

December 6, 2016

U.S. Coast Guard First District
C/O Mr. Craig Lapiejko
Waterways Management Branch

Subject: NY Docket Number USCG-2016-0132

Dear Mr. Lapiejko:

As a group of concerned Hudson Valley land trusts, based in Ulster County, NY, we are writing you to voice our opposition to Docket Number USCG-2016-0132 which seeks to establish 10 barge anchorage sites between the cities of Yonkers and Kingston. Each of our organizations is dedicated to preserving this region's natural resources and has spent countless hours restoring land and waterways heavily impacted by past industrial uses. Consequently, we cannot support any rulemaking that threatens to undo so much hard work and spoil future use of our environment by Ulster County residents and visitors alike.

Barge anchorage grounds, including the 279 acres of river at Kingston Flats South, 47 acres of river at Port Ewen and 208 acres of river at Big Rock Point currently proposed, would inevitably bring negative environmental, social and commercial consequences.

In a best case scenario, this plan would jeopardize important habitat for several vulnerable aquatic species, impede access to the river at Kingston Point and limit recreational watercrafts. It would also introduce new noise and light pollution to this portion of the Hudson River, further degrading qualities that led to the creation of the Hudson Valley National Heritage Area and undermining the considerable efforts that have been done to build local economies based on the appreciation of our natural resources and which are now beginning to revitalize our communities.

In a worst case scenario, barge anchorages along this section of the Hudson River would lead to catastrophic and irreversible damage to our environment and livelihoods. Turning the Hudson River into a waystation for an indeterminate amount of barges will increase the chances of maritime accidents. Given that at least some of these barges are expected to hold petroleum products, there is then an increased chance of an oil spill. Such an accident would wreak havoc on everything and everyone associated with the river.

We respectfully oppose the proposed barge anchorage sites as proposed in NY Docket Number USCG-2016-0132 and hope that the U.S. Coast Guard chooses against moving forward with this action. We further respectfully request that a public meeting be held in Kingston regarding the proposed rule.

Signed,

Christine DeBoer
Executive Director
Wallkill Valley Land Trust

Maxanne Resnick
Executive Director
Woodstock Land Conservancy

Andi Turco-Levin
Chairperson
Kingston Land Trust