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**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ANNOUNCES  
NEW PILOT PROGRAM THAT WILL ALLOW FOR USE OF ELECTRIC  
TROLLING MOTORS WHILE FISHING**

*Pilot Program Builds on Success of Recreational Boating Expansion and Will Begin at  
Cannonsville Reservoir this spring*

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland today announced a new pilot program that will allow for the use of electric trolling motors for permitted boats fishing at Cannonsville Reservoir this year. The one-year pilot comes after last year's successful expansion of the recreational boating program, and it marks the first time motorized boats for fishing will be allowed on any of DEP's upstate reservoirs. Water quality monitoring during the four-year recreational boating pilot revealed that the regulations put in place, including mandated steam cleaning of boats, led to no negative affects to water quality and no indication of invasive species in the reservoirs — key indications that the limited use of boats on the reservoirs did not affect DEP's ability to provide high quality drinking water. Electric trolling motors are powered by a sealed, marine grade battery and do not use gasoline or oil that could degrade the water supply. DEP will continue to monitor water quality to ensure no impacts are seen from the introduction of electric trolling motors.

“More than nine million New Yorkers, or nearly half the state's population, rely on these reservoirs for their daily drinking water needs so we have closely monitored the recreational boating program and will continue to do so this year with the introduction of electric motors,” said Commissioner Strickland. “Working with our local partners we would like to responsibly expand recreational boating, which has proven to strengthen local economies by attracting even more visitors to watershed communities.”

The pilot program is scheduled to begin in April and the guidelines will be similar to those established for recreational boating over the last few years:

- Boats and their motors must be steam cleaned by a certified vendor before they are used in the reservoir. Steam cleaning protects against the spread of certain invasive plants and animals.
- Vendors will issue a trolling motor tag after the motor is cleaned.
- Motors will need to be steam cleaned each time the motor is used on the reservoir, unless it remains stored along with the boat at the reservoir.
- A DEP Access Permit is needed for anyone boating and/or fishing on City reservoirs.

To be eligible for the program, electric trolling motors must not exceed 55 pounds of thrust, and their batteries cannot exceed 12 volts. The motors must use marine-grade batteries

that are sealed, and they must be affixed to the boat to prevent them from falling into the reservoir. Trolling motors are to be used only for fishing, and only in conjunction with row boats and jon boats. DEP will consider expanding the acceptable use of the motors and types of vessels after the year-long pilot. While the trolling motors may be stored along with the boats at the reservoir, the batteries must be removed at the end of each day.

New York State laws for trolling motors will also apply, including the requirement that users have a whistle, a hand lantern, and an anchor on board.

The new pilot program for electric trolling motors follows the successful expansion of the recreational boating program, which also began with a pilot at Cannonsville Reservoir in 2009. Last year, the recreational boating program expanded to include Neversink, Pepacton and Schoharie reservoirs, where a total of 983 tags were issued for the use of kayaks, canoes, rowboats, sculls and sailboats. The recreational boating season will open on Memorial Day again this year and run through Columbus Day.

Fishermen have long sought to use electric trolling motors on City reservoirs, and the motors will help some fishermen reach portions of Cannonsville Reservoir that might be difficult to access using non-motorized boats. DEP plans to convene a focus group of anglers in February to solicit thoughts on the details of the program. Participants for that focus group have not yet been chosen. If the pilot program is successful, it could be expanded to include other reservoirs that are open to recreational boating in the City's watershed.

Expanding recreational opportunities in the watershed is one of the goals outlined in *Strategy 2011-2014*, a comprehensive strategic plan that outlines 100 distinct initiatives to make DEP the safest, most efficient, cost-effective and transparent water utility in the nation. The plan is available at DEP's website at [www.nyc.gov/dep](http://www.nyc.gov/dep).

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of high quality 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 almost 1,000 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 over \$13 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 [www.nyc.gov/dep](http://www.nyc.gov/dep), like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/nycwater](http://www.facebook.com/nycwater), or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/nycwater](http://www.twitter.com/nycwater).

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