



5 August 2016

Craig Lapiejko  
Waterways Management Branch  
Coast Guard First District

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*via email to [craig.d.lapiejko@uscg.mil](mailto:craig.d.lapiejko@uscg.mil)*

Re: Docket No. USCG-2016-0132

Dear Mr. Lapiejko:

Hudson River Heritage has several urgent concerns with respect to the proposed anchorages in the vicinity of Rhinecliff and Staatsburg, N.Y.

This stretch of the Hudson lies within the Hudson River National Historic Landmark District, which extends from Hyde Park to Germantown, and to the county line in the middle of the Hudson River. The largest national historic landmark district in the nation, this 32-square mile area was recognized and designated by the Department of the Interior in 1990 for its remarkable combination of scenic beauty, well-preserved historic communities, rich architectural heritage, and iconic landscapes – immortalized by artists of the “Hudson River School” such as Frederic Church and Thomas Cole. As such, this region draws tourists from across the nation and around the world. The scenic vistas of and across the river from the water and from both banks will not be enhanced by anchorages full of barges awaiting transport to ports in Albany or New Jersey. This proposed action will require review and approval by the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Aside from this concern for the visual impact, heightened after dark by the required bright lighting, safety concerns arise from the increased risk of collision between the anchored vessels and those underway in periods of low visibility (fog, rain) or high wind, particularly recreational watercraft which may not be equipped with radar or a skilled navigational team. This risk is particularly high when considering the likely barge cargo of Bakken crude oil, a notoriously volatile petroleum product with a low flashpoint, now being shipped in bulk by rail and by barge down the river.

Short of an explosion, however, the risk of pollution from a leak, whether caused by a collision or otherwise, is increased significantly when barges are anchored in the vicinity rather than simply passing by. Moreover, the Town of Rhinebeck draws its drinking water from the Hudson, and any pollution of this water source from an oil leak or spill would have immediate negative consequences for thousands of local residents, potentially shutting off the public water supply for weeks or months.

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For all of these reasons, Hudson River Heritage urges the Coast Guard and Department of Transportation to remove the Kingston Flats anchorage from the proposed list of sites, along with others within the Hudson River National Historic Landmark District. We are aware of the Hudson's history as a maritime corridor for commercial transportation of goods and people, and support its continued use for those purposes to maintain the vitality of our region. But this use must be consistent with the purposes and goals of the Landmark District, something we feel is lacking in the current plans for these proposed anchorage sites off Astor Cove (Kingston Flats), Port Ewen, and Big Rock Point.

We look forward to public hearings on this proposal, and trust you will give these points your serious consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Warren Temple Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a period at the end.

Warren Temple Smith, R.A.  
President, Hudson River Heritage

Copy to:

Senator Charles Schumer  
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand  
U.S. Representative Christopher Gibson  
Governor Andrew Cuomo  
County Executive Marcus Molinaro  
State Senator Sue Serino  
State Assemblyman Kevin Cahill  
State Assemblywoman Didi Barrett