



Fall Foliage

Pepacton Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System



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CONTACT:

Michael Saucier/Angel Roman (718) 595-6600

MORE INFORMATION

NYC Department of Environmental Protection Communications & Intergovernmental Affairs

59-17 Junction Boulevard
19th Floor
Flushing, NY 11373

(718) 595 - 6600

New York City to Acquire 685 Acres of Land for Watershed Protection

City Has Purchased Land or Easements on More than 105,000 Acres of Upstate Land

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today announced the purchase of 685 acres of upstate land for \$3.1 million. This acquisition builds on the City's efforts to protect the upstate watershed and maintain the outstanding quality of the drinking water that 9 million New Yorkers need every day. Since the inception of the Land Acquisition Program, New York City has protected over 105,000 acres of watershed land in the Catskill/Delaware and Croton systems, which cover parts of eight counties in New York State.

"Mayor Bloomberg has always continued to invest in infrastructure and programs that are critical to our City's long term health, even during tough economic times," said Deputy Mayor for Operations Ed Skyler. "Protecting the quality of our water supply is essential to the City's continued prosperity, which is crucial to the prosperity of the entire State. And the Land Acquisition Program has been an important part of that protection since its inception more than 10 years ago."

"New York City's watershed serves roughly half the population of New York State, and since 2002, we have committed nearly \$300 million to continue the land acquisition program that has been a critical component of our efforts to protect the City's water supply since 1997," said Commissioner Holloway. "These investments, and the partnerships we have established with the watershed towns that are the home to our water supply, have enabled New York City to preserve its high quality drinking water, and we must ensure that it remains protected for generations. The acquisition of these nearly 700 acres is another step in our efforts to do that."

Watershed protection is considered the best way of maintaining drinking water quality over the long term. New York City's program, one of the most comprehensive in the world, has been so successful at protecting the integrity of its water supply that the Environmental Protection Agency

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awarded the City a 10-year Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD) in 2007. The City has invested more than \$1.5 billion in watershed protection programs, and their success is a main reason why New York City remains one of only five large cities in the country that is not required to filter the majority of its drinking water. The 2007 FAD requires the City to continue a land acquisition program. The City only acquires lands from willing sellers and pays fair market value based on independent appraisals. The properties are usually opened for public access and recreational use. The City also protects land by purchasing conservation easements, and through initiatives like the Watershed Agricultural Council, that works with farmers to implement farming practices that are compatible with the City's watershed protection goals.

DEP manages the City's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8 million in New York City, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties.

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