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Fall Foliage

Ashokan Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System



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DEP Announces Bottom Release Program for Cannonsville and Pepacton Reservoirs

Trout Fishing to Benefit From Cooler Water Temperatures in Local Streams

Commissioner Christopher O. Ward today announced that with the very wet summer weather and high runoff patterns in the upstate watershed, storage levels in the Pepacton and Cannonsville Reservoirs are unusually high, and without action both reservoirs are likely to spill large quantities of warm surface water. As a result, DEP has commenced a Bottom Release Program from the Cannonsville and Pepacton Reservoirs. The program is designed to release cold bottom water from the reservoir dams that exceed normal conservation release requirements prior to reservoir spillage and to minimize the quantity of warm water that does spill.

Commissioner Ward said today, "We took this action before the reservoirs, which were nearing overflow capacity, began to spill and discharge warmer reservoir surface waters downstream. The first releases took place on August 8 from Cannonsville Reservoir and on August 11 from the Pepacton Reservoir. By reducing the amount of warm surface water that spills from the reservoirs, additional protection is provided for downstream cold water fisheries. Since the program began, 1.6 billion gallons of cold water above normal conservation release requirements have been made."

The Bottom Release Program was announced by Commissioner Ward on August 12 at the "Day on the Delaware" event, sponsored by the Delaware River Foundation. Officials of both the Delaware River Foundation and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) praised this action, which extends benefits to trout fishermen downstream of the Cannonsville and Pepacton Reservoirs.

This Bottom Release Program was developed by the City in consultation with the Delaware River Master's office, the Delaware River Basin Commission, the New York State DEC, and the States of Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, all of whom are affected by releases from the upstate Delaware water supply system. The program is scheduled to end on September 30, 2003.