

**America's Great Outdoors
Notes from Listening Session**

Location: Poughkeepsie, NY

Date: June 2, 2010

President Obama launched a national conversation about conservation in America at the White House Conference on the Great Outdoors on April 16, 2010. The President understands that protecting and restoring the lands and waters that we love and reconnecting people to the outdoors must happen at the local level. Therefore, President Obama directed the principal leaders of the Initiative to travel across the country to listen and learn from people directly involved in finding grassroots solutions to conserve our lands, waterways, historical and cultural resources and to reconnect Americans with the Outdoors. The President indicated that the sessions should engage the full range of interested groups, including tribal leaders, farmers and ranchers, sportsmen, community park groups, foresters, youth groups, businesspeople, educators, State and local government, recreation and conservation groups and others. The President placed a special priority on engaging with America's youth. Below are notes from the breakout groups at the Listening Session sorted by Discussion Question. Please feel free to use the ideation tool at <http://ideas.usda.gov/ago/ideas.nsf/> if you would like to share your thoughts.

Discussion Questions

1. What works: Please share your thoughts and ideas on effective strategies for conservation, recreation and reconnecting people to the outdoors.
2. Challenges: What obstacles exist to achieve your goals for conservation, recreation, or reconnecting people to the outdoors?
3. Federal government role: How can the federal government be a more effective partner in helping to achieve conservation, recreation or reconnecting people to the outdoors?
4. What additional tools and resources would help your efforts be even more successful?

Discussion Question 1-4	Comment
1, 4	Thanks for growing the food upstate and providing water. We want more people to ship upstate agricultural goods downstate by water and not by road to reduce oil usage and traffic. We need docks and piers. Youth need to be involved and work on ships to develop a sense of community and love for the river.
1, 2, 4	The Hudson River watershed is a community with many different local governments. What doesn't work is a lot of different parks that charge their own admission and you can get one pass for all the non-state parks for each park in different towns. This discourages recreation. There are great parks, but they Bay way is identifying wonderful spots to kayak and routes. Resources are not available or known to people. Wants a pass that is good for lots of parks.
2, 3, 4	Susan agrees with other commentators, especially regarding the lack of funding for DEC. She is concerned with the impact of untreated sewage on streams (combined sewer overflows). There needs to be more funding for infrastructure. NYS has within its jurisdiction ways for fine money to go back into the community and that should be done.

	Municipalities need to be fined if there is water quality violations and have that money go back into the community.
2, 3, 4	John grew up in the Bronx 30 years ago and had lots of outdoor recreational opportunities. Indian Point used to be a park. There are fewer areas for recreation in cities currently. We have to change the political discourse so that the public language has to be more inclusive. Everyone needs to pull together with people working together regardless of political affiliation. Sea level rise is a national security issue. He would like to see an increase in EPA and NOAA budgets.
2, 3, 4	Need more real time monitoring (Beacon Institution is doing some of that). Would like to see a model of what is happening on the river. More funding is needed for real time monitoring. Science education is needed and training for teachers on how to teach kids to learn science hands on.
1, 2, 3, 4	Dan wants to commend the federal groups for holding this session. Kids need to know how to swim. 69% of African American teens can't swim. 42% of white teens can't swim. We need to do a lot more to teach young people to swim. The CCC provided infrastructure in the 1930s that is still used today. NYS closed parks and the Feds stepped in requiring state to keep open fed. Funded parks. Please build in accountability in federal grants. Write in assurance that parks using fed money require that they remain open. Build in enforcement that money is spent in compliance.
2, 3	Lack of funding for DEC prevents DEC from investigating violations. Local planning boards don't take into consideration cumulative impacts which affect the Hudson River. SEQRA has no enforcement arm.
2, 3, 4	AGO is also in our back yards and ecosystem services should be a top priority. Funding and research on new education initiatives, and infrastructure.
2, 3	I want viewsheds protection for the Hudson Valley. When federal and state parks are involved there should be a way to protect viewsheds. Things that are done on a local level affect people in a region.
3, 4	Would like to get federal money to improve outdoor access. Dairy farms need to be able to make more money. Implement tax credits or raise milk prices so dairy farms can stay in business.
2, 3, 4	All river and estuary programs-make all of them one program and give them elevated status. Combine federal designations to work better together. Make them all eligible for federal money. Better coordination and resources among federal agencies. If you want to connect people with nature put nature where people are. It has to be accessible to people in urban population centers. Federal money needs to go to urban center parks. Concentrate

	and prioritize on national estuaries.
2	Allen is NPS hydrologist. There are national parks in New York, but few people know of them. We need to get NPS information out.
2, 3, 4	Reconnect people with landscapes and connect landscapes with each other from headwaters and tributaries to main stem. Provide additional funding to remove dams. Support legislation to increase F&W service programs. Find ways to provide federal incentives so farmers don't have to sign natural gas drilling leases.
2, 3, 4	The Hudson River estuarine research reserve is part of a little known partnership program. They have something to contribute. Use science based management practices. Get people to connect with the resources from youth to policy makers and how to plug for the program. Please fund and connect to other initiatives. We have to keep climate change and sea level rise front and center. Relates to public access, wonderful array of public access site, a lot of those will be under water with sea level rise. Keen interest in seeing energy conservation.
1, 3, 4	Wildlife Conservation Society educates Kids about the river in the Bronx, has had success. Don't forget the urban population! Need to have outdoor experiences in urban centers. So important to inner city youth. CSOs are the biggest threat to the Bronx River and stormwater runoff.
1, 2	It is important to understand it is the kids that are going to carry this work on, kids need to be involved in river activities and kids love to be on the river. The more they are on the more vested they get. Kids like being on the river with their friends. They are more invested if they are with their friends for longer periods of time. Just need a strip of beach with nothing else on it. Kids don't know you can't be on the river after a hard rain because of CSOs. River keeper is working hard on this issue. There isn't timely knowledge of bacterial levels in the river.
2, 3, 4	Would like people to have access to water quality information. Infrastructure investment is desperately needed. We need a water quality (sewage system) infrastructure! Needs enforcement of laws. EPA has a role. Waste-water treatment budget has plummeted in EPA. Need to have a robust presence so permits are stricter. Wants fed government to invest in infrastructure and enforcement. Hydrofracking: what is EPA's jurisdiction? Leaves drinking water supplies contaminated. EPA needs to get involved otherwise the states will have conflict. EPA needs to make sure NYDEP works on infrastructure investment and economic opportunity. Send more EPA staff to more public meetings.
1, 2, 3, 4	It is worth reminding ourselves that we have globally rare freshwater wetlands in the Hudson Valley, we need to conserve the ecosystem, need big picture plan of attack (this is work here-Greenway program). This would be a great test case. We have the resources, plan and people. We are all invested in this plan and would love a federal partner. Expand

	NY & NJ harbor Estuary program should expand up the river. \$52 million dollars requested to President to expand funding for EPA. Combine 2 programs to combine the harbor program with the DEC program. Sea level rise will travel up the Hudson. A green ribbon of protected space along rivers is a great idea. Federal government needs to provide more science on sea level rise and more interpretation and outreach about that data.
1, 4	Use non-profits to bring kids to the outdoors. www.liwatersentinel.org Does water testing with volunteers. Families participate
2, 3	I remember playing with my son and the water was terrible. Children need to have clean water where they are playing. Concerned about too many services because taxes go up.
1	Industrial Heritage Association, Troy Waterfront Farmers Markets, Farmers Market Pavilion in, distress cities, Capital City Community Garden, Industrial Heritage Site
1	Public partnerships are working, e.g. NY State Parks & Land Trust, Starting the residence Stable, bidding project
1	Getting people out to see and learn about these important land vistas, Specific programs like Teaching The Hudson River Valley Programs, Hudson River Ramble (Heritage weekend), The concept of the Hudson River Valley Greenway
1	I like hands on activities, where I can interact with the environment. For example, Norry Point trail, where I work to restore wetland marshes.
2	Finding people to do the work or creating the jobs where the people who want to help can work or make a living doing these things
1	Black Rock Consortium – taking students outdoor or exposing them to the outdoor environment. (Infusing in our curriculum to expose students to all the possible jobs they could be doing in the outdoors).
2	FEDs should put more money into these organizations that fun institutions but the turn around a paten research that sustain life. (Land Grant Colleges).
1	Infusing local land trust and encouraging them to make or preserve rail trails. Appalachian Trails Society which runs through the NY.
1	Land water Conservation Fun which.
1	Work of grass roots organization which organizes to support parks and public parks, Play Street, CSA and Compost Gardening.
1	Investing in existing in to historic preservations and providing the tools and funding, Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit for smaller and building and infrastructures, Emphasis on

	outdoors and historic preservation.
1	Coacher Crew – introduce 100’s of kids to the outdoors, Rescued race horse, raising awareness, about the Marcellus Shale.
1	Community Gardens are growing and are working because its raises the awareness among kids and get them outside.
2	Funding sources pose a big hurdle.
1	Change all the models and all the rules that provide food and faming in the county, Creating a new model or business model that can promote cost share in sustainable farming, Community involvement and community ownership.
1	NY Recreational Water Society Working with the local townships which give the parks money, volunteers, and expertise to do their service, Non-profit partnerships that support these efforts, Working with the great towers – forest services.
2	Interoperability between the agencies that have the power to implement any of these changes required to bring about the America’s Great Outdoor Initiatives, the ease in converting farm land into developments.
1	People being involve works but the federal government is missing from the table (engaging all the support that the feds can provide).
2	Train teachers to bond with student in these areas.
1	Teachers needs more profession development about the environment – getting teachers to expose kids to the outdoors more essential in raising a society that is aware and appreciate the outdoors more.
1	How do we get the people using sustainable transportations to get to the places that they need to go to? Shuttles that can get people to these places. Support the initiative for local state transportation projects.
1	Fragmenting out communities with new development, new ways for people to think about the, big picture, centers of green spaces.
1	Industry has left the county and these needs to be reinvested in, need help with people to help us with revitalizing the outdoors in the Hudson; we need more visionaries to help us see the good in our environment.
1	Breaking the bond with students with the TV and inside to get them to come back outside; bring back Captain Planet.

2	Getting word out about these partners or initiatives out there that are doing what they are doing. Ways of bringing all these initiatives together. .
2	Transportation to get people from the urban population to some of these outdoor adventures (getting boats back, rebuilding docks).
2	Planting trees and vegetation to prevent erosion and sediment runoff works; Forest Service has work very well; Forest Service has also done a lot to quantify benefits of environmental mitigation efforts; large scale planning that would take into account the component of other initiatives should be the focus of future planning and development.
2	Synergy between the agencies – how to do you connect people with these outdoor activities; where can we place these community gardens; complete streets and safe routes to schools.
2	FED should take a more active role with people who bring together these people.
2	Efforts to create more green space; improving or building more docs on the Hudson River.
2	Local land trust are the most effective means for protecting open spaces and watersheds, renewal of the extended federal tax incentive for conservation is critical.
2	Connecting people with the land by showing them how food is produce works.
2, 3, 4	I'm a Hudson River navigator and through American Heritage Rivers Initiative. Also works here at Marist and represents local community groups. Bringing people out are surely things promoted by the grass roots, local community. Opportunities to partner with federal government. Every local community has different needs and it could be recreation or natural resource conservation. But we need to stress connecting people through the rich sites that we have, cultural, historical and environmental. Additional resources that would help our efforts? Coming from the American Heritage Rivers Initiative – 14 rivers that work together. Tools we need from federal government are for federal government to be engaged, but not just through one agency, but inter-agency task forces. It's not once size fits all. We worked with an interagency task force. Can be such a tremendous tool, because if I go to USDA and I'm not talking about farm, it's not a part of the USDA priority of projects, if we could crossover and USDA is partnering with the American Council of Historic Preservation or NPS is involved, then they will recognize needs of local communities are not one size fits all. We need to work across agencies. We also need to re-engage what the federal government has already invested. We constantly struggle with where we belong, because the American Heritage Rivers is not part of an overarching organization. Where do we evolve? Maybe what we do is partner with some of those local initiatives to reengage them and make them part of the project. The challenges are, of course, money. We need to

	see the federal investment across all agencies. The role can be great. We've seen across our history much investment and it is a golden opportunity.
1, 2, 3, 4	<p>What works to engage people are community gardens, school gardens, theme farms, fresh air farms; things to get kids out and experience their environment and to understand the food system. Community gardens are a fabulous way to get people even in small spaces in urban environments to connect with the outdoors, to preserve that land. Tools/resources – public land trusts, protection of land rights for community gardens, assistance of soil remediation in brown fields and urban areas, sites that exist and are neglected, mini-grants, funding to get school gardens going, efforts to bring fresh food to children. Challenges – state and local regulations that are seen as barriers right now. Lack of incentives, short term goals for development that fragments the land and takes land out of production as a green space. Green spaces or community gardens being sold. Maybe if they are sold could have some percentage of the fund be put into a coffer – when public land is sold, to put some of that money into a coffer to use for other public lands, soil remediation, etc. Food modernization act is an opportunity to amend that in certain ways not to overburden small producers. Can't be one size fits all, right now it's five hundred dollar blanket fee for every farmer that participates. We need to mitigate that and make it more flexible for small farmers or a variety of farmers.</p>
1, 3	<p>I'm here as a private citizen. However, I'm involved in a number of businesses and activities related to the subject. Regarding the two other areas I'm involved in, I'm the designated developer of a project called Longdock Beacon, a collaborative project in Beacon with Scenic Hudson, constructing riverfront land there in the city of Beacon into a tourist destination, a facility that will be developed according to sustainable practices. Connecting to outdoors requires a place to spend the night. That dramatically increases the chances of people spending more time there, because they have the chance to spend a second day and can take advantage of more resources. This gets into the private sector and development. I'm also on the Board of Directors of Hudson Valley Fresh and also interested in economic development to the dairy cooperative. What struck me in my various roles is that I believe that it's a mistake that the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development is not involved in this initiative. In each of these projects I've been involved in, HUD has been involved as well. Most recently, Hudson Valley Fresh has been a recipient of HUD funding for job retention at one of the oldest family-owned dairies in the state. HUD plays a very important role and since money is constantly being mentioned as a challenge, those are potential deep sources of financing. HUD loan programs can help finance many projects and any tourist association can be financed in part by HUD 108 loans, do not need congressional appropriation for the full amount of the loan. It's a wide open source of capital.</p>
2, 4	<p>I'm here today as an independent professional fundraiser who's worked in parks, gardens, and arts. I want to second what was said about interagency. Inter-agency approach is</p>

	<p>essential. When you are dealing with a park, you are dealing with a designed landscape. It can't just be seen as grass mowing. I work for two different Olmstead parks. One has challenges just to keep the trees trimmed, to keep the design intact. Needs historic preservation money and recreational tourism money. As far as activating this, I think that what works is to plot activities to connect people through various methods – slow food, future farmers, etc. Get kids out of the classroom and on to farms and in farm areas. There is no excuse for not getting kids out of the classroom more. Water is also very important and kids haven't had any experience with water and it's very important to educate them about water safety. Every year kids die because they don't know how to swim.</p>
1, 2	<p>I work for the NY state office of parks, recreation and historic preservation under Carol Ash as a community liaison. One thing that really does work is to link the many programs out there. Many times we are working in bubbles without connections to others. What we do in the state historic preservation office is provide awareness and a protection of resources that lead to an incentive for preservation. Farmers have to make money. Money goes where the opportunities are and where the path is clearest. But we have an amazing amount of infrastructure that is already established in historic sites and towns and we need to reinforce what we already have. We have a federal-state program "Certified Local Government" that the federal government stepped up to the plate to provide assistance to communities to incorporate preservation. We provide grant money to those communities to do the preservation work, training, and planning. It needs to be fully funded. If we keep our infrastructure and our historic communities viable, people want to live there and we leave open space alone. Speaking under my parks hat, we have enormous number of parks, we pioneered the CCC effort here in this state. All these things that were built that need cash. Cottages, cabins, admin buildings, that important for families to get out. We are so behind in our capital investment because we can't do it anymore. I see all our historic resources and parks; we have any interesting hinge part between communities and parks that are economically important. It takes funding. It takes cash. Land and Water Conservation Fund have gotten so much attention, trying to keep attention on Historic Preservation Fund.</p>
2	<p>Independent consultant in historic preservation. The good news is that the increase the state office would get from the Historic Preservation Fund would go back out to the communities. This extra money would be going for more projects. Money to do these important projects, the grass roots needs the money to do that. My concern is that the state being in this position financially, there will be short term decisions that will have long term detrimental impacts. Alternative energy for example. Wind farms, gas development. This is an industrializing area. When you have farmers that are not making money, landholders that have no viable means of earning, they are very vulnerable to practices that may not be the best, like hydraulic fracturing. In terms of developing these rural landscapes, making rural roads accessible to high volumes of truck traffic or collecting lines for the electric power grid, these things all have major impacts on our landscape and</p>

	diminish people's connection to it.
1, 2, 3	<p>Attorney and involved in Walkway over the Hudson. Most people thought I was nuts to try to turn a railroad bridge into a walkway. It's become the 3rd biggest tourist attraction in NY State. We've had 600,000 visitors. I think it's popular because it's very simple – it's a way to get people outdoors without cars. Shared for bicycles, skaters, runners, walkers, small scooters. It takes about half hour to walk across it. Until you get out there, you can't understand the beauty of it. It's quiet, it's peaceful and people just love it. It's going to connect with 25 miles of traffic-free trails on both sides. I've been pushing for a number of years with the Dept of Transportation not just to concentrate on providing motor vehicles access, but on bikes and pedestrians. Not enough attention to sidewalks and traffic-free lanes. There are no shoulders, sidewalks, traffic free lanes. I think that's the reason for the obesity problem because there isn't a safe way to get out and walk around. We've concentrated on motor vehicles for too long. Dept of Transportation needs to take into account and consideration the impact on bicycling and pedestrian traffic. Maybe some incentives that every project they do, they take into account the impact on biking, walking, take that into consideration. Even with the project we did, we had transportation funding and it took us 3 or 4 years to use that. We had to get most of the money through other means. In the Hudson Valley in general, we are the original great outdoors. It's the most beautiful area in the world and I think the federal government should concentrate on this area by making it accessible to people not just in motor vehicles. Railroad transport—one of the problems we had, CSX built a new freight line, not really cooperating in helping us use old rail trails. Trying to get commercial interests to buy them, but the federal government could help. The feds could take a role in providing incentives or leaning on CSX. Senator Schumer helped with the walkway. We are working on other things. CSX owns a key piece that we need for the trails. It is all coming into fruition except for the one piece we are trying to buy from CSX. We're within close proximity of 10-15 million people in New York City. Local people can't get out West, but by protecting the Hudson Valley we helping people get outdoors in an area that's close to a concentrated population. We were overwhelmed with the success. By word of mouth we're getting people from all over the world. You just have to go talk to people to see they're coming from everywhere. We're still working on parking issues, an elevator, benches, but it's been a remarkable success. Until you get up there, you can't understand the beauty of it. With those trail connections, we could make a trail from here to NYC, but there is a lot of resistance to it. But if we could get the federal government to help us lean on the railroads.</p>
4	<p>Kids learning how to bike on the walkway because there's no traffic and it's safe. That's the biggest impediment to walking and biking. The traffic free trails, the Walkway is a perfect example of kids walking, learning how to bike, there's not a car in sight. . It's safer and parents are more comfortable taking kids there. I don't think any emphasis is given to getting people out without cars. That's bad because of gas, obesity. Trails, even shoulders on the road are important, 4 ft shoulder gives the ability for bike safety when it's low</p>

	<p>speeds. Any new roads that are constructed should take that into account. I know it's expensive but it's more expensive to try to fight obesity.</p>
2	<p>One of the other issues with access is getting people from the city. Metro-North has been very good about promoting our region and if there is something special going on they have been very good about offering deals. They have helped support tourism in our region. I think the education system should address that as well, getting the young people from NYC up here.</p>
1, 2	<p>Great example about the partnerships and working together is the Walkway over the Hudson. It's our newest state park. It was also an historic preservation project as well. It's a community resource. It's sustainable because the iron was forged in the 1880s; we didn't have to mine for it. It was already constructed and we put it back to a new use. It's kept a landmark of the Hudson Valley that's already constructed and in good order and put it back to working order. One point of access to the outdoors is historic urban parks. There was a huge park movement in American city life that started in 1860s. Too many of those are languishing. They have mature landscapes, beautiful buildings, and the state cannot put money into them. The cities cannot afford to put the money back into the parks and provide the maintenance. So in the urban areas, there experience of nature can be pretty lousy because the parks aren't kept up or aren't safe. We have those parks all across NY State. We're called the Empire State, it's a nice name, but it'd be good if it meant something. We have these great communities, everyone needs help to keep legacy alive.</p>
1, 2	<p>GIS Director of Highlands Institute. US. What works? The USGS and the USFS. I can't say enough about the scientific work those organizations have done, their diligence in organizing it and their increasing ability to make that publicly available. The Rockland County Water Resources spread new light on the water treatment plant, for example. Getting solid science about how the entire water cycle works allows us to be informed; it will have impact on generations. In the U.S. Forest Service, Martina Barns and her colleagues, they have done studies (Forest, Water, and People Study) that analyzed several indicators of water quality so we now have the information and data. With this data set I can help individual municipalities establish targets, impairments, threats to that water and actions. What are the best water sheds, what are the challenges? The work done at the U.S. Forest Service is invaluable. In terms of natural resources, Harriman State Park has a long tradition of group camps for less advantaged children. There is a balancing issue between recreation and biodiversity. Recreation does have a significant impact on biodiversity. In Harriman state parks we have many visitors, but if something isn't done we will have no forest in 40-50 years if we do nothing. The management is the issue. Establishing of base lines and ongoing monitoring. More study and management.</p>
1, 2, 3	<p>Small grass roots group working in Putnam County. Being an advanced senior, I will read my comments. (Written comments were submitted.) The great swamp of eastern Putnam and Dutchess County is a different type of river system – 20 mile length encompasses two major</p>

	<p>river systems. The Housatonic and the Hudson. The East branch of the Croton River also is part of the NYC water system. The great swamp is known to supply about 20% of water to the Croton system. The great swamp is the 2nd largest fresh water wetland and the largest red maple swamp in the state. Many thousands of acres are included in this area, fresh water swamp habitat and critical resources that provide areas where children and adults can get out and engage in science in the field by tracking turtles or simply enjoying the joys of being outdoors. Hunting, fishing, kayaking and canoeing are possible. Many species live here, many species of birds, major breeding population of turtles, amphibians, reptiles, etc. Over 25 species of mammals, rare plants are numerous. Eight natural communities support rare plants. Success – the answer is a coalition of partners led by an entirely volunteer organization. Friends of the Great Swamp (FROG) that has been able to obtain Recovery Act funds, with 11 partners as well as local land owners have all come together to preserve over 600 acres in the swamp and more acres in conservation easement. Major challenge – funding. Potential for new homes and development in the great swamp watershed. Demand for open space has driven prices beyond which feds are willing to pay. We need more open space lands in the Hudson Valley. Land prices and taxes are exorbitant here. There are few other grants for open space preservation. What can the federal government do? Now is the time before it’s gone to create unique and valuable open space. We support that creation of the Hudson Valley as a National Park. FROG would like to propose that the federal government acquire additional acreage in the Great swamp to create a national wildlife refuge to protect the habitat of the wildlife in the great swamp to protect habitat of waterfowl and songbirds and rare reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and butterflies. This refuge could also act as a biological research station as well as preserving water quality and provide public education. The addition of a north woods element is a thought. The northeast would then have a national refuge and a national forest similar to what is out west. People cannot connect to the wild world, if there is no wild world out there. Preserving the great swamp is an important first step. We look forward to partnering with the federal government.</p>
<p>2, 3</p>	<p>Zoning commission for town of Taughkonic, town is rewriting its zoning code and an area that the federal government could connect with. I’m reaching out to find resources to help the town s feel empowered and to understand the importance. We are the front line of conservancy with a 36-year old code where the word conservancy doesn’t even appear. And of course there is funding. We have \$10,000 to get us through a three year process. Feds could reach out about these issues. We need funding for planners and helping organize. We are the front line to educating our townspeople and we are losing our population. We’ve had dairy farmers taking their own lives because they can’t face the debt they are acquiring.</p>
<p>1, 2, 3</p>	<p>The Hudson Valley is the birthplace of the modern environmental movement. We have partnerships and incredible collaboration through the government, organizations to help provide food to our incredible farm stands, tourism. Great opportunity to build on what we</p>

	<p>have here as a great resource and collaboration. One aspect of that collaboration is “Saving the Land that Matters Most” 17 land trusts are working together. 65,000 acres that we estimated cost about \$500 million dollars to implement. There are other estuaries around the country, but the idea that in 5 years we could preserve that green corridor of the Hudson Valley is within our grasp. We think it can be done through a number of exiting funding sources in collaboration with USDA, DEC, etc. If we all work together to fight for full funding of existing initiatives is what we need. We have the Land Conservation Fund, the Highlands Conservation Act authorized for \$100 million, the National Estuary Program – full funding is essential for these. We’ve asked Governor Patterson and Mayor Bloomberg for funding. USDA farm and ranch protection program is miniscule amount of funding. I would love to work with the Dept of Ag to identify other funding sources because we have land trusts on the ground, working in our communities with the farmers and land owners. We need a federal partner here. Working with NRCS, USDA, and the land trust community to protect what is a great source of food for the valley and for NYC. Many of our farmers are trucking their food to NYC. If the land is lost at the rate, Hudson Valley agricultural sector is one of the 10 most threatened nationally. This is a time of real urgency and a great opportunity for collaboration.</p>
2, 3	<p>Captain of the Clearwater. I believe in conservation. The sloop Clearwater is a large sailing vessel and part of the mission is protecting the waters of the Hudson. We do on the water education. Our standard sail is three hours, a field trip for students. The boat is a replica of the cargo vessels that would have been on the Hudson. So the kids are getting an all-encompassing experience on the Hudson – learning about the history and the environment. But these kids are 9-22 years old. Everything we’re talking about in terms of conservation, recreation is going to happen in the future. If we short change a serious understanding of how to work the outdoors into the education system, especially for the kids in urban areas or in isolated rural areas, it might be the first time they’ve slept outdoors or been on a boat. It’s a very intensive program to give these kids a place to put their enthusiasm and we must get them while they are young. We heard from the youth yesterday – one girl said that we don’t think it’s good to mandate what we have to learn. But I do think it makes a difference in the attitude that you have from the top. Value outdoor education, but not necessarily mandate it. Some resources that would be good would be to streamline the grant process. Many small organizations need help applying for funding. Giving those small organizations the opportunity to get money – it doesn’t need to be millions of dollars. (Beczak in Yonkers, Rocking the Boat for example). It can be a local place that can’t fill out 150-page grants but can handle smaller grants. Facilitating that grant process is important. And setting the example of early education is something that needs to be done.</p>
3	<p>If funds from Land and water conservation fund could be made available directly to local trusts and nonprofits rather than going through the state.</p>
2, 4	<p>Part of organization to bring back the night sky. Full cutoff lighting promotes tax savings</p>

	and gives view of night sky. Incorrect lighting changes life cycles of some animals in sound. They move to the Town lights rather than to the moon light. Web site: www.darksky.org
1, 3, 4	Historic Preservation When you restore areas of historic sites you keep open spaces open. Funded from Fossil Fuel Resources. Need full funding for historic preservation as well. Conservation and preservation should work hand in hand.
1, 2, 3	Many grass roots agencies already work together. Need feds to join. We will have a US travel office thanks to the President. We need Federal partner help with having tourists come up river from city to see the Hudson Valley. We just got a grant but the pre-approval application alone was 115 pages. No public transportation to get from train station to farms and parks and trails. Tourism in HV is \$4.7 billion dollar business.
2, 3, 4	Have seen good and bad of conservation actions over years. NY has over 14000 public/private recreation areas. Each State has unique goals. Local needs are different than out west. National goals not only goals. They may not fit every state. Need to look at needs over the country. NE has more open space than bi areas out west. Needs across NY are all similar. Groups need to communicate across the state and the country. A lot of innovative ideas are out there. Don't reinvent the wheel.
3, 4	Land and water conservation fund funded most of the parks in the 60's and 70's. It has been a long time since it had an impact. Asking Feds to fully fund this fund. Need it off budget. Need to keep it in the parks. This money gets lost or taken up in federal budget.
1, 2, 3	Making first whisky in NY since prohibition. We are a farm. The biggest disconnect between people and farms is that they don't get there. Tourism helps bring some people to the farms, but we need an education program to get more people to the farm. Farming in NY is a difficult and dangerous job. Feds need to help the state understand the importance of connection.
2, 4	The City of Yonkers has only 50 yards of access to the Hudson River. 4th largest city in the state. We see over 15,000 kids a year and they never see or get to the water. Education is an important component. Don't forget the kids that need to touch the water. Stop Hydro-fracking from happening.
1, 2, 3, 4	Purpose is to connect people to natural resources and history and culture. Please include Americas Byways as equal partners with the park service and others in this initiative. Make sure funding programs are not for just bricks and mortar. Have some for grass root organizations that bring people together. Volunteering is an American activity. These people in these groups can spend funds wisely.
3, 4	Residential program that get kids to forests and farms is important. Need at least fed funding.

1, 2, 3	374 acre learning center for arts and nature. Connecting kids to nature by bringing underserved kids into the environment to give them hands on learning. We get kids there for 3-5 days. It is enlightening for them. Kids learn about history and importance of conservation and perform better on testing when outdoors. Need a stronger educational component.
2, 4	Put emphasis on hands on learning rather than tests. We can't pay for a bus to get 5 miles to get kids outside in nature. Kids in rural areas don't get out either. We need to build a passion for outdoors.
2, 3, 4	Working on statewide agenda. Pass not child left inside. Make sure every kid gets outdoor education for every year they are in school. I work with little kids and see the benefit. Test scores go up, illnesses go down. Teachers aren't trained to take kids out. Transportation is a huge issue. Encourage outdoor jobs for youth.
2, 3, 4	Signs off for environmental education aid for state. Disconnect for administrators at schools. They need to be educated on value of outside hands on training. New teachers are trained on pass tests. The teachers who are retiring are the ones that had the hands on experience.
1, 3, 4	Too much emphasis on testing. College campuses are great resources for local organizations. College kids and help reach out to youth and non-profits.
3	All levels of government need to break-down walls and see the big picture.
1, 3, 4	We just celebrated 400 years of history in NY. We celebrated by making everything sustainable and built 3 big projects. Walkway over Hudson, Crown Point Lighthouse and Governor's Island. We have seen thousands of tourists. We had several events including River Day. We brought together every single constituent. This initiative can build on momentum of this celebration.
1, 2, 3, 4	We discovered a revolutionary war monument. Had kids who had gotten in trouble with the law restore it and they didn't go away. They kept coming back. Convenience is needed to get people out. As a physician we need to get people out. This is a public health emergency. 40% of sophomore girls were overweight who were going out for sports 5 years ago. We need to work on this.
2, 3	Land grants are recommending the wrong type of feed/chemical for cows.
1, 3, 4	Environmental movement is future to our society. Yesterday was a great event. We need to pull the youth in. Good diversity in youth. We want to become a model in the nation as we have been in the past. Include young at the table and young people with solutions. Create a CCC but on the level with kids involved.
1, 2, 4	Have an idea. Raise your hand if you believe that anything is possible. We always hear we

	<p>need more funding. What if what we do is profitable? All the groups that are here. Small gardens in the Bronx can't produce enough. But if all the groups work together we can produce enough to sell and make our own money. For example "Rockin' the boat" builds boats. They are not for profit but they don't need money. They are making their own. The Carpenter School in Maine only gets a little bit of funding. They sell what the kids make. Think Profit.</p>
1, 4	<p>Teach the right kind of things to youth. Take kids outdoors. Spiritual growth is more important than physical growth. Spend time with kids outdoors. Parents need to get kids involved in the environment.</p>
2, 4	<p>Parkways should protect plants that are growing. Education important.</p>
3	<p>Federal and State need to collaborate and have information and discussion forums. We need to solve problems so our volunteers can solve problems.</p>
1, 2, 3	<p>70 acres of historical property was going to be developed near a soldier's grave yard. His project would hopefully protect the value of a battlefield. The Hudson Valley grassroots effort is made. funding is needed</p>
2, 3	<p>Trails, bridges need to be connected. Transportation needs funding. Highway design should incorporate walking, biking trails for Cities and Parks. A better way to transport.</p>
2, 3	<p>Beacon - make transportation an important part. The Hudson River is America's River. Funding needed for transportation costs and being connected to the River.</p>
1, 3, 4	<p>Zero access to Hudson River in Town of Newburgh. The City of Newburgh has 400 ft of access. Feds bought riverfront years ago and sold it to private business. EPA bought a large parcel recently. Would like to see access to river for community, not condos or restaurants. People and kids don't get out on river and don't know about it. EPA has control of property. Make it into a park. Don't sell it to developers. Don't understand why that happens. What works? State has member items to get money to small groups that get things done.</p>
1, 3, 4	<p>NY/NJ Trail Conference has dealt with hiking trails for 90 years. Hiking is a low cost part of a healthy lifestyle. Walkway over the Hudson and areas in New Paltz are good examples of access to hiking areas. Public Officials should be seen outside on the trails as examples. Many afraid to go out-door and parents can't educate when they are afraid or haven't done it. People new to hiking in nature ask us questions like "what do you do about mosquitoes"? Need Education. Urban Parks are a backyard for children. Partnerships are important. Me and my husband are working with bike riders to create trails in our town. We hope the Town will work with this.</p>
1, 2, 3, 4	<p>35000 acres of Parkland n NYC. It is the backyard to many children. Urban areas need to be</p>

	<p>included. Problem in urban areas is alienation of parkland. It is too easy for land uses to change and it is not preserved as open space. Urban areas have natural areas too. Our cities and council people are selling our historic and natural areas. Oldest part of Poughkeepsie settled by the Dutch. As mayor I acquired the property to access walkway over the Hudson. Can't make these types of areas inaccessible to people. Friends of the Upper Landing with partners hope to build a bridge (taken from Dutch technology) and help restore old buildings. Need to pursue global projects to boost tourism.</p>
1, 3, 4	<p>Parks and Trails and Greenways need to be treated as the "main dish" not the side as far as infrastructure. Fully fund the land trusts and heritage area programs. Communities are changing in a tourism economy. NY has a lot of history in the Hudson Valley. Heritage areas need to be connected. Create programs to allow all grass root organizations to have access to funding. River and Trails program thru NPS is only access for tech assistance for many. Needs to have continued funding. The River and Trails program is the only place to preserve, expand and continue the program.</p>
1, 3	<p>Worked with many different groups to restore watersheds and natural areas. National Estuaries is an organization already in place to restore areas. Incentivize local action such as issuing local bonds for others to match. Many communities are raising their own money. Missing a partner in the Federal government. Federal tax credits are a great option.</p>