Why Recreation?

• Second largest landowner in the Watershed
• Recreational activities are compatible with water quality protection
• Contribute to local economies, primarily tourism
• DEP’s Strategic Plan
  • “Expand recreational opportunities in the City’s watershed”
• Recreation users - the “eyes and ears”
• Deer hunting as a tool to reduce negative impacts on water supply forests
• Various requirements and obligations through the years
History of Recreational Uses

• 1905 Water Supply Act
  • City must provide public access/use for fishing, boating and ice cutting on reservoirs used or built by the City for water supply
  • In accordance with the City's rules to protect the “purity of the water and prevent nuisances…”
  • Silent on lands
• 1997 Memorandum of Agreement
  • When acquiring lands, City will consult with NYSDEC, USEPA, local governments and Sporting Advisory Committees for recommended recreational uses
  • Certain uses, such as hunting, fishing, hiking, snowshoeing, cross county skiing, bird watching, nature study and interpretation “are more likely to be allowed…”
  • Snowmobiling, camping, motorcycling, mountain biking and horseback riding “are not likely to be allowed…”
  • “…undertake comprehensive review of existing and potential recreational uses…”
• Filtration Avoidance Determinations
  • (2007) Included coordinating uses of City lands to meet multiple objectives, including recreation
Removing Barriers to Access

• Progression of expanding recreational uses with no negative water quality impacts
• Public Access Areas (PAA) (2008)
• Elimination of DEP Hunt Tags (2009)
• Web-based ability to: (2009)
  • Obtain a new DEP Access Permit
  • Renew DEP Access Permit
  • Update records
• Group Access Permits / Guest Passes
• Maps of all recreation areas on DEP website
• Revision of LUP rules to waive fees
DEP Recreational Opportunities

- Over 118,000 active Access Permits
- Almost 80,000 acres of land open for recreation
  - High percentage of eligible land
- Over 300 recreation units
- Over 46,000 acres are PAA
- All reservoirs (33,000 acres) open for fishing from shore or boat
- Most new properties are PAA, converting “entry by permit” properties to PAA over time
  - Most areas adjacent to reservoirs “entry by permit”
- 1,824 acres of bow hunting only units on Neversink and Ashokan Reservoir
- Out of watershed fishing opportunities
- Recreational Land Use Permits
- Participating in local recreational planning
- Open to new proposals / partnerships
Boating for Fishing

- Over 11,000 boats on City reservoirs
- All boats must obtain a DEP Boat Tag and be steam cleaned
- Small percentage of boats actually being used at any one time
- No negative water quality issues at present
- Large staff resource expenditure to manage
  - 4,142 boats removed and auctioned since 2003
- Annual “Fathers Day” boat auction
- Working on Boat Management Plan
  - Identify ways to minimize administrative burdens and improve user satisfaction
Expanded Boating

- Successful completion of 3-year pilot program on Cannonsville Reservoir
  - Collaborative process with many stakeholders
  - Mark Danvetz is giving a presentation at 3pm today with more details
- Expanded to 3 additional reservoirs in 2012
- All boats must be steam cleaned by private DEP-approved vendors. 13 now active
- YTD stats
  - Almost 1,000 tags issued to date, over ½ are repeat users
  - Kayaks 70%, canoes 25%
  - 44% seasonal tags
  - 68% use Pepacton, 12% Neversink
- Expanded monitoring
- Working on pilot trolling motor use for Cannonsville
Examples of Recreation-Related Permits

- Creamery Pond recreation fields in Windham
- NYSDEC pheasant release
- NYSDEC for fish stocking in reservoirs
- Village of Fleischmanns temporary park
- Fishing access in Ashland
- Boy Scout Trek
- Prattsville “Mud Fest”
- CWC recreation parking areas
- Village of Margaretville
- US Adventure Racing National Championship
- Several permits issued for fund-raising events such as the Harry Chapin Memorial Run Against Hunger
- “History” hikes
Trails on NYC Lands

- Teatown Reservation
- Angle Fly Preserve
- Finger Lakes Trail
- Town of Andes/Catskill Mountain Club
- Lake Gleneida Trail
- 3 Snowmobile trails
- Working with partners on potential trail system in Margaretville
Designated Use Areas

- Allow access without DEP Access Permits
- Unique areas with infrastructure
- Uses typically include walking, jogging, dogs on leash, roller blading
  - Kensico Dam
  - Davesego Park
  - Waldo Smith Day Use Area (Ashokan Fountain/walkway)
  - Rondout Eagle viewing area
Deer Hunting as a Tool

• Deer hunting not only provides recreational opportunities on City land but is an important management tool

• Forests provide the best cover for water quality protection

• Forest management plan completed in 2011 highlighted forest regeneration failure on many lands—primarily due to deer browse

• What are we doing?
  • Expanding areas to deer hunt
  • Bow-only areas
  • Partner with Westchester County
  • DMAP on Ashokan
  • Managed hunts?
  • Sharp-shooting?
DEP Recreation Survey

• 31% use City land 1-5 times per year
• Fishing from shore is the highest use: 42%
  • Fishing from boat: 30%
  • Big game hunting: 13%
• Westchester County sees the most visits: 28%
  • Delaware: 21%
  • Ulster: 20%
• For fishing, Ashokan Reservoir had the most visits: 15%
  • Pepacton 11%
  • 41% of visits were on east of Hudson reservoirs
• 85% of users reported City lands “Not crowded at all”
• 91% of users were “very aware” land and reservoirs were part of a water supply (0 were unaware)
• 82% of users felt “very safe”
Other Uses of City Land

• Agricultural use
  • Over 70 projects. Most allow haying but a few are for maple tapping, row crops and livestock
  • 2,000 acres and 3,249 taps now covered
• Completed first-ever DEP Forest Management Plan in 2011
  • Comprehensive inventory / used to identify areas in need of treatment
  • Will help facilitate targeted projects with greater volumes of timber produced. Local loggers typically bid on these projects
  • Will help DEP plan for and address threats such as Emerald Ash Borer
• Developing pilot project for firewood and bluestone mining on City land
Thank You! Questions?

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