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**NYC Environmental Protection**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 16-02  
 January 11, 2016

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## Department of Environmental Protection Invests \$30 Million to Keep Trash and Debris Out of Newtown Creek

**Similar Litter Capture Technology Already Benefitting the Bronx River and Gowanus Canal**

**Construction Photos and a Map are Available on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)**

New York City Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Emily Lloyd today announced that construction has begun on a \$30 million project to build four litter capture devices that will improve the health and aesthetics of Newtown Creek. Much of the trash and debris found in New York Harbor, and its connected waterways, originates as litter discarded on city streets that subsequently gets washed into a catch basin and eventually makes its way into the sewer system. To help keep litter from reaching Newtown Creek, in late 2015 DEP began the installation of below-ground capture devices at four key locations within the sewer system in the vicinity of the Creek. The control devices include floating baffles and bending weirs to capture the litter and direct it to a wastewater treatment plant where it can be properly disposed of. Over the last three years, DEP has installed similar facilities along the Bronx River and the Gowanus Canal and they have captured more than 200 tons of litter and debris. Construction of the Newtown Creek facilities is expected to be completed, and the technology activated, in 2017.

"Cleaning up and revitalizing Newtown Creek is one of our top priorities and this \$30 million investment will help to capture trash and debris and ensure that it does not foul the waterway," said **DEP Commissioner Lloyd**. "We look forward

**More Information**

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to continuing to work with elected officials, environmental groups and residents on the many other projects we are working on to further improve the health of Newtown Creek.”

“I’ve been proud to work to ensure Newtown Creek received federal resources for its remediation through the Superfund program,” said **Representative Nydia M. Velázquez (D-NY)**. “This latest project by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection will further help clean up this local waterway. By coordinating efforts at the local and federal levels, we can make Newtown Creek healthier and safer for the surrounding community.”

**Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the City Council Environmental Protection Committee**, said, “The new litter capture devices will help keep Newtown Creek healthier and improve our city’s sewer system. The devices will also prevent litter from reaching our waterways, one of our greatest resources. I applaud DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd for her leadership on this issue and look forward to seeing a cleaner Newtown Creek.”

“Our natural resources are an invaluable part of the community we share in Brooklyn,” said **Borough President Eric L. Adams**. “The residents of Greenpoint and East Williamsburg deserve to enjoy an improved Newtown Creek that has been cleaned of pollution and restored to beauty. This DEP initiative will reduce the amount of garbage that reaches Newtown Creek and contribute, ultimately, to its full restoration.”

“This DEP investment will help our continuing effort to clean Newtown Creek,” said **Senator Michael Gianaris**. “There is much more work to be done to reverse the effects of decades of pollution, but I am pleased the City is focusing its attention on this important environmental problem.”

“The installation of these four litter capture devices reinforces our state’s commitment to providing a clean and healthy environment for all New Yorkers,” said **Senator Joseph Addabbo**. “These structures will not only eliminate garbage and other debris from Newtown Creek, but they will also save our city countless tax dollars that would otherwise be spent cleaning clogged catch basins as a result of litter being washed into the sewer system. As a member of the NYS Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, I thank the Department of Environmental Protection for their progressive vision with this project and their dedication to New York’s environmental future.”

“In scale, debris-capture devices may pale in comparison to the millions of dollars and decades of cleanup efforts at work in and around Newtown Creek; the impact however will prove to be great,” said **Senator Martin Malavé Dilan**. “Similar City Department of Environmental Protection devices have removed hundreds of tons of litter from city waterways in as little as three years. This technology is a welcome addition to ongoing Newtown Creek cleanup efforts. I commend Commissioner Lloyd and Mayor de Blasio for standing by their commitment to clean up our creek and community.”

**Assemblywoman Margaret Markey (30th AD, Maspeth/Middle Village/Dutch Kills)** said: “I applaud DEP for this new step to improve the water quality of Newtown Creek. As we in government have worked hard to improve the quality of life in Western Queens, the health of this waterway has been a continuing impediment. This new project takes us one step closer to making Newtown Creek and its connected waterways cleaner and eventually more accessible to adjacent communities.”

“The revitalization of Newtown Creek is essential to the growth and vitality of Long Island City, Queens and Brooklyn,” said **City Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer**. “This \$30 million investment will improve access to waterfront while making our neighborhoods healthier.”

“I want to thank DEP for making this major investment that will help address the contamination of Newtown Creek,” said **City Council Member Antonio Reynoso**. “North Brooklyn has the highest concentration of waste processing facilities in the city, and this project will help keep that trash, and litter discarded

on the streets, out of the creek. As we work to remediate this toxic waterway, every effort helps, and this project is a step in the right direction.”

“This \$30 million investment represents the next step in restoring and protecting Newtown Creek after decades of neglect,” said **City Council Member Elizabeth Crowley**. “This will not only help build a safer environment, but help in preserving the area for years to come. I thank Commissioner Lloyd for her unwavering commitment to cleaning up Newtown Creek and look forward to the project’s completion.”

“We commend the efforts of NYC DEP to reduce floatable pollution entering Newtown Creek, which poses direct harm to the returning local wildlife and litters shores both local and city-wide,” said **Program Director for the Newtown Creek Alliance Willis Elkins**. “Less debris in the Creek is a positive step forward for the waterway and the communities that surround it. NCA looks forward to additional measures to improve the quality of this unique NYC resource.”

“Curb Your Litter: Greenpoint, a project of the Greenpoint Chamber of Commerce made possible by the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund, is working toward a cleaner Greenpoint and we support DEP bringing this effort to our waterways,” said **Elaine Brodsky, Chairwoman of the Greenpoint Chamber of Commerce**. “Street litter and floatables are closely interrelated problems that necessitate action on the neighborhood and city-wide scale. We look forward to the effects DEP’s litter capture devices will bring to our section of Newtown Creek.”

“We applaud this substantial financial commitment by DEP to advance the significant progress that has been made over the past few years to restore Newtown Creek, and return it to productive use for our residents,” said **Patrick O’Brien, Chairman of Queens Community Board 2**. “This is a very tangible expression of the dedication to the realization of that goal, and we thank Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Lloyd, and the countless others that have labored long and hard on the Newtown Creek project. There is more to do, but this is a very welcome announcement that we embrace with open, and grateful, arms.”

The litter capture devices are being constructed at the following locations:

- **47th Avenue between 28th and 29th Streets**
- **Rust Street and 56th Drive**
- **Troutman Street and Saint Nicholas Avenue**
- **455 Johnson Avenue**

In addition to the litter capture devices, the city’s 144,000 catch basins are designed to trap litter before it can make its way into the sewer lines. DEP also operates skimmer boats that patrol New York harbor to capture floating debris, including wood, plastic, metal, rubber, and glass.

DEP has also partnered with the Department of Sanitation (DSNY), the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability and GreeNYC to initiate a new public information campaign aimed at reducing consumer waste and street litter while also helping to improve the health and aesthetics of local waterways. The campaign will build upon the success of GreeNYC’s recent “B.Y.O.” (Bring Your Own) effort and aim to address these interconnected problems by reducing the amount of consumer waste produced in the first place. Working with small businesses, the campaign will encourage New Yorkers to use reusable mugs, bottles and bags rather than their disposable counterparts, and digital ads and posters on bus shelters and DSNY trucks will help remind New Yorkers to bring reusable items when they’re on the go. In addition to addressing the issue of street litter and marine debris, the campaign will help to meet the OneNYC goals of sending zero waste to landfills and reducing waste disposal by 90 percent by 2030. DEP has already committed approximately \$600,000 to the campaign.

DEP manages New York City’s water supply, providing more than one billion

gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8.5 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 has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. 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](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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