



Friends of the Great Swamp



FrOGS

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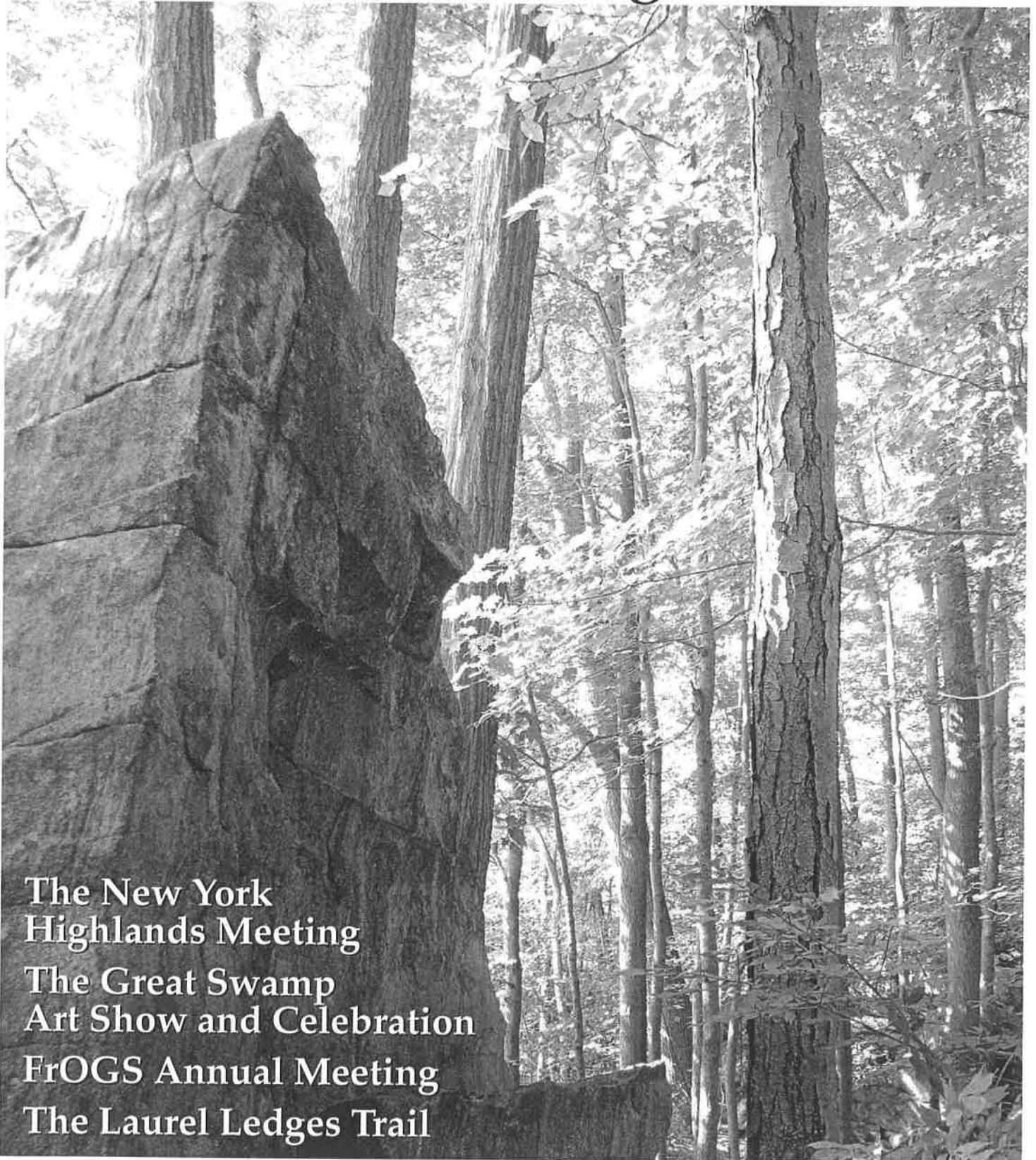
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Laurel Ledges



The New York
Highlands Meeting
The Great Swamp
Art Show and Celebration
FrOGS Annual Meeting
The Laurel Ledges Trail

Laurel Ledges

A short, intimate trail you'll want to walk again and again!

Step into the unexpected on Putnam County Land Trust's newest trail. This is not your typical Patterson landscape of lowlands and rolling hills. Upon entering the trail from the parking spot on Cornwall Hill Road (opposite the entrance to Cornwall Hill Estates), one is plunged into a deeply shadowed landscape of towering cliffs and monolithic boulders.



Rock ferns, mosses, laurels and baby pines grow out of crevices in the cliff. Patches of grey-green liverworts with brown curling edges and lichens pepper the surface of the rocks. The cliffs are awesome and the shapes and textures of the boulders and outcrops encourage touching, sketching and photography. One impressive monolith looks like something from an ancient ruin.

All along the trail stepping-stones are fitted together like puzzle pieces to help hikers up and over the rough spots. A wooden walkway takes you over the dark and spongy soil near Turtle Pond.



Cinnamon ferns grow waist high beneath spicebush and winterberry on one side of the trail while walls of stone rise on the other. Hidden beneath the ferns; a bleached snapping turtle skull rests in a bowl made of its own inverted shell.



The trail winds along the base of the cliffs over rock humps and through a narrow "lemon squeezer". Bob Lund, a trustee of the Putnam County Land Trust helped design a section of



"floating" boardwalks for an area where the cliff drops straight into the wetland. The boardwalk turns the trail away from the pond and into the ridge. A nearby rocky knoll, furnished with natural boulder seats, provides the only view of Turtle Pond on the trail. This fall it will be a great spot to watch the flocks of migrating ring-neck ducks that rest and feed on the pond.

The smooth, silvery gray trunks of a stand of young beech trees pop out against the dark hillside as the trail moves eastward into a large amphitheater below the ridge.



Spiky beechnut cases and wedge shaped beechnuts litter the forest floor. The nuts are an excellent food source for wildlife. The whole hillside is scuffed up from foraging turkeys.



The cliffs and boulder fields tell us of glaciers that thawed and froze again, plucking out rocks from the ridges and shearing off the hillsides. A large round glacial erratic (boulder) is still perched on a rise just as the melting glacier left it over 12,000 years ago. The surfaces of the rocks in this area are a palette of swirling light colored quartzes and darker mineral bands. They are evidence of the tremendous heat and pressure that formed them hundreds of millions of years ago. The ridge to the east contains an old quarry whose tough metamorphic gneiss was used to construct dams for the reservoirs. Listen for the greeting calls of the ravens that nest and roost in the quarry walls.



The new trail ends all too soon at a small wooden bridge over the spring feed stream that feeds Turtle Pond. This trail will connect with those in Sterling Farm Preserve and the protected lands in the Great Swamp. In the future it will connect to new trails across Route 164, to the wetland on the corner of Farm to Market Road and into the protected lands along Muddy Brook.



As part of his Eagle Scout Project, Steven Maddock (Mahopac Troop #1), spent many hours laying out the Laurel Ledges trail, raising money for materials and organizing work crews. Once you walk the trail you'll have a new respect for Steven and all those who helped design and construct this trail. The property for the Laurel Ledges trail was acquired by FrOGS with funds from the NAWCA grant and is owned and maintained by our partner The Putnam County Land Trust.

Check out this new trail and its unique landscapes and don't forget to sign in and share your experience in the trailside ledger. Respect the rocks!

by Judy Kelley-Moberg



FrOGS Hosts the New York Committee Meeting of the Highlands Coalition at the Patterson Library on September 11th



Teddy Eisenman, the chairman of the NY Committee conducted the meeting. There were around 30 in attendance including Co-chairmen Andy Chmar and Martus Granirer.

Mike Griffin, Supervisor of the Town of Patterson welcomed the Committee and stressed the importance of the Great Swamp as open space as well as its positive effect on water quality and flood control for the town.

The topics discussed were:

1. Concerns about plans to build a desalinization plant at Haverstraw and how it would promote explosive development in Rockland County. A call to amend NYS Water Law so that development would depend on the available natural water supply.

2. The need for new funding sources for the three HC staff positions that rely on grants

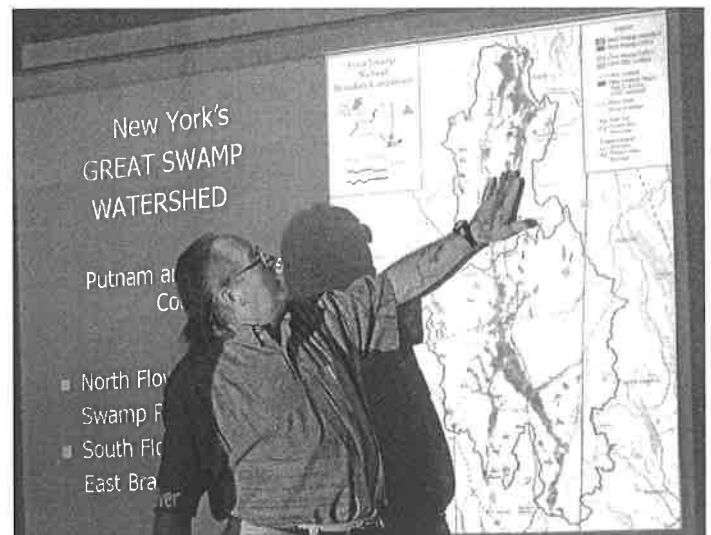
3. Betsey Ryder spoke about trying to save the 129-acre family farm on Starr Ridge Rd. in Brewster. They are applying for a NYS grant that helps farmers keep their farms by buying the development rights on the land. OSI, Putnam Co. and the Town of Southeast have supported the application.

4. Lynn Eckhart of the Putnam Smart Growth Alliance reported that the State plans to limit the upgrade Route 22 to the section from Route 684

to Doansburg Road. The Highlands Coalition will have to focus on the expansion of travel corridors since they determine the pattern of future growth. Scenic Hudson is concerned about the expansion around Stewart Airport.

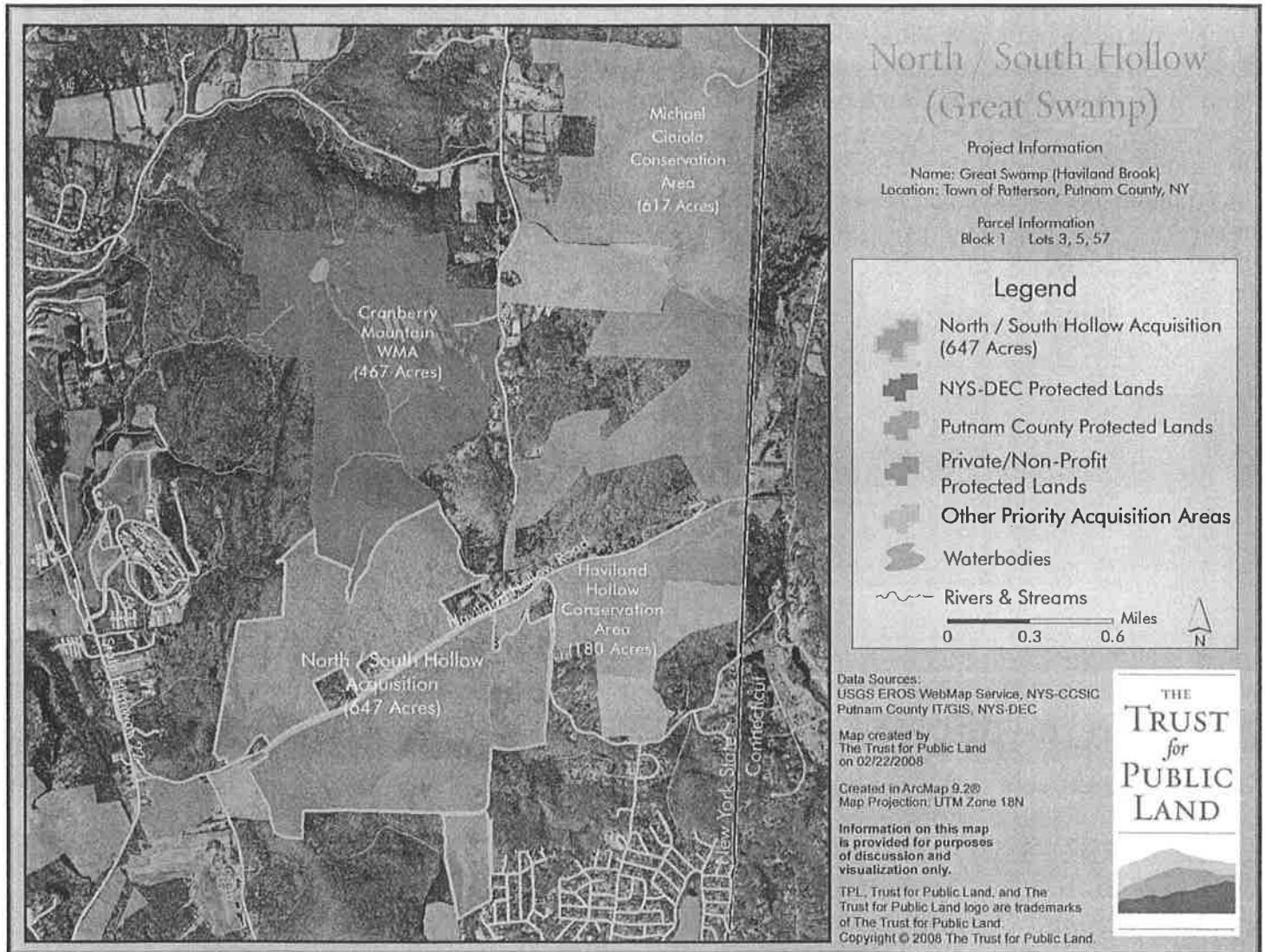
5. Sybil Gilbert of the Oblong Land Trust expressed their concern about protecting "Little" Whaley Lake, a scenic jewel of a property with great habitat diversity.

6. Tonia Shoumatoff spoke of the opening of the NY office of the Housatonic Valley Association and their plans to apply for a grant to conduct a scientific study of the Swamp River, which is the north flow of the Great Swamp. With more than 2000 proposed housing units this watershed will be under intense pressure.



7. Dr. Jim Utter gave a power point presentation on the Great Swamp and the 1,000 acres of wetland and buffer protected in the South Flow with NAWCA Grant funds and the assistance of all the Grant partners. FrOGS has just submitted a new NAWCA grant proposal for lands in the north flow of the Great Swamp.

8. Matt Shurtleff of the Trust for Public Land spoke about their efforts in conjunction with the DEC, to acquire 647 acres on both sides of Haviland Hollow Road. The property includes



the steep upland forest north of the road and runs down across the brook into the wet meadows and forested hill to the south. This is the last and longest unprotected portion of Haviland Hollow Brook designated a "critical treasure" by the Highlands Coalition. The acquisition would link almost 2000 acres of parkland for public use. The State would pay local taxes on the land and the DEC would treat it as a Wildlife Management Area. Biotic corridors would be preserved and the water quality of the brook would be protected. **One million dollars from the Federal Highlands Conservation Act fund has been pledged towards the acquisition of the parcel but more is needed!**

Letters of support for the acquisition of the 647-acre property known by the DEC as the North/South Hollow would be appreciated. Address them to:

**Commissioner Alexander B. Grannis
 N.Y.S. Department of Environmental Conservation
 625 Broadway, 14th Floor
 Albany, NY 12233**

Following the meeting, FrOGS Board Member, Rick Saracelli took interested attendees on a canoe trip into the Great Swamp from the Patterson Environmental Center.

by Judy Kelley-Moberg

FrOGS Annual Art Show and Celebration

October 18th and 19th at Christ Church on Quaker Hill in Pawling, NY

We invite all our old friends and those that we hope will become new enthusiasts to come to this annual event, which celebrates the importance of the Great Swamp in protecting the quality of our drinking water, as a home to native plants and animals as well as green space for our communities to enjoy.

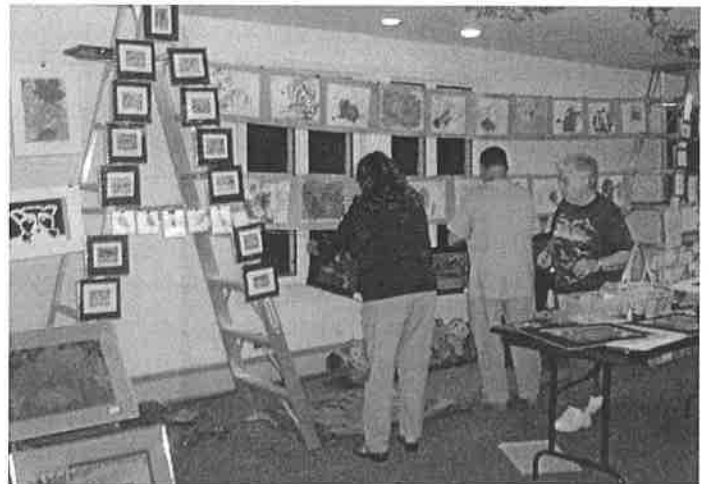


Post the pullout in a prominent place so you can remember to keep the date open for this enjoyable and educational event!



What's in the Show?

Charming Children's Art...The High School Art Competition...Great Blue Singers...Educational Exhibits...Swamp Slide Show...Jim Eyring and His Birds of Prey...The Nature of Things and Their Animals...Chucky Goodnight and Children's Craft...Great Food by the Hamiltons...FrOGS' Tee Shirts and Hats for Sale...The Work of Artists Who Celebrate Nature and the Great Swamp...



Volunteers Needed for the Art Show!

1. Volunteers are need for set up, in the kitchen, to spell the dedicated volunteers there all day, and for clean up on Sunday. If you can help call Board Member Laurie Lewis at (845) 878-4299

2. A request for desserts, please call Bill Hamilton at (845) 878-4352

Historic Haviland Hollow

Haviland Hollow was once part of Connecticut, but in an 1731 boundary settlement, it became part of a strip of land in New York called "The Oblong". At that time Quaker farmers and speculators bought large farm lots in the strip.

The "Hollow" at various periods supported a Methodist chapel, a Quaker meeting house, three schools, mills, a tannery, several stores and even its own post office. George Washington and his troops were here in 1778 and a portion

of the old military highway between Fishkill and Danbury ran through the valley.

The Patterson Historical Society is giving a presentation about the settlement of the valley, the history of the early families, with maps, photos and the reminiscences of the folks that lived there. The public is invited to attend "Historic Haviland Hollow" at the Patterson Library Community Room, at 7 Pm on Wednesday, October 15th.

Mike Purcell Receives the Housatonic Valley Associations' "Friend of the River" Award

FrOGS Board Member, Mike Purcell was given "The Friend of the River " award at the Housatonic Valley Association's Annual Meeting on September 12th for his dedication to the protection of the Ten Mile River watershed in New York as well as being a staunch advocate

for the protection of the biodiversity of the Great Swamp and the Swamp River in Dover and Pawling. Mike is a hard worker, a dedicated environmentalist, and extremely active in the field study work being done in the north flow of the Great Swamp. BRAVO MIKE!

FrOGS' Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held from 2 to 4 PM on Sunday, November 9th at the Lawlor Building (corner of Route 311 and Route 164 in Patterson).

Mike Musnick will give a power point and video presentation on his turtle study in the

Great Swamp. Mike not only protects the eggs from predation but also helps the young turtles on their way. You might see him in hip boots walking along a roadside holding an antenna in the air like an umbrella. FrOGS has providing many of the tiny radio transmitters that are attached to the turtle's shell so Mike can track them.

Friends of the Great Swamp is an organization dedicated to *Preserving the Great Swamp* through educational programs, scientific projects and special events and making all aware of this wonderful resource in our midst.

The generosity of our members and supporters extends FrOGS reach and effectiveness. Contributions support the efforts of the Education Committee, the Spring Celebration and this newsletter.

Please consider a tax deductible gift to FrOGS.

Send your gift to: **Friends of the Great Swamp**
P.O. Box 373, Pawling, NY 12564

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Day _____ Night _____

E-Mail Address _____

WE NEED HELP

If you can lend a hand with any of the following, please check off the box and we will call you.

- Spring Celebration Publicity Mailings
 Education Committee Art Show Other

