

# Navigator's Newsletter

A Quarterly Report

January-September 2006

## Hudson River Navigator's Newsletter

A focus on Energy and Clean Air

Improving Air Regional Air Quality and Exploring Bio-Fuel Alternatives



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The annual Hudson River Navigator's Conference held on March 29, 2006, focused on the health, environmental and regulatory benefits associated with local policy actions to require the use of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel for on and off road vehicles and cleaner fuel oils for residential heating and smart energy alternatives. Over 80 attendees followed a full-day agenda at the Land Use Law Center at Pace University in White Plains, New York. The goal was to educate people about the issues, have them consider alternatives, and encourage regional leadership to bring to the Hudson River Valley ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel along with other alternate energy sources.

The bio-fuels working group through the Lower-Hudson-Long Island Resource Conservation and Development Council partnered in the conference. The session highlighted the benefits and variety of bio-energy resource alternatives and the contributions made through agricultural activities as a source for environmentally sustainable and renewable energy. The cities of Yonkers and White Plains convened work sessions, and opportunities are being explored with local community partners to further discuss and educate the Hudson River Valley.

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## Patriot's Gardens

New York American Patriot Gardens, a partnership with US Forest Service - Living Memorials Program, the Lower Hudson - Long Island Resource Conservation and Development Council, and the New York State Office of Governor George E. Pataki, has created a photo essay of the existing Patriot Gardens. The Hudson River Navigator provided the narrative and edited the final book, volume one of a two-part series.

As we mark the fifth anniversary of September 11, we recognize that the New York American Patriot Gardens continue to bring communities together through nature to promote awareness and aid in contemplative healing processes.

A new garden is to be dedicated in the Village of Cold Spring on Veterans Day, November 11, 2006, with the Governor and Congresswoman Sue Kelly invited to the dedication by

Mayor Anthony Phillips. Many other gardens have scheduled memorial services as we remember the tragic events of one of the darkest days in America's history.



## Hudson Navigator a Participant at River Rally: Promoting Green Energy and Cooperative Conservation

In order to promote cooperative efforts for achieving natural resource goals, the River Navigator for the Hudson was joined by other American Heritage Rivers at the River Rally on May 5-9 in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire. The Cuyahoga River, Connecticut River, St. Johns River, Blackstone-Woonasquatucket River, and AHRI director participated as the AHRI delegation. An American Heritage Rivers' display was available and updated materials on the national and Hudson River programs were distributed.

Bio-fuels and renewable energy, water-trail development, financing watershed protection, fundraising for not-for-profits and Clean Water Act training were some of the sessions that the delegation participated in. Success stories related to restoration, protection and heritage preservation are a centerpiece of this nationwide conference.



**COOPERATIVE  
CONSERVATION**  
*Strengthening shared governance and citizen stewardship*



This annual conference is a great opportunity to promote the American Heritage Rivers Initiative and share in the successes of other rivers.

## A Commitment to Continuity: American Heritage Rivers Alliance

*"I realize that we are all connected and engaged. Collaborative partnerships help to establish a process of communication that can build trust for on-the-ground projects."  
-Vinny Tamagna*

The Hudson River Navigator joined the steering teams of River Navigators (RNs) as plans for the annual fall AHRI conference got underway.

The 2006 Conference will be held on the New River in West Virginia and is being hosted by Ben Borda, who has requested assistance in planning the four-day event. Regularly scheduled conference calls to discuss the conference continue, and the Hudson River is leading the preparation of White Papers and working with Community partners for opening discussions at the Annual Conference.

River Navigators continue to focus on how to endow a program for the American Heritage Rivers as RNs are transitioned and graduated. The Hudson River Navigator is the lead in coordinating this effort to be discussed at the Fall Conference.

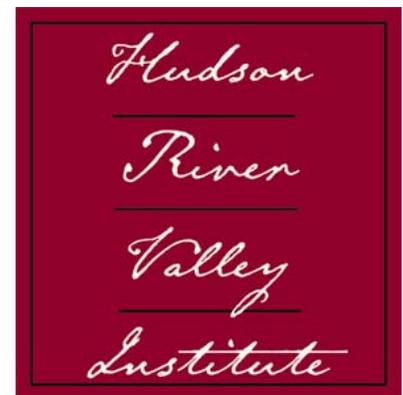
At last year's annual American Heritage Rivers meeting our community partners pledged

their commitment to continuity in working under the American Heritage Rivers umbrella after the federally supported River Navigator sunsets. (September 2007 for the Hudson River) through the creation of a \$75 million national endowment.

In October 2006, on the New River, River Navigators and community partners will discuss issues of transition and produce recommendations for working together as an alliance in the future. The commitment for all rivers is to work together in the future. As a coalition we plan to look at creating results-based measures of success to track and encourage future American Heritage Rivers activities across the country. Other teams are exploring options to establish a national non-profit American Heritage Rivers Alliance and are evaluating the feasibility of a major fundraising endowment effort.

## Hudson River Valley Institute Endowment

The Hudson River Navigator has secured a contribution in the amount of \$250,000 toward establishing an endowment for the Hudson River Valley Institute (HRVI). The unrestricted funds will support the mission of the Institute. As the educational arm of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, HRVI is the center for the study and promotion of the Hudson River Valley. The Institute maintains a regional website and portal, [www.hudsonrivervalley.org](http://www.hudsonrivervalley.org), publishes a biannual journal of regional studies, *The Hudson River Valley Review*, and works with students, educators, and everyone interested in the Hudson River Valley. HRVI and Marist College have hosted the Hudson River Navigator and supported his mission since 2003. The Navigator's long-term goal is for a \$2 million endowment to sustain the HRVI and the Hudson River AHRI program.



## Preserve America Passport and the First Hudson River Valley Preserve America Trolley Create Jobs and Promote Tourism

The counties of Dutchess, Putnam, and Rensselaer, along with the cities of Yonkers, Beacon and Kingston continue to work with the AHRI and the Preserve America Communities programs.



Hudson River Valley Institute Executive Director James M. Johnson and Hudson River Navigator Vincent Tamagna receive Putnam County's Preserve America Award from First Lady Laura Bush

Beacon's application was resubmitted, and Beacon was designated a Preserve America Community in 2005. Rensselaer County's application was submitted, and the Preserve America review panel has requested additional documentation. Dutchess County's application is underway for consideration in the 2007 awards. The Hudson River Navigator continues to work with Commissioner Bernadette Castro and Hudson towns on their applications for Preserve America Community designations (see [www.preserveamerica.gov](http://www.preserveamerica.gov)).

Putnam County's Preserve America Passport, the first in the nation, has been a great success. Over 30,000 copies are circulating in the Hudson River Valley and will serve as companions to the upcoming Preserve America Trolleys program. It will promote the White House Initiative by creating greater awareness and stewardship of the historic inventory that exists in the Hudson Valley. A \$250K grant was received through New York Metropolitan Transportation Committee as a part of the regional planning priority and the 80%/20% Federal local match was supported, and the Trolleys were dedicated in Cold Spring this past May.

### The Hudson River Navigator's Website

Linking the Community to Federal and State Programs

The Hudson River Valley Institute staff and interns continue to make information available for our local and national partners about our conferences and activities. Our web address has been simplified to allow quick access to the site: [www.hudsonrivernavigator.com](http://www.hudsonrivernavigator.com) and [www.hudsonrivernavigator.org](http://www.hudsonrivernavigator.org); both link directly to the resources provided through the Hudson River Valley Institute with support from Senator Vincent Leibell and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

**Congresswoman Sue Kelley, Hudson River Navigator Vincent Tamagna, NYS Parks Commissioner Bernadette Castro, Senator Vincent Leibell, and Assemblywoman Sandy Galef at the unveiling of the Putnam County Passport in Cold Spring.**



## Focus on Cooperative Conservation for Clean and Abundant Water Provides Croton-on-Hudson a Healthy Habitat and Improved Scenic Beauty

American Heritage Rivers Initiative on the Hudson continues to coordinate with West Point on the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) project for removal of railroad ties from shallow water Hudson River habitat. The cooperative partnership program involves the United States Military Academy, the Department of Defense, Coastal America and the Village of Croton. USMA cadets completed the feasibility report and the engineering design in 2005 based on their special project course in West Point's Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering.

Work with the DEC and the NYS Estuary Program to obtain permits for the project is ongoing, and coordination with Metro North and the Village is necessary for a fall 2006 clean up. Once completed, the project will provide improved habitat for fish, wildlife, and plant communities. It will also enhance recreation and small boating opportunities in the Croton Bay, a priority of Governor Pataki's strategic plan for river recreation. Coastal America (a sister interagency initiative to AHRI) will work through the Department of Defense's IRT program to schedule labor and logistical support from the New York Air National Guard as a training opportunity in the local community.



## An historic combination of industry and agriculture brings farmer's markets to the waterfront

The Yonkers Downtown/Waterfront Business Improvement District developed a floating farmers market called "Fresh Off the Barge," in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Lower Hudson-Long Island Resource Conservation &

Development Council.

This innovative concept, launched in 2003, brings fresh produce and New York State wines and cheeses from the upstate farming regions of New York to river communities in the lower Hudson Valley using an historic, restored

canal barge and tugboat.

*Fresh Off the Barge* celebrates the history of the Hudson Valley as an important transportation corridor and brings people down to the restored riverfronts, connecting urban communities to their rural food suppliers.

## Clean Air Conference Continued...

The conference explored forging partnerships and allowed discussions on how to promote the use of renewable energy. Vegetable oils, Switchgrass and other renewable energy opportunities were presented and are posted on the Hudson River Navigator's website. Natural resources and farms in the Hudson River Valley will play important roles in the development of energy. Growth in bio-based products and bio-energy will stimulate rural development efforts in farming, forestry and associated industries. Benefits will be a preserved working landscape, cleaner and healthier air quality and local alternative energy sources in the future.

Extension, Environmental Defense and many local citizens and leaders in planning departments, health departments and county & town governments in Orange, Dutchess, Rockland, Putnam, Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk counties.

Further information on the conference, including legislation and PowerPoint presentations from the day are available on the website at: [www.hudsonrivernavigator.org](http://www.hudsonrivernavigator.org).

Partners included The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Lower-Hudson-Long Island Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D), American Lung Association, American Cancer Society, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Pace University, Marist College, Hudson River Valley Institute, New York State Energy Research Development Agency (NYSERDA), Cornell Cooperative



## The Hudson River Navigator's Conference and Shallow Water Dredging Workshop

The first ever Navigator's Conference in November 2004 discussed shallow water dredging needs along the Hudson River. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Hudson River Boat & Yacht Association, the Hudson Marine Trade Association, Sea Grant, Department of Environmental Conservation and the Hudson Riverkeeper also were partners in organizing this one-day workshop, which focused attention on the need to maintain shores and basins for use by recreational boaters. The Conference also discussed the timely issue of means to protect the River against invasive species.

communities which lace both sides of the River, 2004 was a banner year for the American Heritage Rivers Initiative on the Hudson that revitalized the energy and enthusiasm of its communities. Like Rip Van Winkle, River communities appear to be reawakening to the tremendous environmental, historic and economic potential that the River holds. With the support of key community partners - particularly Governor Pataki and the Hudson River Congressional Caucus - the American Heritage Rivers Initiative continues its efforts to highlight the River's many unique and important attributes.

While many challenges remain for the Hudson and the

## Campbell Island

### Exploring the Protection of our Natural Resources while Enhancing Recreation

Campbell Island is located in the Town of Schodack, Rensselaer County and offers miles of hiking trails and beautiful water views. It is a serene setting for picnicking, and a perfect place for recreation including fishing and small craft boating. It is an important sanctuary and habitat for wildlife and aquatic vegetation. It is also a posted eagle nesting site. This Island is a hidden treasure and could become one of the most significant destination points at the north end of the Hudson River.

Governor George E. Pataki’s mission of new and improved access to the Hudson River and the preservation of lands in the Hudson River Valley fits well within the parameters of making this island a priority for federal and state resources.

The challenge is access, both from land and water. It is

necessary to continue to build capacity and work with the landowners and the local municipalities to gain access and explore opportunities to share this gem on the Hudson with the public.

The Hudson River Navigator has begun exploratory work and will have a series of meetings to work through the feasibility for Campbell Island.



## Waterfront Development: Marina in Watervliet

### Jobs Created and River Access Provided in Upstate New York

The City of Watervliet and developers for “The Rusty Anchor,” a marina/restaurant, completed their permitting process “right down to the wire.”

The City completed its Waterfront Revitalization Plan and has submitted a completed application to the Department of State Coastal Resource Management Program. Finally approved in late February, construction began in the spring.



Kevin Schufelt the owner, received help from The Hudson River Navigator to expedite Army Corps of Engineers and Department of State permits, including how to avoid minimize or mitigate degradation of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV’s) in the area the floating restaurant will cover.

This successfully completed project has had a banner first season. Thousands of people were able to enjoy the waterfront, and over forty new jobs were created since its opening in July 2006. Twelve slips are planned for seasonal lease and two hundred feet of transient docking is available for water access to Hudson Shores Park.

## Working with Communities to Celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the Hudson River

2009 marks the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historic voyage of Henry Hudson. New York State Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Commission continues coordination and planning efforts to provide the appropriate historic interpretation of this event. The Hudson River Valley Institute in cooperation with the American Heritage Rivers Initiative and the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area is working toward a coordinated effort to make this a memorable event.



## Hudson River Navigator's Newsletter



Hudson River Navigator  
Marist College  
3399 North Road  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1387

Phone: 845-575-3470  
Fax: 845-575-3176  
E-mail: [hrnavigator@marist.edu](mailto:hrnavigator@marist.edu)

[www.hudsonrivernavigator.org](http://www.hudsonrivernavigator.org)

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### The American Heritage Rivers Initiative

This is a network of community-led partnerships making a difference by restoring river habitats, strengthening local economies, celebrating regional culture and history, fostering community pride and, overall, improving quality of life. The initiative was established by Executive Order in 1997, with three primary objectives: natural resource and environmental protection, economic revitalization, and historic and cultural preservation.

The White House designated 14 American Heritage Rivers the following year: Blackstone and Woonasquatucket Rivers (RI/MA), Connecticut River (CT, NH, MA, VT), Cuyahoga River (OH), Detroit River (MI), Hanalei River (HI), Hudson River (NY), Upper Mississippi (IA, IL, WI, MN, MO), Lower Mississippi River (LA, TN), New River (NC, VA, WV), Potomac River (MD, DC, PA, VA, WV), Rio Grande (TX), St. Johns River (FL), Upper Susquehanna and Lackawanna Rivers (PA), and Willamette River (OR).

Each river community receives initial assistance from a federally-funded "River Navigator" to serve as a liaison between the community partners and over a dozen federal agencies. River Navigators help match available federal resources with the specific needs identified by the river communities. They provide guidance with bureaucratic concerns, serve as coaches, act as catalysts to leverage funds, and create partnerships. The initiative helps build local capacity to access federal sources of funding and provides incentives and support to build strong public-private partnerships for stewardship and revitalization efforts. The permanent American Heritage River designation offers a unique advantage for nature and heritage tourism, riverfront redevelopment, and watershed protection efforts.

Selected outcomes: new working relationships and partnerships; new or strengthened community nonprofits; new international wildlife refuge in the Detroit River; historic one-lane bridge rebuilt while protecting sense of place; new water trails and linked bike paths; brownfields turned into parks triggering neighborhood reinvestment; adaptive reuse of historic riverfront buildings; cities attracting investment by turning toward their rivers, etc.