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Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Parks & Trails New York. Don't forget to add ptny@ptny.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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Trail and bike/ped funding dealt blow by Congress

The picture is bleak. Both the House and Senate committees have passed bills that either eliminate or seriously decrease funding for Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails - programs that during the last 20 years have been directly responsible for creation of thousands of miles of trails and increased participation in bicycling and walking.

In the House: The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved H.R. 7 or the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act which **eliminates**:

- dedicated funding for the Transportation Enhancements program - it becomes an optional program
- the Safe Routes to School program
- state bicycle and pedestrian coordinator positions
- all funding for rail trails and rail corridor preservation and historic projects, including canal corridors and railroad facilities [Learn more.](#)

In the Senate: The Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee passed S. 1813 or Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP 21) which dramatically reduces the available funding for Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails, and Safe Routes to School programs. [Learn more.](#)

It's time to pull out all the stops! These bills may come to the floor within a week. Contact your [Representative](#) and Senators [Kirsten Gillibrand](#) and [Charles Schumer](#). Urge them to support amendments that will retain state bicycle and pedestrian coordinators and restore dedicated funding for the Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School and Recreational Trails programs.

**FEBRUARY
2012**

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

Trailfinder Trail of the Month

Catskill Scenic Trail



With or without snow, the Catskill Scenic Trail is a great venue for outdoor winter pursuits. Over 26 miles of trail stretch across

Parks and the environment get boost from Governor

Gov. Cuomo's [executive budget](#) released last month includes positive news for New York's parks and the environment.

The budget includes \$89 million for infrastructure improvements at 48 state parks and historic sites as part of the New York Works fund. Details about which park projects will see improvements are just emerging. [See the list of Hudson Valley projects.](#)

The Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) holds steady at \$134 million, with \$16 million slated for state land stewardship and \$13,000 for municipal park and trail projects. [Thank the Governor](#) for making a smart investment in New York State by providing funding for infrastructure needs at state parks and historic sites and supporting the EPF.

Learn More

- [Read the Governor's Budget Briefing Book.](#) (See pages 29 to 32 for the parks and environment section.)
- [Read PTNY's testimony presented at the legislative budget hearing.](#)
- [Learn more about the EPF.](#)
- [Read PTNY's letter to the editor in the Albany Times Union.](#)

Two opportunities to support NY's parks and trails

The Governor's budget proposal is good news for parks and trails. Now it's up to the Legislature, and they need to hear from YOU. It's important that legislators know their constituents support the Governor's proposal and we have not one, but two opportunities for you to show your support!

Park Advocacy Day - March 6



Join Parks & Trails New York and our partner, the Alliance for New York State Parks, in Albany for the 6th Annual [Park Advocacy Day](#) on Tuesday, March 6 and help send a message of support for New York's 213 state parks and historic sites. Park supporters from throughout the state will meet with policymakers and stress the importance of supporting Governor Cuomo's budget proposal, particularly the \$89 million slated for state park and historic site repairs and improvements

what was formerly the Ulster & Delaware Railroad. Between its hard-packed cinder surface and gentle grade, the trail is perfect for hiking, biking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing.

Located on the western side of the Catskill Mountains along the West Branch of the Delaware River and NYS Routes 10 and 23, the trail is owned and maintained by the [Catskill Revitalization Corporation, Inc.](#) For more information, on this trail and others like it, visit [Trailfinder](#), PTNY's interactive guide to multi-use trails throughout New York State.


PTNY Board welcomes Parks Commissioner



Last month, State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey met with the PTNY Board of Directors in NYC. Thank you, Commissioner, and thank you to all the dedicated park staff for such steadfast stewardship of our remarkable park system.

Register for Canal Clean Sweep April 20-22



 under the New York Works Fund. Your efforts will have a lasting impact on legislators as they make important decisions. [RSVP today!](#)

EPF Lobby Day - February 13

Join us in Albany on Monday, February 13th as we rally in support of New York's [Environmental Protection Fund](#) (EPF). The EPF protects New York's healthy air and water, clean beaches, bays and rivers, working farms and forests, accessible parks, trails, and historic sites, state parks and state forests, community recycling programs, zoos and botanical gardens. Join PTNY and a coalition of more than 100 organizations as we meet with state legislators to advocate in support of these programs as part of New York's economic recovery. [RSVP today](#) by sending an email with your name, organization, mailing address, phone number and email address. [Learn more.](#)

11 park and trail groups receive capacity building grants from PTNY

PTNY awarded more than \$18,000 in capacity-building grants to 11 not-for-profit park and trail organizations. The groups will use the funds to increase organizational visibility, generate community support, grow membership, and attract additional volunteers. Grants were awarded to:

- [Friends of Gantry Plaza State Park, Inc.](#), Queens
- Fallsburg Rails to Trails Committee, Sullivan County
- Friends of Mine Kill and Max V. Shaul State Parks, Schoharie County
- [Friends of the Chemung River Watershed](#), Chemung County
- [Northville Placid Trail Chapter of Adirondack Mountain Club](#), Essex, Fulton, and Hamilton counties
- [Saratoga Mountain Bike Association](#), Rensselaer County
- [Great Swamp Conservancy](#), Madison County
- [Battenkill Conservancy](#), Washington County
- [Friends of Fahnestock and Hudson Highlands State Parks](#), Dutchess and Putnam counties
- [Kingston Land Trust](#), Ulster County
- [Concerned Citizens of Montauk](#), Suffolk County

[Learn more about the grant winners.](#)

Show parks some love on May 5! First-ever *I Love My Park Day*



Show state parks and historic sites some love! [I Love My Park Day](#) is an exciting new statewide event to bring visibility to the entire state park system and its

Join in the spring cleaning of the NYS Canal System and Canalway Trail by organizing a [Canal Clean Sweep](#) clean-up event in your community. [Register](#) today because spring will be here before you know it.

Bike with us this summer!



Registration for PTNY's [Cycling the Erie Canal](#) and [Great Hudson Valley Pedal](#) bike tours is now open!

Cycling the Erie Canal is an eight-day, 400-mile bicycle tour from Buffalo to Albany along the historic and scenic Erie Canal beginning on July 8 and ending July 15.

The Great Hudson Valley Pedal is a six-day, 200-mile bicycle tour from Albany to New York City through the magnificent Hudson Valley. The tour kicks off from Albany on July 31 and ends August 5 in New York City.

We are honored



needs. On Saturday, May 5, volunteers will celebrate and improve park lands and beaches, plant trees and flowers, restore trails and wildlife habitat and carry out site-improvement projects across the state.

PTNY, in collaboration with State Parks, will coordinate the event at the statewide level, with cleanup, improvement and beautification projects organized by local state park and historic site friends groups and park staff.

Visit the [I Love My Park Day website](#) to find an event near you and stay tuned—we'll be adding more sites and online registration soon!

Thank you to our Green Partner: Trailside Family of Companies



The [Trailside Family of Companies](#) is a unique consortium of four trail-focused Northampton, MA businesses operated by long-time trail advocate and PTNY friend Craig Della Penna. Craig's ventures began with the [Sugar Maple Trailside Inn](#), a B&B located directly on a rail trail, and expanded to [Della Penna's Trailside Realty, Inc.](#) and [Trailside Rentals](#), which specialize in properties with access to trails. Craig's real estate office is also home to [The Trailside Gallery](#), which features the work of local artists. Thanks Craig for your continuing support.

Two mid-Hudson Valley trails make major connections

Walkway Over the Hudson



Harlem Valley Rail Trail

CSX railroad will sell a nearly one-mile section of rail bed within the City of Poughkeepsie to the [Walkway Over the Hudson](#), creating a long-sought connection between the Walkway and the [Dutchess Rail Trail](#).



PTNY will be honored, along with Brookfield Renewable Energy Group, by the [New York League of Conservation Voters](#) at the 2012 Capital District Chapter [Eco-Breakfast](#), March 1 in Albany. Special guests will include State Senator Mark Grisanti and Assemblyman Robert K. Sweeney. Thank you, League of Conservation Voters, for the honor.

Capital Region's Livingston Ave. Bridge walkway gains support

The [Hudson River Valley Greenway Council and Conservancy](#) unanimously passed a [resolution](#) in support of inclusion of a walkway on a railroad bridge between Albany and Rensselaer, should the bridge be reconstructed. A Rensselaer County legislator will soon be introducing a similar resolution. ([read more](#)).

National Trails Day® June 2

The [Copake-Hillsdale Rail Trail Alliance](#) has raised the matching funds required by a \$122,000 NYS grant to complete a conceptual design and final construction drawings for a five-mile extension of the [Harlem Valley Rail Trail](#) from the Columbia County town of Copake Falls to the hamlet of Hillsdale.

Update from our friends at the Adirondack Recreational Trail Advocates (ARTA)



[ARTA](#) is a citizen-led effort that seeks to capitalize on an important economic and recreational asset in the Adirondack Park: converting the [90-mile railroad bed](#) that connects Old Forge and Lake Placid into a world-class recreational trail for multiple uses, including bicycling, snowmobiling and hiking. Tourist trains currently operate at the northern and southern ends of the corridor, but the rest of the line is unused except to move train cars to Lake Placid at the start and end of

each tourist season.

ARTA is currently awaiting the findings of two studies that will build on last year's assessment by Camoin Associates of the costs and benefits of a recreation trail.

To learn more about the opportunity to create the Great Adirondack Recreation Trail, visit www.TheARTA.org. You can add your voice by clicking on "Sign Up Now!"

Big changes coming to Grafton Lakes State Park?



Overnight camping, new year-round rental cabins, a new nature center, a new amphitheater, and 4.5 miles of new trails are all possible changes coming to [Grafton Lakes State Park](#) in Rensselaer County, according to the draft [final master plan](#) for the park released by the [Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation](#) (OPRHP).

[Recreation and Historic Preservation](#) (OPRHP).

The beach at Grafton Lakes is one of the most popular beaches in the area and is often crowded with area residents looking for relief from the summer heat. The plan includes a feasibility study



Hundreds of thousands of trail enthusiasts will be celebrating the 20th annual [National Trails Day](#) on June 2. Will you be one of them? Whether it's a solitary hike, helping with maintenance, or organizing a long-awaited improvement project, there's no better way to start summer than on a trail.

Planning on organizing an event? Register online with the [American Hiking Society](#). Not only will the AHS help you promote your event, the first 500 registered events will receive free promotional items. [Register](#) today!

Funding opportunity for historic trails or parks

Applications are now available for municipalities or not for profits to apply for [Preserve New York](#) grants to fund historic structure reports, historic landscape reports or cultural resource surveys. Grants range between \$3,000 and \$10,000. Prospective applicants should contact the [Preservation League of NYS](#) to discuss their project and to request an

for a second beach. Read a recent *Albany Times Union* [article](#) for more details on the plan.



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.

application form. Deadline: **May 7, 2012.**

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Catskill Scenic Trail image courtesy of Velga V. Kundzins

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