



PHOTO INFO...



**Fall Foliage**

Schoharie Reservoir - New York City Water Supply System

**SEARCH** [Advanced Search](#)

[facebook](#)

[flickr](#)

[twitter](#)

[Home](#)

**CUSTOMER SERVICES**

- [Ways to Pay Your Bill](#)
- [Account Information](#)
- [Customer Assistance](#)
- [Water Rates](#)
- [Property Managers and Trade Professionals](#)

**WATER UTILITIES**

- [Drinking Water](#)
- [Wastewater](#)
- [Stormwater](#)
- [Harbor Water](#)

**THE WATERSHED**

- [Watershed Protection](#)
- [Watershed Recreation](#)

**CITYWIDE INITIATIVES**

- [Regulatory Reform](#)
- [Environmental Education](#)
- [Conservation Programs](#)
- [Air Pollution Control](#)
- [Noise Codes & Complaints](#)

**BUSINESSES & PROFESSIONALS**

- [Forms & Permits](#)
- [Doing Business with DEP](#)
- [Asbestos Abatement](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

11-28

April 12, 2011

CONTACT:

Farrell Sklerov / Mercedes Padilla (718) 595-6600

**MORE INFORMATION**

NYC Department of Environmental Protection  
Communications & Intergovernmental Affairs

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

(718) 595 - 6600

**NYC to Acquire 1,775 Acres of Land for Watershed Protection**

**More than 118,000 Acres of Upstate Land Purchased Since 1997 Helps Preserve New York's High Drinking Water Quality**

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today announced the purchase of approximately 1,775 acres of upstate land and conservation easements for more than \$7 million. This group of acquisitions is the latest in New York City's ongoing efforts to protect the upstate watershed and maintain the outstanding quality of the drinking water that nine million New Yorkers need every day. A total of 21 parcels of land were acquired, ranging in size from 2.7 to 213 acres. The properties are located in Delaware, Putnam, Greene, Schoharie, Sullivan and Ulster counties. Since the inception of the Land Acquisition Program in 1997, New York City has protected approximately 118,000 acres of watershed land in the Catskill/Delaware and Croton reservoir systems—up from approximately 42,000 acres in 2002. Prior to the start of the land acquisition program in 1997, the City already owned 44,600 acres surrounding its reservoirs. Most of the properties acquired outright will be opened for public access, including hunting, hiking and fishing, as well as economic activities like hay cropping that help local community businesses. The city also protects land by purchasing conservation easements, including easements on farms through initiatives like the Watershed Agricultural Council, which works with farmers to implement farming practices that are compatible with the City's watershed protection goals. In February 2010, DEP and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation announced a new 15-year Water Supply Permit for New York City that continues the successful Land Acquisition Program in the New York City watershed.

"The remarkable success of our Land Acquisition Program is one of the single biggest reasons why NYC Water remains the best," said Commissioner Holloway. "Since 1997, we have secured roughly 118,000 acres to preserve the quality of our water, which serves nine million New Yorkers every day. And with a new permit that was the product of years of collaboration between DEP, the State Department of Environmental Conservation, and dozens of local

**ABOUT DEP**

## Inside DEP

## News

DEP Featured In...

Stories from DEP

Press Releases

Public Notices

Testimony and Public  
Comments

## Capital Projects

## Job Opportunities

## Environmental Reviews

## A to Z Index

## Contact Us

communities and stakeholders, we will continue this award-winning program for another 15 years. At the same time, we will continue to work with our watershed partners to support as many recreational, agricultural and business opportunities as possible that also maintain the unrivalled quality of New York City's water supply."

The 21 parcels are being purchased at fair market value from willing sellers. They are scattered throughout priority areas which were established in 1997 based on certain watershed and water quality features that help guide the City's solicitation of land in order to best protect water quality of upstate reservoirs. The group of properties includes four parcels in Delaware County totaling approximately 655 acres, seven in Greene County totaling approximately 466 acres, two in Putnam County totaling eight acres, two in Schoharie County totaling 197 acres, three in Sullivan County totaling 380 acres, and three in Ulster County totaling 67 acres.

Watershed protection is widely considered the best way of maintaining the quality of drinking water in the long term. New York City's program, one of the most comprehensive in the world, has been so successful at protecting the integrity of New York City's water supply that the United States Environmental Protection Agency awarded the City a 10-year Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD) in 2007. Since the beginning of the FAD, New York City has committed \$541 million to purchase land to protect our unfiltered drinking water which supplies roughly half the population of New York State. The 2007 FAD requires the city to continue an active Land Acquisition Program, focusing on properties selected for their water quality protection benefits. The city only acquires lands from willing sellers and pays fair market value based on independent appraisals. DEP has made unprecedented efforts to balance water quality preservation with the interests and economic vitality of watershed communities, and has agreed to avoid acquisitions in and around existing hamlets where towns have designated such properties as important for their future growth. The success of New York City's Watershed Protection Program is one of the main reasons why New York City remains one of only five large cities in the United States that is not required to filter its drinking water. The other cities are Boston, Portland, San Francisco and Seattle.

In December 2010, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation issued a new 15-year Water Supply Permit to New York City to continue the Land Acquisition Program in its upstate watershed. The new permit will allow the city to continue to acquire additional properties and conservation easements in fee to ensure that the undeveloped, environmentally-sensitive watershed lands in the watershed remain protected. The new permit also includes a few refinements, including provisions for a pilot riparian buffer acquisition program and a program to encourage land trust participation in acquiring watershed land. In 2010, almost 12,000 acres were signed to contract by DEP, making it the most successful year for signing contracts since the Land Acquisition Program started in 1997.

The city's watershed Land Acquisition Program is part of Strategy 2011-2014, a far-reaching strategic plan that lays out 100 distinct initiatives to make DEP the safest, most efficient, cost-effective, and transparent water utility in the nation. The new plan, the product of nearly one year of analysis and outreach, builds on PlaNYC, Mayor Bloomberg's sustainability blueprint for New York City. The plan is available on DEP's website at [www.nyc.gov/dep](http://www.nyc.gov/dep).

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. Approximately 1,000 DEP employees live and work in the watershed communities. For more information, visit [www.nyc.gov/dep](http://www.nyc.gov/dep) or follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/nycwater](http://www.facebook.com/nycwater).

- ▶ [View all press releases](#)
- ▶ [Sign up to receive DEP press releases by email](#)