



NEWS RELEASE

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I Love My Park Day Celebrates New York's State Park System 8,000 Volunteers Pitch in at over 125 State Parks, Historic Sites and Public Lands

ALBANY, N.Y. – More than 125 New York State Parks, Historic Sites and public lands are hosting volunteer events today, Saturday, May 6, as part of the sixth annual I Love My Park Day. I Love My Park Day is a valuable statewide event that improves and enhances New York's state parks, historic sites and public lands while bringing visibility to the entire state park system and its needs. More than 8,000 volunteers are expected to pitch in on cleanup, improvement, and beautification projects.

New York State is a leader in parks and conservation because of a long history of stewardship and generosity of private citizens who believed in the importance of parks. With a surge in visitation to more than 69 million people annually, grassroots Friends groups and volunteers are more important than ever to keep parks beautiful, clean, and welcoming for all to visit and enjoy.

This year volunteers of all ages will work on 250 projects to help improve parks, historic sites and public lands. Projects range from general park cleanup and invasive species removal to beautification efforts such as flower and tree planting, weed removal, reseeding, painting, installation of benches and picnic tables, trail maintenance, and much more.

Robin Dropkin, Executive Director of Parks & Trails New York, said: "New York's park legacy is a responsibility handed down from one generation to the next. Through I Love My Park Day, New Yorkers are able to step up and do their part for their parks. Parks help us all stay healthy and active, and by working together we can make them even better."

I Love My Park Day is coordinated at the statewide level by Parks & Trails New York in partnership with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. At the park level, Friends groups and park staff oversee cleanup, improvement and beautification projects and work with volunteers.

I Love My Park Day would not be possible without the support of statewide sponsors and partners. AT&T, a top supporter of the event since its inception in 2012, has contributed a total of \$75,000 to support I Love My Park Day, including \$15,000 this year to assist with the beautifying of New York state

parks and trails. In addition, Con Edison, Brookfield Renewable Energy Group, and Harney & Sons Fine Teas continue their major support for I Love My Park Day, ensuring a positive experience for thousands of volunteers as they give back to their beloved parks.

I Love My Park Day is also supported by new and continued statewide partners and corporate and media sponsors including: America's Best Value Inn; Corning Incorporated; M&T Bank; Stantec Consulting Services; Nicholas & Lence Communications; GoGoSqueeze; National Baseball Hall of Fame; Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation; BBL Companies; L.L. Bean, Inc.; H2M architects + engineers; Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects PC; Buffalo News; Times Union; and Long Island.com.

"New Yorkers love their parks, and it's not a surprise that 'I Love My Park' Day has grown exponentially in size since its inception in 2012," said Marissa Shorenstein, president of AT&T New York. "AT&T salutes the good work of the thousands of volunteers who will pitch in at more than 125 parks across the state, cleaning beaches and shorelines, improving trails, painting fences, clearing debris and making parks more accessible."

For the fifth annual event last spring, 7,500 volunteers took part in more than 225 cleanup, improvement and beautification projects at 100 state parks and historic sites, contributing 18,750 hours of volunteer service.

For more information on I Love My Park Day and a complete list of participating locations and event contacts, visit <http://www.ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day/find-event>.

About Parks & Trails New York: Parks & Trails New York is the leading statewide advocate for parks and trails, dedicated since 1985 to improving the health and quality of life of all New Yorkers by working with community organizations and municipalities to envision, create, promote, and protect a growing network of parks, greenways and trails throughout the state for all to use and enjoy. For more information, visit www.ptny.org.

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