



MISSION STATEMENT

The Alliance for Balanced Growth supports economic growth while maintaining a high quality of life and providing a forum to address and develop a unified voice on issues of mutual interest and advocating for balanced growth. It is a standing committee of the Orange County Partnership whose members are actively involved in creating industrial and office development.

ORANGE COUNTY NEW YORK

April 12, 2012

Hon. Doug Bloomfield
Town of Goshen
41 Webster Avenue
P O Box 217
Goshen, NY 10924

Dear Doug:

As part of a statewide effort to update its wetland maps and extend its jurisdiction, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is finalizing new wetland maps for all of Orange County, and portions of Ulster and Sullivan Counties. We expect the DEC to publish the maps and possibly hold public hearings on the new maps in the next few months. It appears that the DEC is currently evaluating whether or not to go forward with the publication of the new wetland maps. As a result, there is a rare opportunity to express our concerns about the new maps and the impact that they will have on our businesses, residents and municipalities.

Although the DEC has already stated that the new maps will have at least a 50% increase in wetlands under the DEC's jurisdiction, the actual impact of this new mapping is coming into sharper focus as more details emerge. The new maps will increase the size of DEC's regulated wetlands in Orange County by an additional 16,000 acres, and in Ulster County by 4,000 acres. However, this amount does not include the acreage constrained by the 100-foot regulated buffer. The addition of the buffer acreage will significantly increase the amount of land subject to DEC jurisdiction. The majority of these wetland areas are already regulated and protected by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE).

The new maps will affect businesses, landowners and municipalities. Unbuilt or future planned projects will not be grandfathered from the new requirements, and the regulated buffer is a cause for concern. For instance, a homeowner might be prohibited from adding an extension on their own home when their property is dry but their neighbor's property is wet. Existing business may not be able to proceed with a planned expansion without having to get an additional permit from the DEC – a permit that takes time to obtain and is costly to implement. This could have an enormous effect on local property values and assessments.

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TOWN OF GOSHEN
TOWN CLERK