This chapter presents three goals consistent with achieving the vision. Each goal has outcomes or results that will show progress toward the goal. For each outcome, one or more actions are **identified that CLC, committee members, watershed residents, or others might take to achieve** the outcome. Some of the actions are already underway while others offer opportunities for creative partnerships. The tools and strategies introduced in this chapter are expanded on in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER THREE

How do we achieve a connected Taghkanic Headwaters?

GOAL ONE

The forests and woodlands that surround the Taghkanic Creek help keep drinking water clean **and abundant, provide important habitat and pathways for wildlife, and provide other benefits** for communities. In 2016, forests covered 75% of the Taghkanic Creek Headwaters. Forests of 500 acres in size and larger provide critical habitat for plants and animals over time and in the face of climate change.

Conserving forests is about more than protecting trees. The soil and understory (the plants that grow under trees) are a key part of the forest ecosystem and are essential to making sure forests **remain in a healthy condition so that they can regrow and provide benefits. Cutting some trees** allows light through so the understory can grow.

Forests and woodlands in the Taghkanic Headwaters are protected and managed so wildlife are able to move freely, water remains clean, and the woods are resilient to climate change.

Outcome 1.1

Large, forested areas remain throughout the watershed.

Purchase land and development rights in the areas of exceptional conservation value identified in this plan.

Enhance goals for protecting forests by recognizing forest connections, large forests, riparian forests, and forest types in local plans.

Minimize forest loss and fragmentation when siting new development, structures, utilities, or driveways.
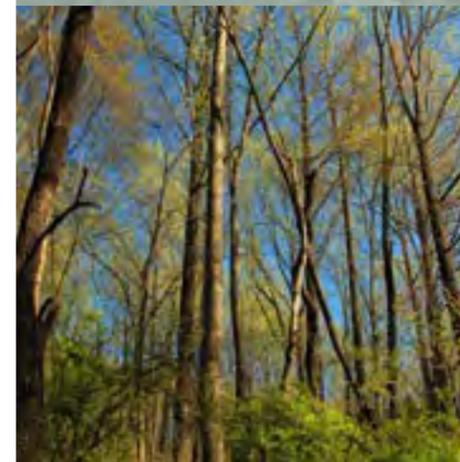
Outcome 1.2

People and communities throughout the watershed appreciate the value of forests and understand the connections among forests, drinking water, the Taghkanic Creek, and wildlife habitat.

Develop and share key messages about the important forests and streams of the watershed.

Identify and promote educational programs that highlight the importance of forests and woodlands in the watershed.

Recognize the importance of forests and wildlife habitats in municipal plans.

Outcome 1.3

Best forest management practices and tools become more widespread so there are healthy, diverse forests in conservation areas and on private lands.

Encourage landowners to monitor the condition of their forests.

Learn about forest management for wildlife by visiting Rheinstrom Hill Audubon Sanctuary and other demonstration sites.

Connect landowners to forest best management practices and resources.

Manage woodland and deer so new trees grow along with a lush understory to provide wildlife habitat improve resilience to climate change.

Allow active forest management practices to support improved forest health.

KEY TO SYMBOLS

Potential Partners

- Individual
- Group
- Municpal Government
- State Government
- Columbia Land Conservancy

Tools & Strategies

- Education
- Community Science
- Land Use Planning and Decision-making
- Land Management
- Land Protection

GOAL TWO

Abundant forest cover is crucial to water quality, and so to achieve the goal of "enough clean water," forest cover must be maintained. A recent review of scientific studies recommended that forests cover between 60 – 90% to support high quality water. Although the Taghkanic Headwaters is currently 74% forested, forest cover is declining. In addition to the total amount of forest, woody vegetation along streams is especially important for stream health. Trees and shrubs have deep roots that stabilize streambanks, filter polluted runoff, and shade the stream, keeping it cooler.

The Taghkanic Creek has enough clean water so it is a high quality habitat and it meets the needs of people, fish, and wildlife, including water supply and recreation.

Outcome 2.1

Taghkanic Creek has enough clean water.

Organize a group of citizen scientists to monitor water quality.

Share water-related information such as annual water quality, water withdrawal, and well water reports.

Outcome 2.2

People and communities are using land-based management practices and tools for protecting the creek, including protecting and restoring vegetated buffers along streams.

Encourage landowners to maintain or enhance woody plants along streams.

Promote programs that provide guidance and resources to help landowners implement stream best management practices.

Implement recommendations in municipal groundwater protection plans to limit hazardous uses in the most sensitive areas and ensure density regulations are protective of source water.

Use land use tools to reduce the impact of new development on streams, such as setbacks and siting to reduce erosion.
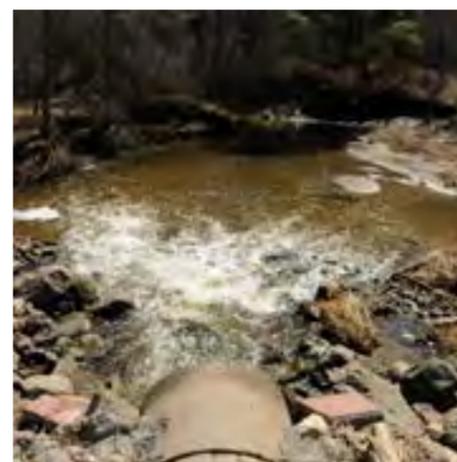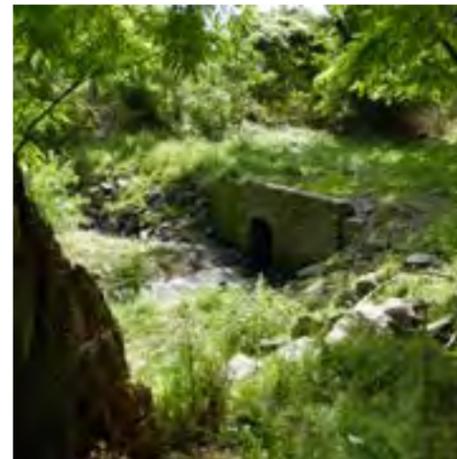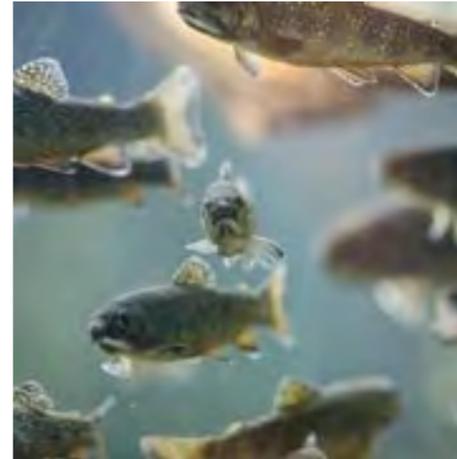
Outcome 2.3

Stakeholders throughout the watershed and the City of Hudson understand the connections among what happens on land, in the Taghkanic Creek, and for the City of Hudson.

Develop and share messages about the importance of streamside management.

Tell and promote stories about the connections.

Outcome 2.4

In-stream habitats are connected by removing or "right-sizing" dams and culverts.

Use culvert assessments to prioritize replacements of culverts.

Continue to work with partners to replace culverts and remove dams, where possible.

Potential Partners

- Individual
- Group
- Municipal Government
- State Government
- Columbia Land Conservancy

Tools & Strategies

- Education
- Community Science
- Land Use Planning and Decision-making
- Land Management
- Land Protection

GOAL THREE

Throughout the process, stakeholders expressed their hope that people who live in the watershed and use the Taghkanic Creek feel valued and empowered by this plan. They believe the plan is most valuable as a tool to bring people together to protect and steward the watershed in ways that build connections and cross boundaries, values, and worldviews. The stakeholders recognized that not all people are drawn to the Taghkanic Headwaters for the same reason, so there is a need to be empathetic about people's individual concerns and different ways of viewing the world.

There are many opportunities for more conversation and for stronger connections among people in these communities. One way to bring people together is to engage organizations and individuals in measuring forest and water quality. This approach that will help implement Goals 1 and 2 by filling gaps in information that can help identify the most effective actions to fulfill the plan's vision for the Taghkanic Headwaters.

In the watershed, build connections among people and communities, including leaders in the watershed towns of Claverack, Copake, Hillsdale, and Taghkanic, and the City of Hudson.

Outcome 3.1

Towns and the City work together to address shared concerns for forests and water.

Develop and share a list of contacts involved in watershed planning, land use planning, and code enforcement.

Explore interest in periodic meetings to look at opportunities for advancing goals and actions.

Outcome 3.2

There is a community of stewards caring for the lands and waters of the Taghkanic Creek Headwaters.

Share information and resources about forest and water issues and conservation strategies through a Mobilize group.

Outcome 3.3

Community members, local leaders, and organizations help assess forests and water quality.

Encourage volunteers to participate in existing programs that monitor forests and water quality.

Collaborate to gather on-the-ground verification of forest and water status.

Learn from other groups that engage volunteers to test water quality.

Potential Partners

- Individual
- Group
- Municipal Government
- State Government
- Columbia Land Conservancy

Tools & Strategies

- Education
- Community Science
- Land Use Planning and Decision-making
- Land Management
- Land Protection