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**Hudson River Watershed Alliance Celebrates This Year's Watershed WaveMaker Awards at its Toast to the Tribes Awards Benefit**

Marlboro, NY - The Hudson River Watershed Alliance is pleased to announce our 2018 *Watershed WaveMaker* Awards for an institution, watershed group, small organization, small business and individual who are working tirelessly to protect the streams and tributaries of the Hudson River. The recipients of this year's awards are: **Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies**, the **Friends of the Great Swamp**, **Rensselaer Land Trust**, **Greenway Environmental Services**, and **Martha Cheo** of the Wallkill River Watershed Alliance

The Hudson River Watershed Alliance's mission is to support, unite and empower the people and communities who are protecting Hudson River streams and tributaries. The Alliance provides the tools, information and resources that residents of the Hudson River Watershed need to better manage their water resources. The *Watershed WaveMaker* Awards were launched by the Alliance as a way to recognize the exemplary efforts of our watershed partners, who are working throughout the year on critical activities to protect Hudson River water resources. The awards ceremony will take place at our ***Toast to the Tribes Awards Benefit at The Falcon*** in Marlboro, NY on Tuesday, December 4, 2018 from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm. The event includes dinner and a silent auction, with proceeds to benefit the Hudson River Watershed Alliance. Music will be provided by **Betty and the Baby Boomers** (<http://bettyandthebabyboomers.com>), an American folk band that is, for many Hudson Valley residents, the voice of the Hudson River, featuring musicians Betty Boomer, Jean Valla McAvoy, Paul Rubeo, Robert Bard and Steve Stanne. Tickets for the event are \$90 per person and can be purchased at [www.hudsonwatershed.org](http://www.hudsonwatershed.org) or [bit.ly/2018ToasttotheTribes](http://bit.ly/2018ToasttotheTribes)

"The Watershed WaveMaker awards are an important way we say thank you to the protectors of our local streams and tributaries, the people and organizations who make a positive impact everyday on the long-term health and resilience of our water resources. The Toast to the Tribes is one of the few times during the year we celebrate our collective successes and accomplishments," said Maureen Cunningham, Executive Director of the Hudson River Watershed Alliance.

"The Cary Institute is thrilled to be honored for the work we have done over the last 30 years to improve our understanding of the ecology of the Hudson River and its tributaries, and to apply that science to sound management and policy," said Dr. Joshua R Ginsberg, President of Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies.

**Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies** has been selected as our 2018 Watershed WaveMaker in the institution category for creating a critical foundation of education, research and environmental problem solving related to ecological systems, watersheds and water quality issues in our region. For more than three decades, Cary Institute scientists have been studying the Hudson River and its watershed with a broad intent of providing information relevant to fundamental understanding as well as important management questions. This research has encompassed changes in forest lands, risks from disease and the chemistry of Hudson River tributaries. In the mainstem, Cary has been tracking invasive species, recording the recovery of fish, engineering sustainable shorelines, and mapping the status of globally rare wetlands that protect freshwater quality. Cary's work has helped make the Hudson River one of the best-understood rivers in the world. The Cary staff is deeply committed to supporting the education of Hudson Valley residents through hands-on programs and opportunities for teachers to enhance skills in data interpretation. Cary scientists advise numerous local, state and federal management agencies with the hope of supporting decisionmakers in these times of rapid change and an uncertain future.

**Friends of the Great Swamp**, led by coordinator Laurie Wallace, has been selected as our 2018 Watershed WaveMaker in the community watershed group category because of their long history as one of the earliest watershed groups in this region implementing watershed education, research and awareness building; managing a large group of active and dedicated volunteers; and thinking creatively about how to confront new challenges to their watershed, including climate change.

**Rensselaer Land Trust** has been selected as our 2018 Watershed WaveMaker in the small organization category because of their long history in conserving the open spaces, watersheds and natural habitats of Rensselaer County, for the benefit of our communities and future generations. Their recent successes include a county-wide Natural Resource inventory and Conservation Plan, a Hudson River Access Plan for Rensselaer County, a citizen scientist water quality monitoring project in local streams and tributaries, and a successful partnership application to the NYSDEC Water Quality Improvement Program Source Water Land Protection Program (WQIP) for the Tomhannock watershed.

**Greenway Environmental Services** has been selected as our 2018 Watershed WaveMaker in the small business category because of their corporate focus on producing goods and services that protect the watershed, and specifically their Esopus Creek Tidewater Project that is creating a public access site on the Esopus Creek, their work in the Black Creek Watershed, and in their unique community outreach approach, especially their work on an educational program with inner-city youth in Poughkeepsie to demonstrate the important connection between drinking water and stormwater.

**Martha Cheo** has been selected as our 2018 Watershed WaveMaker in the individual category because of her long history of water advocacy, education and research in the Hudson River Watershed, including prior work as an educator with the Hudson River Basin Watch, a volunteer educator and trainer with NYS DEC's WAVE program, an early leader with the Ulster County chapter of the Walkkill River Task Force, and most recently, a founding member and active volunteer with the Walkkill River Watershed Alliance.

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