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## Parks and trails suffer the effects of Superstorm Sandy



The impacts from Sandy will likely take some time to fully realize, but we already know the damage to parks and trails in New York City, Long Island and the Hudson Valley is extensive. Damage estimates to state parks and historic sites alone total well over \$100 million. Two of New York's most beloved and heavily

visited state parks, Jones Beach and Robert Moses, were particularly devastated, with significant damage to buildings, roads, infrastructure, and beachfronts, and remain closed indefinitely.

The superstorm, along with last year's storms, have only further compounded the existing infrastructure needs at state parks and historic sites and reinforced the importance of restoring our park system with long-term resiliency and sustainability in mind. Investing wisely in parks infrastructure, including both natural and built infrastructure that utilize sustainable development practices, will serve as a national model for rebuilding smarter after storms and help protect these treasured places and their surrounding communities from the impacts of future storms.

The devastation also underscores the need to ensure that the full measure of federal transportation dollars are quickly made available for trail and bicycle and pedestrian projects from the remaining Transportation Enhancements as well as the new Transportation Alternatives Programs. In the wake of limited gas and flooded subways, New York City's recently improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure offered a way to safely get around. The Thursday after the storm, [30,000 cyclists](#) crossed the East River bridges, according to NYCDOT. Normally, 13,000 do. In rebuilding our neighborhoods, we must ensure that they include infrastructure that ensures safe bicycling and walking.

Governor Cuomo has shown great leadership and commitment to parks and trails in the storm's aftermath. The outpouring of

## NOVEMBER 2012

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support from volunteers has also been tremendous; NYC Parks has actually had to turn volunteers away.

PTNY will continue to press for reinvestment in our state park system, statewide trails network, and community bike/ped infrastructure, and build on the positive momentum and support for these resources that has already been begun.

Our thoughts are with the many people and organizations affected by the recent storms and we hope for a speedy recovery process.

*In the photo: Sandy hit Long Island parks such as Jones Beach hard*

## PTNY continues to push for trails and bike/ped funding



PTNY is continuing its efforts to ensure that the full measure of NY's old and new federal transportation dollars are allocated to support trails, complete streets, and active transportation. PTNY's Fran Gotcsik and representatives of the [New York Bicycling Coalition](#), [Tri-State Transportation](#)

[Campaign](#), [AARP](#) and [Empire State Future](#) recently met with Cuomo executive administration staff to thank the Governor for his support of the Recreational Trails Program and discuss when local governments will be able to access remaining Transportation Enhancements Program (TEP) funds. PTNY believes that as much as \$30-50 million of TEP dollars may still remain and that NYSDOT should make these dollars available as soon as possible to local governments to fund trails and bicycle and pedestrian projects.

The group also discussed implementation of the new Transportation Alternatives program, created by the federal MAP-21 law to fund trails, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, complete streets, safe routes to school and recreational trail programs. The U.S. Department of Transportation recently released its [interim guidance](#), to provide states with additional information on how to interpret and implement the Transportation Alternatives Program of MAP-21. [Advocacy Advance](#) has more on what this means for future funding of active transportation.

### Bicycling and walking - missing from NYSDOT Capital Plan

At their meeting with the Governor's staff, PTNY staff and other advocates also expressed concern that [NYSDOT's Two-Year Capital Plan](#), recently presented to NY Works, makes no mention

## TrailFinder Trail of the Month



### Setauket-Port Jefferson Greenway on Long Island

This popular 1.5-mile paved trail connecting Setauket to Port Jefferson on the north shore of Long Island is in the process of being extended an additional mile on both ends. Joggers, walkers, bicyclists, and skateboarders use the [Greenway](#) to enjoy old growth forest, woodlands, meadows, and county parklands. Visit PTNY's [TrailFinder](#) to learn more about the Greenway and other multi-use trails in NYS.

### Looking for the perfect holiday gift?

Here are some ideas that are not only perfect for your family and friends but will help sustain New York's parks and trails.

### For the bicycling enthusiast

of walking and bicycling as part of the state's transportation system - an egregious omission.

*In Photo: Nadine Lemmon, Tri-State Transportation Campaign; Fran Gotcsik, PTNY; Brian Kehoe, NY Bicycling Coalition; David Hogenkamp, Empire State Future; Bill Ferris, AARP*

## Urge Gov. Cuomo to enhance the EPF



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

In June, the Legislature passed a bill that will dedicate \$56 million of the revenue from the state's bottle deposit law to the EPF in the coming years. 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 grow the EPF and protect our air, land, and water.

**ACT NOW!** Call (518) 474-8390 or [write](#) Governor Cuomo today, and urge him to show his **love** for New York by growing the Environmental Protection Fund!  
[Click here for sample language for a letter or a call.](#)

## News from State Parks

### Playground improvements coming to a park near you



Kids (and parents)...get ready. State Parks recently announced plans to update or create more than 50 playgrounds, particularly in parks that are popular with families, such as [Point Au Roche State Park](#) near Plattsburgh and [John Boyd](#)

[Thacher State Park](#) near Albany. The playgrounds are funded through the NY Works initiative. [Find out more about park playground improvements in your region.](#)



Purchase one of PTNY's acclaimed cycling guidebooks: [Cycling the Erie Canal](#) or [Cycling the Hudson Valley](#). Or [order both](#) for a discounted price.

### For the advocate

Give the gift of a Parks & Trails New York [membership](#) - it's the green gift that keeps giving year-round.

### For the park fan

Order an [Empire Passport](#) that provides unlimited day use vehicle entry to most of New York's State parks and recreational facilities.

### We're hiring!

Parks & Trails New York is looking for a part-time Assistant Bike Tour Director. The position may be used for internship credit. See the [job description and requirements](#).

### Last Chance!

**Apply for a PTNY Growing the Grassroots grant**

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,

## Want more news on State Parks?

See the Fall issue of our e-newsletter, [You Gotta Have Friends](#), for information on a new state park, "green" projects at state parks and historic sites, and much more.

## Honoring New York's park & trail champions



A large and lively crowd joined PTNY on October 17 to celebrate and honor Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey, and Brookfield and its Co-Chairman John E. Zuccotti.

At the event, PTNY presented its Park Legacy Award to Gov. Andrew M.

Cuomo for his commitment to keep New York's state parks open and for providing increased capital funding for the magnificent but previously underfunded state park system.

Congressman Hinchey, who is retiring this year, was honored with PTNY's George W. Perkins Award for his long and distinguished record of leadership on behalf of New York's precious natural and historic heritage. And PTNY honored Brookfield Renewable Energy Partners and Mr. Zuccotti with the Perkins Award for creating green and beautiful public spaces and for an outstanding record as a model of corporate social responsibility.

Honorary Chairs of the event were Dr. Lucy R. Waletzky, Chair of the State Parks Council; former NYS Parks Commissioner Joan Davidson; Robert R. Dyson, head of the Dyson Foundation; and Diana L. Taylor, Chair of the Hudson River Park Trust.

*In the photo: State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey (center) accepted PTNY's Park Legacy award on behalf of Gov. Cuomo. PTNY Board Chair Judy Mower (left) presented the award and Dr. Lucy R. Waletzky offered a tribute to the Governor.*

## PTNY Healthy Trails, Healthy People program supports community trails



PTNY staff Martin Daley and Eli Yearick visited the Sullivan County town of Fallsburg to undertake a [Universal Trail Assessment](#) Profile audit and distribute trail user surveys for the O&W Rail Trail. The visit

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.

Deadline for submitting [applications](#) is **November 19, 2012**.

### Investing in canal pays off

Read this [letter to the editor](#) from PTNY Board Chair Judy Mower about why investment in the NYS canal system pays big dividends.

### Physical inactivity and obesity cost New Yorkers plenty

New York spending on health-related costs of physical inactivity and obesity have reached nearly \$12 billion according to a new report from the New York State Comptroller's office. [Read more](#).

### Track the Trestle



One year ago the [Open Space Institute](#) and [Walkkill Valley Land Trust](#) teamed up to convert an historic Ulster County rail trestle that



also provided the opportunity to download trail [count data](#) from an automated counter set alongside the trail. The Fallsburg trail committee

recently installed interpretive signs on the trail, made possible by an HTHP program grant from PTNY.



In the Delaware County community of Andes, Andes Works! has used a PTNY grant to create a logo and build a trailhead kiosk for its 1-mile rail trail.

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.

## Albany's Hudson River bridge walkway gains support



The Albany County Legislature unanimously passed a proclamation of support for the [Livingston Avenue Bridge walkway](#). A press conference to mark the event was held on October 25 at the Corning Preserve in Albany. The cities of Albany and Troy, the Rensselaer County Legislature, and the

Hudson River Valley Greenway and Greenway Conservancy have also passed resolutions in support. Read [press coverage](#).

*In the photo: PTNY Project Director Martin Daley speaks at the press conference for the walkway.*

## Adirondack Rail Trail gains support while railroad proposes resumption of train service

[Adirondack Recreational Trail Advocates](#) (ARTA) has made steady progress in its efforts to create a 90-mile recreational rail trail from Lake Placid to Old Forge in the Adirondacks. Almost 10,000 persons have [signed an on-line petition](#) to register their support for the trail. The group recently picked up key resolutions in support of removing the tracks and building a trail from the Towns of North Elba and Piercefield and Village of Lake

will be a vital link in the [Walkkill Valley Rail Trail](#).

"Track the Trestle" has raised \$1 million toward the restoration of the trestle and, with a little over \$300,000 to go, the re-opening of the trestle is near. To read more about the project, visit the [Track the Trestle website](#).

### NY State ranks 42<sup>nd</sup> in bicycle-friendly communities

The [League of American Bicyclists](#) has designated 242 Bicycle Friendly Communities in 47 states. NYS ranks 42nd with only two Bicycle Friendly Communities: [New York City](#) and Rochester; three Bicycle Friendly Businesses: [Alta Planning](#), [Rochester's R Community Bikes](#), and [Random House](#); and three Bicycle Friendly Universities: Cornell, Rochester Institute of Technology, and SUNY Buffalo.

### Become a walk friendly community

Communities are encouraged to [apply](#) to become a [Walk Friendly Community](#), a national recognition program designed to encourage towns and cities to establish or recommit to supporting safer walking environments. Presently no New York communities have this distinction. Application deadline is **December 15**.

### Resources

Placid. The Town of Tupper Lake and Village of Saranac Lake have also passed resolutions in favor of reviewing and updating the DEC's Unit Management Plan for the rail corridor.

While the rail-trail concept gains traction, a recent [announcement](#) by the [Adirondack Rail Preservation Society](#), operator of a tourist train on the corridor between Lake Placid and Saranac Lake, and Iowa Pacific Holdings, operator of the region's [Saratoga and North Creek Railway](#), outlined a plan to use the corridor to offer high-end Pullman service for passengers between New York City and Lake Placid.

## Controversy shadows Queens park proposals



Three separate proposals could mean big changes for [Flushing Meadows Corona Park](#) in Queens. Plans are currently being reviewed for a Major League Soccer stadium, the expansion of the U.S. Tennis Center,

and a retail mall on a total of about 15 acres of designated parkland in a dense urban area. Supporters tout the economic boost the proposals could bring to the borough, but [opponents](#) are concerned about the loss of parkland that is heavily used primarily by the local immigrant minority community.

## National Trails Fund grants available

Members of [American Hiking Society's](#) Alliance of Hiking Organizations can apply for [National Trails Fund](#) grants worth up to \$5,000. Application deadline is **December 15, 2012**.

## Leaf Peeping in Parks



We asked our Facebook and Twitter followers to share their best fall foliage photos taken in parks. This beautiful photo from [Fillmore Glen State Park](#) in the Finger Lakes was taken by Facebook fan Tony Ingraham.

## Get ready for our next challenge--Winter Wonderland photos

### Want tips on improving walkability?

Download [Steps to a Walkable Community: Guide for Citizens, Planners and Engineers](#) for examples of what other communities have done to improve and encourage walking.

### Free on-line training for assessing parks and trails

[Register](#) for the Built Environment Assessment Training (BEAT) Institute's new free online introductory [course](#) to learn how to assess streetscapes, parks and trails for physical activity. It takes about four hours to complete all the modules, but you can work at your own pace.

### Complete Streets Tool kit available

[Tri-State Transportation Campaign](#) and [Vision Long Island](#) have released "[Complete Streets in a Box: Long Island](#)" to support the adoption and implementation of complete streets policies and help fill in the gaps in New York State's complete streets law. While developed for Long Island, many of the kit's resources can be adapted for other New York State communities.

### Keep In Touch!

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Winter is just around the corner (some of us are feeling it already!) and we want to see your Winter Wonderland shots taken in New York's parks and trails. Post your best shots to our [Facebook page](#) or tweet them to us [@PTNY](#)



*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](http://www.earthshareny.org).*

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