

Cary to Present Freshwater Forum

By Antonia Shoumatoff

Fresh drinking and ground water is critical for the quality of life in the Hudson Valley now and in the future. As towns throughout the region evaluate strategies for dealing with increased flooding, climate change and impending development a steep learning curve is required to keep up with all the new regulations for stormwater management alone. A recent forum at Cornell Cooperative Extension for Planning Boards on the new MS4 Stormwater Regulations was so enthusiastically attended that enrollment had to be closed.

On Saturday, April 16, at 9 a.m. the Cary Institute of Ecosystems Studies will host a forum designed to help towns get a handle on the freshwater issues that our region is facing. Experts in hydrology, aquatic biology and biodiversity will give an overview of the quality and quantity of

water in Eastern Dutchess County and how this precious resource can best be protected.

The goal of the forum is to provide municipal officials and concerned citizens with a roundup of the information needed to make sound decisions about freshwater management. There will be an overview of the pressures on groundwater and streams from development, runoff and pollution. Special attention will be given to green infrastructure and stormwater management practices and that can help minimize these pressures.

All the area's 'water gurus' will present their expertise: Russell Urban Meade will explain the hydrology of the groundwater in the region. The water resource educators and program leaders from Cornell's Dutchess County Environment programs will give an overview of water resources and facilitate a

panel discussion on management options. The NYS DEC's Watershed Outreach Specialist will explain the new MS4 Regulations.

Erik Kiviat of Hudsonia will give an insight into the sensitive wildlife that is dependent on wetlands and vernal pools, and Emma Rosi-Marshall of the Cary Institute will explain human impacts to freshwater.

The forum is directed towards municipal officials, planning boards, conservation advisory committees, watershed groups and concerned citizens. Attending the forum qualifies municipal attendees for three credits toward New York State municipal training.

The event is free but RSVP's are required by registering at: www.caryinstitute.org/freshwater.html.