

YANTAPUTCHABERG

More than Jan Mabee's 1680 Woodlot

James M Schaefer



24,000 years ago

Continental Ice Sheet

7,500+ feet thick glacier

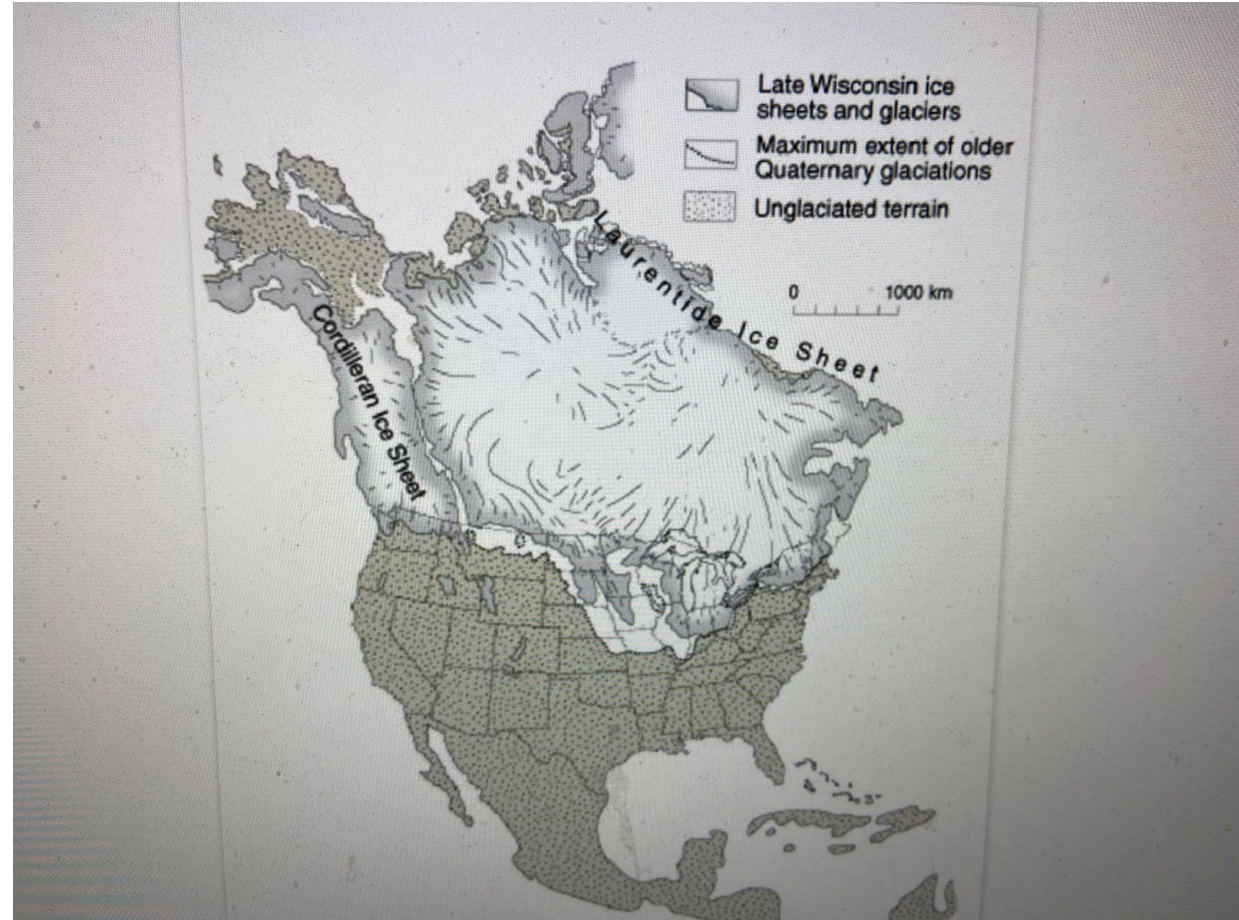
Advanced (melted)–Retreated (froze)

NW to SE movement

Ground Yantaputchaberg down to
~1,300 '

Meltwaters held in Lake Iroquois &
Lake Albany

Debris & Ice dam at Little Falls



15,000 years ago

Ice dam near Little Falls broke

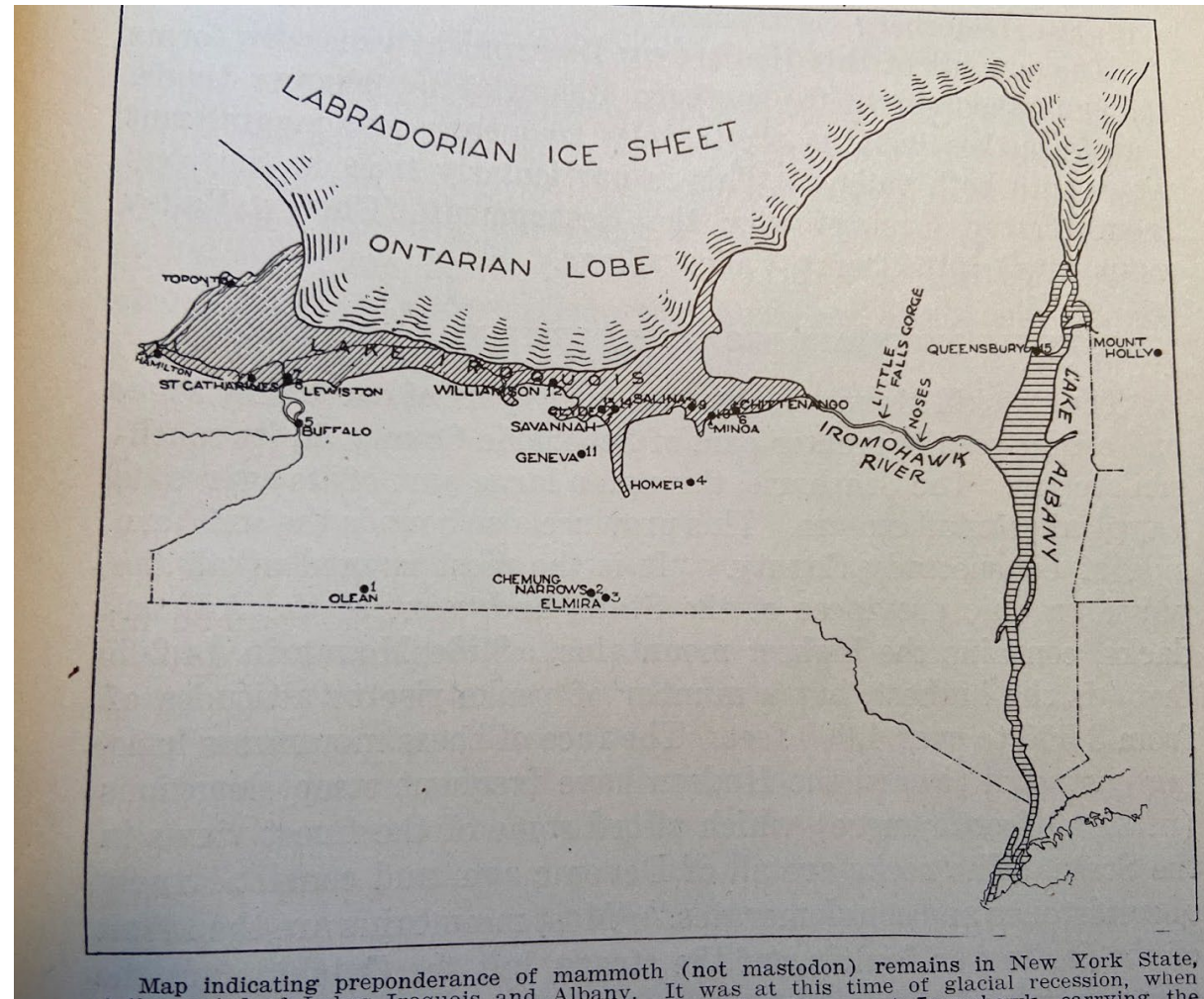
Sent the river raging eastward

50-100 ' deep

After 100 miles joined Lake Albany

Boulders, cobblestones, gravel, sand
deposited over Schenectady County

Below Yantaputchaberg
an Aquifer formed



**10,000 -1,500 years ago
Paleo-Indians Hunted & Foraged
Algonkian and Iroquoian People Migrated here**

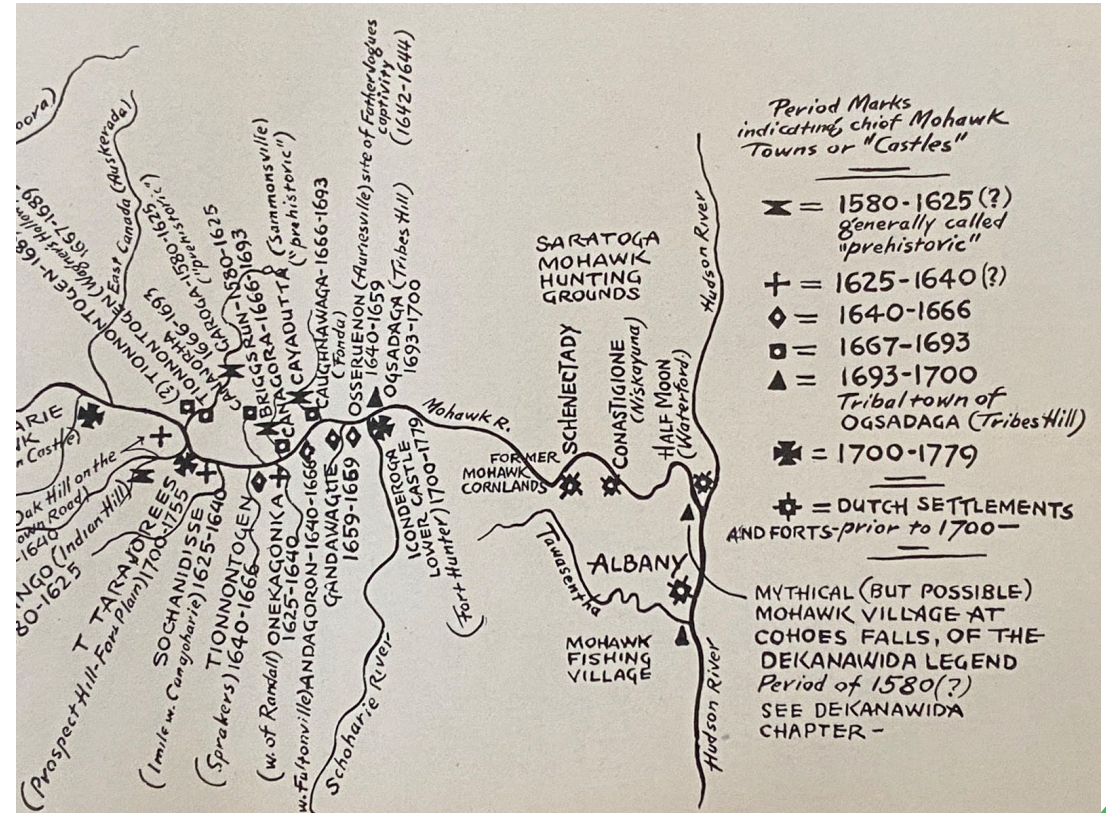


Yantaputchaberg

Easternmost of the Iroquois Lands

Strategic use of highest hill in valley

- In prehistoric times Yantaputchaberg was a familiar hunting area and likely observation post for indigenous people
- European missionaries and explorers visited Mohawk villages that lined the valley lowlands and ridges
- The Turnbull site, located on the northwest flank of Yantaputchaberg is an important stratified archeological site showing evidence of continuous occupation for at least 1,000 years



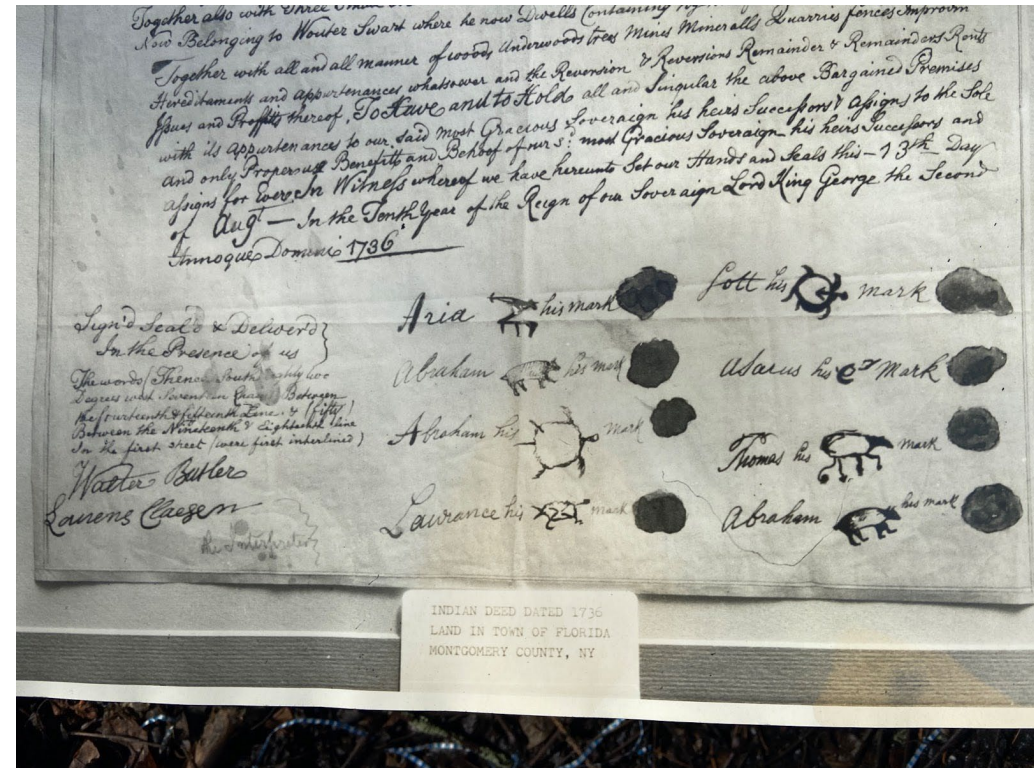
First European Settlers

Dutch Farmers

1640 Arendt Van Curler of the West Dutch India Company explored land west of Beverwyck (Albany) and saw a vast forested area through which meandered a beautiful river bound on either side by fertile flats framed by the rise of Yantaputchaberg on the south and Toureuna on the north

He was moved to write to his superiors of this place as “the most beautiful land the eye of man ever beheld.”

1661 Dutch settlers obtained land from the Mohawk (Iroquois) through an agreement with the Bear and Turtle clan representatives for the fertile flats bordering the Mohawk River east of Yantaputchaberg (called Schonowe)



Dutch Farm

1680

Jan Mabee

1680 West of “**Schonowe**” Jan Mabee and Anna Boorsboom bought the house and property from Marten Van Antwerpen on the edge of the river

For them, this was “**woestyne**,” a wilderness covered in deep brush and surrounded by forests filled with wild animals. Anna and Jan, along with eight of their children eked out a living.....

And for the next three centuries their descendants continued to develop and farm the land, including Jan’s “wood-lot” – Yanta putcha berg

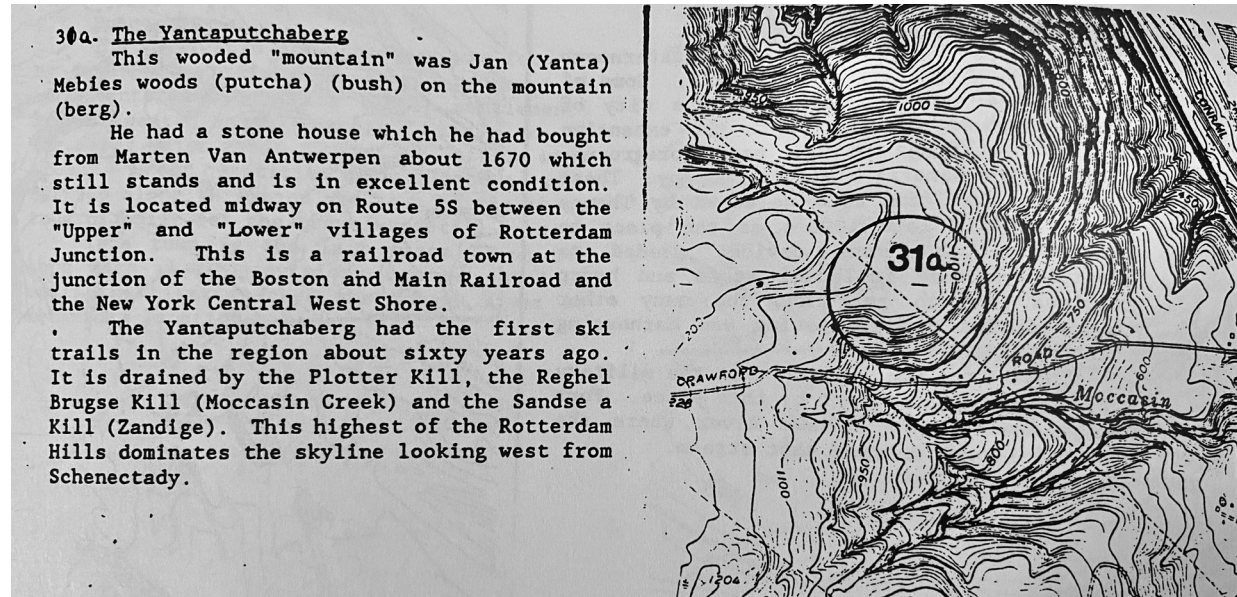


Yantaputchaberg

Long Path

1931

- The Long Path established by Vincent and Paul Schaefer celebrating the eastern New York Highlands – popular hiking route
- New York City- Catskills to Whiteface Mountain in the northern Adirondacks 500+ miles
- Yantaputchaberg is #31 of the 84 Landmarks selected as day hikes in the northern section of the Long Path 2023 (relocated by owner request)



YANTAPUTCHABERG

THE START OF NEW YORK'S ALPINE SKIING and its Multi-Million Dollar Ski Industry



1930 -1950

Yantaputchaberg

The Highest of the Rotterdam Hills

- A small group of 20 year-olds led by Vince Schaefer, Bill Gluesing and friends found great skiing on Yantaputchaberg
- 1930 arranged an annual lease of the land from owners Schumacher, Turnbull, Rapehaus, Holton and Pittney of Rotterdam Junction ---- Cost \$16.25/yr
- Cleared underbrush & small trees to make a network of downhill ski trails
- They designed trails with all skill levels in mind – the centerpiece was the Quarry Trail recognized as the earliest downhill run in New York State
- “Yantapooch” attracted local skiers and challenged ski clubs from afar (North Creek, Boston)
 - easy access by car, bus or trolley a few miles west of Schenectady

Alpine Trails on "Yantapooch"

QUARRY TRAIL - EXPERT & RACING

CABIN TRAIL - NOVICE

"Z" TRAIL - INTERMEDIATE

MEADOW TRAIL - NOVICE

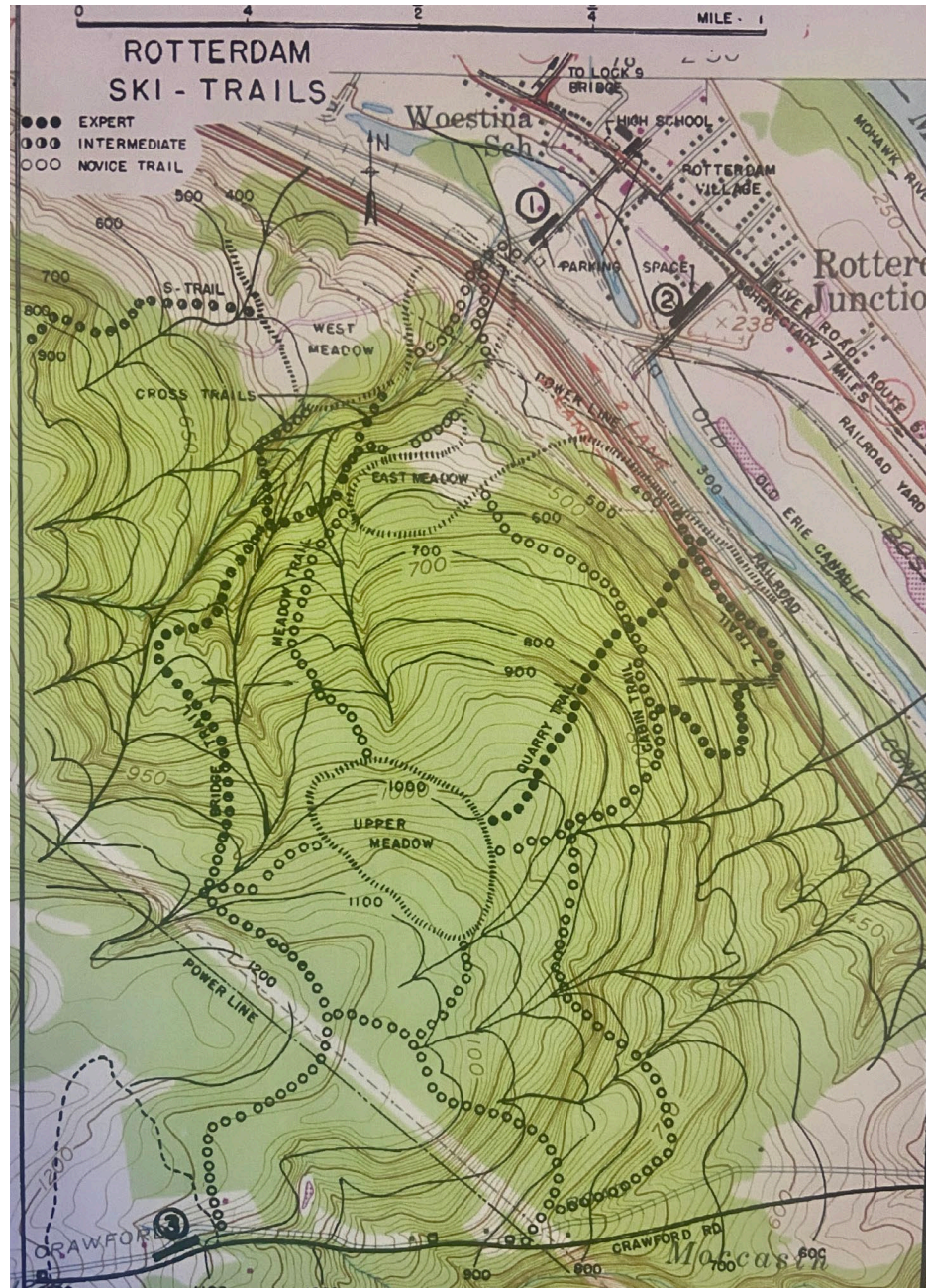
RIDGE TRAIL - INTERMEDIATE

"S" TRAIL - INTERMEDIATE

CROSS TRAILS - NOVICE

Parking 1 & 2 Start of Climbing

Parking 3 on Crawford Rd - contour &
traverse skiing - Novice Trails to trailhead



No Surface Lift Wax & Climb Up Bill Gluesing (Herringbone method)



QUARRY TRAIL

**Designed by Otto Schneibs
600' long ~ 30+ degree slope**

The Quarry Trail (1932) became a hot spot for local and regional downhill races

"THE STEEPEST IN THE EAST"

Schenectady's racing enthusiasts, included Guy Suits, Larry Shaw, Robert Serrell, Klaus Sixtus, Olympian Dot Hoyt; Dartmouth's Dick Durrance; North Creek's Dan O'Keeffe

Hosted 1936 High School Invitational



Quarry Trail

E.H. Hurl

ALL SORTS OF FUN

Vince Schaefer - into the meadow



Stem Christie (Arlberg)



DIFFICULT AND EASY EXPERT AND NOVICE



Turns on the Open Slopes

GE's skiing engineers added metal edges to skis



The Learning Curve

Back to the Practice Slopes.....



Hundreds Sign Petitions for Snow Trains '32-'33



March 4th 1934

Schenectady ski enthusiasts had to cancel the first Snow Train in 1932-1933 due to lack of snow!

All the more reason for excitement surrounding the arrival of adequate snow at North Creek to run the FIRST SNOW TRAIN

FINALLY ON THE WAY!!!





North Creek Local Drivers Take Skiers to Trailhead on Pete Gay/Gore 'Ride Up - Slide Down' (25 cents/ride)



Alpine Skiing Starts at Yantaputchaberg Blossoms in North Creek

- "Schenectady Force" with experience in trail design joined North Creek ski enthusiasts – helped build 4-5 mile-long trails on Gore with a Ski Bowl near town for Snow Train skiers
- Snow Trains from Schenectady and NYC with thousands of ski enthusiasts (1934-1939)
- Nurse Lois Perret Schaefer headed up a safety patrol – 1st in the country (1933)
- Carl Schaefer built a rope tow in North Creek – 1st in the state (1935)
- Goldstock and Cunningham families open stores for ski equipment in both towns (1934)
- Gore Mountain becomes a ski resort (1964) with Rope Tow - T-Bar – Chair lifts -- Gondola
- Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA) – (1981) – Gore – Whiteface – Bellayre

? Yantaputchaberg in the 21st Century ?

Rotterdam Hills

a rural haven with spectacular vistas

202X

“Yantaputchaberg” Solar Photovoltaic

A multi-year lease by owner to an energy company planned for a 20 megawatt facility on the mountain top

Design requires removing vast acres of forests, then covering steep slopes of Yantaputchaberg with tons of gravel to support a hundred plus solar panels

Promoted as a “passive, quite and low-impact use of the land, with minimal visual disturbance regarding neighbors, and surrounding roadways.”



Hey -- the base of Yantaputchaberg is our **AQUIFER**

Did I hear it right? This solar farm plans to
clearcut 100+ acres of forest? (~150
trees/acre)

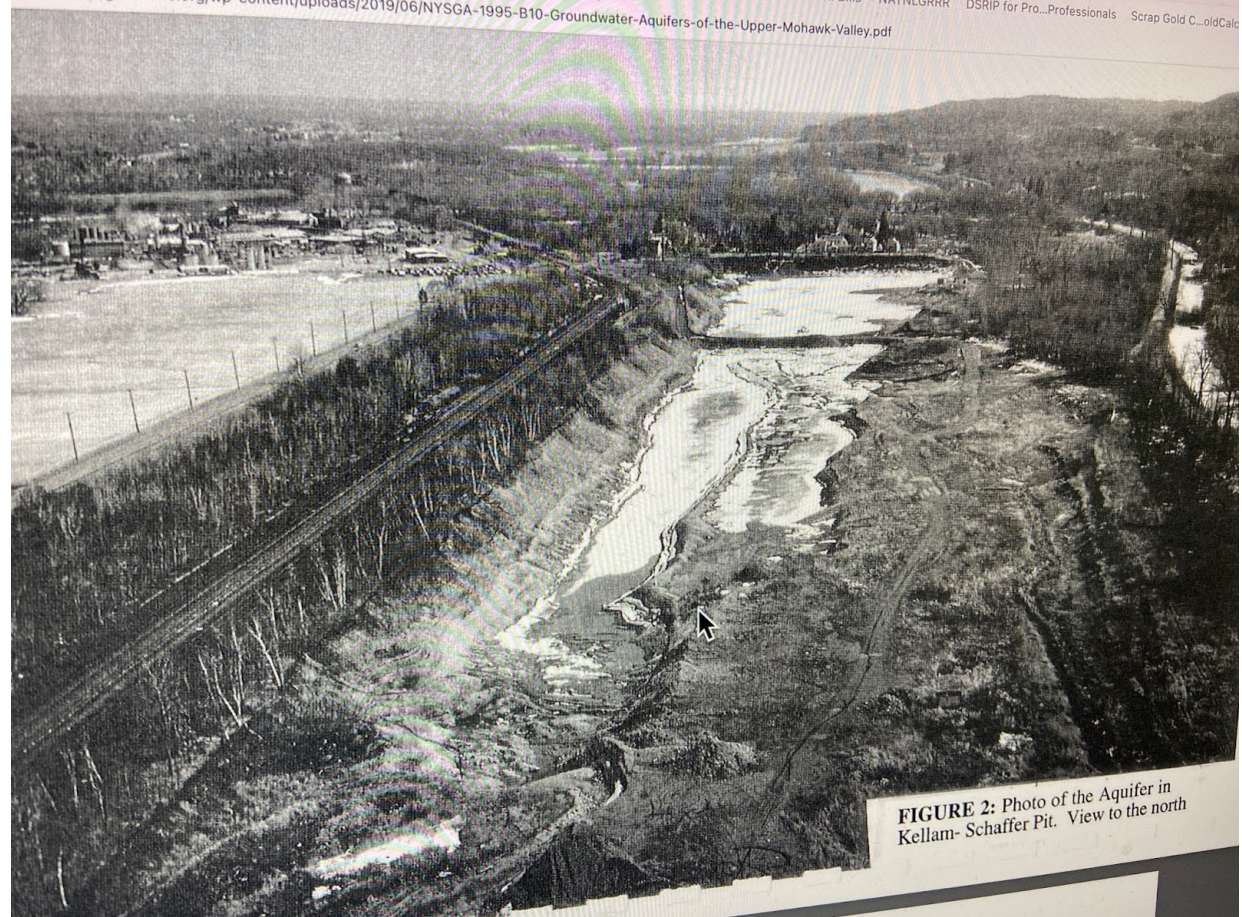
Each tree

- produces 250 liters of oxygen
- absorbs 75 grams of CO₂
- transpires 100 gallons of water

Clearcutting is a direct threat to the aquifer

*“They took all the trees -- put them in a
tree museum, And charged the people a
dollar and a half just to see ‘em”....*

Joni Mitchell 1970



DISREGARDS

Comprehensive Plan for Western Rotterdam*



*“III-19 RAN10. Conserve the rural character of western Rotterdam and rural hamlets, including Rotterdam Junction and Pattersonville” By RURAL we expect reasonable.....

open space -- getting fences & glass panels

scenic areas -- ending up caged/limited

natural areas -- getting clear cut & slashed

intact ecosystems -- getting disturbed

“Conserving the rural character” – really?

featuring rich history -- just ignored

THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES – TOO LATE?

Yantaputchaberg

? A National and State Historic Site ?

“Where Alpine Skiing started in New York”

- Under the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) we can apply for designation of **Yantaputchaberg as the place where New York's Alpine Skiing began in the 1930s**. Tax benefits follow from participation in the program.
- In 1930 the Yantaputchaberg skiing center **led directly in 1934 to the Snow Trains** from Schenectady to North Creek that over the following 5 years transported thousands of skiers to enjoy the “Ride Up and Slide Down” program centered on Gore and Pete Gay Mountains, **In 1935 a rope tow was installed** at the village Ski Bowl to complement the system of vehicle transportation to the trailhead of the 4+ mile long network of trails. **1964 Gore Mountain** and **1981 ORDA** became established

Western Rotterdam & Yantaputchaberg ? Protected Open Space -- Land Conservation ?

- Under Title 5 of the Environmental Bond Act, a total of \$650 million is available for open space land conservation and recreation projects.
- At a minimum, \$300 million is allocated for open space land conservation.
- The [NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation](#) is authorized to distribute this funding to **municipalities** for the **purchase of real property or conservation easements on real property**.

Do we have the will to start the process? Is it too late?

YANTAPUTCHABERG

Preserve Jan Mabee's 1680 Woodlot

2080



Reminds Me of a Song

**“Don’t it always seem to go, that you
don’t know what you’ve got till it’s
gone. They Pave Paradise and Put Up
a Parking Lot” Joni Mitchell 1970**