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DEP Wins Environmental Quality Award From USEPA Region 2

DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd announced today that the agency has been selected by the EPA as a winner of its annual Environmental Quality Award for work on the Staten Island Bluebelt system.

The awards are made in celebration of Earth Day. They honor people and organizations that have made significant contributions to improving the environment in New York and other USEPA Region 2 jurisdictions, which include, among others, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Staten Island Bluebelt is a system of streams, ponds and other wetlands owned and managed by DEP. The Bluebelt program provides ecologically sound and cost-effective storm water management for approximately one third of Staten Island's land area. It preserves natural drainage corridors, called Bluebelts. Preservation of these wetland systems allows them to perform their functions of conveying, storing and filtering storm water. The Bluebelt also provides important community open spaces and diverse wildlife habitat. The program also provides an opportunity for community involvement in the preservation of Bluebelt sites.

Commissioner Lloyd said, "We are honored to be presented with this award. Our Bluebelt program has saved the City tens of millions of dollars in infrastructure costs when compared to the costs of constructing conventional storm sewers. Because of its success, more Bluebelts are currently being constructed in Staten Island that will provide additional environmental enhancements to its natural wetland areas."

The award will be presented to DEP at 2 pm at the EPA office, located at 290 Broadway. For further information about the award ceremony, contact the EPA directly at (212) 637-3660.