



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Parks & Trails New York awards grants to strengthen grassroots park and trail groups around the state**

The statewide advocacy group Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) today awarded almost \$16,000 in Growing the Grassroots capacity building grants to seven 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. The awards are supported, in part, by the visionary philanthropist, Merryl H. Tisch.

PTNY's program is unique in that it awards funding for activities not normally covered by existing grants. PTNY's Growing the Grassroots capacity building grants are designed to help park and trail not-for-profits develop and strengthen the skills, processes, and resources that will allow them to thrive and be better stewards of New York's parks and trails. New to the program this year were awards to undertake small park or trail capital projects that will raise the visibility and capacity of park and trail not-for-profits.

"Hundreds of local organizations are working to build, protect, and promote our state's parks and trails which contribute so much to our economy and quality of life," said Robin Dropkin, Parks & Trails New York Executive Director. "With our Growing the Grassroots grant program, we can help propel these groups to new levels, enabling them to leverage more private funding and marshal more volunteer power to aid their stewardship efforts."

Since it initiated the awards program in 2009, PTNY has assisted 59 organizations in 36 New York counties.

Organizations receiving 2015 Growing the Grassroots grants:

**[Wallkill Valley Rail Trail Association](#)** - Town of New Paltz, Ulster County - \$3,500 to create signage for 12 new miles of trail.

**Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum** - Village of Chittenango, Madison County - \$3,500 for consultant services to assist the organization in developing a marketing program to increase membership and support across a wide diversity of generations and geographic areas.

**Victor Hiking Trails**, Town of Victor, Ontario County - \$2,500 for consultant services to aid in growing volunteer stewardship efforts and assist with development of short- and long-term strategies for trail maintenance.

**Friends of Connetquot State Park** - Town of Islip, Suffolk County - \$2,500 for signs describing the Friends' role in the Preserve's historic Grist Mill restoration.

**Friends of Allegany State Park** - City of Salamanca, Cattaraugus County - \$1,734 for a website, brochures, banners, and business cards to increase membership and fundraising.

**Friends of Astoria Heights Park** - City of New York, Queens County- \$1,250 for marketing materials including brochures, decals, and an enclosed bulletin board.

**New Baltimore Conservancy** - Town of New Baltimore, Greene County - \$700 for printing and distribution of membership materials.

Parks & Trails New York is the leading statewide advocate for parks and trails, dedicated since 1985 to improving the health and quality of life of all New Yorkers by working with community organizations and municipalities to envision, create, promote, and protect a growing network of parks, greenways and trails throughout the state for all to use and enjoy.

More information on the Growing the Grassroots grant program and Parks & Trails New York can be found at [www.ptny.org](http://www.ptny.org) or by calling 518-434-1583.

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