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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Ian Michaels (718) 595-6600

New \$4.48 Million Stream Management Plan To Improve Batavia Kill

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Christopher O. Ward and Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District (GCSWCD) Executive Director Rene Van Schaack today announced the release of the new Batavia Kill Stream Management Plan. New York City and the District have agreed to implement the Plan over the next four years at a cost of \$4.48 million, all of which is being provided by the DEP.

The announcement was made today at the Big Hollow Restoration Site on County Route 56 in Windham.

"The Plan presents a detailed set of step-by-step recommendations that will enhance recreational opportunities, reduce flood hazard risks and erosion and enhance economic development – all in a manner that simultaneously provides water quality protection" said Commissioner Ward. "City funding will be used to design and build three additional demonstration stream restoration projects, and to implement the varied recommendations."

The Plan includes revegetating the stream corridor with vigorous, erosion-resistant native plants; reducing the colonization of streambanks by Japanese knotweed; improving stormwater management; and building a landowner constituency responsible for assisting and ensuring the plan's implementation.

"The Management Plan for the Batavia Kill is essential to ensuring close collaboration among the many individuals, businesses and agencies that deal with the Batavia Kill on a daily basis," said Executive Director Van Schaack.

Jim Hitchcock, Greene County Legislator representing the Batavia Kill watershed and a member of the GCSWCD Board of Directors said, "I have been very pleased by the success of the partnership between New York City and the local communities via the Stream Management Program. This program works to solve real problems, and results in long-lasting benefits to both the City and the local landowners."

Hitchcock, who grew up on the banks of the Batavia Kill, also noted, "I am pleased not only as a legislator, but also as a member of the GCSWCD Board of Directors that we

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NYC Department of
Environmental Protection
Communications &
Intergovernmental Affairs

59-17 Junction Boulevard
19th Floor
Flushing, NY 11373

(718) 595 - 6600

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have developed a County-based stream program that is second to none in the nation and which has gained the respect of local landowners and municipal leaders.”

Ward and Van Schaack also announced that the City and the GCSWCD are strongly committed to expanding on the success of the Batavia Kill project by developing stream management plans for the West Kill, the Schoharie Creek and the East Kill.

Stream assessment and a demonstration stream restoration project began this summer on the West Kill, where the District has contracted with the City for some \$1.48 million in funding, matched by an additional \$1.1 million in outside funds raised by the GCSWCD. The City has earmarked an additional \$2.3 million for future planning and restoration activities on the Schoharie Creek and East Kill. Since 1996, the partnership has resulted in a commitment of City funds – as well as state and federal funds – in excess of \$12.7 million for stream assessment, planning and restoration in Greene County.

“The City is committed to ensuring that our partners have the tools they need to steward stream corridors over the long term,” said Commissioner Ward. “The County has carefully assessed the condition of the Batavia Kill and worked to identify the underlying causes of excessive erosion – they’ve piloted new techniques, and reduced rates of erosion using natural channel restoration principles over some two miles of the stream. These projects have enhanced fish habitat and the overall beauty of the Batavia Kill. The City is proud to extend its Batavia Kill partnership and to expand this work with GCSWCD to the West Kill and Schoharie watersheds, especially because the GCSWCD has done its part to use City funds to leverage substantial state and federal funds.”

The partnership was first established in 1996 when the City contracted with GCSWCD for \$2.1 million to pilot the use of natural stream channel restoration techniques in reducing rates of stream erosion that contribute to high levels of turbidity (suspended sediment) in the Schoharie Reservoir. High levels of turbidity can interfere with the effective disinfection of drinking water.

GCSWCD maintains a Web site at www.gcswcd.com/stream/bataviakill/smp which provides information about the Brandywine, Maier Farm and Big Hollow projects and the Stream Management Plan.