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**DEP Connects 100 Homes in Staten Island to Sewer System**

**Project Will Reduce Flooding and Septic Tank Backups**

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today announced the completion of an infrastructure project that will connect 100 homes in the Pleasant Plains section of Staten Island to the City's sewer system. Approximately 7,969 feet of new sanitary sewers, 7,166 feet of new storm sewers, and the construction of three acres of wetland will ease flooding in the community and help eliminate septic tank backups. The \$20.8 million project – funded by DEP and managed by the City's Department of Design and Construction – also included the replacement of 1,846 feet of water distribution mains, catch basins, curbs, sidewalks, and a street repaving. Funding secured by Council Member James Oddo was also used to remove debris from the New Creek and South Beach Bluebelts and install barriers and signage to protect the area from illegal dumping.

"This project combines traditional infrastructure – sewer mains, catch basins, and storm sewers – with the green infrastructure that DEP has pioneered here in Staten Island to provide essential City services to the residents of Pleasant Plains and the surrounding area," said Commissioner Holloway. "Wastewater from this neighborhood will now flow to the Oakwood Beach Wastewater Treatment Plant, and stormwater will drain into natural wetland areas, alleviating flooding, and saving New Yorkers the millions of dollars it would take to build traditional stormwater piping. I want to particularly thank Council Member Oddo for his support of this local project, and the entire Staten Island Bluebelt – a key component of Mayor Bloomberg's sustainable strategy for handling the billions of gallons of stormwater that fall in New York City every year."

"The unique characteristics of the land in the Bluebelt have given us the opportunity to create a unique public amenity while also upgrading essential infrastructure," said DDC Commissioner David J. Burney, FAIA. "Creating sustainable designs and using Best Management Practices, such as the watershed area, provide natural drainage corridors as well as create open spaces in the Bluebelt area, which Staten Islanders can appreciate for decades to come."

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"The New Creek and South Beach Bluebelts will be cleaner and greener as a result of this project. Our Mid-Island Bluebelt network, once fully operational, will improve the quality of life for thousands of residents in flood-prone areas. To work most effectively and efficiently, it is essential that it stay clear of debris," said Council Member Oddo. "Unfortunately, there are far too many selfish individuals who illegally dump trash where they should not. In some areas, such as in our Bluebelt network, illegal dumping can impede the proper operation of the system."

The project will allow the 100 homes that had septic tanks in the project areas to connect to the new sewers, which will convey flow to the Oakwood Beach Wastewater Treatment Plant via the Richmond Avenue Pumping Station. The project started in September 2008. DEP will begin sending letters to individual homeowners in the project area who are required to hire a Licensed Master Plumber to connect their homes to the new sewers within six months of notification. Plumbers can apply for a house connection permit at a DEP Staten Island local office, and DEP will work with applicants to expedite the approval and inspection of the connection. The project is in Community Board 3, and its boundaries are: Station Avenue between Amboy Road and Richmond Parkway South Service Road; Pleasant Plains Avenue between Hallister Street and Richmond Parkway South Service; Gaynor Street between Pleasant Plains Avenue and Richmond Parkway South Service Road; Hallister Street between Erie Street and Richmond Parkway South Service Road; South Drum Street between Richmond Parkway South Service Road and Dead End; Richmond Parkway South Service Road between Station Avenue and Bloomingdale Road; and in Outerbridge Avenue between Hallister Street and Dunham Street.

The project also included the construction of three acres of wetland as part of the Mill Creek Bluebelt in Staten Island. A large 2.7-acre stormwater treatment wetland was constructed to collect and naturally treat the stormwater from a 48-acre drainage area via the new storm sewers. The completion of the first man-made wetland in the Mill Creek Bluebelt saves money by directing stormwater into nearby natural wetlands. Otherwise, additional storm sewers would have to be constructed to convey the stormwater to an outfall pipe. Sediment pools and wetland plants clean the stormwater before it flows to downstream natural wetlands. A small .45-acre wetland along the Staten Island Railway that previously contained dumped debris and fill was constructed as well.

In the New Creek and South Beach Bluebelts, work funded by Council Member Oddo consisted of clearing debris along the edges of the Bluebelt property, installing barriers such as boulders, fences and guiderails to prevent future dumping, and installing signage prohibiting motor vehicles and dumping in the area. The project also includes the addition of stone-lined swales, which are channels that direct stormwater into the Bluebelt.

The Bluebelt system is a component of PlaNYC, Mayor Bloomberg's sweeping sustainability program designed to create a greener, greater New York City. The Staten Island Bluebelt system channels stormwater into natural drainage corridors, including streams, ponds and other wetland areas, instead of into storm sewers. Preservation of these wetland systems allows them to perform their functions of conveying, storing and filtering stormwater. In addition, the Bluebelts provide important open spaces and diverse wildlife

habitats. The Bluebelt system on the South Shore of Staten Island provides drainage for 16 watersheds, covering about 10,000 acres. The City of New York has purchased approximately 325 acres of wetland property on the South Shore for the system and is being expanded from the South Shore to Mid-Island, to provide sustainable drainage benefits to more communities. Since 2002, more than \$350 million has been invested in Staten Island's Bluebelts with more than \$220 million currently planned for the next 10 years.

Upgrading water distribution and sewer infrastructure is a central part of DEP's upcoming capital plan. In Staten Island, to improve the reliability of its water supply, DEP, in conjunction with the Port Authority, will begin an approximately \$250 million project for construction of a new water tunnel to provide redundancy for the Staten Island water supply system. Because Staten Island lacks storm and even sanitary sewers in some areas, an additional \$361 million is budgeted from FY 2010 through FY 2014 for sewers.

DEP manages the City's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents. New York City's water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the City, and is comprised of 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,400 miles of sewer lines take wastewater to 14 in-City treatment plants.

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