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New York City Public School Students Study the Ecological Health of the East River as Part of “A Day in the Life of the Hudson and Harbor” Event



Students Gather at Gantry Plaza State Park in Long Island City to Collect Water Samples and Document the Health of the East River

Statewide, Nearly 5,000 Students at 72 Locations, From Troy to New York City, Explore and Learn About the Hudson River Estuary

Photos are of the Event Available on [DEP’s Flickr Page](#)

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today sponsored more than 70 public school students who participated in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s (DEC) “A Day in the Life of the Hudson and Harbor” educational event. The students, advanced placement environmental science students from Baruch College Campus High School in Manhattan and 7th graders from Hunter’s Point Community Middle School in Queens, participated in the event during which teams collected and analyzed water samples and made environmental observations along the East River, at Gantry Plaza State Park. Students used field techniques to track the river’s tides and currents, examined the water’s chemistry, identified macroinvertebrates and fish, and observed oyster colonies.

“New York Harbor is a critical part of the Hudson River estuary and over the last decade DEP has invested more than \$10 billion to improve water quality and restore wetlands and adjacent grasslands, helping to bring back native fish populations and allow for greater recreational use,” said **DEP Commissioner**

More Information

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Vincent Sapienza. “We’re proud to partner with DEC to bring this valuable program to thousands of young New Yorkers and to inspire stewards who will ensure that future generations can enjoy all the Hudson River has to offer.”

During the event, five stations were set up where students were able to measure the river’s currents and perform tests to determine the level of turbidity, pH, salinity and dissolved oxygen in the water. The high school students were paired with seventh graders and taught them how to properly measure water quality. The seventh graders taught their high school partners the techniques they use to clean and monitor the oysters they are raising in the East River. The students were supervised by science teachers from their schools and DEP staff. DEP supplied the equipment for the event, including seine nets and lab materials to investigate aquatic life, water chemistry and quality, tides and weather. The data collected by the nearly 5,000 students at 72 different locations, from Troy to New York City, will be analyzed and posted on the “A Day in the Life of the Hudson and Harbor” website. This annual event, now in its 15th year, is part of DEC’s [Hudson River Estuary Program](#), which is sponsored by the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University.

The Hudson River is not just a river—it is a tidal estuary. The estuary makes up the lower half of the Hudson River, spanning 153 miles from the tip of the Battery to the Troy Dam. The river experiences dramatic changes in salinity, circulation patterns, tidal ranges, river width and water depth, fish species, macro invertebrate communities, and plant life. While the northern half of the river is freshwater fed by snowmelt, groundwater and rain, the southern estuary section is a tidal mix of salty seawater and freshwater.

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 \$20.7 billion in investments 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](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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