

# **Hudson River Estuary Cleanup Talking Points**

**Welcome!**

**The Hudson River is an amazing and inspiring waterway!** The Hudson River watershed includes many rivers and streams that feed the river with freshwater. The Hudson River estuary is an arm of the sea, stretching more than 150 miles from New York Harbor to the dam at Troy. It includes the waters around New York City, including the East River and the Harlem River. Today, fish that live their lives in the Atlantic—like American shad, river herring and striped bass—are spawning in the Hudson River.

**We all must do our part to protect it!** By minimizing your environmental impacts, supporting wildlife restoration projects, and advocating for improved water infrastructure, everyone can make a difference to protecting the Hudson River Estuary.

**Please stay safe!** It's important to stay safe. Please take responsibility for yourself and any children you have with you. Volunteers should wear sturdy closed-toe shoes, and take care to avoid hazards, such as slippery rocks, poison ivy, ticks and the potential for trash to include hazards, such as discarded needles. If you come upon an item that may be unsafe, don't touch it! Leave it and report it to the cleanup coordinator.

**Please recycle as much as possible.** The more recyclables we separate, the less trash goes to a landfill or incinerator. A good way to recycle is to separate recyclables from trash as volunteers pick it up.

- You can do this by pairing up, with one volunteer gathering recyclables and one gathering trash.
- You can grab two bags and use one for recyclables and one for trash.
- Or, you can choose trash or recycling and fill your bag with one or the other.

**Please share your experience on social media.** Use the hashtag **#ItCameFromTheHudson** and/or **#RiverCleanup**. If you're working on a tributary, you might want to use **#WalkKillSweep**, etc. And please tag **@riverkeeper**.

**If your project involves the use of kayaks, canoes or other vessels:** The water and air temperature should total 120 degrees or more to avoid the risk of hypothermia. If temperature or weather conditions present a risk, we urge you to postpone on-water projects. No volunteer should be allowed to participate if he or she lacks appropriate equipment or fails to demonstrate the experience necessary to stay safe.

**If a volunteer asks you to certify community service hours:** High schools, courts and other organizations require volunteers to certify their volunteer service. Please sign and date any letters or forms presented to you, after the individual has given his or her time.

# Day-Of Cleanup Checklist

## Before your volunteers arrive

- ✓ Place signage if necessary to help volunteers find the meeting place.
- ✓ Arrange your materials (trash bags, T-shirts, etc.) so they are easy to distribute as volunteers arrive.
- ✓ Check for any hazards to communicate to your volunteers, such as slippery conditions, poison ivy, ticks and “sharps” sometimes found in trash: glass or needles.

## As volunteers arrive

- ✓ Check-in registered
- ✓ Use the talking points provided, or your own words, to welcome the group and make them aware of any hazards.

## During the Cleanup

- ✓ Take photos! Try to take shots of volunteers in action, and a group shot of all volunteers with the trash pile. Try to capture smiling faces! Also take photos of any particularly noteworthy trash.
- ✓ Share your success on social media using hashtag **#ItCameFromTheHudson**. If you're working on a tributary, you might want to use #WalkKillSweep, #MoodnaSweep, etc. And please tag **@riverkeeper**.

## After the Cleanup

- ✓ Count how many bags of trash/recycling you collected, see what items your volunteers found most frequently, as well as any weird finds.
- ✓ Thank your volunteers! Let them know you value their hard work and that their efforts made a difference.
- ✓

## Next Week

- ✓ Share your success! Use social media to share your hard work with your friends and family. Help others see the importance of being responsible for their local community and stretch of the river.
- ✓ Share photos and results with Riverkeeper, we're interested in hearing you're your cleanup went and seeing your photos. E-mail photos and stats to [sweep@riverkeeper.org](mailto:sweep@riverkeeper.org). (For large files, contact us for file-sharing options.)