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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Friends of Liberty State Park and NY/NJ Baykeeper Oppose Commercial Barge Mooring Proposal Next to Ellis Island

A commercial barge mooring is proposed to be built right next to Ellis Island, in front of the Liberty State Park promenade. NY/NJ Baykeeper and the Friends of Liberty State Park oppose the permit application by New York State Highway Transportation Company for this project which would also be directly in the ferry path between Ellis Island and the Central Railroad Terminal at Liberty State Park.

“Mooring barges here, possibly garbage barges, in the path of this historic Ellis Island immigrant ferry journey would mar the views of these great American cultural and historic landmarks of the NYC skyline from Liberty State Park,” said Sam Pesin, President of the Friends of Liberty State Park.

Millions of people visit these historic locations to experience open and unfettered views of these iconic landmarks amidst the renowned NY/NJ Harbor. Many reflecting on the fact over 12 million immigrants entered the United States through Ellis Island and that a quarter of our nation’s population can trace family ancestors to this historic gateway.

A raft of work barges would also interfere with existing transport and timely access to these international tourist destinations that include Ellis Island, the Statue of

Liberty and crossing from those landmarks to Manhattan.

“Impacts include rerouting existing ferries, which would delay and limit access to these international treasures; diminished visitor experience, and economic losses from both impeded ferry access and reduced tourism,” said Greg Remaud, Deputy Director of NY/NJ Baykeeper.

At a depth of 12-feet in areas of flats and shallows, there may also be an impact to various benthic species such as shellfish, clams, marine invertebrates and grasses.

This mooring location is both a clear and avoidable “impairment to the protection and utilization of important (public) resources.”

“NY/NJ Baykeeper shares the pride that the Port of NY/NJ is one of the great ports in the world and appreciates that the larger Harbor region requires working waterfronts and on-water maintenance,” said Remaud. “However, the flats between Ellis Island and the Central Railroad terminal is not the place for such activities. Hopefully, seeking this location is an oversight by an applicant focused on activities below the waterline.”

“It is up to the US Army Corps of Engineers to protect these prized public resources by helping to locate these barge moorings away from national treasures to a more appropriate area,” said Pesin. “Fortunately, the solution is easy, as ours is a large Harbor with vast opportunities to moor rafts of barges without blighting historic views and impacting local transportation.”

Comments must be mailed to the US Army Corps of Engineers, New York District – ATTN: Regulatory Branch, 26 Federal Plaza, Room 1937, New York, N.Y. 10278. The public comment period ends April 25, 2016.

[Click here](#) to view a map of where the barges would go and to read our letters to the Army Corps of Engineers opposing the proposal.

About NY/NJ Baykeeper

NY/NJ Baykeeper is the citizen guardian of the NY-NJ Harbor (Hudson-Raritan Estuary.) Since 1989, we’ve worked to protect, preserve, and restore the environment of the most urban estuary on Earth – benefiting its natural and human communities. Through our Estuary-wide programs we seek to end pollution, improve public access, conserve and restore public lands, restore aquatic habitats,

encourage appropriate and discourage inappropriate development, carry out public education, and work with federal and NY/NJ state regulators and citizen groups as partners in planning for a sustainable future for the Hudson-Raritan Estuary watershed.

About Friends of Liberty State Park

The Friends of Liberty State Park is an all-volunteer, non-profit, 501(c) (3) organization that is dedicated to preserving, protecting, conserving and promoting Liberty State Park, the inspiring urban state park on the Jersey City waterfront behind Lady Liberty and Ellis Island. Since 1988, we have advocated for the protection and improvement of this open space park with its open vistas of the New York City skyline, the Hudson River and the Upper New York Bay. Our primary volunteer program is our Volunteer Garden Program which is continually beautifying LSP and always welcomes volunteers. Over 5 million visitors come annually to enjoy this recreational, natural, historic, and cultural public resource, which opened in 1976. Visionary citizens, Morris Pesin, the park's "father", Audrey Zapp, the park's "godmother" and historic preservationist Ted Conrad, had led a citizens movement for 18 years to transform a waterfront wasteland of abandoned railyards and decaying piers into one of our nation's most special public spaces.

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Protecting, preserving, and restoring the NY/NJ Harbor Estuary since 1989.
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