

James Clayton



Five Rivers' New Building

The new Wendy Repass Suozzo Guided School Program (GSP) Building at the Five Rivers Environmental Education Center in Delmar was dedicated in September. The LEED-eligible building features a classroom and will be used by the Friends of Five Rivers (FOFR) for teaching school groups, as well as by DEC for teacher trainings and workshops. The building is a cooperative venture between DEC and FOFR, and was made possible in part by a donation from Wendy's parents in memory of their daughter. Wendy was an environmental educator who, in partnership with FOFR, started the popular GSP in 1978 and later ran it for many years. GSP

provides hands-on, outdoor lessons to visiting school groups. For more information about GSP, see www.friendsoffiverivers.org/node/39; and also visit www.dec.ny.gov/education/1835.html to learn more about Five Rivers Education Center.

Rabies in Deer

In less than one month, from August to September 2012, the DEC Wildlife Health Unit diagnosed rabies in three white-tailed deer, one each from Monroe, Tompkins and Genesee counties. Residents had reported seeing the deer wobbling, walking in circles and having difficulty raising their heads. All three deer were euthanized and taken to Cornell's Animal Health Diagnostic Center where rabies was confirmed at the Wadsworth Laboratory. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/animals/261.html for details on what to do if you suspect rabies in an animal, or if you come across sick or injured wildlife.

Free Lifeguard Tests

Beginning January 2013 and running through June, DEC will be offering free lifeguard tests to potential campground

personnel (16 years of age and older) for the Adirondack and Catskill regions. The tests include an in-water demonstration of lifesaving techniques, as well as performance of CPR. Only candidates who pass the exam will be eligible for employment. For information, including how to register for the exam, visit DEC's website at www.dec.ny.gov/about/726.html, or email lfgdinfo@gw.dec.state.ny.us, or call 518-457-2500 (ext. 1).

Lake Ontario Fisheries

In February and March 2013, DEC will hold three public meetings in Niagara, Monroe and Oswego counties to discuss Lake Ontario fisheries. These annual "State of Lake Ontario" meetings provide individuals the opportunity to interact with scientists who study the fisheries. Biologists from DEC, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources will make presentations on a variety of topics, including the status of trout and salmon fisheries, forage fish, stocking programs, and fisheries management plans. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/27068.html for more information, including specific times and locations.



BRIEFLY

Outdoor Discovery Newsletter

Check out DEC's new, monthly, email newsletter, *Outdoor Discovery*, which highlights recreational opportunities around the state. Features include Watchable Wildlife sites, outdoor adventures, a hike of the month, upcoming events, and photos of New York's most stunning scenery. Check out the latest issue at www.dec.ny.gov/public/84455.html, and subscribe to this free newsletter today.

Rabbit Hunters Wanted

Rabbit hunters in Rensselaer, Columbia, Dutchess, Putnam and Westchester counties are needed to help DEC gather information about the distribution of New England cottontails. The New England cottontail is the only native cottontail east of the Hudson River in New York, but its range has been greatly reduced due to habitat loss and competition with the more abundant eastern cottontail. New England cottontails look almost identical to eastern cottontails and are only reliably



identified by genetic tests of tissue and fecal samples, or by examining the skull. Hunters can help DEC gather information by providing skulls of the rabbits they harvest. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/animals/67017.html for more details.

BOOK REVIEW by Sarah Shepard

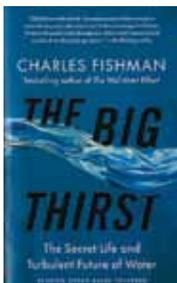
The Big Thirst: The Secret Life and Turbulent Future of Water

by Charles Fishman

Softcover: \$16; 416 pgs.

Free Press (a division of Simon and Schuster, Inc.)

www.simonandschuster.com



You might think *The Big Thirst* is a dire warning about an upcoming global water crisis. It's not. That's because according to Charles Fishman, we're already in a water crisis and the days of cheap, safe and abundant water are over. But Fishman says there is also good news: most of our water problems are solvable. Some can even be solved quickly with existing technology.

Unlike climate change, which is a global crisis, Fishman explains how all water problems are regional and local, and so require regional or local solutions. Cutting down on your shower time in New England does not help the woman in India who walks miles every day to fetch water from a communal spigot.

The Big Thirst is filled with inspiring examples of water managers who have confronted drought and water shortages and prevailed. It is an engaging exploration of everything about water: its chemistry, uses (and abuses), politics and economics, and our relationship with it. The book's well-researched stories take us from Vermont and the ultra-pure water used to wash

computer chips, to the black and bubbling Yamuna River in India fouled with Delhi's untreated sewage and industrial waste.

According to Fishman, our toughest problem will be changing our attitude about water—to stop taking water for granted. Most of us cannot imagine turning on the tap and nothing coming out, yet forty percent of the world doesn't have ready access to water, or has to walk to get it.

Part of why we take water for granted, says Fishman, is because it's cheap. "If you had to pick one thing to fix about water, one thing that would help you fix everything else... that one thing is price. The right price changes how we see everything else about water."

In addition to pricing water correctly, Fishman advocates matching the purity of water to its purpose. In the U.S. we use 5.7 billion gallons of water pure enough to drink just to flush our toilets every day. Still, water managers struggle to overcome the "yuck factor," meaning the public's aversion to using "recycled water" for any purpose.

One of the best things about *The Big Thirst* is that unlike many books on environmental crises, it does not leave you feeling hopeless or that it's too late to do anything. There can be enough water for everyone; we just have to start paying attention to it, stop wasting it, and use it more wisely.

Sarah Shepard works in the Bureau of Publications and Internet in DEC's Albany office.