



# Annual Report 2011 and GreenSpace Spring 2012 Newsletter



Protecting New York's parks & trails  
from the ground up

[www.ptny.org](http://www.ptny.org)








“Joining  
Parks & Trails New York  
was our way of  
becoming New Yorkers.”

## Dear Friends of New York's Parks and Trails,

Thanks to the support of donors and members like you, in 2011 PTNY continued to be the “go-to” organization for the protection and promotion of New York’s incredible parks and trails.

Over this past year, we’ve had some good news from many sources – from the Governor’s office, the Legislature, and in cities, towns, and villages all over the state. We are celebrating the inclusion of capital funding for parks infrastructure in the state budget (see page 2); the grantees of our Growing the Grassroots capacity-building program are making regular gains in stewardship, membership, and influence (see page 4); and from Niagara to Montauk we see growing recognition of the enormous contributions of parks and trails to New York’s economy and New Yorkers’ health and quality of life.

It takes a strong statewide effort to achieve these results. Here are just a few examples:

-  With help and support from PTNY, hundreds of communities across New York are planning, building, and promoting local trails, linking schools, shops, and housing with a growing green network.
-  PTNY brought outdoor enthusiasts to Albany who helped persuade legislators to adopt Gov. Cuomo’s proposed allocation of \$89 million for desperately needed repairs to our state parks. The Legislature also passed two important bills which PTNY vigorously supported – protecting parks from fracking.
-  Working with state and federal officials, including Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, our Close the Gaps Campaign on behalf of the renowned 365-mile Erie Canalway Trail is moving this historic corridor ever closer to completion as the longest multi-use trail in the U.S.

We are building on this record in 2012: fighting for more funding for park and trail maintenance and restoration; promoting sustainable outdoor recreation, and strengthening the grassroots park and trail movements. We’ve developed these strategies to deal pro-actively with the new reality, that state and local governments are able to do less for parks and trails than they did just a few years ago.

We are extremely grateful for your generous support.  
We couldn’t do any of this without you.

David F. Shaffer  
Chair of the Board

Robin Dropkin  
Executive Director



# We're Helping to Build Trails Across New York

PTNY's Healthy Trails, Healthy People program is helping local trail Friends groups and municipalities envision, plan, and build community trails. These trails connect housing, schools, and shops with woodlands, canals, orchards, and other green, beautiful, and often historic areas.



For example, we are working with:

- the Kingston Land Trust to create a two-mile rail trail linking several low-income neighborhoods with the revitalized waterfront
- the Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail near Buffalo, advocating for the transformation of a 27-mile former rail corridor into a linear park for residents of Erie County

## PTNY Supports Adirondack Trail Group



PTNY is assisting Adirondack Recreational Trail Advocates (ARTA) to advance a 90-mile multi-use trail between Lake Placid and Tupper Lake that will pass through some of the most beautiful parts of the Adirondacks.

## Honoring New York's Pioneers of Environmental Law

On November 17, 2011, PTNY awarded its coveted George W. Perkins Award for environmental leadership to a select group of pioneers.



Honorary Chair  
Arthur Savage and our  
2011 Perkins Honorees  
(in alphabetical order):  
John Adams, Martin Baker,  
Al Butzel, Henry Diamond,  
Stephen Gordon, Pete Grannis,  
Drayton Grant, Robert  
Hallman, John Hanna Jr.,  
Ragna Henrichs, Robert Kafin,  
Stephen Kass, William Kissel,  
Alice Kryzan (not in photo),  
Langdon Marsh, Rosemary  
Nichols, David Paget,  
Gail Port, Daniel Riesel,  
Nicholas Robinson,  
Joel Sachs, and David Sive  
(not in photo)



# Parks Get Much-Needed Boost in Budget

The enacted 2013 state budget includes \$89 million for infrastructure improvements, including critical health and safety repairs, at 48 state parks and historic sites.

Thank you, Governor and Legislators, for making this smart investment in our state park system and recognizing the strong connection between economic vitality and outdoor recreational opportunities. It's a great first step on the way to funding the almost \$1 billion backlog of state parks infrastructure needs.

And thank you, park supporters, for making your voices heard.



## PTNY is Honored



New York League of Conservation Voters President Marcia Bystryn (left) presents award to PTNY Executive Director Robin Dropkin.

PTNY was honored by the New York League of Conservation Voters at the 2012 Capital District Chapter Eco-Breakfast on March 1 in Albany for our more than quarter-century of advocacy for New York's parks and trails. Also honored was Brookfield Renewable Energy Partners. Special guests included Lieutenant Governor Bob Duffy, State Senator Mark Grisanti, and Assemblyman Robert K. Sweeney. We are proud to be recognized by the League.

## Park Advocacy Day in Albany

Park supporters from across New York came to Albany on March 6 for Park Advocacy Day, meeting with policymakers to urge funding for critical park infrastructure improvements. More than 50 grassroots advocates met with key Senators and Assembly members on both sides of the aisle.

Joining us for the welcome at PTNY's offices were Senator Betty Little, Chair of the Senate committee that oversees parks, and State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey.

## First Niagara Teams Up with PTNY on Cycling the Erie Canal



PTNY welcomes the official bank sponsor of our 2012 Erie Canal bike tour – First Niagara Bank Foundation. The tour, July 8-15, 2012, is an eight-day ride from Buffalo to Albany along the legendary Erie Canal. "We look forward to cheering on the riders from our more than 200 branches across the state," said Elizabeth Gurney, Executive Director of the Foundation.

Other sponsors of CTEC 2012 include the NYS Canal Corporation, Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, Brookfield Renewable Energy Partners, and Wegmans.

To learn more about our Erie Canal (and Hudson Valley) bike tours, visit [www.ptny.org](http://www.ptny.org).

## Welcome New Board Member Elaine Tack

Elaine is a media consultant with experience as a reporter, anchor, and video journalist. An avid sportswoman (skiing, biking, kayaking), she is also active with the Thousand Islands Land Trust.



# First Ever I Love My Park Day A Great Success!

On Saturday, May 5, thousands of volunteers, including Governor Cuomo, turned out to clean up park lands and beaches, plant trees and flowers, restore trails and wildlife habitat, and carry out site improvement projects at more than 40 state parks across New York.



Photo Credit: Alison Lynch

PTNY, in collaboration with the state parks agency, coordinated the event at the statewide level, with improvement and beautification projects organized by local state park and historic site Friends groups and park staff.

“New York’s state park system is a treasured asset,” Governor Cuomo said. “I am thrilled that so many New Yorkers came out to help get our parks ready for summer. I Love My Park Day will hopefully become a New York State tradition for New Yorkers to build community, have some fun, get to know their neighbors a little bit better, all the while helping clean up our parks.”



Visit the I Love My Park Day website at [www.ptny.org/ILoveMyPark](http://www.ptny.org/ILoveMyPark) to see photos of events at a park near you.

## Progress in Completing the Canalway Trail

A new report from PTNY and the Canalway Trails Association New York (CTANY), *Closing the Gaps: A Progress Report on the Erie Canalway Trail*, cites the progress being made to close the five remaining gaps in the 365-mile Erie Canalway Trail connecting Albany and Buffalo.

The report notes that PTNY’s campaign to “Close the Gaps,” endorsed by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand in the fall of 2010, has generated dramatically renewed interest in completing the trail among citizens, community leaders, and elected officials at all levels of government. Roundtables in Syracuse, Lockport, Utica, and Clyde have spurred the creation of local working groups focused on discovering “out of the box” solutions to the unique challenges associated with each gap.

Meanwhile, more and more people are flocking to the Canalway Trail. The 2011 Canalway Trail Count demonstrated record-setting visitation on the Erie County section of trail in Tonawanda —605,000 annual users.

Find the *Who’s on the Canalway Trail* and *Closing the Gaps* reports on the PTNY website at [www.ptny.org/publications](http://www.ptny.org/publications).



## Two Great Losses:

Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff, 81, and Francis H. Cabot, 86

We sadly note the recent passing of two giants of environmental conservation.

Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff, a long-standing PTNY Advisory Council member, was a tremendously influential force for environmental protection at the federal, state, and local levels, as well as in the nonprofit sector.

Frank Cabot, husband of long-time PTNY supporter and Advisory Council member Anne Perkins Cabot, created two of the most celebrated gardens in North America and helped preserve scores of others as founder of the Garden Conservancy.

# PTNY is Growing the Grassroots

PTNY's capacity building program has a new name and logo. Growing the Grassroots is a unique program that provides small grants and ongoing technical assistance to help grassroots park and trail groups become stronger and more effective stewards of New York's parks and trails.

A small investment makes a big difference. For example, with a PTNY capacity-building grant:

- The Brooklyn Greenway Initiative upgraded its website and created a new brochure, adding 1700 names to its database and doubling its membership
- The Friends of Fahnestock and Hudson Highlands State Parks created a new website, launched an e-marketing effort, and added 350 new members and 65 volunteers
- The Concerned Citizens of Montauk, conservation and habitat preservation advocates in Suffolk County, are creating Spanish language flyers to engage the local Latino community, with the goal of diversifying membership



## Ways to Give Visit [www.ptny.org](http://www.ptny.org) to learn more.

- **Become a member of Parks & Trails New York or make a donation**, online or by phone or mail
- **Double your donation** by sending us your employer's matching gift form
- **Remember Parks & Trails New York in your will**
- **Give at the office** via Earth Share New York
- **Get involved** – join us on Advocacy Days, participate in our trails and parks coalitions, and **help make New York greener, today and tomorrow**

## We are accountable to you!

Thanks to the generosity of our members and donors, in 2011 PTNY was able to do even more to protect and nurture New York's green network of parks and trails. Thank you!

### Financial Statement

Statement of Activities for the year ended June 30, 2011

#### Support and Revenue

|                                  |                     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Individual contributions         | \$ 225,046          |
| Grants                           | 788,527             |
| Corporate contributions          | 36,615              |
| Special events                   | 25,515              |
| Program revenue                  | 319,914             |
| Other                            | 2,536               |
| <b>Total support and revenue</b> | <b>\$ 1,398,153</b> |

#### Expenses

|                               |                     |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Program services              |                     |
| Conservation                  | \$ 855,492          |
| Public education              | 165,578             |
| Membership                    | 110,386             |
| <b>Total program services</b> | <b>\$ 1,131,456</b> |

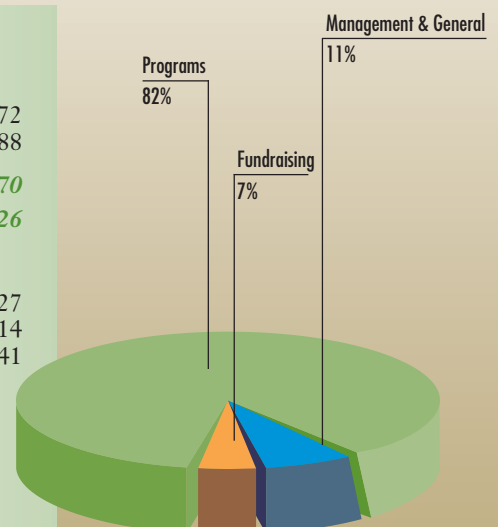
#### Expenses (continued)

|                                  |                     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Supporting services              |                     |
| Management and general           | \$ 151,872          |
| Fundraising                      | 96,588              |
| <b>Total supporting services</b> | <b>\$ 248,370</b>   |
| <b>Total expenses</b>            | <b>\$ 1,379,826</b> |

#### Net Assets

|                                   |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Change in net assets              | 18,327     |
| Net assets, beginning of year     | 877,514    |
| Net assets (deficit), end of year | \$ 895,841 |

*A copy of our most recent audited financial statement is available upon request to Parks & Trails New York*



Source: PTNY FY10 Audited Financial Statement



# Thank You Members and Donors

*Gifts of \$100 or more*

Parks & Trails New York is deeply grateful to the members and donors whose gifts of \$1 to \$99 also made our work possible.

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