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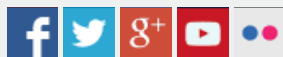
## Department of Environmental Protection Celebrates Earth Day by Joining Trout Unlimited and New York City Students to Release Trout into Watershed Streams

**More Than 2,000 Students from New York City and the Upstate Watersheds Will Participate in the Environmental Awareness Program**

### **Photos of the Trout Release Can be Viewed on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)**

In celebration of Earth Day, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today joined Trout Unlimited, a private, non-profit organization whose mission is to conserve, protect, and restore North America's trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds, and 40 students from South Bronx Head Start, a bilingual early childhood educational program that serves children 3 to 5 years of age, to release juvenile brown trout that the students have raised in the classrooms since October. Since 2002, DEP and Trout Unlimited have partnered to educate students in New York City and watershed communities about the importance of protecting our shared water resources through the Trout in the Classroom program. The conservation-oriented environmental education program for elementary, middle, and high school students teaches young New Yorkers about the connections between trout, water quality, the environment and steps they can take to improve the ecological health of the New York City watershed. This year more than 2,000 students from schools in New York City and the upstate watersheds raised trout in their classrooms and will release them into watershed streams for three weeks during April and May. Today,

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nearly 25 juvenile trout were released into the Cross River where it passes through the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation in Westchester County.

"The Trout in the Classroom program is a hands-on way to educate young New Yorkers about the importance of preserving the rivers, streams, reservoirs, and lakes that supply the world class drinking water we enjoy every day," said DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd. "Over the years, thousands of students from New York City and the watershed have participated in the Trout in the Classroom program and gained an appreciation for our shared water resources."

"Trout in the Classroom in NYC is designed to help connect students to their unique unfiltered water resources upstate through a hands-on, interactive and exciting process," said Trout Unlimited's Youth Education Director Franklin Tate. "Students are engaged in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning, all while developing a deeper understanding and appreciation for nature. Our longstanding partnership with DEP is key to helping us bring this program to thousands of students throughout NYC and inspiring these students to become stewards for the environment."

The Trout in the Classroom Program began in New York City in 2002 and has become a model for similar programs across the country. The students monitor water temperature, clarity, dissolved oxygen, ammonia, and PH while the trout are raised in tanks. They also learn that trout play an important role in the water ecology of the streams that feed New York City's water supply and the nearby forest habitat. To learn more about Trout in the Classroom in New York City and the New York City Watersheds, sponsor a school, get a school involved, or volunteer at the next Trout Release Field Day contact Lilli Genovesi at [lgenovesi@tu.org](mailto:lgenovesi@tu.org).

To support the program, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) provided 20,000 trout eggs last fall that were distributed for free to approximately 150 schools in New York City and the watershed. DEC also sets guidelines for raising trout in the classroom and releasing them in the New York City watershed.

"DEC has actively supported the Trout in the Classroom program since its inception in New York," said DEC Commissioner Joe Martens. "Trout in the Classroom is a great way to get students involved in raising fish from eggs for release in local waters. These types of educational programs are valuable tools to help build future aquatic resource stewards and conservationists."

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$14 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/nycwater](https://facebook.com/nycwater), or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/nycwater](https://twitter.com/nycwater).

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