

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 19, 2012

No. 73

**DEP UNEARTH'S NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS AND
ANCIENT FOSSILS AT CONSTRUCTION SITES IN EASTVIEW
AND GILBOA, NEW YORK**

Findings Will Be Put On Public Display at Local Institutions

Environmental Protection Commissioner Carter Strickland today announced that artifacts unearthed prior to construction of the Catskill/Delaware Ultraviolet Treatment Facility (UV Facility) in Eastview, as well as fossils found at the Gilboa Dam in Gilboa, have been preserved and will be put on display at local institutions. Over 400 artifacts were recovered from the site in Eastview including tool making elements, cache blades and quartz projectile points dating back thousands of years to the terminal Archaic Era and early Woodland Period. They will be housed at the Historical Society Serving Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown and will be put on public display and made available for research in 2013. In addition, two fossils of the earth's oldest trees, dating back 380 million years ago, that were discovered during the reconstruction of the Gilboa Dam have been loaned to the Time and the Valleys Museum in Grahamsville to be part of a permanent exhibit about the New York City watershed. DEP and its consultant, Historical Perspectives, Inc., made a public presentation concerning the artifacts found at Eastview last night at the Warner Public Library in Tarrytown.

"By researching the history of these sites during the planning for these important projects and employing sensitive excavation techniques we were able to preserve these ancient artifacts and fossils," said DEP Commissioner Strickland. "I am grateful to the Historical Society Serving Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown as well as The Time and Valleys Museum for partnering with us to showcase these important artifacts and fossils to help foster a better understanding of the Native Americans from this area as well as the ancient history of the watershed itself."

"The Historical Society serving the villages of Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown is pleased to add this valuable collection of Native American artifacts to our educational collection," said Sara Mascia, Curator of the Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown Historical Society. "Our organization is dedicated to advancing our knowledge and understanding of local history through educational programs and research. The NYC DEP collection of artifacts recovered from the Eastview UV site will enhance research opportunities, and will contribute to our compilation of artifacts related to the heritage of the Tarrytown, Sleepy Hollow and the nearby region. We thank the NYC DEP for working with us to preserve the history and character of our surrounding community."

"The Time and the Valleys Museum is grateful to DEP and all of the people that made possible the loan of the Archeopteris fossils from the Gilboa site," said the Museum's Executive

Director, Donna Steffens-Fajfer. “The fossils will become part of the permanent exhibit about NYC’s water system story including the building of the Rondout and Neversink Reservoirs.”

When DEP acquired the Eastview site for the UV Facility it hired an archaeological firm, Historical Perspectives, Inc., to conduct an analysis of the 153 acre parcel. An initial survey of the site found two stone projectile points, likely dating back between 1,200 and 2,800 years ago. These initial findings led to a more detailed inspection of a 67 acre section of the site and included 700 shovel tests, an approximately one foot by one foot hole, carefully dug five feet below grade. The shovel tests found 18 sites that were positive for artifacts, including a Brewerton Point dating back 4,400 to 5,000 years ago. Larger excavations were then done which determined that there were two intact concentrations of artifacts which were then carefully excavated, mapped and the artifacts went through laboratory analysis including radiocarbon dating. The location of the findings, near Mine Brook, a source of fresh water, and the fact that the majority of them were related to tool processing suggest that the site was periodically utilized by hunting groups during the late Archaic Era and early Woodland Period, thousands of years ago. Artifacts that would indicate a more settled Native American living environment were not found at the site. Artifacts donated include approximately 391 pieces of stone shatter and flakes from stone tool production, 12 projectile points, 5 bi-faces, two scrapers, and two knives. A plaque will be placed at the UV Facility to commemorate the Native American presence at the site.

The UV Facility has been under construction for the last six years and will be treating water from the Catskill and Delaware watersheds in December of 2012. It will be the largest such plant in the world and will have the capacity to treat over 2 billion gallons of water a day.

During the ongoing reconstruction of the Gilboa Dam in Schoharie County, DEP engineers uncovered fossilized tree stumps while excavating the Riverside Quarry, which is downstream of the Dam. The New York State Museum was notified of the find and their experts helped to unearth 32 fossilized stumps. As excavation of the Quarry resumed Museum personnel, who remained on-site, noticed the remnants of the forest floor. The area was then carefully washed and Museum staff mapped the forest floor and extracted additional tree-top specimens from the rock. The fossils are from the Devonian Period, dating 380 million years ago, and are evidence of the world’s oldest forest. The findings have been loaned to the Time and Valleys Museum in Grahamsville and are part of a permanent exhibit that also features panels about the history of the watershed, including the building of the Rondout and Neversink reservoirs. The fossilized stumps were delivered to the Museum earlier this summer. In 2011 DEP donated similar fossils to the New York State Museum as well as the Gilboa Museum.

The Gilboa Dam is part of New York City’s Catskill water supply system, and is located at the northern point of the Schoharie Reservoir in the Town of Gilboa. The \$400 million upgrade that began in 2005 will bring the Dam into compliance with stringent state and federal standards for new dam construction. The work is scheduled to be completed in 2019.

The Historical Society and Museum collects, preserves, and celebrates the history of Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow. The Historical Society has been the keeper of the collective memories of the villages since 1889. The Time and the Valleys Museum is a living and interactive resource that preserves the past, educates the present and displays the uniqueness of the Rondout and Neversink watersheds for all generations.

DEP manages the 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, 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 employs nearly 6,000 employees, including more than 750 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and others professionals in the upstate watershed. In addition to its \$68 million payroll and \$153 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 a planned \$13.2 billion in investments over the next 10 years that creates up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/nycwater.

-30-

Contact: Chris Gilbride / Mercedes Padilla (718) 595-6600