



Controlling Stormwater Runoff Is Crucial for Environment

Uncontrolled stormwater runoff is one of the most significant sources of pollution in New York State's waters. In fact, the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) report, "30 Year Trends in Water Quality in Rivers and Streams of New York State," identified expanded development and urban stormwater runoff as two of the top three emerging threats to water quality in the State.

Controlling stormwater not only leads to cleaner water and healthier habitats, it also helps reduce flooding. Thus, when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) required that urbanized municipalities address stormwater pursuant to the Clean Water Act, the DEC recognized that this would be an important new program for New York State.

However, we were very concerned that the adoption of the EPA's requirements was not linked to any additional funding and provided only limited technical support to the states and localities. Thus, the DEC was forced to look to its own resources to assist in the implementation of this program. Since 2003, the DEC has awarded approximately \$5.7 million in funding to municipalities covered by these requirements. Clearly, this does not cover all the municipal costs, but we hope it is a good start. In addition, we have worked across agen-

cies and with various interested partners to develop and assist in the implementation of this complex program.

To coordinate this effort we formed the "SWIT," or Stormwater Implementation Team, which is composed of staff from our nine regional offices and central office, and is chaired by a DEC regional water manager. In the formation of the SWIT, we worked to draw on a wide cross section of staff talents and expertise to develop a thoughtful and consistent approach to stormwater regulation statewide.

New York State's stormwater program has made significant progress over the past three years, thanks to the hard work of all involved, and we are learning as we go forward. Presently, our focus is on financially and technically supporting municipalities who are required to have permit coverage so that they are on track to meet the January 2008 deadline to implement the permit requirements. For example, one of our recent assistance documents, "Stormwater Management Guidance Manual for Local Officials," includes a sample law that urbanized municipalities can adapt for use in their local stormwater management programs.

January 2008 will also be the renewal date for the stormwater permit for urbanized municipalities, and we will be revising the permit terms based on feedback and our experiences as we continue to refine the program. We welcome all comments, suggestions and assistance in the continued development of this program. Effective stormwater control will help safeguard New York State's vast water resources for generations to come.

—Sandra L. Allen

Director of the NYSDEC Division of Water

2006-2007 NYWEA Scholarship Winners Recognized

During a recent Long Island Chapter event, NYWEA President Janice Jijina had the opportunity to personally congratulate four of the seven winners of the 2006-2007 Scholarship Program.

\$10,000 Major Environmental Scholarship—

Rachel Cluett, Earl L. Vandermeulen High School, Port Jefferson, NY

Student Chapter Category—

\$1,500 Scholarships:

Kathleen Munson, Manhattan College
Jessica Puliafico, Manhattan College

High School Category—

\$1,500 Scholarships:

Erin Menzies, Southwestern High School, Lakewood, NY
Ashley Nickelsen, Staten Island Technical High School, Staten Island, NY

Children of Members Category—

\$1,500 Scholarships:

Abraham Brewer, East Setauket, NY Parent, Eugene Brewer
Megan Kelleher, Centereach, NY Parent, Dennis M. Kelleher



Pictured are (left to right) Rachel Cluett, Kathleen Munson, Abraham Brewer and Megan Kelleher.