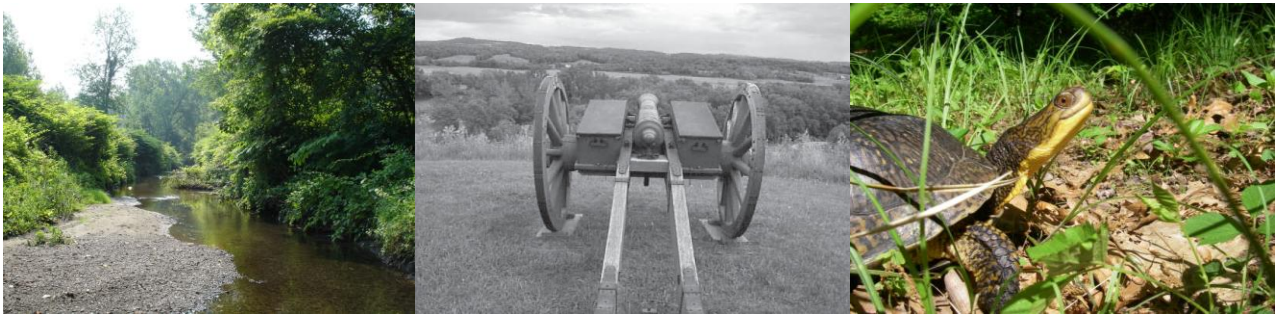


# Designating Environmental and Historical Zones

## Designation of Critical Environmental Areas

Local municipalities can protect areas of exceptional character by designating them as Critical Environmental Areas (CEA's). A municipality can define exceptional character very broadly and the designation can be used to protect a wide variety of desirable environmental, historical, scenic and other land features. The following partial list gives the reader an idea of the flexibility municipalities have when classifying Critical Environmental Areas:

- Geological, hydrological or ecological sensitive areas,
- Historic, archeological, social, cultural or recreationally valuable areas,
- Agriculturally important areas,
- Natural or esthetically attractive settings, and
- Other reasons to protect sensitive areas with regard to development.



A proposed project in or an action affecting a Critical Environmental Area automatically triggers a SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) Type I action. This is significant because the Type I action is a more comprehensive review of the environmental impacts. A Type I review requires a municipality to examine a project or proposal's environmental impacts, and methods of mitigation prior to funding or approving an action. Further, actions are inclusive of:

- 1) projects or physical activities,
- 2) agency planning or policy making activities, and
- 3) adoption of agency rules, regulations and procedures that may affect the environment.

