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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hamden Hill Ridge Riders and DEP Reach Agreement on Access**Agreement Gives Snowmobiling Club Continuing Use of Historic Trail**

Commissioner Emily Lloyd of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that the DEP has given the Hamden Hill Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club permission to maintain and use an established snowmobile trail that crosses a parcel of land in Hamden that was recently purchased by New York City. The site is located near Hamden Town Hall and will give the Club better access to the emergency sled that is stored there.

"Today's announcement is the result of a working collaboration between DEP, the Club and the Town of Hamden, with input from the New York State Snowmobile Association and Delaware County Planning Department," said Commissioner Lloyd. "We hope we're able to reach similar agreements with other groups which will make the City's property even more accessible."

DEP purchased the 146-acre Covert Hollow Road property from Dorothy Court, who had previously allowed the Hamden Hill Club access over the property on a designated trail. This trail is part of 76 miles of trail that the Hamden Hill Ridge Riders maintain in the region.

"My attitude toward DEP did a 180-degree turn when I heard this was happening," said club president Gerry Wright. "It's never encouraging when land with a trail on it changes hands, but we are pleased with the land managers at DEP and their willingness to try out snowmobile use on this property. Former club president Joe Caso was very diligent and worked hard at putting together this agreement with DEP and we are proud of the way he brought it about."

The Hamden Hill Club is a non-profit snowmobile club dedicated to furthering the sport of snowmobiling in the Hamden area. They have a membership of over 200 people including individuals and family members. The Club obtains permission from private and public landowners to construct, maintain and mark snowmobile trails for use. They also promote snowmobile safety among members and the general public.

"The Town of Hamden supports the efforts of the Hamden

MORE INFORMATION

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Hill Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club in its activities for the safety and enjoyment of snowmobiling and for the economic vitality of the Town of Hamden and Delaware County," said Town Supervisor Wayne Marshfield, " I would also like to thank DEP for working with us on this important issue and hope that further arrangements can be made on other appropriate City-owned parcels in the future."

DEP's Land Acquisition Program has been purchasing qualifying watershed lands, as well as conservation easements, from willing sellers in a nationally-recognized effort to protect sources of drinking water in New York State. Some of these landowners have generously allowed portions of State-sanctioned snowmobile trails to cross their lands in the past. The DEP has been working with local snowmobile clubs to make sure that such arrangements can continue after the land has been protected for water supply purposes.

"We recognize the economic importance of snowmobiling in the watershed region and are happy to contribute as a landowner in partnership with local groups," said Commissioner Lloyd, "I understand that private landowners buying properties in Hamden and elsewhere will sometimes stop all uses by the public and shut-down longstanding snowmobile trails, but with this model for allowing such trails on City-owned land, concerns about trail closures can be diminished region-wide."

For snow conditions and other information regarding the Hamden Hill Ridge Riders, please visit their Web site at www.hamdenhillridegeriders.com. For membership information, contact Hank Groth at (607) 746-7705. For information on recreational opportunities on DEP water supply land visit nyc.gov/watershed.