



**Hudson River
Valley Greenway**



**MAURICE D. HINCHEY
Hudson River Valley
National Heritage Area**

HUDSON RIVER VALLEY GREENWAY 2024 Annual Report





Strength in our Roots, Vision for our Future

What a year it's been! We've seen old friends moving on, embraced new people who will champion our mission, and we continued to offer the meaningful programs, relationships, and grants that support our partners throughout this amazing Hudson River Valley.



Making connections between the Greenway and our partners is the foundation of our work. Nothing demonstrates this more than completing more than 750 miles of New York's Empire State Trail. The trail not only connects our Hudson River Valley community, but it reaches west to Buffalo and north to Canada. Its completion would not have been possible without the strong support from our state agency and municipal partnerships that ensured the project was completed on time.

Our numbers speak for themselves. The Greenway awarded 33 grants this year to support trail planning and construction and help towns to plan their futures through a comprehensive approach grounded in Greenway principals. Our 31 National Heritage Area grants and sponsorships supported a wide range of interpretive programs, preservation activities, and events to raise awareness for our shared heritage. Our signature program, the Hudson River Valley Ramble drew more than 36,000 participants to 156 unique events offered during the month of September.

This year we also wished Scott Keller well in his retirement after serving our organization for the past 38 years, including the last seven as Executive Director. We also selected Andy Kitzmann to join us as our next executive director to build on our excellent work over the past four decades and lead us forward into our bright future.

As we wrap up the past year with pride, we look forward with excitement to continuing to champion the value and natural beauty of our Hudson River Valley.

Kevin Burke & Meg Downey

*Chairs, Hudson River Valley Greenway / Maurice D. Hinchey
Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area*

*Guided paddle
at Tivoli Bay*

Our Unique Partnership

The Hudson River Valley Greenway serves as an umbrella for three unique groups that each offer a distinct approach to achieving Greenway principles. Two of our organizations are New York State-based entities and the third is a program of the National Park Service. This model demonstrates the best of a public-private approach to improving the quality of life in the region by bringing together likeminded people who are dedicated to enhancing our quality of life.

The Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council is a state agency established to coordinate with local and county governments to support voluntary local land use planning techniques grounded in Greenway criteria.

The Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc. is a state public benefit corporation that promotes the region as a single tourism destination area, assists in the preservation of agriculture, natural and recreational resources, and strengthens state agency cooperation with local governments.

The Maurice D. Hinchey Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area was designated by Congress to recognize the importance of the historic, cultural, and natural resources of the Hudson River Valley to the nation.



Greenway Grant Programs Make a Difference



Sound planning for public projects requires dedicated volunteers, organizations, and municipalities. Access to Greenway Grants ensures projects are completed. The Hudson River Valley Greenway is proud to offer a wide range of grant opportunities to our partners that support community planning, trail development and construction, interpretation, and heritage and cultural preservation. In 2023, we awarded 64 grants and sponsorships from our state and federal programs; and 70 projects from the current and prior years were completed.



“The HRVG grant funding has been vital in advancing our mission to conserve critical grassland habitat. Skirting the grassland restoration area, the trail serves as an outdoor classroom and a recreational resource for birders and hikers. We are deeply grateful to HRVG for helping us foster community engagement, enhance the visibility of GBT and our partners, and support our efforts to protect grassland habitats.”

– Bonnie Nightingale, Stewardship & Outreach Director

COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS

13

Awarded

11

Completed

CONSERVANCY TRAIL GRANTS

20

Awarded

15

Completed

HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

2

Awarded

15

Completed

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA SPONSORSHIPS

29

Awarded and Completed

GRANT HIGHLIGHTS:

Grassland Bird Trust Birding Loop Trail

Located at the Alfred Z. Solomon Viewing Area in Fort Edward, NY, the trail is a 2.5-mile loop within the heart of the Audubon-designated Important Bird Area, a part of the 102,000-acre Washington County Grassland Bird Conservation Center.



Village of Cold Spring Zoning Code Update

The Village of Cold Spring in Putnam County received a Community Planning Grant to update their zoning code. The Village’s zoning code updates focused on walkability, access to transit, mixed-uses, and compact building design. Preservation updates relate to the Village’s Historic District and included updated review guidelines for architectural features of new construction, renovations, and structural improvements.

Greater Hudson Heritage Network Stone Strategies: Documentation, Stewardship & Conservation of Historic Cemeteries

A \$30,000 Hudson River Valley Greenway sponsorship supported Greater Hudson Heritage Network’s conservation and maintenance techniques programs for historic cemeteries. 74 participants from 25 cultural heritage organizations learned about preservation techniques of these important places.



Historic Huguenot Street, New Paltz

Partners

AHET Trail Storm Cleanup

Albany-Hudson Electric Trail

Managed by the Hudson River Valley Greenway, this section of the Empire State Trail crosses multiple jurisdictions and is maintained by a network of dedicated friend's groups and municipalities. Their work is critical to having a safe, fun, and clean public trail.

Our thanks to the volunteer groups and municipal partners who maintain 36 miles of trail through the work of 46 volunteers who logged more than 950 hours.

36

Miles of Trail

950

Volunteer Hours



Heritage Sites Program

To help showcase the unique and varied stories found throughout the Hudson River Valley, the Greenway offers a formal Heritage Sites program for arts, cultural and heritage sites located throughout the valley. This unique network brings together more than 100 local, state, federal, and nonprofit organizations that together tell a complete story of the Hudson River Valley heritage experience. These stories include a wide range of themes like the Underground Railroad, Women's suffrage, art, and the Revolutionary War.

HERITAGE SITE HIGHLIGHT

Historic Cherry Hill, located in Albany, is one of our designated Heritage Sites. The site was the family home for five generations of Van Rensselaer's. Today, school groups and visitors experience the site through tours and access to thousands of artifacts and manuscripts. The documents span three centuries of the family's history and help build critical thinking skills about our shared history.



Communities & Compacts

Sound planning is the foundation of vibrant communities. To support Hudson River Valley communities in planning for their future, the Greenway works on a voluntary basis to assist in the development of local land use plans and programs related to the Greenway criteria. Planning can happen with a single community or a group of communities working together to address common solutions for shared challenges.

\$161,390

Awarded to support planning efforts

COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

In December 2023, the Town of Greenwich completed an update to a region-wide comprehensive plan that included both the Village of Greenwich and Washington County. This collaborative effort embraces the Greenway Criteria by encouraging municipal cooperation to further natural, cultural, and recreational resource protection, compatible economic development, and public access and participation.

A total of \$161,390 was awarded to 13 Greenway towns and villages to support planning efforts for a variety of needs.

- **Town of East Fishkill**, Dutchess, Comprehensive Plan Update
- **Village of Irvington**, Westchester, River Towns Feasibility Study of Food Scraps Curbside Collection
- **Town of Amenia**, Dutchess, Comprehensive Plan Update
- **Town of Pawling**, Dutchess, Housing Assessment & Strategy Report
- **Town of Easton**, Washington, Green Energy Law
- **Town of Gallatin**, Columbia, Zoning Code Update
- **Town of Greenwich**, Washington, Zoning Code Update
- **Town of North Greenbush**, Rensselaer, Community Profile & Housing Assessment
- **Town of Westerlo**, Albany, Codification of Local Laws
- **Village of Schuylerville**, Saratoga, Comprehensive Plan Update
- **Town of Chatham**, Columbia, New Zoning Regulations
- **Town of Poestenkill**, Rensselaer, Comprehensive Plan
- **Village of Athens, Greene**, Athens Riverine Living Museum and Education Center



Hudson River Valley Ramble

The Hudson River Valley Ramble has been celebrating the rich history, culture and natural resources of the Maurice D. Hinchey Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, for the past 23 years. Ramblers come from far and wide to discover the riches our Valley has to offer. Whether you are interested in a challenging hike, bike ride or paddle, an inspiring walk through the grounds and homes of some of the Valley's most notable artists, authors and Great Americans, the Hudson River Valley Ramble offers something for everyone!

36,368

Ramble Participants

156

Ramble Events



“We have participated in Ramble programs for a number of years and enjoyed learning about different areas of the Hudson River Valley we’ve never explored. Innisfree Garden in particular is a gem. I will be returning to see the seasonal changes and take in the beauty of gardens.”

— Ramble Participant



Photo: Suzy Allman

RAMBLE HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS:

Kayak to Nyack

Participants got out on the Hudson River and paddled across Haverstraw Bay near the Mario Cuomo Bridge, then back again.

Hudson River Skywalk Arts Festival

The festival celebrates the art of the Hudson Valley and the Hudson River Skywalk, a picturesque pedestrian path connecting Thomas Cole National Historic Site and Frederic Church’s Olana State Historic Site

Hints of Autumn: Nut Walk at Historic Huguenot Street

Participants joined an ethnoecologist to explore the site’s many nut-bearing trees at the Nyquist-Harcourt Wildlife Sanctuary. The walk was conducted through the lens of Northeastern native voices, history, and folklore.

AHET Inaugural Trail Ride 2024

This past September, Hudson River Valley Greenway offered our first guided trail ride as part of the Ramble. Cyclists of all abilities experienced the trail through part of Columbia County along the Albany-Hudson Electric Trail, a 36-mile rail trail with a rich history and abundant natural scenic beauty. The ride included brief stops to discuss the history of the electric trail, local businesses, and a tour of the North Chatham Trolley Depot.



Riders outside the North Chatham Trolley Depot.

Numbers over the year

74

participants supported through Greater Hudson Heritage Network conservation workshops

3

historic sites sponsored for TAG grants by Preservation League of New York State



108

miles of trails
planned or
created

64

Hudson River
Valley Greenway
grants and
sponsorships
made

106

designated
Historic Sites

118

designated
water trail sites

75,000

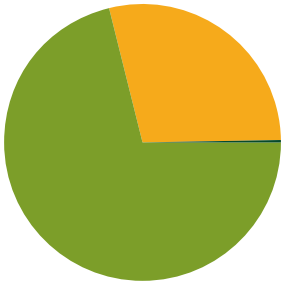
publications distributed



Financial Statements

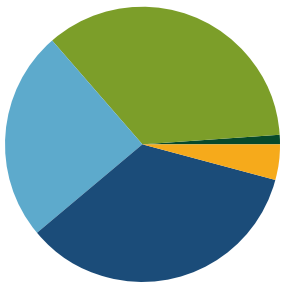
For the period April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024

Income inclusive of Council, Conservancy, and National Heritage Area combined.



REVENUE

● State	1,538,029
● Federal	617,933
● Non governmental	2,768
Total Revenue	2,158,730



EXPENSES

● Program services	94,424
● Grants Completed	756,731
● Capital*	533,364
● Management & Administration	765,905
● Other	2,768
Total Expenses	2,153,192

BALANCE SHEET

Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley

Operations	376,788
Trail Grants	289,408
Empire State Trail	533,364
Program	94,424
Total	1,293,984

Hudson River Valley Communities Council

Operations	95,517
Grants	145,758
Total	241,275

Maurice D. Hinchey Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area

FEDERAL APPROPRIATION

Management and Operations	296,368
Programs and Grants Awarded	321,565
Total	617,933

*Hudson River Valley Greenway manages the Albany-Hudson Electric Trail, a 36-mile multi-use trail located between the cities of Hudson and Rensselaer and continues to support Empire State Trail activity.

Transitions

Our thanks to Betty Head

Our sincere appreciation to **Betty Head** for her nine years of service on the Board of Directors of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council. Ms. Head was appointed to the board by the Albany County Executive on November 2, 2015.



Congratulations to Scott Keller on his retirement

Scott Keller has retired from the Hudson River Valley Greenway after 38 years of service. Scott's careful stewardship of our resources, support in the creation of the Empire State Trail, and his skilled leadership as Executive Director are just a few of the reasons he leaves us so well positioned to take on the next phase of the Greenway's work. Scott's dedication to the Greenway can best be defined by his preferred method of commuting: paddling to work across the Hudson River!

Above: Scott kayaking on the Hudson River.

We Recognize David Sampson and Barnabas McHenry

David Sampson served as the founding Executive Director of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council. David passed away earlier this year, and his voice and passion for the Greenway will be missed. We appreciate his strong executive leadership throughout the formative years of the Greenway and recognized the contribution his work had in building a foundation for the success of our organization.

Barnabas McHenry was the founding Chairman of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council, a leadership position he retired from in 2022. Barnabas' lifelong work for the Greenway was done in close partnership with many state leaders and community supporters and established the Greenway as a strong and trusted organization in the Hudson Valley.



David Sampson and Barnabas McHenry (foreground).

Courtesy: Albany Times Union



Greenway Conservancy for the Hudson River Valley, Inc.

LEADERSHIP

- Kevin M. Burke – Chair
Appointed by Governor
- Elizabeth Jacks—Vice Chair
Appointed by Greenway Council
- Jayne McLaughlin – Treasurer
Appointed by Assembly Minority Leader
- Sarah Olson – Secretary
Appointed by Greenway Council
- Kristin C. Brown
Appointed by Assembly Speaker
- Jane Daniels
Appointed by Governor
- Hon. Michelle Hinchey
Appointed by Senate Majority Leader
- Sara Idleman
Appointed by Greenway Council
- Cindy Lanzetta
Appointed by Greenway Council
- Dr. Dennis J. Murray
Appointed by Greenway Council
- Daniela Weiss
Appointed by Governor
- Jeanne Williams
Appointed by Greenway Council
- Stefan Yarabek
Appointed by Greenway Council

Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council

LEADERSHIP

- Meg Downey—Chair
Appointed by Governor
- J. Winthrop Aldrich—Vice Chair
Appointed by Governor
- Vincent Altieri
Appointed by Rockland County Executive
- Hon. Anil Beephan, Jr.
Appointed by Assembly Minority Leader
- Kathleen Bucholsky
Appointed by Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chair
- Jennifer Carlquist
Appointed by Putnam County Executive
- Carla Castillo
Appointed by Senate Majority Leader
- Robert W. Elliott III
Appointed by Westchester County Executive
- Hon. Christopher Eachus
Appointed by Assembly Speaker
- Marcel Florestal
Appointed by Senate Minority Leader
- Betty Head
Appointed by Albany County Executive
- G. Angela Henry
Appointed by Dutchess County Executive

- Mary McNamara
Appointed by Ulster County Executive
- Anthony Piscitelli
Appointed by Mayor of New York City
- Johanna (Yaun) Porr
Appointed by Mayor of New York City
- Matthew Schneid
Appointed by Mayor of New York City
- Linda von der Heide
Appointed by Rensselaer County Executive

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE GREEWAY CONSERVACY AND THE COMMUNITIES COUNCIL

- Richard Ball
Commissioner, NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets
- Marie Therese Dominguez
Commissioner, NYS Department of Transportation
- Hope Knight
President, CEO and Commissioner of Empire State Development
- Sean Mahar
Interim Commissioner, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
- Jeanette M. Moy
Commissioner, NYS Office of General Services
- Walter Mosley
Secretary of State, NYS Department of State
- Randy Simons
Commissioner Pro Tem, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation



MAURICE D. HINCHEY
Hudson River Valley
National Heritage Area

Governor of New York State
Kathy Hochul

Congressional Delegation

US SENATORS

Charles Schumer
Kirsten Gillibrand

US CONGRESS

Elise Stefanik, NY21
Paul D. Tonko, NY20
Marcus Molinaro, NY19
Patrick Ryan, NY18
Michael Lawler, NY17
Jamaal Bowman, NY16

Staff

Andy Kitzmann, Executive Director
Cody Arana, Event Coordinator
Andy Beers, Project Manager
Elizabeth Campochiaro, Trails and Community Outreach Director
Shannon Day, Director of Operations
Dan Jeanson, Project Director



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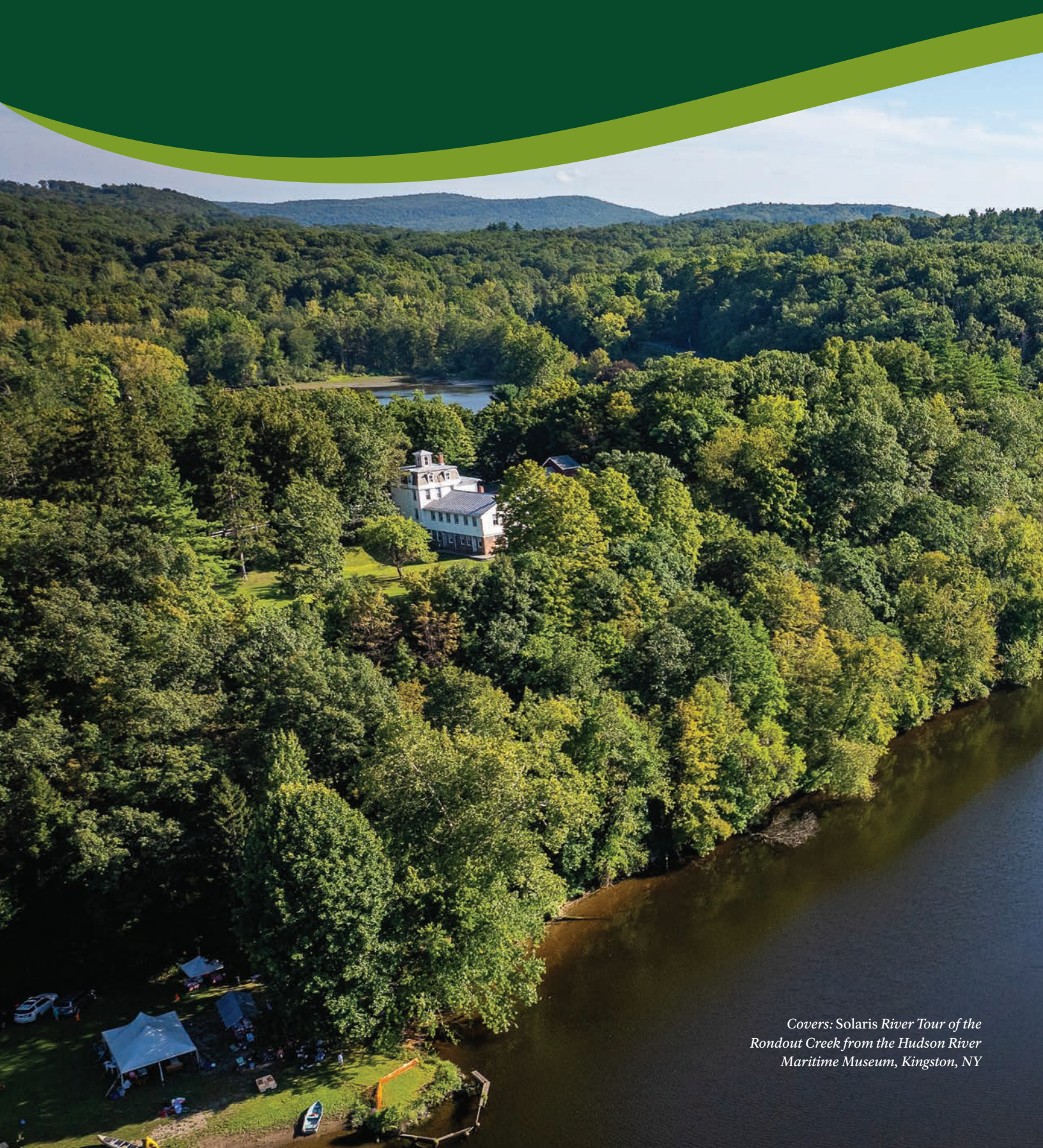


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National Heritage Area



A MEMBER OF THE
National Heritage
Area System

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*Covers: Solaris River Tour of the
Rondout Creek from the Hudson River
Maritime Museum, Kingston, NY*