



**Department  
of Health**

**Hudson River  
Fish Advisory  
Outreach Project**

**Project Update  
2009-2016**



## Executive Summary

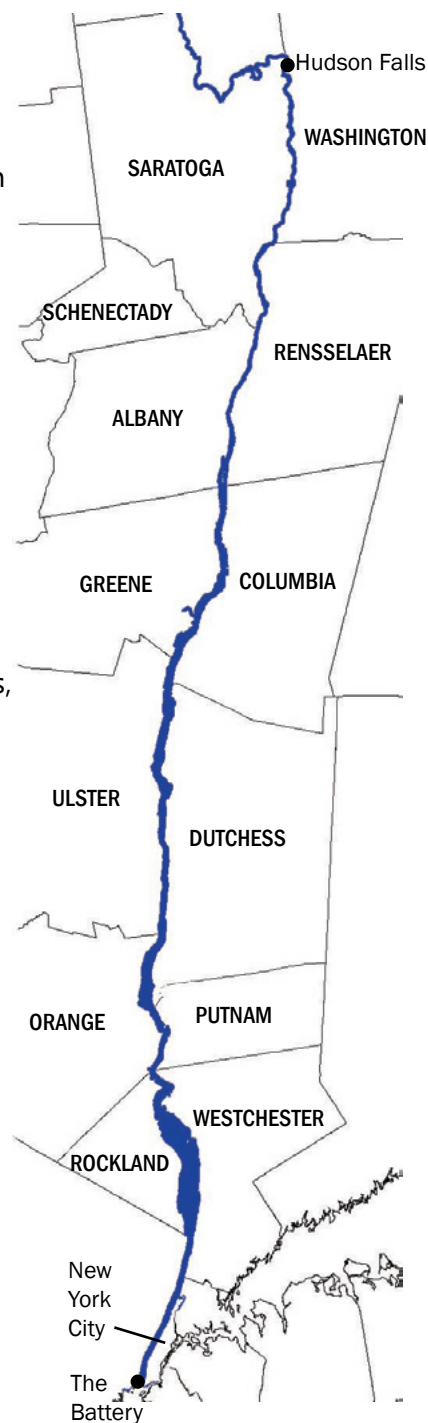
The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) offers health advice, or fish advisories, on eating fish you catch. We do this because of chemical contamination of some water bodies. In 2008 we initiated the Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach Project, a twenty-year initiative with a goal that all Hudson fish and crab consumers know about, understand and follow the Hudson fish advisories. The project area extends for 192 miles of the Hudson River, which is contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, from Baker's Falls in Hudson Falls (Washington County) to the southern tip of the Manhattan Battery in New York City (NYC).

PCBs, man-made chemicals that were banned in the 1970's, concentrate in fat, and build up along the aquatic food chain. Eating Hudson River fish can be a concern because the fish can have many thousand times more PCBs than the surrounding water. PCBs can have a greater effect on the development of young children or developing fetuses, and NYSDOH advises that women under 50 (of childbearing age) and children under 15 not eat fish or crabs from the Hudson River from Corinth in Saratoga County to the NYC Battery.

NYSDOH reaches out to people who fish the Hudson and to their families, and works with a variety of groups: fishing and boating associations, marinas, municipal, park and recreation staff, immigrant and food bank networks, social service providers, and many more. We developed a range of free materials to communicate the project messages to different audiences, including brochures, posters, signs, a children's activity book, a magnet, and a pocket card. In total we have nine pieces in up to five languages. We value the many municipal offices who distribute our materials with the fishing licenses they sell, the community organizations who give out our materials, and municipal and other property owners who post our signs.

Most people who fish the Hudson also fish other local waters. Our newest brochure, Hudson Valley Region Health Advice on Eating Fish You Catch, gives the advice for the Hudson River and other water bodies in the counties along the Hudson – and has a positive spin on fishing. It lists some waters with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) public access where the whole family can eat fish. We are working with the NYSDEC to include NYSDOH advice in the popular NYSDEC Pocket Ranger fishing and hunting phone app.

In 2009 and 2014, we issued Requests for Applications to establish mini-grants for local outreach. Some funded partners reach out to the low-income community at food banks, Headstart programs and health clinics, and do fish consumption surveys to help us learn more about who eats Hudson fish. Other partners present the advice through classroom activities and environmental science programs.



Staff member Audrey Van Genechten teaching children about different types of fish in the Hudson River at Bangladeshi Day in Hudson, NY.

In 2015, Arm-of-the-Sea Theater visualized Hudson fish advisory messages through their unique theatrical production, Hook Line and Sinker: Fishing the Hudson River.

We and our partners share the health advice with the public at county fairs and many community events, from Washington and Saratoga Counties to Manhattan. To reach immigrants who are often less aware of the advice, NYSDOH collaborates with organizations like Latinos Unidos of the Hudson Valley, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, and the Chinese-American Planning Council, who are trusted agents in the immigrant community. The success of the Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach Project hinges upon connections on the ground to people who eat Hudson fish. We look forward to working with our existing partners and invite others to join with us in this important public health effort.

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*On a rainy day at NYC Parks' "RiverFish" event at the West Harlem Piers, Arm of the Sea Theater couldn't perform their full production of "Hook, Line and Sinker" but their striped bass and catfish characters came out to interact with fishermen of all ages.*



## Hudson River Fish Advisory Goals and Messages



Boy fishing at Dutchman's Landing Park in Catskill, NY.

Fishing is fun and fish are an important part of a healthy diet. Fish contain high quality protein, essential nutrients, healthy fish oils, and are low in saturated fat. However, fish in some waterbodies in New York contain chemicals at levels that may be harmful to health. To help people make healthier choices about which fish to eat, the NYSDOH issues advice about eating fish you catch. One of the waterbodies for which NYSDOH has health advice, known as a fish advisory, is the Hudson River.

The Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach Project has a goal that all people who eat fish from the Hudson River know about, understand and follow the fish advisories. The project area extends 192 miles along the Hudson River from Baker's Falls in Hudson Falls (Washington County) to the southern tip of the Manhattan Battery in NYC. This area is a federal Superfund site and is contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), a family of man-made chemicals used in commercial and electrical products until they were banned in the 1970's. Health concerns related to PCB exposure include skin diseases, effects on the immune, nervous and reproductive systems, effects on development and the increased risk of some types of cancer.

PCB concentrations build up along the aquatic food chain, or "bioaccumulate" in fish. Unlike mercury, PCBs concentrate in the fatty tissue. Some fish species, such as

catfish, have higher levels of PCBs than others. Removing the skin and fat, and cooking fish so the juices drain off, can reduce the PCBs eaten in a fish meal by nearly half.

Generally, PCB contamination in Hudson River fish decreases south of Hudson Falls. The advice about eating Hudson River fish depends upon **who** you are, **where** you fish and **what** you catch.

### Objectives and Key Messages

#### The Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach Project objectives are:

- To encourage anglers and other fish consumers to follow the health advisories.
- To promote awareness of the advisories by posting signs at major fishing access sites on the river.
- To maintain advisory awareness through education and promotional activities to targeted populations.
- To identify reasons that anglers or other fish consumers may not follow the fish advisories and to modify outreach activities so they are more effective.



*Catfish are an easy to catch, popular fish that are considered a "do not eat" species because they accumulate high levels of PCBs. A common misconception about catfish is that they have high levels of PCBs because they are "bottom feeders," but it's actually because they are very fatty fish.*

## The key messages of Hudson River fish advisory outreach include:

- Fish are nutritious and good to eat but some local fish you catch can have levels of chemicals that may be harmful to your health.
- Women under 50 (of childbearing age) and children under 15 should not eat any fish from the Hudson River south (downstream) of the Corinth dam in Saratoga County.
- North of the federal dam at Troy, NYSDEC “catch and release only” fishing regulations apply and no fish should be eaten. South of the Troy Dam, the advice for men over 15 and women over 50 depends on the location on the River and what they catch. Near Troy, the advice outlines eating only four species up to once a month, while the advice near NYC is that some fish can be eaten up to once a week.
- Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in fish concentrate in the fat. Removing the skin, cleaning the fish, and cooking it so juices drain away, can substantially reduce the amount of PCBs consumed.
- Some fish species contain higher PCB levels than other fish, and should not be eaten at any location in the river: channel catfish, white catfish, walleye and gizzard shad; NYSDEC regulations prohibit taking American eel for food in the Hudson River.
- Do not eat the “green stuff” (tomalley) in crabs, or use the cooking liquid.
- The health advice also applies to Hudson River tributaries and connected waters if there are no dams, falls or barriers to stop the fish from moving upstream.



*Project Coordinator Regina Keenan educating anglers about the advisory at the World Outdoor Expo in Suffern, NY.*

To meet our objectives, we create partnerships with local groups, and reach out to both people who fish the Hudson and to their family members. We have developed a range of free materials to communicate the advice, and staff and partners participate in a variety of venues throughout the 192-mile Project Area - from health clinics to county fairs and outdoor shows.



*A NYSDEC “Catch and Release Only” sign posted in Schuylerville, NY warns anglers about contamination in fish.*

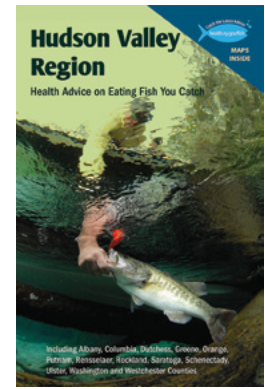
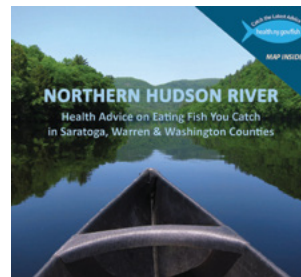
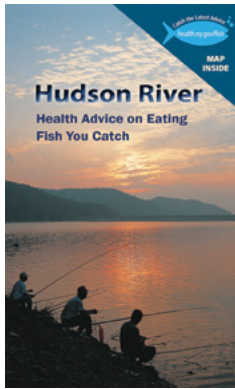


## Materials

A major focus of the Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach Project effort is to develop a range of educational materials that target different audiences. Our materials include maps and pictures of fish to make them more user-friendly. Project staff talk to a wide range of people at community events, health clinics, schools, churches and other venues to evaluate how people understand our messages and graphic images. We continue learning from our audiences new ways to present information and gain insight about what works best. The Project developed a website with materials in English and Spanish, including public service announcements for radio. All Hudson-related outreach materials are listed here:

[http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/udson\\_river/](http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/udson_river/)

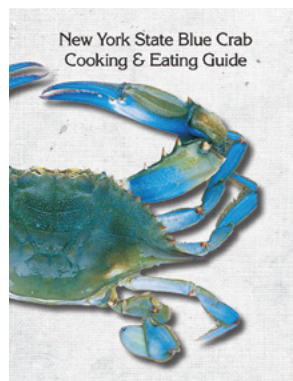
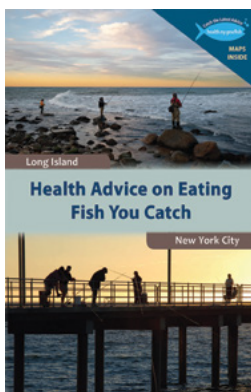
## Brochures



The Project produced a brochure with the health advice on eating Hudson fish in English and Spanish in 2009, updated it in 2011 and translated it into Chinese in 2015. Through a wide network of partners and venues, the Project distributes annually about 7,000 English and 2,500 Spanish brochures to the public.

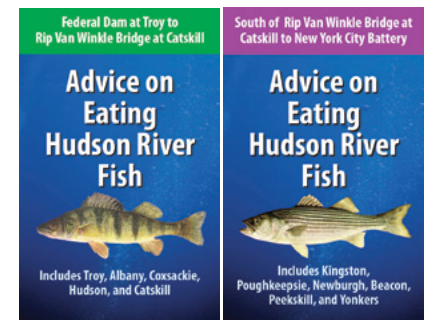
In 2013, we developed a brochure that details the advice on the northern Hudson between the Federal Dam at Troy and Corinth. With assistance from project partner Cornell Cooperative Extension Saratoga County, over 2000 copies were distributed in 2015.

Our newest effort, Hudson Valley Region: Health Advice for Eating Fish You Catch, provides the health advice on eating Hudson River fish for the Project Area's thirteen counties that border the Hudson River. It lists some publicly accessible waters in each county that are better choices for the family to eat fish.



In 2015, we re-developed our New York City brochure to include the advice for Long Island fresh and marine waters. This brochure is translated into five languages and includes the advice for the marine waters around NYC including the Hudson River down to the The Battery.

Eating Hudson River crabs is very popular – in a Hudson “creel” or fishing survey, the NYSDEC found that people take home nearly 80% of the crabs caught in the Hudson. Crabs have an organ similar to a liver that concentrates toxic chemicals like PCBs, cadmium and dioxin. This brochure illustrates how to remove this organ and recommends discarding cooking water. It has been translated into Spanish and Chinese.



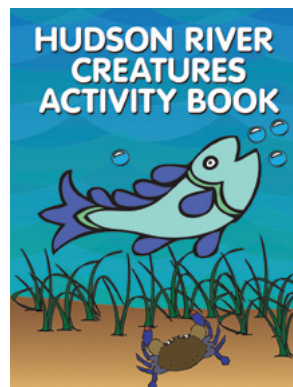
## Wallet Cards

These water-proof cards, aimed at anglers, describe the advice and fit in your wallet.



**Poster**

The Project works with food banks, where the idea for posters with simple messages originated. Food bank staff requested something they could post at their sites. DOH developed the colorful “Can You Eat That Fish from the Hudson?” in English and Spanish. The poster is used in health clinics, housing authorities, libraries and other community spaces.



**Activity and Coloring Book**

To create another path to families who may eat Hudson River fish, in 2011 the Project created a Hudson River Creatures Activity Book, a children’s coloring and activity book with simple advisory messages. The coloring book can be found in public libraries, health provider waiting rooms, and locations that sell fishing licenses. Over 10,000 coloring books were distributed in 2015.



**Refrigerator Magnet**

PCBs concentrate in the skin and fat of fish. Removing fat and skin, and cooking fish so the juices drip off can reduce PCBs in a fish meal by almost half. This information is depicted in a refrigerator magnet “Cut the Fat to Cut PCBs”, which is also available in Spanish and Chinese.



**Signs**

Another way the Project lets people who fish on the Hudson River know about the advisory is through posting signs at popular fishing locations. The signs were developed through stakeholder focus groups. The free 11” x 14” coated aluminum Hudson River fish advisory signs are available in English, Spanish, and Chinese.

Posting is voluntary by property owners. Signs have been put up at over 250 riverfront locations. In 2011 and 2012, Project staff made a special effort to reach out to municipalities and area boat clubs, and 70 additional sites were posted. We appreciate the commitment of the municipalities, agencies, boat clubs, marinas, and non-profit groups who have posted signs, and are happy to work with other property owners.



Keeping signs up is an ongoing process. We have begun a GPS database of where our signs are posted and each year check a portion of the River to see if the signs are still up, or if additional signs are needed. From Troy to Hudson Falls, the NYSDEC posts signs that reinforce their catch-and-release-only fishing regulations for this section of the River.



## Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach Minigrant Partners

NYSDOH recognizes that with 192 miles of river, local partners are essential to communicating the advice. In 2008, NYSDOH held public meetings in Albany, Poughkeepsie, Newburgh, Yonkers and Pomona to announce the project initiation. We issued a Request for Applications, and awarded contracts totaling \$60,000 to four partners in 2009. The original funded partners included Cornell Cooperative Extensions (CCE) of Dutchess County and Rockland Counties, and two projects coordinated by non-profit Hudson Basin River Watch.

CCE Rockland joined with the county AmeriCorps and did outreach to people fishing the river, developed a Rockland-specific brochure which they distributed throughout the county and posted English-Spanish signs with the advice and pictures of the fish. Transport of Rockland partnered with CCE to stock the brochures and post a message with the advice in county buses with an annual ridership of 3.4 million each spring. Hudson Basin River Watch partners staffed displays and did consumption surveys at local hunting and fishing shows. An environmental educator working with Hudson Basin River Watch took the advice into local classrooms, and is currently based out of Rensselaer Land Trust.

CCE Dutchess staff reached out to the community to form a Dutchess County Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach Committee. The Committee included representatives from the NYS Fish and Wildlife Management Board, the Coastal Conservation Association, Hudson Valley BassMasters, Mid-Hudson Trout Unlimited, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Scenic Hudson, NYSDEC Bureau of Fisheries, and Dutchess County Parks and Recreation.

The Committee organized a conference with 100 attendees at the Wallace Center of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt library in March 2012. This highly successful event, "Bringing People Together to Celebrate Fishing on the Hudson," provided an overview of the natural history and fishing on the Hudson, information on the upriver dredging project and on habitat restoration, and workshops on fish advisory outreach and Hudson River fishing regulations.



*Attendees listen to a presentation by NYS DEC Naturalist Tom Lake at the Wallace Center during a conference sponsored by the project "Bringing People Together to Celebrate Fishing on the Hudson."*



*Our Rockland partners posting a bilingual fish advisory sign at Nyack Beach State Park.*

CCE Dutchess began conducting fish consumption surveys in Dutchess County in 2013 and now coordinate surveys from the Cooperative Extensions in Columbia, Greene, Orange, and Ulster Counties. The one thousand surveys they have collected have helped us gain a better picture of local fish consumption patterns in the central Hudson Valley.

In 2014 we issued a new RFA, and expanded partner funding to up to \$90,000 annually. We gained Cornell Cooperative Extension Saratoga County, Rensselaer Land Trust, Hudson Sloop Clearwater and Arm of





*Fran Martino teaches a group of students about Hudson River fish they just caught in a seine net.*

the Sea Theater as collaborators. CCE Saratoga County's Nutrition Educator works in Saratoga and Washington Counties, collects fish consumption surveys and reaches out to the public at county fairs, community festivals, health clinics, food pantries, and Headstart programs. Hudson Sloop Clearwater utilizes environmental education programs to convey the advice, with presentations to groups ranging from science teachers to boating associations. These partners reach out to the public through programs in Hudson Valley classrooms, libraries, camps and Hudson boat launches at invasive species checkpoints.

The environmental educator linked to Rensselaer Land Trust has been with the Project since 2009 and uses a variety of ways to engage the public in learning about Hudson fish and advice. One technique is the "Go Fish" game she developed - a hands-on activity in which the student picks a fish, a location and a picture of an angler. Then the student learns the health advice relevant for that fish and angler (woman, man, or child). Working at schools, libraries and environmental education partners like Five Rivers Environmental Center and the New York State Museum, her programming has reached over 12,000 people in Albany, Columbia, Greene and Rensselaer Counties.

A unique addition in tools to convey the advice was the imaginative theater production of "Hook, Line and Sinker: Fishing the Hudson River" in 2015. Colorful imagery embeds the advice in a story about living near and fishing the Hudson. NYSDOH sponsored fourteen shows and more than three thousand people from NYC to Saratoga County saw the show in its first year. More shows for 2016 can be found at this website:

<https://www.armofthesea.org/project/hook-line-sinker/>

## Other Collaborations

We have many other important partners who help let people know the health advice on eating Hudson fish. The NYSDEC includes NYSDOH fish advisories in their annual freshwater fishing regulation guide, and this is one of the primary ways licensed anglers learn about the fish advisories. The NYSDEC helped us grow our distribution list for fish advisory materials by including order forms for NYSDOH fish advisory materials with their mailings to municipalities. We also work with fisherman and sportsmen's associations, boat and yacht clubs and marinas.

To share the advisory messages with families, the Project partners with a range of organizations: nutrition and environmental educators, health care providers, schools and after-school programs, food banks and faith organizations, social service providers, municipal parks and recreation staff,



*A shot of the PCB molecule character and his friend, the catfish, in action from Arm of the Sea's play about the Hudson River fish advisory "Hook, Line and Sinker." Photo by Chris Bowser.*



youth and neighborhood associations, perinatal networks, English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, and many more. The network continues to grow and new partners are always welcome.

The Project appreciates the cooperation of the many organizations and businesses who help share Project messages and distribute materials. Some we have mentioned already, but we thought it was important to showcase the many, and reinforce our belief that the success of the project depends on the knowledge and outreach of local partners who know their communities and constituencies.

At the end of this document, we list some of our partners and events attended, recognizing these linkages along the 192 miles of the Project Area are critical to our reaching people who may eat Hudson fish. We appreciate our many valuable partners, and the many Hudson Valley municipalities who distribute materials with fishing licenses and who have posted signs. We appreciate the area schools, after-school programs and libraries in Albany, Columbia, Greene and Rensselaer Counties who have hosted our programs. We are fortunate to have many more collaborators - and welcome new ones.

In 2013, with the NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program, we co-sponsored "Hooked on our Waters" a day-long conference that brought together the many groups in NYC with interest in the area waters. The Hudson River Fisherman's Association, NYSDEC, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, Mount Sinai Pediatric Environmental Health Unit, New York Harbor Foundation, NYC Water Trail Association, Bronx River Alliance, Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, and Rockaway Waterfront Alliance were some of the groups that participated in panels on choosing healthy fish, connecting to the water, creating water stewards and restoring water ecology.



*Eymund Deigel of Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club (left) and Chris Bowser of NYSDEC (right) speaking at "Hooked on our Waters," a full day conference the project co-sponsored in NYC about fish, building stewardship and using our water ways.*



To help people eating local fish make healthy choices, Project staff and partners attend community events and ethnic festivals each year to talk to the public and to give out materials. In 2015 staff did over 55 "field days".

Part of the project involves speaking to groups and interested individuals. Over the years, we have given presentations to a multitude of groups including fish and game clubs, tenant organizations, English-as-a-second-language teachers, and environmental educators. We look forward to receiving additional invitations as the Project continues.

### Reaching Newcomers

Fishing and eating fish is central to many cultures. Immigrants who may not know the history of the Hudson and the health advice may be at more risk from eating contaminated fish. Getting access to the many immigrant groups who may fish the Hudson is challenging. To reach new Hudson Valley residents, the Project has translated our materials, participates in a variety of events and works with a network of organizations. Community organization staff are able to communicate in the native language(s) and can better frame messages in a culturally sensitive manner. We appreciate our collaborations with Latinos Unidos of the Hudson Valley, the Chinese-American Planning Council and the United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants to communicate the health advice on eating fish you catch.

Many cultures use the whole fish or crab in cooking, and use the whole fish instead of making a fillet, which can greatly reduce the contaminants in a meal. The hepatopancreas is an organ in a crab like a liver and in Hudson River crabs it can contain PCBs, dioxin and cadmium. Eighty percent of the PCBs can move into the cooking water, which some ethnic groups use in soup and stews.



*A traditional Oaxacan folkloric dance being performed at La Guelaguetza in Waryas Park, a 2015 event attended by staff in Poughkeepsie, NY.*



*Father and son enjoying a nice day and learning about the fish advisory at the Hudson River Fisherman's Association Family Day.*

In 2010, NYSDOH collaborated with the Columbia County Health Department Migrant Health Services to visit farms in Columbia, Greene and Rensselaer Counties. Many of the workers were fishing in farm ponds. Staff attended the "Backstretch" health fair in 2015 to reach the many Spanish-speaking workers at Saratoga Race Course. Track workers reported they fish the local lake close to the track, where NYSDOH advice is that the whole family can eat the fish. To reach the large number of Spanish speakers in Newburgh, we have gone to food banks, ESL classes, health fairs, and soccer games and continue to look for more opportunities.



*Our 2015 intern Danling Luo, at the Good Health Day event in Manhattan's Chinatown.*

In 2015, we began a special effort to reach the Asian and Chinese communities. The Chinese are the second largest foreign-born population in NYC, with over 350,000 NYC residents from China counted in the 2011 census. With the help of our Chinese intern, we learned about the different Chinese communities and their written and spoken dialects within NYC and the Hudson Valley. Through this concentrated outreach we recognized gaps in our existing materials and translated them into both Simplified and Traditional Chinese to reach a broader audience. In 2016 we are working with the Chinese Community Center in Albany, and the NYC Chinese-American Planning Council will develop teen "youth ambassadors" to communicate the health advice to the Chinese community.

Benefitting from connections to Karen refugees from Burma/Myanmar created by the United States Committee Refugees and Immigrants volunteers, we began a project with the refugee community

in Albany in 2015. Fishing is very important to the Karen and other peoples of Burma. We met with Karen community representatives who fished frequently and they felt the most useful way to convey the advice was a color-coded map. We developed a color-coded map of Albany and Rensselaer Counties with "good" blue waters where a family can eat fish, and red waters, like the Hudson, with advice and where families should avoid eating fish.

In Albany County, the Hudson River is the only water body where women and children can't eat the fish. We were able to share a positive message that for all the other waters, families can eat local fish up to four times a month, or about once a week. We recommend this general advice, a once-a week limitation, because we cannot sample each of the thousands of water bodies in New York. We focus on testing those with histories of contamination or which are popular fishing waters. Rensselaer County has some waters with specific advice and some with general advice, where the whole family can eat the fish.

Burmese cooking practices use the whole fish, including the skin. We were able to do a presentation about the health advice and give out the maps at a local church, and NYSDEC provided fishing poles for a raffle. In the summer we did a "photovoice" project on healthy eating with teens from the Karen community. The teens shared pictures of dishes with fish from the Tomhannock Reservoir, a "good" water in Rensselaer County where the fish can be eaten whole and with the skin, as they have eaten fish for generations. In 2016 we will do two presentations at different churches in Albany to reach other people from Burma in the community.



**Food in the Water. Food in the Pot.**

*Fish is good. This dish has fish, olives, turmeric and paprika. The Karen men caught the fish in the Tomhannock Reservoir. - Saw Shi, Karen participant in the 2015 photovoice project.*



## What We Are Learning and Moving Forward

The short fish consumption surveys we and our partners are collecting have helped inform our work. We learned that many people who fish in the Hudson also fish in other waters. The popularity of striped bass is also clear from the survey results.



*CCE Saratoga partner Diane Whitten with local student Allison Constantine tabling at the Waterford, NY farmer's market.*

Three quarters of the over one thousand people surveyed since 2014 about local fish consumption by Cornell Cooperative Extension at health clinics, food banks and a variety of community settings are women under 50. The surveys were conducted in Dutchess, Columbia, Greene, Orange and Ulster Counties. These families are an important audience for us, as we advise women under 50 and children under 15 not to eat Hudson fish. About 19% of the respondents report eating fish that they or someone they know caught, and half of those eating fish ate fish or crabs from the Hudson River. As only 45% of the participants were aware of the fish advisories before the Cooperative Extension contact, we recognize we have more work to do to let families know about the advice.

CCE Saratoga conducted surveys in Saratoga County and will continue in Washington County in 2016. Surveys are done at health clinics, food banks and community events. About 65% of the respondents

are women and half are under 30. CCE Saratoga County borders the "catch and release only" portion of the Hudson from Hudson Falls to Troy, where NYSDEC regulations prohibit people from taking fish home. About 70% of the families surveyed in this area are aware of the advice and those who report eating Hudson fish are eating fish below the Federal Dam in Troy or upstream of the Superfund site.

Project staff have also collected over 700 "convenience-sample" surveys of people who fish on the Hudson from the people we meet at the many community events where we do outreach each year (see the appendix for an overview of results). About 80% of our respondents are male, 20% share the catch with their spouse and 28% with friends and family. About 9% say that children under 15 in their household ate Hudson fish.

Responses vary by river section fished, but about half report eating striped bass and another 32% say they do not eat any fish they catch in the Hudson. Seventy-two percent of the people eating fish say they eat it a few times per year. We will do a follow-up survey with respondents willing to share their email with us to see what they learned from our materials or talking to us. We also will ask if they have made any changes in fish consumption or talked about what they learned with anyone they know.

These surveys helped us recognize the significance of striped bass in Hudson fishing. Striped bass taste great and people know that striped bass migrate each year to the Hudson to spawn. Striped bass caught in the stretch from Catskill to Troy are more contaminated



*A group of Hudson River anglers taking our survey at Newburgh Illuminated.*

than the striped bass caught further south from Catskill to NYC, and NYSDOH advises that no one should eat striped bass north of Catskill. We developed some displays specific to striped bass to help people understand the message.

Over the years of giving advice about what fish not to eat, people have asked us to say more about what they can eat and still reduce their exposure to contaminants. Our messaging reflects that shift. For example, in our newest brochure for the Hudson Valley Region, for each of the thirteen counties that border the Hudson River in the Project Area, we include local alternatives of NYSDEC public access water bodies where the whole family can eat fish. We want to encourage people to fish, to be outside with their families, and to enjoy eating fish as part of a healthy diet.

Along these lines, we also have a series of county maps that show NYSDEC public access waters with the health advisories overlaid. The maps serve to highlight the waters with the general advisory - waters where the whole family can eat up to four fish meals a month. At local events, these maps help people see fishing locations other than the Hudson if their intent is to eat the fish rather than fish for recreation. This fishing season, through social service providers in Albany and Rensselaer counties, we are reaching out to families at homeless shelters and other community spaces, to promote eating fish from healthier waters than the Hudson.

## Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach

### Partners include:

- Adirondack Perinatal Network
- Albany Medical Center Pediatrics
- Albany Public Library
- American Outdoor Sports
- Arm of the Sea Theater
- Backstretch
- Capital District Educational Opportunity Center
- Capital Region Refugee Roundtable
- Chinatown Partnership
- Chinese-American Planning Council Incorporated
- Chinese Community Center – Albany
- Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association
- Community Cradle
- Coastal Conservation Association
- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Saratoga, Ulster, Westchester Counties
- Cornerstone Family Health Care
- Dutch Apple Cruise Line
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Hudson River dredging program
- EPA New York-New Jersey Harbor and Estuary program
- Five Rivers Environmental Center
- Going Coastal Incorporated
- Groundworks Science barge
- Headstart of Saratoga and Washington Counties
- Hudson Crossing Park in Schuylerville
- Hudson River Boat and Yacht Club Association
- Hudson River Fisherman’s Association
- Hudson River Health Care
- Hudson River Park Trust
- Hudson Sloop Clearwater
- Hudson Valley BassMasters
- Kiley Center, Peekskill
- Latinos Unidos of the Hudson Valley
- LL Bean, Colonie
- Manhattan Community Boards Nos. 1 and 9
- Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance
- Mid-Hudson Trout Unlimited
- Migrant Educators Network
- Mohawk-Hudson Council of Yacht Clubs
- Moreau Lake State Park
- Newburgh Armory Unity Center
- New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- New York City Department of Environmental Protection
- New York City Parks Urban Park Rangers



Staff member Audrey Van Genechten goes through the NYC “Go Fish Game” with parents and kids attending the Little Red Lighthouse Festival in NYC. The game helps kids (and their parents) learn about waters where they should “throw the fish back” and where the whole family can eat the fish.



- New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program
- New York Sea Grant
- New York State Museum
- New York State Canal Corporation
- New York State Council Trout Unlimited
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Hudson River Estuary Program
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Environmental Remediation
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources
- New York State Department of Health Division of Nutrition
- New York State Fish and Wildlife Management Board
- New York State Office of General Services
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
- New York State Thruway Authority
- Ossining Boat and Canoe Club
- Palisades Interstate Parks Commission
- Refugee Community Health Partnership Program
- Rensselaer Land Trust
- River Project, NYC
- Rocking the Boat
- Rockland Conservation and Service Corps
- Rockland County Division of Environmental Resources
- Saint Peter's Church, Yonkers
- Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce
- Scenic Hudson
- South End Neighborhood Association
- Summer on the Hudson
- Taconic Valley Lawn and Garden
- Teaching the Hudson Valley
- Trinity Alliance
- Trinity Cruise Company, Peekskill
- Troy Neighborhood Action Council
- Troy Public Library
- United States Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
- Wang Community Health Center, Manhattan
- Westchester Food Bank
- Whitney M. Young Health Services, Albany and Troy
- Columbia, Greene, Orange, Rensselaer, Rockland and Westchester County health departments
- And many municipal partners including the towns of Bethlehem, Clarkston, Esopus, Hoosick, Stillwater, and the cities of Hudson, Poughkeepsie, and Rensselaer

### Events have included:

- Bangladeshi Day, Hudson
- Cardboard Boat Race, Schuylerville
- Catfish Derby, Catskill
- Clarkstown Hunting and Fishing Day
- Clearwater Festival
- County fairs in Columbia, Dutchess, Saratoga, Ulster and Washington counties
- Dragon Boat Races in New York City and Poughkeepsie
- "Duck Day on the Docks" in Mechanicville
- Dutchess, Columbia, Saratoga, Rensselaer, and

- Washington County fairs
- EPA Hudson River Dredging public availability sessions in Poughkeepsie, Albany and Fort Edward
- EPA Hudson River Dredging Citizen Advisory Group meetings
- Fall Festival, Forsyth Nature Center, Kingston
- Greater New York Boat Show
- Guelaguetza festival, Poughkeepsie
- Hudson Black Arts Festival, Hudson
- Hudson Valley Green Fair, Rhinebeck
- Hudson River Fisherman's Association "Hooked on the Hudson"
- Juneteenth, Albany
- Mississippi Day, Albany
- Mohawk Hudson Council of Yacht Clubs "Flare-off" in Catskill
- National Night Out – Albany South End Neighborhood Association (2015, 2016) and Burden Iron Works Museum, Troy (2016)
- Newburgh Illuminated
- Peekskill Youth Bureau Health Fair
- Peekskill Celebration
- Riverfish Festival with the New York City
- Urban Park Rangers and the NYSDEC
- Saratoga County Interagency Fair
- Summer at the Plaza at Empire State Plaza, Albany – GE Kids Day, African American Family Day and Hispanic Festival
- Submerge! NYC Marine Science Festival –
- Hudson River Park Trust
- Tugboat Round Up, Waterford
- Troy River Fest
- "Walkway Over the Hudson" opening
- World Outdoor Show, Suffern
- Yonkers Riverfest

### Some organizations and groups where staff did presentations about the advisory:

- Capital District Fly Fishing Association
- Chinatown Community Association, Manhattan
- Chinese-American Planning Council, NYC
- Chinese Community Center health fair, Albany
- ESL classes, Latinos Unidos of the Hudson Valley, Newburgh
- EPA Hudson River Dredging Citizen Advisory Group
- Hudson Health Care
- Hudson River Boat and Yacht Club Association, Inc.
- Hudson Sloop Clearwater
- Mohawk-Hudson Council of Yacht Clubs
- New York City Parks Urban Park Rangers
- Orange County Department of Health
- Saratoga And Washington County Headstart
- Teaching the Hudson Valley 2014
- Tech Valley High School, Albany
- Ulster-Orange Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)
- Volunteers for Hudson Sloop Clearwater's angler survey in Peekskill
- Visiting Nurse Service Chinese Community Center

## How to Get Involved

With nearly 400 miles of shoreline on both sides of the Hudson, the success of the Project hinges upon connections in local communities. We continue to look for and work with new partners. The Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach Project wants all people who may eat Hudson fish to understand the Project messages to make healthy choices. We invite local groups in Hudson River communities to work with us to make this possible. Contact us and get involved in New York's public health –

- Give out materials
- Link to our website and materials
- Help us post signs
- Have us talk to your staff or your members
- Let us know about your group's event

**More information about the health advice on eating Hudson River fish and on the Hudson River Fish Advisory Outreach Project can be found at:**

<http://www.health.ny.gov/hudsonriverfish>

**Contact us:**

HRFA@health.ny.gov  
(518) 402-7530



**Department  
of Health**