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## **GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES \$25 MILLION IN NEW FUNDS FOR RIVERS AND ESTUARIES CENTER ON THE HUDSON**

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### **Construction Begins on World-Class Research and Education Facility**

Governor George E. Pataki today announced that his 2006-07 Executive Budget – which will be unveiled next week – will include \$25 million for the development and construction of the Rivers and Estuaries Center on the Hudson, a world-class research and education facility that will be located at Denning’s Point in Beacon, Dutchess County.

“The Rivers and Estuaries Center on the Hudson will help to usher in a new era of scientific and educational discovery, and develop new strategies to ensure that our rivers, estuaries and watersheds are clean, healthy, and accessible,” Governor Pataki said. “This \$25 million investment and the start of construction demonstrate our commitment to building a vibrant, world-class institution that will attract leading scientists and help people young and old learn about the river and our role as environmental stewards.



“Over the past 11 years, we have made significant progress in protecting and restoring the historic Hudson River and other waterways and watersheds across the Empire State,” the Governor said. “The Rivers and Estuaries Center builds on these accomplishments and will help to protect important waters in New York State, across our nation, and around the world.”

Senator Stephen Saland said, “The advancement of Governor Pataki’s Rivers and Estuaries Center initiative confirms his continued concern for and commitment to improving the quality of our environment.”

Mayor Clara Lou Gould said, “We thank Governor Pataki for his vision in creating this center to advance understanding of rivers, estuaries and watersheds through research and education. We greatly appreciate his continuing interest and this additional financing to keep the project moving forward.”

The \$25 million budget appropriation will be used to construct a Center for Advanced Environmental Technology, a 37,000- square foot laboratory dedicated to the development and design of remote sensing and real-time monitoring technologies. The concept for this facility was prepared by a team of science advisors headed by Dr. Arthur

Sanderson of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) and will be designed as an advanced green building.

“The future health of the world’s rivers and estuaries requires that civilization have the ability to predict accurately the short and long term impacts of its activities,” said John Cronin, managing director of the Rivers and Estuaries Center. “The Rivers and Estuaries Center will develop technologies that will allow us to forecast the human impacts on these ecosystems and then develop the policies that will allow us to protect them. Imagine a school child sitting at a home or school computer, entering longitude, latitude, and depth of water, and watching in real time as Hudson River fish swim by on the screen – thanks to this \$25 million investment in the Rivers and Estuaries Center by the State of New York.”

State Parks Commissioner Bernadette Castro said, “Today marks an important milestone in the continuing development of the Rivers and Estuaries Center here along the Hudson riverfront. With Governor Pataki’s extraordinary investment proposed in the Executive Budget and the groundbreaking for Building One, the commitment to establishing the Center as a premier institution for environmental research and education has never been stronger.”

State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Denise M. Sheehan said, “Governor Pataki has repeatedly demonstrated his personal commitment to restoring the Hudson River and helping this majestic waterway realize its full environmental, economic, historic, and recreational potential. Today’s groundbreaking and the funding proposed in his Executive Budget will be instrumental in continuing the mission of the Rivers and Estuaries Center in learning more about the habitat and ecology of the Hudson and other important rivers throughout the country.”

Governor Pataki originally proposed the development of the Rivers and Estuaries Center in his 2000 State of the State Address, calling for the creation of center of worldwide river studies. On Earth Day in 2003, he announced the selection of the City of Beacon as the future home of the center.

The Center will focus on increasing our understanding of rivers, estuaries and their watersheds. Its programs will guide conservation and management policies for these natural water systems, from the Hudson River to rivers and estuaries around the world. In addition, the Center will feature unique educational programs, including seminars, lectures, and forums for scientists, teachers and students, and the general public.

Construction of the Rivers and Estuaries Center has begun, with the first facility – Building One – expected to be completed by fall. Building One will be constructed within the footprint of a former brickworks factory site and will rehabilitate the largest of the brick building shells remaining. The restored facility will be approximately 4,000 square feet, and will include an environmental interpretive facility. Building One will be a model of energy efficiency, utilizing solar energy, geothermal energy, composting toilets, and a green roof of indigenous plants.

The entire Center will be constructed on 64 acres at Denning's Point, part of Hudson Highlands State Park, adjacent to an ecologically-significant area in the Hudson and within the heart of the city's active waterfront. Two satellite facilities, part of the Hudson Riverscope Project, are being developed: a research facility to be operated by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in the City of Troy, Rensselaer County, and a research facility to be operated by the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University.

To date, the Rivers and Estuaries Center's capital campaign has raised more than \$26 million, including commitments of \$10 million from the New York Power Authority (NYPA), \$5 million from the Dyson Foundation of Dutchess County, \$900,000 in federal funding, \$750,000 from Dutchess County, and additional State funding.

(source credit: <http://www.ny.gov/governor/press/06/0111061.htm>)