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Department of Environmental Protection Announces Schedule of Summer Tours and Educational Programs Throughout the Upstate Watersheds

Fishing, hiking and forestry events included in outings for watershed residents and visitors

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced that it will host a series of public programs this summer for watershed residents and visitors, including a hike on recently protected land, an educational walk through biologically diverse wetlands, and a fishing day for children. The summer events begin this week with two programs to mark New York's first-ever Invasive Species Week.

"We hope these family-friendly events will help watershed residents and visitors learn more about New York City's water supply and the amazing natural environments that surround it," DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd said.

The schedule of summer events includes:

July 10 – Invasive Earthworms: Hands-on Discovery and Fishing

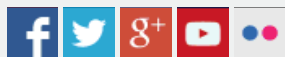
Earthworms can help young anglers have a great fishing experience, but they are also playing a role in changing our forests by increasing the speed at which nutrients move from the soil into the water. Join DEP's invasive species and fishery experts to learn more about the link between fishing, earthworms, healthy forests and clean water. Participants will join an exciting, hands-on survey of earthworms around fishing areas and in nearby forests before fishing at Ashokan Reservoir. Activities are appropriate for children ages 8 and up. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Fishing poles will be available to borrow for the morning. A state fishing license is required for participants ages 16 and older. The event will take place at the Woodstock Dike in West Hurley, alongside Ashokan Reservoir, from 9:30 a.m. till noon. A parking lot is located on a gravel road off Route 28, just east of the West Hurley Post Office. The event is part of New York State Invasive Species Week. Those interested in participating should register by calling (800) 575-LAND or by e-mail at Recreation@dep.nyc.gov.

July 12 – Aquatic Plants: Fish's Friend or Foe? Aquatic plants are an important element of fish habitat, but all species are not created equally. DEP's invasive species and fishery experts will be on hand to teach visitors how to identify the variety of aquatic plant life in Muscoot Reservoir, in Westchester County, and learn which plants provide excellent fish habitat and which invasive plants could pose a problem. Visitors will gain insight into areas of the reservoir that might be good for fishing, and areas to avoid at certain times of year. Plant samples will be available for hands-on discovery. The event will happen off Route 100 in Yorktown, from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m. The event is part of New York State Invasive Species Week. Those interested in participating should register by

More Information

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calling (800) 575-LAND or by e-mail at recreation@dep.nyc.gov.

August 2 – Hike on Recently Protected Watershed Land Join DEP land protection experts for a hike through meadows and forest on a newly protected 240-acre parcel in the Delaware County Town of Bovina. The hike will end at Round Top peak, with an elevation of approximately 3,065 feet, which is part of a New York State Reforestation Area. Hikers will meet at the eastern end of Boggs Road (off Bovina Road) at 11 a.m. This 2-4 mile hike will include woods, roads as well as some limited off trail hiking. The hike includes moderate slopes with short areas of steep climb. Along the way, we'll discuss DEP efforts to protect land throughout the watershed. Participants are encouraged to bring lunch, water, tick repellent and appropriate hiking gear. Those interested in participating should register by calling (800) 575-LAND or by e-mail at Recreation@dep.nyc.gov.

August 16 – Educational Wetlands Walk Join one of DEP's wetland scientists to explore a wetland in the Delaware County town of Andes. Participants will learn about the basic functions of wetlands, their importance as a habitat for wildlife and for water quality. The tour will take place from 1-2:30 p.m. on DEP land located on County Route 6, about 1.3 miles after the turn off State Route 28. Participants are encouraged to wear boots or sneakers that they don't mind getting dirty. Those interested in participating should register by calling (800) 575-LAND or by e-mail at recreation@dep.nyc.gov.

September 21 – Kids Fishing Day at Ashokan Reservoir DEP and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will host a fishing event for children and their parents. Poles and bait will be supplied, but feel free to bring your own. As part of the state's "I Fish NY Program," the requirement for a fishing license will be waived for adults who want to join their children at the event. DEP and DEC staff will be available to teach participants how to fish and assist as needed. Adults who don't have a free DEP access permit will be able to obtain one at the event. Ashokan Reservoir is home to many different species of fish, including smallmouth and largemouth bass, yellow and white perch, yellow and brown bullhead, sunfish, and trout. The fishing event will begin at 9 a.m. at the Woodstock Dike. A parking lot is located on a gravel road off Route 28, just east of the West Hurley Post Office.

Each of these events is subject to cancellation or postponement based on weather conditions. DEP will provide updates on its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/nycwater and directly to those who register beforehand and provide contact information.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of high quality water each day to more than 9 million New Yorkers. This includes more than 70 upstate communities and institutions in Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties who consume an average of 110 million total gallons of drinking water daily from New York City's water supply system. 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 \$70 million payroll and \$157 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.7 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, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.