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PTNY Growing the Grassroots grants available for park and trail groups

Parks & Trails New York is offering a new round of [Growing the Grassroots Capacity Building Grants](#) for park and trail groups. The grants, of up to \$3,000, are designed to strengthen not-for-profit organizations that are working to build and protect parks and trails in communities across the state. Funds can be used to assist with activities associated with organizational start-up and development, training, communications, and volunteer recruitment and management.

PTNY leads fight for state's bike-ped funding

PTNY is continuing its efforts to ensure that NYS directs the full measure of its federal MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives (TA) funding to trails, bike paths, complete streets, safe routes to school, and other bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure that supports active transportation. Recent advocacy efforts include:

- In a [press release](#) distributed statewide on October 1, PTNY, in conjunction with the [New York Bicycling Coalition](#) and [Tri-State Transportation Campaign](#), reminded New Yorkers that the new federal transportation law will mean a decrease in overall funding for bike/ped accommodations by 30% and give the state the authority to transfer up to half of these remaining TA funds (approximately \$12 million) to highways and bridges.
- During a recent meeting with key NYSDOT officials, PTNY learned that it may be 18 months before guidelines are finalized for administering a statewide competitive program for awarding TA funds for trails and bicycle and pedestrian projects.
- At the same meeting, PTNY emphasized the need for public input to the development of guidelines for the new TA funding program and urged NYSDOT to reconstitute the statewide bicycle-pedestrian advisory committee as a means to gather input and disseminate information.

Stay informed and involved

OCTOBER 2012

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

TrailFinder Trail of the Month

Cato-Fairhaven Trail and Hojack Rail Trail



This October, take a stroll along the Cato-Fair Haven Trail in Cayuga County and breathe in the crisp, cool air. This 14.5-mile trail, which connects the towns of Cato and Fair Haven, also intersects with the 8.3-mile Hojack Rail Trail. Both trails are maintained by [Cayuga County Parks and Trails](#) and have natural surfaces which

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and our national partners have been hosting webinars and preparing other materials designed to help everyone better understand and advocate for the optimal inclusion of trail and bike/ped funding. Resources include:

- [Navigating MAP-21: Transportation Alternatives Advocacy Tool Kit](#)
- [Webinar - Maximizing Eligibility for Bicycling and Walking Projects under MAP-21](#)
- [FHWA MAP-21 informational webinars](#)
- [FHWA guidance documents, Q&A etc.](#)

Two communities receive funding from PTNY for trail projects

Two of PTNY's [Healthy Trails, Healthy People](#) projects have been selected to receive funding to advance their trail promotion efforts.

In the Cayuga County town of Montezuma in central New York, the Montezuma Historical Society will use an award of \$600 toward the design of a logo and design and printing of promotional brochures for the trail system within Montezuma Heritage Park. The park is a 140-acre site being developed with six trails linking remains of New York's canal development dating from 1819 to the present.

PTNY awarded the Andes Historical Society \$700 towards the cost of a roadside sign, printing of a trail brochure/map, signs, and a trailhead kiosk. PTNY is working with [Andes Works!](#) to create a five-mile trail linking the Village of Andes to the Pepacton Reservoir in the Catskills.

Since launching *Healthy Trails, Healthy People* in 2004, PTNY has helped 38 communities in 34 counties with the development and promotion of 260 miles of trail across New York State. [Healthy Trails, Healthy People](#) is funded in part by a grant from the Healthy Heart Program of the [NYS Department of Health](#).

New section of Genesee Valley Greenway opens in Southern Tier

Another mile of the [Genesee Valley Greenway officially opened](#) in the Allegany County village and town of Cuba, bringing to 62 the number of miles of the 90-mile corridor now open to the public. PTNY spearheaded the Genesee Valley Greenway project starting in 1991.



PTNY's Fran Gotcsik joined project sparkplug Michael Doyle, Mayor Tom Taylor, Assemblyman Joseph

are suitable for walking, jogging, mountain biking, and snowmobiling during winter.

For information on more great trails like these, be sure to visit [TrailFinder](#), Parks & Trails New York's interactive guide to multi-use trails throughout the state.

Did you see PTNY in the *New York Times*?

New York's state parks and historic sites were recently featured in the *New York Times*' Metro section. The [article](#) reports on this year's infusion of capital funding through the NY Works program to address critical infrastructure needs. The story also highlights the tremendous work that remains to be done - State Parks estimates more than \$1 billion in rehabilitation needs exist across the park system. As PTNY Parks Director Laura DiBetta says at the end of the article, we hope the money represents a down payment on a "multi-year commitment" to parks.

PTNY speaks out

Read some of our letters to the editor published recently:

- The benefits of the proposed [Adirondack Rail Trail](#) between Lake Placid and Old Forge
- Why investment in the NYS [canal system](#) pays big dividends
- The importance of continuing to reinvest



Giglio, and representatives for Congressman Tom Reed and State Senator Cathy Young for a ribbon cutting ceremony held October 6.

The Cuba trail was built using a \$589,000 award from the federal Transportation Enhancements Program, funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and donations of labor and materials from countless community businesses and residents who also supplied trailside benches and a trailhead gazebo, parking area, and bike rack. Project funds also were used to construct a pedestrian walkway and 100-foot bridge over an active rail line to safely connect the trail and local school with village neighborhoods and historic landmarks.

As part of its [Healthy Trails, Healthy People](#) program, PTNY will continue working with the village and Cuba Friends of Architecture to promote use of the trail by visitors and area residents.

Urge Governor Cuomo to protect what we love about New York-- its air, land and water



New York collects more than \$100 million from unclaimed bottle deposits every year. Take a moment to urge the Governor to commit to invest some of these resources to protect our air, land, and water.

In June, the Legislature passed a bill that will dedicate \$56 million of revenue from the state's

most successful recycling program -- our bottle deposit law -- to the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) in the coming years, helping to grow the EPF and benefit communities across New York.

The EPF protects our parks, clean water, local farms, and zoos and provides funding for trails, waterfront redevelopment and recycling programs - all while creating local jobs and boosting our economy!

ACT NOW! Call (518) 474-8390 or [write](#) Governor Cuomo today to urge him to enhance the Environmental Protection Fund.

Sample Message

in our [state park system](#).

I Love My Park Because photo contest winners



Thank you to everyone who submitted photos and showed parks love during this summer's I Love My Park Because photo contest. We received so many fun, creative photos taken in parks across New York. Congratulations to Pauline Shostack and her son Zachary, our "Favorite Photo" winner, with their photo taken in [Erie Canal Park in Camillus](#). With the great prizes they won from [REI](#), they'll get to explore even more parks. [See all the winning photographs](#).

Erie Canalway Trail in national limelight

The Erie Canalway Trail is Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's October [Trail of the Month](#). Check it out!

Welcome New Staff



Thank you for maintaining the Environmental Protection Fund in this year's state budget. Please show how much you love New York by signing legislation to grow the EPF in the future with money from the Bottle Bill. The EPF is important to me because (SAY WHY YOU CARE ABOUT THE EPF HERE, such as our community parks, trails and historic sites or recreational access to our forests, lakes, rivers and bays). A bigger EPF will do even more to protect our natural resources and public health, and provide clean, green jobs in our communities.

Thank you to our Green Partner- Chobani



Experiencing the success and growth of [Chobani's](#) now global brand has been an exciting adventure over the past five years. But no matter

how big they become, or where the company expands, Chobani is determined not to lose sight of its roots - the Central New York community that surrounds the Chobani plant in South Edmeston, New York.

Dozens of initiatives have been carried out in order to give back to the hometown that has watched the Chobani story unfold, starting in 2005 when Chobani founder and CEO Hamdi Ulukaya bought the recently closed Kraft plant with big plans in mind.

Chobani's recent local projects include building a state of the art baseball field for the Village of New Berlin's Little League, the renovation of the Town of Columbus' Norton Park, and a donation to Norwich's Chenango Memorial Hospital for newer and more effective equipment. Chobani also supported local park volunteers on PTNY's I Love My Park Day in May 2012.

News from State Parks

Comptroller report: State Parks safe, but in need of work

A new [report](#) from the State Comptroller corroborates what PTNY has been saying since it released its [Parks at a Turning Point](#) report in 2005: many infrastructure issues exist throughout the park system and the more time passes before these issues are addressed, the higher the cost will be.

The State Comptroller conducted an audit of 33 state parks and historic sites and found that, in some cases, public access has been blocked to certain amenities or sections where there are safety concerns. According to the report, almost every park and historic site in the NYS park system faces an infrastructure need.

Read PTNY's quote in a [recent article](#) on the report.

Special projects intern [Laura Trivison](#) is currently majoring in Urban Design at SUNY Albany. Participating in smart design that incorporates the natural environment within urban settings is what intrigues her most. Every chance Laura gets she is enjoying the great outdoors and already feels at home here at PTNY. Laura currently sits on the Board of the Albany Social Justice Center. She has experience in networking and is looking forward to bringing her previous connections into the fold here at PTNY, while simultaneously learning as much as she can from her internship.

Construction on Champlain Canalway Trail segment to begin next year

Great news from Washington County! The [NYS Canal Corporation](#) has announced that construction will begin on a segment of the Champlain Canalway Trail next fall. Totalling 4.5 miles, the trail will pass through the Town of Kingsbury before ending in the Village of Fort Ann. Further improvements planned include the construction of camping facilities at Lock C-9 and the placement of interpretive kiosks along the finished trail. [Read more](#) about the project.

Canalway Trails Association NY on Facebook

The [Canalway Trails Association New York](#) (CTANY) is now on

Parks go mobile

You can now get info on NY's state parks and historic sites in the palm of your hand. The free [Oh Ranger! NY State Parks app](#) is designed to provide everything a visitor would need to become familiar with a property, including contact information, directions, amenities, maps, and events. Users can search by zip code and desired activity to find locations to go hiking, camping, boating, birding, and discover historic sites, nature centers, and more. The app is available for the iPhones and iPod Touch but an Android version will soon be available.

Grant Cottage in the spotlight



[Grant Cottage State Historic Site](#) in Wilton will soon get some national attention. A CBS Sunday Morning crew recently visited the site to film a piece about President Ulysses S. Grant, who spent the last few weeks of

his life at the Saratoga County cottage. The piece will likely air close to Veterans Day. [Read more.](#)

Canalway Trail News

Western New York villages eager to welcome Canalway Trail tourists

At the recent [Bicyclists Bring Business roundtable](#) held in the Orleans County Village of Albion it was clear that Canalway Trail tourism is growing and western New York communities are eager to do more to welcome the cycling tourist. More than 50 local business owners and elected and tourism officials from three counties came together to hear what other trails across the nation are doing and share what they have learned about attracting and meeting the needs of Canalway Trail tourists.



The following day, PTNY and Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor staff joined a small group of business owners and local government representatives to visit Albion by bike. Seeing the trail and the community from the perspective of a first-time

tourist was an eye opener for everyone. As they made their way around the village, the group used the checklists found in PTNY's [Bicyclists Bring Business: A Guide for Attracting Bicyclists to New York's Canal Communities](#) to help generate a number of suggestions for improvements to the trail, signage, street

Facebook. [Like us](#) to find out the latest on the [Adopt-a-Trail](#) program, the [Canalway Trail Ambassadors](#), and trail news from throughout the Canalway Trail corridor. Help us make all 524 miles of the Canalway Trail a reality!

Friends of the Queensway engaged in fundraising campaign

The Friends of the Queensway, formerly known as the Rockaway Beach Branch Greenway, have been diligently working towards the goal of transforming the abandoned Rockaway Beach Branch of the Long Island Rail Road into The QueensWay, a multi-use trail and cultural greenway running through central and southern Queens. PTNY provided assistance to the Rockaway Beach Greenway under its [Healthy Trails Healthy People](#) program.

The first step in creating this greenspace is to complete a feasibility study that will help the group better understand the scope of the work and map out the steps that must be taken to complete this project. The Friends are asking for support in raising the funding for this first phase of work. To contribute, visit the Friends of the Queensway [website](#).

Hudson River Greenway Water Trail recognized

This fall, the Hudson River Greenway Water Trail became the first trail in the nation to receive the U.S. Dept. of the Interior's National Water Trail

infrastructure, and businesses that could increase the likelihood that someone would stop and visit and even stay overnight.

The roundtable events were presented by PTNY, the [NYS Canal Corporation](#), and [Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor](#) and hosted by the [Western Erie Canal Alliance](#).

Get recognized for hiking, biking, or kayaking the Erie Canalway Trail



Anyone who has completed a journey along the entire Erie Canalway Trail, whether in one multi-day trip or in segments over time, will be recognized with a [certificate](#), [decal](#), and inclusion in the End-to-Ender [Honor Roll](#).

The program is a joint effort of PTNY, the NYS Canal Corporation, and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor.

The first step is to [register](#) as an End-to-Ender. You will be asked several questions about your trip and overall experience. We'd love to hear your stories and receive photos of your trip. Please send them to endoenders@ptny.org. You can also put your images on our [Flickr](#) site.

Canalway Trail Ambassador program expands to Rochester area

In early September eight Canalway Trail users were designated as the first [Canalway Trail Ambassadors](#) to patrol the trail in Monroe County. Initiated in 2008 in Schenectady and Albany Counties, the Ambassadors are trail users who volunteer to assist and inform trail users, monitor trail conditions, and promote trail safety, courtesy, and awareness.

Identified by their eye-catching green shirts, the Monroe County Ambassadors will be patrolling the trail from Gates to Brockport throughout the fall and will resume patrols in the spring.

Are you an active Canalway Trail user? If so, please consider volunteering to become an Ambassador. Not only can you patrol during your regular use of the trail, you will be providing a valuable service to your community and fellow trail users. Those interested in volunteering should [contact PTNY](#) for more information.

Western New York downtowns eager to welcome Canalway Trail tourists

At the recent [Bicyclists Bring Business roundtable](#) held in the Orleans County Village of Albion it was clear that Canalway Trail

designation. The [Hudson River Greenway Water Trail](#), a 256-mile water trail stretching from the Adirondack Park and Lake Champlain to Manhattan, was established to provide one or more access points every 10 miles or less along both shores of the river and overnight accommodation sites every 15 miles or less. The water trail includes 96 designated public access sites.

Kudos to PTNY friend Jeff Olson on his new book, *The Third Mode*



The "third mode"--walking and bicycling--is every bit as integral to transportation as highways and mass transit. Jeff Olson's [The Third Mode](#) is more than just a book - it symbolizes a new way of seeing how our society can create better connections between people, nature, and the built environment.

New report: economic benefits of bicycling infrastructure

A new report from Advocacy Advance "[Bicycling Means Business: The Economic Benefits of Bicycle Infrastructure](#)" highlights the

tourism is growing and western New York communities are eager to do more to welcome the cycling tourist. More than 50 local business owners and elected and tourism officials from three counties came together to hear what other trails across the nation are doing and share what they have learned about attracting and meeting the needs of Canalway Trail tourists.

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Get ready! Next round of trails funding from DOT expected mid-2013

As a result of a recent meeting with top NYSDOT officials, PTNY has learned that the last and final round of SAFETEA-LU Transportation Enhancements Program (TEP) funding will be announced by mid-2013. NYSDOT declined to say how much would be available but PTNY estimates that DOT may have at least \$30 million to distribute. TEP is a reimbursement program that funds transportation-related community-based projects including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, trails, and bike paths. Awards can range up to \$2.5 million and can fund up to 80% of project costs.

If you are considering applying there are several things you can do right now to ensure a successful application.

- Contact your [regional NYSDOT or MPO bicycle and pedestrian coordinator](#) to be put on the list to be notified when the funding round and applicant workshops are announced.
- Review the [application materials from the previous round](#) held in 2008 to get a better idea of the level of detail and the type of documents that you will need to submit so you can start planning and gathering information now. If you start to plan your project when the funding availability is announced it is often too late.
- Review the Federal Aid 101 [power point](#) and other NYSDOT [training resources](#) to learn more about the roles and responsibilities of all parties and steps that must be followed when implementing a project.

impact the bicycle industry and bicycle tourism has on state and local economies and demonstrates that investments in bicycling infrastructure are a cost-effective way to enhance shopping districts and communities, generate tourism, and support business.

Historic coal house restored along Vestal Rail trail near Binghamton

For nearly a decade, a century-old coal house on the west end of the [Vestal Rail Trail](#) had been an empty shell but now the landmark is getting a new lease on life. The coal house, which operated through the 1960s as a weigh station to determine the cost of coal, will be transformed into a concession stand offering snacks to trail users, including "coal house" pizza and gelato on Sundays. A concrete platform will be added as a performing arts space.

Every Day Capacity Building Grants

The National Environmental Education Foundation's (NEEF) [Every Day Grants](#), like PTNY's [Growing the Grassroots](#) grants, strengthen the stewardship of public lands by strengthening Friends groups through funding for organizational capacity building. Applications are now being accepted year-round on a rolling basis. The winter deadline is **October 30** and the spring deadline is **April 30**.



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.

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