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Department of Environmental Protection Announces 1,038 Additional Watershed Acres Open for Recreation

With New York's regular hunting season ongoing through Dec. 10, new or expanded access in four counties provides additional opportunities for sportsmen and sportswomen

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced that it has opened access this year to 1,038 additional acres of water supply land where outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy recreation, including hunting. The expanded access includes 411 acres on five new parcels of recreation land, and 627 acres that were added to existing recreation areas throughout the Catskills. With the state's regular hunting season continuing through Dec. 10, sportsmen and sportswomen are encouraged to utilize the 94,857 acres of water supply land managed by DEP that are open for hunting. That includes 69,991 acres known as "public access areas" that are open for hiking, hunting, and trapping without the need for a DEP Access Permit. Parcels open for hunting are spread across 344 recreation areas in Delaware, Dutchess, Greene, Putnam, Schoharie, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester counties.

"DEP has long understood that many types of recreation are compatible with our core mission to protect the water supply for millions of New Yorkers," **DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza** said. "The sportsmen and sportswomen who participate in hunting season are important to the ecological health of our watershed, and we welcome them to make safe and productive use of the properties we've opened in their communities."

The expanded access included new acreage in Delaware, Greene, Schoharie and Ulster counties. Some highlights include:

Recreational Unit	Rec Use	County	Town	Acres
Little Dingle Hill	Public Access Area	Delaware	Andes	178
Roxbury Run	Public Access Area	Delaware	Roxbury	124
Lower Dingle Hill	Public Access Area / Bow only	Delaware	Andes	33
Herrick Hill***	Public Access Area	Delaware	Masonville	129
Platner Brook***	Public Access Area	Delaware	Delhi	113
Old Road	Public Access Area / Bow only	Greene	Windham	44
South Roundtop***	Public Access Area	Greene	Hunter	153
South Jewett***	Public Access Area	Greene	Jewett	173
Beech Ridge***	Public Access Area	Greene	Lexington	45
Hubbard Hill***	Public Access Area	Schoharie	Conesville	13
Ashokan Brook	Public Access Area	Ulster	Olive	32

More Information

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*** Denotes land added to an existing recreation unit.

All state hunting regulations—including antler restrictions throughout most of the watershed region—apply on water supply lands. Also, those using water supply lands for recreation and hunting should pay careful attention to posted signs that outline what uses are allowed. Access to some areas may be restricted due to ongoing forestry projects, and entering areas marked as closed will be considered trespassing. Hunters should also pay careful attention to recreation unity boundaries to avoid venturing onto private properties. In addition, some parcels open for recreation require a free DEP access permit, which can be obtained through an [online permitting system](#).

Deer management is an important aspect of protecting and maintaining water quality because forests, especially those immediately adjacent to New York City's reservoirs, are ideal buffer lands that need to continually regenerate. Dense populations of deer can stunt the regeneration of forest lands that serve as an important natural filter for surface waters before they enter reservoirs or their headwaters.

To help address deer overpopulation, DEP this year issued 225 special tags that allowed additional hunting on lands immediately adjacent to Ashokan, Cannonsville and Neversink reservoirs, along with a recreation unit along the border of Dutchess and Putnam Counties. These permits were made available through New York State's Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP). These special tags were issued for use on buffer lands immediately adjacent to the reservoirs, including areas that were recently managed by DEP foresters to promote the growth of young, vibrant and diverse forests. These tags allow hunters to harvest additional antlerless deer, which is the most efficient method for keeping deer populations in check. Opening these areas to additional hunting will improve the success of those forestry projects by allowing the next generation of trees to take root and grow to a height at which they are no longer vulnerable to deer browsing.

Additional information about hunting on City-owned property in the watersheds can be found by going to nyc.gov/dep/recreation. More information about each of the recreation units—including directions, printable maps and more—can be found by using DEP's new RecMapper utility. The RecMapper is an interactive tool that allows users to zoom in and click on highlighted parcels to learn about their location, size and what recreation is allowed on them. The RecMapper can be used on any computer or mobile device by visiting www.nyc.gov/dep/recmap. Hunters who are unclear about what activities are allowed in each unit may also call (800) 575-LAND during regular business hours.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of high-quality water each day to more than 9.5 million New Yorkers. This includes more than 70 upstate communities and institutions in Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties who consume an average of 110 million total gallons of drinking water daily from New York City's water supply system. This water comes from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and the system comprises 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and numerous tunnels and aqueducts. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and other professionals in the watershed. In addition to its \$70 million payroll and \$166 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.7 billion in watershed protection programs—including partnership organizations such as the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the Watershed Agricultural Council—that support sustainable farming practices, environmentally sensitive economic development, and local economic opportunity. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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