

PARKS & TRAILS NEW YORK 2010 COMMUNITY TRAIL AND GREENWAY AWARDS

PUBLIC LEADERSHIP AWARD



The award recognizes agencies or local, county, state, or federal governmental entities or their employee(s) that have made significant and sustained contributions to a trail project.

New York City Department of Parks & Recreation's Queens Borough Commissioner Dorothy Lewandowski and her assistant Velma Segars first had a vision and then the courage to take took a bold step forward to create the first water trail in New York City.

In nominating Commissioner Lewandowski and Velma Segars for the award Nancy Brous of the NYC Water Trail Association stated that "Shepherding this project through the bureaucracy of New York City politics should in itself be enough for the award, because "While it sounds easy to say "Let's create a water trail" the logistics of actually doing it are quite daunting."

Commissioner Lewandowski first had to convince the NYC Parks Department that there was actually a need for a water trail. Then she had to get them to agree that it should be under Parks guidance and obtain a budget for the undertaking. Next, it was necessary to garner support from the human-powered boaters and related organizations, get these diverse groups to work together, and do the legwork required to create and maintain the trail. Lastly, they had to work with the local boating community to create the actual water trail map, publicize it, and encourage the public to use it – all in addition to their regular duties managing the parks in Queens.

Today the New York City water trail represents a growing collection of 40 sites in the City's five boroughs where kayakers, canoeists, rowers, and sailors have direct access to the waterfront connecting them to 160 square miles of rivers, bays, creeks, inlets and ocean.

For the vision and tenacity and courage to create, map, and promote the first water trail in New York City, Parks & Trails New York honors Queens Borough Commissioner Dorothy Lewandowski and her Assistant Velma Segars with its Public Leadership Award.