

## Now That's Service!



In late March, Bureau of Customer Services Inspector **George Negron** was driving along East Gun Hill Road in the Bronx on his way to an appointment when he noticed what appeared to be a purse in the middle of the road. He pulled his vehicle over and found that the item in the road was in fact a women's wallet, including a driver's license, credit cards and cash. There was a CVS store on the same block so George had the manager page the name on the driver's license but no one responded. He was headed back to his vehicle with the wallet when he noticed a distressed woman who was crying and who appeared to match the photo on the driver's license. When she responded to the name on the license George explained that he had found the wallet in the road and returned it to the grateful woman intact. Kudos to George for going the extra mile and making one New Yorker's day!

## Spotlight on Safety

### Maintaining a Safe and Respectful Workplace

DEP is dedicated to providing a safe and respectful work environment for all employees and has begun distributing printed materials throughout the department that include points of contact for employee EHS Concerns, Workplace Violence, Equal Employment Opportunity and the Employee Assistance Program. A key goal of this communication effort is to ensure that all DEP employees understand the expectation for safe behavior and respectful conduct in all workplace activities and interactions, and to provide the proper contacts for any specific concerns so that they can be addressed in the appropriate manner.

It should be noted that the "Our Vision" Palm Card that was included with the packets contains an error—the EHS Employee Concerns Hotline phone number is incorrect. New cards will be distributed to all employees at a later date. To report a concern or an EHS violation you can call the EHS Employee Concerns Hotline anytime at 800-897-9677. To access the most current information provided in the "Maintaining a Safe and Respectful Workplace" material electronically, visit the [Maintaining a Safe and Respectful Workplace Source Page](#).

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.

## Commissioner's Corner



Earlier today, I joined Ulster County Executive Mike Hein to tour a section of the future rail trail along Ashokan Reservoir and to reiterate the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) support for the project. The trail proposed by Ulster County is consistent with DEP's goals of protecting water quality, enhancing outdoor recreation in the Catskills, and expanding free-of-charge access to public lands that surround New York City's water supply.

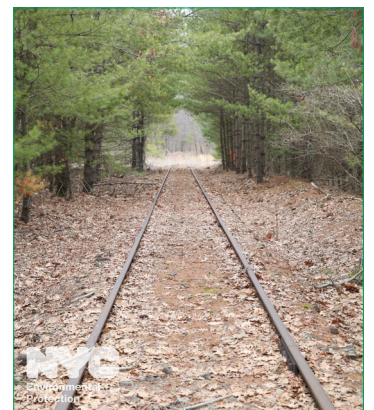
In 2013, DEP committed \$2.5 million toward developing the 11.5-mile trail along an easement owned by Ulster County on the north side of Ashokan Reservoir. Those funds, which can only be used for building the trail, are designated for projects that will meet or exceed watershed protection standards and address localized erosion issues, such as washouts along some stretches of the corridor. In addition, DEP will build, operate and maintain a number of access points along the trail. Our commitment came after Ulster County determined that a trail would be the best use for that portion of the easement in the future.

Over the past several years, DEP has worked with nonprofit groups and local governments to open eight recreation trails on City-owned land in the watershed. Two additional trails are scheduled to open in 2015. These trails provide safe and scenic opportunities for low-impact recreation such as hiking, jogging, cycling and

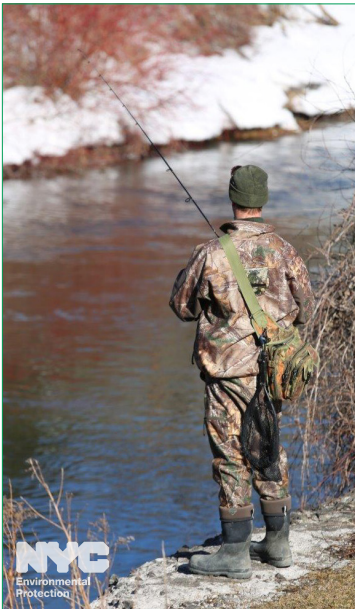
snowshoeing. They also bolster public health by encouraging outdoor exercise, and they support the outdoor recreation and tourism economies that are vital to the Catskills. Importantly, the growing network of recreation trails help achieve these positive outcomes by offering free-of-charge access to public lands for the benefit of watershed residents and visitors.

The proposed rail trail at Ashokan Reservoir offers a truly unique opportunity to expand this vision as it is the City's only reservoir in the Catskills that has an established corridor running through its border lands. In addition, the trail at Ashokan will fill an important gap in a regional trail network that stretches across parts of Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan and Ulster counties. DEP fully supports the plan outlined by Ulster County and we look forward to collaborating on this exciting trail project.

To see additional photos from today's tour, [click here](#).



## Anything Biting?



Despite the chilly temperatures, trout fishing season officially began in New York State last week and a few committed anglers were spotted along a tributary of Pepacton Reservoir in Delaware County. Due to ice cover, most of DEP's 22 reservoirs and lakes are not yet accessible by boat. However, New York City also owns protected land in the watersheds that include roughly 210 miles of frontage along rivers, streams and creeks that are suitable for trout fishing. DEP has also created a [fishing brochure](#) with information about the free DEP access permit, how to prevent the spread of invasive species and fishing conditions and fish species at each reservoir and lake. Find more information [here](#).

## One-Stop Shopping

DEP's Environmental Compliance Outreach staff will be available at the BuildingsNY 2015 conference which will be held at the Javits Center on April 28 and 29. They will help landlords, architects and building owners stay up to date on the latest environmental compliance regulations on air, noise and hazardous materials. Staff can also provide assistance in navigating the City's permitting regulations and answer questions about water use and other DEP-related programs. Stop by to see them at booth 946.

## Volunteer Opportunity

The City of New York created the Housing Recovery Office (HRO) to coordinate efforts to quickly return residents to their homes. The New York City Build it Back program, administered by HRO, was designed to assist homeowners, landlords, renters, and tenants affected by Hurricane Sandy within the five boroughs. The program offers multiple pathways to assistance, including: property rehabilitation or reconstruction, reimbursement for repair work already carried out, and acquisition of homes. To ensure that benefits can be provided to all in need of assistance and to encourage increased participation among older and low to moderate income populations, HRO is reaching out to Build it Back applicants who have not recently communicated with the Program. The outreach includes: re-engagement sessions in Sandy-affected neighborhoods, correspondence from local elected officials and civic associations, and a door-knocking campaign deploying OEM's Community Emergency Response Team volunteers and NYC Service volunteers. To learn how you can help, [click here](#).

## Watershed Recreation Newsletter



Yesterday, DEP announced the release of the agency's annual [Watershed Recreation Newsletter](#), which serves as a guide for thousands of people who enjoy outdoor activities on City-owned land across the upstate watersheds. The 2015 edition includes a calendar of outdoor events—including hikes, special fishing days, and educational tours—that are suitable for families.

The Watershed Recreation Newsletter also provides information about increased participation in DEP's recreational boating program, which saw another 10 percent increase of paddlers in 2014, and it tells the story of a recent driftwood giveaway at Ashokan Reservoir that attracted some 200 artists and craftsmen from the watershed and the metropolitan area. Those who regularly use City-owned property for recreation will also find helpful safety tips and information on keeping their free DEP access permits and boat tags up to date. More information on these events will be posted throughout the year on DEP's [watershed Facebook page](#).

**We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: [newsletter@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:newsletter@dep.nyc.gov).**