October 28, 2015

*Via US First Class Mail and Email*

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of the State of New York  
New York State Capitol Building  
Executive Chambers  
Albany, NY 12224

**Re: PCBs in the Hudson River**

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We're writing today with an urgent request that you add your voice and leadership to the debate raging about the future of the Hudson River in the wake of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s partial cleanup of the Hudson River.

It is understood that the EPA, as well as other federal agencies, have an important role to play in determining the adequacy of the remedial action that has occurred to date and whether additional dredging is warranted under either the remedial or Natural Resource Damage provisions of federal law. However, New York State, in its fundamental role as steward and guardian of our state’s valuable natural resources and public health, must be the final voice in determining whether the cleanup meets its intended goals and complies with state and federal standards.

We stand united in stating that this is an issue of regional, statewide and national concern, setting important precedents. If the future of the Hudson River, Champlain Canal and public health can be written off without objection from the state, what other resources will be next?

The evidence is clear: The amount of residual contamination following completion of the EPA’s cleanup will impose a heavy financial burden on state taxpayers, create a barrier for commercial and natural restoration opportunities, and, worst of all, expose our communities and those who are subsisting off Hudson River fish to unacceptable health risks for decades. One of the most important goals of this cleanup—fish that are safe to eat—is being postponed for decades and even generations under decisions being made right now.
We ask for an opportunity to meet with Acting Commissioner Gerstman, Commissioner Zucker and Secretary Perales to identify steps New York State can take to achieve its goals as a party to the Superfund cleanup and a Natural Resource Trustee. We implore you, as leader of the state agencies responsible for protecting the public health and safeguarding our most valuable natural resources, to fight for an adequate remedial action and full restoration of the Hudson River and Champlain Canal.

Sincerely,

Ramsay Adams, Executive Director
Catskill Mountain Keeper

Peter Gross, Executive Director
Hudson Sloop Clearwater

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Riverkeeper

Neil F. Woodworth, Executive Director
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Adirondack Mountain Club

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