The New York City Watershed Experience: A compelling example for the restoration and protection of water resources in their watershed context?

Keith S. Porter, LL.M
Director, NYS Water Resources Institute
Cornell University

Environment Seminar Series (CEE 601)
School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Cornell University

Abstract

Great gains have been made in wastewater management. Nevertheless, water resources throughout the US remain seriously degraded in quality. Nonpoint sources are the cause. The primary reason for the failing is the insistence on applying non-quantified technology standards in managing nonpoint sources. The New York City Watershed experience represents a highly visible counter example. This experience is showing that protecting water supplies at their source requires quantified water quality objectives for all sources in their watershed context. Watershed management has an errant history. The New York City Watershed experience constitutes a new paradigm. We now have the example of scientifically sound restoration and protection of a critical water resource through integrated watershed management. Can we meet the promise?

Further information on the Environment Seminar Series as well as a list of future speakers can be found at: http://ceeserver.cee.cornell.edu/eac20/cee601/

or contact Prof. Edwin (Todd) Cowen (eac20@cornell.edu).