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**Fall Foliage**

Ashokan Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DEP Announces Pilot Program for Small Game, Turkey and Bear Hunting On Water Supply Lands**

Commissioner Emily Lloyd of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that the DEP will implement a pilot program for hunting small game, turkey and bear on City-owned water supply lands in the watershed. Presently, only deer can be hunted on water supply lands.

The one-year pilot program will include all small game, turkey and bear seasons in accordance with state hunting regulations beginning September 2006. Evaluation will be ongoing during the program and the DEP may decide to expand the available hunting areas at its end.

“Deer hunting on DEP land has been very successful, with over 11,000 people receiving permits last year,” said Commissioner Lloyd. “Hunters have told us that they would like more opportunities to hunt other game during other seasons. We are pleased to try out a new approach that goes beyond DEP’s previous commitments but which also continues in the spirit of providing community and economic benefits to watershed communities.

“The pilot program is meant to determine if we can expand our hunting opportunities in a way that does not conflict with the DEP’s watershed protection program and with the concerns of local residents. The pilot program will be evaluated for its effect on the water supply and local communities, and for hunter compliance with applicable rules and regulations. At its conclusion, the DEP will decide whether to continue the program long-term and whether to expand it to other locations,” said Lloyd.

Preliminary locations for the pilot program have been scouted and include two areas each in Delaware, Ulster, Schoharie, Greene, Sullivan and Putnam Counties, and one each in Dutchess and Westchester Counties. Areas were chosen based on public safety, water supply concerns, community input and the quality of the habitat. The final selection of the pilot areas will include notification of nearby property owners and local governments. The anticipated 14 hunting areas are expected to total more than 5,700 acres. Maps will be available to hunters in advance of the season.

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Species to be included in the pilot program include bear, turkey and small game as defined by the State hunting regulations. Hunting dogs will be allowed, as appropriate. As always, all State hunting regulations apply on City lands, in addition to DEP hunting and land use conditions. Hunters are obligated to be familiar with all rules pertaining to hunting on water supply lands.

Access to most water supply lands for recreation requires a free Public Access Permit. Permits are issued for five years and are sent to applicants through the mail. Applications are on the Web at [nyc.gov/watershed](http://nyc.gov/watershed) and at DEP offices in the City and throughout the watershed. Allow two weeks for processing.

Hunters are required to have an additional free DEP Hunt Tag, issued annually. Hunt Tag applications for the 2006-2007 season will be available in the DEP newsletter *Watershed Recreation*, as well as on the Web at [nyc.gov/watershed](http://nyc.gov/watershed). You must have a valid Access Permit in order to apply for a Hunt Tag. Hunters who completed and returned their 2005 Hunt Survey will automatically receive this year's Hunt Tag without needing to apply. A list of those hunters will be posted on the DEP Web site.

Details of the new pilot hunting program will be posted on the DEP Web site as the season approaches. The DEP publishes the *Guide to Hunting* every year, which contains updated maps of hunting areas and rules for hunting on water supply lands.

DEP currently has 36,600 acres of land open for deer hunting. The agency also has almost 25,000 acres of land and 19 reservoirs and two controlled lakes open for fishing.

For more information about hunting and other recreational use of City lands, see the Web or call DEP Land Management at (800) 575-LAND. Email questions to [recreation@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:recreation@dep.nyc.gov).