

## check it out

## New York Open Space Plan to benefit Shawangunk conservation

**N**ew York State's just-released draft Open Space Conservation Plan lists the Shawangunk Mountains region as one of the Hudson Valley's 19 top conservation priorities. The Mohonk Preserve welcomes this endorsement of the area's scenic, ecological and economic importance and urges residents to attend hearings scheduled by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to obtain public input. The hearings for the Hudson Valley region will take place this Thursday, Jan. 22 at Bear Mountain State Park Overlook Lodge, with a workshop explaining the plan from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., followed by public comment sessions from 2:30 to 5 p.m. and 7 to 9:30 p.m.



PHOTO BY FRANK TRAC

*View of the Shawangunks at the Mohonk Preserve*

"Since initiating open space planning in 1990, New York has done a great job ensuring public input on priorities for land protection," says Glenn Hoagland, Executive Director of the Mohonk Preserve, who currently serves as Chairman of the Region 3 Citizen Advisory Council for the Plan. "The plan supports partnerships among organizations, landowners and agencies to achieve the kind of conservation that enhances quality of life in communities and encourages creative solutions to protect the State's most vital natural assets."

The priority objectives of the 2009 Open Space Conservation Plan (which is revised every three years) include responding to climate change; fostering green and healthy communities; connecting New Yorkers with nature and recreation; and safeguarding natural and cultural heritage. Despite current budget constraints on the state level, it is hoped that the Environmental Protection Fund will continue to be a key funding source for many conservation projects.

The 2009 Open Space Plan is available at [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov). DEC will be accepting comments on the draft plan until the end of February; written comments can be submitted by regular mail to the Open Space Conservation Program, NYS DEC, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4250 or by e-mail at [osp2009@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:osp2009@gw.dec.state.ny.us).