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10-89

September 20, 2010

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DEP Completes Grand Gorge Sewer Extension Project

Project Will Help Protect Water Quality in Catskill Watershed

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today announced the completion of a new sewer extension project in the hamlet of Grand Gorge in the Town of Roxbury that will help protect water quality in the Catskill watershed. Construction of the 5,500-foot sewer line will replace onsite septic systems serving more than 20 residential properties. The sewer lines will carry approximately 5,200 gallons of wastewater each day to the DEP-operated wastewater treatment plant in Grand Gorge. The \$2 million project also included the installation of a pump station and pressurized sewer main, and the replacement of gutters, drains, and pavement. DEP worked in close collaboration with the Town of Roxbury to manage and construct the project.

"It is critical to prevent potential wastewater contaminants from reaching the water supply relied upon by nine million New Yorkers every day," said Commissioner Holloway. "With this new sewer extension, Grand Gorge residents will no longer need to use aging septic systems, which can sometimes fail and release pathogens into our water supply. Now, wastewater from these properties will flow to a state-of-the-art treatment plant that will protect water quality and improve the quality of life for local residents. This is another great example of how our partnerships upstate can be beneficial to everyone, and I want to thank the town of Roxbury for its hard work in bringing this vital project to fruition."

"The project in Grand Gorge has been a long-term and productive partnership between the Town of Roxbury and the City of New York," said Roxbury Town Supervisor Thomas Hynes, a critical partner in bringing this project to completion. "Bringing wastewater treatment to additional residents will help maintain the community character in Grand Gorge and result in improved water quality in the watershed."

The Town of Roxbury recently sent letters to individual homeowners in the project area who are required to hire a

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contractor to connect their homes to the new sewers within three months of notification. Contractors can work with the town building inspector on proceeding with an inspection and getting a house connection to the sewer system.

The new sewer extension line — located just west of the hamlet of Grand Gorge along NYS Route 23 from Jump Brook Road to Bruce Purn Road — will help protect water quality in the Catskill watershed, which provides, on average, 40% of the approximately one billion gallons of drinking water delivered to the city each day. The sewer extension project also included the installation of a new package pump station, a 1,160-foot force main, 3,300 feet of house-connection piping, as well as the replacement of 740 feet of paved gutter, seven driveway culverts, 5,500 feet of paved shoulder, and 4,100 feet of ditch-line grading work.

The project is part of DEP's watershed protection program to ensure that the Catskill/Delaware system remains unfiltered. Failing septic systems are potential sources of pathogens that can enter the city's water supply. Rehabilitation and repair of failing septic systems, or the replacement of septic systems with modern wastewater treatment plants, reduces the levels of contaminants and pathogens in treated wastewater that is discharged in the watershed.

Watershed protection is considered the best way of maintaining drinking water quality over the long term. New York City's program, one of the most comprehensive in the world, has been so successful at protecting the integrity of its water supply that the Environmental Protection Agency awarded the City a 10-year Filtration Avoidance Determination in 2007. Since 1997, the City has invested more than \$1.5 billion in watershed protection programs, including nearly \$55 million to help homeowners repair or replace failing septic systems, and nearly \$125 million to construct new wastewater infrastructure in communities with concentrated areas of substandard septic systems. The success of these programs is a main reason why New York City remains one of only five large cities in the country that is not required to filter the majority of its drinking water.

DEP manages the City's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8 million in New York City, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties. Approximately 1,000 DEP employees live and work in the watershed communities as scientists, engineers, surveyors, and administrative professionals, and perform other critical responsibilities. New York City's water is delivered from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the city and comprises 19 reservoirs, and three controlled lakes. The DEP police protect the watershed and its facilities, including seven City-owned wastewater treatment plants.

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