

Rondout Rowing Club
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April 19, 2021

Dear Department of Environmental Conservation,

We as members of Rondout Rowing Club (RRC) of Kingston, New York are urging the NYSDEC to exercise its authority to enforce the state and federal laws that protect water quality in evaluating the impacts of NYCDEP releases to the Lower Esopus Creek. Part of the mission of RRC is to foster awareness of the unique natural resources of the Hudson River. Specifically our charge is to advocate for the protection of the environmental and recreational integrity of the Rondout Creek and Hudson River so that succeeding generations of rowers can experience the exhilaration and joy of rowing. The dumping of millions of gallons of turbid water into Esopus and subsequently the Hudson has left the Esopus a muddy mess; indeed it has been placed on NYS list of impaired waters for excessive silt and sediment. Kingston, 10 miles south of Esopus entry to Hudson, is seeing an impact on fish and birdlife. Indeed the Saugerties Seal left its home by the Lighthouse in Saugerties because of decreased number of fish. After spending years advocating for Hudson River and educating population on importance of decreasing pollution it's distressing to see the biggest source of pollution coming from DEP 's decision to adversely impact Esopus Creek and Hudson River communities to preserve NYC drinking water. The Hudson River is a critical regional drinking water source for over 100,000. Protecting water quality, environmental integrity and recreational opportunities are important regional priorities. The current state of Ashokan releases is unsustainable and unacceptable. The DEIS must create a different long-term plan to stop the mud, specifically accounting for climate change impacts.

Sincerely,

Katharine Irwin
RRC President