

This Earth Day look at the world through an “Earth Day” perspective. Recognize your place in it. And honor your passion for the places- and the clean air and water- that keep you healthy and happy.

# EARTH DAY MEDIA

Glennys Romero and Julia Gloninger, Saw Kill Watershed Community Interns

Since the first Earth Day in 1970, groups across the nation have made great strides to protect our environment in innovative and inspiring ways. Learn more about the work they have done and are continuing to do, in addition to their plans to celebrate this historic holiday, from the links below.

## Websites

- Earth Day Website: <https://www.earthday.org/>
- Dutchess Cornell Cooperative Extension: <http://ccedutchess.org/events/2020/04/22/earth-day-stream-a-thon>
- Basilica Hudson and Sun Common: <https://basilicahudson.org/climate-action-film-festival/>
- We Act for Environmental Justice: <https://www.climateweeknyc.org/event/we-act-virtual-earth-day-5k>
- Digital Earth Day: <https://www.earthday.org/press-release/coronavirus-announcement-digital-earth-day/>
- Earthrise: <https://www.earthday.org/campaign/earth-day-earthrise/>
- Today's Action: <https://www.earthday.org/todays-action/>
- EarthChallenge2020: <https://earthchallenge2020.earthday.org/>
- Greenpeace: <https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/faces-of-earth-day-we-need-you/>
- Nature Conservancy: <https://www.nature.org/en-us/--https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/volunteer-and-attend-events/find-local-events-and-opportunities/ok-picnic-in-place-earth-day/>
- NASA Earth Day 2020: <https://www.nasa.gov/content/earth-day-2020>
- American Rivers: <https://www.americanrivers.org/stay-home-well-bring-the-river-to-you/>

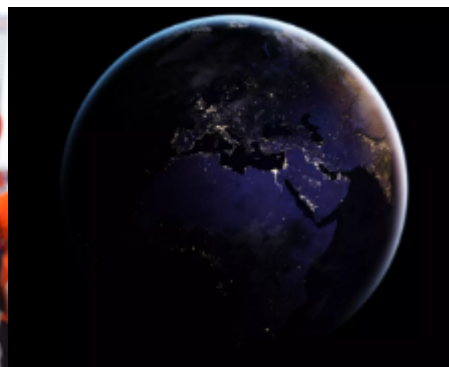
## Earth Day Themed Videos and Artwork

- 50 Voices for the Planet: <https://www.earthday.org/50voices/>
- Various 50 Voices videos: <https://www.youtube.com/user/earthdaynetwork/videos>
- NASA Earth Day 50th Anniversary Tool Kit: <https://www.nasa.gov/content/earth-day-2020-50th-anniversary-toolkit>
- Musketaquid Earth Day 2020: <https://theumbrellaarts.org/program/earth-day>
- Artists for the Earth: <https://www.earthday.org/category/artists-for-the-earth/>
- Learning through Art: <https://www.earthday.org/learning-through-art/>
- Car Free NYC Earth Day: <https://www1.nyc.gov/html/dot/summerstreets/html/carfree/carfree.shtml>



### Faces of Earth Day: We Need YOU!

This year, Earth Day will be anything but normal, but that won't stop us. We need your help for a special project we're working on!



### Earth Day goes digital with 24 hours of action

In the face of global crises, we don't shut down — we shift. Join us as the Earth Day movement goes digital



### Earth Day STREAM-A-THON!

Environmentally-conscious but not sure what you can do on Earth Day from the comfort of your home? Join CCEDC and other Extension associations for a virtua...

 Cornell Cooperative Extension / Apr 22



# LOOKING INTO THE PAST AND FUTURE OF THE SAW KILL THIS EARTH DAY

Marco Spodek, Saw Kill Watershed Community Leadership Team

Happy Earth Day to all! Today marks an incredible milestone in the history of community action around the environment. Today we acknowledge the incredible work put into raising awareness for environmental issues by great conservationists throughout history. From the vast tribes of indigenous peoples who settled these lands, to the philosophical likes of Thoreau, Muir, and Leopold; from the brave and poetic calls to action by Rachel Carson, to the unwavering resiliency of activists on the frontlines at Standing Rock. Earth Day means reflecting on the work that's been done, while reinvestigating ourselves to continue to fight for the future.

Here in the Saw Kill Watershed, there is much to both reflect on and plan for! In honor of Earth Day 50, we are taking a dive into the past to see how the Saw Kill has changed-- for better or for worse-- over the last several decades. Why do this, you ask? Understanding past conditions of the creek offers us a unique perspective on what kinds of things we should be taking into account for future monitoring and action efforts. For example, understanding the state of the creek's adjacent wetland area forty years ago versus now allows us to understand whether we need to fight for more stringent wetland protections in the coming decades based on the current trajectory. Protecting these areas not only maintains habitat for critters, but preserves key ecosystem services that directly benefit our community; carbon sequestration, flood resilience, and runoff filtration, to name a few.

To do this, the SKWC plans to release a Saw Kill "Report Card" in one of our upcoming newsletters. Modeled after a format employed by the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#), the report card will include a selection of pollution, aquatic life, and habitat parameters. Both qualitative and quantitative information will be taken into account for each of these parameters in order to come up with "grades" on where the Saw Kill stands today versus where it did during the period that we have the oldest information for each one. Some things that we plan to assess include salt concentrations, fecal bacteria counts, nutrient pollution (excess Nitrogen & Phosphorus), eel and native trout populations, pollution-sensitive benthic macroinvertebrates, and wetland cover. These parameters tell us little when analyzed individually, but collectively, they help paint a picture of our stream that is rich with history as well as future purpose.

Developing this holistic understanding of the Saw Kill is highly congruent with the spirit of Earth Day. Remembering the past helps us reconnect with why we do this work, and planning for the future grounds us in reality. While we don't yet know how the Saw Kill will fare in this exercise, we do know that regardless of what we find, we will continue to fight for clean drinking water and a hospitable environment for many Earth Days to come.



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# HAS EARTH DAY MADE AN IMPACT?

Glennys Romero, Bard College '20, Saw Kill Watershed Community Intern

April 22nd, 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, a worldwide celebration dedicated to mobilization for environmental care and consciousness. Earth Day began in 1970 as a call to action against the great challenges and detriments being faced by the environment and everyone who lived in it. Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson spearheaded the movement, intending to combine the energy of anti-war protests with environmental concerns that had not been previously considered. He proposed the event of Earth Day as an "environmental teach-in" or protest itself. Sen. Nelson said "The objective was to get a nationwide demonstration of concern for the environment so large that it would shake the political establishment out of its lethargy, and, finally, force this issue permanently onto the national political agenda." Nearly 20 million people in the United States gathered for the very first Earth Day demonstration, and by 1990 over 200 million people in over 140 countries took part in the Earth Day festivities. This increased even more just ten years later, with hundreds of millions of people in over 180 countries and 5,000 different groups participating. It was clear that the message of Earth Day had reached global proportions. The United Nations recognized Earth Day as International Mother Earth Day as of 2009.

Since its inception, Earth Day has seen some great victories for the planet as communities join together and seek to make impacts in the sectors that are most important to them. As a result, in the United States alone, we saw the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (1970), the Clean Air Act (1970), the Clean Water Act (1972), the Marine Mammal Protection Act (1972), and the Safe Drinking Water Act (1974), all in a five-year span. And with every year's Earth Day celebration centering around a distinct theme (everything from plastics to climate change), the world has seen amazing displays of collaboration for this event. Organized events include landscape clean-up events, community pledges against single-use plastic, mass tree plantings, and lobbying for environmentally conscious policies, to name a few.

The Earth Day website states this event is "widely recognized as the largest secular observance in the world, marked by more than a billion people every year as a day of action to change human behavior and provoke policy changes." This 50th year, the Earth Day theme is centered around climate action, a fitting goal considering the significance of climate change and the massive challenges it imposes to future generations unless acted upon now. At the end of 2020, participating nations will be expected to increase their commitments to the 2015 Paris Agreement, allowing for bigger strides against climate change.

Although there have been significant advances since the first Earth Day, and progress continues to be made, there continues to be pending work against instances of environmental injustice. Environmental injustice, or environmental racism, is regarded as the special risks to "low-income persons, the working class and people of color and indigenous peoples whose livelihoods and health may be imperiled by resource extraction, waste disposal and pollution in their neighborhoods and hazards in their workplace," and the regulations that target communities to live in these conditions. Unfortunately, instances of environmental injustice continue in cases such as the all-too-familiar lead pollution water crisis in Flint, energy companies' plans to construct compressor stations along the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and in Union Hill, the U.S.-Mexico border wall plans, and pipelines and fracking being imposed on Native land.

Historical instances of injustices led to the necessity for environmental justice, the idea that the environment and access to it should include "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies." The foundation of environmental justice was summarized by principles adopted by the National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in 1991. These standards should be continuously upheld as part of the core of environmentalism as a whole, and will only become even more crucial as climate change continues as a looming threat.

While the entire world shares solidarity in this current time of uncertainty, we can't lose sight of the meaning behind Earth Day. Although in-person clean-up events and tree plantings may be physically postponed, Earth Day 2020 lives on digitally, as should our dedication to the movement and our efforts for a stable environmental and social future for all.