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DEC: APPLICATIONS FOR SUMMER ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPS ARE AVAILABLE
Camps Offer Unique Educational, Outdoor Experiences For Youth

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Erin M. Crotty today announced that applications for DEC's 2004 Summer Environmental Education Camps are available and encouraged families to consider enrolling their children in this exciting program.

"For more than 50 years, DEC's Environmental Education Camps have provided young people with a unique opportunity to explore and enjoy the beauty of our natural resources, while also teaching them the importance of conservation," Commissioner Crotty said. "All our camps offer expert instruction in a fun-filled environment, and will help young people learn how to be strong stewards of our land, air, and water."

The DEC Summer Camp Program is in its 57th year of operation, offering week-long adventures in conservation education to State residents ages 12-17. DEC operates three residential camps over an eight-week period for children ages 12-14: Camp Colby in Saranac Lake, Franklin County; Camp DeBruce in Livingston Manor, Sullivan County; and Camp Rushford in Caneadea, Allegany County.

A fourth residential camp, Pack Forest in Warrensburg, Warren County, will run for five weeks and features a special program of environmental study - The Teenage Ecology Workshop - which is specifically targeted to campers 15-17 years of age.

The DEC Camp sessions begin June 27, 2004. DEC has a "Returnee Week" at Pack Forest for campers ages 12-14. This program is offered during the sixth week of the camp season, August 1 - 7, 2004, and no first-year campers are eligible.

Under the guidance of experienced DEC education camp staff, these programs provide a week of activities that will acquaint campers with fields and forests, streams and ponds, helping them to uncover the interconnected aspects of our natural world. Campers will observe wildlife, discuss and debate environmental issues, sample streams for microscopic life and explore the brilliance of the night sky, while meeting new friends from across the State.

Campers also will have time to pursue and improve their skills in a wide variety of outdoor activities, including fishing, birdwatching, fly-tying, canoeing, hiking, camping, orienteering, and hunter safety education.

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The cost per camper for a one-week stay is \$225. Applications and an up-to-date number of “open slots” for each camp may be obtained via the DEC website at: <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/education/edcamps.html> or by contacting DEC by mail at: DEC Camps, 2nd Floor, 625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233-4500; (518) 402-8014. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

A schedule for the Summer Camps is listed below.

Week 1: June 27 - July 3 All Camps Open	Week 5: July 25 - July 31 (END of Pack Forest for 15 -17-year-olds)
Week 2: July 4 - 10	Week 6: August 1 - 7 **
Week 3: July 11 - 17	Week 7: August 8 - 14
Week 4: (Returnee Week, All Camps): July 18 - 24 NO FIRST YEAR CAMPERS	Week 8: August 15 - 21 END of Colby, DeBruce & Rushford Camps

**EXTRA Returnee Week (NO first year campers) for 12-14-year-olds at Pack Forest.

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