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Environmental Protection Commissioner Strickland & Queens College Unveil Green Projects on Campus to Improve Harbor Water Quality and Announce \$6 Million Green Infrastructure Grant Program

Green Infrastructure at Queens College Will Help Improve New York City Harbor Water Quality;

DEP Makes \$6 Million Available for Similar Projects in 2013

Environmental Protection Commissioner Carter Strickland and Queens College President James L. Muyskens today unveiled the College's newly installed green infrastructure. Queens College, the recipient of a \$386,000 DEP grant, has rebuilt three different areas of their campus in order to direct stormwater to newly installed permeable pavers and rain gardens that will capture the stormwater and allow it to be naturally absorbed into the ground. The green infrastructure will keep nearly 900,000 gallons of stormwater out of the combined sewer system each year and thereby reduce sewer overflows into Flushing Creek. Queens College provided more than \$150,000 in matching funds for the project. Commissioner Strickland also announced that applications are now being accepted for the 2013 Green Infrastructure Grant Program cycle, which will make \$6 million available for green infrastructure projects in combined sewer areas.

"The rain gardens and permeable pavers installed at Queens College are terrific examples of the type of green infrastructure that we aim to build in targeted areas around the city in order to keep stormwater out of the sewer system and further improve harbor water quality," said Commissioner Strickland. "Further, by installing the green infrastructure at three central points on campus, the Colleges' 20,000 students will come to have a better understanding of the importance of handling stormwater and how it ultimately affects New York harbor water quality."

"We are very grateful to the Department of Environmental Protection for this grant," noted Queens College President James Muyskens. "Not only will we now reduce our rainfall run-off by almost a million gallons every year, but we also have three new attractive rain gardens for the college community to enjoy."

Through the first two years of DEP's Grant Program more than \$7.5 million has been allocated to 22 different partners, who contributed an additional \$4.1 million in matching funds, to install green infrastructure that will manage stormwater runoff before it ever enters the sewer system. Queens College is the second project to be completed following the opening of the Brooklyn Grange's Rooftop

More Information

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Farm at the Brooklyn Navy Yard this past summer. Green infrastructure employs vegetation, soils, and other structural elements to absorb and evaporate water and to mimic natural hydrologic cycles.

All private property owners in combined sewer areas of New York City are eligible to apply for a 2013 Green Infrastructure Grant for projects that will reduce or manage stormwater on their property. The application deadline is February 4, 2013. Preference for grants will be given to projects that are built in priority watersheds, are cost effective, provide matching funds or other contributions, and include other environmental and community benefits such as green jobs development. Examples of green infrastructure include green and blue roofs, rain gardens, permeable pavers and rainwater harvesting cisterns. One million dollars of the \$6 million in grant funding will be awarded through the New York State Environmental Benefits Program.

DEP will host three workshops that explain the eligibility requirements and guide users through the online application. A fourth technical workshop will be held at DEP headquarters in December to provide support in computing the stormwater calculations. The workshop schedule is below:

Bronx Grant Workshop
Bronx Borough President's Office
851 Grand Concourse – Room 915
Bronx, New York
November 29, 2012 at 5:30-7:00PM

Brooklyn Grant Workshop
Brooklyn Public Library
280 Cadman Plaza West - Ground Floor Auditorium
Brooklyn, New York
December 5, 2012 at 5:30-7:00PM

Stormwater Calculations Workshop
NYC Department of Environmental Protection
59-17 Junction Boulevard - 3rd Floor Cafeteria
Flushing, New York
December 6, 2012 at 3:00-4:00PM

Queens Grant Workshop
NYC Department of Environmental Protection
59-17 Junction Boulevard - 3rd Floor Cafeteria
Flushing, New York
December 6, 2012 at 4:00-5:30PM

New York City, like other older urban centers, is largely serviced by a combined sewer system where stormwater and wastewater are carried through a single pipe. During heavy rain storms, the system can exceed its capacity, and must discharge a mix of stormwater and wastewater — called a combined sewer overflow, or CSO — into New York Harbor. Since 2002, DEP has invested \$10 billion in infrastructure upgrades that has resulted in a reduction in CSO's and drastic improvements to the overall health and ecology of New York City waterways. In September 2010 Mayor Bloomberg unveiled the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan, an alternative approach to improving water quality that combines traditional infrastructure upgrades and the integration of green infrastructure to capture and retain stormwater runoff before it ever enters the sewer system. Over the next 20 years DEP is planning for \$2.4 billion in public and private funds for targeted green infrastructure installations, as well as \$2.9 billion in cost-effective grey infrastructure upgrades, to reduce sewer overflows by 40% by 2030.

Queens College has been recognized as one of the most environmentally responsible colleges in the U.S. and Canada in the second edition of The Princeton Review's 2012 Guide to 322 Green Colleges. The College has been a tremendous partner in Mayor Bloomberg's PlaNYC initiative by committing to a 30% reduction in carbon emissions by 2017. To help reach this goal the College

participated in NYC CoolRoofs and coated the roof of Kiely Hall with a reflective surface earlier this summer. It has also joined in MillionTreesNYC by planting over 300 trees on campus to date, including 70 apple trees in May that created the college's newest apple orchard. More info on Queens College may be found at www.qc.cuny.edu.

DEP manages the 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. DEP employs nearly 6,000 employees, including nearly 1,000 in the upstate watershed. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/nycwater.

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