

# Hudson River Drinking Water Intermunicipal Council

Town of Esopus, Town of Hyde Park, Town of Lloyd, City of Poughkeepsie, Town of Poughkeepsie, Town of Rhinebeck, Village of Rhinebeck

October 19, 2020

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

**Re: Class C Streams Bill (A.8349/S.5612A)**

Dear Governor Cuomo,

The Hudson River Drinking Water Intermunicipal Council respectfully urges you to sign the bill that would extend New York State protections to Class C streams (A.8349/S.5612A). This bill would extend protections to 41,000 miles of streams across New York, including nearly 9,000 miles in the Hudson River watershed. As with other protected streams, a Department of Environmental Conservation permit would be required before any disturbance of the bed or bank of a Class C stream takes place.

The Hudson River Drinking Water Intermunicipal Council formed in May 2018. We are a council of seven municipalities—the City and Town of Poughkeepsie, the Village and Town of Rhinebeck, and the towns of Esopus, Hyde Park and Lloyd. Each of our municipalities rely on the Hudson River as our source of drinking water. Over 100,000 people in all rely on our public water systems. We call ourselves the Hudson 7.

There are roughly 25 miles between Rhinebeck’s water intake, near the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge, and Poughkeepsie’s intake, near Walkway Over the Hudson State Park. While the state classifies the Hudson River in this reach as Class A, the state has classified almost none of the streams that directly feed the river as Class A. Many of these streams are Class C or Class B, according to a “key finding” of an analysis by the Center for Watershed Protection utilizing Rierkeeper’s Drinking Water Source Protection Scorecard.<sup>1</sup>

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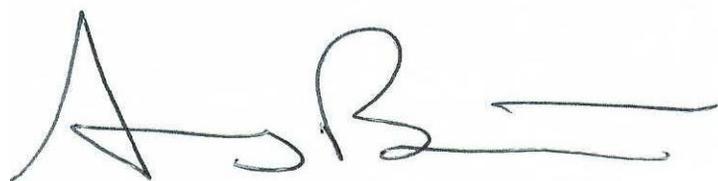
<sup>1</sup> Center for Watershed Protection, “Drinking Source Water Protection Scorecard Review for Seven Hudson Communities: A review of programs and policies to protect drinking water supplies for the Towns of Esopus, Hyde Park and Lloyd, the City and Town of Poughkeepsie, and the Town and Village of Rhinebeck,” February, 2018, at page 16. Available at [hudson7.org/uploads/1/1/3/8/11382860/final\\_report\\_-\\_hudson\\_scorecard\\_review\\_2-6-2018.pdf](https://www.hudson7.org/uploads/1/1/3/8/11382860/final_report_-_hudson_scorecard_review_2-6-2018.pdf)

A map produced by the Ulster County Department of the Environment demonstrates that most Class C streams in the county are those that directly discharge to the Hudson River.<sup>2</sup> A cursory analysis by Riverkeeper shows that many streams directly feeding the Hudson follow the pattern in Ulster County. We therefore conclude that enhancing protections for Class C streams will result in an important new layer of protection for our drinking water supply.

We are committed stewards of the Hudson River, and the public water supply for over 100,000 people in our communities, but as mayors and supervisors, we need the state's help in protecting this river and its vast watershed. We have benefited from enhanced collaboration with state agencies since forming as an intermunicipal council, and we are grateful for our partnership with the state on the paramount issue of drinking water source protection. We have been particularly gratified by the state's recent improvements to oversight of the manufactured gas plant coal tar remediation at Poughkeepsie, and by the state's collaboration with us and federal agencies on improving spill prevention and response planning. The Town of Esopus has applied on behalf of the Hudson 7 to be part of the new Drinking Water Source Protection Program, and we are eagerly anticipating your announcement of the communities that the state will work with. In this, and in many initiatives that I am sure are to come, we anticipate our excellent working relationship will result in positive results for residents of our communities.

In this spirit of collaboration, we ask for your help in ensuring that the integrity of the streams that contribute to our drinking water supply are adequately protected by signing the Class C streams bill into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Bassett', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gary Bassett  
Chair, Hudson River Drinking Water Intermunicipal Council  
Mayor, Village of Rhinebeck

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<sup>2</sup> Ulster County Department of the Environment, "Proposed NYS Stream Protection Legislation," October 2020, available at [hudson7.org/uploads/1/1/3/8/11382860/ulster\\_streams.pdf](https://www.hudson7.org/uploads/1/1/3/8/11382860/ulster_streams.pdf)