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## Department of Environmental Protection Expands Access to City-Owned Lands for Hunting, Trapping, and Hiking

### With the State’s Regular Hunting Season Set to Begin on Saturday, an Additional 2,663 Acres Have Been Opened for Hunting and Low-Impact Recreation

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland today encouraged sportsmen and sportswomen to use City-owned land across the upstate watersheds when the state’s regular hunting season opens Nov. 16. DEP owns and manages some 84,730 acres in its upstate watersheds that are open for hunting, including 57,764 acres known as “Public Access Areas” that are open to outdoor enthusiasts, including trappers, without a permit. Many hunters have already enjoyed this expanded access during the early bow-hunting season, which began in October. City-owned tracts that are open for hunting are spread across 295 recreational units in Delaware, Dutchess, Greene, Putnam, Schoharie, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester counties. Large populations of certain animals, including deer, can degrade water quality by stunting the regeneration of forest lands that serve as an important natural filter for surface waters before they enter the reservoirs.

“DEP is proud to support the watershed area’s heritage of hunting, fishing, and trapping, which has been passed down from generation to generation and helps to protect the high quality drinking water relied upon by more than 9 million residents of New York State,” Strickland said. “We encourage our neighbors in the watershed to safely enjoy the expanded access as hunting season begins.”

An additional 2,663 acres of watershed land has been opened this year in Delaware, Sullivan, and Ulster counties. That includes 1,485 acres across 13 new recreational units, and 1,178 acres that were added to existing recreational units. All state hunting regulations—including antler restrictions throughout much of the watershed region—apply on City-owned lands. Also, those using City lands for recreation and hunting should pay careful attention to posted signs that outline what type of hunting and other uses are allowed, as some areas remain open for bow hunting only throughout the regular season. In addition, access to several areas around reservoirs remains restricted due to ongoing forestry projects and entering areas marked as closed will be considered trespassing.

Additional information about hunting on City-owned property in the watersheds can be found by going to [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep) and clicking on the “Watershed Recreation” link. A complete list of recreation units can be found by going to this link on the DEP website. Hunters should check what activities are allowed in each unit either on the DEP website or by calling (800) 575-LAND.

Since 2003, DEP has more than doubled the amount of City-owned water supply lands that are open for recreation to 118,600 acres. Of those acres open to recreation, roughly 85,000 are land and 33,000 are water. Last year, DEP

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opened approximately 3,852 additional acres of land in the watersheds for low-impact recreation that included hiking, hunting, fishing, and snowshoeing. In 2013, DEP expects to open a total of 4,000 additional acres of watershed land for recreation, including areas in Schoharie, Sullivan, Ulster, Greene, and Delaware counties.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight 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 at [facebook.com/nycwater](https://facebook.com/nycwater), or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/nycwater](https://twitter.com/nycwater).

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