

[Home](#)
**Customer Services**

- › [Pay Online](#)
- › [Ways to Pay Your Bill](#)
- › [eBilling](#)
- › [Account Information](#)
- › [Customer Assistance](#)
- › [Service Line Protection Program](#)
- › [Water Rates](#)
- › [Property Managers & Trade Professionals](#)

**Water Utilities**

- › [Drinking Water](#)
- › [Wastewater](#)
- › [Stormwater](#)
- › [Harbor Water](#)
- › [Long Term Control Plan](#)

**The Watershed**

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

**Citywide Initiatives**

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

**Business and Professionals**

- › [Forms & Permits](#)
- › [Support for Businesses](#)
- › [Doing Business with DEP](#)
- › [Asbestos Abatement](#)
- › [Construction, Demolition & Abatement](#)

**About DEP**

- › [Inside DEP](#)
- › [News](#)
- DEP Featured In...
- Stories from DEP
- Press Releases

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## Department of Environmental Protection Encourages Anglers to Enjoy World-Class Trout Fishing in the Watershed

To mark the start of trout season today, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) encouraged anglers to enjoy world-class fishing on its upstate reservoirs and dozens of properties that include frontage along creeks and streams throughout the watershed. Twenty-two reservoirs and lakes, covering roughly 36,000 acres, will be open for fishing from shore or from boats that have a valid DEP boat tag. Most of these reservoirs and lakes include habitat for coldwater species such as trout and warmwater species such as smallmouth and largemouth bass. New York's trout season generally runs until Oct. 15. However, the trout fishing season on certain New York City reservoirs is open year-round or closes later than Oct. 15. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation outlines statewide fishing regulations, including information on licenses, catch limits, and stocking, on its [website](#).

"Generations of watershed residents and visitors have enjoyed fishing for trout in the deep, cold water of New York City's reservoirs," **DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd** said. "In recent years, DEP has expanded fishing access on our reservoirs and lands alongside watershed streams and creeks. As New Yorkers and visitors to our region enjoy opening weekend of trout season, we hope many anglers will enjoy this new access and cast a line in the watershed."

DEP this year has updated its fishing brochure to help guide anglers through the process of getting their free DEP access permit, and take certain precautions that help protect water quality and prevent the spread of invasive species. The brochure also features valuable information about fishing conditions and fish species at each of the 22 reservoirs and lakes. The brochure, along with angler maps that show the water depths within each reservoir, can be found at the DEP website by [clicking here](#). 2016 also marks the fourth year that state-certified outdoor guides are permitted to offer their services—including guided fishing trips—on water supply reservoirs and lands. A list of certified guides that are approved for the program on water supply lands and waters can be found by [clicking here](#).

Many of New York City's reservoirs store deep, cold water, making them excellent fisheries for coldwater species such as trout. Here is a brief overview of the trout fisheries and some of the best fishing locations in the reservoirs:

### Brown Trout

Brown trout are the primary coldwater fish species living in New York City's reservoirs. Most of these fish are stocked annually by the state, and they usually make up the bulk of the trout catch. Where adequate spawning tributaries exist, natural reproduction contributes to the reservoir population. In some cases, the largest trout caught in the reservoirs are these "wild" fish. Brown trout in the 8-10 pound range are caught every year from many of the reservoirs, and most

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- › [Capital Projects](#)
- › [Careers at DEP](#)
- › [Environmental Reviews](#)
- › [Interagency MOUs](#)
- › [A to Z Index](#)
- › [Contact Us](#)

reservoirs have some fish in the 12-15 pound range. Some of the largest brown trout come from Kensico, Rondout and Pepacton reservoirs.

Shore fishing near deep water or where there is moving water from tributaries or tunnel inlets (only where access is allowed) are likely hotspots. Rondout Reservoir is a great location for shore fishing because high volumes of cold water from Cannonsville, Pepacton and Neversink are delivered into Rondout daily. This high volume of water keeps the water moving and cool.

#### **Rainbow Trout**

Ashokan Reservoir is the best reservoir fishery for rainbow trout. The rainbow trout population in Ashokan, as well as the Esopus Creek that feeds it, are all naturally reproduced within the system. Trout move between the reservoir and the Esopus Creek to spawn. For this reason, two popular shore-fishing spots for rainbows include the mouth of the Esopus Creek and the midpoint of the reservoir near the Dividing Weir. Fishing downstream of the Dividing Weir can be excellent early and late in the season. Rainbows up to 10 pounds have been caught in Ashokan. East of the Hudson River, Muscoot Reservoir is now producing rainbows up to 5 pounds.

#### **Lake Trout**

Lake trout typically live deep in the reservoirs, where they can find some of the coldest water. During late fall and through the colder months, they can be caught in shallow water. Lake trout are a very long-lived fish and can grow quite large. Fish up to 20 pounds likely exist in Rondout and Kensico reservoirs, and lake trout over 10 pounds are commonly caught each year. Lake Gleneida and Gilead are smaller waters that have also recently produced some lake trout in the 10-12 pound range.

Fishing on all city-owned reservoirs and lakes, along with some recreation units along streams and creeks, requires a free DEP Access Permit. An access permit can be obtained through DEP's online permitting system, found at [nyc.gov/dep/accesspermit](http://nyc.gov/dep/accesspermit). Those with questions about permitting may also email [recreation@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:recreation@dep.nyc.gov) or call (800) 575-LAND. Those fishing on streams that run across water supply lands should carefully check signs in those recreation units to determine whether a permit is required.

The breadth of fishing opportunities on City reservoirs and land underscores DEP's effort to support the recreation and tourism economies in the watershed by opening more properties to recreation. There are currently more than 130,000 acres of City property open for recreation in the watersheds, including the reservoirs.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of high quality water each day to roughly 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 upstate watershed. In addition to its \$70 million payroll and \$157 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 with nearly \$14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).