

# **2007 Report to NYS Conservation Council from Division of Operations**

*Provides technical services, facilities management, and maintenance of physical assets to ensure effective and efficient operation of the Department and safe public use of DEC lands and facilities.*

**Goal: Develop and implement initiatives to accelerate the protection of air, land and water quality.**

**Objective: Minimize creation of waste and pollutants.**

In support of the requirements of the Federal Energy Policy Act of 1992 and the Governor's Executive Order No. 111 for light duty vehicles, DEC purchased 52 flex-fueled vehicles and 36 hybrid vehicles for 2007.

## **Compliance**

- At the beginning of fiscal year 2007, in the annual environmental audit of the Department's nearly 2,000 facilities, Operations identified a total of 18 new or uncorrected environmental violations, including 5 violations where a third party was responsible. This is the same number of violations as from the previous fiscal year. No new instances of non-compliance were identified. At the same time, the Department corrected 5 violations. Those completed included petroleum bulk storage upgrades at the Stony Brook Regional Office and the Schenectady Regional Office; a hazardous waste removal at the Monterey field headquarters in Region 8; an old dump debris cleanup at Golden Beach campground in Region 5 and a major remedial cleanup at the Summit site in Region 4. The Department spent nearly \$2,414,000 at these cleanups including nearly \$2,350,000 at Summit. Furthermore, in the past year, the Department has continued to work on the remaining audit violation projects and multiple environmental emergency interim remedial repairs at the McGregor dam in Region 5 for a total value for all compliance work at DEC facilities of more than \$2,814,000.
- Construction is underway to replace the deficient Dam at the Colgate Lake in the Blackhead Range Wild Forest valued at \$1.53 Million dollars and at Meacham Lake Campground to replace failing sewage systems valued at \$435,000. Design has been completed for the replacement of the deficient Little Pond Campground Dam and the bid process will be started when regulatory approval is granted.

**Goal: Become better stewards of our land, infrastructure and natural resources.**

**Objective: Develop management plans for all of the state's public lands and implement the core recommendations of such plans.**

- The construction of Phase 2 of the new Scaroon Manor Campground is expected to begin in the fall of 2007, with completion by Summer 2008.
- The UMP for the Ausable Point Campground has been approved. With the approval of the plan, shoreline stabilization, road resurfacing and construction of a new playground can now proceed.

**Objective: Develop the department's Maintenance Management System (MMS) and use it to identify and implement needed maintenance of Department facilities.**

A key element in the behind the scenes activities of stewardship, is being able to know what assets you have and their condition. The MMS assists Department management in planning, organizing, directing, controlling and budgeting for operation and maintenance, including the tracking of energy usage, of almost 2,000 DEC facilities spread across over 4.7 million acres of land. Additional efforts by the Division of Lands & Forests will enable GIS data to be directly linked with MMS asset records, enhancing the management and functional utilization of each data component.

This past year the Division of Operations completed over 6,000 work orders for the repair and maintenance of the Department's facilities, as well as over 14,000 work orders for the repair and maintenance of the Department's vehicles and motorized equipment. This system is also being used to track usage of all vehicles.

The focus recently has been on implementing the utility portion of the system. This module replaces many independent systems used to track the Department's energy usage at all of its facilities. Almost 800 separate accounts are now being tracked in the system. This data is important in tracking DEC's continuing efforts to comply with Executive Order #111 to reduce the Department's energy usage.

### **Wind Power**

Chateaugay Fish Hatchery Windmill Demonstration Project - The Division of Operations has recently completed the construction of a 120-foot windmill at the Chateaugay Fish Hatchery in Franklin Co. This hatchery is the Department's first facility that has wind power as a source of energy. The project, though small in nature, provides 10KW of power to run a portion of the process and rearing equipment. Information gathered from this demonstration project will be used to evaluate the feasibility of future, larger-scale wind power projects at other DEC facilities across the state.

### **Access**

- Access for people with disabilities - The Department continues to expand opportunities to enable people with disabilities to access programs on state land such as hunting, camping, fishing and horseback riding. Nearly 150 projects have been completed. These include: accessible fishing piers and fishing areas, accessible equestrian mounting platforms; boat and canoe launches, campsites; and road rehabilitation projects. Also,

accessible buses are used to support the public at both Prospect Mountain and Belleayre Mountain Ski Center. Certain other projects in the Adirondack and Catskill Forest Preserves still must go through the Unit Management Planning process before they can go forward.

- Since last year, work was completed to improve access in the Region 5 ADA Phase II project at Northville BLS, Saratoga County BLS, West Lake FAS, and Cossayuna FAS; and Santanoni Preserve Historic Area Accessibility Improvements for equestrians. Also work is nearing completion for the Region 5 ADA Phase III project at Lake Colby FAS, Second Pond FAS, Upper Saranac Lake BLS, Raquette River BLS, and Whey Pond: Russell Brook Bridge in Cherry Ridge-Campbell Mountain Wild Forest. Contracts have been approved for the construction of the South Bay Fishing Pier, with completion anticipated this Fall. Final design work is nearing completion for the stabilization of historic stone arch culverts into the Santanoni Preserve.
- Boat Launch Construction and Rehabilitation - Boat launch projects completed this period include Upper Peconic River in Region 1, Redfield Island BLS in Region 7, Repaving the Mossy Point BLS in Region 5 and Reconstruction of the Freemans Bridge BLS on the Mohawk River in Region 4. Construction was halted at the Stillwater Reservoir in Region 6 due to high reservoir water levels and will resume in September 2007. The construction contract has been approved for the Indian Lake Campground in Region 5 with construction to begin in September 2007. Construction is slated for this fall for Oyster Bay (Jakobson Shipyard) in Region 1. Design work has been completed for the City of Plattsburgh for their planned boat launch in the old rail yard. Once regulatory approval is obtained, the advertisement for bids will go out, with construction in 2008. Design work is progressing for the Hudson River at Moreau BLS in Region 5.

### **DEC Facilities (Camps, Education Centers and others)**

- Working with the State Office of General Services, the Stony Kill Environmental Education Center Visitors Center, the Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve Visitors Center and the Crusoe Audubon Center at Montezuma were all completed last year.
- Montezuma Audubon Center - DEC completed construction of the Montezuma Audubon Center, a 6,000 sq.ft. environmental interpretive and education center in the Northern Montezuma Wetlands Complex. In 1991, the management of the Northern Montezuma Wetlands Complex was the subject of a Environmental Impact Statement in which one of the expressed goals was to "improve accessibility to this wetland complex for compatible wildlife-related public recreation, education and research." The Center is located approximately 1.5 miles north of the hamlet of Savannah, Town of Savannah, Wayne County and lies on the west side of NYS Route 89 immediately north of the Crusoe Creek. DEC and Audubon NY have entered into a Cooperative Agreement whereby Audubon NY will operate the Center with help from DEC and the USFWS in the planning of education and interpretation programs and exhibits. The center design follows green building guidelines and it is being commissioned as a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certified building.

- The Department operates 59 developed recreation facilities in the Adirondacks and Catskills. These include 52 campgrounds, Belleayre Mountain Ski Center, Prospect Mountain Highway, and the Lake George Beach. Approximately 1,000 seasonal employees are hired annually to operate these facilities which serve over 1,600,000 visitors annually. The admission fees at these facilities offset the annual operating costs of staff salaries, supplies and utilities.
- Construction of Scaroon Manor - The construction of the first new campground built in the forest preserve since 1977 is well underway at Scaroon Manor on Schroon Lake in Warren and Essex Counties. Construction of the campground portion will begin in the fall of 2007.

**Objective: Improve the level of fiscal and human resources available to carry out the goal of becoming better stewards.**

- The Department purchased \$760,000 worth of heavy equipment during this past fiscal year, including at least one piece of priority heavy equipment for each DEC Region. The enacted budget for FY 2007-08 includes an allocation of another \$750,000 for heavy equipment.
- This last year the Department purchased 236 new vehicles, of which 116 will be for regional stewardship support. The remaining 120 are emergency response vehicles used in support of Law Enforcement, Forest Protection & Fire Management, and Spill Response.
- Operations installed various electronic controls and wiring in the new vehicles (82 Law Enforcement, 22 Forest Ranger and 16 Spills vehicles statewide). This program also includes emergency response lighting and equipment for snowmobiles, ATVs, and personal water craft (PWCs).
- Operations provided support and maintenance on the Divisions of Forest Protection, Fish & Wildlife and Law Enforcement radio systems statewide - including support of 2,600 mobile and portable radios, 120 repeaters, 75 base stations, 46 repeater sites and 213 licenses.
- Sixty-five Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (NEV) continue to provide support to Recreational Campgrounds, Fish Hatcheries, and the Educational Camps. These contribute significantly toward meeting the transportation support needs at these locations.
- The Department is actively involved in the planning, design, construction and contract management of multiple Bond Act projects involving many program areas at DEC facilities statewide. This past year, \$1.7 million was spent on multiple construction projects, including new bathroom/shower buildings, sewage system upgrades/replacements at Nicks Lake, North South Lake and Sacandaga Campgrounds

and the Saratoga Tree Nursery. A contract is in the award process for the Modification of the Lower Perch River WMA Dam worth \$343,000.

- Replacement of the last original wood stave water supply pipeline was completed at the South Otselic Fish Hatchery at a cost of \$537,000. A contract is in the award process to install a backup generator at the VanHornesville Fish Hatchery at a cost of \$62,500. Design has been completed for the Rome Fish Hatchery Pond Enclosures with bids due on August 29, 2007. The enclosures will protect the fish from predation and increase the fish inventory for stocking. Design is in the preliminary stages for a new Rearing Building at the Rome Fish Hatchery.
- Design has been completed for modifications at the Reynolds Game Farm Pheasant Nursery to install more efficient brooder units and lighting that is more appropriate to the pheasant rearing process. Bids are due on September 19, 2007 with construction planned to be completed by January 2008.
- Department staff working with APA developed a Standard Forest Preserve Snowmobile Bridge Design which blends in with the Natural Environment to the maximum extent possible.
- Nature Recreation Program - DEC conducts programs of many types for the overnight campers and day use visitors at DEC campgrounds in the Adirondack and Catskill Forest Preserves. These programs include walks, talks, games, crafts, music, paddle trips, mountain hikes, and more.
- Junior Naturalist Program - This program is designed for children campers, ages 5 - 12 years old, who must complete several modules in a journal of environmental activities in order to earn a patch. The journals and patches change each year and the 2007 patch is a bluebird. Over 8,000 journals are distributed annually and over 6,400 patches are issued at the more than 30 campgrounds which offer the program.
- The Division of Operations conducts semi-annual training for all of the Department's vehicle mechanics. Professional instructors are brought in from the various commercial sources to provide state-of-the-art training on various vehicle systems and analysis/repair procedures.