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How a \$50K Grant Helps a County Get Climate Smart

December 20, 2016 • by Andrea Fox



Image: Pixabay

Orange County, New York, is taking steps to get climate smart by studying its watersheds and preparing infrastructure adaptation strategies.

Orange County, New York, received more than [\\$50,000 in funding from the Department of](#)

Environmental Conservation to continue with the state's [Climate Smart Communities Certification process](#).

The county's next step includes developing a county-wide Natural Resource Inventory (NRI), so Orange County is partnering with the Wallkill River Watershed Alliance, the Orange County Water Authority and the State University of New York at New Paltz. The partners will also conduct vulnerability assessments and develop climate adaptation strategies around the county watersheds, which are located west of the Hudson River.

Orange County was the first county in the state of New York to be certified as a Climate Smart Community, making the municipality eligible for the grant funding, [according to The Photo-News](#).

"We're going to do some research on what climate change is impacting those watershed areas and then come up with some proposed actions on how to address them," said David Church, county planning commissioner.

[NRIs](#) determine the locations and conditions of resources in order to establish a baseline for long-term management. For Orange County, the NRI will help them benchmark how flooding and dry periods affect related infrastructure, like drinking water supplies, as well as commercial and agricultural water resource users.

Orange County's NRI will help direct the county's water resource adaptation strategies, [according to the New York Climate Change Science Clearinghouse](#). Plans could include phased withdrawal of infrastructure from high-risk, flooding zones, implementation of warning systems for reduced water supplies and managed water withdrawals.

[#Hudson River](#) [#natural resources inventory](#) [#Orange County](#) [#watersheds](#)



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