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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rehabilitation Project To Improve Two Dams In Town Of Southeast

\$25 Million Project at Bog Brook at East Branch Reservoirs to Improve Dams' Function and Appearance and to Increase Public Access

Commissioner Christopher O. Ward of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that the City has begun a \$25 million rehabilitation project affecting the dams at the Bog Brook and East Branch Reservoirs in the Town of Southeast. The work includes upgrades of the dams' hydraulic functions, aesthetic improvements to the dams and the surrounding woodlands and better access for boaters through a new boat ramp in the East Branch Reservoir.

Commissioner Ward cautioned local residents that work will continue through August 2005, and that during that time the water levels in the two reservoirs will often be lowered dramatically to allow construction crews to access important parts of the two dams. Water levels have already been lowered by over 60 percent at the site.

"This two-year project will make necessary upgrades to the dams while beautifying the area and increasing access for the public," said Commissioner Ward. "It is another example of the City's commitment to the partnerships it has forged with its upstate neighbors. We will make every effort to have as little effect on the community as possible while we complete this important work.

"This work will also encourage diversity, improved health and active growth of our watershed forests, further improving the buffering capacity and ability to reduce sedimentation and erosion," continued the Commissioner. "Our forests are critical for the long term protection of water quality and are a great asset to the surrounding area."

Commissioner Ward emphasized that there is no damage to either of the dams and that the work is for improvements only, not because either dam is in poor condition or is structurally unsound.

At the East Branch Reservoir the project will adjust stones that have shifted within the spillway; install new sluice gates and activators in the dam; create a new service road

MORE INFORMATION

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for DEP access; and create a new valve chamber at the base of the dam that will allow the DEP better control of releases of water into the East Branch of the Croton River.

The project will also remove graffiti from the spillway; clean and resurface the face of the dam; remove overgrown brush from the area; and restore the fountain at the base of the dam to its original splendor.

At the Bog Brook Reservoir the project will install a “fuse plug” in the reservoir’s auxiliary dam. A fuse plug is a section of dam that is intentionally designed to give way if conditions in the reservoir threaten the structural integrity of the main dam. The fuse plug is designed to minimize the catastrophic damage from a potential dam failure by allowing water to escape into the Croton River through a predetermined spillway, instead of building up to the point where the main dam can be damaged. This work will require the use of a temporary coffer dam in the reservoir.

Also at Bog Brook, the project will install new sluice gates and actuators in the dam; create a new valve chamber so that the DEP can better control releases into the East Branch of the Croton River; clean the fountain at the base of the dam; and repair the tunnel which connects the two reservoirs under Route 22, including the gatehouse that controls water flow through the tunnel.

There will also be a new boat launch installed at East Branch, the first of its type for that reservoir. Access to the launch will be on Old Milltown Road, off of Route 22.

Work to improve the forestlands surrounding the Bog Brook and East Branch reservoirs is currently underway as part of the project. Historically, the planting of trees and clearing of wood debris from the reservoir areas was necessary as part of the original construction of water supply dams and facilities over 100 years ago. Now that the surrounding forests have matured, the removal of invasive vines and hazards is necessary to encourage diverse, healthy and vigorous forests. Densely planted conifer stands are thinned, and dead and dying trees along roadsides and in boat mooring areas will be removed.

Local fisherman will benefit through improved safety in their boat mooring areas, and visible improvements will be noticed by residents traveling along state Route 22 and other roads in the area. Trees cut are largely left on location to assist in continued soil and vegetation development.

The East Branch and Bog Brook Reservoirs are part of the City’s Croton Water System, which supplies about 10 percent of New York City’s daily supply and is capable of providing 40 million gallons per day to surrounding communities. The East Branch Reservoir holds 5.2 billion gallons and was put into service in 1891. Bog Brook holds 4.4 billion gallons and was put into service in 1892.