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## **Scenic Hudson Succeeds in Getting NYS DEC to Confirm Limited Scope of South Bay Permit**

### **Group supports getting truck traffic off neighborhood streets and making South Bay strong community asset**

**HUDSON** – Following Scenic Hudson’s challenge of a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) permit granted to the O&G Industries trucking company, the DEC has clarified that the permit is limited to select maintenance activities on an abandoned railroad bed that runs through South Bay. Scenic Hudson launched its appeal with the State Freshwater Wetlands Appeals Board because Scenic Hudson believed that the DEC issued the permit without considering implications the permit would have on the city’s ongoing waterfront planning process and without fully considering the best alternative route for the truck traffic. The appeal was recently settled by a written stipulation between Scenic Hudson and DEC, based on DEC’s clarification of the permit provisions and agreement about how future permit applications will be administered.

#### **Importance of getting huge trucks out of neighborhoods understood**

Scenic Hudson stressed that it supports getting O&G’s industrial trucks away from running on their current route through City of Hudson neighborhood streets. The land preservation and environmental nonprofit said the city’s in-progress waterfront revitalization planning effort is the best way to create a well-thought-out solution that will best resolve the trucking nuisance and safety issues while protecting South Bay and providing future opportunities for the unique natural area to be restored and enjoyed by residents.

The action makes clear that the DEC permit is not—contrary to the company’s public assertions—a substitute for any approvals that O&G would otherwise need to secure from the City of Hudson and Town of Greenport, including following requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). Also, when future wetlands permits from DEC are required relative to South Bay, the agency will provide immediate notice to Scenic Hudson, which will create an opportunity for public input for the DEC’s consideration as part of the review. Scenic Hudson is prepared to provide the DEC with reports about South Bay’s current condition and possibilities for future ecological restoration to inform the agency’s consideration of future permit requests.

#### **City asked trucking company to hold off permit request**

“Residents and community groups have a right to comment on projects like this. And even with a strong desire to solve the truck situation, the public deserves a fair and comprehensive look at a range of options rather than pursuing the most expedient alternative,” said Steve Rosenberg, senior vice president of Scenic Hudson. “The city’s own attorney asked O&G to hold off on applying for the permit until the city could conclude its waterfront planning initiative. The request makes sense because that’s the right way to decide on the truck route—as part of a bigger-picture look at revitalizing the city’s waterfront,” he added.

“The truck traffic is an important issue, and so is South Bay, which could become a great place for residents to enjoy and a significant contributor to economic revitalization,” stated Mr. Rosenberg.  
(more)

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Scenic Hudson will stay active on the trucking issue as the waterfront planning process unfolds. The group underscored that the New York State Department of State's (DOS) historic 2005 decision to deny permits for the massive coal-fired plant being sought by St. Lawrence Cement outlined an environmentally and economically healthy vision for the community and Hudson Valley. That vision included transforming unused or underused industrial waterfronts into healthy, beautiful and thriving public waterfronts complemented by a mix of light industrial, professional services, construction trades and other clean businesses along with public recreation and tourism.

In fact the DOS decision stated:

“Since the 1980’s, urban centers along the Hudson have experienced a dramatic shift, moving from industrial uses and brownfields to mixed-use redevelopment, recreation, cultural activities, and, increasingly, high-tech businesses. This shift in land use coincides with a shift in the valley’s economic engine from industrial uses to tourism, office, high-tech and retail activities. These new uses have generated spin-off businesses and a wide range of stable and growing employment and revenues.

Tourism spending in the 10-county Hudson Valley region is \$4.7 billion annually, and the tourism industry is responsible for 80,000 jobs in the valley. In Columbia County tourists each year spend \$105 million that is responsible for almost 1,500 jobs and a \$6.3-million contribution in local taxes.

### **About Scenic Hudson**

Scenic Hudson works to protect and restore the Hudson River and its majestic landscape as an irreplaceable national treasure and a vital resource for residents and visitors. A crusader for the valley since 1963, we are credited with saving fabled Storm King Mountain from a destructive industrial project and launching the modern grass-roots environmental movement. Today with more than 25,000 ardent supporters, we are the largest environmental group focused on the Hudson River Valley. Our team of experts combines land acquisition, support for agriculture, citizen-based advocacy and sophisticated planning tools to create environmentally healthy communities, champion smart economic growth, open up riverfronts to the public and preserve the valley’s inspiring beauty and natural resources. To date Scenic Hudson has created or enhanced more than 40 parks up and down the Hudson River and preserved more than 25,000 acres.

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