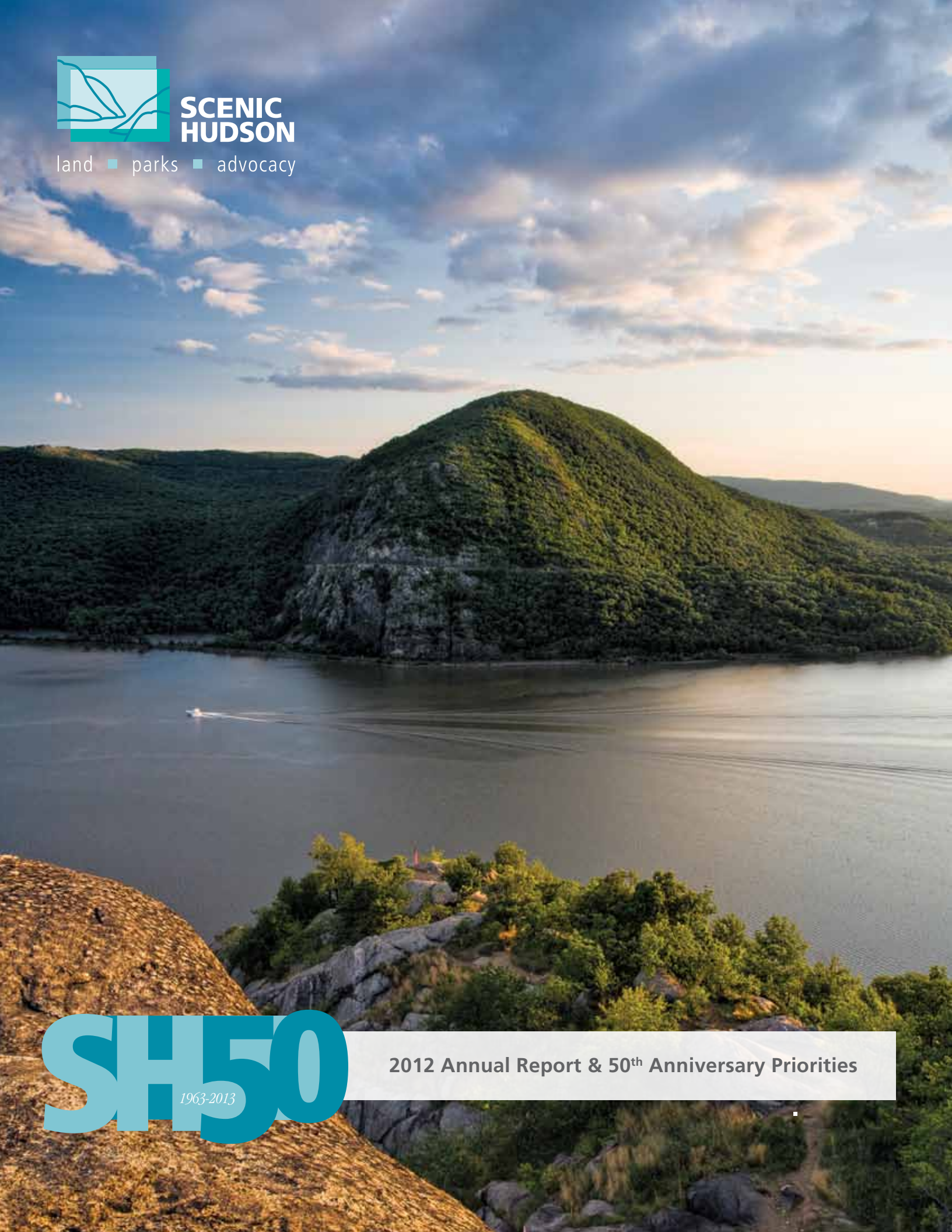




**SCENIC
HUDSON**

land ■ parks ■ advocacy



SH50
1963-2013

2012 Annual Report & 50th Anniversary Priorities



In 1963 Scenic Hudson's founders set out to protect revered Storm King Mountain in the Hudson Highlands from a proposed power plant. The successful campaign lasted 17 years, but early on achieved a landmark legal victory—the "Scenic Hudson Decision." It democratized the environmental movement, unleashing the power of an informed, engaged citizenry to protect cherished natural resources.

The resulting principle—that citizens have legal standing to support or oppose projects affecting the environment—went "viral" decades before invention of the World Wide Web. Thousands of national and local environmental groups sprang up in the decision's wake, helping to implement new laws that for the first time required consideration and balancing of environmental impacts before projects were permitted.

For nearly five decades, Scenic Hudson has played an unparalleled role in preserving the Hudson Valley's treasured resources and shaping development along the banks of its famed river. We've created parks and "outdoor classrooms" that connect people with the Hudson's beauty and spiritual power. Farmland permanently protected through our easements provides fresh, healthy produce to our towns and New York City greenmarkets. And the public policy and laws we've crafted and advocated for ensure the enduring health and prosperity of the valley and state.

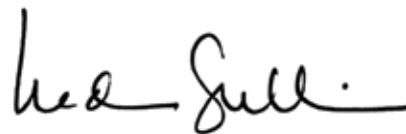
Our land protection and advocacy are based on science and cutting-edge strategies that ensure we Save the Land That Matters Most—properties possessing the greatest scenic, ecological and agricultural values. It also means we preserve habitats and species of national, even global importance. Looking to the future, we're putting science and waterfront-planning tools in the hands of citizens and local officials so their communities can adapt to rising sea levels and other climate-change impacts.

While rooted in a deep conservation ethic, our work increasingly is recognized as vital to sustaining the valley's economy. In building parks we create jobs and contribute fabulous destinations to a \$4.3-billion tourism industry. The "critical mass" of working farms we protect provides a foundation for an \$800-million agricultural economy. And the region's enduring beauty and quality of life are consistently ranked as top attractions by chief executives considering where to locate jobs.

In 2013—our 50th-anniversary year—we'll celebrate accomplishments made possible by thousands of dedicated citizens and partnerships with land conservation and environmental organizations, businesses and government. But more important, we'll tackle new projects and launch initiatives worthy of this milestone and the region's vibrant future. Margaret Mead's famous admonition—"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world"—certainly applies to Scenic Hudson's history. We're counting on you to ensure that these words are just as true in the year and decade ahead.



James C. Goodfellow, Board Chairman



Ned Sullivan, President



Connecting People to Nature

50 years of achievement

From Hudson River Park in **Manhattan** to the **Albany** County Rail Trail, we've created, enhanced or supported the development of more than 50 parks throughout the Hudson River Estuary. Spanning 6,000 acres and featuring over 75 miles of trails, these spectacular natural areas include pocket parks in Westchester providing vital links in the county's 51-mile RiverWalk, summits in the Hudson Highlands affording world-class vistas and tidal marshes abounding with wildlife. In communities such as **Yonkers, Tarrytown, Irvington** and **Beacon**, we've turned contaminated industrial lands into magnificent public spaces where schoolchildren come to learn and families gather for concerts, ball games and art classes.

Whether exploring the cascades at Falling Waters Preserve in Ulster County or the bird-filled meadows at Harrier Hill Park in Columbia County, Scenic Hudson parks offer a world of recreation and inspiration close to home. They also serve as the public face of many waterfront communities—and the catalyst for economic growth.

Latest successes

After protecting 87 acres adjacent to our Shaupeneak Ridge preserve in **Esopus**, Ulster County, we partnered with the Fats in the Cats Bicycle Club to create a new 1.5-mile trail that skirts dramatic rock ridges. We also completed construction of the two-mile Stockport-Greenport Trail in Columbia County. Traversing a picturesque wooded ravine, it leads from our Harrier Hill Park in **Stockport** to the Greenport Conservation Area. And our acquisition of 25 acres adjacent to habitat-rich Vosburgh Swamp in **Coxsackie**, Greene County, brings to nearly 300 acres the lands we've conserved on or near the river here, including our popular Four-Mile Point Preserve. It also offers the potential to increase public access to the swamp and trails linking to the preserve.





50th priorities—creating exciting parks and trails

We'll ensure that Gov. Cuomo's Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council, on which Ned Sullivan serves, continues to make critical investments in protecting, and connecting people to, the valley's natural treasures. We're also leading ambitious projects to create trails that will link parks and communities on both sides of the river. One of these, the Hudson Fjord Hike/Bike Trail, eventually could span from **Cold Spring** in Putnam County through the Highlands to **Beacon** and then across the Hudson River to **Newburgh**. Next year construction will commence on our fifth Westchester RiverWalk Park—Scenic Hudson Park at **Peekskill** Landing. And we'll celebrate the opening of a transformed West Point Foundry Preserve in Cold Spring, where new trails and interpretive features will tell the story of the 19th-century ironworks credited with winning the Civil War.



We'll also continue efforts to enhance habitats in our parks, important components of the valley's diverse but fragile ecosystem. Informed by an inventory of habitat-restoration opportunities we recently conducted on 16,000 acres preserved by Scenic Hudson, we're engaged in projects to restore bird-friendly grasslands, rehabilitate shorelines and eradicate invasive species that prevent native plants and wildlife from thriving.



50 years of achievement

The photos opposite tell the story of Scenic Hudson's success all along the Hudson Riverfront. Family-friendly Long Dock Park in **Beacon** replaces a former junkyard and oil-storage facility. A contaminated lumberyard in **Irvington** becomes a waterfront park with ball fields and a senior center. In **Tarrytown** an asphalt plant is relocated and a riverfront esplanade takes its place. And Walkway Over the Hudson, formerly the dilapidated **Poughkeepsie** Railroad Bridge, now welcomes 30,000 visitors a month.



Since 2000 Scenic Hudson has invested more than \$58 million in salvaging riverside properties—the first step in helping communities create economically vibrant waterfronts. Our planning expertise and grassroots mobilization also have proven essential in turning eyesores on the Hudson into exciting public amenities that attract new jobs, residents and tourists.

Latest successes

We celebrated the opening of three spectacular new riverfront amenities—Long Dock Park, Scenic Hudson RiverWalk Park in **Tarrytown** and the Kathryn W. Davis RiverWalk Center in **Sleepy Hollow**. We also co-hosted a series of forums (based on our award-winning planning guide, *Revitalizing Hudson Riverfronts*) to ensure the Hudson remains the welcoming front door and economic driver in waterfront communities. Local officials and citizens explored innovative ways to strengthen local connections to the river and provide new

links to waterfront assets in nearby towns. They also began to consider strategies to prepare for rising sea levels.

50th priorities—extending waterfront opportunities

We're spearheading a collaborative initiative to extend the success of Walkway Over the Hudson, which already has pumped \$24 million into local economies since 2009. We and our partners will propose new zoning in neighborhoods adjacent to the park that could encourage visitors to extend their stays—for days or even years. And we're creating a unifying brand to promote the entire Walkway region as a destination for recreation and heritage-based tourism.



We also continue watchdogging developments—such as those proposed for the former Dutton lumberyard property in **Poughkeepsie** and the Hudson Valley Wine Village in **Lloyd**, Ulster County—to guarantee they won't block vital connections to the river or awe-inspiring views. And we're making sure that approved developments like Hudson Landing in **Kingston**, where we successfully advocated for a waterfront esplanade, deliver public amenities at the outset of construction.



Yonkers—A City Transformed

Scenic Hudson's work in Yonkers, the valley's largest city, best illustrates our ability to transform waterfronts and re-energize downtowns. In the mid-1980s, we halted proposed skyscrapers from blocking access to the river and spectacular Palisades views. An easement we secured along the river enabled creation of **Esplanade Park**, now a popular place for enjoying festivals, concerts, restaurants or a magnificent sunset. And we helped shape the city's sound Downtown Waterfront Master Plan, which led to the first new development in decades—right-sized buildings offering a mix of residential and commercial space.

We also worked with Westchester County to protect two waterfront acres and create **Habirshaw Park**. Home to the Beczak Environmental Education Center, it's the only place in Yonkers where children can dip a net—or a toe—in the water and learn about their role as environmental stewards.

Latest successes

For 80 years a parking lot greeted travelers exiting Yonkers' historic train station. Today they walk into a park stretching along both shores of the babbling Saw Mill River. Recognizing its potential to breathe new life into the downtown, Scenic Hudson experts drafted the initial plans for "daylighting" (or uncovering) stretches of this important Hudson River tributary. With the City of Yonkers, Daylight Yonkers and Groundwork Hudson Valley, we led efforts to secure state funding to turn our vision into an exciting destination—**Van der Donck Park at Larkin Plaza**.

The initiative already has attracted \$30 million to nearby revitalization projects. It has brought wildlife back to the Saw Mill: Students exploring the daylighted river recently discovered three fish species, including eels. And by capturing 170 tons of trash that formerly emptied into the Hudson each year, it will make for a healthier estuary.

50th priorities—sustaining the momentum



We'll continue providing planning and advocacy that supports the city's commitment to daylight more of the Saw Mill. Phase two, beginning next year, will uncover the river near Philipse Manor Hall State Historic Site, the 18th-century home of a prominent Westchester family.

The Saw Mill may be a little river, but its impact will be huge: When completed in three to four years, the daylighting initiative could deliver more than 1,000 permanent jobs and millions of dollars in new property taxes annually.



Providing Fresh, Local Food

50 years of achievement

Since beginning our farmland preservation initiative in 1996—one of the nation’s early leaders in partnering with farm families to acquire conservation easements—we’ve protected 9,600 acres of high-quality working farmland on 65 farms in five counties. We’ve invested \$19 million of our own funds and leveraged more than \$11 million from public and private sources to ensure these lands will forever be available for farming. At the same time, we pioneered the “critical mass” approach to protecting farmland, focusing our preservation efforts in five communities whose economies and rural character depend on a stable agricultural land base.

Perhaps most important, thanks to the investments farm families have been able to make, more than 90 percent of the farms we’ve protected remain productive.



Family farms Scenic Hudson has conserved in Red Hook (left) and throughout the valley are among the leading suppliers of fresh, nutritious food to local and New York City greenmarkets



Latest successes

Our latest farmland-assemblage initiative—protecting nearly 700 acres on eight farms in **Red Hook** (Dutchess County) and three in Columbia County—supports the next generation of farmers. One of the easements we secured on 70 high-quality agricultural acres in **Clermont** made the land affordable for purchase by young farmers Ben and Lindsey Shute, whose Hearty Roots Community Farm supplies food to local and New York City consumers. They've already begun expanding operations. Partners in this initiative included the farmers, the Town of Red Hook, the Dutchess Land Conservancy and the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, which provided a \$1.8-million grant through its Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program. The conserved family farms include major suppliers of poultry, meat and produce to markets in the region and New York City.

50th priorities—securing the valley's foodshed

With a second, \$2.65-million federal grant, we're on target to complete our next farmland-assemblage initiative. It brings together all of the partners above as well as the Columbia Land Conservancy to protect 1,250 acres on seven working farms in Dutchess and Columbia counties. Our innovative farmland projects have won more than 40 percent of the federal funds allocated in New York State in 2011 and 2012.



We're also engaged in developing new strategies critical for matching the region's rising demand for fresh local food with an adequate, reliable supply—an essential step for keeping our cities healthy and prosperous. With support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, we're completing the first-ever, valley-wide "foodshed conservation plan." Our research will help us determine how much farmland must be conserved so growing populations can put nutritious food on their tables.

At the same time, with county leaders we're exploring ways to increase local funding for farmland conservation, enhancing the likelihood of securing state and federal grants requiring matching funds. And we're working with state and New York City lawmakers to adopt policies that reinforce the important role valley farmland plays in securing the city's foodshed to create a truly sustainable regional food system.



50 years of achievement

Fishkill Ridge... RamsHorn Marsh... Poets' Walk... Illinois Mountain... Scenic Hudson has strategically conserved more than 30,000 acres—lands that delight the senses, restore the soul and bear witness to our nation's past.

- We've preserved 6,200 acres in the **Hudson Highlands**—just 45 minutes from Manhattan—whose magnificent vistas gave birth to American art and literature.
- We've protected 700 acres visible from the **Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site**, enabling visitors to experience the same splendor that inspired FDR from his boyhood through his presidency.
- We've safeguarded 1,500 acres surrounding **Olana State Historic Site**, permanently preserving the views that led Frederic Edwin Church to call his hilltop estate "the center of the world."



These astonishingly beautiful lands also sustain the valley's remarkable wildlife—protecting riverfront nesting sites for bald eagles and healthy tributaries where herring lay eggs following their 1,000-mile journey from the sea. Lands we've conserved in the Highlands sustain a true biological powerhouse that's home to 200 bird species and 200 fish species.

Our "must-save" acquisitions also directly benefit human health. They purify water as it's absorbed into local aquifers—communities' prime sources of drinking water. Preserved wetlands soak up floodwaters and absorb pollutants before they reach streams and reservoirs. And every acre of forest we protect captures 31 tons of carbon annually, slowing down global climate change.



Latest successes

A priority for 20 years, our acquisition of the Esopus Lakes property in **Esopus**, Ulster County, protects 310 acres of forest, riverfront bluffs, wetlands, meadows and shoreline on Esopus and Mirror lakes. In addition to safeguarding iconic vistas from the river and popular historic sites in Dutchess County (including Wilderstein and Mills Mansion), we conserved one of the mid-valley's most biologically diverse habitats. We also ensured that 35 commercially zoned acres of minimal ecological importance remain available for development, further benefiting the local economy.

The historic Armstrong Farm in **New Baltimore**, Greene County—76 acres of rocky bluffs, forest, rolling meadows and 1,370 feet of natural Hudson Riverfront—affords magnificent vistas extending to the Berkshires and encompassing sweeping river views. We're working with local partners on plans for public access to the land, ideally suited for passive recreation.

50th priorities—making critical connections

This year we have 31 "must-save" projects in the pipeline with an estimated cost of \$26 million. Many of these treasures—prominent ridgelines, rushing streams, riverfront beaches and towering forests—are located adjacent to previously conserved open space. Their acquisition would enable us to expand recreational opportunities, a foundation of the valley's \$4.3-billion tourism economy, and keep intact habitat networks on which many species depend.

Our Saving the Land That Matters Most priorities include key inholdings in the **Hudson Highlands**, whose development would destroy panoramic views enjoyed from the river, waterfront parks on both shores and popular hiking trails. In Ulster

County we're seeking to preserve lands in the Black Creek corridor, bringing us closer to creating a trail stretching from Black Creek Preserve to Illinois Mountain. Upriver we're looking to secure lands critical for developing a cross-river trail linking **Catskill** to **Hudson**. It would traverse RamsHorn-Livingston Sanctuary, Olana, Mount Merino (protected by Scenic Hudson in 2008) and 148 acres within the South Bay watershed we conserved earlier this year.





Building on Storm King's Legacy

50 years of achievement

Since our Storm King campaign, Scenic Hudson has continued empowering citizens to shape their environment in a positive way. We've joined with local activists and leaders to oppose dozens of poorly planned housing and industrial projects that threatened to tear the valley's scenic and ecological fabric. And we've advocated for—and dedicated our resources to—projects offering immense, long-term benefits to the region's economy and quality of life.

- We played critical roles in projects that transformed derelict sites into world-class tourist destinations—Dia:Beacon, Walkway Over the Hudson and the daylighted Saw Mill River.
- When we oppose bad projects, we seek beneficial alternatives. Instead of 800 housing units across from the Poughkeepsie waterfront, Franny Reese State Park (which we protected) provides a crucial leg in the popular Walkway Loop Trail and conserves fabulous views from the Walkway and waterfront restaurants and attractions.
- Slated for a coal-fired cement plant, Hudson's South Bay now is buffered by land we protected—a haven for wildlife and a potential future paddling, fishing and bird-watching destination.

Latest successes

Thanks to continued advocacy with our partners, General Electric's PCB cleanup in the upper Hudson has exceeded by one-third the amount of toxins projected for safe removal. A transmission line proposed to bring needed electricity from Canada to New York City will avoid damage to sensitive Hudson aquatic resources and create an unprecedented \$117-million habitat restoration fund.

50th priorities—keeping the pressure on

We'll continue pressing GE to complete a comprehensive cleanup, work to minimize ecological harm from a new Tappan Zee Bridge, find a sustainable alternative to the proposed (and costly) Rockland County desalination plant that could damage Haverstraw Bay's fragile habitats, and remove environmental threats posed by the Indian Point power plant.

Most important, we'll keep alive the spirit of the Storm King victory—empowering citizens to safeguard the natural beauty that stirs our passions and makes the Hudson Valley an unparalleled place to live and work.





Scenic Hudson continues fulfilling its mission “to protect and restore the Hudson River and its majestic landscape as an irreplaceable national treasure and a vital resource for residents and visitors.” Consolidated results for Scenic Hudson and The Scenic Hudson Land Trust for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, show total operating expenses were \$14.1 million, down from \$17.7 million spent in FY11.

Scenic Hudson

Expenses totaled \$5.8 million, a 4.4-percent increase over the prior year, and operating revenues totaled \$5.8 million, a 2.6-percent increase over the previous year. Monies were spent to protect lands vital to clean water, wildlife and working farms; to create beautiful public parks; to assist communities with planning for appropriate growth; and to pursue the historic cleanup of Hudson River PCBs.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

	June 30, 2011	June 30, 2012
Land areas (at cost)	59,314	59,896
Cash and investments	159,460	155,759
Other assets	27,657	25,250
Total assets	246,431	240,904
Liabilities	8,636	7,248
Net assets	237,795	233,656
Total liabilities and net assets	246,431	240,904

[in thousands]

The Scenic Hudson Land Trust

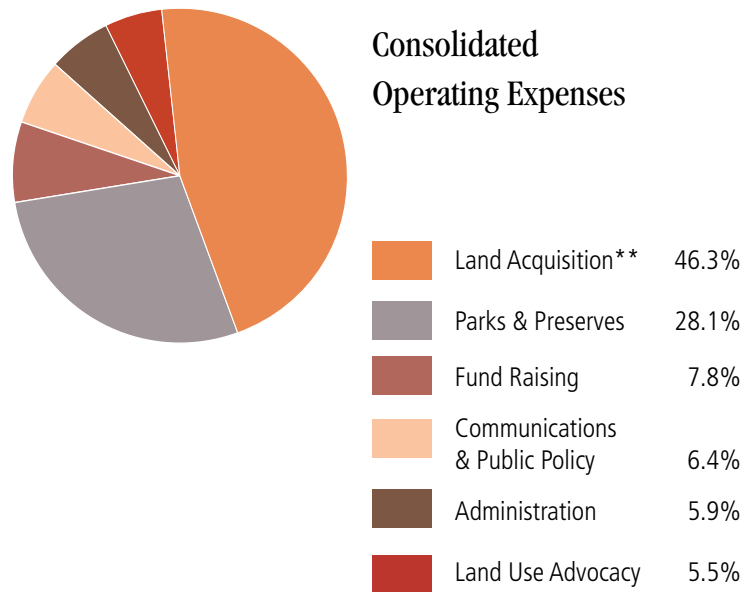
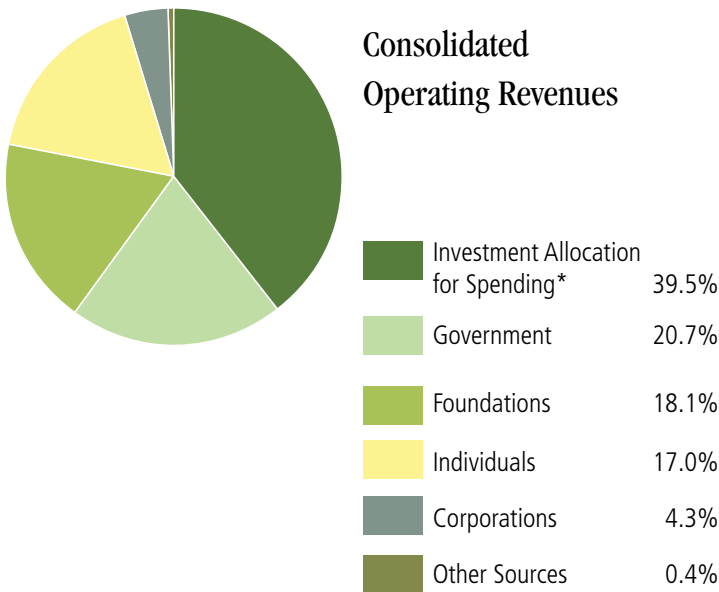
Expenses totaled \$8.3 million, including \$2.2 million to build and maintain public parks and \$4.0 million to purchase 13 conservation easements. In addition, the land trust spent \$5.9 million to acquire and conserve five properties in fee title. In FY12, the land trust protected 1,632 acres through acquisitions and conservation easements.

Financial Structure

Scenic Hudson maintains three endowments: The Lila Acheson and DeWitt Wallace Hudson Valley Land Preservation Endowment (\$131.2 million at year-end FY12), used to support land conservation activities; a board-designated fund for general operating expenses (\$11.8 million at year-end FY12); and an Easement Enforcement Fund (\$1.0 million at year-end FY12). The assets are pooled in a diversified portfolio supervised by an investment committee. Total investment return was -0.8 percent for FY12. The board approved \$6.5 million in spending from the endowments for the year (5 percent of the past 12 quarters’ rolling average value).

Although lands owned by the land trust are eligible for tax exemption, Scenic Hudson paid \$245,236 in property taxes and payments in lieu of taxes in FY12 and \$237,466 in FY11. Scenic Hudson generally seeks relief from taxes at the first opportunity following acquisition of the property.

The board engages Marks Paneth & Shron, LLP, to perform an independent annual audit, which is available on our website.



* The vast majority of investment allocation for spending supports land acquisition and parks creation.

** Including conservation easements.

Hudson River Stewardship Society

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Executive Assistant to the President

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Hayley Carlock
Environmental Advocacy Attorney

Mark Wildonger
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Long Dock Beacon

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Geoff Carter
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Parks Event and Volunteer Coordinator

Susan Hereth
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Park Planner

Joseph Kiernan
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Carley Maneely
Parks and Trails Coordinator

Meg Rasmussen
Senior Park Planner

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Andy Bicking
Director of Public Policy

Althea Mullarkey
Public Policy Analyst

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Jay Burgess
Director of Communications

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Reed Sparling
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Individual Giving Manager

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Patti Mitchell
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Veronica Renzo
Annual Campaign Associate

Karen Wellwood
Development Associate and Grants Writer

Operations & Finance

Joe Kazlauskas
Chief Finance and Operations Officer

Robin Elliott
Accountant

Gail Krein
Executive Assistant

Theresa Vanyo
Human Resources Director



Back cover: view from Storm King Mountain

* Board member of both Scenic Hudson and The Scenic Hudson Land Trust

