



29 Elk Street
Albany, NY 12207
518-434-1583

NEWS RELEASE

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Media Contact: Alison Jenkins, Director, Parks Program
518-434-1583
ajenkins@ptny.org
www.ptny.org

Parks & Trails New York Commends Governor Cuomo’s Investments in Parks and the Environment in the Executive Budget Proposal

ALBANY, N.Y. – Parks & Trails New York, the state’s leading nonprofit advocate for parks and trails, applauds Governor Cuomo for investing in our parks and shared green spaces in the New York State (NYS) Fiscal Year 2018-19 Executive Budget Proposal. Although changes at the federal level have made this a difficult budget year for NYS, Governor Cuomo stands by the environment and continues to make significant investments in State Parks and Historic Sites, and the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF).

“The Governor’s proposed budget shows his commitment to conservation and secures New York’s position as a national leader in the protection of natural resources, as well as the advancement of tourism and outdoor recreation,” said Robin Dropkin, Executive Director at Parks & Trails New York. The proposal includes \$300 million for the EPF, including \$500,000 for the Park & Trail Partnership Program, a grant program for grassroots Friends organizations. The EPF also includes another \$1 million for the Connect Kids to Parks Program that reimburses transportation costs for school children visiting State Parks, Historic Sites and other environmental education facilities.

The Executive Budget Proposal includes \$90 million in State Parks capital projects, part of Governor Cuomo’s NY Parks 2020 plan to invest \$900 million in critical projects at State Parks and Historic Sites. Two specific projects in the proposal are \$15 million to transform a former landfill into a 407 acre state park in Jamaica Bay (Brooklyn), and \$50 million to complete the Hudson River Park, which will promote tourism, and enhance the quality of life for all New Yorkers.

The Capital Plan shows the Governor’s commitment to spending last year’s appropriation to complete the Empire State Trail, a 750 mile continuous trail that expands outdoor recreation and economic development opportunities for communities it connects across the state.

The Governor recognizes that investing in parks and the environment is a good investment for the economy and the planet. A recent [report](#) shows that State Parks support about 45,000 jobs and are responsible for \$5 billion in spending, a nine to one return on state investment.

We thank the Governor for continuing his commitment to protecting our shared green spaces, and look forward to working with the Governor and Legislature in the coming months on these important issues. For more information, please see Parks & Trails New York’s [2018 Advocacy Agenda](#).

Parks & Trails New York is the state’s leading advocate for parks and trails, working since 1985 to expand, protect and promote a network of parks, trails and open spaces throughout the state for use and enjoyment by all. Learn more at www.ptny.org.

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