



2015 -- LOOKING BOTH WAYS -- 2016

By Chuck Parker, NYSCC President

2015 was a busy year for the New York State Conservation Council. It was a year of challenges, both legislatively and internally within the Council. We survived and in some ways flourished. For 2016 there are further challenges which could also be called **opportunities**. These opportunities will, as always, require involvement by all for us to have the maximum success.

Hours spent on NYSCC internal matters in 2015 were more than normal. We formed a Financial Review Committee and had our regular and a couple of additional fund raisers. When all is said and done, at the close of 2015 the Financial Review Committee will have a list of financial concerns and issues that will serve as suggestions and focal points for the officers, directors, membership, and staff to be concerned with. Their suggestions and recommendations are primarily just that, and it will be the Board of Directors and the membership deciding which suggestions and recommendations to act on and which ones not to.

Finances are always a challenge and 2015 was no different. Efforts of the directors and staff and their wise management practices were always present. The membership through their dues and donations, Buck A Member participation, and regular and additional fundraising efforts helped the Council finish in the black this year.

Our legislative efforts went fairly well in 2015. Some say the number of bills handled by the legislators was a little smaller than in the past. Some say it was 'wait and see' who will be indicted next that slowed the process down, and that comment may have some merit.

The Adirondack invasive aquatic species program was in full swing this year and general reports say it went okay. I am sure that adjustments will be made. Much that has been learned from efforts in the Adirondacks will be passed on to the rest of the state. The Council membership needs to be aware of these efforts as we do not want to see a loss of access under the disguise of invasives control.

Quarterly meetings with DEC, meetings with the Governor's office, deer populations too high/too low, pheasant farm, mandatory antler restrictions, ATVs, access, and a gamut of other issues resulted in over 25 trips to Albany. Unit Management Plans, a tour of Onondaga Lake, invasives, and various regional issues also resulted in quite a few meetings throughout the state.

Our efforts and those of others were successful in getting the feral cat bill and the mute swan bill vetoed by the Governor. Unfortunately, the dogs running at large bill, one that we supported, was also vetoed.

In 2015 we started the use of Constant Contact; it is an additional way to reach out to our membership, and more importantly the public, promoting the concerns of sportsmen. We continue to build email lists of like-minded groups and individuals, a press release list, government officials, and other categories. The efforts under Constant Contact will be refined and grow this coming year.

It started in 2015 but in 2016 we should see more notifications from Regional Natural Resource Supervisors on Unit Management Plans and other topics coming up for review.

Our finances will continue to be a concern and I ask you to continue with your present efforts in fundraising. I also recognize that from the director's and officer's level we need to do more to increase the Council's revenue, and we will do so. We are looking for more sustaining contributions from sources outside the Council membership; this will be a major initiative. BAM (Buck a Member) grew slightly this year but has the potential to grow even bigger.

Our committees need to become more active and grow in their scope. They will be asked to make comments on topics they are involved in as well as develop a working plan moving forward. Have you signed up for a committee, which is required every year? Have you an idea to make a committee more productive?

What legislation will be dealt with in 2016? Hard to tell at this time, but our Legislative VP, Bill Gibson, will keep us informed. The Governor's budget will surely have issues that we will be concerned with. Specific funding benefiting sportsmen and the environment has been in recent budgets and will be in this budget also. We will have to get out in force to support those items. We may see something specific concerning ATV weight classification and access in this year's budget. Let's see if that happens.

Communication and getting our word out is an issue for all sporting and conservation groups; ours is no different. The style and glitz that some groups with which we are not in agreement put out their message gives some the opinion that we cannot compete with them. I say we can and must compete with them. As Governor Cuomo has stated, hunting, fishing, and trapping have an \$8.2 billion economic impact on NYS. That does not go unnoticed. Common sense and the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation say hunting, fishing, and trapping are sound conservation tools. Outdoor sportsmen were the first conservationists and are still the best.

Some thought we could never have a working relationship with Audubon; we do. The Nature Conservancy has promoted hunting on some of its lands (they need to recognize the benefits of trapping). We have always had a positive relationship with the forest and logging community. Ours is a strong base to work from, supporting what we believe in -- we just have to do it as sportsmen, as conservationists, as members of the New York State Conservation Council.

2015 ended up being a good year for the NYSCC. With your help 2016 will be a better one. As we move into 2016, I hope you recognize the opportunity to support our initiatives and become more involved.

SAVE THESE DATES:

January 23, 2016:	Board of Directors Meeting @ NYSCC Office
March 12, 2016:	Legislative meeting @ Herkimer College
April 9, 2016:	Spring/ Committee meeting @ Herkimer College
June 11, 2016:	Board of Directors meeting- location TBD
August 13, 2016:	Board of Directors meeting- location TBD
September 9-11, 2016 (tentative):	Annual Convention- location TBD

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For more information, contact our office at nyscc@nyscc.com or 315/894-3302, or write to NYSCC at 8 East Main Street, Ilion, NY 13357.

2016 CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS

This notice constitutes official call for resolutions for the NYSCC for 2016. All resolutions should be sent to the NYSCC Office by **February 1, 2016**. The Council office address is 8 East Main Street, Ilion, NY 13357-1899. It would be of great help to the Committee if resolutions were submitted early; any resolutions not in the proper form and received by the February 1 deadline will be rejected.

County and Associate members may submit two resolutions, and Affiliate groups may submit one. Each organization submitting a resolution should investigate its facts thoroughly. Be very specific as to what is being requested along with reference to any law, order, policy or regulation. In addition, the resolution should contain reference to who should perform the action requested and by what means (law change, Department order change, request for action, etc.).

Of statewide significance –

To benefit the sportsmen of New York State

By Stephen Wowelko, Chairman, NYSCC Resolution Committee

The resolution process for 2016 is in full swing. As the February 1 deadline approaches, here are some suggestions to help you along in the process.

All resolutions for consideration through NYSCC should be to establish or change a position or policy for the New York State Conservation Council on a matter concerning issues of state-wide significance.

The **title** of the resolution should clearly reflect the intent.

In formulating the resolution, the “**Whereas**” statements should provide the basic facts and reasons for the resolution. The information should be specific, and provide answers to such questions as: Why is the change necessary? What are the facts leading to the final request? It should provide or reference statistics and the effect of the issue. What is the rationale for the “resolved” course of action?

The “**Be It Resolved:**” should clearly spell out what it is you wish to achieve.

The primary purpose of a resolution is to delineate a position for the New York State Conservation Council on a matter not otherwise covered concerning policies, principles, or precedent of state-wide significance. Resolutions are policy declarations and are not meant to solve local problems unless all other avenues of remedy have been exhausted on the local level.

The final submitted resolution should be polished, well thought out and not a draft work in progress.

The resolutions are to be submitted by the organization’s official councilman to the NYSCC.

Resolutions coming from other individuals or directly from Federation clubs will not be accepted. The resolution should contain contact information for the councilman – name, address, phone number and email address. The councilman will be the primary contact for any questions the Resolution Committee may have about the resolution.

Resolutions are due at the NYSCC main office by **February 1, 2016**. It is preferred that they be sent electronically to nyscc@nyscc.com or if the councilman does not have email access it may be sent on paper through the US Post Office to the following address:

NYSCC (Resolutions)
8 East Main Street
Ilion, NY 13357-1899



NYSCC BUCK A MEMBER PROGRAM

By George Gibbs, NYSCC First VP

The NYSCC was established in 1933 to champion the sportsmen of our state. We are the largest and oldest organization in the state that is advocating for sportsmen as a whole. We are a bottom – up organization and have approximately 300,000 members statewide. As with most other organizations, costs continue to increase while income mostly stagnates. This must change! We have reviewed all of our costs and cut wherever we can, but are still just barely breaking even.

I recently attended a conference sponsored by the Catskill Forest Association entitled “The Growing Deer Debate.” This was very well organized and featured 5 speakers from New York, New Hampshire, Wisconsin, Connecticut, and Texas. The presentation was held in Margaretville and streamed live on the web. There were less than 100 attendees in the auditorium at \$25 each. Being generous, if 100 were there, that would be \$2500. The producer told me that her fee alone was more than that. I asked where their money came from to pay travel and speaker fees for the 5 panelists. Her answer – donations.

For whatever reason, the Council does not get these donations. I think there are 3 main reasons for this.

- 1) Lack of name recognition; most sportsmen don't know who we are or what we do.
- 2) People seem to support specific causes, such as save the feral cats, save the mute swans, etc. Our cause is far more general and doesn't get the following that it should.
- 3) My pet peeve: sportsmen's apathy. Sportsmen spend more time and energy shooting themselves in the foot than anything else. Most of them don't belong to a sportsmen's club, contact legislators, vote, or even take the time to be informed on the issues that affect them in this changing political and social climate

As a result, we have to support the Council ourselves and there are too few people carrying the majority of the load. In my opinion, there is a very simple solution to this – Buck A Member (BAM). If our 300,000 members would each pledge one measly dollar a year to the Council, we would not have to worry about paying our bills and could concentrate our efforts better on the issues that affect us.

Usually, when I suggest to a club that they should become a BAM member, their reply is that they can't afford it. I tell them they can't afford not to. No one can tell me that there is a sportsman in this state that can't afford one more dollar a year, no matter how many other causes they support. How much money does the average sportsman spend on his outdoor activities in a year? Is one more dollar going to be the straw that breaks the camel's back? NO. Drink one less beer or one less soda a year – there is a dollar or two that can be used for the Council, and you will never get more bang for your buck.

The Council does a lot of good now. We have quarterly meetings with the DEC in Albany and have very good communications with them. We make many trips to Albany to talk to legislators and members of the Governor's staff. We are going to be more involved in Unit Management Plan scoping sessions. We have more influence in Albany than ever. But we can do even better. A pipe dream I and others have is to have a dedicated lobbyist in Albany. That costs money. Without a steady income stream, that will always be a pipe dream. We have a solution, and that solution is BAM. In 2005, we realized about \$15,000 from BAM. In 2015 we realized about \$15,000 from BAM. That is unacceptable. BAM should easily be our major source of income. We need more participation! I am asking everyone who reads this to pass it on. Bring it up at your club meetings. Send a representative to every club in your area to promote BAM. Don't take “no” for an answer. Having been a member of several clubs over my lifetime, I have noticed that very seldom does a

motion get voted down. Find a way to get a motion on the floor to join BAM and discuss the benefits. I guarantee that a great majority, if not all of these motions will pass.

We cannot allow or afford to be apathetic in this matter. I have complete confidence that with some effort, BAM will become our main income stream, but don't depend on someone else to push it. Do it yourself. If there are 3 or 4 people pushing at a club meeting, all the better. Having nobody pushing it speaks for itself. Please, everyone, let's spread the word and get BAM and knowledge of the Council to every sportsman that we can. Be persistent. It will take some effort, but I am confident that we can accomplish this. With your help, the Council will be bigger and better than ever.

THINKING ABOUT FISHING

By Robert E. Brown, Executive Program Director

As I gaze out my kitchen window I am watching a gray squirrel plan the invasion of my new bird feeder. Tonight is New Year's Eve. This December has been the warmest weather-wise that I have ever experienced in the Adirondack Mountains. A week ago it was 63 degrees in Saranac Lake! The lack of snow and warm weather did not help in the pursuit of whitetail deer. Some hunters turned to fishing, since the lakes were not covered with ice and the days were warm.

Invasive species continue to threaten our waterways. Some of our lakes are overrun with purple loosestrife, hydrilla, and Eurasian milfoil. They not only clog our waterways and eliminate our native aquatic plants but also entangle our boat props. I cannot even use surface poppers for bass on some waters! That is only three invasive aquatic plants -- there are more!

Let's add meat to that invasive salad. How about some sea lampreys that attach themselves to and suck the life out of our salmon and trout before we catch them; some zebra mussels that eat food before the fish can taste it; and spiny water fleas that cling to our fishing line so the line won't go through the ferrules of our fishing rods. I have only mentioned three -- there are more!

We need to control both invasive plants and animals in our lakes, rivers and ponds ... or fishing as we know it won't be a part of our children's and grandkids' experience. That would be too bad, because we learned a lot about life itself when as children we waited for those bobbers to dip and talked to our friends and relatives.

So it seems that boat washing stations will be a vital part of the future, both entering and leaving the water. Who pays for this safeguard? You do! We need to do it. However, we need to make sure these facilities are open when we need the access, early in the morning and just after dark so that we don't miss the best time to catch the big one.

I can't believe that I have been thinking about the condition of our ponds and lakes on New Year's Eve. But I'm seeing the lakes without any ice on them and just the calm water this time of year, clear, cold and blue. They look so pristine, as they should be.

I decided my New Year's resolution will be to spend some time in the cellar cleaning and organizing my fishing gear. I could fix up some fish poles and reels I don't use any more. I might give them to some kids this spring when the bullheads are biting,

The squirrel that was sizing up the bird feeder just ran away with a sunflower seed that a nuthatch dropped on the ground. He turned and looked back at the feeder. I wonder what his New Year's resolution is all about? The birds seem nervous.



Buck A Member Contributors:

Albion Fish & Game Club, Inc., Sandy Creek * Avon Anglers Unlimited, Inc., Avon
 Bison City Rod & Gun Club, Buffalo * Broome County Sportsmen's Assn., Binghamton
 Burlington Flats Fish & Game Club, Edmeston * The Cahoonzie Club, Inc., Sparrowbush
 Chautauqua County Sport Fish Advisory Board, Fredonia * Depew Rod & Gun Club, Inc., Depew
 Eastern Lake Ontario Salmon & Trout Assn., Inc., Syracuse * Empire Rod & Gun Club, Schenectady
 Erie County Trappers, Lawtons * Lakewood Rod & Gun Club, Inc., Lakewood
 Lima Gun Club, Lima * Millgrove Sportsmen's Club, Inc., Corfu
 Neighbor's Gun Club, Rhinebeck * Niagara County Sportsmen's Assn., North Tonawanda
 Niagara River Station Fishing Club, Grand Island * North Shore Sportsmen's Assn., Bernhards Bay
 Otisco Lake Rod & Gun Club, Marietta * Redfield Fish & Game Club, Clay
 South Bristol Fish & Game Assn., Naples * Springwater Rod & Gun Club, Inc., Springwater
 Waterloo Rifle & Pistol Club, Waterloo * White-Otter Fish & Game Club, Inc., Woodgate
 Wolcottsville Sportsmen Club, Corfu * Woodbury Field & Stream Club, Inc., Central Valley

\$2 per Member Donation Contributor:

Ben Miller Hunting Club, Buffalo

MATCHING BAM!

Livingston County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs has generously donated matching funds for all contributions made to NYSCC by its member clubs in 2015. Livingston County challenges other federations to do likewise for 2016.

General Donation Contributors:

Genesee County Federation of Sportsman Clubs, Inc., LeRoy
 Reuben Tompkins, Greenville

Special thank you to Onondaga County Federation of Sportsmen for the fundraising effort to benefit the NYSCC!

**GENESEE CONSERVATION
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E-mail: jcushman@juno.com

WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE



S-VE Sportsman Day 2016 -- Sat, Feb. 6, 10 am-5pm; Sun, Feb. 7, 9am- 3pm at Spencer- Van Etten High School, Darts Crossroads, Spencer, NY. Admission is free! Artists, taxidermists, wood carvers, archery shops, fishing experts and guides, hawks and falcons, archery range and fly casting area for kids. Youth 3D archery tournament and more! For info call Doug 607-589-6512 or email cheveefann@aol.com.

29th Annual NYS Sportsman Educators Workshop -- Sat, Jan. 30, 8am – 4pm at Saratoga County Cornell Cooperative Extension, 50 West High Street, Ballston Spa. \$15 registration for DEC educators, \$25 registration for all others. For more info: <http://ccesaratoga.org/events/2016/01/30/29th-annual-new-york-state-sportsman-educators-workshop>

Coyote Hunt Contest sponsored by Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs of Sullivan County, Feb 5-7. \$35 entry fee includes a free dinner at the “Coyote Banquet” on the 7th and a free \$5 gun raffle ticket. For application call Jack or Kay 845/482-4987 or download from www.SullivanCountySportsmensFederationNY.com.

ALBANY COUNTY CONSERVATION ALLIANCE HOSTS FREE FISHING DAY

By Kevin Busch, Region 4 Director



Another great time was had by all this year assisting with a NYS Free Fishing Day at 5 Rivers Environmental Center. While the weather was wonderful, the fish seemed to be on vacation, but the cagey veterans of Mike Speranza, Tim Barnard and Mike Busch were able to assist all in hooking up.

From the smiles memories and a passion have been created. Special thanks to Watervliet Fish & Game Association and West Albany Rod & Gun Club for their participation with all that was required to make this event successful.



New Members

DEFENDER MEMBER:

Robert P. Vargo, Jr., Cold Spring

GUARDIAN MEMBERS:

Boght Sportsmen’s Club, Cohoes * Freedom, Farmersville & Sandusky Rod & Gun Club, Freedom Benjamin F. Vasta, Mt. Kisco

LIFE MEMBERS:

Leanne Haley-Brown, Newfane * Rodney St. Clair, Madison



IF YOU ARE NOT CURRENTLY A MEMBER, JOIN TODAY!

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 (OR) Club Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
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Check One:

- _____ Guardian \$30
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Send application with check or money order payable to:
 NYSCC
 8 East Main Street
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