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11-90

September 29, 2011

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**DEP Funds \$1 Million for Upstate Flood Relief  
Contribution Will Help Upstate Businesses Rebuild  
Following Historic Storms**

Environmental Protection Commissioner Carter Strickland today announced that DEP will provide \$1 million in funding to help West of Hudson businesses recover from flood damage as a result of Hurricane Irene and the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee. Statewide estimates of the damage as a result of these storms exceed \$1 billion, with some of the most severely affected communities in New York City's watershed. During and directly after the storms, DEP provided significant assistance from its upstate and in-city crews to help watershed communities clear debris, open and rebuild roads, and clean and rehabilitate sewer lines, with in-kind contributions of manpower, equipment, and materials valued at roughly \$1 million. The additional \$1 million in funding for businesses will supplement a \$5 million Flood Recovery Fund established by the Catskill Watershed Corporation and approved by DEP and other CWC board members. The Catskill Watershed Corporation is a regional not-for-profit established in 1997 to administer water quality protection and economic development programs in the Catskill and Delaware watersheds as part of New York City's program to retain and unfiltered drinking water supply.

"The recent storms have been devastating to our partners upstate," said Commissioner Strickland. "The impact of Hurricane Irene in the watershed in particular was much stronger than anticipated, and the cumulative effects of Tropical Storm Lee made it even worse. To do our part to help the region recover, DEP personnel have been providing equipment, and emergency response and technical assistance during and since the storm. Now, to build on that effort, DEP will contribute \$1 million to help damaged businesses get back on their feet. The city depends on its 2,000-square-mile upstate watershed to provide drinking water for nine million New Yorkers, and local businesses and residents are stewards for this vital resource. This contribution will help reestablish vibrant communities and is in the long-term interest of the New York City drinking water supply."

"This funding and assistance to help our communities

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rebuild from Commissioner Strickland and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection is an important step in the healing process," said Congressman Paul Tonko. "It's this kind of partnership that is critical if we are going to make a full and complete recovery from this devastating disaster."

"I applaud today's action by the DEP, which will provide critically needed funds to help upstate communities rebuild," said Congressman Chris Gibson. "There is an intrinsic link between our local waterways and New York City, and this disaster assistance is recognition of that connection. I look forward to continuing to work with DEP to build a strong and mutually beneficial partnership for the future."

"This welcome contribution to the CWC's Catskill Fund for the Future, which we will use to support the 2011 Flood Recovery Fund, will help repair damage to many small, family-run businesses," said Alan Rosa, Executive Director of the Catskill Watershed Corporation. "They are the backbone of the Watershed economy and our communities will not be whole again until these businesses are back on their feet. We thank DEP for its valuable assistance during and immediately after the flood, and for contributing to the Watershed's long-term recovery."

The DEP funding will add to the Catskill Fund for the Future (CFF)—which was established in 1997 as part of the watershed Memorandum of Agreement and is administered by the CWC—to support flood recovery efforts. The CFF supports responsible, environmentally sensitive economic development projects in the West of Hudson watershed by making loans or grants to Qualified Economic Development Projects. CFF-funded projects encourage environmentally sound development as well as watershed protection and job growth in the watershed communities.

The Catskill Watershed Corporation has also established an account to accept private donations to assist with storm recovery efforts. Individuals interested can contact the Catskill Watershed Corporation at (845) 586-1400 to make private contributions to assist flood victims.

In addition to this funding, DEP continues to work with local communities to assist in the recovery and rebuilding while making sure to protect the watershed. The monetary value of all of this work is estimated at roughly \$1 million. DEP took several actions ahead of, during and after the storm:

- ▶ Ahead of the storm, DEP increased water release rates at its reservoirs to enhance the reservoirs' ability to absorb storm inflow and minimize any potential negative impacts on the surrounding community or to drinking water quality.
- ▶ From the start of the storm, DEP Police assisted with search and rescues throughout the watershed.
- ▶ In order to ensure that cleanup efforts were implemented as quickly and efficiently as possible, DEP suspended enforcement of certain watershed rules and regulations in its West-of-Hudson watershed provided they are taken in response to Hurricane Irene and are immediately necessary to protect life, health, property, and natural resources and are conducted with easily adopted, common-sense protections.



DEP deployed equipment and personnel to Prattsville, Windham, Margaretville, Phoenicia, Arkville, Mill Brook, Fleischmanns, Wawarsing, and other communities. Dozens of watershed maintainers, construction laborers, and supervisors used dump trucks, backhoes, excavators, loaders, and chainsaws to remove debris.

- ▶ A Vactor truck and crew from the city was deployed to clean manholes in Margaretville as were crews from sewer maintenance, which deployed flusher trucks and rodders to clean the collection system in the village.
- ▶ DEP wastewater treatment personnel from the city pitched in at the Tannersville Wastewater Treatment Plant, where a 150-foot section of road was washed away near the plant. They also assisted with repairing a broken sewer pipe which crossed a stream.
- ▶ DEP deployed engineers to assist in inspecting bridges throughout the watershed.
- ▶ DEP is also providing technical assistance for the cleanup of Catskill streams after the flood.

DEP manages the city's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City, and residents of Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties. New York City's water is delivered from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and comprises 19 reservoirs, and three controlled lakes. The DEP police protect the watershed and its facilities, including seven city-owned wastewater treatment plants. 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).

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