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Fall Foliage

Pepacton Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Ian Michaels (718) 595-6600

Public Hearings to Be Held on Department of Environmental Protection's Waterfowl Management Program**Draft Environmental Impact Statement Released**

Commissioner Christopher O. Ward of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that the agency has released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed expansion of its Waterfowl Management Program. The DEP will take written comments on the DEIS until November 21.

"The Waterfowl Management Program is an important part of our overall strategy to protect the water supply that over nine million people rely on every day," said Commissioner Ward. "I urge residents to comment on the DEIS so that the City can tailor the Program to have a minimal impact on the surrounding communities."

There will also be two public hearings on the DEIS where the public can comment:

Date:	November 3	November 5
Time:	7:00 P.M.	7:00 P.M.
Location:	Katonah Library 26 Bedford Road Katonah	Marbletown Elementary School 12 Atwood Road Stone Ridge

The Waterfowl Management Program uses various methods to discourage waterbirds such as gulls and geese from congregating near reservoirs, where they can leave droppings that introduce bacteria into the water supply. Among the methods DEP has used are motorboats, which cruise the reservoirs chasing birds away; pyrotechnic devices, which use noise to scare away birds; modifications to the physical environment, such as allowing grass to grow, which discourages geese; and the damaging of eggs so that roosting geese cannot reproduce.

The Waterfowl Management Program has been in place at the Kensico Reservoir in Westchester since 1993. The current DEIS examines the effects of expanding the Program to the Ashokan Reservoir in Ulster, the Rondout Reservoir in Ulster and Sullivan, the West Branch and

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Croton Falls Reservoirs in Putnam and the Cross River Reservoir in Westchester.

The use of pyrotechnic noise-making devices to scare away birds is only needed at limited times of the year, typically including the late fall and early winter. Even during these times, pyrotechnic devices are usually only used during a four-hour period around sunset.

The DEIS attempts to identify the effect of the expanded Program on these areas. Among the factors studied are noise levels in the surrounding communities, the effect of the Program on "community character," and the effect of the Program on natural resources such as plants and other species of birds and wildlife. Ecological field surveys have been ongoing at some of these reservoirs since 1995. Field work to evaluate noise at the five reservoirs was conducted this spring in preparation for the DEIS.

Comments received at the public hearing or in writing by November 21 will be addressed in a Final EIS, which the DEP expects to issue by the end of the year. Written comments should be mailed to:

Diane M. McCarthy
New York City Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Environmental Planning and Assessment
59-17 Junction Boulevard , 11th Floor
Flushing, New York 11373-5108

Comments can also be emailed to dmccarthy@dep.nyc.gov.

The 62-page Executive Summary of the DEIS is available online on DEP's Web site at <http://nyc.gov/dep/html/waterfowleis.html>.