

Canal Corp., Parks&Trails NY, & Erie Canalway Nat'l Heritage Corridor Announce Bicyclists Bring Business Guide

Guide is a Resource for Canal Communities to Attract Bicyclists

by New York State Canal Corporation

ALBANY, NY (04/23/2010)(readMedia)-- The New York State Canal Corporation, Parks & Trails New York and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor today announced the availability of Bicyclists Bring Business: A Guide for Attracting Bicyclists to New York's Canal Communities. The Bicyclists Bring Business guide focuses on how to attract and profit from the growing number of bicycle tourists along the Erie Canalway Trail. Local business people, elected officials, Chambers of Commerce, Tourism Promotion Agencies, and bicycling enthusiasts will all find the new guide book interesting and helpful.

Governor David A. Paterson said, "The Canalway Trail crosses much of Upstate New York and offers recreational and tourism opportunities to residents and visitors alike. This Bicyclists Bring Business guide will allow the hundreds of communities linked to the trail to attract more bicyclists and, in turn, increase economic development."

Carmella R. Mantello, Director of the New York State Canal Corporation, said, "The Erie Canalway Trail offers extensive close to home recreational opportunities and serves as a destination for long-distance bicycling and hiking tourism with linkages to local communities and attractions along the way. The Canal Corporation is proud to have been a part in the development of this new guide that will help local communities and businesses benefit from the Canalway Trail."

Robin Dropkin, Executive Director of Parks & Trails New York, said, "Through the Bicyclists Bring Business guide, we want to help area businesses and communities attract bicyclists and outdoor enthusiasts and thereby increase their share of tourism dollars."

Beth Sciumeca, Executive Director of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, said, "What makes the Erie Canalway Trail so great is not just the experience of cycling through American history, but the ability to explore so many authentic canal communities along the way. This guide makes it easier for communities and businesses to put out the welcome mat for bicyclists-for the benefit of both."

The 365-mile Erie Canalway Trail follows both active and historic sections of the Erie Canal between Buffalo and Albany. More than three-quarters of the trail is off road and at specific locations attracts an estimated 100,000 to 200,000 cyclists for day trips and multi-day excursions each year.

With the combination of the waterway, the Canalway Trail, and an extensive number of attractions, the National Heritage Corridor is becoming increasingly attractive to those wishing to enjoy a cycling vacation in Upstate New York. The Bicyclists Bring Business guide sets forth strategies for enhancing the appeal of communities and businesses along the Canalway Trail to bicycle tourists.

The guide points to studies that show:

- Bicycling is now the third most common vacation activity
- Bicycle tourists are, on average, well educated older adults from upper income households who typically travel in groups of friends or family members.
- Bicycle tourists spend money. Those who take long, multi-day bicycling vacations spend between \$100 and \$300 per day on food lodging and other items.
- Bicycle tourists will travel further to bike on a multi-use trail or low traffic road than to use roads.

To download a complete copy of the Bicyclists Bring Business: A Guide for Attracting Bicyclists to New York's

Canal Communities, please visit Parks and Trails New York's website at

www.ptny.org/publications/index.shtml

The New York State Canal System is comprised of four historic waterways, the Erie, the Champlain, the Oswego and the Cayuga-Seneca Canals. Spanning 524 miles across New York State, the waterway links the Hudson River, Lake Champlain, Lake Ontario, the Finger Lakes and the Niagara River with communities rich in history and culture. When complete, the New York State Canalway Trail System will span more than 500 miles and connect numerous cities, towns, and villages along the Erie, Cayuga-Seneca, Oswego, and Champlain Canals, making it one of the longest multi-use recreational trails in the country.

The New York State Canal Corporation is a subsidiary of the New York State Thruway Authority (Authority). Since 1992, following State legislation transferring the Canal System from the New York State Department of Transportation to the Authority, Canal operating and maintenance activities have been supported by Thruway toll revenue.

For more information regarding events, recreational and vacation opportunities along the Canal System, please visit

www.nyscanals.gov

or call 1-800-4CANAL4.

Parks & Trails New York is the only statewide nonprofit organization working to expand, protect and promote a network of parks, trails and open space across New York State for all to enjoy. Its work includes advocacy, outreach, technical assistance to communities, bicycle tourism promotion, and bicycle tours such as Cycling the Erie Canal. For more information on Parks & Trails New York, please visit

www.ptny.org

The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor is one of 49 National Heritage Areas in the nation. For information visit

www.eriecanalway.org

The New York State Thruway Authority/Canal Corporation offers a free email service called TRANSalert to its customers via email or text messaging to inform them of major incidents and emergencies that may affect travel on the Thruway or navigation on the Canal System. To sign up for the Canal TRANSalert service, customers can visit the Corporation's website at

www.nyscanals.gov/tas/

To sign-up for Thruway TRANSalerts please visit the Authority's website at

www.nysthruway.gov/tas/

Motorists are encouraged to check their alerts prior to traveling.

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