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**CITY BEGINS DREDGING OF SPRINGFIELD LAKE AND
CONTINUES CONSTRUCTION OF STORM SEWERS AND
BLUEBELT WETLANDS IN SOUTHEAST QUEENS**

Project Will Help Reduce Local Roadway Flooding and Improve the Health of Jamaica Bay

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland today announced that work has begun to dredge Springfield Lake and double its depth in order to improve water quality and discourage algae blooms. The Lake will serve as part of a new network of nearly 10 acres of Bluebelt wetlands that will receive stormwater through a newly built sewer system from neighborhood streets, sidewalks, and roofs, and filter it before it is released into Jamaica Bay. The Lake dredging and construction of Bluebelts is one part of a \$69 million project that will bring three miles of new water mains, nearly three miles of storm sewers, and new roadways and sidewalks to the Springfield Gardens neighborhood. Installation of the water mains is 95 percent complete, work on the Bluebelt wetlands is ongoing, and the installation of sewers began in June. The project broke ground in the fall of 2012, is being managed by the City's Economic Development Corporation, and is expected to be completed by the fall of 2014.

“With initial work on the Bluebelt wetlands well underway, we are currently installing nearly three miles of sewers that will help manage stormwater and reduce flooding throughout the Springfield Gardens neighborhood,” said DEP Commissioner Strickland. “The millions of dollars we have invested in Southeast Queens will improve living conditions for local residents and promote economic growth while helping to protect the health of Jamaica Bay.”

“These investments in green infrastructure and Bluebelts in Southeast Queens and citywide, represent another important step forward in advancing the strategies laid out by Mayor Bloomberg in his recently-released resiliency blueprint for New York City, ensuring that we are better prepared for an uncertain future,” said New York City Economic Development Corporation President Seth W. Pinsky.

A barge equipped with floating hydraulic equipment will remove approximately 17,500 cubic yards of sediment from the floor of the lake and a high-density polyethylene pipe system will transport it to a nearby geotextile dewatering system. Construction also continues on a fresh water wetland located to the north of the Lake, a tidal wetland to the south, and a stream channel that will empty into Jamaica Bay. The installation of 84 new catch basins will collect stormwater from neighborhood streets and the sewers will empty into a forebay at 145th Road and Arthur Street which will slow the water and act as a stilling basin where suspended sediment will settle. The water will then flow into an open channel surrounded by native wetland vegetation designed to filter the stormwater and absorb pollutants. The wetland system will be

surrounded by a planted green buffer of native trees and shrubs which will help stabilize the stream shorelines and act as a wildlife habitat.

The project will also include a pilot use of 25,780 square feet of porous concrete in the median strip of Springfield Boulevard, one of the first uses of the treatment on a New York City roadway median. Porous concrete is a type of green infrastructure that allows stormwater to pass through it and be absorbed into the ground, rather than having it run off and be funneled to the nearest catch basin and discharged into the sewer system. The reconstruction will also include the installation of 12,000 linear feet of concrete curb, 13,500 linear feet of steel faced curb, 165,600 square feet of concrete sidewalk, 51,600 square yards of asphalt roadway, 43 hydrants, and 990 trees. The project area is bounded by South Conduit Avenue on the north side, 149th Avenue on the south side, 145th Road/146th Avenue/225th Street on the east side and Springfield Boulevard on the west side.

The ongoing \$69 million project is the fourth phase of a \$175 million comprehensive neighborhood upgrade for Springfield Gardens that will result in the addition of approximately nine miles of new storm sewer lines, eight miles of sanitary sewer lines, 47 storm sewer chambers, 71,450 feet of distribution water mains, 7,550 feet of trunk water mains, 505 manholes, and 305 fire hydrants.

DEP began building Bluebelt wetlands on Staten Island over 20 years ago and the award winning program has recently been expanded to the Bronx and Queens. Over the last ten years, DEP has built Bluebelts for approximately one third of Staten Island's land area. In the South Richmond and mid-Island areas, DEP has purchased approximately 400 acres of wetland property for Bluebelts that provide drainage for 19 watersheds, covering about 14,000 acres. Expanding the use of Bluebelts to reduce flooding and improve the water quality of New York Harbor is one of the operational goals outlined in *Strategy 2011-2014*, a far-reaching strategic plan that lays out 100 distinct initiatives to make DEP the safest, most efficient, cost-effective, and transparent water utility in the nation. The plan is available on DEP's website at nyc.gov/dep.

DEP manages New York 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. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$14 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/nycwater](https://www.facebook.com/nycwater), or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

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