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**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CATSKILL MOUNTAIN CLUB OPEN HIKING TRAIL AT PEPACTON RESERVOIR**

*New trail in Town of Andes built through partnership between City and local volunteers*

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Catskill Mountain Club on Friday opened a new hiking trail on City-owned property near the Pepacton Reservoir. The trail, which was built and will be maintained by the Catskill Mountain Club, features an outlook with a scenic view of the Pepacton Reservoir along its 5.3-mile round trip.

The trail represents a collaborative effort between the City and the Catskill Mountain Club. DEP provided trail markers and access to the land, while the all-volunteer Catskill Mountain Club plotted and built the trail, and installed a sign to mark its beginning. The trailhead is located just off Route 30, across from the Shavertown Bridge Boat Launch on the Pepacton Reservoir in the Town of Andes. DEP acquired the property through its land acquisition program in 2010 as part of its ongoing effort to protect water quality around its reservoirs.

“This trail underscores our desire to open more City-owned property for recreation in the Catskills,” DEP Deputy Commissioner Paul Rush said at the opening ceremony. “By teaming up with local groups such as the Catskill Mountain Club, DEP hopes it can support local outdoor enthusiasts and the tourism economy by providing more access for hikers, fishermen, and others.”

Catskill Mountain Club President, Steve Berg, added, “We’re appreciative of DEP’s efforts to open additional lands for hiking and proud to take part in this historic development of our region, especially since research has shown a primary motivation for coming to the Catskills is interest in outdoor recreation, especially in organized group activities.”

Andes Town Supervisor Martin Donnelly also thanked the Catskill Mountain Club at the opening ceremony. He gave special thanks to Catskill Mountain Club board member Ann Roberti for her work in leading the trail-building efforts on both the Shavertown trail and the recently completed 4-mile Andes Rail Trail.

The trail at Shavertown Bridge is the fourth hiking trail opened on City-owned land in the Catskills. The first three include a nature trail alongside a school in Conesville in Schoharie County, a walking and cross-country skiing trail near Windham in Greene County, and trails in the Delaware County towns of Tompkins and Walton that were built by the Finger Lakes Trail Conference with help from Catskill Mountain Club.

The new trail is also within walking distance of the Shavertown Bridge Boat Launch, a popular site for recreational boating on the Pepacton Reservoir. DEP expanded the recreational boating program in 2012 to include four of its reservoirs in the Catskills. In its first two years, the program has issued more than 1,600 tags for kayaking, canoeing and sailing. The Shavertown trail is one of many City-owned properties that are open to the public without the need for a permit. More than 52,000 City-owned acres in the Catskills can now be accessed without a permit for hiking, hunting, snowshoeing, and other low-impact recreation. That includes more than 40,000 acres in Delaware County.

Formed in 2003, The Catskill Mountain Club, Inc., is an all-volunteer group of outdoor enthusiasts interested in providing a wide variety of outdoor (non-motorized) recreational opportunities abundant in the Catskills. Its objective is to increase public awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of the region's natural resources, public lands, and outdoor activities and to promote responsible, safe, and sustainable outdoor recreation.

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 8.3 million in New York City, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam, and Westchester counties. This water comes from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and the system comprises 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and numerous tunnels and aqueducts. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and others professionals in the upstate watershed. In addition to its \$68 million payroll and \$157 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.5 billion in watershed protection programs—including partnership organizations such as the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the Watershed Agricultural Council—that support sustainable farming practices, environmentally sensitive economic development, and local economic opportunity. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program with over \$14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. 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).