Global Water Dances: Water Stories and NY Actions

Wednesday, July 16th, 2025

Locomotive Lawn in Riverside Park (at W 62nd Street)

Welcome to Global Water Dances! Global Water Dances began as a collective idea of an international group of individuals, with decades of experience in producing Movement Choirs* - events that use community dance to create social cohesion through non-verbal communication. The mission of Global Water Dances is to connect and support a global community of choreographers and dancers to inspire action and international collaboration for water issues through the universal language of dance.

Opening: Water and the Cardinal Directions

Members of Global Water Dances community

(see names below)

A Global Water Dances Ritual: Water and the Four Directions

Performed & Choreographed by Wendy Joseph

Music credits:

“Ajaja” - A call to action - Babatunde Olatunji West Africa

“Toe Fetaui” - Te Vaka, a diverse group of musicians and dancers from the Pacific Islands

Wendy’s invites us to embody the element of Water and to move with her!

Art of Motion Dance Theatre with Lynn Lesniak Needle

(Unable to join us in the Rain due to Costume protection)

SHAKTI

Performed by Janette Dishuk, Lynn Needle, and M.A.Taylor

Choreographed by Lynn Needle

Music credits: Mickey Hart

Costume Design and Construction by Annie Hickman

SHAKTI embodies female energy, ability, strength, power and capability. It underlies and is the thread to all existence. Its feminine essence refers to the power of male deity, purusha, or consciousness, complimenting creative energy of female prakriti, or nature.

Bereft and Beleaguered

Performed & Choreographed by: Dafna Soltes Stein

Music: The Swan composed by Camille Saint-Saens from

Carnival of the Animals played by Yo Yo Ma

NYC & NYS Water Update and Suggested Actions

Environmental Advocates of New York

Niamh Moore

Yemaya, the Ocean Goddess

Performed & Choreographed by: Beatrice Capote

Music credits: “Yemaya Guiro” by Bembesito

Water Dream -

Conceived & Performed by: Yuri Ogasawara

Music Title: Rave

Composer: By Dia Succari

Global Water Dance

Performed by Ann Moradian, Beatrice Capote, Martha Eddy, Naomi Goldberg Haas, Theresa Herron, Wendy Joseph, Yuri Layla Ogasawara, Dafna Soltes Stein, Shannon Michaela Smith, Sara Vogeler, Linda Wang

Choreographed by Martha Eddy with GlobalWaterDances.org Steering Committee in collaboration with the

GWD Committee Co-coordinator Theresa Herron

With thanks to Lily Chase, Jennifer Clarke, Tegan Hack, and Pamela Proscia

GWD Participatory Dance

Join us with gestural movements

and if you want to learn parts of Global Water Dance or dance

for Peace together to various world music

Closing Remarks - Martha Eddy

**Global Water Dances is a program of the non-profit Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies in New York, USA, with its founders being trained as Certified Movement Analysts*

Learn more from Environmental Advocates of NY about water actions you can take:

RIVERKEEPER

Summer Update

June 2025

Improving Water Quality

The Hudson River and its tributaries face significant water quality threats from legacy and emerging pollution sources, including raw sewage, stormwater runoff, PCBs, and climate-driven contaminants. Riverkeeper plays a unique role in monitoring these threats and advocating for solutions based on community needs and science. With the support of community scientists, we collect and test thousands of water samples annually to assess where in the estuary it is safe for drinking, fishing, and recreation. We share these data on our website, building public trust and accountability while influencing advocacy, infrastructure improvements, and policy that improve water safety, health, and access. Over the spring and summer of 2025, we will be working on the following:

Expanding our signature Water Quality Monitoring Program. With our new boat, the *Bob Boyle*, we have started our 2025 water monitoring season, adding 47 new testing locations to the 77 regularly monitored by Riverkeeper encompassing over 110 estuary and 100 tributary sites in total. We are also measuring four new parameters of interest (nitrogen, phosphorus, salinity, blue-green algae). These new parameters and sites were chosen in concert with members of the new Hudson Valley Water Monitoring Collaborative, in response to their issues and concerns.

Launching a user-friendly, public Hudson Valley Water Quality Data Portal. In August 2025, Riverkeeper will launch a new data portal with aggregate and downloadable data from Riverkeeper, Collaborative members, and other open data sources. The Portal will include analytical tools to improve understanding of Estuary conditions, a map with three core stories (recreational access, local drinking water quality, climate impacts), and opportunities to take actions needed to tackle water issues.

Building regional momentum to improve water quality standards and swimming access. Riverkeeper is engaging with state agencies and communities in a push to reclassify Hudson River waterways as safe for swimming, a move backed by our monitoring data. This change would increase access to the river beyond the four public beaches on the Hudson but will require significant upgrades to water quality standards and reductions in sewage discharges. Toward this effort, Riverkeeper is:

- Promoting the **Westchester Coalition for Clean Water**, which aligns local community needs to advocate for county-level wastewater management consolidation in order to reduce pollution and expand safe swimming access.
- Prompting New York State to **update water quality standards for NYC**, which will determine how the city addresses the 418 sewer overflow outfalls that discharge sewage to city waterways and the harbor.
- Conducting an analysis that indicates that it is well within the city's ability to undertake more sewage discharge reduction to improve water quality in the Harlem River.
- Ensuring that Governor Hochul's $150M NY SWIMS initiative supports natural beaches and artificial river pools. This resulted in Kingston Point Beach receiving funding for a sea-level rise mitigation project.

Sustaining pressure for PCB cleanup and accountability: Despite Riverkeeper providing evidence of dangerously high PCB levels in Hudson River fish and sediment and the EPA's own data showing clear signs that PCB contamination remains a serious threat to the Hudson, the EPA concluded in its third "Five Year Review" that more data are needed to determine whether the General Electric PCB cleanup has achieved its intended goals. In response, we helped organize a bipartisan letter signed by 30 state senators urging EPA to declare the current

cleanup efforts inadequate and demanding a stronger remediation plan that protects public health, wildlife, and the economy. We will continue to build support from Members of Congress, EPA Headquarters, state legislators, municipalities and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to make sure these toxic chemicals in the river are cleaned up to safe levels. We are closely monitoring General Electric's ongoing study of PCB contamination in the lower Hudson River, and the EPA's cleanup and remain steadfast in our push for a meaningful and enduring cleanup of the Hudson River.

Expanded community and youth environmental stewardship: On May 3, 2025, our 14th Annual Sweep mobilized volunteers across 120 projects, removing 21 tons of debris, controlling invasive species, and planting or maintaining native trees and plants to stabilize shorelines. In 2024, we turned Sweep into a year-round program and conducted additional clean-up and habitat restoration projects with community and corporate volunteers throughout the year. We also grew our Water Justice Fellows program, expanding from Troy to Kingston and continued the *Source to Estuary* experiential course for youth. Participants organized a Water and Agriculture Conference, bringing together youth to discuss water quality issues and fostering the leadership needed to build the next generation of environmental stewards.

Protecting the Hudson

Captain Luis Melendez and Neale Gulley accomplished an April launch of our patrol vessel, the *R. Ian Fletcher*, and completed repairs, upgrades and commissioning of the *Bob Boyle* for our monthly water quality sampling runs. We are now monitoring the lower Hudson and NYC through monthly river patrols; responding to reports of pollution and Clean Water Act violations; and reports that come in through our Watchdog hotline.

Captain Luis Melendez on the newly re-launched *R. Ian Fletcher*

With the Coast Guard and other agencies, we co-designed and executed the first train derailment and oil spill drill for the Mohawk River, simulating a multi-level government response to protect implicated drinking water intakes. We expect to advise on future spill drills as well as prevention and response policies.

Our watchdog team is seeing an increase in reports from the public now that the weather is warmer. We are currently looking into a range of potential issues including plans for a landfill development; a plume-like discharge captured on video in Sleepy Hollow; a private hydroelectric dam in the Croton River watershed that periodically drains into the stream below the impoundment; and outreach from the New York Bridge Authority regarding upcoming construction/repairs.

In addition to reports of landfill runoff along the Mohawk and a sunken sailboat in the Upper Hudson, our Watchdog team has fielded concerns over a DEC pilot program to deploy the herbicide "Clearcast" to eradicate 15-acres of water chestnut in the Hudson River near Germantown in 2025. Following Riverkeeper and community input, DEC is revising its plan with a new location for 2026, and we will be seeking greater clarity on overall project objectives, including the potential to replace invasive water chestnut with native water celery at scale. We continue to try and assess all reports from the public with the goal of reporting and resolving environmental issues – or where appropriate, equipping the public to engage local concerns on their own.

Riverkeeper analyzed a conceptual plan to extend the Manhattan Greenway along portions of the Harlem River waterfront, and raised concerns about an in-water concept's likely impacts on navigational safety and habitat. We are supporting the community's effort to gain access to the waterfront, while advocating for a route that prevents damage to the Harlem River ecology or boating safety.

Safeguarding Drinking Water

As climate change threatens drinking water supplies, Riverkeeper is advancing policies and programs that improve drinking water source protection for NYC's reservoirs and smaller communities lacking adequate safeguards. Through advocacy, partnerships, and technical support, we help local coalitions and municipalities understand local risks, enforce vital regulatory protections for their water sources, and implement science-based strategies. This year, Riverkeeper advanced several drinking water safety reforms:

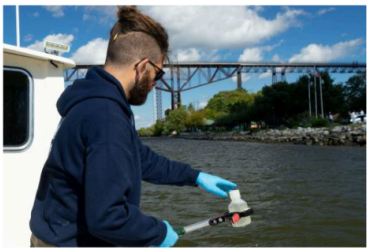
Riverkeeper has garnered support from NYS mayors and county health commissioners for **modernizing Watershed Rules and Regulations** to strengthen state-level protections for drinking water sources. We also mobilized hundreds of Riverkeeper members to submit letters in support of EPA's proposal to reduce lead in drinking water in historically underserved communities. We championed open space protection as a core strategy for safeguarding drinking water sources, recommending protection opportunities on NYS's plan to preserve 30% of its lands and waters by 2030.

In NYC, we testified before the City Council on the urgent need for a comprehensive **assessment of the threat of disinfection byproducts** (compounds produced when chemicals used for water treatment mixes with decaying organic matter). Disinfection byproducts are the greatest threat to the city's continued ability to use watershed management in the Catskills, rather than expensive filtration, to supply 1 billion gallons of safe drinking water daily to 9.5 million people.

Peekskill and several other communities rely on **Peekskill Hollow Creek** for their drinking water. However, the Creek has not been assessed for its use as a drinking water source in decades and is experiencing water quality issues (cyanobacteria, nutrients, turbidity, and road salt) that have challenged its use as a drinking water source. The growing impacts of extreme storms and changing precipitation patterns due to climate change are particular concerns for this drinking water supply. Riverkeeper is collecting baseline water quality data from Peekskill Hollow Creek to fill important gaps in our knowledge of the water quality and help define long-term monitoring needs and strategies to protect this critical drinking water source.

The **Hudson 7** is a coalition of mid-Hudson communities forged by Riverkeeper, all of which rely on the Hudson River as a drinking water source. The Hudson 7's Drinking Water Source Protection Plan includes:

- Targeted monitoring of Hudson River segments critical to Hudson 7, measuring new parameters such as PFAS and microplastic levels and pinpointing high-pollution tributaries.
- An updated Area Contingency (spill response) Plan from the Coast Guard that incorporates the Hudson 7's concerns about impacts to drinking water intakes in the Hudson



Riverkeeper is sounding the alarm about the harmful impacts of road salt on our waterways and drinking water. Our research found that the tap water for more than half the population in the Hudson and Mohawk River watersheds has unsafe sodium levels for people on very low-sodium diets. Salt pollution also threatens fish and other wildlife and is driving salinity increases in New York City's drinking water supply. Without meaningful action, officials warn that some of this water could be undrinkable by the end of the century. To protect public health and preserve our water resources across the state, Riverkeeper supports a **Road Salt Pollution Reduction Act** and will continue working with the Legislature to pass this bill.

Addressing Climate Change Impacts

Riverkeeper is at the forefront of enhancing climate preparedness and resilience in the Hudson River watershed, where increased water temperatures and more frequent severe rainstorms are driving combined sewer overflows, harmful algal blooms, and urban and agricultural runoff. These impacts increase vulnerability for communities already burdened by pollution and flood risks.

Riverkeeper continues to advance flood and stormwater resilience plans now that we have secured language in the federal 2024 Water Resources Development Act to reinforce the need for a multi-hazard flood mitigation study in NY Harbor — a critical bulwark protecting this study against potential political reversal. We are also urging the NYC Water Board to adopt an equitable fee structure based on property use of storm sewers, incentivizing property owners to invest in green infrastructure and improve stormwater runoff management.

Restoring Wildlife and Habitats

The Hudson Valley's migratory fish populations, including river herring, striped bass, American shad, Atlantic sturgeon, and American eel, are experiencing catastrophic declines due to two centuries of overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution, and excessive damming. Riverkeeper is committed to revitalizing native fish populations by conducting targeted monitoring and studies to support data-based advocacy and community engagement, systematically removing obsolete dams, and restoring critical habitat and riverine connectivity.

Our habitat team's field season is in full swing, collecting fish, water, and sediment data around 15 dams that we've identified as priorities for removal, and along three entire tributaries. We've also collaborated with high school and college students on aspects of this field work, sampling fish species on the Claverack Creek with Fisheries Management students from SUNY Cobleskill and conducting field work with students from Sleepy Hollow High School. Our surveys in these former dam sites at Furnace Brook and Quassaick Creek show that species such as American eel, white perch, and white sucker are flourishing in newly accessible habitats, demonstrating the value of restoring continuity.

Riverkeeper stands in opposition to the federal government's proposal to remove habitat destruction from the definition of 'harm' under the Endangered Species Act. This change would mean that harms to the habitat of critical species such as sturgeon will be unregulated at the federal level and we will continue to advocate for the reinstatement of this language.

This spring, Riverkeeper launched a petition to promote eel passage at small hydroelectric facilities on dams in the Hudson River watershed. These measures would go a long way towards protecting this important migratory fish on its journey from Atlantic spawning grounds to the Hudson and tributaries. Consistent with this effort, we have identified concerns about eel impacts at two dams at the mouth of the Wallkill River that are starting their licensing process through FERC – a process that we helped kick-start via another Riverkeeper petition.

Thank you for your support!