

# Hudson River Navigator - 2004 Annual Report

## Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College

In 2004, energy and enthusiasm returned to the Hudson River. Resulting from ongoing efforts to restore the health of the Hudson River Estuary, fish and aquatic vegetation species are returning to the River in record numbers. With them came people, both residents and visitors, who are once again turning to the River for both recreation and inspiration. This year the Governor emphasized activities to make the Hudson River swimmable, to enhance access points to the river and to acquire environmentally sensitive or historically significant parcels that make the River's communities unique.

### Riverfront Infrastructure

- Hudson River Estuary Center
- Beacon Waterfront Revitalization and Commuter Ferry Pier
- Haverstraw Riverwalk/Greenway Trail/Park
- Stony Point Lighthouse and State Park and Palisades Greenway
- Yonkers Business Improvement District-Fresh off the Barge/Farmers Market
- Hudson River Maritime Alliance-Tug & Barge Museum

### Hudson River Estuary-Environmental Protection/Habitat Restoration

- 90 Million invested in the Hudson River Estuary
- \$160 Million in other high priority projects improving the health of the Hudson River

### Hudson River Congressional Caucus

Improved communication between leaders on the Hudson brought an unprecedented press conference to the shores of Beacon as Governor George Pataki announced the creation of the Hudson River Congressional Caucus. This bipartisan organization chaired by congressman John Sweeney and Congresswoman Nita Lowey is dedicated to preserving the Rivers cultural, historical, environmental and economic resources. The Congressional Caucus will work on local community projects and authorize legislation to benefit the River.

### Waterfront Revitalization

The renewal of the Hudson River sparked waterfront revitalization projects up and down the River. In May 2004, New York Secretary of State, Randy Daniels held a Press Conference at Marist College and previewed some of the most creative waterfront revitalization projects which were aired across the State. The importance of smart waterfront planning and the conversion of so many industrial parcels into revitalized areas for tourism, recreation, businesses and residences was the feature of the conference.

### Preserve America/Heritage Preservation

The Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College was a key partner in the Preserve America application and serves as the home of the Hudson River Navigator. First Lady Laura Bush named Putnam County one of the first eight Preserve America communities in the Nation on January 15, 2004. Saratoga Springs and Newburgh also were named in the summer of 2004 and more Hudson River Valley community's applications are being prepared including Kingston, Yonkers, Haverstraw, Beacon and Wappingers Falls.

- Preserve America Communities awarded in the Hudson River Valley
- \$472,000 in State funding to preserve historic barns
- NYS awarded 1.8 million dollars to Hudson River Valley historic sites for preservation, open space and recreation
- Governor announced that in the first decade of this millennium NYS would procure 1 million acres of preserved lands as of August 2004 650,000 acres were already protected.

### Hudson River Lighthouse Trail/Hudson River Greenway Trail and Water Trail

The Hudson River Valley Greenway, worked with the American Heritage Rivers

Initiative and the Hudson Mohawk and Lower Hudson-Long Island Resource Conservation and Development Council on an initiative to connect the Hudson River Greenway Trail to the Hudson River Water Trail. In 2004, a \$14,000 grant was awarded to the Hudson River Lighthouse Coalition to develop and distribute a map of the Hudson River Lighthouse Trail.

In April 2004, New York Congresswoman Sue Kelly highlighted the importance of the Lighthouse Trail when she announced a \$1.2 million authorization for a trail connecting the Palisades Interstate Park with the Stony Point Battlefield and Lighthouse. These funds were recommended in omnibus transportation legislation approved in 2004 by the U.S. House of Representatives. With the cooperation of the National Park Service, the Navigator helped to add an important new component to the Trail – the Statue of Liberty –, which is perhaps the most famous lighthouse in the world.

### Agricultural Preservation

Successes in 2004 included the award of a \$48,000 grant to Glynwood Center for a collaborative project with the State Department of Agriculture and Markets that will spotlight new and innovative means to market regional produce. “Fresh Off The Barge”, a floating farmers market unique to the Hudson River Valley, had its second successful season of showcasing produce grown on farms along the Hudson River. This summertime regional food market continued to work with the City of Yonkers to establish one permanent waterfront square at Larkin Plaza where the new Farmer’s Market features fruits, vegetables and wines of the Hudson Valley.

### Shallow Water Dredging/Hudson River Navigator’s 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.

While many challenges remain for the Hudson River and the communities which lace both sides of the River, 2004 was a banner year for the American Heritage Rivers Initiative for the Hudson that reinvigorated 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 will continue its efforts to highlight the River's many unique and important attributes.

3399 North Rd, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601-1387 (845) 575-  
3470