that TV type of hunting.

To make an economically successful television show they bring in a lot of expensive equipment to a location that has several "trophy bucks" on private property that can guarantee a successful kill. That is not where most of us hunt, most of the time. If we hope what we view on television is what we want in New York State, we will lose the real experience of hunting deer in New York. On public land, TV-type "trophy hunting" is pure fantasy, and our free use of private property from our neighbors may be lost because of another restrictions.

How do our young first-time hunters react to the reality of deer hunting? I am sure they are excited the first time out. How do they feel after they realize that it may take several trips, long hours and the development of special skills? (Are they on their cell phones instead of looking for deer because they are bored?) This is a great time to sit together and talk about hunting, quietly sharing all kinds of stories and knowledge about being afield. However ... it is nothing like that television show.

I am not in favor of antler restrictions for several reasons favored by many deer management organizations. If a hunter wants to plant food plots and manage his land for big antlered bucks, that's OK. But the next fear is that big buck might wander off the property as a six point buck. A neighbor harvests the buck while the fellow with the food plot wanted to wait another year when it would be an eight pointer. The food plot hunter can buy more land or gather with like-minded hunters and lobby for antler restrictions in that management area.

If antler restrictions are imposed, hunters would have limited choices of what buck to take. They may decide to change hunting locations if they want to increase their hunting options. I hunt in the southern zone in Otsego County where there are no additional antler restrictions. On the other side of the Susquehanna River is Delaware County with restrictions. I have heard very few shots from across the river in the last couple of years but I am hearing more on my side. My conclusion is that the restrictions across the river are resulting in more deer hunters on my side and decreasing my opportunities for harvesting bucks.

If the food plot owner opts for more land to control a larger area he buys more land; or in many cases because it is less expensive, leases hunting rights to other parcels in the area. To cover his costs he then decides that he could start a hunting guide service. If the guide service is successful, more clients hear about it and the territory expands. Other local land holders begin to do the same, starting outfitter businesses or leasing their lands. Smaller farmers are now charging local hunters, or more likely making deals with guides, so they don't have to deal with their neighbors. They won't think to ask you first but one day you will ride down the road and find that your old favorite hunting spot is posted. You stop and ask but it's too late and you get, "Gee I'm sorry Bob, the guy down the road asked me to lease him the hunting rights, so you will have to ask him."

You are done! Your favorite spot is gone and hunting is not the same any more.

I have been lucky enough to go on a couple of big game hunts in other states and while there I go into a diner and talk to the locals. They say that they have no place to hunt any more. They say that the little farms where they hunt have all leased their lands to the big outfitters.

This is already happening in New York State along Lake Champlain where Vermont guides have leased a majority of farm fields for Canada and Snow Goose hunting. It is also happening along Route 88 from Cooperstown to Binghamton with turkey hunting guides.

We have a tradition in New York State to go out our back door or down the road a short distance and hunt deer. I fear that if we continue down the "big rack track" that we might find the average deer hunter might have to pay a large sum of money to hunt near his home.

As an older sportsman, I like to get up in the morning, check the weather, grab my deer rifle and take a quiet walk in the woods. I like the option to choose to shoot a spike horn or wait for a six point or to pass on both of them. (Near the end of the season I tend to be less choosy.) As an older hunter, I don't have a lot of years left to find a big buck. I don't go as far in the woods because I can't drag one out a long distance any more. However, I still crave a venison sandwich.

Now you know where I stand on antler restrictions from a personal point of view. I predict it will lead to entrepreneurial development resulting in a rapid loss of hunting land for the average hunter to pursue the sport of deer hunting.

I have just put on my hockey helmet and my goalie protective leg pads, so take your shots. I've got my stick in both hands and I am pretty good at deflecting pucks!

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### ALBANY COUNTY CONSERVATION ALLIANCE HOSTS ICE FISHING DERBY



Saturday, February 22, dawned at 7°, but that did not slow down 60 adults and 22 youth from attending the annual ice fishing derby. The smile on Parker's face says it all about the event. It was cold and windy with about 20" of snow on the ice at Warners Lake in Albany County. Special thanks to Mike Speranza of Watervliet Fish and Game, the Bethlehem Sportsmen's Club, Onesquethaw Rod & Gun, Helderberg Rod & Gun, Voorheesville Rod & Gun and West Albany Rod & Gun for assistance and donations. All the youth were very tired running for "flags" throughout the morning as all the "seniors" made it all about the youngsters; the pickerel were very cooperative. Thank you also to Michael Busch for assistance with the derby.



**IF YOU ARE NOT CURRENTLY A MEMBER, JOIN TODAY!**

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**GRASS ROOTS NEWS**



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