
IV-A: Regional Setting

The Batavia Kill watershed is located in the northeastern limits of the Catskill Mountains, part of the Appalachian Plateau physiographic province. The headwaters of the Batavia Kill originate on the south slopes of Windham High Peak, Burnt Knob and Acra Point mountains and the north slope of the Blackhead Range, which are not only the northernmost peaks in the Catskill chain, but also some of the highest elevations in the Catskills .



While the watershed is characterized by its rural nature, it is located a convenient distance from several major population centers. Metropolitan New York, as well as the populated upper sections of New Jersey are as close as 2 ½ hours by car from the watershed while the Albany/Capitol District area is approximately an hour away. Philadelphia, Boston, and Montreal are all within an easy drive of the watershed. The watershed is easily accessible from the NYS thruway, and it is also bisected by NYS Route 23, one of only a few routes that provide east-west access through the mountains. For over 100 years, the Batavia Kill watershed’s proximity to the downstate population centers has made it not only an ideal tourist destination, but also a popular location for the development of part-time or seasonal homes.

The Batavia Kill watershed is located entirely within Greene County. The majority of the watershed is located in the Town of Windham, with lesser portions in the Towns of Ashland and Prattsville. These three towns as well as Greene County comprise the municipal governments in the watershed. While there are several hamlets, there are no incorporated villages. A

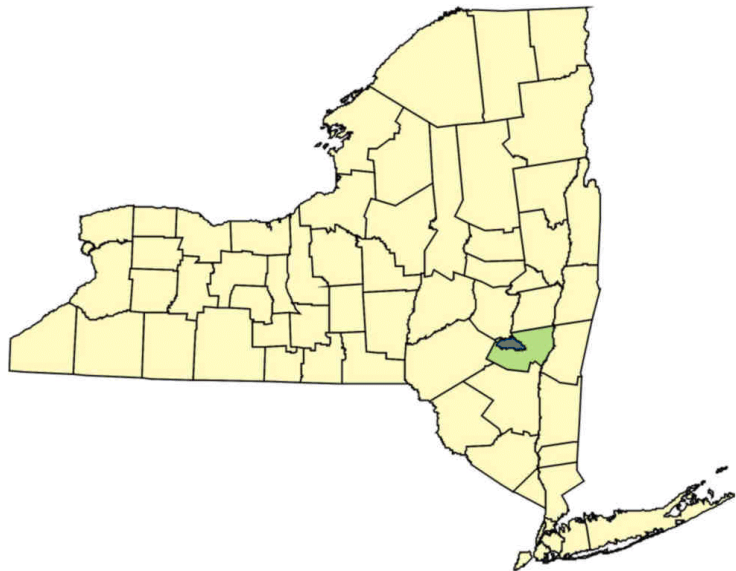


Figure IV-1 Batavia Kill Watershed Regional Location.

portion of the watershed is located within the protected 700,000 acre Catskill State Park. In addition, a short section of the stream at the Windham-Ashland town line carries a National Scenic River Designation from the US Park Service.

Most significant in the consideration of the Batavia Kill's regional setting, is its location within the New York City watershed. The Batavia Kill watershed is a sub-basin of the



Figure IV-2: Aerial view of Batavia Kill watershed. Windham Mountain ski slopes are seen on the right of the photo.

Schoharie Creek, which comprises approximately 30% of the Schoharie Reservoir watershed. The Schoharie is the northernmost reservoir in the Catskill/Delaware water supply system. Its water is diverted to the Ashokan Reservoir by means of a 19-mile underground tunnel. The New York City water supply is currently unfiltered, and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) operates its system under a Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD) issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and New York

State Department of Health (1997).

Central to the maintenance of the FAD are a series of partnership programs between NYC and the upstate communities, as well as a set of rules and regulations administered by NYCDEP. As shown in following sections of this SCMP, the watershed's location within the NYC water supply system will prove to be the most significant influence on the success of stream corridor management in the coming years.