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Department of Environmental Protection Watershed Operations Staff and Delaware County Public Works Pumping Floodwater and Clearing Downed Trees in New York City

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland today announced that 15 watershed employees normally stationed in Orange, Delaware, Sullivan and Ulster Counties, along with two heavy equipment operators from the Delaware County Department of Public Works, have been deployed to New York City and are providing valuable assistance with flood abatement and downed trees. Hurricane Sandy resulted in more than 16,000 downed trees and flooding in low lying areas in all five boroughs that has affected critical infrastructure.

Using industrial Godwin pumps brought to the City from the watershed, crews have already drained Manhattan's Battery Underpass of floodwater and are now assisting in removing water from sewage pumping stations in Brooklyn and school facilities in Queens. Other crews have been deployed by the New York City Parks Department to affected locations in Queens where they are using 5 dump trucks, two industrial wood chippers, two mini excavators, a backhoe, a road sweeper and chain saws brought from the watershed to clear downed trees and limbs.

"The winds and storm surge of Hurricane Sandy have devastated portions of New York City and we are mobilizing all available staff and resources to aid in the recovery effort," said Commissioner Strickland. "We are grateful for Delaware County's support and have deployed their crew to work alongside our DEP team from the watershed to help remove downed and dangerous trees as well as pump out submerged infrastructure."

"Delaware County is proud to provide skilled manpower and equipment to support Hurricane Sandy recovery operations in New York City," said Delaware County Board of Supervisors Chairman James Eisel.

"Task Force Chipper" and "Task Force Godwin" will continue until the recovery effort in New York City is complete, however staff will be rotated out every three to four days. In the past New York City has sent staff and equipment to support watershed communities, most recently during the aftermath of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, and now upstate community members are able to return the favor.

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