

# Policy Adoption Fact Sheet: CEA Declaration for Vanderburgh Cove

2020 Comprehensive Plan Review | David Chernack, Joint Environmental Committee Intern

**Why is this action important?** Vanderburgh Cove, located in the southwestern Rhinebeck along its border with Hyde Park, is an area home to distinct biodiversity found nowhere else in Rhinebeck. Its value is huge for species like Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, and Minks who forage for prey inside the cove and along the river.

Critical environment areas (CEAs) are areas in New York which have been designated as such to recognize their benefits to human health, unique natural character, or an inherent ecological, geological, or hydrological sensitivity to change that maybe adversely affected by any physical disturbance. Once a CEA has been designated, potential impacts on the characteristics of that CEA become relevant areas of concern that warrant specific, articulated consideration in determining the significance of any Type I or Unlisted actions that may affect the CEA.

Vanderburgh Cove isn't completely in Rhinebeck's jurisdiction: its southern corner is actually a part of Hyde Park, which has already declared a CEA for their portion of the Cove. It's time for Rhinebeck to move forward and itself declare a CEA for Vanderburgh Cove.

**How is this action implemented?** An application is drawn up and sent to NYSDEC for approval.



## Vanderburgh Cove CEA quick facts:

*CSC points:* up to 6

*Benefits to Rhinebeck:* longstanding protection for Vanderburgh Cove, collaboration with our southern neighbor, opportunities for recreation

*Cost:* low to medium

*Relevant agencies:* Town Board, Joint Environmental Committee

**What does the Comprehensive Plan say about it?** The Town's 2009 Comprehensive Plan calls for establishing CEAs in several areas—notably the Sepasco Lake area, which was studied in depth in a 2018 study by Hudsonia—but one was never established at Vanderburgh Cove or at any of the other locations listed in the Plan.

**What departments will it involve?** The Town Board and the Joint Environmental Committee would be involved in drafting a resolution and application to NYSDEC to seek CEA status for Vanderburgh Cove.

**What will it cost?** Relatively little. Thanks to the "Significant Habitats" study done by Hudsonia in 2007—and because Hyde Park has already argued for CEA protection for their section of the Cove—not much original research will need to be done to prove to the state that Vanderburgh Cove should be protected.