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Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. (ECOS); Records

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M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives

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Summary Information

Repository:	M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives
Title:	The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. (ECOS) Records
ID:	apap180
Date [inclusive]:	1962-2004
Physical Description:	3.01 cubic ft.
Physical Location:	The materials are located on site in the department.
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. also known as ECOS, is a regional environmental organization founded in Schenectady, New York in October 1971 by members of the Junior League of Schenectady, Inc. and supported since 1974 by membership contributions, donations, and volunteers.

Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Identification of specific item, series, box, folder, Environmental Clearinghouse, INC. (ECOS) Records, 1962-2004. M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York (hereafter referred to as the ECOS Records).

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Biographical History

The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. also known as ECOS, is a regional environmental organization founded in Schenectady, New York in October 1971 by members of the Junior League of Schenectady, Inc. and supported since 1974 by membership contributions, donations, and volunteers. ECOS mission has been to provide environmental information and education opportunities that enhance the appreciation of the natural world, to organize a community of citizens who are aware and knowledgeable about environmental issues, and to advocate for informed action so as to preserve the areas natural resources. From its inception, ECOS has concentrated its efforts on Schenectady County while cooperating closely

with other environmental groups inside and outside New York State such as the Environmental Clearing House of Buffalo on which the organization seems to have been modeled.

Based upon the records in this collection, an environmental clearinghouse was first thought of by members of the Junior League of Schenectady when they were presenting an Environmental Forum a one-day seminar on environmental concerns. The group, spearheaded by Mrs. Richard Lange, then presented a proposal to the Community Research Committee of the Junior League. The latter accepted the proposal by the membership in October of 1971. An Advisory Committee was then formed made up of eight league members, a representative from American Association of University Women (AAUW), one from League of University Women (LUW), a lawyer, a local assemblyperson, and three people from General Electric. The committee's first meeting was held on November 1, 1971.

Helped by a Junior League grant in the amount of \$15,700 to be dispersed over a three-year period, the committee began the search for an office, office equipment, hired a part-time administrator, initiated a monthly newsletter, and recruited volunteers. The First Reformed Church offered a room in the Stockade section of Schenectady for which the fledgling ECOS paid custodial services and utilities. A part-time director was hired to work four hours each weekday for nine months of the year. The committee then submitted the name of the organization (ECOS Environmental Clearinghouse of Schenectady) to the New York State Attorney General accompanied by a request to be incorporated under state laws. Once the latter was achieved, the first Board of Directors was nominated. At a joint meeting on June 2, 1972, the Advisory Committee officially transferred the reins of power to the newly elected Board of Directors. ECOS was slated to become financially independent after three years and it had been decided that there would be an evaluation at that time to determine its future. This evaluation, in fact, was made earlier than anticipated.

At the October 1973 meeting, a report suggested that there was a need to consider some facts and ask some questions about the future of ECOS. ECOS director had resigned, the future funding on which the organization had counted had not proved viable and there was only a limited number of volunteers, as many of those available had already been recruited by existing environmental groups. ECOS had, however, already proven what it has intended to prove: a coordinating agency for environmental information and organizations could be extremely important in informing and educating the public on environmental concerns. The question then arose as to whether ECOS should be dissolved as a corporation and the funds returned to the Junior League. The Board, however, decided to continue the operation and it grew to 200 members in 1976 and to 400 members in 1982, its tenth anniversary. In addition to the Board of Directors, an Executive Committee was created as well as several activities and programs committees, including the Riverfront Committee in 1974.

ECOS has been active in a variety of activities including organizing environmental action programs such as recycling, dealing with toxic household waste, cleaning up sections of rivers, and advocating for restructuring programs such as creating walkways and cycling paths along naturally occurring environmental features. ECOS has also continuously organized courses, audiovisual presentations, workshops, and lectures by specialists in the field of environmentalism for access to the general public. The organization has provided environmentally-friendly activities to the general public such as nature walks, museum visits, and skiing trips. ECOS maintains a library of resources for those who are interested in environmental issues and careers. ECOS has also cooperated with the Schenectady County Environmental Advisory Council (SCEA) and eventually became their education subcommittee.

Major activities and programs for ECOS have included: improving recycling; reporting environmental infractions; publishing a newsletter which has provided a summary of environmental programs, progress, and problems in the Capital Region; creating a calendar which has been much valued for its listings of outdoor activities and indoor meetings of local environmental groups; supplying information concerning local and state environmental legislation and energy conservation; the Green-up Spruce-up phase of the Schenectady Bicentennial in 1975-1976; preparing an audiovisual presentation on Schenectadys environment for use by clubs and school classes; publication of the book Environmental Trip Tips; sponsoring an environmental lecture series at the Schenectady Museum; support of the Riverfront Committee in its long-term goal of establishing a hike-bike trail along the Mohawk river across the county; and dump and river clean-up operations.

The Environmental Clearinghouse of Schenectady, now known as the Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc., but also known under the acronym ECOS, as of 2006, continues to be an ever-evolving ever-industrious organization. It is currently located in the Niskayuna Community Center. The staff and volunteers of ECOS still believe that educational outreach is the best way of building an informed community that will lead to an appreciation of the interdependence of natural and human systems, a recognition of the inherent value of natural ecosystems, as well as an understanding of the importance of community action to create ecological sustainability.

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Scope and Contents

This collection documents the organization, evolution, thinking, activities and programs of the Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. over a period of more than three decades. The earliest items date from 1971, but continuous records begin in 1972 and run up to 2004, with the largest portion of the records dating from the 1970s and 1980s. Preservation concerns in this collection include water damage to some of the records, documents that are stuck together and newspaper clippings, which are either glued or taped onto paper backing.

Topics that are documented in the collection include: advocating for riverside walkways and bikeways, environmentally-friendly art, biking, Camp Mohawk, canals, courses and lectures, river cruises, Earth Day/Week, Earth Month, ECOS exhibits, nature explorations, Grassroots Environmental Fair 1976, Gulf Oil Conservation Awards, hiking, household hazardous waste, ECOS library and resources, museum trips, picnics in the park, recycling, river clean-up, the Riverfront Committee, the Organization for Action for the Riverfront (O.A.R.), whose educational and informational services were coordinated by ECOS (both groups shared members and functioned as subcommittees of the Schenectady County Advisory Council), skiing, the 1990 ECOS Symposium, Thacher State Park trips, and nature walks.

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Arrangement of the Collection

The collection is organized into the following series: Series 1- Administrative Records 1971-1997, Series 2- Activities and Programs 1971-1997, Series 3- ECOS Publications 1971-2004, Series 4- Non-ECOS Publications 1971-1989.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives

Revision Description

EAD file created Encoded in EAD by Conversion and encoding by ArchProteus 2014 2014

Processing Information

Processed in 2006 by Tim Bridgman and Kayla Misner.

Access

Access to these records is unrestricted.

Copyright

The researcher assumes full responsibility for conforming with the laws of copyright. Whenever possible, the M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives will provide information about copyright owners and other restrictions, but the legal determination ultimately rests with the researcher. Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be discussed with the Head of Special Collections and Archives.

Acquisition Information

All items in this manuscript group were donated to the University Libraries, M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, by Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. in August 2004.

Access

Access to this record group is unrestricted.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Schenectady, New York
- Conservation and the Environment
- Albany, New York
- Social Activists and Public Advocates
- New York (State)
- Reports
- Proposals
- Summaries
- Fliers
- Environmental Clearinghouse of Schenectady

Collection Inventory

Administrative Records, 1971-2000

Physical Description: 1.17 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically.

Scope and Contents

This series consists of materials relating directly to the operations of the Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. There is one folder of correspondence covering 1971, but most of the series dates from 1972-1997. The records of the Board of Directors, Executive Committees and activities and programs committees are to be found here, as are some of their lists of participating members. Other items found in the series include financial reports, by-laws, fundraising materials, general correspondence, membership lists and materials, annual reports, program committee reports, program coordinator reports, director's reports, projects reports, annual meetings material, and records on all-member meetings.

Title/Description	Instances	
Administrative Committees, 1992-1993	Box 1	Folder 1
All Member Meetings, 1980-1991	Box 1	Folder 2

Annual Meetings, 1978-1992	Box 1	Folder 3
Annual Reports, 1974-1997	Box 1	Folder 4
Board Committee, 1982-1996	Box 1	Folder 5
By-laws, 1972-1996	Box 1	Folder 6
Correspondence, 1971-1972	Box 1	Folder 7
Correspondence, 1973-1974	Box 1	Folder 8
Correspondence, 1975-1976	Box 1	Folder 9
Correspondence, 1977-1978	Box 1	Folder 10
Correspondence, 1979-1980	Box 1	Folder 11
Correspondence, 1981-1982	Box 1	Folder 12
Correspondence, 1983-1984	Box 1	Folder 13
Correspondence, 1985-1986	Box 1	Folder 14
Correspondence, 1987	Box 1	Folder 15
Correspondence, 1993-1997	Box 1	Folder 16
Fund Drives, 1980-1993	Box 1	Folder 17
Long-Range Planning Committee, 1995	Box 1	Folder 18
Membership, 1973-1999	Box 1	Folder 19
Membership, 1973-1999	Box 1	Folder 20
Membership, 1973-1999	Box 1	Folder 21
Membership, 1973-1999	Box 1	Folder 22
Membership, 1973-1999	Box 1	Folder 23
Board of Directors, 1972-1973	Box 1	Folder 24
Board of Directors Minutes, 1974-1975	Box 1	Folder 25
Board of Director Minutes, 1975-1977	Box 1	Folder 26
Board of Directors Minutes, 1978-1980	Box 1	Folder 27
Board of Directors Minutes, 1981-1983	Box 1	Folder 28
Board of Directors Minutes, 1984	Box 1	Folder 29
Board of Directors Minutes, 1985	Box 1	Folder 30
Board of Directors Minutes, 1986	Box 1	Folder 31
Board of Directors Minutes, 1987	Box 1	Folder 32
Board of Directors Minutes, 1988	Box 1	Folder 33
Board of Directors Minutes, 1989	Box 1	Folder 34

Board of Directors Minutes, 1990	Box 1	Folder 35
Board of Directors Minutes, 1991	Box 1	Folder 36
Board of Directors Minutes, 1992	Box 1	Folder 37
Board of Directors Minutes, 1993	Box 1	Folder 38
Board of Directors Minutes, 1994	Box 1	Folder 39
Board of Directors Minutes, 1995	Box 1	Folder 40
Board of Directors Minutes, 1996	Box 1	Folder 41
Board of Directors Minutes, 1997	Box 1	Folder 42
Board of Directors Minutes, 1998	Box 2	Folder 1
Directors Reports, 1993-1998	Box 2	Folder 2
Executive Committee Minutes, 1978-1990	Box 2	Folder 3
Financial Reports, 1984-1998	Box 2	Folder 4
Nominating Committee, 1971-1994	Box 2	Folder 5
Personnel Committee, 1986-1990	Box 2	Folder 6
Program Committee, 1972-2000	Box 2	Folder 7
Program Coordinator Reports, 1984-1987	Box 2	Folder 8
Project Reports, 1972-1973	Box 2	Folder 9
Slide Show Committee, 1979-1994	Box 2	Folder 10

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Activities and Programs, 1962-2001

Physical Description: 1 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically

Scope and Contents

This series consists of materials relating directly to the activities and programs of the Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. Topics of interest include art, biking, Camp Mohawk, canals, river cruises, Earth Day/Week activities, Earth Month activities, ECOS exhibits, suggestions for explorations of natures by families, Grass Roots Environmental Fair 1976, Gulf Oil Conservation Award, household hazardous waste management, ECOS library and resources, museum trips, picnics in the park series, recycling, Riverfront Committee, Organization for Action for Riverfront (O.A.R.), 1990 ECOS Symposium, Thacher State Park trips, and nature walks.

Title/Description	Instances	
Art, 1994	Box 1	Folder 1

Biking, 1981-1986	Box 1	Folder 2
Camp Mohawk, 1998-1999	Box 1	Folder 3
Canals, Undated	Box 1	Folder 4
Courses, 1973-1987	Box 1	Folder 5
Courses, 1975-1993	Box 1	Folder 6
Courses, 1975-1993	Box 1	Folder 7
Courses, 1975-1993	Box 1	Folder 8
Courses, 1991-1999	Box 1	Folder 9
Cruises, 1982-1985	Box 1	Folder 10
Cruises, 1982-1985	Box 1	Folder 11
Earth Day/Week, 1972-1975	Box 1	Folder 12
Earth Day/Week, 1980-1992	Box 1	Folder 13
Earth Month, 1993-2000	Box 1	Folder 14
ECOS History, 1970-1983	Box 2	Folder 1
ECOS History, 1971-1994	Box 2	Folder 2
ECOS Library and Resources, 1992	Box 2	Folder 3
Environment, 1992-2001	Box 2	Folder 4
Exhibits, Undated	Box 2	Folder 5
Family Nature Explorations, Undated	Box 2	Folder 6
Grassroots Environment Fair, 1976	Box 2	Folder 7
Gulf Oil Conservation Award, 1982-1983	Box 2	Folder 8
Household Hazardous Waste, 1997	Box 2	Folder 9
Museums, Undated	Box 2	Folder 10
Picnics in the Park Series, 1990-1993	Box 2	Folder 11
Press Releases, 1972-1981	Box 2	Folder 12
Press Releases, 1983-1984	Box 2	Folder 13
Press Releases, 1984-1985	Box 2	Folder 14
Press Releases, 1985-1986	Box 2	Folder 15
Press Releases, 1987	Box 2	Folder 16
Press Releases, 1988-1990	Box 2	Folder 17
Programs, 1985-1998	Box 2	Folder 18
Programs, 1985-1998	Box 2	Folder 19

Recycling, Undated	Box 2	Folder 20
Riverfront Committee, 1974-1978	Box 2	Folder 21
Organization for Action for Riverfront, 1962-1984	Flat-File 1	Folder 1
Organization for Action for Riverfront, 1962-1985	Box 2	Folder 22
Organization for Action for Riverfront, 1962-1985	Box 3	Folder 1
Organization for Action for Riverfront, 1962-1985	Box 3	Folder 2
Skiing, 1977-1982	Box 3	Folder 3
Skiing, 1983-1991	Box 3	Folder 4
Skiing, 1984-2000	Box 3	Folder 5
Symposium, 1990	Box 3	Folder 6
Tenth Anniversary, 1983	Box 3	Folder 7
Thatcher State Park Trips, 1991-1992	Box 4	Folder 1
Twentieth Anniversary, 1991	Box 4	Folder 2
Walks, 1976-1982	Box 4	Folder 3
Walks, 1983-1985	Box 4	Folder 4
Walks, 1986-1989	Box 4	Folder 5
Walks, 1990-1995	Box 4	Folder 6
Walks, 1995-2000	Box 4	Folder 7

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ECOS Publications, 1972-2004

Physical Description: .67 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged Alphabetically

Scope and Contents

This series includes newsletters and books published by the Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. Newsletters include ECOS News, the official newsletter of the Environmental Clearinghouse of Schenectady, (1972-2004, the majority of the issues date from 1971-1997). Books published by the Environmental Clearinghouse of Schenectady include Environmental Trip Tips and Natural Areas of Albany County. The former is a book for newcomers or long-time residents who enjoy planning outings to interesting natural places. It can be used to discover appealing sites in which to observe natural beauty, enjoy outdoor activities and learn about the environment. It includes places open to the public in a seven-county area. The latter features nearly seventy natural areas open to the public in Albany County. The descriptions include points of interest and contact information.

Title/Description

Instances

ECOS News, 19721973	Box 1	Folder 1
ECOS News, 1974	Box 1	Folder 2
ECOS News, 1975	Box 1	Folder 3
ECOS News, 1976	Box 1	Folder 4
ECOS News, 1977	Box 1	Folder 5
ECOS News, 1978	Box 1	Folder 6
ECOS News, 1979	Box 1	Folder 7
ECOS News, 1980	Box 1	Folder 8
ECOS News, 1981	Box 1	Folder 9
ECOS News, 1982	Box 1	Folder 10
ECOS News, 1983	Box 1	Folder 11
ECOS News, 1984	Box 1	Folder 12
ECOS News, 1985	Box 1	Folder 13
ECOS News, 1986	Box 1	Folder 14
ECOS News, 1987	Box 1	Folder 15
ECOS News, 1988	Box 1	Folder 16
ECOS News, 1989	Box 1	Folder 17
ECOS News, 1990	Box 1	Folder 18
ECOS News, 1991	Box 1	Folder 19
ECOS News, 1992	Box 1	Folder 20
ECOS News, 1993	Box 1	Folder 21
ECOS News, 1994	Box 2	Folder 1
ECOS News, 1995	Box 2	Folder 2
ECOS News, 1996	Box 2	Folder 3
ECOS News, 1997	Box 2	Folder 4
ECOS News, 1998	Box 2	Folder 5
ECOS News, 199920022004	Box 3	Folder 1
Trip Tips, 19761982	Box 3	Folder 2
Natural Areas of Albany County, 1981-1994	Box 3	Folder 3
Publications Reports, 1983-1985	Box 3	Folder 4

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Non-ECOS Publications, 1971-1989

Physical Description: 0.17 cubic ft.

Arrangement

Arranged Alphabetically

Scope and Contents

This series includes publications by organizations other than the Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc. Newsletters include Echo Issues published by the Environmental Clearing House Organization, Buffalo Museum of Science, Room 216, and issues of New York State Environment published by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The bulk of the latter concerns 1979-1984 with one part of an issue dating from 1976 and one whole issue dating from 1989.

Title/Description	Instances	
ECHO Issues, 1971	Box 1	Folder 1
New York State Environment, 1976-1979	Box 1	Folder 2
New York State Environment, 1980	Box 1	Folder 3
New York State Environment, 1981	Box 1	Folder 4
New York State Environment, 1982	Box 1	Folder 5
New York State Environment, 1983	Box 1	Folder 6
New York State Environment, 1984-1989	Box 1	Folder 7

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