



ECOS NEWS

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A Day in the Life of the Mohawk River

ECOS Hosts Schoolchildren at DEC Event



Children from RiverRun Community Montessori School, Matt Schlesinger, and ECOS Director Leah Akins seining for fish in the Mohawk River. Story on page 3.

**Deadline for tickets for Rachel Carson
Celebration is November 1! See page 4.**



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ECOS' mission is to provide environmental information and educational opportunities that enhance appreciation of the natural world, to build a community that is aware and knowledgeable about environmental issues, and to advocate informed action to preserve our natural resources.

ECOS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization funded through the support of our members and community. We invite new members to join us in supporting our mission. Our membership form is on the back of this newsletter.

Extending Our Reach

By William Seyse, ECOS Board President

I went for a walk in the woods last month that took 10 days to complete. Four other friends went along, from Northville to Lake Placid, a distance of about 140 miles. We started in the rain, and had a very wet night to tent near Woods Lake. The next nine days were dry and we could concentrate on mudholes, tree roots, washed-out bridges, the scenery, and having a good time.



For this type of trip, everyone uses hiking poles. They provide balance, take some of the strain of the backpack off your knees and hips, and can assist in the search for stepping stones that are usually there in the mud somewhere in front of you.

My hiking poles adjust easily for different lengths, and I normally don't have an exact setting that I use. When hiking in the Adirondack High Peaks I can change settings by six or even 10 inches, depending on the steepness of the terrain.

Usually on hiking trails, I don't need to make any adjustments. But for some reason, on this hike, on the second day I lengthened the poles by about two inches and found a better stride for the entire hike. There was a slightly longer sweep to plant the pole in front of me, but there was also more reason to look farther ahead on the trail. While some sections of mud won't allow any distraction from the placement of each and every step, in general I found myself looking ahead more and seeing more of the sights that surrounded me.

I report all this just to say that I believe ECOS has lengthened its hiking poles, too, with the hiring of our new Executive Director, and we are looking ahead a little further than we have been able to in recent months. I'm happy to report that the view looks great, and as the journey continues, ECOS has a long trail still ahead of us. Thank you for your continued support.

Close Encounters of the Fishy Kind: A Day in the Life of the Mohawk River

By Matt Schlesinger, ECOS Newsletter Editor

On October 12, ECOS hosted school groups and the public at an educational event on the Mohawk River at Lock 7 Park in Niskayuna. A corollary to the “Day in the Life of the Hudson” programs that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Hudson River Estuary Program have held annually up and down the Hudson, the event drew more than 50 participants, who learned about the Mohawk’s fish species, studied its water quality, and witnessed the demonstration of an Erie Canal lock.

RiverRun Community Montessori school in Niskayuna brought its lower and upper elementary and middle-school students to the river on a perfect



fall morning. Several homeschoolers attended as well, and a class from Niskayuna High School visited the river for a separate project, but quickly joined in with seine operation and fish identification. “This is more fun than what we came here to do,” one student was overheard saying.

The students were treated to close encounters with some of the river’s resident fish, including walleye, white sucker, smallmouth bass, and a 16-inch goldfish (a.k.a. carp) that was the clear favorite of many. Some kids had never touched a live fish before, and the squeals of delight and surprise from some of the younger ones were rewarding to hear.

The occasion also drew media attention, with The Daily Gazette of Schenectady previewing the program in its October 11 edition, and following up with photos and video of the October 12 event on October 13.

Executive Director Leah Akins was joined in representing ECOS by Board President Will Seyse, Board Members Art Clayman, Arden Rauch, Holly Hawkes, Darwin Roosa and Peter Tobiessen, as well as volunteers Ed Kautz, Nancy Parry, Kathie Armstrong, and Matt Schlesinger. Kathy Czajkowski and Russell Moore from the state DEC educated partici-



pants about water quality sampling and fish identification and biology, respectively, and Bill Sweitzer of the New York Canal Corp. hosted the group and demonstrated the operation of the canal lock. Scott Wells and Doug Reed, from DEC, conducted fish sampling and sediment coring.

The data on water quality and fish populations will be submitted to the DEC, making this a citizen science event with real value.

Thank you to everyone who made A Day in the Life of the Mohawk such a success! We hope to expand the program to other schools and more of the public next year. Contact Leah at leah@ecosny.org if you’d like to help!

Cycling Doesn’t Get Smoother Than This!



ECOS brought this **Smoothie-making Bike**, owned by Cornell Cooperative Extension, to the Mabee Farm Fall Foliage Festival on October 15. We handed out well over a hundred cups of free smoothies and got countless kids excited about outdoor recreation, coached on by our spin instructor extraordinaire Art Clayman!