

## Special Guest *Commissioner's Corner*



**James Mueller**, Acting Deputy Commissioner for the Bureau of Engineering, Design and Construction is a guest commentator this week.

As we begin 2017, DEP remains steadfast in its commitment to improve the health of our local waterways. Just last week, equipment was mobilized and preparatory work has begun on a [\\$34 million project to dredge portions of Flushing Bay](#) in the vicinity of the World's Fair Marina. This work will significantly reduce nuisance odors, enhance existing wetlands, and remove deteriorated timber piles, an abandoned pier and non-native trees to improve views of the Bay. The dredging is anticipated to be completed in 2017, while the wetland expansion and planting will continue over the next several years.

The work will encompass long-reach excavators situated on floating barges dredging 91,000 cubic yards of sediment over a 17.5 acre area in the vicinity of the World's Fair Marina and two combined sewer outfalls. In addition, non-native trees, 78 deteriorated timber piles and an abandoned pier will be removed to improve views along a portion of the 1.4-mile long Flushing Bay Promenade. The work will conclude with the enhancement of more than three-acres of wetland habitat, which will naturally filter the water in the Bay, including mudflats, intertidal marsh and high marsh.

During the dredging, a turbidity curtain will be installed to isolate

the work area from the rest of the Bay and there will be continuous monitoring of water quality and any odors. The extracted sediment will be processed, dewatered and transferred for offsite disposal. Dredging operations are expected to occur over a 24-hour period, seven days a week, however boaters with vessels docked in the public marina will have access to their watercrafts at all times.

The dredging of Flushing Bay is one of numerous DEP projects, both under way now and in the planning stages, to improve the health of Flushing Bay. This includes a [\\$132 million project in College Point](#) that will see the construction of more than 400 new catch basins and nearly 12 miles of new sanitary and storm sewers. This work will allow for the decommissioning of three existing combined sewer outfalls that empty into Flushing Bay, thereby avoiding the release of nearly 50 million gallons annually of combined sewer overflow.

An ongoing [\\$33 million upgrade](#) at five key junction points within the sewer system in Queens will reduce combined sewer overflows into Flushing Bay by 225 million gallons each year. In addition, DEP is building hundreds of specially designed curbside rain gardens in the vicinity of Flushing Bay that will intercept stormwater before it can ever enter the combined sewer system and contribute to overflows into the Bay. And, in 2009, the \$291 million Flushing Bay Combined Sewer Overflow Retention Facility was activated.

This \$34 million dredging and wetland expansion project will clean up Flushing Bay and greatly benefit the residents of northern Queens. I'd like to thank the whole BEDC team, especially **Roy Tysvaer, Nayan Shah, Edward Novotny and Dorothy**

**Chao**. I also want to thank our partners who have worked with us on the extensive planning needed to carry out this dredging, and we

look forward to working together on our many other initiatives that will enhance the environment in and around Flushing Bay.



## *Spotlight on Safety*

### Seasonal Flu

Seasonal influenza, or the flu, is a specific and serious respiratory virus, primarily spread through droplets that are released when infected individuals sneeze or cough, but it can also be transmitted from touching affected surfaces. The flu can lead to complications such as pneumonia and can be life-threatening especially among those who are elderly, pregnant, or with certain underlying health conditions. Typical symptoms include high fever, aching muscles, sore throat, dry cough, fatigue, runny or stuffy nose, headache, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Here are some every day tips that you can take to prevent the spread of germs, especially in the workplace:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20

seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Avoid sharing phones, computers and other equipment/supplies.
- Use disinfectant wipes/spray to keep surfaces clean.

Flu vaccines are available at many pharmacies, as well as at your doctor's office, and it takes about two weeks after the vaccination for protection to kick in. According to the Centers for Disease Control, for the 2016-2017 season the nasal spray flu vaccine should not be used. For more information, visit [OSHA guidance for workers and employers](#) on reducing the spread of seasonal flu in workplaces.

At DEP, everyone is responsible for safety. If you or anyone on your team is concerned about your working conditions, it's okay to ask your supervisor or your bureau's EHS liaison how they can help. If you've still got questions, you can call the EHS Employee Concerns Hotline. It's DEP's responsibility to acknowledge and fix unsafe situations, procedures, and practices. With your help, we'll not only get the job done, we'll make it safer for ourselves, our coworkers, our families, and our city. CALL (800) 897-9677 OR SEND A MESSAGE THROUGH [PIPELINE](#). HELP IS ON THE WAY.



## Ongoing Forestry Project at Ashokan



Work progresses on a project to remove potentially hazardous trees along a stretch of Route 28 in Shokan in order to protect utility lines, public safety, and improve the overall health and vigor of the forest adjacent to Ashokan Reservoir. The conifer trees, many of them more than 100 feet tall, were planted by New York City in the early 1900s as part of the development of Ashokan Reservoir. Along with protecting public safety and utility lines, forestry projects open the forest floor to sunlight and promote the natural growth of the next generation of forest. The timber removed from the Route 28 site is being harvested by a professional timber company based near Cooperstown, and will be used for home building and finishing products. The volume of wood produced from this sustainable forestry project is enough to build 20 houses and provide a dozen jobs.

## 2017 Art and Poetry Contest



Entries for DEP's 31<sup>st</sup> annual *Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest* are now being accepted online until March 8, 2017. Second through twelfth grade students attending public, independent, charter or parochial schools and/or home-schooled in New York City, and in the East and West of Hudson watersheds, are invited to create original art and compose poetry that reflects an appreciation for our shared water resources. Students can submit poems and artwork including paintings, collages, three-dimensional models, photography, animation and videos of dance performances, public service announcements and songs based on five central themes: water, the drinking water system, wastewater treatment, harbor water quality, and stewardship/climate change. Teachers, parents and students can visit [www.nyc.gov/dep/artandpoetry](http://www.nyc.gov/dep/artandpoetry) to view the contest guidelines and resource materials, submit entries online, see past winners, and learn more about New York City water.

## Extra Acres for Upstate Recreation



An additional 2,640 acres of City-owned property across the watershed in Delaware, Greene and Ulster counties were opened for recreation in 2016. The vast majority of them were opened as public access areas that do not require a DEP access permit. Some recreation properties—especially those near reservoirs—still require a free access permit that can be applied for by going to [www.nyc.gov/dep/accesspermit](http://www.nyc.gov/dep/accesspermit). DEP first established public access areas in 2008 to allow recreation without permits on certain watershed lands. Since then, the number of acres open for recreation without a permit has more than tripled, from 20,009 to 69,016. In total, DEP has opened 133,017 acres of land and water for fishing, hiking, hunting, snowshoeing and other forms of low-impact recreation.

## Construction Continues at Gilboa Dam



Construction continues on the outlet at Gilboa Dam where water released from the reservoir will be able to flow into Schoharie Creek below the dam. A gate shaft (above) is being bored at about the halfway point in the release tunnel. The gate shaft has to be blasted to a terminal depth of about 180 feet. Construction of the permanent release tunnel will allow the reservoir/dam to meet modern dam safety standards.

**We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: [newsletter@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:newsletter@dep.nyc.gov).**