

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ANNOUNCES
27th ANNUAL WATER RESOURCES ART & POETRY CONTEST**

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland today announced the 27th annual *Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest*. Second through twelfth grade students attending public, independent, charter or parochial schools (or who are home-schooled) in New York City and in the East and West of Hudson Watersheds are invited to create original art and compose poetry that reflects an appreciation for our shared water resources. Entries will be accepted from February 1 – March 1, 2013 and may be submitted online, by mail, or delivered to DEP Headquarters. Entries submitted by mail or delivered must be 22" x 28" or smaller and have a completed entry form attached securely on the back. Participants must register for the contest at www.nyc.gov/dep. An award ceremony honoring all student participants will take place in May.

“The annual *Water Resource Art and Poetry Contest* is a great opportunity to teach students about the water systems that keep New York City running and raise awareness about the importance of environmental stewardship,” said Commissioner Strickland. “Each year, hundreds of students in New York City and the watershed demonstrate their creativity and appreciation for NYC Water and we are excited to see this year’s submissions.”

Last year, more than 700 New York City and Watershed students from more than 50 schools submitted artwork and poems about NYC Water. In June they were honored at an awards ceremony at Citi Field where their artwork and poems were displayed on the stadium’s large outfield screens as well as on monitors throughout the stadium. At the ceremony, Eric Saretsky, Vice President of Queens Ballpark Company - the agency that developed and manages Citi Field - spoke to students about the importance of green infrastructure in managing stormwater and water consumption at the stadium. In addition, many students were selected to read their poetry and discussed their artwork.

DEP’s *Water Resources Art and Poetry* program helps raise awareness about the importance of clean, high-quality drinking water, and what it takes to maintain New York City’s water supply and wastewater treatment systems. The 2013 contest will focus on four central themes:

- *Water—A Precious Resource*: To highlight the importance of the quality of our tap and harbor water.
- *The New York City Water Supply System*: To understand the history of the NYC drinking water system.

- *The New York City Wastewater Treatment System*: To examine how the City treats more than 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater every day.
- *Water Stewardship: What Can I do to Help Conserve Water?* To bring attention to the value of water and ways to conserve it, and the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan as a cost-effective way to manage stormwater and ensure a clean NYC harbor.

Entries will be judged based on creativity in interpreting one or more of the contest themes, accuracy of information, originality, and skill. An impartial panel of judges will review the entries and select one art and one poetry winner from each category (grades 2-3, 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12). Please notify us about your student participants with special needs.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of high quality water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 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 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including nearly 1,000 in the upstate watershed. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/nycwater.

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