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DEC TO START ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR 2012 SUMMER CAMP PROGRAM

Camp Program Changes will be Implemented for 2012 Season

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation will be accepting applications for its 2012 Summer Camp Program starting January 28, DEC Commissioner Joe Martens announced today.

The summer camp program offers week-long adventures in conservation education for children ages 11-17. DEC operates four residential camps for youth ages 11-13: Camp Colby in Saranac Lake, Franklin County; Camp DeBruce in Livingston Manor, Sullivan County; Camp Rushford in Caneadea, Allegany County and Pack Forest in Warrensburg, Warren County. Pack Forest and Camp Rushford also feature Teenage Ecology Week, an environmental studies program for 14-17-year-old campers.

“As the parent of a son who spent a week at Camp Colby, I can personally attest to the quality of the camp experience for teenagers and the valuable environmental lessons learned at a DEC summer camp,” said Commissioner Martens. “Many DEC camp alumni have followed their interests into careers in the environment and wildlife conservation throughout our 64 years of operating DEC summer camps.”

Campers learn about environmental stewardship through hands-on experience in the outdoors. They participate in a wide variety of activities including fishing, bird watching, fly-tying, archery, canoeing, hiking, camping, orienteering and hunter safety education. Campers also learn about fields, forests, streams and ponds through fun, first-hand experiences in these habitats. DEC counselors teach youth conservation techniques used by natural resource professionals, such as measuring trees and estimating wildlife populations.

Changes for the 2012 camp season:

- Youth camp attendees now range from age 11 to 13.
- Teenage Ecology Week attendees now range from age 14 to 17 and will be offered at Pack Forest from weeks 1 through 5 and at Camp Rushford during week 5.
- All four camps will run for seven weeks, beginning July 1.
- Children who have attended camp in the past may register for any of the weeks within their age range.
- Campers may attend for more than one week. The fee for the total number of weeks must be included with the application (Note: campers may not stay at camp on Saturday night, so parents should make alternate arrangements if two consecutive weeks are selected).

(MORE)

DEC is also encouraging sporting clubs, civic groups and environmental organizations to sponsor a child for a week at camp. Those groups who sponsor six paid campers will receive one free scholarship when all applications are sent together.

Information and applications for the 2012 Summer Camp Program are now available on DEC's website. Applications from both sponsors and parents can be postmarked starting January 28, 2012. The cost for camp remains at \$350 a week, a great value for parents.

For complete information, including when applications will be accepted, visit DEC's website at www.dec.ny.gov/education/29.html or call 518-402-8014. Interested parents may also sign up for the camps' listserve on the same web page, visit the camps' Facebook page at "NYS DEC Summer Camps" or contact DEC in writing at DEC Camps, 2nd Floor, 625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233-4500.

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