

# City of Water Day Festival



July 16, 2011

For Immediate Release

## **15,000 PEOPLE TO REVITALIZE REGION'S WATERFRONT AT CITY OF WATER DAY FESTIVAL**

*Governors Island & Liberty State Park festival features free boat tours,  
fishing, kayaking, paddle-boarding, sailing, food, music and more!*

*Additional activities in Manhattan, the Bronx, Staten Island and Brooklyn*

**New York, NY:** On Saturday, July 16, over 15,000 people will come together on Governors Island and at waterfront locations throughout the region to revitalize the New York-New Jersey Harbor as part of the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance's 4<sup>th</sup> annual City of Water Day Festival.

Held each year on Governors Island and in Liberty State Park—and this year with seven “City of Water Day in Your Neighborhood” sites throughout the harbor—the City of Water Day Festival is a unique, free, harbor-wide event celebrating the world-class potential of the region's waterfront. The festival demonstrates everything about the water that is fun and exciting while educating participants about the many critical issues it faces.

“For generations we as a region turned our backs on our harbor and waterways,” said Roland Lewis, President and CEO of the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance. “Today we're beginning to realize what a priceless resource it is for recreation, education, business and more. The City of Water Day Festival reconnects thousands of people with the water that is literally at their doorsteps.”

Highlights of the 2011 festival will include:

- Free narrated harbor boat tours for over 3,000 people on the region's premier working, historic, and educational vessels;
- A flotilla of over 250 paddlers, rowers and sailors converging on the festival from launch points throughout the harbor (Governors Island only);
- Kayaking and paddle-boarding lessons (Liberty State Park only);
- Free semi-private sailing trips (available through a festival twitter contest);
- *Imagination Playground*, sponsored by Disney;
- The *Waterfront Activity Fair*, showcasing hundreds of businesses and organizations working to revitalize our waterfront;
- *Water-Rama: A Symposium on our Harbor* (Governors Island only);
- Special activities just for families like water-themed arts and crafts, touch-tanks, puppet shows, and relay races;
- Free ferry transit between Governors Island and Liberty State Park;
- Live music and the region's best food vendors.

“The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is pleased to once again participate in this educational festival on the waterfront. The Corps is on the water, by the water and in the water and proud of our contributions to the economic and environmental sustainability of the Port and New York Harbor,” said Col. John R. Boulé, II, the Army Corps' New York District Commander. “We strive to preserve, improve and restore the abundant water resources with which this region has been blessed.”

"City of Water Day is both a celebration and an acknowledgement," said Captain Linda Fagan, Captain of the Port of New York and New Jersey and Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Sector New York. "It is a celebration of the nearly unlimited potential of New York Harbor and its hundreds of miles of shore line, offering opportunities for residents of New York and New Jersey, as well as visitors from around the world, to

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sail, power boat, kayak, canoe, fish, sightsee and travel for business and leisure. City of Water Day is also a well earned acknowledgement that the City of New York, surrounding New York and New Jersey communities and groups such as the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance have done a superb job in restoring to health a harbor that was once in severe decline. Everyone involved can be proud of what has been accomplished. The task now before us is to continue to develop this harbor's resources so that both commercial and recreational use can co-exist safely and securely."

Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez said, "Our communities are connected by local waterfronts all across the City, affording us new opportunities for recreation and commerce."

"New York City's waterfront is an indispensable resource for our city's economy and cultural identity," said Rep. Jerrold Nadler. "Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance and its many allies know well that our waterfront is not merely a historical artifact or a source for nostalgia. The waterfront is a living, growing and changing part of New York City, and the City of Water Day is a fitting occasion on which to celebrate its central role in our lives."

New York City Councilmember Margaret Chin said, "In lower Manhattan we look forward to the festivities on Governor's Island all summer long. The City of Water Day Festival brings our community—and New Yorkers across the five boroughs—together and allows us all to explore the beauty of our City's waterways. Our waterfront has come a long way in recent years and I am proud to be a part of its revitalization and growth."

"There is no better way to experience New York in the summer than on our waterfront and harbor," said Senator Daniel Squadron. "The City of Water Day Festival takes us one step closer to a new harbor park—a central park for the center of our city. I'm proud to celebrate our world-class waterfront and ensure that it lives up to its full potential."

Biofuel for participating vessels will be provided for free by Metro Terminals, the largest marketer of biodiesel in the New York Metropolitan Area. "Biodiesel is a greener, cleaner alternative to traditional diesel that should be encouraged in all boats and ferries," said Gene V. Pullo, President of Metro Terminals. "We are proud to provide many of the historic tugs and safety boats with biodiesel which will make for cleaner fun for all on this special day and hopefully set a precedent for a cleaner, greener New York Harbor. I'd like to applaud Roland Lewis and the MWA for its continued advocacy of our waterways and cleaner energy."

For the first time, the day will include seven "City of Water Day in Your Neighborhood" events, including activities in Bronx River Park, Hudson River Park, Harlem River Park and Brooklyn Bridge Park, as well as Yonkers Paddling's circumnavigation of Manhattan by kayak and NYC Swim's Manhattan Island Marathon Swim Relay.

2010's City of Water Day Festival brought over 12,000 people to Governors Island and Liberty State Park to participate in dozens of exciting waterfront activities, while hundreds of thousands more heard the City of Water Day message through event media sponsors. Festival officials anticipate over 15,000 participants this year.

### **Festival Details**

The City of Water Day Festival takes place on Governors Island and in Liberty State Park from 10am to 4pm on Saturday, July 16, rain or shine. For all the details, visit [www.cityofwaterday.org](http://www.cityofwaterday.org).

### **Festival Partners and Sponsors**

The City of Water Day Festival is presented by the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance in collaboration with the Trust for Governors Island, the Governors Island Alliance, the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, and Friends of Liberty State Park. Festival sponsors include: Con Edison, Disney, Metro Energy, Entertainment Cruises and NY Waterway; as well as media sponsors WABC-TV and the Star-Ledger.

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### About the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance ([www.waterfrontalliance.org](http://www.waterfrontalliance.org))

The Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance works to transform the New York and New Jersey harbor and waterways to make them clean and accessible, a vibrant place to play, learn and work, with great parks, great jobs and great transportation for all.

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