EPA’s Healthy Watersheds Program Promotes Planning for Green Infrastructure at the Landscape Scale – A Case Study of New York

Tuesday, January 14, 2014
Two-hour Webcast

Eastern: 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.  Central: 12:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m.  Mountain: 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.  Pacific: 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Join us for a webcast on planning for green infrastructure (GI) at the landscape scale, highlighting New York State’s new GI planning guide. Green infrastructure in the context of landscapes is the interconnected natural systems and ecological processes that provide clean water, clean air, and critical wildlife habitat. This webcast will help states and local governments understand the importance of planning to protect GI landscapes by using a strategic landscape approach to open-space conservation. By using this approach, local communities, landowners, and organizations work together to identify, design, and conserve their local land network and the multiple ecological and economic benefits it provides. A GI plan entails assessing an area’s existing natural assets to determine the greatest priorities for protection and restoration, along with implementation strategies. GI plays a critical role in the protection of healthy watersheds and the ecosystem services they support.

This three part webcast will introduce a landscape scale approach toward GI planning and provide a planning example conducted at the county level. The first part of the webcast will introduce the multiple benefits of GI and GI planning as a key tool to ensure that land use conservation decisions are made using the best available data and objective information. The second part of the webcast will highlight why New York State sought to develop a GI plan and how they went about it. The webcast will conclude with a case study of GI planning in Ulster County New York. This example will highlight the various steps of GI planning and demonstrate how GI maps are created and evaluated. The case study will provide a planning model that may be replicated at other counties across New York and nationwide.

Instructors:

Karen Engel, Green Infrastructure Coordinator, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation – Karen leads a NYS DEC initiative to incorporate GI internally into its programs, as well as to promote GI more broadly. With a BS from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, she has held positions in both the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and the NYS DEC, where she has worked across Regions and Divisions in outdoor recreation, environmental education, wildlife biology, hazardous waste site remediation, and forestry. This experience supports her holistic view of the life-sustaining functions of natural systems that recommends less compartmentalized approaches to environmental concerns.

Karen Firehock, Executive Director, Green Infrastructure Center Inc. – Karen directs the nonprofit Green Infrastructure Center (GIC) and creates GI networks and plans for regions, states, counties, cities and sites. The GIC recently completed a GI planning guide for New York State, funded in part by EPA’s Healthy Watersheds Program. Karen holds degrees in environmental planning and natural resources management. She is also on the adjunct faculty at the University of Virginia.

Amanda LaValle, Coordinator, Ulster County Department of the Environment – Amanda heads a county level department charged with coordinating environmental initiatives and work across county government spanning open space planning, natural resource management, stormwater, energy conservation and sustainability. Ulster County was recently selected as a case study to complete a GI mapping project as part of the NYS GI planning guide. The Ulster County mapping work built on an open space conservation plan completed by Ulster County in 2008. Amanda holds a BS degree from Cornell University and an MA degree from SUNY Empire.

Registration: You must register in advance to attend this webcast. Register at the Watershed Academy Webcast website at www.epa.gov/watershedwebcasts.

Note: Your computer must have the capability of playing sound in order to attend this webcast. To view archived webcasts, go to www.epa.gov/watershedwebcasts.

Questions? Please contact Amber Siegel at amber.siegel@tetratech.com.

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