2014 was an exciting year for the Erie Canalway Trail. Several important trail segments were constructed and a new project was launched that will help complete a major gap in the western part of the state. Federal funding was also obtained to complete a new trail segment in the Mohawk Valley. The New York State Canal Corporation led the Erie Canalway Trail development effort, constructing projects in Monroe, Wayne, and Oneida Counties.

Work completed in 2014

Between Pittsford and Fairport, upgrades to eight miles of existing Erie Canalway Trail were completed in September. The stone dust and asphalt trail surfaces were widened and rehabilitated, retaining walls were constructed and new directional and informational signage was installed.

In Rome, a new three-mile Erie Canalway Trail segment was completed in November, narrowing the Erie Canalway Trail gap in that city. A 10-foot wide asphalt trail was constructed, and a connection to Rome’s Canal waterfront facilities was established. The two projects were funded with $4.1 million from the Transportation Bond Act, approved by New York voters in 2005.

In a separate $2.72 million project, 420 feet of existing stone wall along the northern side of the canal in Fairport was replaced with soldier piles and precast concrete panels to create a safer and more stable structure for boaters to tile up alongside. A one-half mile portion of the Erie Canalway Trail from Parker Street to Cobbs Lane was also reconstructed. The work was completed in early 2014.

“I am extremely pleased with the progress that was made on developing the Erie Canalway Trail in 2014,” said Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton. “The Erie Canal and Erie Canalway Trail have proven to be economic engines for New York. Under Governor Cuomo we have made significant progress in ‘closing the gaps’ in the Erie Canalway Trail.”

In November, dozens of people braved heavy rain to attend a ribbon cutting and a dedication, hosted by the Wayne County Town of Arcadia, for a restored Erie Canalway Trail underpass and new Canal park at Whitbeck Road. The underpass had previously been closed, which required trail users to cross Whitbeck Road at-grade. Canal Corporation and Town of Arcadia crews worked in partnership to complete the improvements which consisted of grading and site work, placing rip rap to widen the canal embankment for the trail, installing several hundred feet of wood safety railing along the edge of the trail, and

(Continued on page 7)
Although no new miles of Champlain Canalway Trail were constructed in 2014 it was still a year of significant progress. An expanded and enthusiastic Champlain Canalway Trail Working Group combined with committed local governments to help lay the foundations for future construction of more than 10 miles of new trail.

The catalyst for 2014’s effort came at the end of 2013 with the opening of the historic Dix Bridge for pedestrian, bicycle, and snowmobile use. The completion of this pivotal project, after years of effort following its closure in 1996, established the essential Hudson River crossing needed to link Washington and Saratoga Counties and set the stage for an impressive list of 2014 successes, including:

• The Town of Saratoga received a $368,000 Federal Lands Access Program grant to fund design and construction of approximately 1.5 miles of trail along the historic canal towpath south of Schuylerville.
• The NYS Canal Corporation continued with design of approximately four miles of new trail between Kingsbury and Fort Ann.
• Lakes to Locks Passage compiled the needed local match for a previously received federal Scenic Byways grant that will enable the design of a total of two miles of trail in Waterford and Halfmoon.
• The Washington County towns of Greenwich and Fort Edward and the Town of Saratoga and Stillwater in Saratoga County designated their respective parts of River Road as interim routes for the trail.
• The Town of Stillwater received funding from the Canal Corporation and State Parks to extend an existing trail in Saratoga southward for 1.13 miles to the Saratoga National Historical Park.
• More than 50 bicyclists, including NYS Canal Corporation Director Brian Stratton, participated in the 3rd annual Champlain Canalway Trail Bike Tour to explore parts of the emerging trail corridor in Stillwater, Mechanicville, and Saratoga.

The Champlain Canalway Trail will follow the old and current Champlain Canal for 58 miles from Lake Champlain at Whitehall to the Mohawk River and Erie Canal at Waterford. With these and other accomplishments, the years ahead promise major advances in getting the trail fully complete. To stay current on Champlain Canalway Trail progress, like their Facebook page at Champlain Canalway Trail.
Eleven upstate communities will receive a total of $955,343 in grants from the Canal Corporation as part of the $709.2 million in awards that Governor Andrew M. Cuomo’s Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) recently announced to foster economic development across New York State. “The significant funding will offer valuable opportunities for upstate canal communities to continue improving and developing the Canal system and the Canalway Trail,” said New York State Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton. “I would like to thank Governor Cuomo and the Regional Economic Development Councils for ensuring support for these treasured projects to continue strengthening New York’s economy while promoting and encouraging tourism to the state’s most distinguished and resourceful assets.”

The Canal Corporation awards will support the following projects:

- **Waterford Canal Harbor Visitor Center** — $71,400 for dock and promenade repairs
- **Schenectady County** — $75,000 to repave approximately 1.25 miles of the Mohawk Hudson Bike Trail/Erie Canalway Trail in the Town of Rotterdam
- **Town of Rotterdam** — $150,000 for a 105-foot trail tunnel under an existing railway that will eliminate a critical gap in the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail/Erie Canalway Trail
- **Town of Stillwater** — $98,943 for a 1.13-mile Champlain Canal connector between Saratoga National Park and Wilbur Road in the Town of Saratoga
- **City of Rome** — $125,000 for Canal Park Navigation Center improvements
- **City of Syracuse** — $45,000 for Canalway Trail route signage to designate the currently unsigned route of the Erie Canalway Trail within the city
- **Village of Montour Falls** — $30,000 for a trail connection project that includes a pedestrian bridge over Catharine Creek
- **Seneca Falls Center for Great Women** — $150,000 for renovations to the historic Seneca Knitting Mill
- **Fairport IDA** — $50,000 for the expansion of the Thomas Creek Wetland Walk, connecting the Erie Canalway Trail
- **Village of Pittsford** — $50,000 for construction of a Bicentennial Pavilion at Schoen Place
- **Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper** — $150,000 for the Scajaquada Creek Paddlesport Launch Micro-Park in the City of Buffalo’s Black Rock neighborhood.
Canalway Trail volunteers prove that in New York a trail isn’t just a trail, but a resource that brings communities together and helps visitors connect with people and places along the route. About 50 groups of Trail Adopters performed regular maintenance throughout the 2014 season to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for the public.

For one Adopt-a-Trail group, Friends of Great Bear Recreation Area, flooding in 2014 forced members to use innovative means to tend to their adopted trail sections on the Oswego Canal. When the trails became too difficult to navigate by land, the group took to water and transported lumber and other materials by canoe to allow them to add more than 70 feet of new boardwalk to their trail system.

Others, not content to confine their contribution to the Canalway Trail to one location, serve as Trail Ambassadors in Rochester and the Capital Region. In 2014, these individuals spent hundreds of hours and rode thousands of miles while patrolling the trail on bicycles and greeting and assisting trail users.

Dave Valvo, a long-time Rochester-area Ambassador, was awarded the 2014 Canalway Trail Tender award by the Canal Corporation during the NYS Canal Conference in Geneva in September in recognition of all the miles he logs on the trail – more than 1,800 miles in 2014!

To become a Trail Adopter and/or Trail Ambassador, contact Parks & Trails New York at canaltrail@ptny.org. The Adopt-a-Trail program offers great service opportunities for school and scout groups and helps civic organizations and local businesses demonstrate pride in their community. The Trail Ambassador program is a perfect opportunity for seasoned trail users to share their experiences – while enjoying the Canalway Trail themselves!
Counts have been conducted by volunteers along the Canalway Trail System for almost a decade. Most of the efforts have focused on the Erie Canalway Trail (ECT) where since 2007 the count data has been used to project annual estimates of trail visitation at 25 locations. With the 2014 addition of annual trail traffic volume estimates of 208,500 persons in the City of Tonawanda in Western New York, 52,991 persons in the Village of Chittenango and 8,063 persons near the City of Oneida in Central New York, a clearer picture of trail use is emerging.

While trail use varies widely, the most heavily used sections of ECT are those located near large urban centers, such as Niawanda Park in Tonawanda north of Buffalo, Camillus’ Sims Store outside of Syracuse, Schoen Place near Rochester, and the Corning Preserve in Albany.

Volunteers conducting observational counts also record the type of trail traveler (cyclist, walker, jogger, etc.) and whether cyclists are wearing a helmet. The results from 2014 in Central New York show cyclists edging out walkers and joggers in terms of share of users, 53% to 45%. This is a departure from the results of the last four years in which walkers were the dominant trail user.

The 2014 survey results also showed high rates of helmet usage, about 72%. Observed helmet usage rates have varied by year and count location, but, overall, about 60% of Canalway Trail cyclists wear helmets, which exceeds the national average of 50% helmet use.

“The economic impact study estimated that the ECT receives almost 1.6 million visits per year but we are eager to obtain more data points from those areas not surveyed for the study. That is what makes the results from 2014 so important. While annual visits to the trail were low at the Chittenango and Oneida locations, this data is important as it gives us a better idea of what the trail traffic volume may be like in other more rural areas where we do not have a significant amount of information at present. It also helps creates a baseline from which communities can measure the impact of their future trail promotion efforts,” said Frances Gotcsik, PTNY Director of Programs and Policy.

Trail counts help to justify existing financial support and encourage new funding for trail development. Count data can also spur local involvement in trail maintenance and promotion by helping communities more fully grasp the impact that the state-wide trail system has on the local economy and way of life.

### Estimated annual trail traffic volume at selected ECT locations, 2008 - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location and Year</th>
<th>Estimated Annual Traffic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lake Road, Oneida, Oneida County, 2014</td>
<td>8,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centerport, Brutus, Cayuga County, 2010</td>
<td>19,453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albion Canal Park, Albion, Orleans County, 2013</td>
<td>31,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widewaters, Lockport, Niagara County, 2012*</td>
<td>46,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeport Road, Chittenango, Oneida County, 2014</td>
<td>52,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village of Fort Plain, Montgomery County, 2012*</td>
<td>68,983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Street Bridge, Brockport, Monroe County, 2013</td>
<td>72,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonie Town Park, Albany County, 2009</td>
<td>95,471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schenectady Community College, Schenectady County, 2009</td>
<td>105,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honeoye Falls Lake Eugenia, Greece, Monroe County, 2011</td>
<td>107,143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train Station, Niskayuna, Schenectady County, 2012</td>
<td>178,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoen Place, Pittsford, Monroe County, 2008</td>
<td>184,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sims Store, Camillus, Onondaga County, 2011</td>
<td>207,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niawanda Park, Tonawanda, Erie County, 2014</td>
<td>208,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corning Preserve, City of Albany, Albany County, 2012*</td>
<td>240,782</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*counts obtained as part of 2012 economic impact study
Locktoberfest Kick-Off and Unveiling of Restored Flight of Five Locks in Lockport

The New York State Canal Corporation and the City of Lockport kicked-off Locktoberfest weekend by unveiling the newly restored Enlarged Erie Canal Locks 69 and 70 at a rededication ceremony held on October 3, 2014.

The $2.6 million restoration of Locks 69 and 70, recently finished by Hohl Industrial of Tonawanda, completed Phase I of the Lockport Flight of Five restoration project. The original locks were built between 1836 and 1847 as two sets of five flights of locks (one eastbound on the southern side, one westbound on the northern side) and were considered to be an engineering triumph. However, when the construction of the Barge Canal – the current Erie Canal – began in 1905, it required the southern Flight of Five to be demolished and replaced with the two enlarged electrically powered Locks E-34 and E-35, which are still in use today. The northern Flight of Five were left intact and are now being restored in efforts to give visitors the opportunity to experience and admire an iconic piece of the historic Erie Canal.

Unique learning experience for canal visitors

“The Erie Canal played an integral role in the history of New York State as well as the nation and continues to remain a valuable resource for millions of New Yorkers,” said Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton. “The lock restoration project will enable visitors to view the overall operations of America’s most influential waterway from both a modern and historical perspective.”

Lockport is now the only location in the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor where historic manual and current electrical operations of canal lock technology can be viewed side by side. These renovations will help to further learning experiences for visitors who value the foundations of the Canal system and its impact on New York State throughout history.

A large crowd was on hand to watch water pour through two newly restored locks of Lockport’s original mid-19th century Flight of Five.

Lock dedication launches Locktoberfest

The celebration continued on Saturday, October 4, as the Canal Corporation and City of Lockport partnered with the Lockport Locks Heritage District Corporation, Lockport Main Street, I Love NY, and Taste NY, in collaboration with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, to host the first annual Locktoberfest, an all-day, family friendly festival filled with music, art, craft beer and wine-tastings, and a community market. The event was a great success, attracting approximately 2,000 people to Lockport and the Erie Canal.

“It was great to partner with the Canal Corporation, I Love NY, and Taste NY on this fantastic event highlighting the past, present and future of the Erie Canal in Lockport,” said Lockport Mayor Anne E. McCaffery. “I look forward to establishing Locktoberfest as an annual celebration of how the Canal continually shapes commerce and development. Lockport is the ideal location for such a celebration, and I’m proud to showcase our city, our heritage and the Flight of Five locks.”

The Canal system already supports nearly $380 million in tourism based economic activity and $6.2 billion in other economic activity annually and those numbers are expected to grow with the expansion of events like Locktoberfest and the restoration of historic sites like the Flight of Five. The NY State Canal Corporation is hopeful that Locktoberfest will evolve into an annual, state-canal system-wide event.
2014 Marks Year of Erie Canalway Trail Progress

(Continued from page 1)
paving several hundred feet of the trail and a new parking area. “This successful partnership represents the positive results that can be achieved when local and state government work together to better a community,” said Town of Arcadia Supervisor Richard Colacino.

Work on Lockport to Amherst gap begins in 2015

Also in November, bids were opened for Phase One of the eight-mile Lockport to Amherst Erie Canalway Trail segment. The project will construct a five-mile portion of new asphalt trail from Lockport to Fisk-Fiegle Road in Pendleton and a new 180-foot pedestrian bridge over Tonawanda Creek at the Amherst town line. Work is expected to be complete in November, 2015. The low bidder was Keeler Construction Company, Inc., of Albion New York at a cost of $4,068,107. Phase Two, which will complete this gap segment, is planned for construction in 2016.

Funding awards set stage for more construction in 2016

Over the course of 2014, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced federal funding awards that will help close two Erie Canalway Trail gaps in the Mohawk Valley. In January, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation received $980,000 in federal Transportation Enhancement Funds to complete an important four-mile trail segment between Pattersonville and Amsterdam. In October, the Canal Corporation received a $985,000 federal Transportation Alternatives grant to construct a new two-mile Erie Canalway Trail segment between the Fort Herkimer Church and Erie Canal Lock 18 in Herkimer County, which will link to an existing two-mile Erie Canalway Tail segment in the Town of German Flatts. Construction of these projects is expected to begin in 2016.

Under Governor Cuomo’s administration, the New York State Canal Corporation, along with other New York State agencies, since 2011 has proactively moved forward to plan, begin and complete projects for approximately 20 new miles of the Erie Canalway Trail across New York.

A portion of the new Erie Canalway Trail in Rome runs adjacent to local roadways.

The rehabilitated Pittsford to Fairport Erie Canalway Trail provides access to businesses which cater to trail users.

The new Harder Park trailhead and Erie Canalway Trail underpass at Whitbeck Road in Arcadia was constructed by Town of Arcadia and Canal Corporation crews.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**APRIL 17 - 19, 2015**

Join us in giving the Canalway Trail a proper spring cleaning in preparation for the 2015 season!

Let’s top last year’s numbers:

- 3,000 volunteers
- 150 groups
- 105 locations

Registration opens January, 2015

For more information, email canalsweep@ptny.org or call 518-434-1583.
Make this the year! JOIN US!
Cycle the Erie Canal 2015
July 12-19
Registration opens January 5
www.ptny.org

There has never been a better time to think about joining Parks & Trails New York’s Cycle the Erie Canal bike tour! Now in its 17th year, Cycle the Erie Canal (CTEC) offers riders of all ages and abilities from across the country and around the world an unparalleled opportunity to bike across New York State and experience the rich history of the legendary canal that helped transform America.

New changes for 2015 will make joining the fully-supported eight-day, 400-mile ride even easier. With so much to do along the Erie Canalway Trail, riders will now be able to plan in advance how to take in the best of Upstate New York long before the tour begins. When registration opens on January 5, 2015, daily routes will be available online at the PTNY website and for export to GPS-enabled bike computers and fitness devices.

Also new this year, riders from Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Toronto, and points west will be able to drive directly to the start in Buffalo and take advantage of the new return shuttle bus from Albany to Buffalo at the end of the ride. And, those who cannot devote a full week to participate in the entire trip can take advantage of the new four-day ride options from Buffalo to Syracuse and Syracuse to Albany. You’ll be halfway to becoming an Erie Canalway Trail End-to-End!

For more information on Cycle the Erie Canal, visit ptny.org/canaltour or call Parks & Trails New York at (518) 434-1583.