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CONTACT: Claire Holmes | holmes@risaheller.com | 845.282.0774

SMASH IT DON'T TRASH IT: ANNUAL HUDSON RIVER PARK PUMPKIN SMASH BRINGS FUN TO COMPOSTING

NEW YORK (October 19, 2020)—Nothing says fall like pumpkins, and if there was ever a good year to pick up a bat and smash a pumpkin, 2020 is undoubtedly it. Hudson River Park invites New Yorkers to take out their frustrations— in an ecologically-friendly fashion, of course— at their 3rd annual Pumpkin Smash.

Hudson River Park is holding this socially distanced event on Saturday, November 7th from 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM at Chelsea Waterside Park. The free event is designed to encourage families to dispose of their Halloween pumpkins responsibly. Organic waste accounts for a third of all NYC garbage, and diverting organic waste from landfills reduces the city's carbon footprint and helps to strengthen plant beds throughout Hudson River Park.

The Park is taking a number of precautions to ensure a safe event. Participation will be limited— all attendees must register in advance to secure a spot and will receive a timed entry. One ticket is for one household of up to five people, and each group will have 15 minutes of smashing good fun! Groups are asked to wear a face-covering and bring their own pumpkins and protective eyewear, such as safety goggles or sunglasses.

"Every year we call on families to smash it, not trash it— and bring their pumpkins to Hudson River Park and turn them into compost," said Madelyn Wils, President and CEO of the Hudson River Park. "Halloween will undoubtedly be different for many families this year, so we knew we had to find a way to continue this tradition responsibly."

The event follows the reopening of the compost site at Hudson River Park, which is currently the largest composting site in the city. In total, the Park collected approximately 86,000 pounds of food scraps from the local community in 2019— a 23 percent increase from 70,000 pounds collected in 2018. Combined with horticulture waste, the Park diverted a total of 450,000 pounds from landfills in 2019. Instead of food and plant waste slowly decomposing in landfills, the Park returns this organic matter to the earth and uses it to nourish plant beds.

The Pumpkin Smash plays a vital role in contributing to the Park's compost program every year. Last year's event brought a record-breaking 1,200 sustainability enthusiasts

to smash over 2,000 pounds of pumpkins. Although participation is limited this year, families are encouraged to drop off their pumpkins starting Monday, November 2nd, at either Pier 40 or Chelsea Waterside Park at W. 23 St, which are 2 of their 10 composting sites located throughout the Park.

This green initiative grows 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 each year.