

This series is dedicated to
Marilyn Gelber and Perry Shelton

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CONTENTS



Clayton Brooks

Member of the Coalition of Watershed Towns

Tony Bucca

Member of the Coalition of Watershed Towns

Eric Greenfield

Executive Director of the Coalition of Watershed Towns

Ken Markert

Executive Director of the Coalition of Watershed Towns

Alan Rosa

Member of the Coalition of Watershed Towns

Perry Shelton

Chairman of the Coalition of Watershed Towns

Jeffrey Baker

Attorney for the Coalition of Watershed Towns

Erin Crotty

Mediator from the Governor's Office

Marilyn Gelber

Commissioner, New York City Department of Environmental Protection

Robert Kennedy, Jr.

Environmental activist

Keith Porter

Scientist, Cornell University

Daniel Ruzow

Attorney for the Coalition of Watershed Towns

BEHIND THE SCENES: THE INSIDE STORY OF THE WATERSHED NEGOTIATIONS

New York City's water has been called "the best-tasting water in the world." It has been used by tea companies to test their teas. It accounts for the incomparable taste of New York City bagels and New York City pizza. But many New Yorkers have a poor sense of where their water comes from, and what it takes to maintain it.

New York City's Water Supply System

New York City possesses one of the greatest metropolitan water supply systems in the world. Begun almost 200 years ago, and still under construction, the New York City system supplies 1.2 billion gallons of water a day to nine million residents of New York City and its northern suburbs.

10 percent of New York City's water comes from the Croton System, a series of interconnected reservoirs and lakes east of the Hudson River, with tributaries and branches extending into Westchester, Putnam, and Dutchess Counties in New York State and into Fairfield County in Connecticut.

The remaining 90 percent of New York City's water comes from the Catskill Mountains, an area so beautiful it inspired the Hudson River School of painters. Its streams and rivers are known for some of the best fly-fishing in the world. Fifty thousand people live in the Catskill/Delaware watershed west of the Hudson River. They are some of the poorest people in the state, but they are fiercely attached to the land that was settled by their ancestors.

Construction of the Reservoirs

In 1905, the State Legislature gave New York City the right to establish a reservoir system in the Catskills, and with it the unique authority to control land and residents outside its borders. From 1915 to 1964, land was acquired by eminent domain, residents were evicted, and 23 communities were flooded as New York City built its reservoirs. Bitter memories still linger.

"I didn't think I could ever sit down with the City," says Alan Rosa, now Executive Director of the Catskill Watershed Corporation. "I was too little to know what

happened, but I was constantly brought up on that hatred—you know, how the City just kind of came in and did what they wanted and bullied people around. So I was brought up hating the City.”

New York City Proposes Watershed Regulations

Distrust and ill will had been building for generations in the Catskills when, in September of 1990, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection drafted new regulations to prevent pollution of its upstate water supply. The United States Environmental Protection Agency had issued a Surface Water Treatment Rule, which ordered that surface water supplies (such as reservoirs) must be filtered to protect consumers from water-borne diseases.

New York City faced construction costs of \$4–8 billion to build a filtration plant, with annual operating costs estimated at \$500 million. “The City’s annual budget was about \$29 billion, so this was a huge, huge hit,” recalls Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., senior prosecuting attorney for Riverkeeper. “It would have doubled water rates in the City; it would have put 250,000 people out of their homes; it would have closed down 50,000 housing units in rent-controlled areas of New York City, where the landlords could not pass the additional cost of the water on to their tenants.”

There was one alternative. If a municipality wanted a waiver from the filtration requirement—what became known as a Filtration Avoidance Determination—it had to demonstrate that it had adequate controls in place to protect the watershed from sources of pollution. So the New York City Department of Environmental Protection developed a comprehensive set of regulations to restrict new development and control pollution from manure in fields, salt on roads, failed septic systems, and oil and gas from cars in parking lots.

When the watershed towns began to understand the impact of the regulations, they were appalled. “It hit us like a ton of bricks,” recounts Perry Shelton, chairman of the Coalition of Watershed Towns. “You couldn’t spread manure within 100 foot of a stream or watercourse. Well, when you get into these hills and valleys in Delaware County and the watershed, it would almost rule out everything.” Any construction within 250 to 500 feet of a watercourse was prohibited. “[That means] you aren’t going to build, unless you build on top of the mountain somewhere,” Shelton says. “You wouldn’t have been able to live in the watershed if all those regulations got put through.”

Formation of the Coalition of Watershed Towns

“So we were sitting there wringing our hands at a Board meeting one day when we happened to have two attorneys in the room from Albany, who had had prior experience with Department of Environment Conservation matters in Delaware County,” Shelton recounts. “The subject of these regulations came up, and one of the lawyers said, “Why don’t all of you towns band together?”

So a meeting of Town Supervisors was called. The date was March 21, 1991. “As it happened, that weekend I was kind of busy,” says Town of Hunter Supervisor Tony Bucca. “And as I recall, I was leaning towards not attending. But there was a fellow in town who’s always up on all of these things, and he called me and said, ‘You know, we really need somebody of your caliber at the meeting.’ So we showed up, and I was really surprised at the number of people who were there, and the enthusiasm.”

“From there, it was something that had never happened before,” says Town of Denning Supervisor Clayton Brooks. “Local municipalities joined together in one effort, and our voice was heard.”

They formed the Coalition of Watershed Towns, created a fund, and retained two excellent attorneys—Dan Ruzow and Jeff Baker—from the Albany law firm of Whiteman Osterman & Hanna. 50,000 people were fighting for survival against a metropolis of 9,000,000.

Whole Farm Planning

Meanwhile, the farmers had hired their own lawyers, and contacted the Farm Bureau and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to voice their opposition to the proposed watershed regulations. New York City Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Albert Appleton moved to address the problem by arranging a meeting with Cornell University scientists.

“When the City published its draft regulations in September of 1990, that provoked a great deal of public contentiousness, and in October, I was invited to meet with New York City Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Al Appleton,” recounts Keith Porter, director of the New York State Water Resources Institute at Cornell University. “The outcome of that meeting was an agreement that we would create an ad hoc task force for agriculture specifically to see if, through discussion and negotiation, the apprehension farmers in particular had about the regulations could be addressed.”

The City came to agreement with the farmers fairly quickly, pledging to pay for capital improvements to prevent pollution from farms in the watershed if the farmers voluntarily agreed to participate in a watershed protection program.

“That kind of took the farmers out of the picture, and by spring they were feeling, ‘Hey, we’re going to get a good package out of this’,” recalls Delaware County Planner Ken Markert. “But then there were all the other things, and one of my little catch phrases was: ‘The regulations were one hundred and eight pages, and the agriculture part was two pages. We’ve got to deal with the other hundred and six.’”

Whole Community Planning Develops . . . and Collapses

Watershed Resources Institute Director Keith Porter set to work to forge an agreement between the City and watershed communities. “Over many meetings, the Coalition moved towards the position that it could successfully negotiate an agreement with the City, which would provide for communities assuming responsibility to meet water quality goals, understanding that there would be compensation for doing that,” he recalls. “Whatever they did in service of the City, so to speak, would be paid for by the City.”

With Porter’s assistance, the towns of Denning, Neversink and Middletown formed Citizen Advisory Committees to explore issues of water quality and ways they could help New York City meet the EPA requirements. “We met time after time, meeting after meeting, with all kinds of technical support,” Town of Denning Supervisor Clayton Brooks recalls. “We decided there were five programs we could implement that would meet and alleviate all problems in the Neversink Basin. We picked the Neversink Basin because it’s the crown jewel of the water supply system, and we, through simple measures, could protect it forever and not be under this proposed regulation.”

But Coalition of Watershed Towns attorney Jeff Baker had misgivings. “I had problems with the process because I knew the City wasn’t closing the loop. They were not providing anywhere near the assurances that, once the community went through that process, they would get anything in exchange. And I said, ‘There’s no guarantees you’re going to get anything here.’ The communities went, ‘Oh, we think we can trust the City. We think this is good.’ I said, ‘I’m advising you as a lawyer that you’re missing what’s happening here.’

His misgivings proved to be well-founded.

“They got blindsided by the City in August of 1993 when the City announced its land acquisition program,” Baker recalls. “Suddenly the City was going to come out and apply for a permit from the State to buy 80,000 acres of land and use the powers of eminent domain at the same time.”

Coalition of Watershed Towns Chairman Perry Shelton remembers. “When we did begin to make some headway, and we thought we were close to an agreement with Appleton, he pulled out of his hat this idea of buying 80,000 acres of land,” Shelton says. “Well you know, that stopped everything right dead in its tracks, because that’s what everybody was so mad about originally: the way they took land, the amount they took, and especially the way they treated the people.”

“The City did not even give them a heads-up that this was coming down the pike,” says Baker. “They found out about this when it hit the papers. And they took enormous political flack locally. The people said, ‘See, you can’t trust the City. You were betrayed. They weren’t serious about it.’ And that’s when things really blew up.”

Coalition Strategy

The lawyers moved into high gear.

“The Catskills were not going to pay the price for the City to avoid filtration. We would share the burden, but we weren’t going to pay the price,” says Baker.

Attorney Daniel Ruzow argued, “You had the notion of extraterritoriality here. New York City was seeking to regulate, external to its boundaries, with no rights of the regulated in the election of City officials who would be regulating them. That was sort of a fundamental problem that existed.”

“Twice the State Senate voted to rescind the City’s authority in the area,” says Town of Hunter Supervisor Tony Bucca. “But even as that was happening, everyone knew the resolution wouldn’t pass the Assembly, which was controlled by downstaters and people from Westchester County or other areas that are also served by the New York City water system.

“And for us it became a battle of words,” Bucca recalls. “I can remember going with [Delaware County Planning Director] Ken Markert to New York to testify. Congressman Green had hearings in Manhattan about the watershed, and Ken and I had a great time. It was like being on a mission—slipping into the City like a commando mission and testifying and creating havoc.

“And very frankly we really felt that we had a mission here,” Bucca continues. “I’m not exaggerating that. And we felt that we had to resort to the tactics that powerless people everywhere have to resort to in their political struggles. The strategy was very simple, and it went like this. We recognized what the City needed most was its waiver. And the extent to which we could put that waiver in jeopardy, and keep it in jeopardy, gave us whatever power we ever had.”

Giuliani is Elected Mayor

In 1993, New York City voted in a new mayor.

“At that time, Giuliani was running against Dinkins for Mayor,” recalls environmental activist Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., whose organization, Riverkeeper, had started a public ad campaign to alert City residents to problems with the City’s water supply system. “Dinkins was in a fight for his life, and they were very angry with us, because although the ad campaign didn’t attack the Mayor directly, it was the kind of thing that would make people feel bad about the quality of life in New York City and he felt that it would hurt his election chances,” Kennedy recalls. “The Mayor called me and screamed at me for an hour.”

By the end of the conversation, Kennedy had arranged a meeting with First Deputy Mayor Norman Steisel. “We had a full day of negotiation, and we came out with an agreement in which the Mayor agreed to spend \$750 million dollars and to double

the size of the police force in the watershed and to buy a lot of land in the watershed—50,000 or 100,000 acres,” Kennedy recalls.

“We then took that agreement—he’d signed it—to EPA (at the time, New York City was under order to filter) and we said, ‘Give this mayor a chance to see if he can make this work.’ EPA agreed and gave him, I think, a year or two years. Then we went out and got all the other environmental groups in line behind the Mayor and said, ‘This is an historic document. He’s going to make this work.’ And all the environmental community went to bat, fighting for Mayor Dinkins—and Giuliani won the election.”

Giuliani appointed Marilyn Gelber as Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, the first female ever to become DEP Commissioner and one of the first non-engineers to hold the position.

“I was excited, intrigued, and scared,” Gelber recalls. “The EPA had signed an agreement with the outgoing City administration literally the last day of December, I believe, just before the new mayor was taking office. So here was an agreement signed by a prior administration, laying out roughly 157 tasks that the Department of Environmental Protection had to do to protect the watershed or else EPA would order us to filter. The staff that described the requirements to me were daunted by it; and here we were a new administration just coming into office, faced with a lot to do and not very much time to do it.

“At the same time, I quickly became aware of the level of hostility that existed in the watershed for New York City in general and New York City Department of Environmental Protection in particular,” Gelber continues. “I spent my first few weeks as Commissioner reviewing histories, understanding the past, and hopefully putting myself in a position to be able to not only confront the EPA mandate, but also to figure out some way we were going to get along.”

Town of Middletown Supervisor Alan Rosa says, “Marilyn Gelber, after she was caught up in the process and got up to speed on it, probably has turned out to be the best thing that’s happened in the long run, because she’s been to the area, she understands what we’re talking about. She’s a person who understands the importance of trying to protect people’s rights in the area, but yet trying to protect her major objective, which is the water supply. So once she helped us understand what her objectives were and we made her understand what our objectives were, things moved on rather nicely for a spell.”

“She sort of come up here with the right idea,” recalls Coalition of Watershed Towns Chairman Perry Shelton, “and right from the beginning one of the first things she said was, ‘I assure you that I’ll never pull any surprises on you, and I hope you won’t pull any surprises on me.’”

Marilyn Gelber

“I must say, all the City lawyers warned me initially that there was no way to avoid litigation—that instead of even fantasizing about an agreement with watershed communities, I should just prepare for litigation, get as many lawyers prepared as possible, and forget about any other strategy,” says Gelber. “That bothered me. So I decided that maybe despite all the advice I was getting, what I should do is just go up and look for myself.”

One of her first visits was to Coalition of Watershed Towns Chairman Perry Shelton.

“I set a date to visit Perry Shelton one morning in Trout Creek,” Gelber recalls. “And if you know Trout Creek, it is probably at the furthest end of the watershed, way the heck over in Delaware County. I was leaving from Brooklyn, which meant I had to get up well before dawn to make the trip. It was a beautiful day, and I went by myself. I did have a driver from New York City, which made my life easier. Charlie, my young driver, picked me up in the car sometime before dawn and we barreled up to Trout Creek.

“When I got there, there were these wonderful smells coming from the kitchen,” Gelber continues. “Perry’s wife, who’s now passed, had gotten up early to bake her special blueberry muffins for this occasion of having a New York City Water Commissioner in her kitchen. Perry wanted to be the good host, and since his wife was feeling poorly, he wanted to make coffee for me,” she recalls. “He was so nervous at my being in his kitchen that he forgot to put the little thing under the coffeemaker, and he poured the water in and it flooded out all over the kitchen counter.

“Perry comes across as being a very proper gentleman, very careful, very precise, and here, much to his embarrassment, he couldn’t make a cup of coffee,” Gelber laughs. “It was a morning that I will not soon forget. I can’t tell you how it happened or why it happened, but somehow over those blueberry muffins I became convinced that we would reach an agreement, and we did.”

Gelber took an unprecedented approach. “It seemed pretty clear that we were not going to resolve this issue by issue,” Gelber recalls. “We had to somehow right this relationship. We had to start from some personal relationship; we had to be able to trust each other. It was only then that we could begin to negotiate a settlement.”

“Mrs. Gelber pretty much assembled a completely new team,” recalls Shelton. “As soon as she found out the people that had a bad attitude toward upstate—because she recognized the fact that some people *did* have a bad attitude—she got rid of them. And I think a big thing was when they got up here and saw what conditions really are, their attitudes changed. And they found out we didn’t have horns or anything, and we found out they didn’t have horns, so it just got to be we began to

trust each other. But it really changed considerably with Mrs. Gelber—Commissioner Gelber. She was just an altogether different person.”

Pataki is Elected Governor

A year after New York City elected its new mayor, a new governor took office—George Pataki, the first Republican governor in New York State for some time, and a resident of Westchester County.

“So that was another setback, we thought, because now we’d have to begin the process all over again,” recalls Town of Middletown Supervisor Alan Rosa.

“But here we have a Republican governor who comes from the [east-of-Hudson] watershed, who’s previously supported the watershed,” says Town of Hunter Supervisor Tony Bucca. “And yet he knows that the construction of a filtration system for the City of New York is going to have a tremendous negative impact on the City’s economic stability and in turn on the State’s. His frank acknowledgment of that and his willingness to incur some political damage or loss by getting involved in these negotiations . . . he has to be applauded for it, you know?”

“And he did. He got involved in it,” says Rosa. “It was something he didn’t have to get involved in because basically he was in a no-win situation, and if things all went to pot, the City would be looking at a \$4-8 billion filtration plant and he could be labeled as the blame for it.”

“The Governor made it clear to us—personally and through his Counsel, Michael Finnegan—how important he saw resolving this issue was,” recalls Coalition of Watershed Towns attorney Dan Ruzow. “I think that aided the opportunities for the west-of-Hudson community to participate meaningfully in the process, because you had a key player respecting the rights of the upstate communities. Marilyn Gelber brought that, too,” he adds, “because she conveyed the same perspective of respect for the local issues. So you had a good setting, finally.”

Mediation

Governor’s Office representative Erin Crotty picks up the story. “Very early on in Governor Pataki’s first term, starting in 1995, right about March, I was working as Policy Analyst in the Counsel’s Office under Michael Finnegan, who was then the Counsel to the Governor, and this issue of the New York City watershed and the prospect of the EPA not approving a Filtration Avoidance Determination for the Catskill-Delaware portion of its watershed came up,” she recalls. “I was asked by Michael to look into this issue, so look into it I did. I quickly found out that it was a massive issue. It involved the largest city in the State of New York—sort of the heartbeat of America, if you will, New York City—as well as the upstate communities which are the home to New York City’s drinking water supply.”

The Governor made the decision that a comprehensive agreement between New York City, the upstate communities, and the federal government could be brokered, based on research by his staff.

“That’s really how I got involved,” says Crotty. “I remember Michael and the Governor convening a group of people. It was federal, state, city, and local government representatives getting into a room and identifying what the issues were, and we came up with a list of issues which quickly grew to a pretty lengthy document.

“The first meeting was in April of 1995,” she continues, “and at that meeting the Governor directed us to come up with an Agreement by August of 1995. Actually, the agreement-in-principle didn’t happen until November of 1995, and then the very voluminous multivolume comprehensive Agreement didn’t get signed until January of 1997.”

The Process

In the beginning, Crotty and Assistant Counsel Nick Garlick were teamed together to represent the Governor’s Office at the negotiations. “We were identified as the Office, if you will, to bring the parties together—sort of brokering the parties together. We came up with the agendas, we identified the issues, we had off-record conversations, we had off-meeting conversations with the parties,” Crotty recalls.

“We tried to design the agendas in a way where we knew that the issues that were less complicated and easier to fix would be put at the beginning of the day,” Crotty continues, “and then the issues we knew were going to take a long time were sort of in the middle of the day, and then other issues—probably the thorniest issues in the beginning—we would put at the end. The idea was slow, steady progress.”

“They basically orchestrated every meeting, got us together, and when things started getting out of hand, they were like the schoolteacher, you know: slap the ruler on the table and say, ‘Look this is what we gotta do,’ and ‘We can’t solve this. Let’s move on to something else,’” says Rosa. “And basically what ended up happening is, we didn’t start arguing so much about differences, we started talking about where we could agree upon things.

“And you know, we found out they’re just regular people like we are. And that was helpful,” Rosa continues. “They weren’t some monster that was there to crush us. They were just regular people trying to do a job. I didn’t think I could ever sit down with the City,” Rosa says. “I thought I had too much hate for them. But after a while, you realize the only way you’re going to get anything done is to sit down and talk it out.”

“The Governor’s Office kind of sat back and let us talk to each other,” Gelber recalls. “And those face-to-face negotiations went on for days on end, weeks on end. I cleared my schedule of many things I had to do in New York City. Somebody counted

up at the end that we had maybe more than 300 meetings—most of which I actually attended. The only thing that actually made them bearable was getting to know each other on a human level.”

“We all talked about this at various times,” recalls Coalition attorney Dan Ruzow, “both in the watershed meetings west-of-Hudson but certainly among the negotiators, that reaching agreement was larger than any of the individual parties’ interests. It was something larger than yourselves, both professionally and personally, from all parties’ perspectives; and that was a constant reminder, when things got bad and you really disagreed on a position, that it was almost an ethical obligation to try to find some middle ground.

“For the longest time in the negotiations, folks west-of-Hudson were so upset with the history of City behavior they could not hear somebody from the City speak and hear what they were currently saying,” Ruzow continues. “Perry Shelton gave me a context and a construct for speaking and listening to people that was different from what I had known previously. It enabled me to understand how to get people past some of the history, past some of their prejudices.

“If you don’t have a clue as to the context of what had occurred, there’s no way you can communicate with folks who view it so differently,” Ruzow says. “You may be saying all the right words as far as you can, but you don’t have a vocabulary that will get across to these other folks and communicate things that will give them comfort, because you haven’t even recognized what they’ve been through, or what their ancestors went through.”

“If you asked the people who were in the room who actually negotiated on a day-to-day basis, I think we all had a feeling we were involved in something extremely important,” says Crotty. “You could just feel it—there was an energy in the room. We were on the brink of an historic agreement. We were honestly brokering an agreement of historic magnitude,” she continues. “It has acted as a template in the Governor’s administration for how to deal with very thorny environmental issues. It was a very collaborative, consensus-building experience. It was a really unique opportunity, and I think they come by not often.”

The Agreement

“There were basically three large issues that we were trying to address,” says Crotty. “One was land acquisition—making sure that the City of New York was able to purchase property in its watershed from willing sellers and making sure that the property was property that was important to water quality protection. The second one was making sure that the City of New York had protective regulations for the water in the watershed—things like septic tank siting and other issues that get addressed in any health regulation. The third was wastewater treatment plant upgrades and storm water retrofits and septic tank replacements.”

“The people in the Catskills don’t want to pollute the watershed, but a lot of times they don’t have the means to fix the situation,” says Coalition attorney Jeff Baker. And so, the final Agreement includes funding of \$13.6 million to replace septic systems in the watershed.

The Watershed Agreement also includes a pledge of \$75 million to foster economic development in the Catskills. Jeff Baker explains, “Poverty breeds environmental problems. If you can foster sound economic development in the watershed, that will help everybody. Because you have this extra set of regulations they have to go through, it’s more expensive than doing business outside the watershed. So we had to develop an economic development fund to counterbalance the natural reluctance of any business person to say, ‘Why should I go to a place where I’m going to be more heavily regulated, when I can go somewhere else and not have those same regulations?’”

The total package came to \$1 billion. “Well, it’s a heck of a deal for the City,” says Coalition of Watershed Towns Executive Director Eric Greenfield. “I mean, \$1 billion versus \$4–8 billion for a filtration plant, plus the operating and maintenance costs over the long term, not to mention the debt service over the long term. As for us,” he continues, “the reason why it’s a win-win situation is because we got the programs we asked for, the programs we believe will realistically take care of water quality problems.”

“I think what’s coming out of this program—if it’s fully implemented—will be good for us,” Shelton says. “If we can’t do something for ourselves now, nobody else is going to be able to help us.”

Reflections

“One tactic to achieve adequate water protection is to own the watershed,” says Keith Porter. “The environmental community tends to think in terms of preserving the environment by minimizing human activity. It’s a very simplistic view, and it misses the opportunity we have. The environmental community really should think more creatively about how people can live well in their environment instead of just trying to stop the human activity.”

“Basically, I’m looking for a future for my children—and possibly their children. That’s why I’m sticking with it,” says Alan Rosa. “If my kids or someone else’s kids from the area want to live here, my hope is that they’re going to have some kind of an opportunity to make a living and to stay here. Not, mind you, get rich, but to be able to make a living and live here. Because just living here to me is being rich in one way or the other.”

“And while the people in this City take water for granted, I was privileged as Commissioner to understand how the system works, and where the water comes from,” says Gelber. “In order to protect what we have in New York City, you have to

protect watershed communities. Watershed communities have to be your partner in protecting the system, and there's no amount of mechanical systems or science that's going to protect the water unless people in the watershed are your partner in protecting it.

“What New York City produces in terms of wealth for the entire State of New York can't be minimized. For this City to be a great city, though, it can't survive without the water that comes from upstate communities. And what upstate communities do to protect this resource that enables New York to be a great city is not generally known or respected. We had been communicating all along and didn't realize it. We had been dependent on each other all along and didn't realize it.”

ABOUT THE PRODUCER

Nancy Burnett has 20 years experience as a radio and TV broadcaster, teacher, and writer. Her radio stories have been broadcast on NPR, AP, NBC, Monitor Radio, Voice of America, Mutual News, and Empire State Network. She has been awarded a WGBH-CPB Fellowship for two-week residency in public affairs production, Association of Independents in Radio fellowship, and grants from the New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization Program and the Catskill Watershed Corporation Public Education Program.

Burnett has been a news director for commercial radio and documentary producer for public TV. She currently teaches audio production at SUNY Oneonta. She founded her own company, Nancy Burnett Productions, in 1991. Her independent productions include TV documentaries on a legendary jazz musician, embroidery in Slovakia, and the aftermath of war in Bosnia; a year-long radio series about local people and places; and a book on the architecture and history of Unadilla; and this oral history series on the New York City Watershed Agreement.

She grew up on a farm in the foothills of the Catskill Mountains, left at 13 to attend Northfield Mount Hermon School, and graduated cum laude from Connecticut College with a BA in Philosophy. After a year in Japan and ten years in Boston, a simple twist of fate brought her back to New York State, where she lives happily with her cat in an 1860's house on the banks of the Susquehanna River in the beautiful and historic village of Unadilla.

NOTES

Titles:

The professional titles listed on the transcripts reflect the interviewees' positions as of the time the interviews were conducted. As of July 2005:

- ▶ **Clayton Brooks** has retired and lives next door to his former business in Sundown, NY.
- ▶ **Tony Bucca** continues to practice law in Greene County.
- ▶ **Eric Greenfield** has received his Ph.D. in Forest and Natural Resources Management from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.
- ▶ **Ken Markert** is a community planning consultant in Cody, Wyoming.
- ▶ **Alan Rosa** is Executive Director of the Catskill Watershed Corporation.
- ▶ **Perry Shelton** is President of the Board of Directors of the Catskill Watershed Corporation.
- ▶ **Jeff Baker** left Whiteman Osterman & Hanna in 1999 to start a new law firm, Young, Sommer, Ward, Ritzenberg, Baker & Moore, LLC of Albany, NY. He continues to represent the Coalition of Watershed Towns.
- ▶ **Erin Crotty** resigned as Commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in February 2005, to start her own consulting business, The Crotty Group, LLC ("Strategies for Our Changing Environment").
- ▶ **Marilyn Gelber** continues as the Executive Director of the Independence Community Foundation in Brooklyn, NY.
- ▶ **Robert Kennedy** continues as Senior Prosecuting Attorney for Riverkeeper and Attorney for Natural Resource Defense Council.
- ▶ **Keith Porter** continues as Director of the New York State Water Resources Institute at Cornell University.
- ▶ **Dan Ruzow** remains a senior partner with Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP (formerly Whiteman Osterman & Hanna). The law firm was appointed special counsel to the Catskill Watershed Corporation when it was formed in 1997 and still serves in that capacity. In 1999, the firm ended its role as legal counsel to the Coalition of Watershed Towns.

Editing:

These transcripts have been edited to improve readability and clarity, thanks to a Watershed Education Special Program grant from the Catskill Watershed Corporation. Brackets indicate words which have been inserted. Ellipses indicate pauses or a thought that trails off. Because of editing, the transcripts will not completely match the CDs which are included with this set.

Each interviewee has been given the opportunity to carefully review the text to ensure that the edited version accurately represents the meaning of their statements. No attempt has been made to check the factual accuracy of statements. My purpose is to allow each interviewee to tell the story as he or she saw it.

Unedited transcripts are available at the following archive sites: Catskill Center for Conservation and Development, Catskill Watershed Corporation, Delaware County Historical Association, SUNY Delhi (Resnick Library), Frost Valley YMCA, and Sidney Memorial Public Library.

This two-volume set of oral history interviews includes negotiators from the Coalition of Watershed Towns (Set One) and other parties to the negotiations (Set Two). Interviews with Coalition of Watershed Towns members were recorded just after the draft Memorandum of Agreement was signed in 1995. Now, almost ten years later, the Memorandum of Agreement is playing out.

There are many other people who played a key role in the watershed negotiations, and I hope to have the opportunity to talk with them in the future. This is the first stage of a long-term project, which will include articles, documentaries for radio and TV, and curriculum modules. These interviews were recorded on DAT and mini-DV.

Any questions or comments are welcome.

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RIGHTS INFORMATION

Permission is granted by the producer and interviewees to copy these materials freely for educational purposes.

The interviewees request that they be given the opportunity to review work based on this material before it is broadcast or published.

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