

• Clean Water • Habitat • Access • Climate Change • Scenery

Summary

Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda 2010 - 2014



Hudson River Estuary Program
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

In partnership with participating federal and state agencies as well as local municipalities, non-profits, universities and businesses.



Hudson River Estuary Program:
www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4920.html



What is the Action Agenda?

The *Action Agenda* is a forward-looking plan, developed with significant community participation, to revitalize and sustain the Hudson River and its valley for the benefit of all of its residents. The *Action Agenda* defines the challenges we face and identifies practical solutions that can be carried out by civic leaders, policy makers and citizens working together. The Agenda is carried out by the Hudson River Estuary Program and its partners to achieve real progress for the region.

The Action Agenda charts a course to:

Ensure clean water



Protect and restore fish, wildlife and their habitats



Provide water recreation and river access



Adapt to climate change



Conserve our world-famous scenery



The Action Agenda focuses on the tidal Hudson River, from the Troy dam to Upper New York Harbor, and the surrounding Hudson Valley watershed.

Why do we need an Action Agenda?

The Hudson River, with its scenic valley, is one of our state's premier economic and natural assets. The Action Agenda will help us sustain the Hudson River's world class port, revitalize river cities and conserve the region's land, water, and wildlife. It will also foster great waterfront destinations and boost the economic vitality of the region.



- The NY-NJ port generates \$20 billion and creates 230,000 jobs annually
- Natural, historic & recreational destinations on the river in the valley generate millions from tourism
- Our managed fisheries sustain small businesses, while bird watching generates millions for local economies
- Our water resources supply New York City and support local population growth

The Estuary is a “Noah’s Ark” for Atlantic coast migratory fish & wildlife species. If you fish for striped bass on Cape Cod, Canada or the Carolinas, that fish might have been born in the Hudson.



Action Item 1. Ensure Clean Water

The Challenge:

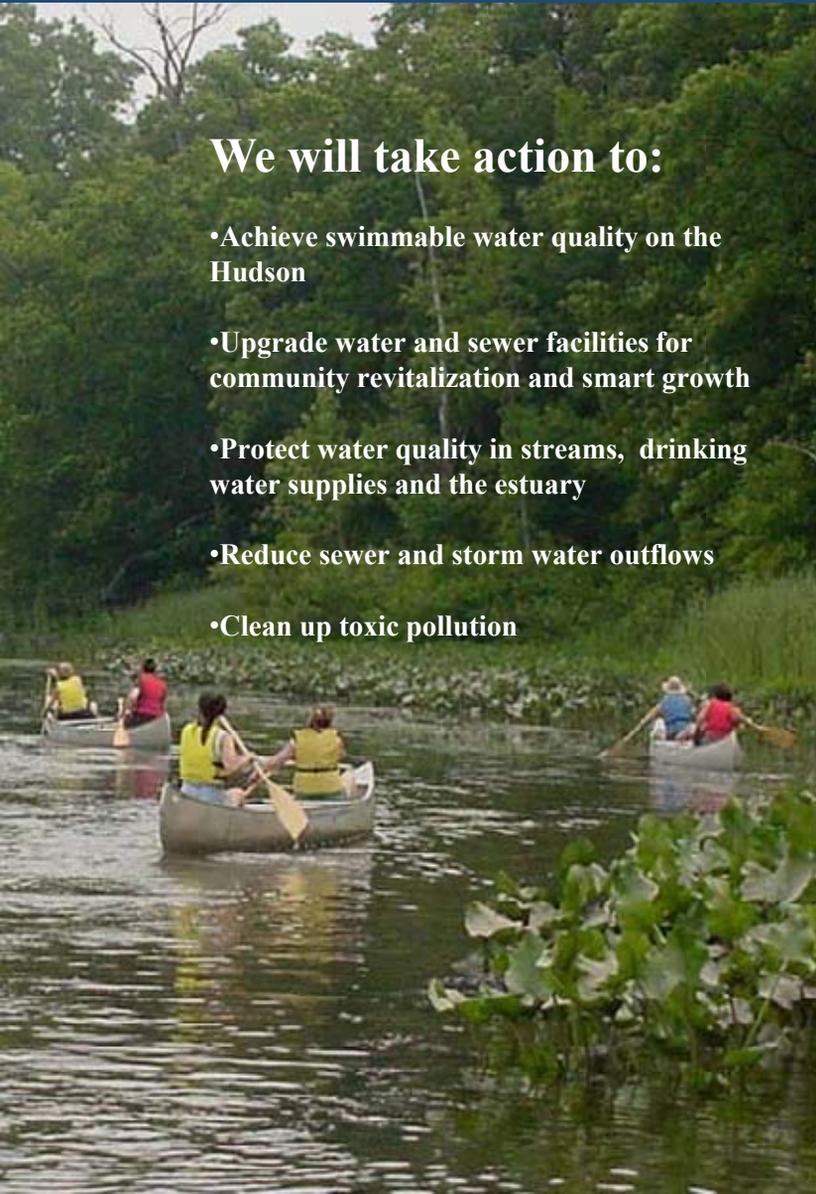
River clean-up has provided enormous stimulus to the region's economy. However, the Hudson Valley and NY metro area are growing rapidly, putting pressure on our water resources as demand for clean water increases.

Today, our water and sewer infrastructure is not sufficient to meet our needs. Land use changes and polluted runoff threaten both the quality and quantity of our water. Many aquifer recharge areas remain unprotected, leaving our drinking water supplies vulnerable. A legacy of toxic contaminants such as PCBs remain. The future of the region depends on ensuring clean abundant water.



We will take action to:

- Achieve swimmable water quality on the Hudson
- Upgrade water and sewer facilities for community revitalization and smart growth
- Protect water quality in streams, drinking water supplies and the estuary
- Reduce sewer and storm water outflows
- Clean up toxic pollution



Action Item 2. Protect Fish, Wildlife & Their Habitats

The Challenge:

The estuary and its valley support an extraordinary diversity of plants, animals, and fishes that sustain life, support outdoor recreation, define our region's natural beauty, and attract tourists. However, many river and valley habitats have been damaged and disconnected by sprawling patterns of development and by past practices such as the filling of wetlands. Several economically valuable fisheries are currently in decline; some are restricted or closed. Conserving our region's biological diversity will provide significant benefits to the ecosystem, to human life and to our tourism, water resource and outdoor recreation economies.

We will take action to:

- Conserve and restore wetland, field, forest and stream habitats
- Sustain key fisheries, including sturgeon, striped bass, black bass, American shad, herring and eel
- Assist communities to identify and sustain natural resources for the economic and ecosystem benefits they provide



Action Item 3. Provide Water Recreation and River Access

The Challenge:

River access renews our connection with nature, sustains recreation and tourism, and stimulates waterfront revitalization. However, getting to the river in many communities is difficult due to railroad tracks, land ownership patterns and the availability of facilities. Access to the river for education and research is also needed, so that we can support informed decision-making about the river and valley. This will enable us to create a new, vital and sustainable future.

We will take action to:

- Create more docks, fishing, boating and swimming sites
- Provide new facilities for underserved communities
- Support greenway trails, parks and preserves
- Link environmental education and river access sites to create great waterfront destinations
- Revitalize waterfront communities
- Foster education and research



Action Item 4. Adapt to Climate Change

The Challenge:

Climate change is happening in the Hudson Valley and around the globe. Sea level in the Hudson has increased 4-6 inches since 1960 and will continue to rise. The intensity of heavy rain storms is increasing, and with it the risk of flooding in some cities, towns and villages. Winters are trending warmer, and plants and animals are moving northward. Reducing the impacts of climate change and preparing our region for its effects will take solid information, collective action and fresh ideas about how to develop new economies that take advantage of these changes.

We will take action to:

- Increase the number of “Climate Smart” communities that are taking local action
- Map flood prone areas and provide assistance to waterfront communities
- Prepare for the impacts of storm surges and sea level rise on the estuary
- Stimulate the local green economy



Action Item 5. Conserve World-Famous Scenery

The Challenge:

The Hudson Valley is a world famous scenic area, on par with Yosemite and the Grand Tetons. Our forests, wetlands, mountains and streams offer beauty that attracts visitors from around the world. Local land use decisions have regional impact and must be informed by an understanding of our shared assets.

We will take action to:

- Protect world famous scenic vistas
- Help communities adopt local scenic and open space plans, and improve land use decisions so that our region's natural assets are conserved



**The river supports the well-being
of all valley residents...**



**...so many stakeholders contributed to
development of the Action Agenda.**

River users, political leaders, community organizations and local, state and federal government officials came together in 2009 at a “State of the Hudson Summit.” Input received then and through public comments, listening tours and dialogue over the following months shaped the Action Agenda. It will guide us in working together to sustain the Hudson River’s world class port, revitalize river cities and conserve the region’s clean water, habitat, river access and scenery.

Through the Action Agenda, government and river users work together to achieve shared goals

The Hudson River Estuary Management Advisory Committee guides the development and implementation of the *Action Agenda* and provides a communication bridge to a wider group of partners and stakeholders. Educators, business owners, researchers, anglers, and others serve on the committee and help deliver our *Action Agenda* results.

Numerous government partners have ex-officio members on the committee:

US Army Corps of Engineers
US Environmental Protection Agency
NY-NJ Harbor Estuary Program
Interstate Environmental Commission
New York City Department of Environmental Protection
NYS Department of Health

NYS Department of State
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Hudson River Park Trust
Hudson River Valley Greenway
NY Sea Grant



New York State
Department of State



New York - New Jersey
Harbor Estuary Program



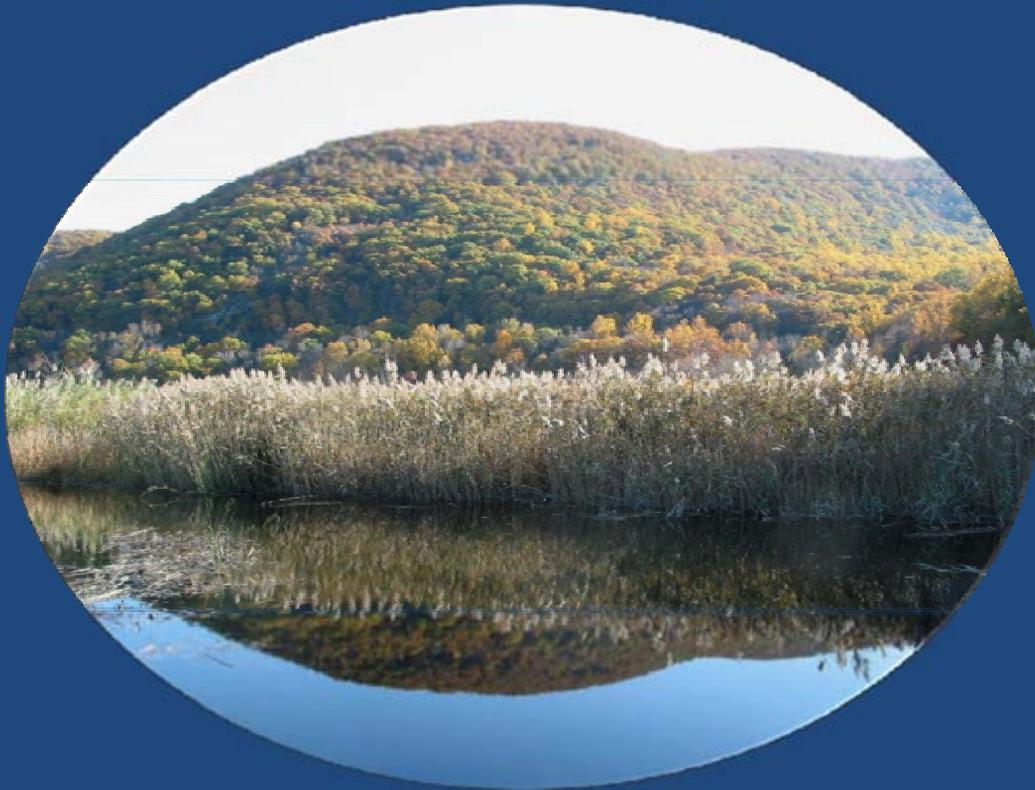
The Hudson River Estuary Program helps people enjoy, protect and revitalize the Hudson River and its valley



Photo by David Rocco

Guided by the Action Agenda, the Estuary Program's collaborative approach includes:

- Grants for community-based projects
- Education, research and training partnerships
- Natural resource conservation, protection and restoration projects
- Community planning assistance



Please get in touch!
The Hudson River Estuary Program

845-256-3016
hrep@gw.dec.state.ny.us



www.dec.ny.gov

