

**Emerson Resort & Spa and Ulster County Soil & Water Announce
Grand Opening of Brookside Wander Protected Environment**
Public invited to attend Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting



Mt. Tremper, NY (September 20, 2024) – Emerson Resort & Spa and Catskill Streams Buffer Initiative are delighted to invite the public to attend the ribbon cutting of their completed joint project, “Brookside Wander,” a native planted stream buffer and educational garden, on Friday, October 4, 2024 at 2pm at the Emerson Resort & Spa.

Emerson Resort & Spa has partnered with the Catskill Streams Buffer Initiative (CSBI), a program administered through the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program and its partners, the Ulster County Soil & Water Conservation District and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County, with funding from the NYC Department of Environmental Protection to create Brookside Wander, a native planted streamside area established to demonstrate the importance of restoring native plants in riparian zones along waterways and to serve as a model for similar restorations throughout the Ashokan Watershed. Brookside Wander is an example of how restoration of degraded streamside areas into native plant communities can help to reduce flooding and erosion while supporting improved water quality and a diverse, healthy ecosystem.

“We are thrilled to celebrate the completion of this project with the public” said Posie Strenz, Creative Projects Coordinator at the Emerson. “We invite everyone to join us at Brookside Wander for the ribbon cutting and a brief presentation to learn about its purpose from Bobby Taylor, the Acting Stream Project Manager with Ulster County Soil & Water Conservation District, and Tim Koch, the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program Stream Education Leader with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County.

It has been a great joy to be part of this team effort with Bobby Taylor of Catskill Streams Buffer Initiative over the last several years on the creation and completion of this educational garden. I was tasked with creating an educational field trip and asked Leslie Zucker at Cornell Cooperative Extension at the Ashokan Watershed

Stream Management Program about creating an outdoor zone on Emerson property for hands-on learning about the control of invasive species and streamside management. She put us in touch with Bobby Taylor of Catskill Streams Buffer Initiative, who reviewed the property and found the perfect spot for this native riparian buffer. After all the project planning aspects were tackled and the main area was planned and planted in 2019, I thought we should convert additional adjacent space into an open classroom that leads into the garden paths. Mr. Taylor has done an outstanding job in all phases of this project, from coordinating with project partners, creating the planting plans and doing the actual planting, through choosing and planting appropriate trees among other aspects of the outdoor classroom, to developing with me the informational panels that now grace the space.”

With the installation of informational panels complete, Brookside Wander provides an educational oasis. The public is welcome to visit and learn about all aspects and benefits of having native plants to help sustain the flora and fauna of the region as well as the health of any watershed in which you may live. It is also an exemplary site on the Pollinator Pathway. Visit this link for details: <https://emersonresort.com/onsite-activities-area-attractions/>.

When asked to reflect on this project, Mr. Taylor remarked, “Transforming this formerly mowed meadow into a colorful living ecosystem that invites all visitors to experience and enjoy a native riparian buffer has been a joyful experience and was well worth the effort it took to create. It serves the CSBI program well as a demonstration of what this program can do for future streamside landowners who are interested in the program.”

Additionally, on Friday, November 1st at 6pm, Bobby Taylor will give a more detailed presentation about the importance of combatting invasive species and restoring riparian areas and their ecosystem benefits with strategically placed native plantings. This presentation will be free to the public as part of the Emerson Resort & Spa’s annual Community Week presentations and events.

Brookside Wander is at the southeast end of The Shops at Emerson near the Shops parking lot. **The address is 5340 NY-28, Mt Tremper, NY 12457.** For more information, visit [Brookside Wander Ribbon Cutting](#).

About Emerson Resort & Spa

Surrounded by the splendor of the Catskill Mountains, the Emerson Resort & Spa is a hidden treasure located a mere two hours from Manhattan. The resort brings the Catskills inside with stunning views, open spaces and an earthy color palate. Featuring spacious accommodations in the contemporary Inn and Adirondack-style Lodge, Emerson guests also enjoy a nature-inspired Spa, signature dining at The Catamount restaurant, The Shops at Emerson and the World’s Largest Kaleidoscope. Seasonal activities are plentiful and include cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hiking and biking. Urban pursuits are satisfied by exploring the nearby towns of Woodstock, Phoenicia and Saugerties. On property guided nature walks and nature-themed workshops reflect a deep connection and appreciation for the history and stewardship of the Catskills. Overlooking the Esopus Creek and one of the region’s most magnificent peaks, Mount Tremper, the Emerson provides a memorable yet affordable respite from the demands of the outside world. Ideal for family gatherings and intimate weddings. Dogs are welcome. For more information please visit <http://www.emersonresort.com> and for reservations call (845) 688-2828, option 0.

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