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HUDSON RIVER PARK ANNOUNCES RECORD-BREAKING YEAR FOR PARK VISITORS, COMPOSTING AND EVENTS

The Park collected more than 80,000 lbs. of food scraps from the community to turn into compost for plantings and trees

NEW YORK (December 23, 2019)— From its nationally unprecedented plastic reduction initiative to a banner year for its Estuary Lab scientists, Hudson River Park reached new environmental stewardship heights in 2019. Following launch of Park Over Plastic, a parkwide initiative to reduce single-use plastics, Estuary Lab scientists and community volunteers removed approximately 555 lbs. of marine debris from the Park’s shorelines at Gansevoort Peninsula and Pier 76, which included macroplastics and other general refuse. As part of the program, the Park installed four indoor fountains, which have saved the equivalent of nearly 50,000 single-use water bottles since their installation in May.

The Park also saw increased participation in its Community Compost Program. At seven drop-off sites along its four miles, the Park collected approximately 81,000 lbs. of food scraps from the local community, which marks an eight percent increase from last year’s 75,000 lbs. Moreover, this year the Park diverted 430,000 lbs. of organic waste from landfills, up from 400,000 lbs. in 2018. The Community Compost Program helps divert food from the city’s waste stream, and those food scraps, combined with the Park’s horticulture waste, makes a healthy compost that then enriches plant beds and trees to help the Park flourish.

These green initiatives grow out of Hudson River Park’s mission to protect its 400-acre Estuarine Sanctuary and maintain a green open space that provides relaxation, recreation and nature to millions of New Yorkers and visitors from across the world each year.

Madelyn Wils, President and CEO of the Hudson River Park Trust, said, “As stewards of the estuarine sanctuary, we are excited to welcome a record-breaking number of students and visitors with a calendar of events designed to engage New Yorkers with the waterfront and inspire another generation of people invested in preserving the long term health of the river. As we look ahead to next year, we hope even more New Yorkers will join us for another jam-packed lineup of community events that promote a greener, more sustainable park and city.”

A record-breaking year for Park events and engagement, close to 200,000 people attended approximately 800 events and programs in the last year alone. This is 23,000 people – or 13 percent – more than attended events in the Park last year, totaling 177,000 in 2018.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Composted 81,000 lbs. of local food scraps
- Diverted 430,000 lbs. of organic waste from landfills
- As part of Park Over Plastic, 555 lbs. of marine debris were removed from Hudson River Park's shorelines at Gansevoort Peninsula and Pier 76
- Saved nearly 50,000 single-use plastic bottles with the installation of four water fountains
- Welcomed close to 200,000 people at 783 events
- Hosted 500 education programs, reaching more than 33,000 people
- Held 250 field trips for 12,000 NYC public school students, with more than half of all students traveling from the outer boroughs and two thirds from Title I schools
- Planted more than 29,000 bulbs and flowers, and 1,700 trees and shrubs this year
- More than 2,150 volunteers donated 6,400 work hours to keeping the Park green and beautiful at more than 70 volunteer events

Hudson River Park offers a myriad of recreational and educational activities for local residents and visitors alike, and plays a critical role in protecting the Hudson River environment itself. All programs and events are borne out of the Park's core priorities; to promote sustainability, activate student scientists, protect and maintain the Park, and build awareness and understanding among New Yorkers of the habitat around them.

Hudson River Park is a vibrant ecological landscape with a diverse array of wildlife and plantings, home to more than more than 2,000 trees. The oldest tree in the Park is the London Plane tree in Chelsea Waterside Park, which is nearly 90 years old with a 24-inch diameter trunk. The most common tree species is the Honey Locust, which is found park-wide, while the most unusual species are the few Dawn Redwoods at Pier 84 Lawn and the Burr Oaks at Chelsea Habitat Garden.

The Park has more than 180 different species of birds and insects – many in its Habitat Garden between 26-29th Streets. As an estuarine sanctuary, the Park is also home to more than 70 different types of fish, including the white perch, bluefish, striped bass, oyster toadfish and American eel.

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