

A POSITIVE TREND – CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Growing numbers of citizens, organizations and institutions are taking action to improve the health of the Hudson and its watershed and to build knowledge of this ecosystem.

How is the Hudson doing? There is no simple answer. Water quality is not as good as it was when the Half Moon sailed up the river 400 years ago, but it has improved greatly over the lifetimes of Hudson Valley residents born 40 years ago. The American shad is in trouble, but bald eagle numbers are increasing. The Hudson offers plenty of fish to anglers, but PCB contamination makes eating these fish risky.

One trend promises future improvements in the Hudson's health—growing numbers of concerned citizens, organizations and institutions are participating in efforts to address river concerns. Students, kayakers, amateur naturalists and planning board members have become personally committed to taking action to solve problems. Citizen science and volunteer projects are on the rise. The following are just a few examples from the many initiatives underway.

How you can help the Hudson

- Participate in a clean-up day. Active watershed associations often need volunteers to help remove the debris that accumulates in rivers and along their banks.
- Don't plant invasive or potentially invasive species. Some may still be available in nurseries—Japanese barberry, autumn olive, oriental bittersweet and Japanese honeysuckle to name a few. Burning bush may also be invasive.
- Talk to your local officials about your concern for clean water and open space. A few persistent citizens can motivate local officials to do a better job of protecting natural resources.
- Come down to the Hudson and enjoy it firsthand. Celebrate progress in cleaning it up! Be inspired to do what's needed to sustain that progress.

For more tips, visit DEC's Make a Difference webpage www.dec.ny.gov/public/337.html



Planting stream buffers: Community groups are planting young trees along Hudson River tributaries. These plantings will grow into buffers that help protect water quality in these streams.



Tracking stream health: Organized by groups like Hudson Basin River Watch, citizens are keeping track of water quality in streams throughout the Hudson's watershed. Their work can pinpoint problems that need to be addressed.



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American eel surveys: In Poughkeepsie, high school students collect data on glass eels—young American eels freshly arrived from the ocean. With eels in decline, information about their presence in Hudson tributaries is important for developing strategies for recovery.



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For more information on subjects covered, please visit the Hudson River Estuary Program pages on DEC's website at www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4920.html. A virtual tour, fact sheets, lesson plans and the Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda can be found there, as well as links to other programs and organizations working to improve the Hudson and tell its stories. The Hudson River Estuary Program: Making a difference together for the river and valley we share.