



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Hudson River
Estuary Program

Resources for Watershed Characterization, Planning, and Implementation

Hudson River Watershed Alliance
Watershed Characterization & Planning Workshop

Anna Boutsikaris,
NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program

March 24, 2026

Agenda

- DEC Clean Water Planning
- Estuary Program Approach
- Examples
- Implementation Resources

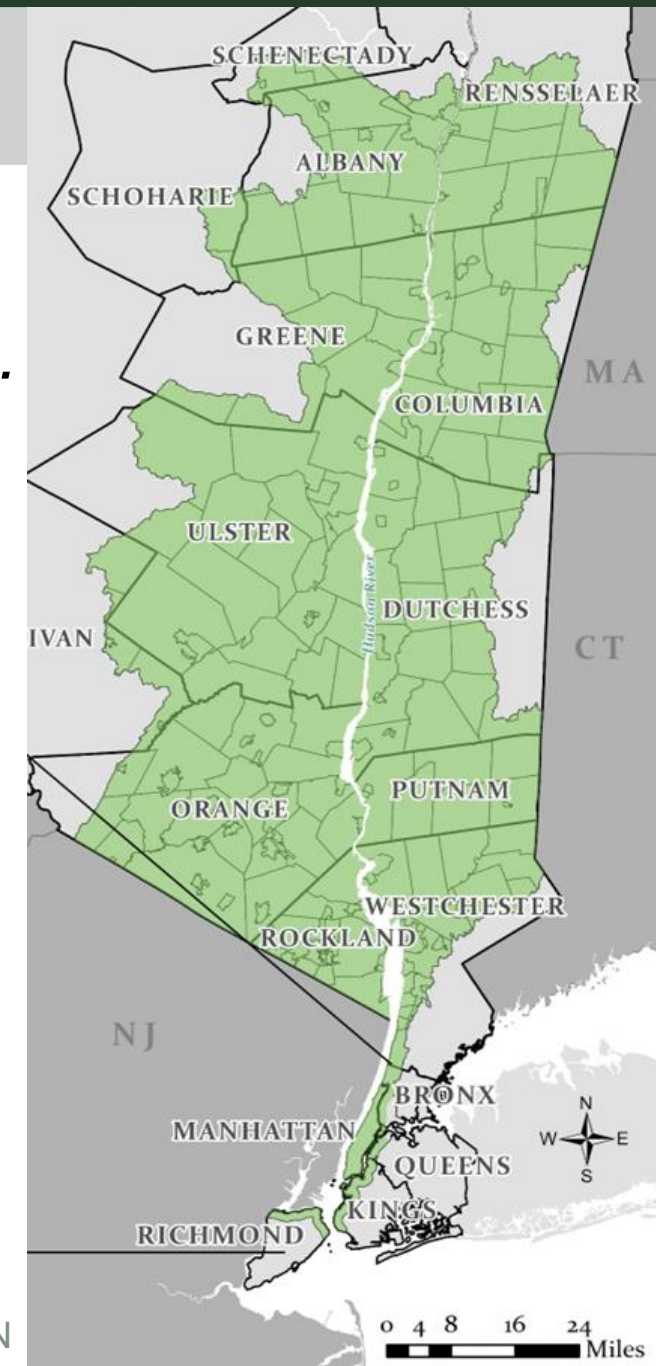
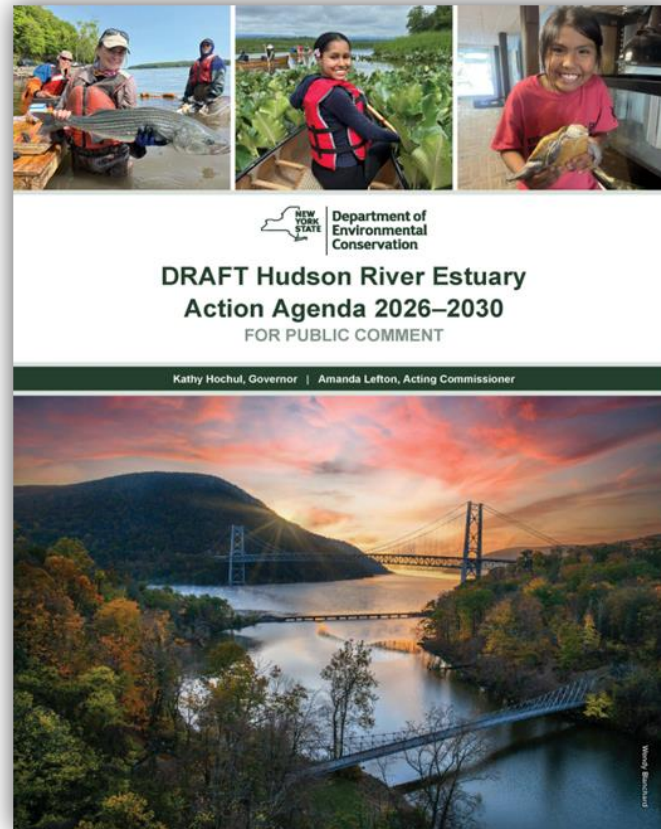


Hudson River Estuary Program

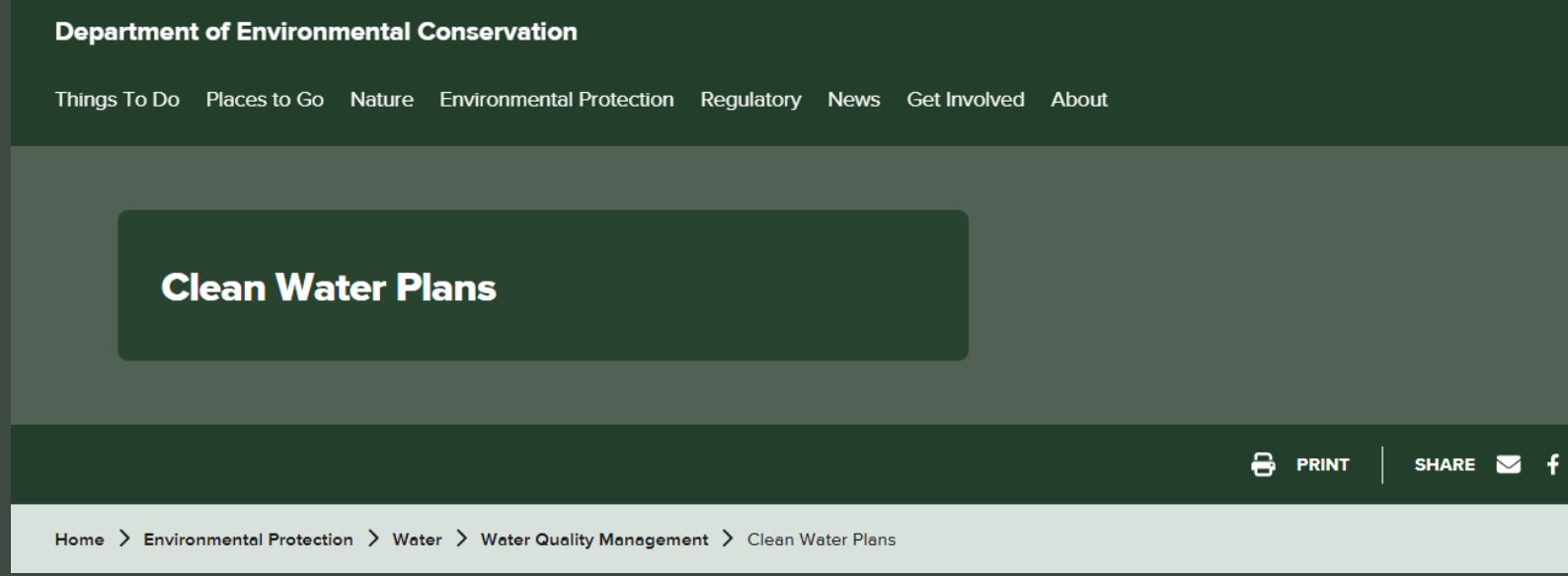
Helping communities conserve and ensure a resilient estuary and watershed for present and future generations.

Goals:

- Clean water
- Robust river habitats
- Healthy tributaries
- Conserved natural areas
- Climate-adaptative communities
- Informed and engaged public
- River access for all people



Clean Water Planning Toolbox



1. Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)
2. 9 Element Plan (9E)
3. Advanced Restoration Plan (ARP)
4. Drinking Water Source Protection Plan (DWSP2)
5. HABs Action Plan
6. Action Agendas

Project Pipeline

outreach, technical support, funding, and research



Outreach and
Education
Reconnaissance
Feasibility Studies

Designs
Permit applications
Technical assistance

Funding
implementation
Leverage larger
funding opps

Monitoring pre-
and post

Examples of Strategies and Actions in 2026-2030 Action Agenda

“The presence of active watershed groups has been associated with improved water quality and supporting them is an opportunity for improved stewardship” AA Trends page 38

Strategies

Learning about the Resource

Sharing What We Learn

Making Change



Actions

1D - collaborate on **monitoring** and **research**

2C- Support **watershed-based characterizations**..to identify and address water resource concerns at a watershed scale.

3E- Connect with other State and federal programs to **maximize available resources** and **synchronize funding opportunities**.

Watershed Work in Action

Learning about the Resource

Fishkill Creek
Watershed Alliance



Department of
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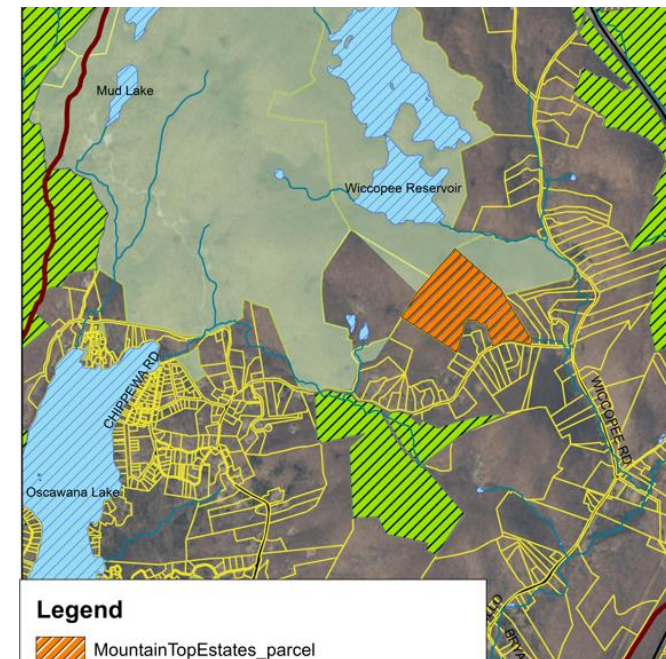
Hudson River
Estuary Program

Sharing What We Learn



2B- Build **capacity** and **regional support** through learning networks, outreach and training.

Making Change



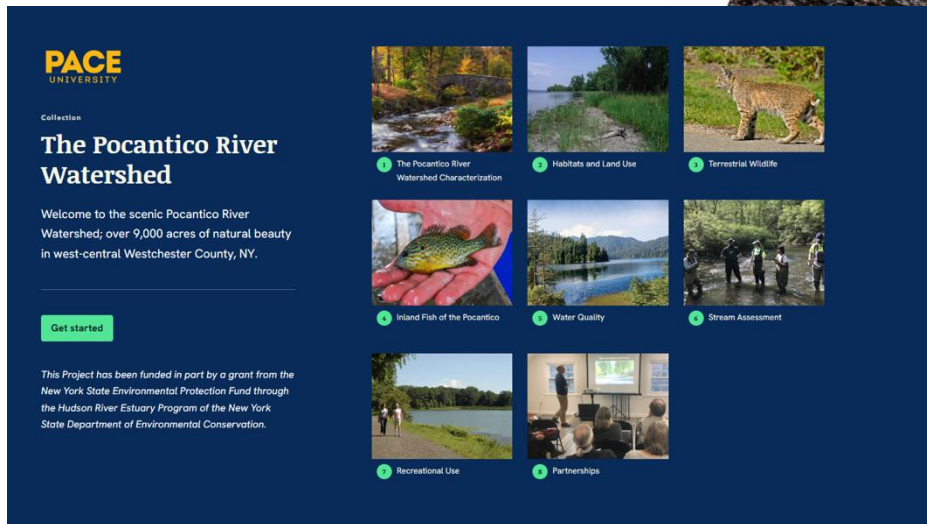
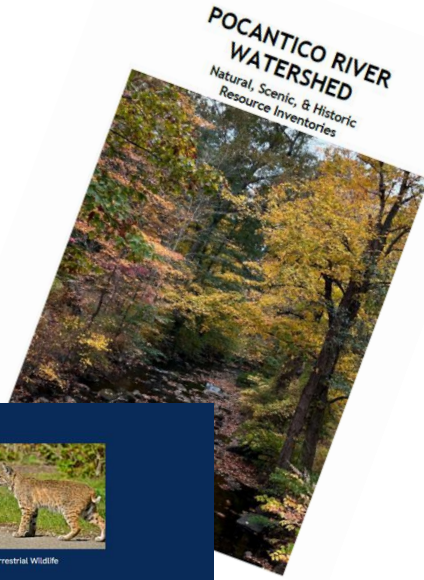


Case Studies

Completed Watershed Characterization Project Examples

Pace University - Pocantico River Watershed Characterization

- 2021 (Round of 32) Estuary Program Stewardship grant



Hudson River Watershed Alliance – Sparkill Creek and Punch Brook Watershed Characterizations

- 2024 NEIWPCC contract
- HRWA best practices document coming soon Estuary Program Stewardship Grant (Round of 40)

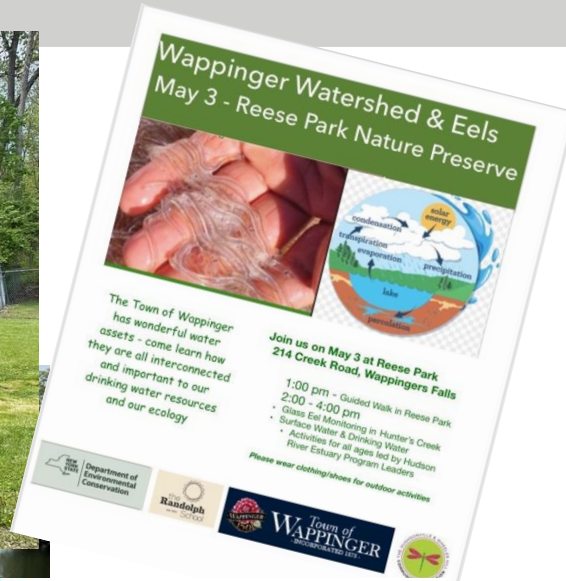


Hudson Estuary Trees for Tribs

We provide free trees and shrubs for you to plant along the tributary streams (“Tribs”) of the Hudson Estuary.



Source Water Protection



Provided technical assistance for DWSP2 implementation in the Town of Wappinger and City of Peekskill.

- Peekskill – updated waterbody assessment, riparian restoration, land acquisition, analyzing nutrient sources.
- Wappinger – public engagement/education event, strategic workplan, applied for a grant.
- + a few others



Example of Culvert Replacement ~ Bashbish Columbia County

Trout Unlimited - High Valley Road, Copake, NY

Bashbish Brook (headwater trib to Roeliff Jansen Kill)

Reconnected 2.2 miles upstream habitat

Found wild brown and brook trout during construction and rare tiger trout

Tiger = sterile offspring of male brook & female brown



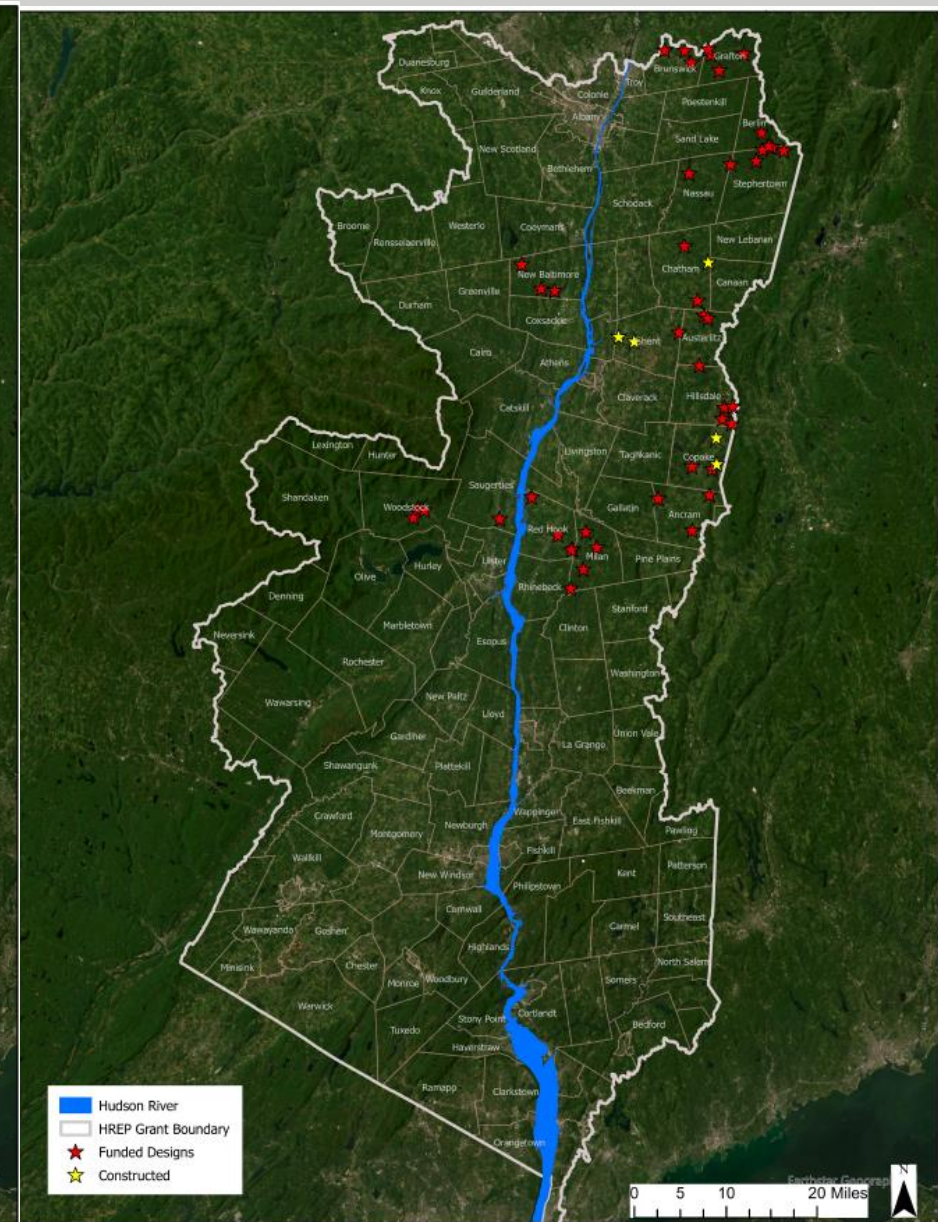
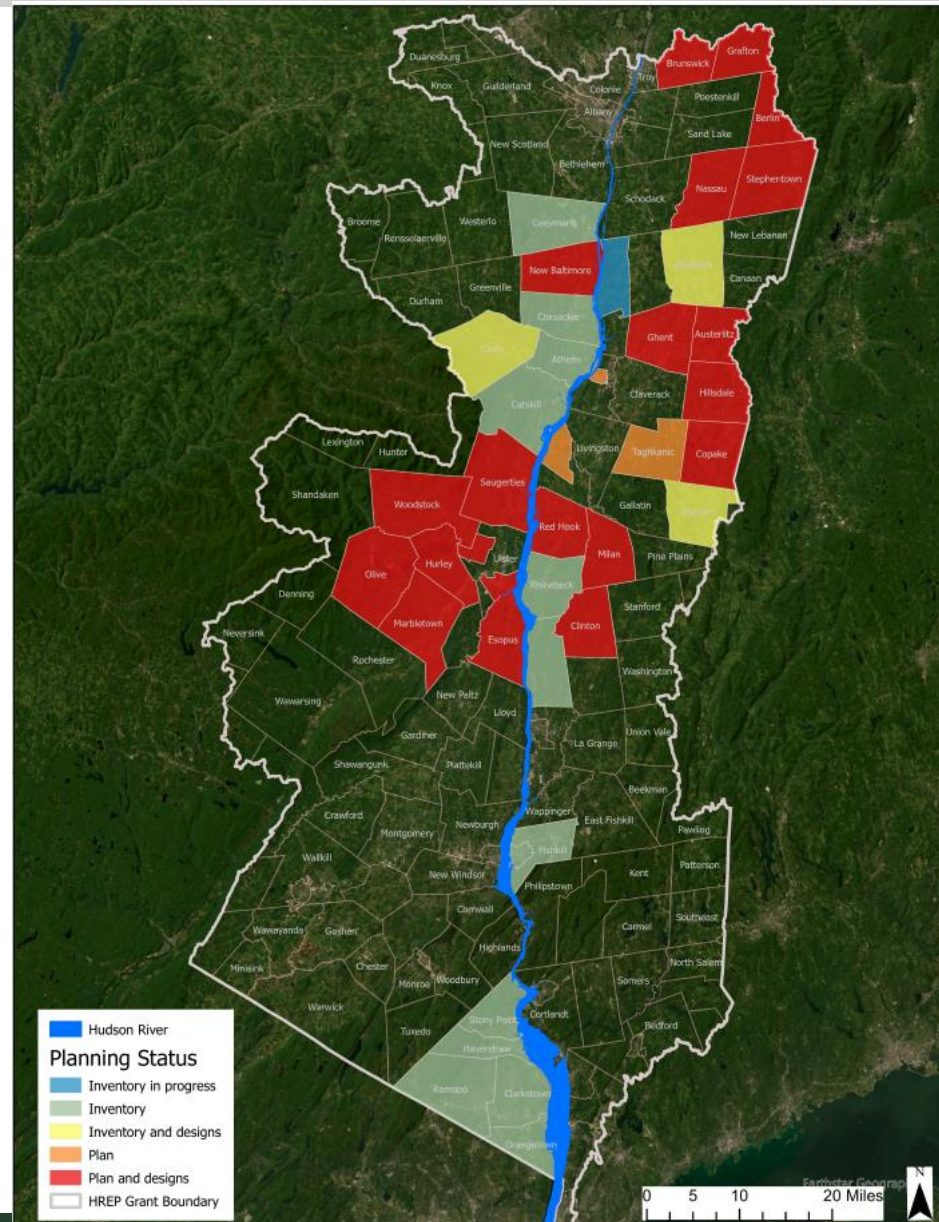
Before



After

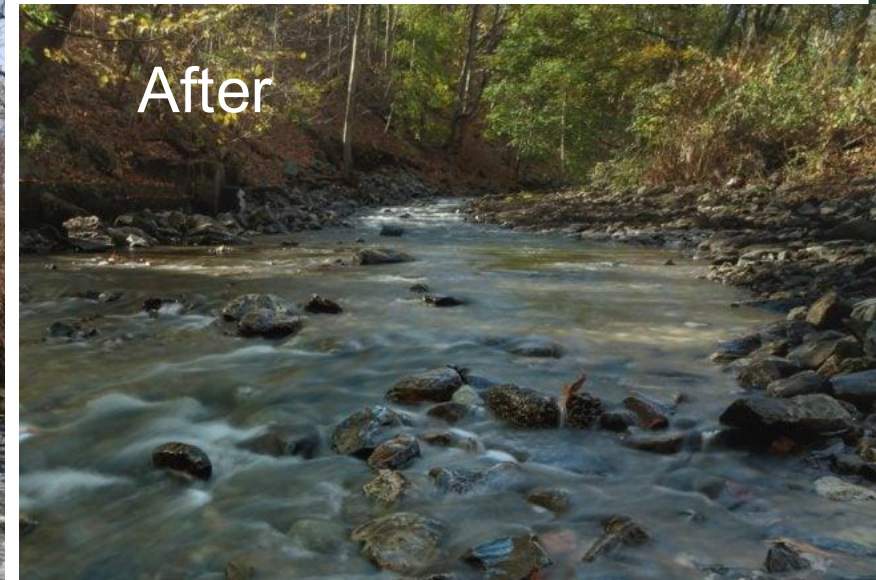
Road/Stream Crossing Mgmt. Plans and Designs

- 43 RSX Management Plans
- 50 conceptual designs



Quassaick Creek –Strooks Felt Dam 2020

- 1st upstream dam
- C. of Newburgh, Orange County, Riverkeeper
- Blue crab observed upstream



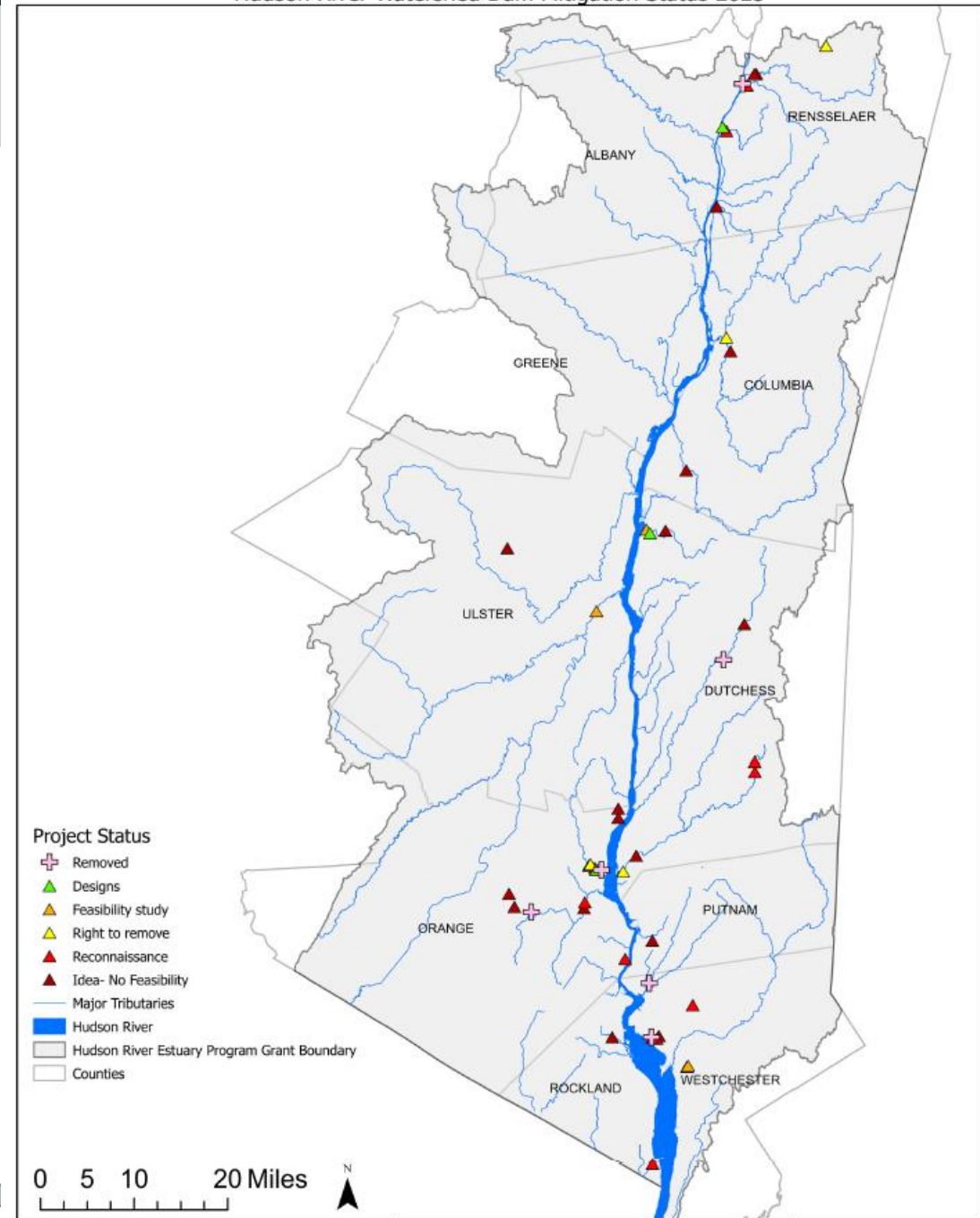
Dam Removal Locations and Opportunities

~45 dams in a spectrum of stages
(in the pipeline):

- Interested owners
- Studies
- Designs
- Permits
- Removals

~10 removal in near term

Hudson River Watershed Dam Mitigation Status 2025





Implementation Resources

Hudson River Estuary Grants Program

Funding for municipalities and non-profit organizations to implement priorities in the Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda, through New York State's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF).

Grant Opportunities:

- Local Stewardship Planning
- River Education
- River Access
- Tributary Restoration and Resiliency

[Grants Webpage](#)



Image credit: OLIN



Municipal Planning for Forest Conservation: Opportunity for Technical Assistance Now Open!

3 Municipalities will be selected to work with the Hudson River Estuary Program Conservation and Land Use Team Staff and Hudsonia in 2026-2027

Through this project, municipal decision-makers will actively participate in conservation planning steps that will generate resources to inform their municipality, including:

- a report describing forests in the municipality, illustrated with maps;
- a list of areas and/or parcels prioritized based on community goals and ecological values; and
- a brief report describing municipal land-use policies and land protection approaches to support

Resources will support future initiatives such as updating a natural resources inventory or comprehensive plan, planning outreach to forest landowners and community members, or pursuing new policies (e.g. conservation overlay zoning or financing for land protection).

Application Deadline is May 6, 2026.

[View the Request for Applications](#)

Questions? Contact Christine Vanderlan, christine.vanderlan@dec.ny.gov.

Implementation Resources WQIP

[WQIP Grants](#) support projects that **improve water quality** across New York

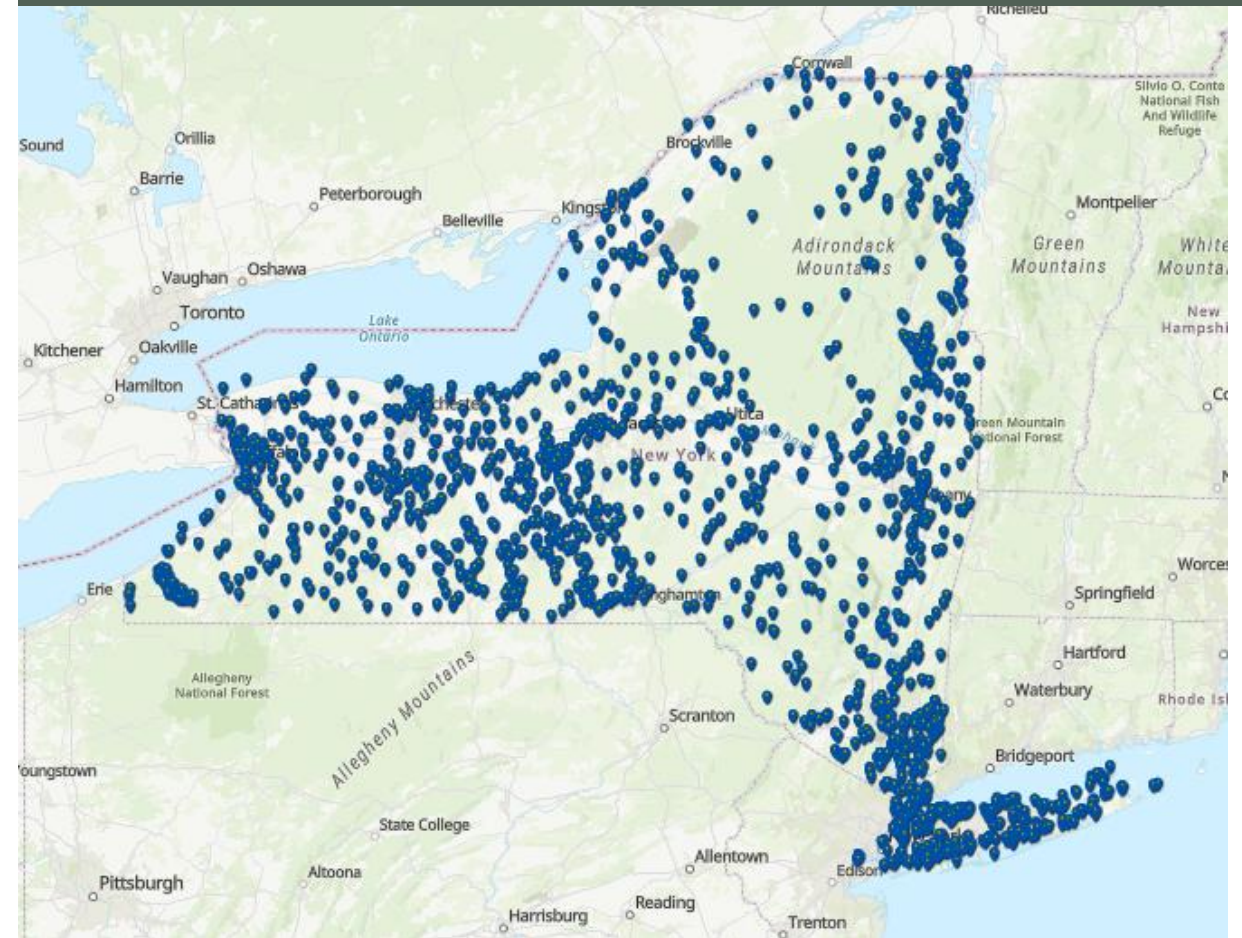
Focus areas include:

- Wastewater infrastructure upgrades
- Nonpoint source pollution reduction
- Land acquisition for water protection
- Salt storage & road runoff management
- Aquatic habitat restoration

Advances **climate resilience, environmental justice, and ecosystem health**

Competitive grants for **municipalities & nonprofits**

Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) Program



Implementation Resources - NPG

[non-ag nonpoint source grant](#) planning programs, supports **planning for water quality projects** (not construction)

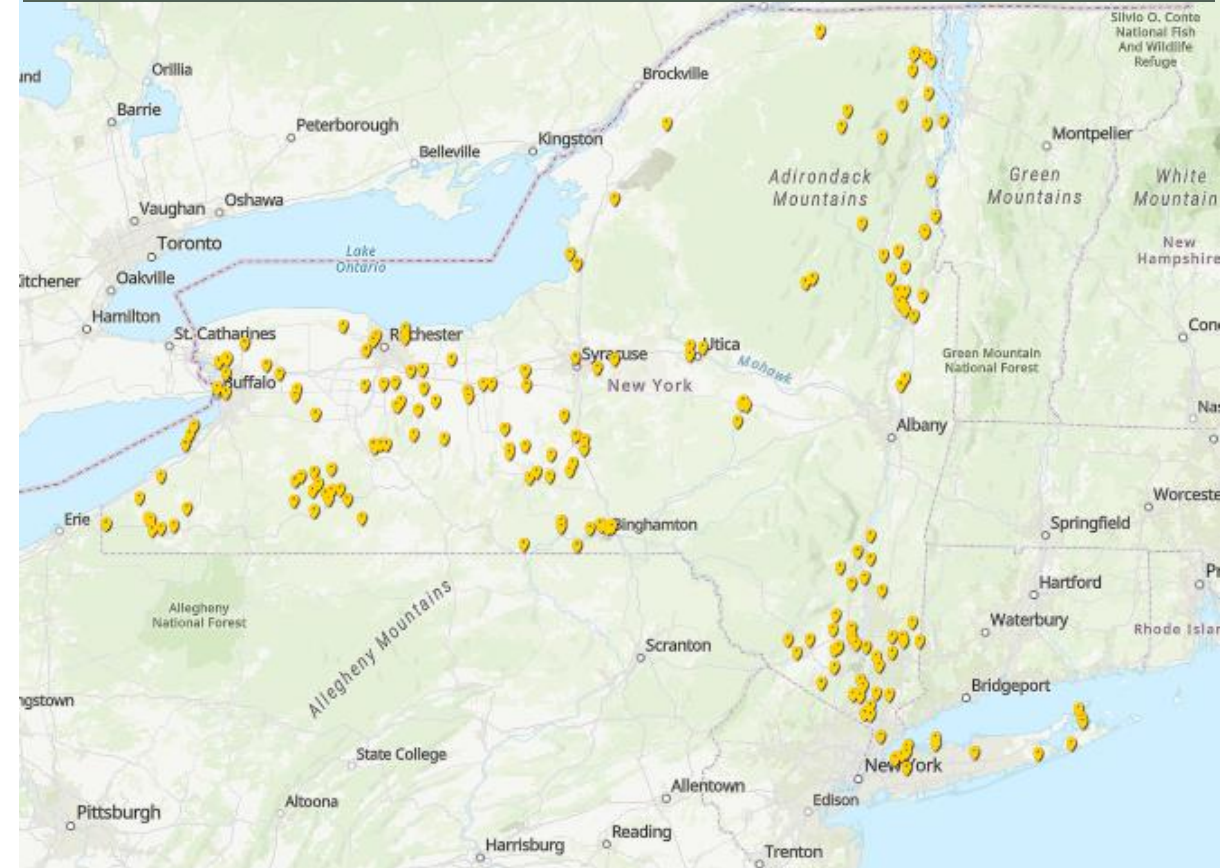
Helps prepare projects to be **competitive for WQIP & other implementation funding**

Funds:

- Watershed & project planning reports
- Feasibility studies (green infrastructure, stream restoration, culverts, etc.)
- Stormwater sewer (MS4) mapping in urban areas

To view previously awarded projects, please visit the [Division of Water Grants Data Portal](#), which contains a comprehensive dataset of projects awarded through the Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) and Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning (NPG) in an easy-to-use map.

Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning And MS4 Mapping Grant (NPG)

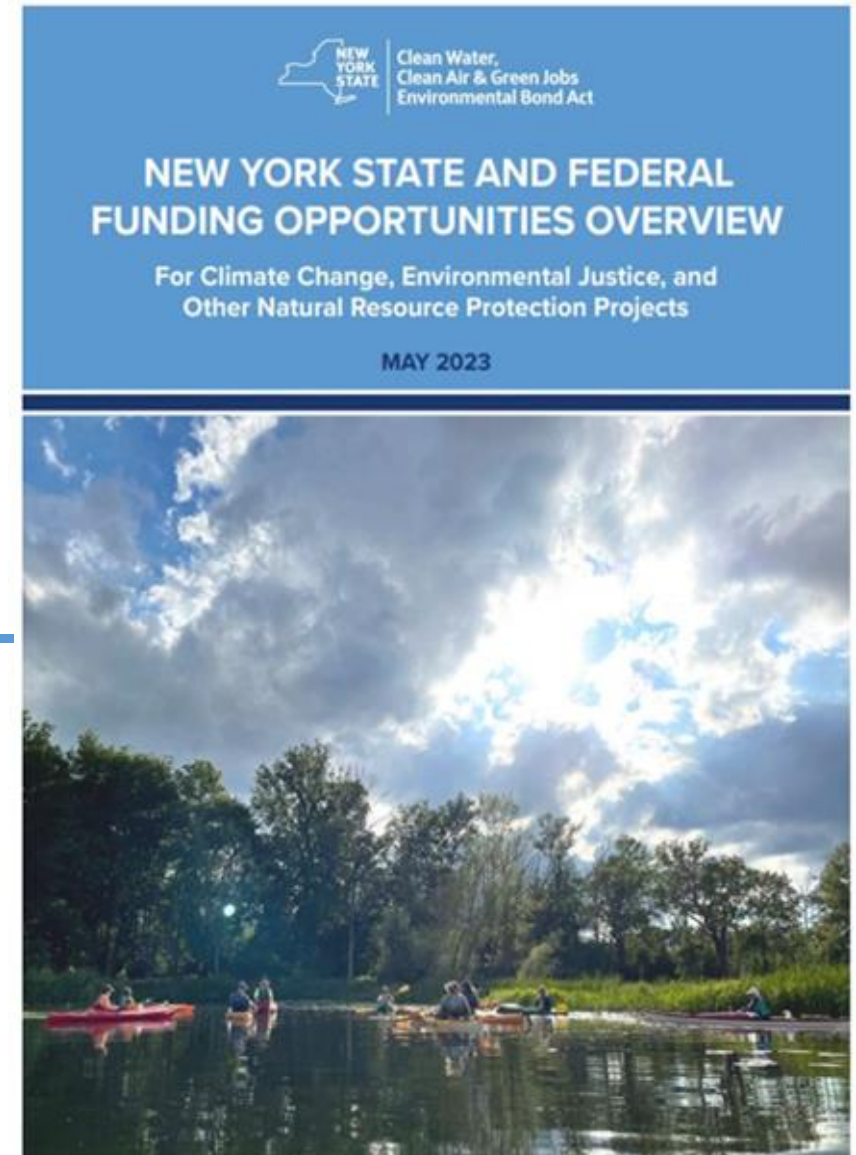


Bond Act Funding Opportunities

New Yorkers approved the \$4.2 billion **Environmental Bond Act** in November 2022

- **Climate Change Mitigation-** \$1.5 Billion to Reduce Air Pollution and Fight Climate Change
- **Restoration & Flood Risk Reduction-** \$1.1 Billion to Protect Communities from Flood Risks
- **Water Quality Improvement & Resilient Infrastructure-** \$650 Million to Safeguard Drinking Water Sources and Reduce Water Pollution
- **Open Space Land Conservation & Recreation-** \$650 Million to Improve Access to and Protect Nature

https://dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/bondactinfodoc.pdf



Bond Act Funding Finder

<https://environmentalbondact.ny.gov/pages/funding-opportunities>



An Official Website of the State of New York

ENVIRONMENTAL BOND ACT

FUNDING ▾

PROJECTS

PRIORITIES

RESOURCES ▾

NEWS

Fund My Project

The funding finder is provided to help find funding for a project. This tool includes funding from a wide variety of sources and includes, but is not limited to, programs using funds from the Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022.

How to use

This simple tool allows grant seekers to filter through grants based on categories including: eligible applicants, project type, project phase, and regional coverage. The results of your search within the tool will provide a direct link to the Request for Proposals (RFP) of the grant(s) that best meet your search result. For additional information, contact the grant agent directly with more specific questions about a funding program.

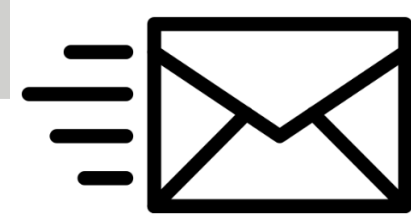
Steps to using the Funding Finder

1. There are three categories that you can use to filter or narrow down your search: **Eligible Applicants, Project Type, Regional Coverage**
2. When a category is selected, the tool will produce a search result that includes all grants covered by that category
3. As the choices are selected under any category, the tool will narrow down the options in the other categories based on selection
4. As selections are made, a list of all the pertinent grants will populate on the right hand side where you can read more information and access the specific grant announcement

Potential Funding Sources

- Hudson River Estuary Program Grants (<https://dec.ny.gov/nature/waterbodies/oceans-estuaries/udson-river-estuary-program/grants-funding-opportunities>)
- Forest Conservation Technical Assistance RFA DUE MAY 6 (<https://hudson.dnr.cals.cornell.edu/news-and-announcements/forest-conservation-technical-assistance-opportunity-hudson-valley>)
- Trees for Tribs program (<https://dec.ny.gov/nature/waterbodies/oceans-estuaries/udson-river-estuary-program/udson-estuary-trees-for-tribs>)
- Water Quality Improvement Program Grants (<https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/grant-applications/wqip-program>)
- Department of State Grants – Inland Flooding
- Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning and MS4 Mapping Grant (NPG) Program(<https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/grant-applications/non-agricultural-nonpoint-source-planning-ms4-mapping-grant>)
- Environmental Facilities Corporation (<https://efc.ny.gov/apply>)
- Resilient NY (<https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/water/water-quantity/resilient-ny>)
- Tips on Navigating Funding (<https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/grant-applications/funding-finder-tool>)
- Bond Act Funding Finder Tool (<https://environmentalbondact.ny.gov/pages/funding-opportunities>)

Sign up for newsletters for announcements



- Join Hudson RiverNet Newsletter for Estuary Program Announcements: www.dec.ny.gov/lands/76018.html
- Join MakingWaves for Program Announcements: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/290.html>
- DEC Grant Opportunities- https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/NYSDEC/subscriber/new?topic_id=NYSDEC_66

Thank you for listening!

***Questions, comments and
thoughts are welcomed!***

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