

Commissioner's Corner



Yesterday I had the opportunity to join with the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations (BWSO) to break ground on Staten Island's first mid-Island Bluebelt system. Joining us in Midland Beach were U.S. Senator **Charles Schumer**, U.S. Representative **Dan Donovan**, Borough President **James Oddo**, NYS Senator **Andrew Lanza**, NYS Assemblywoman **Nicole Malliotakis** and Department of Design and Construction (DDC) Commissioner **Dr. Feniosky Peña-Mora**. Building upon the

success of the 62 Bluebelts we have built and maintain on the Island's south shore, the New Creek Bluebelt will significantly improve the drainage system, help to reduce flooding, and provide some relief to Midland Beach residents.

The \$22 million project will build the first two—of what will eventually be 19—Bluebelt wetlands that will receive and naturally filter the stormwater that falls in the area. In addition, a new

west branch of New Creek will be built to convey the stormwater from the wetlands to the main channel of New Creek. Once the Bluebelts are constructed and ready to receive stormwater, future phases of the project will include the installation of catch basins and storm sewers under neighborhood streets to collect and convey the stormwater to the Bluebelts. The project is being funded jointly by DEP and an \$11 million U.S. Department of Agriculture grant secured by Senator Schumer. DDC will manage the construction of the Bluebelts, which are expected to be completed by the end of 2017.

During this first phase of the project, work will include building a 4.7 acre freshwater wetland between Nugent Avenue and Freeborn Street, and another 0.7 acre freshwater wetland between Freeborn Street and Olympia Boulevard. These wetlands will slow the stormwater down after it empties from the sewer system and detain it, allowing it to be naturally filtered.

The water will then slowly flow over weirs and into the new west branch of New Creek. The stream will be built to a width of 32 feet and will run southeast through City-owned property that, in later phases of the project, will be developed into freshwater wetlands. Culverts will also be built to allow the stream to pass under existing streets. Eventually, the system empties into lower New York Harbor. The work will include the installation of 31,550 herbaceous plants, including wildflowers, 1,572 woody shrubs and 195 trees.

The Bluebelts we have built on the south shore have proven to effectively manage stormwater, reduce flooding, and have even become home for a variety of local wildlife. We look forward to the New Creek Bluebelt doing the same for the Midland Beach neighborhood. Many thanks to all of BWSO for their work in planning, designing, constructing and maintaining all of our Bluebelts. To read more click [here](#).

Spotlight on Safety

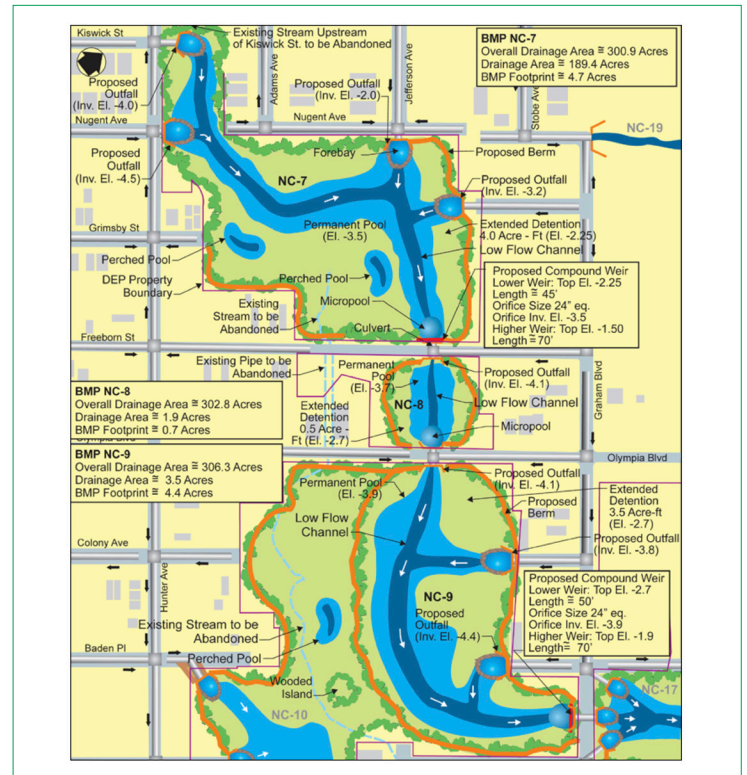
2010 Chilean Mine Collapse

In August 2010, an explosion caused a collapse throughout the San Jose Mine in Copiapo, Chile, trapping 33 miners approximately 2,300 feet below ground. Rescuers used three separate drilling rigs in a process that took approximately 44 days to finally reach the miners, who were trapped for a total of 69 days. The miners were extremely fortunate to have survived such a catastrophic accident, although

many of them have suffered post-traumatic stress as a result of their ordeal.

Any sort of work being done in a trench or excavation site can be in danger of similar accidents. DEP has an [Excavation and Trenching policy](#) in place to ensure workers know how to prevent injury due to collapse. For more information, you can also visit [OSHA's Fact Sheet](#).

At DEP, everyone is responsible for safety. If you or anyone on your team is concerned about your working conditions, it's okay to ask your supervisor or your bureau's EHS liaison how they can help. If you've still got questions, you can call the EHS Employee Concerns Hotline. It's DEP's responsibility to acknowledge and fix unsafe situations, procedures, and practices. With your help, we'll not only get the job done, we'll make it safer for ourselves, our coworkers, our families, and our city. CALL (800) 897-9677 OR SEND A MESSAGE THROUGH [PIPELINE](#). HELP IS ON THE WAY.



Thanksgiving Parade Prep Work



This Thursday, millions of people from New York City and across the United States will either be attending or tuning in for the 2015 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Multiple City agencies have been preparing for the event, and DEP is no exception. For any special event, whether it be a parade, a street fair, or a Papal visit, the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operation's repair crews are responsible for examining DEP's assets in the area to confirm that they are safe for the public and functioning properly. In preparation for this Thursday, Manhattan Repair performed hot patches around manholes and catch basins along the parade's route to ensure that the roadway is in good condition for the event's projected 3.5 million attendees. Thanks to all of our repair crews for helping to make events such as the Macy's Parade, enjoyable and safe for everyone.

Holiday Toy Drives

With the Thanksgiving food drive behind us, toys are now being accepted for DEP's holiday toy drives. Please donate a new, unwrapped toy to help make the holidays a little brighter for children from toddlers to teens. Final day for collection at Lefrak is Monday, December 7. Toys should be brought to your [bureau coordinator](#). Kingston will be collecting both new, unwrapped toys as well as new clothing from Monday, November 30 to Thursday, December 17. Thank you in advance for your generosity in helping make the holidays a little more joyful for your neighbors.

December Blood Drive

To help ensure that blood will be available to those who need it, DEP is hosting blood drives at the below locations and times:

Lefrak: 6th Floor Training Room, 12/1, 12/2, 12/3, 7:45am to 1:45pm; **Kingston/Catskill Area:** 51 Albany Avenue, Kingston, NY, 12/1, 12:00pm to 6:00pm, and 12/2, 1:00pm to 6:00pm; **Downsville Region Area:** Downsville Fire Hall, 12/9, 9:00am to 2:00pm; **Kensico/Highland Regions - Sutton Park Area:** Sutton Park-2nd Floor, 12/10, 8:30am to 2:30pm; **Grahamsville Region Area:** Neversink Firehouse, 12/17, 10:00am to 3:00pm. For the in-city blood drive, click [here](#) for more information, and for the upstate blood drives, click [here](#).

Titicus Reservoir Search Operation



Since early Thursday evening, DEP Police have led a coordinated search effort for a single engine plane that went missing in the vicinity of New York City's Titicus Reservoir in Westchester County. Under difficult circumstances and conditions, divers from DEP and the New York State Police have recovered portions of the plane from the bottom of the Reservoir. In addition, DEP detectives and patrol units have searched and recovered items along the shoreline. The Bureau of Water Supply has also taken measures, such as increased sampling, to ensure that the water leaving the Reservoir is unaffected. Thank you to the DEP Police and our partners in this effort, the New York State Police - Troop K, the North Salem Police Department, the Croton Falls Fire Department and the American Red Cross. Click [here](#) to see more photos.

Welcome Aboard



Yesterday, 20 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from First Deputy Commissioner **Steve Lawitts**, Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter**, and Director of Planning and Recruitment **Grace Pigott**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Joseph Blair, Ma'Saun Branch, Sean Brown, Anthony Descartes, Vincent Feyjoo, Cesar Garcia Aguilar, Felix Graham, Samir Hamoud, Mimi Hatzis, The Le, Alexander Lefkovic, Emmanuel Nweke, Gilberto Perez, John Robbins, William Santopietro, Jason Singh, Tiffany Solivan, and Dennis Wazid with BWSO; **Jose Hernandez** with BCS; and **Rachel Kip-Johnson Mastrolemba** with BWS.

We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: newsletter@dep.nyc.gov.