

Appendix L

Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance (SASS) Summary and Sample Excerpt From SASS Document

INTRODUCTION

New York State has a long history of recognizing the importance of scenic resources. The first widely known recognition of American landscape beauty was expressed during the 19th century in the work of the Hudson River School of painters. The American Romantic Landscape Movement also developed in the Hudson Valley before spreading to the rest of the nation. Thus, New York's landscape tradition includes appreciation of both the natural and the cultural landscape and its coastal scenic landscapes usually include elements of each.

When the State Legislature established the Coastal Management Program in 1981, their findings included:

"...that New York State's coastal area and inland waterways are unique with a variety of natural, recreational, industrial, commercial, ecological, cultural, aesthetic and energy resources of statewide and national significance." (Article 42 § 910)

The Act declares that the public policy of the State within the coastal area is "...to achieve a balance between economic development and preservation that will permit the beneficial use of coastal resources while preventing the loss of living marine resources and wildlife, **diminution of open space areas or public access to the waterfront**, shoreline erosion, **impairment of scenic beauty**, or permanent damage to ecological systems." (Article 42 § 912). The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act also recognizes the importance of aesthetic values in managing coastal resources. The Act states that it is the national policy "to encourage and assist the states to...achieve wise use of the land and water resources of the coastal zone, **giving full consideration to ecological, cultural, historic, and aesthetic values....**"

SCENIC POLICIES

In recognition of the scenic value of the coast, New York's Coastal Management Program (CMP) includes two policies which provide for the protection and enhancement of this unique resource. Policy 24 provides for the designation and protection of scenic areas of statewide significance; and Policy 25 requires that proposed actions located outside a designated SASS must protect, restore or enhance the overall scenic quality of the coastal area. Both policies call for agencies to determine if a proposed action would impair scenic quality.

The policies state that impairment of a landscape's scenic quality can occur in two principal ways: 1) through the irreversible modification or destruction of landscape features and architectural elements which contribute significantly to the scenic quality of the coast, and 2) through the addition of structures which reduce views or are discordant with the landscape because of their inappropriate scale, form, or construction materials. Regulations governing the designation of scenic areas of statewide significance are found in 19 NYCRR Part 602.5.

Both policies include siting and design guidelines which are to be used to evaluate the impact of proposed development, recognizing that each situation is unique and that the guidelines must be applied accordingly. The guidelines address the appropriate siting of new structures and other development; the use of scale, form and materials which are compatible with the landscape's existing scenic components; the incorporation of historic elements in new development; the

maintenance of existing landforms and vegetation; and the removal and screening of discordant features.

EVALUATING NEW YORK'S COASTAL SCENIC RESOURCES

The New York coast is a mixture of developed and undeveloped areas. Central to the growth of the state, the coast is replete with evidence of the state's economic and cultural history. The interaction of man with the landscape provides part of the character that makes the New York coast a visually exciting and valued place. Its historic and working landscapes stimulate as much interest and attract as many visitors as its more natural landscapes.

Because the New York coastal landscape is so diverse, a method for evaluating the scenic quality of the state's coastal landscape must be capable of evaluating both developed and undeveloped areas of the coast. In addition, public recognition of the landscape's scenic quality is included in the criteria for identification of scenic areas of statewide significance under the Coastal Management Program. The landscape must also be visually accessible to the general public.

In order to develop and apply a method for evaluating scenic quality, the Department of State sought proposals in 1987 for the development of a scenic evaluation method. The firms of Jackson & Kihn of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Dodson Associates of Ashfield, Massachusetts were chosen to develop the method and apply it first in the Hudson River coastal area.

Dodson Associates had completed a scenic evaluation of the Connecticut River Valley for the Center for Rural Massachusetts of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Dodson Associates' approach to visual analysis recognizes the interrelatedness of landscape elements and is not limited to identifying specific viewing points and evaluating viewsheds. It is a descriptive approach which identifies the landscape elements and rates their scenic quality, taking public values into account. The Department of State first met with the consultants on January 7, 1988. Preliminary study area visits began on April 6, 1988.

New York's Scenic Evaluation Method

New York's scenic evaluation method is a participatory process involving government agencies and the general public in the development of criteria and the review of study results. The State regulations specify that the Secretary of State shall consult with appropriate State agencies before identifying and designating scenic areas of statewide significance. Accordingly, in 1988 the Department of State established a statewide panel of State agency representatives and experts in scenic landscape evaluation to assist in developing the coastal scenic evaluation method. The first meeting of the state panel was held on June 28, 1988.

The method developed recognizes the diversity of natural and cultural elements that shape scenic coastal landscapes. In order to identify and define coastal scenic components, the physical and cultural character of the coastal landscape and the geologic and historical forces which have shaped the development patterns are examined. A comprehensive listing of coastal landscape elements is developed, including geological features, water features, vegetation, historical and cultural features, and views. Those elements found in the study landscape which influence the scenic quality of the landscape are identified as scenic components. Characteristics which would

render each scenic component as distinctive, noteworthy or common are described. Also rated is the extent of discordant elements in the landscape.

For example, a bluff which is very high, prominent and of varied configuration, with dramatic backdrop and shoreline and no incompatible development, is considered to be distinctive. A bluff of noteworthy scenic quality would be high with a moderately varied configuration, strong backdrop and shoreline, and minor incompatible development. Low, uniform bluffs with monotonous backdrop and shoreline and a major presence of incompatible development would be rated common.

The landscape elements and their scenic characteristics are presented in the Table of Scenic Components. The table also provides for the evaluation of the aesthetic significance of the landscape composition, the landscape's uniqueness, and its public accessibility and public recognition. The evaluation of the landscape composition focusses on the interrelationships of the landscape elements and the composition of views.

For further discussion of the rating system, see Appendix A. Appendix A also includes a sample visual evaluation form. The Table of Scenic Components is found in Appendix B.

Application of the Method

An important aspect of the scenic evaluation method is that the entire coastal area of the region under study is evaluated. After an initial survey of the entire coastal region, the Table of Scenic Components is adjusted so that it contains only those landscape elements found in the study landscape. This adjusted table is called the Regional Table of Scenic Components.

The coastal area of the region is then divided into geographic subunits based on topography and land use. Each subunit is evaluated for its scenic quality. The landscape elements of each subunit are rated individually according to the criteria on the regional table of scenic components, and the ratings are recorded on field sheets along with the evaluator's comments. The relationship of the elements to each other, the quality of the views, and the uniqueness of the landscape are also evaluated to determine the scenic quality of the subunit as a whole.

The degree of public accessibility to the subunit and the degree of public recognition of the landscape's scenic values are rated for each subunit. Public recognition is evaluated in three ways: first, through public meetings and surveys during which landscape elements are rated for scenic quality and specific areas considered scenic are identified; second, through official recognition such as government designations and public investment; and third, through evidence found in the public statements of literature and the arts.

Candidate Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance

Based on the above evaluation, candidate scenic areas of statewide significance (SASS) are identified. Candidate SASS are composed of large clusters of subunits rated distinctive. Subunits with ratings of noteworthy and common may be included in a SASS if they link distinctive subunits or otherwise contribute to the cohesiveness of the SASS, provided that the total rating of the SASS remains distinctive. Isolated subunits or small clusters of subunits rated distinctive are not considered for designation unless the subunit or cluster has an exceptionally high distinctive rating. Note should be made that the scenic resources within a candidate SASS

sometimes extend beyond the boundaries of the Coastal Management Program and cannot, therefore, be included within the candidate SASS.

Detailed, descriptive narratives for each subunit and for the SASS as a whole are prepared. Scenic area maps which delineate the boundaries of the SASS and its subunits accompany the narratives. After designation, the narratives will be used by reviewers in evaluating the consistency of proposed projects with the coastal scenic policies.

Based on the field sheets, the narratives describe the nature of scenic landscape elements and their interrelationships, the significance of their scenic quality, and the degree of public accessibility and public recognition of the landscape. The historic context of the landscape is described, focussing on the forces that shaped the landscape. Understanding these historic forces enriches the appreciation of the existing scene and can serve as a guide for future management decisions. Actions which may impair the scenic quality of the SASS also are identified in the narratives. These are to function as guidelines during the review of projects proposed within the designated SASS. The candidate SASS are subject to public review. Public hearings on the proposed designations must be held and findings made by the Secretary of State before SASS may be designated.

SCENIC AREAS OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE IN THE HUDSON RIVER REGION

The Hudson River coastal area between New York City and the federal dam at Troy is the first area to be evaluated under Policy 24. The Hudson River coastal landscape has a wealth and variety of scenic resources, shaped by a unique combination of geological forces and historical events. Majestic mountains and formidable bluffs rise above the Hudson's waters in some stretches of the river. In others, forested slopes, estate lawns, extensive marshlands and farm fields line its shorelands.

The Hudson River region has played an important role in the nation's history. It spawned the Hudson River School of Painting and the Romantic Landscape style. World renowned artists have responded to its beauty, and the works of major architects line the river's corridor. Historic river landings and villages evidence the Hudson's past as a bustling transportation corridor. Today, tourism is the major industry; and national and State parks and historic sites attract visitors from around the nation and the world.

Six stretches of the Hudson River and its shorelands have been designated as scenic areas of statewide significance. These are the Columbia-Greene North SASS, the Catskill-Olana SASS, the Estates District SASS, the Ulster North SASS, the Esopus-Lloyd SASS and the Hudson Highlands SASS. They include a fiord in the Hudson Highlands, an impressive collection of significant estates along the Hudson River's mid-section, the landscape where Thomas Cole and Frederic Church made their homes, and the pastoral landscape south of the State capital. Each designated SASS encompasses unique, highly scenic landscapes which are accessible to the public and recognized for their scenic quality.

Each designated SASS is comprised primarily of clusters of distinctive subunits. Occasionally, a noteworthy or common subunit is included in a SASS because it links distinctive subunits or contributes to the cohesiveness of the SASS. No individual distinctive subunits are proposed for designation in the Hudson River region at this time.

BENEFITS OF DESIGNATION

Designation affords special protection from potentially adverse federal or State actions which could impair the scenic quality of the SASS. Narratives prepared for each SASS describe the character and scenic quality of the SASS landscape, providing guidance to the public and regulatory agencies as to which landscape elements should be protected and which actions could impair the scenic quality of the SASS.

Additional protection of SASS can be afforded by municipalities which prepare Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs (LWRP). Local land use authority is an important tool for the protection of scenic resources. In communities with an approved LWRP all three levels of government - federal, State and local - are working toward a common goal. Of the 44 municipalities included within the candidate SASS, 25 have prepared or are preparing LWRPs. Most of the LWRPs already address to some degree the protection of scenic landscapes. Designation of the SASS does not impinge on local government decisions.

THE HUDSON RIVER STUDY

The Hudson River coastal area was evaluated from the air, from the Hudson River, from the road network and on foot. To ensure public participation in the scenic assessment process, a regional panel was appointed to oversee the study. The panel is composed of State agency members of the statewide panel, representatives of county and local government and environmental organizations, and individual citizens of the region. The Department of State and the consultants met frequently with the regional panel regarding the conduct of the study and its results. The statewide panel was also kept informed of the study's progress, and joint meetings with both panels were held as appropriate. The panels provided information to the consultants regarding the resources of the valley and reviewed the consultants' work for accuracy and reasonableness.

Meetings with both panels attending were held at the Norrie Point Environmental Center in Staatsburg on July 12, August 2, September 20 and November 15, 1988 and on September 16, 1989.

In order to assess public values regarding the scenic quality of Hudson River coastal scenic components, public workshops were held in Poughkeepsie and Greenport at which those attending were asked to rate various regional landscape elements for their scenic quality. Questionnaires were also published in area weekly newspapers, inviting the public to identify landscapes they thought were of high scenic quality. The responses generated at the workshops and through the survey were considered during the development of the Hudson River Regional Table of Scenic Components.

When candidate SASS were initially identified, draft narratives were prepared and distributed widely in the region. The following public information meetings were held throughout the region during which residents could examine the narratives and accompanying maps:

May 14, 1990	Ulster County Office Building, Kingston
May 15, 1990	Norrie Point Environmental Center, Staatsburg
June 11, 1990	Piermont Village Hall, Piermont
June 12, 1990	Philipstown Town Hall, Cold Spring

June 13, 1990	Bear Mountain Inn, Bear Mountain State Park
June 25, 1990	Columbia-Greene Community Collage, Greenport
June 26, 1990	Coxsackie Village Board Room, Coxsackie

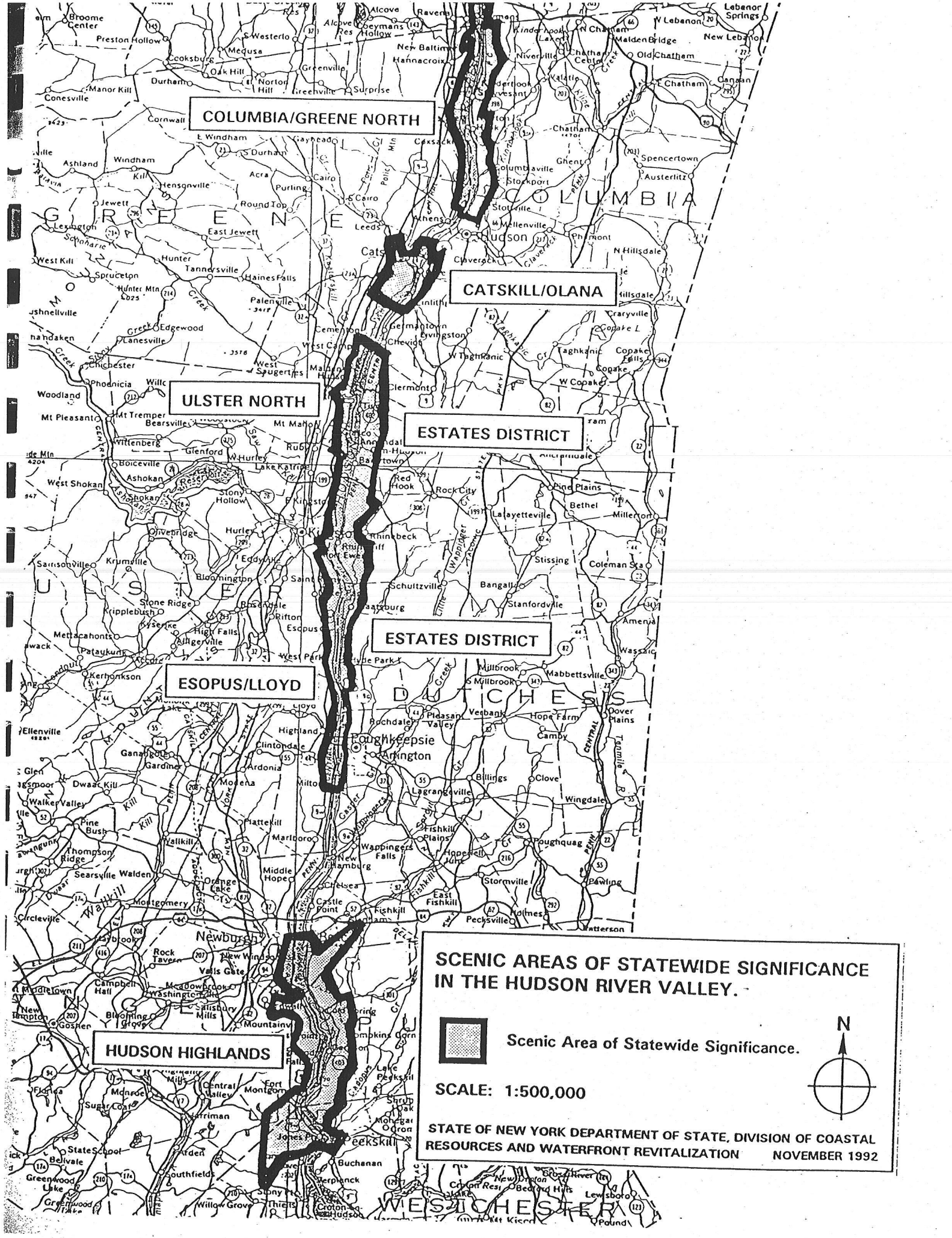
The draft narratives were sent to all municipalities in the study area for review and comment. Presentations were also made at public meetings of the following local government bodies in communities located in the candidate SASS:

May 23, 1990	Hyde Park Town Board
June 5, 1990	Coxsackie Town and Village Boards
June 11, 1990	Athens Town and Village Boards
June 12, 1990	Philipstown Town Board
June 12, 1990	Cortlandt Town Board
June 26, 1990	Greene County Environmental Management Council
July 3, 1990	Stockport Town Board
July 9, 1990	Haverstraw Town Board
July 10, 1990	Kingston City Council
July 12, 1990	Stuyvesant Town Board
October, 1990	Saugerties Town and Village Boards

Based on comments received during this initial period of public review, the SASS narratives and maps were revised. Additional field visits were made and additional research conducted concerning the history and resources of the candidate SASS. The information collected was incorporated into the document "Scenic Areas of Statewide Significance Proposed for Designation" (April 1993). This document was the subject of further public review throughout the Hudson River region. Public hearings on the areas proposed for designation as scenic areas of statewide significance were held on June 1, 1993 at the following locations:

Columbia-Greene Community College, Greenport, Columbia County
 Rhinebeck Town Hall, Dutchess County
 Bear Mountain Inn, Rockland County

After reviewing the hearing record and all written comments received within the comment period, several minor factual revisions were made to the narratives and these are incorporated into this document. As a result of the material contained in this document, the Secretary of State determined that the six areas proposed for designation were of statewide aesthetic significance to the coastal area pursuant to the factors set forth in 19 NYCRR 602.5 (c). Policy 24 of the Coastal Management Program now applies to those areas encompassed by the SASS designation. Management plans for each SASS will be prepared as resources allow. Local governments with approved local waterfront revitalization programs will be encouraged to evaluate their program for adequacy of protection of the identified scenic resources. Municipalities not participating in the Coastal Management Program will be encouraged to prepare LWRPs, but will not be required to change current local government decisionmaking.



COLUMBIA/GREENE NORTH

CATSKILL/OLANA

ULSTER NORTH

ESTATES DISTRICT

ESTATES DISTRICT

ESOPUS/LLOYD

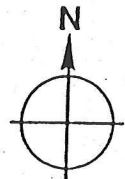
HUDSON HIGHLANDS

**SCENIC AREAS OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE
IN THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY.**

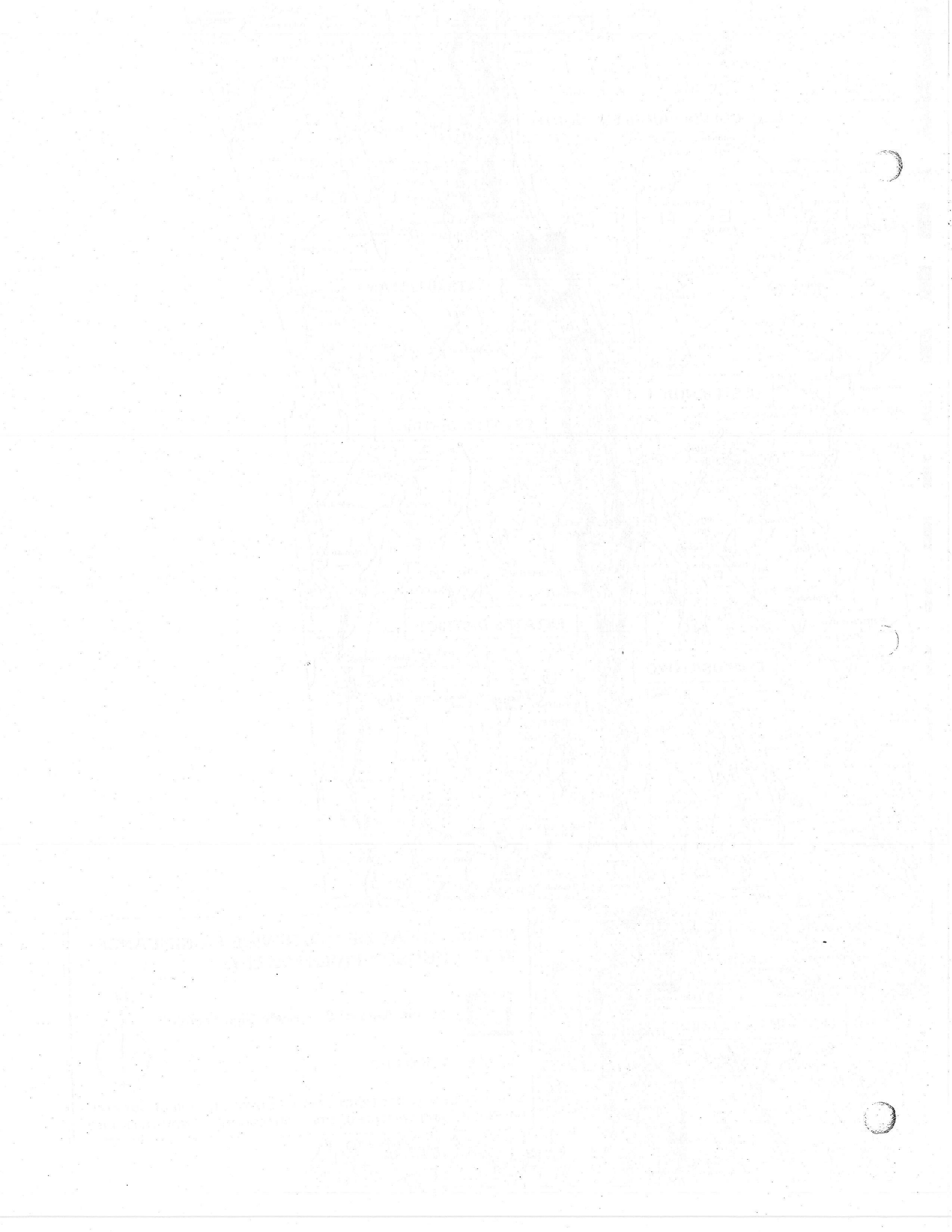


Scenic Area of Statewide Significance.

SCALE: 1:500,000



STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF STATE, DIVISION OF COASTAL
RESOURCES AND WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION NOVEMBER 1992



COLUMBIA-GREENE NORTH SCENIC AREA OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE

I. LOCATION

The Columbia-Greene North Scenic Area of Statewide Significance (SASS) extends about 15 miles along the Hudson River from the vicinity of Schodack Landing in southern Rensselaer County and Coeymans hamlet in southern Albany County southward to just north of the City of Hudson in Columbia County and to the northern boundary of the Village of Athens in Greene County. The scenic area's east and west boundaries generally follow the State coastal boundary with some variations.

On the western shore of the Hudson River the northern boundary of the SASS begins at the mouth of the Coeymans Creek in the Town of Coeymans and follows Stone House Road on the north side of the creek to the intersection with the coastal boundary, NY Route 144. The northern boundary extends east across the Hudson to the Albany-Rensselaer County line, follows the county line north before turning northeast to encompass the northern portion of Lower Schodack Island, then continues across Upper Schodack Island to join the coastal boundary on the eastern bank of the Hudson at the intersection of NY Route 9J and Knickerbocker Road.

The western boundary of the SASS generally follows the coastal boundary along NY Routes 144, 61 and 385, except where the coastal boundary reaches west of Route 61 in the Town and Village of Coxsackie.

The southern boundary in Greene County is the northern boundary of the Village of Athens. The boundary then follows the eastern shoreline of Middle Ground Flats until it is across the Hudson from the North Bay outlet under the railroad tracks on the eastern shore. The boundary then crosses the river and runs through the outlet, continuing up the east bank of the Hudson to Gifford Parkway in the Town of Greenport, just north of the City of Hudson's northern boundary.

The eastern boundary follows the coastal boundary along NY Routes 9J and 9 beginning in the north at Knickerbocker Road north of Schodack Landing. In the south the SASS boundary follows the coastal boundary along Joslen Boulevard in the Town of Greenport to its intersection with Cedar Parkway, follows Cedar Parkway to the intersection with Riverview Boulevard, then follows Riverview Boulevard to Gifford Parkway, the southern boundary of the SASS.

The Columbia-Greene North SASS is located in the following municipalities: the Town of Coeymans, Albany County; the Town of Schodack, Rensselaer County; the Towns of New Baltimore, Coxsackie and Athens and the Village of Coxsackie, Greene County; and in the Towns of Stuyvesant, Stockport and Greenport, Columbia County. Consult the Columbia-Greene North SASS Map for the SASS boundaries.

II. DESCRIPTION

The Columbia-Greene North SASS is comprised of eleven subunits:

CGN-1 Coeymans Hamlet Waterfront, CGN-2 Hannacrois Creek Outlet, CGN-3 New Baltimore Hamlet, CGN-4 Islands, CGN-5 Otter Hook, CGN-6 Coxsackie Creek, CGN-

7 Cocksackie Island, CGN-8 Cocksackie Farmland, CGN-9 Cocksackie Village, CGN-10 Lampman Hill, CGN-11 Vosburgh Swamp, CGN-12 Athens-Cocksackie Farmland, CGN-13 Schodack Landing, CGN-14 Stuyvesant Farms, CGN-15 Poolsburg, CGN-16 Stuyvesant Woods, CGN-17 Mill Creek Marsh, CGN-18 Stuyvesant Landing, CGN-19 Sheffer, CGN-20 Stuyvesant Hamlet, CGN-21 Stuyvesant Ravine, CGN-22 Nutten Hook Farms, CGN-23 Nutten Hook, CGN-24 Stockport Flats, CGN-25 Newton Hook Ravine, CGN-26 Judson Farms, CGN-27 Columbiaville, CGN-28 Stottville Farms, and CGN-29 Stockport Creek.

The SASS constitutes a predominantly rural area of low bluffs and ravines, flanked on the west shore by narrow alluvial plains and on the east shore, by a broader plateau. It is a quiet, pastoral area of working farms and river landings which has changed little since the 19th century. Because most of the land visible from the Hudson River is either inaccessible, too steep or too wet to build upon, the river corridor remains in a predominantly natural state. Early European settlers of the area were primarily Dutch immigrants who migrated south from Rensselaerwyck manor because they wanted to own property rather than be tenant farmers on the manor which spanned both sides of the Hudson River to the north. The Dutch purchased land from the resident Indians and laid out their farms quite isolated from each other. Landings along the Hudson River were the only clustered settlements initially, their commerce being the transfer of lumber, furs and farm produce from land to water. The Hudson River was the main transportation artery to the cities now called Albany and New York. Grist mills and lumber mills were constructed on the tributaries where the water tumbled over falls and plunged through steep ravines to the Hudson River.

The Dutch were later joined by migrating New Englanders and British soldiers who chose to remain in the New World. Although several industries primarily related to the Hudson River and water transport were established along the shores, farming was the primary occupation. When ice harvesting flourished in the 19th century, it provided winter employment for the farmers and their farmhands. Later industries took advantage of the abundant water power of the creeks, then were abandoned as larger industrial centers developed, leaving the landscape primarily rural again.

The development pattern of the Columbia-Greene North SASS is essentially the same today, comprising large stretches of pastoral landscape broken by river landings which have grown to hamlets or incorporated villages. There is a stimulating mix of land uses: the historic hamlets of New Baltimore and Stuyvesant and the village of Cocksackie; semi-wild regions of dense forest and marsh; and an intervening farm landscape of pasture, orchards and fields. A strong contrast remains between the tight village centers and adjoining woods and fields, with little blurring of the edges. The traditional close relationship of the settlements to the Hudson is also intact. Areas and individual structures of particular historic and cultural interest exist, but most must yet be surveyed to determine their eligibility for the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

The SASS is a unified landscape, its visual integrity resulting from development closely tied to specific characteristics of the land. The landscape exhibits great visual variety and contrast in landform and vegetation, unified by an underlying cultural pattern which provides a visible logic to the organization, location and design of scenic elements.

Along with the internal cultural unity of the area, the setting unifies this distinctive landscape. The Hudson River is the dominant element on the landscape and can be seen from many locations. It ranges from 1,000 to 4,000 feet wide. In the northern portion of the SASS, islands divide the Hudson into narrow sections of a friendlier, less imposing character.

Once tied to each other by ferries, each shore of the river now appears unattainable from the opposite bank, intriguing viewers with what may lie in the distant landscape. In panoramic views where the Hudson is not visible, landscapes of similar quality and character on each bank of the river appear as a single expanse. The distant Taconic Hills and Catskill Mountains provide dramatic backdrops to the open fields and orchards. Along with the traditional development patterns, these background elements give a strong sense of place to this portion of the Hudson River corridor. In addition, many intimate compositions abound which focus on clusters of historic farm buildings, streams folded in ravines and deep woodland landscapes.

III. AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Columbia-Greene North SASS is of statewide aesthetic significance by virtue of the combined aesthetic values of landscape character, uniqueness, public accessibility and public recognition. There exists in the SASS unusual variety as well as unity of major components and striking contrasts between line, forms, textures and colors. The SASS is generally free from discordant features. It is both visually and physically accessible to the general public, but public recognition is limited primarily to local residents and travelers on the State and local highways. Perhaps because development pressures have not been present to the extent experienced in the rest of the Hudson Valley, most of the historic and natural resources have not been subject to the types of survey and evaluation which leads to recognition through government designations.

A. Landscape Character

1. Variety

The Columbia-Greene North SASS exhibits an unusual variety of major components. The landform is composed of alluvial plains and steep bluffs along the Hudson River, especially around several small drumlin-like hills along the east shore. Behind the bluffs lie expansive level plains cut by ravines through which several creeks flow before emptying into the Hudson River. The shoreline of the Hudson is extremely varied, incorporating a number of large and small islands, coves, mud flats and creek mouths.

Vegetation ranges from dense hardwood forest along the bluffs and ravines to tilled fields, orchards and meadows of the working farms. Wetland species cover the river flats, and street trees and gardens decorate the river landings. Lawns line the river in the settled areas.

There is a wide variety of water elements. The Hudson River ranges in width from 1000 to 4000 feet, in some locations appearing as a formidable body of water and in others as a manageable stream where it divides to flow around large islands. Creeks contain placid pools as well as waterfalls tumbling off bluffs and over piles of rocks.

Views include panoramic vistas 180 degrees in breadth that unite both shores into a single landscape and reach to the Catskill Mountains and Taconic Hills. Clusters of farm buildings and

significant trees provide focal points in these broad sweeps of pastoral countryside. More intimate views vary from narrow compositions of stream corridors lined with rock walls to tunnel views through dense woodland with the Hudson River glistening in the distance. Other glimpses of the Hudson are framed by the street trees and historic buildings of the river landings.

Of interest in the views are the varied ephemeral effects of wildlife in the marshlands and forests, the operations and livestock of the working farms and the variety of vessels which pass along the Hudson. Occasional trains travel the eastern shore, bringing a fleeting mechanistic touch of technology to the scene.

2. Unity

The variety of components is unified by the predominantly rural landscape, the dominant presence of the Hudson River and the development pattern which creates edges between clustered settlements and the adjacent rolling open lands. The cultural character of the landscape still reflects its historic development which was centered first on the commerce of the river and the use of waterpower for early industries. In the hamlets the historic structures are compatible with each other and their setting. In the working landscape the farm operations respect the natural contours of the topography.

Along the river corridor the bluffs, marshes and flood plains remain generally undeveloped, giving a consistent natural character to the corridor. Where once ferries tied the two shores of the Hudson together, they are now connected by the common viewshed and similar landform of vistas to both the east and the west.

3. Contrast

Contrast is provided among the colors and textures of the varied vegetation, by the drama of the steep bluffs contrasting with the expansive plateau and Hudson River, and between the hard, rugged rock faces of ravines and the placid pools and shimmering waterfalls of the creeks which they line. Clusters of farm buildings and significant trees provide vertical elements in areas of broad, flat expanses. Sharp edges exist between the settled river landings and the adjacent farm fields and forests. The Catskill Mountains and Taconic Hills stand as distant sentinels, marking the edge of the generally level valley and providing a dramatic backdrop for the panoramic views.

4. Freedom from Discordant Features

The SASS as a whole is generally free from discordant features. Although there are some instances of structural blight in the river landings, many historic houses have been restored and the landscape is well maintained overall. The railroad tracks along the east bank of the Hudson are discordant in certain perspectives, for instance when they appear in the foreground of views, but they blend into the landscape where they closely follow the shoreline or when seen from locations removed from the right-of-way.

B. Uniqueness

The river landings are unique in their strong sense of place and orientation to the Hudson River.

The remains of the R. and W. Scott Ice Company Powerhouse and Ice House at Nutten Hook are unique as the most complete industrial ruins of the Hudson River ice industry in the region. They remain as a reminder that the Hudson's northern corridor once was lined with icehouses, power generating stations and shipping terminals.

The landscapes in the CGN-9 Coxsackie Village, CGN-13 Schodack, CGN-14 Stuyvesant Farms, CGN-22 Nutten Hook Farms, CGN-23 Nutten Hook, CGN-29 Lampman Hill and CGN-13 Schodack Landing subunits of the SASS are unique landscapes.

C. Public Accessibility

The SASS is visible to the general public from the Hudson River and the railroad trains which run along the Hudson's eastern shore; from NY Routes 144, 61, 385, 9J and 9; and from a network of local roads. Municipal parks and State-owned shorelands allow the public to reach the shore in some places, although the railroad tracks constitute a formidable barrier on the eastern shore. Boat launches are more plentiful on the western shore, but the Stockport Flats portion of the National Estuarine Sanctuary and Research Reserve on the eastern shore provides significant access for launching small boats and observing Hudson River wildlife.

D. Public Recognition

Public recognition is limited for the most part to local residents and travelers along the State and local highways. There is, however, evidence of the growing public awareness of the value of this landscape. The following highway segments are designated Scenic Roads under Article 49 of the Environmental Conservation Law: NY Route 61 from the Village of Coxsackie north 5.03 miles; NY Route 385 from the Village of Coxsackie south 3.48 miles; and NY Route 9J from its junction with Brickyard Road in Stockport south .38 mile and in Stuyvesant, from its junction with County Route 23A north 1.67 miles.

The following properties and districts are listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places: the Ariaanje Coeymans House in Coeymans, the Reed Street Historic District in the Village of Coxsackie, the Schodack Landing Historic District in Schodack Landing and the R. and W. Scott Ice Company Powerhouse and Ice House Site in Nutten Hook.

The following lands are in public ownership: the municipal parks in Coeymans, New Baltimore and Coxsackie; an 85 acre forest preserve detached parcel bordering Coxsackie Creek in New Baltimore; the State boat launch in the Village of Coxsackie; Nutten Hook and a portion of Stockport Flats in Stockport; Houghtaling Island in New Baltimore; and the Lower and Upper Schodack Islands in Stuyvesant.

IV. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Whether within or outside a designated SASS, all proposed actions subject to review under federal and State coastal acts or a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program must be assessed to determine whether the action could affect a scenic resource and whether the action would be likely to impair the scenic beauty of the scenic resource.

Policy 24 provides that when considering a proposed action, agencies shall first determine whether the action could affect a scenic resource of statewide significance. The determination would involve:

- (1) a review of the coastal area map to ascertain if it shows an identified scenic resource which could be affected by the proposed action, and
- (2) a review of the types of activities proposed to determine if they would be likely to impair the scenic beauty of an identified resource.

Impairment includes:

- (i) the irreversible modification of geologic forms; the destruction or removal of vegetation; the modification, destruction, or removal of structures, whenever the geologic forms, vegetation or structures are significant to the scenic quality of an identified resource; and
- (ii) the addition of structures which because of siting or scale will reduce identified views or which because of scale, form, or materials will diminish the scenic quality of an identified resource.

Policy 24 sets forth certain siting and facility-related guidelines to be used to achieve the policy, recognizing that each development situation is unique and that the guidelines will have to be applied accordingly. The guidelines are set forth below, together with comments regarding their particular applicability to this Scenic Area of Statewide Significance. In applying these guidelines to agricultural land it must be recognized that the overall scenic quality of the landscape is reliant on an active and viable agricultural industry. This requires that farmers be allowed the flexibility to farm the land in an economically viable fashion, incorporating modern techniques, changes in farm operation and resultant changes in farm structures. Policy 24 guidelines include:

SITING STRUCTURES AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT SUCH AS HIGHWAYS, POWERLINES, AND SIGNS BACK FROM SHORELINES OR IN OTHER INCONSPICUOUS LOCATIONS TO MAINTAIN THE ATTRACTIVE QUALITY OF THE SHORELINE AND TO RETAIN VIEWS TO AND FROM THE SHORE;

COMMENT: The Columbia-Greene North SASS is unified by the predominantly natural character of the Hudson River corridor which consists of forested bluffs, extensive wetlands and clustered river landings. The upland is a predominantly rural landscape of working farms and forested areas. The introduction of structures and other development such as highways, power lines, and signs within the river corridor, in the open farm landscape, in the river landings or in other conspicuous places would alter the unifying elements of the landscape and impair the aesthetic quality of the SASS.

The shoreline of the Hudson provides variety and interest to the SASS through its undulating shoreline composed of creek mouths, coves, wetlands and islands. The juxtaposition of the steep bluffs with the level expanse of the river's water surface also provides contrast. The alteration or interruption of these natural linear features and

essential relationships through introduction of manufactured elements would disrupt the relationships and reduce contrast, impairing the scenic quality of the shoreline.

Views from one side of the river to the other unify the landscape and often make the two shores of the Hudson appear as one, since their nature is essentially the same. The SASS is generally free of discordant features. Interruption of these views or blocking these views with highways, power lines, signs and other structures in conspicuous locations would introduce manufactured elements into a predominantly natural landscape. Such structures would constitute discordant features and would reduce the unity of the landscape, impairing the scenic quality of the views. In certain circumstances and from certain perspectives, such structures could block views, particularly the intimate interior views and tunnel views to the Hudson along the bluffs on the eastern shore, destroying some of the contributing scenic components of the SASS.

CLUSTERING OR ORIENTING STRUCTURES TO RETAIN VIEWS, SAVE OPEN SPACE AND PROVIDE VISUAL ORGANIZATION TO A DEVELOPMENT;

COMMENT: The SASS is predominantly a rural landscape of working farms, pastures, fields and forests. Its aesthetic significance involves in part the continuation of this historic land use in a relatively unchanged condition. Because of this open nature of the landscape, panoramic vistas 180 degrees in breadth are common. In addition, the historic settlement pattern is one of tightly clustered hamlets surrounded by the open rural landscape and a visual organization of clear edges between developed centers and adjacent undeveloped spaces.

Introduction of new structures unrelated to farming operations into the farm landscape would alter the pastoral nature of the landscape and impair the aesthetic significance of the SASS. They could also reduce the amount of open space and reduce the breadth of the views which contribute significantly to the scenic quality of the SASS. The spread of new development in an unclustered, sprawling manner would obliterate the edge between clustered development centers and the surrounding open landscape and change the cultural pattern of development, reducing unity and contrast in the landscape composition and thus reducing the scenic quality of the landscape.

INCORPORATING SOUND, EXISTING STRUCTURES (ESPECIALLY HISTORIC BUILDINGS) INTO THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME;

COMMENT: Some of the historic structures in the SASS have been recognized through listing on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. There are many historic structures which are not listed but which may be eligible for listing. Surveys have yet to be done regarding their historic significance. Farm complexes are of particular importance to the SASS. They provide focal points in the panoramic views across the fields and provide a sense of scale for the views. The river landings contain important groupings of structures which are well related to one another and to the topography.

Failure to incorporate sound, existing structures into the overall development scheme could lead to the loss of historic structures and groupings of structures which contribute to the scenic quality and aesthetic significance of the SASS. Such structures and

groupings of structures are focal points in views or frame views of the SASS. Failure to design and site new structures in the development in a manner compatible with the existing structures could destroy the unity of SASS composition and introduce discordant features in a landscape generally free of discordant features, thus impairing the scenic quality of the SASS.

REMOVING DETERIORATED AND/OR DEGRADING ELEMENTS;

COMMENT: The SASS is generally free of discordant features. However, some structures are in a deteriorated condition. Rehabilitation of salvageable historic structures could enhance the scenic quality of the SASS. Removal or screening of degrading elements which cannot be rehabilitated would also enhance the SASS. However, a determination of the historic value of a structure or remains of a structure should be determined before a course of action is chosen, however.

MAINTAINING OR RESTORING THE ORIGINAL LAND FORM, EXCEPT WHEN CHANGES SCREEN UNATTRACTIVE ELEMENTS AND/OR ADD APPROPRIATE INTEREST;

COMMENT: The Columbia-Greene North SASS contains four dominant topographical characteristics: steep bluffs along the Hudson River, drumlin-like hills along the east shore of the Hudson, broad alluvial plains behind the bluffs and steep ravines traversing the plains. Most remain undisturbed. Maintenance of these major land forms will contribute to preserving the scenic quality and aesthetic significance of the SASS.

MAINTAINING OR ADDING VEGETATION TO PROVIDE INTEREST, ENCOURAGE THE PRESENCE OF WILDLIFE, BLEND STRUCTURES INTO THE SITE, AND OBSCURE UNATTRACTIVE ELEMENTS, EXCEPT WHEN SELECTIVE CLEARING REMOVES UNSIGHTLY, DISEASED OR HAZARDOUS VEGETATION AND WHEN SELECTIVE CLEARING CREATES VIEWS OF COASTAL WATERS;

COMMENT: Vegetation in the Columbia-Greene North SASS ranges from dense hardwood forest along the bluffs and ravines to tilled fields, orchards and meadows of the working farms. Wetland species cover the river flats, and street trees and gardens decorate the river landings. Lawns line the river in the settled areas. The forested bluffs create a verdant corridor for the Hudson River. Tunnel views down the roads through these forests focus on the Hudson River glistening at the end like a distant light. These are important intimate interior views. Although clearing of vegetation in these areas would open broader views to the Hudson, the peculiar intriguing nature of these enclosed views, a unique element of the SASS, would be lost.

The forests in the ravines provide a contrast to the surrounding open fields and pastures, contributing to the textural variety of the SASS. Specimen trees in the fields provide focal points in panoramic views. Loss of these trees would reduce the degree of contrast and variety of the SASS, impairing its scenic quality.

Retention of the forests presents opportunities for screening new structures and blending them into the landscape, thus retaining the open, rural character of the SASS which is a significant contributor to its scenic quality.

The orderly plantings of street trees and gardens and the manicured lawns are contributing elements to the distinctive scenic character of the river landings. They frame views, unite the varied architectural styles and soften the developed nature of the hamlets. Failure to maintain existing and replace lost vegetation would impair the unique character of these settled population centers.

Since the State and local road network is an important means of access to the SASS, failure to maintain views from the rights-of-way through selective clearing would reduce this visual access.

The presence of wildlife and farm animals is an ephemeral characteristic which enhances the scenic quality of the SASS. Loss of the wetland vegetation, forests and pasture which sustain them would lead to the loss of the ephemeral elements, reducing the visual interest and, consequently, the scenic quality of the SASS.

USING APPROPRIATE MATERIALS, IN ADDITION TO VEGETATION, TO SCREEN UNATTRACTIVE ELEMENTS;

COMMENT: The SASS is generally free of discordant features. Failure to use colors, materials and textures which blend into the landscape could contribute discordant features to the landscape, alter the composition of views through introduction of discordant focal points and change the rural character of the landscape to the extent that the aesthetic significance of the SASS would be impaired.

USING APPROPRIATE SCALES, FORMS AND MATERIALS TO ENSURE THAT BUILDINGS AND OTHER STRUCTURES ARE COMPATIBLE WITH AND ADD INTEREST TO THE LANDSCAPE.

COMMENT: The SASS is predominantly horizontal in nature, yielding views 180 degrees in breadth. Historic structures in the subunit are generally low-rise domestic and farm buildings. Introduction of large scale or bulky structures or structures made of materials that are reflective or of a color that stands out in the landscape would disrupt the horizontal nature of the landscape, add new focal points to views which would distract from the historic focal points and change the composition of views. This would reduce the unity of the landscape and introduce discordant features, impairing the scenic quality of the SASS.

The first part of the report is a general introduction to the subject of the study. It discusses the importance of the research and the objectives of the study.

The second part of the report is a detailed description of the methodology used in the study. It includes information about the sample, the data collection methods, and the statistical analysis.

The third part of the report is a discussion of the results of the study. It compares the findings with previous research and discusses the implications of the results.

The fourth part of the report is a conclusion and a list of references. The conclusion summarizes the main findings of the study and provides recommendations for future research. The references list the sources of information used in the study.

THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is a critical component of any study. It determines the validity and reliability of the results. In this study, a quantitative approach was used to collect and analyze data.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to measure the variables of interest. The data were then analyzed using statistical software to identify patterns and relationships.

Columbia - Greene North Scenic Area of Statewide Significance

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COLUMBIA-GREENE NORTH SCENIC AREA OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE

CGN-1 Coeymans Hamlet Waterfront Subunit

I. Location

The Coeymans Hamlet Waterfront subunit encompasses the easterly portion of the hamlet of Coeymans and the portion of the Hudson River that borders it. Its northern boundary, which is also the northern boundary of the SASS, begins at the intersection of Stone House Road and NY Route 144 and follows Stone House Road to the mouth of the Coeymans Creek, then extends eastward to the shore of Lower Schodack Island in the Hudson River. The western boundary follows NY Route 144. The southern boundary, a common boundary with the CGN-2 Hannacrois Creek Outlet subunit, stretches from Route 144 eastward to touch the northern tip of Barren Island. Its eastern boundary is the mean high tide line on the western shore of Lower Schodack Island. The subunit is located in the Town of Coeymans, Albany County, and the Town of Schodack, Rensselaer County. Consult the Columbia-Greene North SASS map sheet number 1 for subunit boundaries.

II. Scenic Components

A. Physical Character

The topography of the subunit is composed of a low bluff and a flat alluvial plain. The street trees and lawns of the hamlet provide a pleasing contrast with the natural vegetation of the surrounding forest and low-lying marsh lands. Water is a dominant feature in the subunit. The winding Coeymans Creek enters the Hudson River north of the hamlet center. It empties into a shallow tidal cove which creates a gently curving shoreline. A dike/breakwater lies offshore. The Hudson is approximately 1500 feet wide between the hamlet and Lower Schodack Island, located in the CGN-4 Islands subunit to the east.

B. Cultural Character

The subunit is comprised of an historic Hudson River landing and the tightly organized hamlet associated with it. Coeymans was formed in the 17th century when Barent Coeymans, a Dutch immigrant who had been a miller in the Rensselaerwyck mills, bought from the Catskill Indians twelve square miles of land bordering the Coeymans Creek south of the manor of Rensselaerwyck. His property was crossed by trails to the interior and included waterfalls on the creek at which he built flour mills. Because of the value of the mill sites, the Van Rensselaers disputed his ownership; but in 1714 the British upheld the title by granting him the Coeymans Patent.

Barent's daughter Ariaanje inherited the property and in 1720, on the north side of the creek, built a large home now known as the Ariaanje Coeymans House. The house remained in the family until the late 19th century when it was used as housing for workers in the brickyards. Other than the Coeymans House, the hamlet's historic structures are 19th century buildings. They cling to the hillside which rises above the outlet of Coeymans Creek.

In the past Coeymans functioned over the years as a river landing for shipment of agricultural products and other goods to urban markets. Its other industry was shipbuilding. During the Revolutionary War small gunboats were built in its shipyards for use in the defense of the lower Hudson River. Today its maritime activity is primarily recreational. A town waterfront park and boat launch occupy the center of the hamlet's shoreland and provides a focus for the community. Private marinas and docks are located just north of the park. Strong traditional marine elements of docks, slips and sheds are strung along the waterfront area, but the more recently constructed marina buildings detract from the historic character and visual quality of the hamlet and constitute discordant features. The subunit is generally well-maintained, although the clutter of the waterfront gives an untidy appearance. Boating activities add ephemeral qualities to the landscape.

C. Views

The subunit offers unobstructed moderately long views of the Hudson River to both the north and south framed by the wooded islands and the low hills on the western shore. Other views are framed by the streets and trees in the park. Some views are also fairly wide, generally 90 to 180 degrees. As seen from the Hudson the hamlet unobtrusively clings to the slopes behind a broad expanse of parkland. While there are no major focal points, the simplicity and tranquility of the compositions constitute their appeal.

III. Uniqueness

The hamlet of Coeymans is not unique. It is noteworthy, however, for its close historical connection to the Hudson River.

IV. Public Accessibility

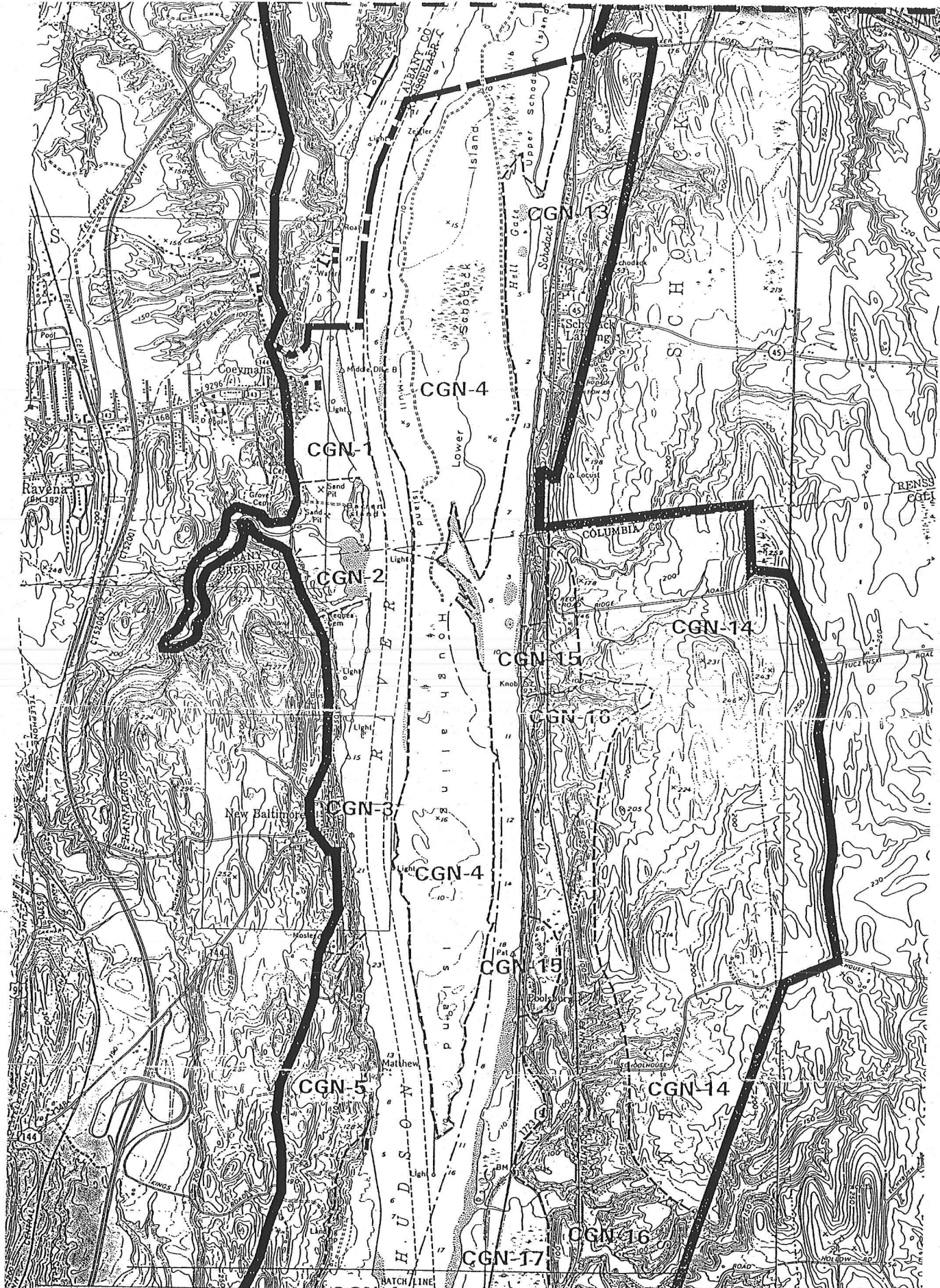
The subunit is accessible from NY Route 144 which carries some commuter traffic between Albany and the communities in southern Albany and northern Greene Counties. The subunit is visible from the Hudson River which is accessible via the boat launch at the riverfront park.

V. Public Recognition

The hamlet is not well known except to local residents and regular travelers of NY Route 144.

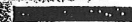
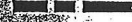


VI. Reason for Inclusion

The Coeymans Hamlet Waterfront subunit is included in the Columbia-Greene North SASS because it is highly visually and physically accessible to the general public, and offers unobstructed views of the Hudson River. The subunit contains an unusual variety of vegetation, including extensive marshland, forests, mature street trees and lawns. The subunit's topography, the hamlet's landscape and the shoreland are moderately varied. Water is the dominant feature that unifies the landscape, but discordant features along the waterfront disrupt that unity to some degree.



COLUMBIA/GRENE NORTH SCENIC AREA OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE: SHEET NO. 1

KEY:

-  Coastal Area boundary
-  Scenic Area boundary
-  Subunit boundary
-  Subunit identifier

