



Bear Mountain, NY

**HUDSON  
RIVER  
FOUNDATION**

# Strategic Plan

2024-2028



## Leadership Message

The Hudson River and its vast watershed play a vital role in the lives of millions of people. The countless interactions between those stakeholders and this extraordinary ecosystem present both opportunities and challenges to communities throughout the region.

For over 40 years the Hudson River Foundation has supported scientific research and engagement that has informed decision making for the stewardship of the river, estuary, and watershed. As we look ahead to a period of rapid and profound change, we are committed to using all our resources to help address the complex problems before us. This will require us to innovate and embrace new approaches that bring new scientists from diverse disciplines into our work. At the same time, we must fully engage communities in ways that build lasting bridges and foster shared learning. Our collaboration with the NY-NJ Harbor and Estuary Program is essential to our collective efforts.

To achieve this ambitious vision, the Foundation's staff and Board have developed a bold Strategic Roadmap (see p. 9) with a clear new mission, values, and three strategic priorities to guide our future work. Through this plan, we affirm our unique role in supporting the Hudson River and our commitment to working in partnership with researchers, policymakers, resource managers and communities towards a future where the river, estuary, and watershed are healthy and resilient for nature and people.

Jonathan G. Kramer  
President & CEO  
Hudson River Foundation

Robert W. Elliott  
Chairman, Board of Directors  
Hudson River Foundation





## Vision

**A healthy  
and resilient  
Hudson River  
from its  
watershed...**



**through the  
Hudson Valley**

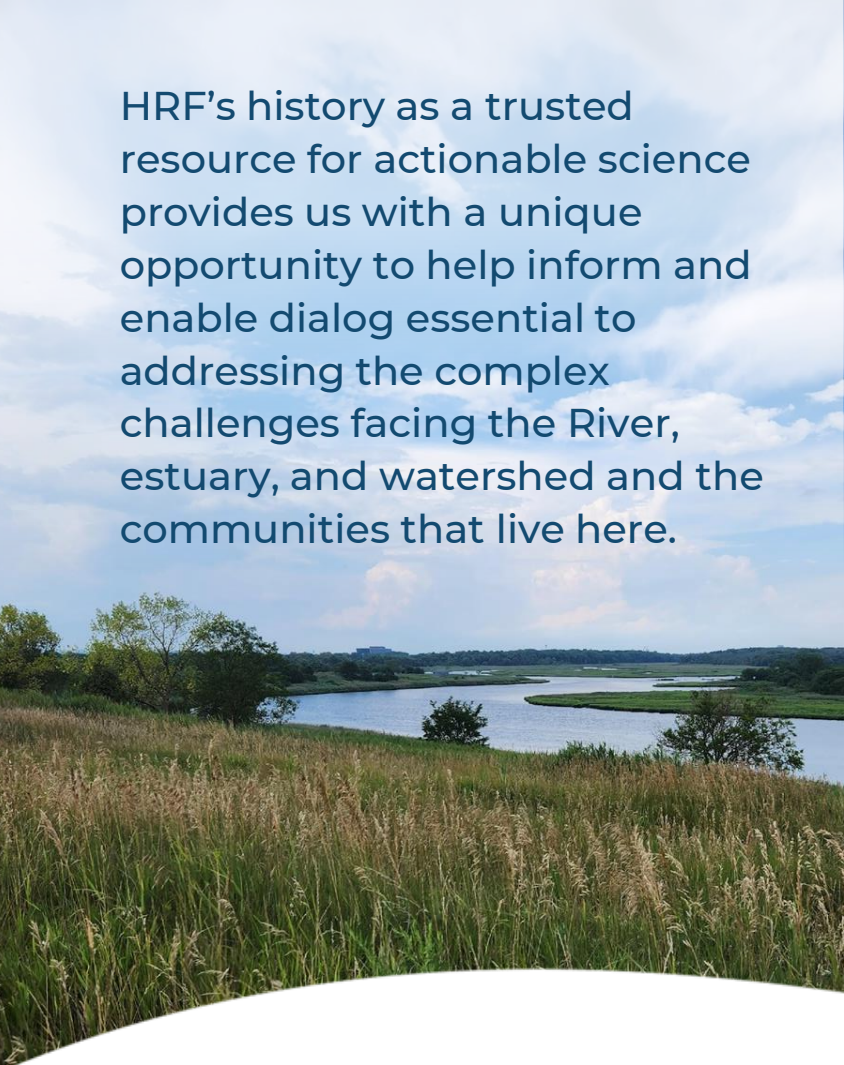


**...to the urban  
estuary joining  
the Atlantic  
Ocean**

## Results

- ✓ Clean and accessible water for all
- ✓ Thriving communities and ecosystems in a rapidly changing world





HRF's history as a trusted resource for actionable science provides us with a unique opportunity to help inform and enable dialog essential to addressing the complex challenges facing the River, estuary, and watershed and the communities that live here.

# Values

## We believe...

- **Clean water is a fundamental right** for all living beings.
- **Science is essential** for people to make informed decisions and take meaningful action.
- **Our independence is key** to providing trusted information and research.
- **Diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice** are integral to creating effective and enduring solutions.
- **Our dedicated and talented staff** is the heart and soul of the Hudson River Foundation.

Herring

# Mission

We inspire and inform action through science and engaging people to enhance the Hudson River, estuary, and watershed.

# From **INSIGHT** to **ACTION**



Healthier  
waterways,  
ecosystems,  
and communities

The  
**RESULT**  
is....

**THEN**  
HRF....

**IF**  
HRF....



**Engages and builds  
trusted relationships**  
with researchers,  
managers, policymakers,  
donors, partners, and  
local communities



**Invests in science** to  
understand the factors  
that are driving change  
in the Hudson River,  
estuary, and watershed



**Grows our  
internal capacity**  
to more  
effectively grow  
regional capacity



**Builds consensus  
for solutions** to  
the complex  
problems that  
impact the  
ecosystem and the  
people who live  
there



**Translates and  
conveys the best  
available science**  
to inform  
decision-making  
and practice



**Creates  
meaningful  
and lasting  
interactions**  
that turn insights  
into action and  
better, stronger  
policies





## Priority #1



## Advance useful and responsive science affecting the Hudson River Watershed

We believe science is essential to making the decisions needed to address the complex problems facing this extraordinary resource. Our response to these challenges starts with building a better understanding of the current ecosystem and the changes brought by human modification, with a specific emphasis on climate change.

HRF will invest in exceptional science that is inspired by need and focused on informing action. Through these investments, we will seek innovative solutions to restore and enhance the Hudson and the services it provides. The skills and perspectives of a new generation of scientists with diverse backgrounds and disciplines are essential to understanding and responding to our rapidly changing world. So too are new, interdisciplinary approaches, particularly those that elevate human connections to the watershed.

Since our start, the Foundation has invested \$45M in generating science about our ecosystem that informs better decisions, and in developing the next generation of scientists through research fellowships.



## Priority #2



Photo courtesy of: Dr. Beizhan Yan

Photo: Helena Andreyko

## Engage and inform scientists, communities, managers, and policymakers

HRF connects the research community to the needs of diverse individuals whose decisions influence the Hudson River, estuary, and watershed. Effective engagement among managers, communities, and researchers is key to bringing the power of research to problem solving. We are committed to providing a platform for open dialogue that empowers stakeholders to identify, collaborate, and act on shared objectives. As we increase our investment in this critical “bridging” role, we will put actionable science in the hands of decision-makers, advocates, boots-on-the-ground implementers, and communities to benefit our region and the lives of people who call it home.

As independent and trusted facilitators, HRF is helping to develop the pathway to a next-generation ecosystem monitoring program that can provide the information managers and many others need to understand and respond to a changing Hudson River, estuary, and watershed.





## Priority #3



Photo: Whitney Browne  
Waterfront Alliance

Photo: Tom Lake

## Grow internal and external capacity and resources for solutions

Achieving a bold collective vision for the Hudson River requires HRF to integrate all our efforts in new ways and build upon our vital collaboration with the NY-NJ Harbor and Estuary Program, our role as a funder, and the expertise of our exceptional staff to convene, synthesize, and communicate. To effectively play our part in tackling the scale of the challenges ahead, the Foundation will need to adapt, build new skills, and grow a larger, diversified base of funds. Facilitating coordination and dialog among scientists, policymakers, resource managers, and communities will enhance the shared understanding and mutual respect essential to making progress. United by shared goals, we will work together to build the broad partnerships and funding needed to achieve lasting collective impact.

Building on our long history as a steward for environmental trusts and funder, we will more intentionally focus on growing capacity for lasting change.



# Strategic Roadmap

## VALUES

### We believe...

- **Clean water is a fundamental right** for all living beings.
- **Science is essential** for people to make informed decisions and take meaningful action.
- **Our independence is key** to providing trusted information and research.
- **Diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice** are integral to creating effective and enduring solutions.
- **Our dedicated and talented staff** is the heart and soul of the Hudson River Foundation.

## VISION

A healthy and resilient Hudson River for nature and people, flowing from its watershed through broad Hudson Valley reaches, to the dynamic urban estuary that joins the Atlantic Ocean

## MISSION

We inspire and inform action through science and engaging people to enhance the Hudson River, estuary, and watershed

## RESULTS

Thriving communities and ecosystems in a rapidly changing world



Clean and accessible water for all

## PRIORITIES & STRATEGIES

### Advance useful and responsive science affecting the Hudson River Watershed

- Enhance understanding of ecosystem processes and interactions
- Understand the impacts of human modification, including climate change
- Invest in next generation scientists from diverse backgrounds and disciplines
- Inform solutions to restore and enhance ecosystems and their services

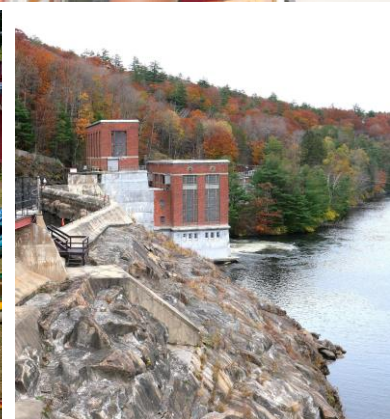
### Engage and inform scientists, communities, managers, and policymakers

- Engage with diverse communities, managers, and policymakers to assess their needs and ways for research to support innovative and effective solutions
- Bring together diverse scientists, managers and communities to identify, collaborate, and act on shared goals
- Elevate and translate science to inform practice and decision-making

### Grow internal and external capacity and resources for solutions

- Develop the organizational funding, expertise, and infrastructure needed to achieve the level of impact we want to have
- Further develop and elevate our staff as sector leaders
- Support community capacity for stewardship, public access, and engagement
- Serve as an experienced and effective steward of environmental trusts
- Build consortium of like-minded funders who collectively work to generate and apply science to advance solutions in areas of common interest







# Acknowledgements

Led by our Strategic Planning Committee (right) with robust participation from our full board and staff, we began by listening to and learning from our constituency, including grantees, partners, and thought leaders. Through one-on-one interviews and surveys conducted by our planning consultants at Due East Partners, we got clearer about what meaningful progress looks like, our role in propelling it, and how we can better work together to achieve it.



12

**key informant interviews** representing partner organizations and funders



72

**survey participants** including community members, grantees, partners, and elected officials



**13 staff** and **13 Board members** through and internal survey and series of planning meetings

## HUDSON RIVER FOUNDATION

### Strategic Planning Committee

- Elizabeth Balladares
- Elizabeth Blair
- Robert W. Elliott
- Rupu Gupta
- Jonathan G. Kramer
- Moe-Swe Myint
- Robert Pirani

[Click here to meet our full Staff and Board](#)



# Thank You

*To get involved or learn more about how we're transforming insights to action for a healthier Hudson River, estuary, and watershed that sustains the ecosystem and the people who live here, please contact [info@hudsonriver.org](mailto:info@hudsonriver.org).*

## HUDSON RIVER FOUNDATION

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