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Fall Foliage

Ashokan Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Ian Michaels (718) 595-6600

Spring Has Sprung As DEP Offers Its First Interpretive Hike of the Season

Series of free guided nature hikes throughout the spring and summer will feature informative discussions by DEP wildlife and forestry specialists

Commissioner Emily Lloyd of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that the DEP's series of interpretive nature hikes will begin Saturday, May 6, at the Cole Hill Unit in Middletown. The public is encouraged to come out for this guided tour by DEP Land Management specialists featuring hills and meadows, scenic mountain vistas, mixed forest, streams and wetlands.

Hikers will have the opportunity to see wildlife such as turkey, deer and ruffed grouse, and blossoming plants and trees including trout lily, jack-in-the-pulpit and shadbush.

The May 6 hike will also include a visit to a former bluestone quarry. Hikers should meet in the parking area at the end of Swart Road for a 10:00 AM departure. For information call the DEP's Gilboa Land Management Office at (607) 588-6231.

This season offers more hiking opportunities on water supply lands than ever before. The regular summer hike series will include three hikes on National Trails Day and special hikes led by guest experts. Other hikes include:

June 3 – Choose from three hikes in celebration of National Trails Day:

- ▶ The Cross-Kent Trek with Land Management Director John Potter. Meet at 8:00 AM at the Pelton Pond parking area off Route 301 in Fahnestock State Park for an all-day hike across DEP and State lands. Back from last year by popular demand! Call John at (845) 340-7541 for more information.
- ▶ The Mt. Tobias Traverse. Go over the Beaverkill and through the woods of Mt. Tobias on DEP and State land with Forester Duncan Schmitt. This steep and strenuous hike on old wood roads, and sometimes on no roads, departs at 9:00 AM from the Beetree Hill Unit at the end of Baker Road in Woodstock and concludes at the

MORE INFORMATION

NYC Department of
 Environmental Protection
 Communications &
 Intergovernmental Affairs

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

(718) 595 - 6600

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Beaverkill Unit on Route 212. Call Duncan at (845) 340-7583 for more information.

- ▶ To the Balsam Mountain Summit. Depart at 9:00 AM from the Balsam Mountain Unit on Route 6 in the town of Lexington for a strenuous sally on and off trail from DEP land up (and up!) into the Westkill Mountain Wilderness to the peak of Balsam Mountain. Recreation Land Manager Jenn Cairo will be your guide. Call Jenn at (845) 340-7517 for more information.
- ▶ July 1 – The Big Indian Interpretive Hike. Join Ashokan Land Steward Austin Schneller for a hike through the forested foothills of the heart of the Catskills, adjacent to the Big Indian Wilderness Area. Meet at the Big Indian Recreation Unit on the south side of Route 28 in the town of Shandaken at 10:00 AM. Look for the DEP vehicle. Call (845) 657-2663 for information.
- ▶ July 16 – The Fungi Foray: The Roles of Fungi in the NYC Watershed. Did you know that fungi are the great recyclers of our world? Did you know that the majority of our plants and trees will flourish only in relationship with their complimentary fungi? Did you know that certain kinds of fungi selectively remove and degrade toxins from the soils and water of their environment? Learn more on an exploration of the fungi of the Acorn Hill Unit with members of the Mid Hudson Mycological Association and Ashokan Land Steward and mushroom aficionado Austin Schneller. Call (845) 657-2663 for information about time and location.
- ▶ August 5 – The Covert Hollow Interpretive Hike. Meet Downsville Land Management staff at 10:00 AM on the Covert Hollow Unit on Covert Hollow Road off of Route 10 in the town of Hamden for this hike through old fields, woodlands and old wood roads to enjoy views of the West Branch of the Delaware valley with. Will the raspberries be ripe? Call (607) 363-7009 for information.
- ▶ September 9 – The Red Hill Knolls Interpretive Hike. Join Grahamsville Land Supervisor John Green and Forester Nathan Hart for a hike through old stone foundations, stone walls and log roads, and along the ridge that contains the highest point on the Rondout – Neversink basin divide. Depart at 10:00 AM from Red Hill Knolls Road in the town of Denning. Call (845) 985-0386 for information.

The DEP also offers over 25,000 acres of water supply lands plus 19 reservoirs and two controlled lakes for fishing, as well as over 36,000 acres for hunting. Call DEP at (800) 575-LAND, or see the DEP's Web site at www.nyc.gov/watershedrecreation, for more information about recreational opportunities on City watershed lands.