



Protecting the future of the Catskills

Expanding Permitting Considerations for Hudson River Anchorages

S.5197-A (Serino, et al.)/A.6825-A (Barrett, et al.)

Recently the U.S. Coast Guard announced plans to establish 43 berths at 10 sites to anchor oil barges on the Hudson River between Kingston to Yonkers. The sites would encompass more than 2,400 acres.

This proposal threatens decades of efforts to remediate the Hudson River and revitalize communities on its shore. New anchorages will re-industrialize at a time when it is just beginning to recover from more than a century of pollution and abuse.

The shipping and oil industries support the Coast Guard's proposal, as it would allow for oil shipped up to the Port of Albany to be parked in tankers on the Hudson until prices reach desirable levels—then the oil can be shipped to market. This proposal effectively turns the Hudson River into a parking lot for multi-million gallon oil tankers

Turning the Hudson into a parking lot at a time when communities have poured millions of dollars into successfully revitalizing their waterfronts puts those municipal, state, and federal dollars at risk. If or when there is a spill it will be these communities that suffer the most economically.

Further, the proposal will have many negative environmental impacts as well, including; scarring and scouring the river bottom which serves as breeding ground for many fish species, including the endangered sturgeon; air, noise, and light pollution; re-exposing PCBs; and endangering fisheries and wetlands.

And if or when a spill does happen, the type of oil coming through the Port of Albany—Tar Sands Oil or diluted bitumen—is denser than water, meaning it sinks to the bottom, further complicating cleanup efforts. In the Kalamazoo River where 839,000 gallons of diluted bitumen spilled in 2010, cleanup efforts took more than five years and cost more than a billion dollars (at least \$80 million of which came from state and local coffers).

All of these impacts are completely preventable, and this bill would allow New York to proactively protect our communities and the Hudson River. **Catskill Mountainkeeper supports this bill.**

Summary

The bill sets minimum conditions for petroleum-bearing vessels on the Hudson River and tanker-avoidance zones. The bill enables the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation to consult experts in the public and commercial use of the Hudson River when establishing guidelines for (a) minimum conditions under which petroleum-bearing vessels may enter or move upon the navigable waters of the Hudson River; (b) minimum conditions under which petroleum-bearing vessels may enter or leave any major facility, port or harbor along the Hudson River; and (c) physical and environmental conditions for the establishment of tanker-avoidance zones. The bill maintains the right of vessels to anchor anywhere in the river in cases of great emergency.