

# 2017 Riverkeeper Sweep Talking Points for Sweep Leaders

Welcome!

**You are part of something big!** By volunteering today as part of the 2017 Riverkeeper Sweep, you are part of the biggest volunteer effort to clean the Hudson River. Thousands of volunteers like you are taking part in over 100 service projects between New York City and the Capital District today. Thank you!

**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!** Riverkeeper organizes this event as a reminder that it's our job to take care of this great river.

**Riverkeeper works to protect the Hudson!** Riverkeeper is a nearly 50-year-old member-supported non-profit organization dedicated to restoring the Hudson River and protecting the drinking water supply for millions of New York City and Hudson Valley residents.

**There are other ways to get involved after today!** By volunteering today, you are making a strong statement that we care about the future health of the Hudson River. To stay involved, please visit [riverkeeper.org](http://riverkeeper.org), where you can learn about current issues, sign up for more volunteer opportunities, take action or make a donation. As a non-profit organization, we rely on the donations of individuals like you.

**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 site leader.

**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 **#HudsonSweep** and/or **#NYCSweep**. If you're working on a tributary, you might want to use **#WallkillSweep**, 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.



## 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 volunteers, and ask those who haven't registered to fill out the liability form.
- ✓ Distribute T-shirts to those who ordered them, and one Brewery coupon per volunteer.
- ✓ Use the talking points provided, or your own words, to welcome the group and make them aware of any hazards.

### During the Sweep

- ✓ 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 **#HudsonSweep** and/or **#NYCSweep**. If you're working on a tributary, you might want to use #WalkkillSweep, #MoodnaSweep, etc. And please tag **@riverkeeper**.

### After the Sweep

- ✓ Using the worksheet on the reverse, communicate your results as soon as your event is over.
- ✓ Sweep to Your Brewery! Join your volunteers, and volunteers from other sites in your area, at a local participating brewery to celebrate your success. You deserve it!

### Next Week

- ✓ Send liability waivers and reporting worksheets to Riverkeeper, ATTN: Jen Benson, 20 Secor Road, Ossining, NY 10562.
- ✓ Share photos with [sweep@riverkeeper.org](mailto:sweep@riverkeeper.org). (For large files, contact us for file-sharing options.)