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Fall Foliage

Ashokan Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System



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DEP Gets Approval to Increase Pepacton Reservoir Release Rate

States Agree to New York City's Request to Allow More Releases in Anticipation of Rain

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today announced that DEP received approval from the states of Delaware, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania for a request to increase the water release rate at Pepacton Reservoir to minimize any potential negative impacts of warmer temperatures and rain forecast for this coming weekend on communities downstream of the reservoir. Allocation of the waters in the upper Delaware River Basin is governed by a decree of the U.S. Supreme Court. The parties to the Supreme Court decree are the four basin states of Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, and the City of New York.

"Based on potential inflows of water resulting from the predicted storm, it makes sense — and the Decree Parties agree — to maintain the highest water release levels possible at this time," said Commissioner Holloway. "Releasing more water now will create more storage capacity in the City's reservoirs to capture storm runoff, which will help to minimize any potential negative impacts on the surrounding community and to drinking water quality."

On March 3, DEP announced initiatives to monitor and manage the water stored above its reservoirs in the snowpack, including the release of the maximum amount of water allowed under the Flexible Flow Management Plan, which is intended to provide a more adaptive means for managing the Cannonsville, Pepacton, and Neversink reservoirs. DEP is also continuing to operate siphons at Gilboa Dam at Schoharie Reservoir, which releases approximately 200 million gallons of water a day into Schoharie Creek.

Yesterday, DEP announced more steps it was taking in anticipation of the heavy rain, including increasing the amount of water flow through the dividing weir of the Ashokan Reservoir to create more room to absorb storm runoff; increasing the release rate at the Ashokan Reservoir Release Channel to 400 million gallons per day from 300

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million gallons per day; and completing a snow survey throughout the entire upstate reservoir watershed. DEP will continue to take the appropriate steps to manage and monitor the water supply system.

DEP manages the City's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8 million in New York City, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties. Approximately 1,000 DEP employees live and work in the watershed communities as scientists, engineers, surveyors, and administrative professionals, and perform other critical responsibilities.

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