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Department of Environmental Protection and National Weather Service Team Up For Better Forecasts

Shared data to enhance Weather Service's coverage of watershed

Commissioner Christopher O. Ward of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Eastern Region Director Dean P. Gulezian of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) announced today that the two organizations have agreed to share real-time weather data collected by the DEP in the watershed in order to enhance weather forecasts in the region.

"This partnership will result in more accurate storm and weather forecasting for watershed residents, as well as improvements to the forecasts that the DEP uses to help manage the New York City water system," said Commissioner Ward. "By sharing our data, we are able to take advantage of the Weather Service's expertise in analyzing and translating information into real-world projections. We look forward to working with the National Weather Service in the future to help improve forecasts for the benefit of all involved."

"Our partnership helps provide the public with the best weather and water information science and technology that exists today," Gulezian said. "It is part of our commitment to ensure the best meteorological and hydrologic information is available."

The Department of Environmental Protection operates 26 weather stations throughout the watershed, including 21 in the 1,600-square-mile West of Hudson watershed and five in the 400-square-mile East of Hudson watershed. The stations monitor temperature, humidity, wind speed and direction, solar radiation and precipitation. Data is sent to DEP offices automatically every fifteen minutes through phone lines.

Under the new partnership, a system has been set up to transmit the data to the National Weather Service at the same time they are received by the DEP. So far, 23 of the 26 stations are connected, with the other three to be

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connected this summer. The DEP's 26 weather stations cost a total of about $350,000 to build. In addition to the weather station data, DEP will send real time reservoir stream release and elevation data collected by DEP reservoir operations system to NWS.

The shared data will help the Weather Service expand its coverage in the watershed and make more accurate forecasts of storm warnings, floods and other events in the region. By better predicting storms and precipitation trends, the expanded coverage by the NWS will also help the DEP manage the water system more efficiently.

The project began as a request from the Flood Advisory Committee of the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC), which was seeking ways to more accurately forecast dangerous conditions on the Upper Delaware River.

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