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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Clear Waters Magazine Honors DEP's Staten Island Bluebelt Program

Stormwater System Is Subject of New York Water Environmental Association Quarterly Publication

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today congratulated the agency's Staten Island Bluebelt staff on the Bluebelt program being recognized in the latest quarterly issue of *Clear Waters* magazine, a New York Water Environment Association (NYWEA) publication (<http://nywea.org/clearwaters/>).

"DEP's Bluebelt staff that has worked hard over the years to build the Bluebelts that protect natural wetland areas, mitigate flooding, and save New York City ratepayers tens of millions of dollars," Commissioner Holloway said. "We appreciate *Clear Waters* for recognizing this environmentally sound approach to managing stormwater."

In his President's Message, NYWEA President Bruce G. Munn said, "Through the success of the Bluebelt program, New York City has adopted this approach in their PlaNYC 2030 as a means of improving climatic, infrastructural and demographic challenges in the future."

The Bluebelt system is a component of PlaNYC, Mayor Bloomberg's sweeping sustainability program designed to create a greener, greater New York City. The Staten Island Bluebelt system channels stormwater into natural drainage corridors, including streams, ponds and other wetland areas, instead of into storm sewers. Preservation of these wetland systems allows them to perform their functions of conveying, storing and filtering stormwater. In addition, the Bluebelts provide important open spaces and diverse wildlife habitats. The Bluebelt system on the South Shore of Staten Island provides drainage for 16 watersheds, covering about 10,000 acres. The City of New York has purchased approximately 325 acres of wetland property on the South Shore for the system. Since its inception, \$300 million has been invested in sewer capital projects in the South Shore's Bluebelt watersheds, along with \$50 million for drainage improvements and wetland restoration work in the Bluebelt system itself.

MORE INFORMATION

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Under PlaNYC, the Staten Island Bluebelt system is being expanded from the South Shore to Mid-Island, providing sustainable drainage benefits to more communities. An additional 312 acres are at various stages of the acquisition process for the Mid-Island area.

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. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,400 miles of sewer lines take wastewater to 14 in-City treatment plants. DEP also manages stormwater throughout the City, and ensures that the City's facilities comply with the Clean Water Act, and other federal, state and local rules and regulations.

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