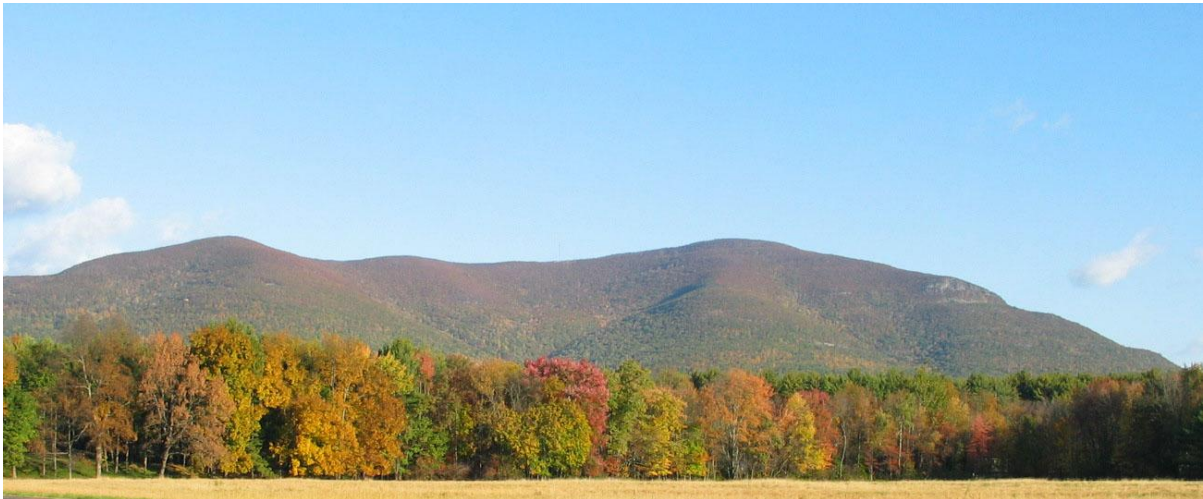




The Overlook Mountain Center (OMC)



Culture, Environment, Knowledge

A 501(c) 3 Non-Profit Corporation

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P.O. Box 1278 Woodstock, NY 12498
845 417 8384

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This proposal outlines the formation of a non-profit corporation, The Overlook Mountain Center, whose purpose is to raise funds to purchase and protect 82 acres of land currently for sale in Lewis Hollow and owned by Lewis Hollow Corp. The purchase of the Lewis Hollow Corp. property holdings, which include the 37 acre upper Lewis Hollow lot and the 45 acre lower Lewis Hollow lot, would create a permanent conservation easement on two of the last remaining large parcels on Overlook Mountain, making them “forever wild”, and adding to existing lands already protected.

With the purchase and conservation of the Lewis Hollow Property, an interpretive trail would be established through “the preserve”, leading from a parking area and entrance kiosk located in California Quarry, (not unlike Sloan Gorge) to the 37 acre upper Lewis Hollow lot, and the mysterious lithic complex that covers that property. The historic and possibly prehistoric stone work found at the site includes many amazing stone walls, dozens of small, carefully created cairns, and the half dozen, rare “great” cairns, which along with two unusual snake effigy walls, create the fascinating “Draco” serpent, petroform and geoglyph located there.

The 45 acre lower Lewis Hollow lot “preserve” would prevent the development of between 8 – 10 homes and instead would house the modest (2500 -3500 sq. ft) Overlook Mountain Center. The Center parking area would also serve a connector trail head that would lead to the current DEC access trail head, off upper Lewis Hollow Rd., and to a newly re-established rustic and scenic, single track Overlook summit trail from Lewis Hollow.

The Overlook Mountain Center would celebrate Overlook Mountain as a medium for the transmission of cultural, environmental and esoteric knowledge, offering programming, permanent exhibits and interpretive tours, year round, not only to local populations, but to those from all over the Hudson Valley, from New York City to Albany and visitors to the Woodstock area from around the world.

In addition to ongoing programming, exhibits and tours, two yearly, three day conferences will be hosted by the Center, featuring leading researchers, scholars and best practices professionals in the fields of cultural research, environmental sustainability and practical esoterica, sharing their knowledge through presentations and experiential workshops.

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Overlook Mountain, in Woodstock New York, may well be one of the most important and sacred mountains in our region, if not arguably all the northeast. The mountain acts as a major gateway to the 1 million acre Catskill Forest Preserve, having the closest Catskill Mountain summit trailhead to the New York City metropolitan area. Overlook Mountain is also the center of Tibetan Buddhism in North America and was recognized as a sacred site by the Iroquois Confederacy at the Council at Onondaga in 1979. Since the mountain entered human consciousness, no doubt in the post glacial period many thousands of years ago, it has served people in innumerable ways and has attained high status, notoriety and recognition not just in the local community, but both worldwide and cross-culturally. Overlook Mountain is seen as a medium and educational base for the transmission of cultural, environmental and esoteric knowledge to Humanity.

In *The Conservationist*, May – June 1985, historian Alf Evers wrote that “The magic spirit of the Catskills makes its appeal to the restless imagination that lies at the heart of human achievement, and of delight in human existence.” Alf further observed “...that applies with special force to Overlook Mountain. May its human neighbors in this time of crisis, rally to its defense.”

OMC Mission Statement: The Overlook Mountain Center (OMC) exists to promote awareness and understanding of the relationship between Overlook Mountain, its environment and history and the human population that has encountered the mountain throughout time. OMC will create programming, exhibits and experiential tours that celebrate the many unique aspects of Overlook Mountain, while documenting its past, securing its present and protecting its future. The 82 acre OMC Land Preserve will build upon already established connections between Catskill Forest Preserve parcels on Overlook Mountain, improving access to the Preserve Forest, which should remain one of the highest priorities for our generation of stewardship.

It's time Overlook Mountain is honored and protected in a way that reflects the immense contribution the mountain has made to humanity. The Overlook Mountain Center (OMC), through conservation, experience, awareness and collaboration, will become the permanent human reflection of the mountain, honoring Overlook; the mountain that has given so much, to so many, in so many ways, for so long.

The Overlook Mountain, as it was once called, has long struck an iconic image looming above the Hudson River Valley, acting as sentry to the eastern most woodland slopes of Catskill Mountains in upstate New York. Drawn to those slopes for thousands of years, humans have lived, worked and roamed there as prehistoric hunter gatherers, early agrarians, colonial lumber cutters and hide tanners, early American glass makers, surveyors and quarrymen, and 20th century Utopians, hikers and hunters. With such a long, varied and well documented past, it's safe to say, Overlook Mountain can be recognized as a serial use area; an area used by many different groups of people, for many different purposes and reasons, for many thousands of years.

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Beyond that, Overlook Mountain has inspired, enlightened and invoked. From practical to artistic and spiritual, the Mountain has been the source and subject of countless paintings, drawings, illustrations, meditations, poetry and books, all seeking in some way to capture, experience and ultimately document the essence and nature of the tangible as well as intangible aspects the mountain possesses.

We are currently beginning a planning and fund raising phase, working through the Foundation Center's new Arkville Extension at the Catskill Center, to secure grant funding from a variety of sources, both public and private, to cover costs of land acquisition and conservation, construction of the OMC in lower Lewis Hollow and to support ongoing programming including exhibits, lectures, interpretive tours and experiential hikes and outdoor education, all related to Overlook Mountain and its environs.

Goals and objectives:

- Purchase 82+ acres on Overlook Mountain (acquire Lewis Hollow Corp. property assets) and create a permanent conservation easement.
- List upper and lower Lewis Hollow property on National Register.
- Construct a self-guided interpretive trail on the upper 37+ acre parcel.
- Construct 3500sq/ft rustic post and beam interpretive center located on the lower 45 acre parcel. Establish a connector trail from OMC to the existing DEC Forest Preserve access point on upper Lewis Hollow Rd and a single tract foot path summit trail.
- Create and direct programming: Weekday and year round scheduled events including: Lectures, presentation and workshops on all aspects of Overlook Mountain, its' past, present and future.
- Construct multimedia exhibits on Native Americans, timber and tanning activity, bluestone quarrying and the Irish Village, early tourism and the Overlook Mountain House, ecology and wildlife, hunting and trapping, spirituality and the Tibetan Buddhists presence, and the mysteries of Overlook. Utilize local talent and resources to create **would class exhibits**.
- Conduct interpretive tours and hikes offering experiential outdoor education programming.
- Offer creative arts programs.

Facility: The 3500 Sq ft. Overlook Mountain Center (OMC). Rustic Post & Beam construction featuring sustainable heating, cooling and waste water systems, a meeting hall for 50, kitchen, exhibit room, classroom, gallery area, restrooms, office and storage. Grounds would consist of natural landscaping, a picnic area with small pavilion, and hiking paths and trails throughout the 45 acre property. Suitable parking for such a facility will be established in accordance with applicable standards.

Staff: 7 Full time employees, 6 part time and 25 + volunteers, including Board of Directors and officers.

- Executive Director
- Program Director
- Administrative assistant (grant prospect researcher)
- Office manager/receptionist

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- Trails and maintenance (grounds) manager
- Exhibit curator
- Interpretive guide - NYS DEC Licensed outdoor guide

Permanent Exhibits:

- Commission a visual, chronological timeline of Overlook
- Native American autumnal hunting camp/rock shelter exhibit
- Colonial industry exhibit: Timber, tanning and surveying exhibits with examples of the tools and implements used through history.
- Early American industry exhibit: Glass making, bluestone quarrying, the Irish Village and mountain agriculture. Examples of the tools and implements used through history.
- Early tourism exhibit: The Overlook Mountain House: Photos and artifacts of early tourism destinations on Overlook.
- Ecology and wildlife exhibit: Wildlife photos of Overlook animal residents; timber rattler, bear, porcupine, raccoon etc., and their habitats and status.
- Hunting and trapping exhibits. Examples of the tools and implements used through history.
- Spirituality and the Tibetan Buddhists: Exhibit explaining how and why Overlook was “chosen” as the spiritual center of Tibetan Buddhism in America, and, the story of the Church on the Mount.
- The mysteries of Overlook exhibit – The cairns and Great Cairns, The Overlook/Draco petroform, and the solstice and ley line alignments, associated with Overlook.

Lectures: Year round, Bi-weekly scheduled talks, presentations and workshops on nature, ecology, conservation, history, arts, culture, indigenous studies, symbolic and esoteric studies, meditation and related topic. Invited guest speakers, who are leaders in their studies, would be featured and regular symposiums would be scheduled.

Interpretive tours of the mountain:

DEC Licensed outdoor guides would conduct interpretive hiking tours of Overlook Mountain.

- California Quarry interpretive tour through the remnants of a mid 19th Century bluestone quarry featuring extraction sites, quarry roads, quarry pools, test sites and worked stone.
- Early Tourism interpretive tour to the locations visited by Overlook Mountain House guests. Summit hikes to the ruins of the Overlook Mountain House and nearby natural attractions.
- Mysteries of Overlook interpretive tour of Great Cairns, effigy walls, a star constellation petroform/geoglyph and dozens of small stone cairns constructions located on Overlook.
- Interpretive Arts Tour, Byrdcliff, Mt. Guardian hike, Artists Studios and Galleries on Overlook .

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Experiential outdoor and arts education program:

Individuals, school groups and corporate groups can all visit and participate in a variety of experiential outdoor and art education activities.

- Demonstrations and workshops in traditional bluestone quarrying methods including drilling and cutting, dressing bluestone. Try your hand at hand drilling into bluestone.
- Workshops in wildlife and nature photography, drawing, painting and ceramics. Learn to make color pigments from natural materials.
- Native American and indigenous lifestyles studies including healing, shamanism, vision quest and ceremonies.
- Hunting and gun safety courses for adults and youths.

Development Plan:

Phase I: Acquire Lewis Hollow Corp. property assets in Lewis Hollow and create a conservation easement and WLC interpretive trail with California Quarry access point kiosk.

Phase II: Establish a NYS DEC Catskill Forest Preserve parking area, interpretive kiosk and connector trail, to service the existing Lewis Hollow Forest Preserve access point on upper Lewis Hollow Rd. Reestablish a DEC single tract foot path to the summit of Overlook Mountain, from Lewis Hollow.

Phase III: Construct the OMC facility using part of the newly established parking area as a staging site for a 3500 sq. timber frame kit building, to be delivered and constructed.

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Marketing plan:

Join in creating a new Woodstock institution: The Overlook Mountain Center (OMC)

- Web site & SEO
- Social media materialization campaign
- Press Releases
- Media kits
- Alliances & Partnerships