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NED SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT OF SCENIC HUDSON, TO DELIVER THE THOMAS COLE SITE'S 13TH ANNUAL RAYMOND BEECHER LECTURE ON OCTOBER 14 IN THE HUDSON RIVER SKYWALK REGION

Catskill, NY – October 1, 2018 – The Thomas Cole National Historic Site announced today that its 13th Annual Raymond Beecher Lecture will be delivered by Ned Sullivan, President of Scenic Hudson. Titled “Still in Eden: Connecting People to the Landscapes that Inspired Thomas Cole,” the lecture will take place on Sunday, October 14, at 2:00 pm at Joe’s Garage, the event space at 443 Main Street in Catskill, NY, in the Hudson River Skywalk Region.

The lecture comes at an exciting time for the newly designated Hudson River Skywalk Region and will illuminate the extraordinary opportunity that still exists to experience the landscape that inspired Thomas Cole and led to America’s first major art movement, the Hudson River School of landscape painting. Scenic Hudson has been an essential partner in advancing the Region and has been crucial to preserving vital portions of the landscape within it, including 149 acres of key shoreline along the Catskill Creek in the Town of Catskill.

The Hudson River Skywalk Region, which was designated last Spring by New York State, is about to undergo a dramatic transformation with the completion of the Hudson River Skywalk initiative that will create a pedestrian pathway connecting Olana and the Thomas Cole Site by way of the Rip Van Winkle Bridge. For the first time ever, the public will be able to walk from one historic site to the other, crossing the Hudson River in the process and experiencing in a unique way the stunning landscape that so inspired Thomas Cole and American art ever since.

The Hudson River Skywalk Region consists of the Thomas Cole National Historic Site, Olana State Historic Site, the Rip Van Winkle Bridge owned by the New York State Bridge Authority (connecting Columbia and Greene counties as well as the two historic sites), and the neighboring communities of Hudson and Catskill with their boutique accommodations, local shopping, and farm-to-table restaurants. The new experience – the Hudson River Skywalk – will weave together the historic homes and studios of Thomas Cole (1801-1848) and his student and international art star Frederic Church (1826-1900) with the Hudson River Valley views that inspired them. As of November 2018, visitors will be able to enjoy the continuous pedestrian walkway from one site to the other, which includes newly constructed viewing platforms on the bridge with sweeping views of the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains.

The 149 scenic and historic acres that Scenic Hudson in partnership with Greene Land Trust has preserved along Catskill Creek, called the Mawignack Preserve, are a stretch of land that is remarkably unchanged since Cole and Church walked, sketched, and painted it nearly 200 years ago. In fact, Cole painted this section of Catskill Creek over 12 times and more than any other subject. Located just upstream of the Village of Catskill, and less than a mile and a half from the Thomas Cole Site and Hudson River Skywalk, visitors can explore the Preserve on a one-mile trail loop. The entirety of the Preserve encompasses more than two miles of shoreline on Catskill Creek, a major Hudson River tributary. It contains an open floodplain meadow along the creek’s eastern bank, upland forest overlooking the meadow, and a forested area west of the creek.

Ned Sullivan has been President of Scenic Hudson since 1999, during which time the organization has experienced dramatic growth in its regional impact. Under his leadership, Scenic Hudson has forged partnerships responsible for preserving thousands of acres of critical open space and farmland, cleaning up contaminated waterfronts, and transforming them into magnificent public parks.

Prior to joining Scenic Hudson, Mr. Sullivan served as Environmental Commissioner of Maine and, before that, as Deputy Commissioner of New York's Department of Environmental Conservation. A graduate of Williams College, he earned master's degrees from Yale University's School of Management and School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. In 2012, he received the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies Distinguished Service Award.

Scenic Hudson works to protect and restore the Hudson River and its majestic landscape as an irreplaceable national treasure and a vital resource for residents and visitors. It is the largest environmental group focused on the Hudson River Valley. It has created or enhanced more than 65 parks, preserves and historic sites up and down the Hudson River and conserved over 40,000 acres.

THE THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE is an international destination presenting the original home and studios of Thomas Cole, the founder of the Hudson River School of painting, the nation's first major art movement. Located on 6 acres in the Hudson Valley, the site includes the 1815 Main House; Cole's 1839 Old Studio; the recently reconstructed New Studio building; and panoramic views of the Catskill Mountains. It is a National Historic Landmark and an affiliated area of the National Park System. The Cole Site's activities include guided and self-guided tours, special exhibitions of both 19th-century and contemporary art, printed publications, lectures, extensive online programs, activities for school groups, the Cole Fellowship program, free community events, and innovative public programs such as the Hudson River School Art Trail—a map and website that enables visitors to visit the places in nature that Cole painted. The goal of all programs at the Thomas Cole Site is to enable visitors to find meaning and inspiration in Thomas Cole's life and work. The themes that Cole explored in his art and writings—such as landscape preservation and our conception of nature as a restorative power—are both historic and timely, providing the opportunity to connect to audiences with insights that are highly relevant to their own lives.

Special Exhibitions at the Thomas Cole Site

+ *SPECTRUM*. This exhibition of artworks by 11 contemporary artists explores color in visual dialogue with Thomas Cole and is installed throughout the historic home, studios, and grounds at the Thomas Cole Site. On view through November 18, 2018, it grew out of conversations between Cole Site curator Kate Menconeri and the artist Kiki Smith.

+ *Picturesque and Sublime: Thomas Cole's Trans-Atlantic Inheritance*. The exhibition is presented in partnership with the Yale Center for British Art and members of the Yale History of Art Department and features works of art by Thomas Cole, J. M. W. Turner, and John Constable. It is on view in the New Studio building through November 4, 2018.

Ongoing Exhibitions in the 1815 Main House

+ *The Parlors*, an immersive experience combining story-telling technology and meticulous restoration of Cole's interior designs in his 1815 home, including the earliest-known interior decorative painting by an American artist. Integrated projections enable paintings to "come to life" and letters to "magically appear" on tables to tell a story.

+ *Mind Upon Nature: Thomas Cole's Creative Process*, an exhibition in the Main House featuring Cole's paintings, sketches, palettes, and other unique objects.

VISITOR INFORMATION: The hours for Thomas Cole's home, studios and special exhibitions vary by season. For details see: www.thomascole.org/visit. Keep in touch on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at @thomascolesite.