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CONTACT:

Farrell Sklerov / Mercedes Padilla (718) 595-6600

DEP Rebuilds Three Dams in the Croton Watershed

\$51 Million Investment Ensures Long-term Reliability of NYC's Water Supply

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today announced the completion of \$51 million of reconstruction work on the Amawalk, Titicus, and Middle Branch dams in the Croton watershed. The upgrades will extend the useful life of each dam for 50 to 100 years, and bring all three into compliance with the latest State and Federal standards, including an enhanced capacity to safely release water during severe storms — a design feature critical to protecting the dam. Enhanced control and measurement systems will allow DEP to optimize water levels at each of the 12 reservoirs that make up the Croton system in order to maximize storage capacity so that the system is able to provide an adequate amount of drinking water to the nine million New Yorkers who rely on it.

"As old as it is, New York City's water supply system is still a feat of engineering," said Commissioner Holloway. "Our Croton system in particular was built in the mid-1800s and consists of a series of 12 reservoirs and 12 dams which are still able to supply up to 25% of New York City's daily drinking water needs. By investing \$51 million into three of these dams and by continuing upgrade work on several others, we are ensuring the long-term integrity of New York City's oldest drinking water supply."

New York City designed, constructed and has operated a system of dams and aqueducts in Westchester County and Putnam County since 1842. Following a series of studies and inspections in the 1980s to determine both the condition of City-owned dams and their compliance with the National Dam Safety Act of 1974, DEP proposed to rehabilitate all dams and controlled structures in the Croton Reservoir System to bring them up to first-class operating conditions. The reconstruction project brings each of them into compliance with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Dam Safety Guidelines.

Details on each of the three projects are as follows:

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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Amawalk Dam

**Built:** 1897

**Location:** Southwest side of the Amawalk Reservoir

**Cost:** \$14.5 million

**Upgrades:** The main spillway on the main dam and the auxiliary dam was rehabilitated; the flow control equipment was replaced; the main road and the boat ramp were reconstructed; and a new bridge on Route 35 was installed.

Titicus Dam

**Built:** 1895

**Location:** South side of Titicus Reservoir

**Cost:** \$18 million

**Upgrades:** The fuse plug—a controlling device that is made to fail in the event that a flood may exceed the discharge capacity of the main spillway, preventing damage to the dam or flooding in the area—was upgraded; new flow control equipment was installed; access roads and a boat ramp were repaired; a new drainage system was installed; and the stone face of the dam was resurfaced.

Middle Branch Dam

**Built:** 1894

**Location:** North side of Croton Falls Reservoir

**Cost:** \$18.8 million

**Upgrades:** New flow control equipment and measurement systems were installed; the spillway capacity was increased; and new access roads and boat ramps were constructed.

The Croton system — able to provide up to 25 percent of the City's daily drinking water supply when activated — consists of 12 reservoirs and three controlled lakes on the three branches of the Croton River and three other tributaries. Water from upstream reservoirs flows through natural streams to down-stream reservoirs, rather than through aqueducts or tunnels. Water from the New Croton Reservoir, the last Croton reservoir, is then conveyed through the New Croton aqueduct to the Jerome Park Reservoir in the Bronx where it goes to distribution in New York City.

The City continues to implement a multi-year capital program to upgrade and improve its upstate water supply facilities. The ongoing dam reconstruction program is part of its watershed-wide infrastructure improvement program. The City is upgrading all of its dams and spillways to comply with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Dam Safety Guidelines, starting with its oldest dams in the East-of-Hudson watersheds. Since 2002, the

City has invested more than \$291 million in the upgrading of the City's dams and related upstate assets. The ongoing dam reconstruction program is part of its watershed-wide infrastructure improvement program and plans to commit another \$477 million until 2019.

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, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties. New York City's water is delivered from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and comprises 19 reservoirs, and three controlled lakes. Approximately 1,000 DEP employees live and work in watershed communities as scientists, engineers, surveyors, administrative professionals, and other critical vocations.

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