



November 15, 2016

Dear Chairman Borchert:

In compliance with our legislative mandate to advise the Dutchess County Legislature on matters impacting our environment, the Dutchess County Environmental Management Counsel strongly advises the legislature to take action on the matter of the US Coast Guard's proposal to expand existing and establish additional anchorages throughout the Hudson River. Until December 6th the U.S. Coast Guard is receiving comments from municipalities, agencies, and citizens concerning the development of 43 berths at 10 anchorages in the Hudson River between Yonkers and Kingston.

The proposal for the anchorages comes to the Coast Guard at the request of the Maritime Association of the Port of New York/New Jersey, which represents various interests in shipping industries. The Association says that more anchorage grounds will improve navigation safety along portions of the Hudson River where there are currently few or no anchorages.

This proposal involves designating a total of over 2,000 acres of the Hudson River Estuary as anchorage grounds. Of particular concern is that the movement caused by twice daily tides would constantly push and pull the anchors' ground tackle along the river bottom. Scour caused by movement of the ground tackle has the potential to damage the critical habitat of numerous fish species, including two that are federally listed as endangered species. Additionally, the proposed anchorages would allow more oil barges on the Hudson River increasing the risks of a catastrophic spill, and polluting the drinking water source of several Dutchess County municipalities. Lastly, the proposed anchorages would negatively impact the view shed of the Hudson River, an important asset to Dutchess County tourism.

Because the proposed anchorages would have a significantly negative impact on Dutchess County, we recommend that the Dutchess County Legislature join a multitude of other government agencies, elected officials, organizations, and citizens along the Hudson by taking formal action that opposes the proposed anchorages until the USCG holds public hearings on proposed United States Coast Guard Rule 2016-0132, and strictly follows the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The EMC stands ready to assist the legislature to further research the potential threat to the Hudson River from this proposal.

Sincerely,

Stephen MacAvery, Chairman

Dutchess County Environmental Management Council

Cc: County Legislators