

CONSERVATION CORNER

Conservation News & Local Events

By Skip Doyle, Conservation Chair



AMC – Princeton Club Lecture on Rachel Carson

On Wednesday, April 18, 6:30 p.m. at The Princeton Club (15 W 43 Street), the Conservation Committee is sponsoring Mark Lytle, Professor of History and Environmental Studies at Bard College, who will present a biography of Rachel Carson – marine biologist, naturalist, author of *Silent Spring*, and one of the founders of the modern environmental movement in America. The Princeton Club is home to eminent lectures across a broad spectrum of topics (see www.PrincetonClub.com/events for other lectures such as Christine Todd Whitman on April 25). The Appalachian Mountain Club is honored that the Princeton Club is hosting this AMC conservation event.

Although there is no fee for this lecture and registration is not required, please send an email to skip@AMCconservation.org so that we can reserve the proper size lecture room. (Note: the Winter Schedule has an incorrect lecture date of April 25.) After the presentation, Mark Lytle will sign copies of his biography of Rachel Carson, *The Gentle Subversive: Rachel Carson, Silent Spring, and the Rise of the Environmental Movement*, which will be available for sale.

The Hole in the Doughnut of Sterling Forest

The capstone of a decade-long conservation project, on November 27th, 2006, a 575-acre tract of woodland located in the center of Sterling Forest State Park, and slated for development, was purchased and preserved. Sterling Forest is a 20,000-acre park which has been pieced together with \$90 million in public and private funds over the past decade through the efforts of numerous conservation, environmental, and land preservation groups. This parcel was acquired by the Trust for Public Land from Zurich Insurance Company, transferred to New York State paid by its Environmental Protection Fund, and is to be administered by the Palisades Interstate Parks Commission. For more information on Sterling Forest and other New York State parks concerning recreation and historic preservation see <http://nysparks.state.ny.us/parks/>.

Note of Gratitude

Researching the Sterling Forest land acquisition, I came upon a letter that Jean Lombard – active in our chapter's AMC conservation decades before me – wrote to Governor Pataki this past December thanking him for his role in Sterling Forest and praising him for his conservation legacy. Her note struck me in several respects. It was in 1986 that she and other AMC members participated in a Sterling Forest Partnership to pioneer the concept and creation of a Sterling Forest state park which came to fruition in 1998 and culminated in this most recent purchase. They worked to raise money and awareness; for these AMCs and their many partners, Sterling Forest is their legacy, too. I was moved by her and her colleagues' foresight, call to concrete action, and persistence. And I was particularly moved by her letter simply written as a thank-you note to the governor. Often we will marshal massive letter-writing campaigns and action plans – all laudable and necessary – but how often after the victory do we write a note of thanks?

As I am leading a hike or bike ride, I am continually filled with a sense of gratitude to those volunteers who built the trail – even stone staircases in the woods! – and converted abandoned railroad beds into rail-trails. So to those of you who open our woodlands and waterways, I want to take this moment to offer my thanks. And too, for each of us to take a moment to reflect: what is our personal legacy?