

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Anna Farneski; afarnesk@ramapo.edu / (201) 684.6844

February 14, 2012

**“Ecological Stewardship: Empowering Communities to Protect the Commons,” Featuring Guest Speaker Dr. Michael W. Klemens, to be Presented at Ramapo College**

(MAHWAH, NJ) – Ramapo College presents “Ecological Stewardship: Empowering Communities to Protect the Commons” as part of the Creating a Sustainable World: Voice of Key Practitioners lecture series offered by the College’s Masters of Arts in Sustainability Studies program. The event will take place on February 23 from 6-7:30 p.m. in the H-Wing Auditorium.

The presentation will feature guest speaker and Consulting Conservation Biologist Michael W. Klemens who will discuss how mutual learning between community and scientists empowers informed communities to become good ecological stewards by integrating local knowledge and expert investigation. Klemens argues that by informing and motivating community members to become active stewards, local environments experience improved ecological resilience required for adapting to altered conditions due to climate change and development activity. To improve such resilience, measures must be taken to create a lighter and more intelligent ecological footprint.

Klemens earned a doctorate in conservation biology and ecology at the University of Kent U.K. He spent 20 years researching herpetology in the U.S. and Africa and discovered that the methods used in Africa to promote conservation could be applied in the U.S. to close the gap between land use planning and conservation science.

Klemens also founded the Metropolitan Conservation Alliance, which undertook collaborative research resulting in planning tools for local and regional application based upon biological data and conservation concepts. He has also worked as Senior Conservationist with the Wildlife Conservation Society and the American Museum of Natural History. In addition, he chaired a local planning commission for more than a decade. He is also the author of books including the co-edited “Nature in Fragments: The Legacy of Sprawl” from Columbia University Press.

The event is free and open to the public. However, off-campus attendees will require a parking permit at the security booth at the north entrance. To make an advance request for a parking pass or for more information, please contact Professor Edelstein via email at [medelste@ramapo.edu](mailto:medelste@ramapo.edu).

###

Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as sixth in the Best Regional Universities North category, Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is, in part, due to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of approximately 6,008 students and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains on the New

Jersey/New York border.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include nursing and social work. In addition, Ramapo College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers six graduate programs as well as articulated programs with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, New York Chiropractic College, New York University College of Dentistry, SUNY State College of Optometry and New York College of Podiatric Medicine.