



## PRESS STATEMENT



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### **Parks & Trails New York and the Alliance for New York State Parks Urge Restoration of State Park Funding in Assembly and Senate One House Budget Proposals**

Governor Cuomo's Parks 2020 initiative has reversed decades of underinvestment in our state parks, transforming New York's most cherished recreational, cultural and natural assets. Bathhouses and campgrounds are being repaired; water and electrical systems are being upgraded and new public amenities are being added. These long-overdue repairs and enhancements have been enthusiastically received by the public who are visiting these regional economic drivers at dramatically growing rates.

With all this success and public goodwill, we are disappointed that the Senate failed to include the next fiscal year's \$90 million installment of funding for the state park's capital program proposed by the governor and included in the Assembly's budget. This funding is critical to keep the exciting momentum going for our parks.

We applaud both the Senate and Assembly for providing \$300 million for the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). We are especially appreciative of restored funding provided for open space protection and funding for the Park and Trail Partnership Program grants for grassroots Friends groups. Funding for these programs will continue to complement the Parks 2020 initiative.

We are disappointed, however, that the Assembly's budget proposal reduces state land stewardship funding by 9.5 million, in contrast to the full \$28 million included by the governor and the Senate. This important EPF category is critical to improve access to the state's public lands, provide environmental stewardship education to the next generation, and protect vulnerable natural resources.

We are hopeful that these state park investments are restored in the next phase of final budget negotiations. The Legislature has historically been a steadfast partner in support of New York's tremendous system of state parks and historic sites. We look forward to a positive outcome wherein state park funding is fully restored for the 2016-17 fiscal year.

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