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Mural Unveiling at Riverbank State Park

**As Riverbank State Park Celebrates its 20th Anniversary,
Teen Artists Unveil Mural Celebrating Our Local Water Cycle**

Mural Dedication Ceremony: Saturday, September 7 at 11am

Location: Riverbank State Park Water Splashing Area, 679 Riverside Drive, New York NY 10031

Groundswell, in partnership with the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and NYC Department of Environmental Protection, is pleased to announce a dedication ceremony to celebrate the unveiling of “Beautifying Riverbank,” a new public mural which engages Riverbank State Park’s diverse visitors in a celebration of our local water cycle, from the Catskill Mountains to New York City, as well as tells the story of Riverbank State Park’s creation and the resource it continues to be to the community 20 years after its opening.

This summer, 15 young people participating in Groundswell’s Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) collaborated with Groundswell Lead Artist Paul Deo and Assistant Artist Olivia Fu to research, design, and fabricate this 260 ft wide by 15 ft high site-specific mural designed for the Riverbank water splashing area. Through this process, the youth muralists enlivened a monumental wall with a whimsical visual narrative.

Playfully changing depths and perspectives, the design illustrates the unique stories behind this one-of-a-kind park and the New York City water cycle. The mural reads left to right, and begins at daybreak as a group of community activists organize for a state-of-the-art park to be built atop a planned wastewater treatment plant. The mural ends at moonrise, as these same activists, now grandparents and friends of the park, enjoy all that the park has to offer and envision its future legacy. At its center, children splash in the waters of the Catskill Mountains beneath a radiant Mother Nature figure.

The unveiling of this mural is particularly meaningful as Riverbank State Park celebrates its 20th anniversary. The only park of its kind in the Western Hemisphere, Riverbank is inspired by urban rooftop designs in Japan. The 28-acre multi-level landscaped recreational facility rises 69 feet above the Hudson River and offers a wide variety of recreational, athletic and arts experiences for all ages, interests and abilities.

“We are thrilled to unveil this beautiful and meaningful mural at Riverbank State Park. Both the installation of the mural and the message the art conveys reflect our goals to nurture positive partnerships with organizations like Groundswell who connect us with our community and allow us to accomplish such significant projects, and our efforts to be good and responsible stewards of the public lands we operate and maintain for recreation and open space. On behalf of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, thank you Groundswell for your vision, and for the work of your artists and youth muralists in creating this wonderful addition to Riverbank State Park,” said Rose Harvey, Commissioner of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

“Riverbank State Park and this beautiful mural sit on top of the North River Wastewater Treatment Plant which plays a critical role in protecting the environment and public health,” said DEP Commissioner Carter Strickland. “The mural is a terrific depiction of the New York City water cycle and will help to inform the millions of annual visitors to Riverbank State Park about all the work that is involved in delivering clean water and protecting our local waterways.”

“Groundswell is proud to unveil another mural which highlights the importance of protecting our shared natural resources,” said Groundswell Executive Director Amy Sananman. “Through this collaboration, Groundswell and our partners not only added to the beauty and vibrancy of Riverbank State Park, but we used public art as a tool to engage New York City teens in environmental sustainability advocacy.”

About Groundswell

Groundswell brings together artists, youth, and community organizations to use art as a tool for social change. “Beautifying Riverbank was completed as part of Groundswell’s flagship program, the Summer Leadership Institute (SLI), which employs over 100 youth each summer as paid apprentices on mural projects that beautify neighborhoods and give voice to ideas and perspectives that are underrepresented the public dialog. www.groundswellmural.org

About NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation maintains and operates 179 parks and 35 historic sites, which attract over 60 million visitors a year. There are seven State Parks in New York City, including Riverbank. For more information about state parks and historic sites in New York, please visit www.nysparks.com.

About NYC Department of Environmental Protection

DEP manages New York City’s water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed.

In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$14 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

"Beautifying Riverbank" is made possible with funds from the Catskill Watershed Corporation in partnership with NYC Department of Environmental Protection and from the NYS State Parks Infrastructure Fund. Additional support is provided by Bloomberg Philanthropies and Winifred Johnson Clive Foundation.

Major financial support for Groundswell's 2013 Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) is contributed by Altman Foundation, Charles Lawrence Keith and Clara Miller Foundation, David Rockefeller Fund, Dedalus Foundation, Ethel and W. George Kennedy Family Foundation, Irene B. Wolt Lifetime Trust, Lambent Foundation, M&T Bank, and Variety The Children's Charity, in addition to numerous individuals.

SLI is made possible in part by public funds administered by the National Endowment for the Arts, New York City Department of Youth and Community Development Summer Youth Employment Program, New York City Department of Education, and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

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