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## Speaking out for parks and trails

### Join us for Active Transportation Advocacy Day March 13

This is one Advocacy Day you won't want to miss!

Over breakfast we'll hear from Washington, D.C.-based [Transportation for America](#) on how to make the most of the new transportation bill, [MAP-21](#).

We'll meet with key state lawmakers to make the case for trails and community infrastructure that supports bicycling and walking.

We'll join with other trails and bike-ped advocates demonstrating a broad base of support as part of New Yorkers for Active Transportation.

[Register](#) by March 11. [Get more information](#).

## March 2013

[MAKE A DONATION](#)

[BECOME A MEMBER](#)

**Celebrating 25 years of  
advocacy for New York's  
parks and trails**

## TrailFinder Trail of the Month

Hurley O & W Trail



When the [Town of Hurley](#) in Ulster County developed its comprehensive plan in 2006, rail trails and bicycle paths received the highest community response, thanks in no small

## Park supporters gather at Capitol



Park supporters from across the state - including Friends group members, regional park commissioners, environmental advocates, and citizen activists - came to Albany for the 7th annual [Park Advocacy Day](#) on March 5. Event

co-sponsors Parks & Trails New York and the Alliance for New York State Parks kicked off the event at The University Club with special guests State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey, Senators Betty Little and Mark Grisanti, and Assemblymembers Kevin Cahill and Margaret Markey

Park supporters spent the rest of the day meeting with nearly 60 policymakers to urge support for parks, in particular the Governor's proposed [\\$90 million](#) for infrastructure needs at state parks and historic sites, [Pennies for Parks](#) legislation, and enhanced funding for the [Environmental Protection Fund](#). Thank you to everyone who joined us in Albany to be a part of these critical meetings.

Couldn't make it to Albany for Park Advocacy Day? You can still support state parks by contacting your state [Assemblymember](#) and [Senator](#) (see our [talking points](#)). Budget negotiations are happening now, so your calls are important in order to keep the momentum for parks going.

## Celebrating 20 years of the EPF

Parks & Trails New York joined with its [coalition partners](#) in the Friends of New York's Environment for EPF lobby day on March 6. The Environmental Protection Fund, which marks its 20th anniversary this year, supports programs that protect local parks and farms, support waterfront revitalization and trails, and much more - all while providing a \$7-\$1 return on investment for the state.



Governor Cuomo's proposed budget enhances the EPF by \$19 million, for a total of \$153 million, and represents the first step in realizing the shared vision of state leaders and the environmental community to continue to enhance the EPF in future years.

**Do you know a park or trail hero?  
Nominate them for a 2013 Park & Trail**

part to the 12.8-mile [O&W Rail Trail](#). Where the [Ontario & Western Railway](#) once rolled through farmland and forest in the Hudson Valley, cyclists, runners, and walkers have made their presence known. The trail was recently estimated to experience 80,000 annual uses along the paved section from the center of town.

For more information on this and other multi-use trails, visit PTNY's [TrailFinder](#).

## Bike NYS this summer

**Two fabulous bike tours - join us!**

### [Cycling the Erie Canal](#)

**July 7-14**

A 400-mile, eight-day tour along the legendary Erie Canal

- \* Great for all ages and abilities
- \* Nearly three-quarters on off-road Canalway trail

### [Cycling the Hudson Valley](#)

**July 30-August 4**

A 200-mile, six-day tour through the historic and picturesque Hudson Valley

- \* Five magnificent bridge crossings
- \* Historic riverfront mansions, museums, wineries, Manhattan

## Ride in style



You don't have to come along on one of PTNY's bike tours to ride in style in one of our newly

## Recognition Award

Parks & Trails New York is seeking nominations for its 2013 Park & Trail Recognition Awards. The awards recognize the leadership, creativity, and donation of time, talent, and materials behind many of New York's parks and trails.



Awards will be given in five categories. The Public Leadership, Volunteer Service, and Corporate Partnership Awards recognize contributions to planning, design, construction, stewardship, management, promotion, and/or public involvement for a park or trail project or program. The Get Outdoors Award celebrates efforts to promote increased physical activity through use of a park or trail. The open-ended Outside the Box Award recognizes unique and creative park or trail efforts.

[More information and a nomination form](#). The deadline for submitting nominations is March 26, 2013. Winners will be announced May 15, 2013.

## Give back to parks and trails

### Canal Clean Sweep - April 19-21

Celebrate Earth Day by joining the [dozens of events](#) and thousands of volunteers that have already committed to lend a hand to give the NYS Canal System and the Canalway Trail its [annual spring cleaning](#) April 19-21.



There is still time to [register](#) an event in your town or village. All events registered in the next week are guaranteed to receive free volunteer shirts, while supplies last!

Just want to volunteer? Contact [canalsweep@ptny.org](mailto:canalsweep@ptny.org) for volunteer opportunities near you.

*Photo caption: Five-year old Kenneth Sloper, Jr. helped Dad and other members of the Sons of the American Legion collect trash along the canal and trail in Medina during last year's Clean Sweep.*

### I Love My Park Day - May 4



designed bike jerseys. Order your [Cycling the Erie Canal](#) or [Cycling the Hudson Valley](#) jersey by June 1 to guarantee one in your size.

### Order your cycling guidebook today



Whether you are you joining us on one of this season's bike tours and want to plan ahead or want to plan a trip of your own, our [cycling guidebooks](#) are the place to start.

\* [Cycling the Erie Canal](#): A Guide to 400 Miles of Adventure and History Along the Erie Canalway Trail

\* [Cycling the Hudson Valley](#): A Guide to history, art and nature on both sides of the majestic Hudson River

### PTNY in the news

A SUNY scientist finds state parks are major [stewards of biodiversity](#), providing crucial habitat for rare animals, plants and ecosystems. PTNY Executive Director Robin Dropkin and our [You Gotta Have Friends](#) eNewsletter are quoted in this Schenectady *Daily Gazette* article.

### We're hiring: Development Director

Are you up to the challenge of working on a variety of fundraising initiatives? Then



Want to give back to parks? Then we've got the event for you.

More than 60 state parks and historic sites across New York are hosting volunteer events on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>

for the second-annual [I Love My Park Day](#). Join thousands of volunteers as we plant trees and flowers, clear trails, paint buildings and birdhouses, and clean up shorelines.

Online volunteer registration opens **March 20**. [Learn more](#) and [find a participating site near you](#).

*Photo caption: Volunteers helped spruce up Gantry Plaza State Park in Queens at the first-ever I Love My Park Day in 2012.*

## NYS Park Friends TAP application deadline approaching

Are you involved with a Friends group that works to promote and enhance one of New York's 214 state parks and historic sites? Are you interested in building the capacity of your organization? PTNY's new program for state park and historic site Friends groups can help.

The [NYS Park Friends Technical Assistance Program](#) will help build the capacity of Friends organizations by working one-on-one with organizations on areas such as communications, board development, and engaging and recruiting volunteers. [Applications](#) are due **March 15**. [Learn more](#).

## Thanks to our Green Partner: MVP Health Care



### [MVP Health Care](#)

is a nationally-recognized, not-for-profit health plan providing benefits to members for more than 30 years. With offices throughout New York, Vermont, and New

Hampshire, MVP is committed to having a positive impact on the health and wellness of the communities and individual members it serves.

The company conducts the [Generation Go](#) program to fight childhood obesity; promotes healthy competition and safety through its [Cycling Program](#); and sponsors events that encourage fitness, health education, and overall enhanced well being in communities throughout its service area.

you might be the perfect candidate for the Director of Development position at PTNY. Read the [job description](#).

### Welcome new staff



Rohan Parikh is excited to join Parks & Trails New York as Assistant Bike Tour Director. A grassroots organizer and community liaison for progressive candidates and elected officials, Rohan's academic and professional interests lie in how we design our cities and communities, especially with regard to race, class, and sustainability. Rohan is happiest searching for great places with a bicycle and a camera, around a campfire with a guitar and old friends, or at the movies with a bag of popcorn.

### You Gotta Have Friends

Have you read the latest issue of our newsletter for friends of the NYS park system? If not, you can check it out [here](#).

### Draft master plan hearing set for Palisades parks

A hearing will be held to listen to comments from the public concerning the [draft master plan](#) for [Rockland Lake](#), [Hook Mountain](#), [Nyack Beach](#) and [Haverstraw Beach](#) State Parks. It will be held on March 27 at 7:00 PM in the Championship Golf Course Clubhouse on Championship Road in Rockland Lake State Park, Congers, NY. Those unable to make the

MVP is "proud to partner this year with PTNY in support of the 2013 Cycling the Erie Canal bike tour," says MVP President and CEO Denise V. Gonick. "We welcome the opportunity to work together to help build the healthiest communities in the U.S."

## PTNY-- on the road to Grow the Grassroots

PTNY staff has been traveling the state to present awards to the recipients of this year's [Growing the Grassroots Grants](#).



### Friends of Schodack Island State Park

PTNY Executive Director, Robin Dropkin, presents an award of \$1,000 to the Friends of Schodack Island State Park to establish a new website and develop membership.

### Friends of Letchworth State Park

PTNY Director of Programs and Policy, Fran Gotcsik, presents an award of \$2,550 to the Friends of Letchworth State Park for display panels, logo designs, membership rack cards, and a printer to increase the organization's visibility, membership and financial support.

### Chestnut Ridge Conservancy

Chestnut Ridge Conservancy received \$1,500 toward design and printing of brochures/ newsletters to garner awareness and support for the organization and its effort to restore iconic infrastructure in one of the largest county parks in the United States.

### Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail, Inc.

meeting can provide [written comments](#) by April 10.

### Which federal programs fund bike and ped projects?

Check out this [handy table](#) by [Advocacy Advance](#) that indicates potential eligibility for pedestrian and bicycle projects under a wide variety of federal highway and transit programs

### Rail trail considered for Oneida

After winning a community foundation's online grant contest, the Oneida Improvement Committee's vision of a series of rail trails connecting some of the city's parks and landmarks is quickly gaining support. It is expected that the first trail segment will be open this summer, with the trail network being over ten miles long when completed. [Read more](#) about the efforts in Oneida.

### Fulton County set to complete FJ&G Rail Trail

Officials in Fulton County have given their approval to pursue the development of a five-mile gap in the Fulton Johnstown & Gloversville (FJ&G) Trail in the Town of Mayfield in the southern Adirondacks. Originally stalled by landowner opposition, this section of the 22-mile trail may now have the support needed for completion. [Read more](#) about Fulton County's efforts to complete the trail.

### Ask your Senators to support key federal conservation bill

A [new bill](#) that would establish permanent and dedicated funding for the [Land and Water Conservation Fund](#) (LWCF) was [introduced](#) in the Senate on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the original

Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail received \$1,600 toward production of a short video showcasing the beauty and benefits of the proposed 27-mile rail trail to be used in presentations as a key tool for major donor and partnership development.

## PTNY Growing the Grassroots grant leads to river group's dramatic fundraising success

A PTNY Growing the Grassroots grant helped the [Friends of the Chemung River Watershed](#) in the Southern Tier develop their fundraising skills, leading to some remarkable results. The group used the grant to hire a consultant who trained the organization's board and staff and advised them on solicitation letters and mailing list development.



As a result, in the last year the group raised \$12,327 and increased annual membership by 83%.

"We now have the knowledge, experience, and resources to expand and improve our fundraising goals which will allow us to better protect and maintain our waterways and riverside trails," said Jim Pffifer, Executive Director of the Friends of the Chemung River Watershed.

## In memoriam: trails visionary John F. Brown Jr., 85

The staff and Board of PTNY received with heavy hearts the news of the death of John Brown of Schenectady, age 85. A trails visionary and activist since the 1960's, John understood from the outset that a statewide trails network would bring a wide variety of benefits to New Yorkers, from protection of local natural habitats to enhancement of community health.



After receiving his Ph.D. from MIT, John worked at the General Electric Research Laboratory, now Global Technology Center,

LWCF bill. The LWCF fosters state, local, and regional conservation investments and has been essential to the creation of new parkland over the last half century. Ask [Senator Schumer](#) to sign on to S. 338 as co-sponsor, and be sure to thank [Senator Gillibrand](#) for co-sponsoring!

### Save the Dates!

#### Genesee Finger Lakes Active Transportation Summit - April 30

Join other active transportation advocates in the 9-county Finger Lakes region for a day of innovative speakers and dynamic educational sessions. Cost is \$50. For more information email [elizabethmurphy@flhsa.org](mailto:elizabethmurphy@flhsa.org)

#### Free conference: Community Partnerships to End Obesity Disparities - March 22 in Troy

Join with experts and advocates to share strategies, research, and success stories with others working to end obesity disparities and create strong and healthy communities across New York State. The conference is sponsored by the [Designing a Strong and Healthy New York Coalition](#) (DASH-NY) and cosponsored by PTNY. **There is no charge** but registration is required. [More information](#)

#### NYC receives grant to study wetlands post Sandy

NYC Parks received an EPA grant to study the health of New York City's salt marshes and their vulnerability to climate change. New York City is matching the grant. [Learn more.](#)

### Connect with us

Visit our [website](#)

in recent years focusing on environmental behavior, human health effects, and toxicology. His commitment to community trails resulted in the creation and enhanced maintenance of many local areas where residents can enjoy a connection with nature. He was deeply involved in designing and maintaining trails in the Schenectady Museum nature preserve, now a part of the Mohawk River State Park, and was honored by having these trails named for him.

A member of PTNY for more than 20 years, John has left an incredible legacy of trails and trail activism that will endure for generations to come. We convey our sincere condolences to his wife Eleanor, also a longtime community trails activist, and to his entire family.

## Upcoming Grants

### Public Lands Every Day Grants

[Public Lands Every Day](#) is accepting applications for its Every Day Capacity Building Grants, due **April 30, 2013**. For more details, click [here](#).

### Zoo, Botanical Garden, & Aquarium Grants

OPRHP's [Zoos, Botanical Gardens and Aquariums Program \(ZBGA\) grants](#) deadline is **April 1, 2013**. Municipalities and not-for-profit organizations which own, house or care for living or systematically organized collections of objects of natural origin and which primarily provide such services to the general public on a regular and predictable basis are eligible for this funding.

### Preserve New York grants available for historic structures and parks

[Preserve New York](#) funds are available to municipalities and nonprofits to undertake historic structure and landscape reports and cultural resource surveys that can aid preservation efforts in municipal parks and historic transportation corridors. Grants range between \$3,000 and \$10,000. Application deadline is **May 1, 2013**. Applicants must first discuss their potential project with the appropriate [Preservation League of NYS](#) staff.

### Bikes Belong Community Partnership Grants

[The Bikes Belong Coalition](#) welcomes grant applications from organizations and agencies within the United States that are committed to putting more people on bicycles more often. Fundable projects include paved bike paths, lanes, and rail-trails as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives. [Learn more and apply](#). **Applications are due May 24.**



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*Parks & Trails New York is a member of Earth Share New York, an alliance of leading nonprofit environmental organizations. For more information about workplace giving to Parks & Trails New York and Earth Share, check out [www.earthshareny.org](http://www.earthshareny.org).*

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