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# You Gotta Have Friends

*a newsletter for friends of the NYS Park System*



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Dear Friend-

Though it seems to have taken an unusually long time to get here, spring finally made its entrance. And what an exciting spring it's been so far for New York's state parks.

With the passage of New York's state budget, we've entered the fourth year of significant funding for improvements at state parks and historic sites. This sustained investment is paying off: read below for news on how New York's state parks have been getting attention on a national stage. A new grants program for Friends groups included in the budget that PTNY will administer with State Parks will only help further leverage the state's investment and spur many more exciting projects.

Even if you are not a member of a Friends group, you can still give back to parks on I Love My Park Day. I hope to see many of you on Saturday, May 2.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura".

Laura DiBetta  
Director, Parks Program & Government Relations



## **New Grants Program: Unlocking the Potential of Friends Groups**

PTNY has been so impressed with what our Growing the Grassroots grant recipients have been able to

accomplish that we have long dreamt of being able to provide organizations with a more significant amount of funding. We are excited to announce that we will soon be able to do just that.

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## Volunteers Sought for I Love My Park Day on May 2

From Montauk Point to Niagara Falls, 95 state parks and historic sites - the most ever - are looking for volunteers to help celebrate the fourth annual I Love My Park Day.

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## Park Revitalization Projects Announced

In celebration of Earth Week, Governor Cuomo announced 88 new revitalization and rehabilitation projects at 60 state parks and historic sites across New York this year. The projects, totaling \$71.7 million, continue the exciting revitalization and modernization of the state park system.

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## Copake Iron Works Museum to Open

At the end of May the Friends of Taconic State Park will see their hard work pay off with the opening of a new museum, Copake Iron Works. The Friends have been raising significant funds for the park since 2008. This museum adds to their impressive list of accomplishments.

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## Letchworth Takes Top Honors

With more than 7,800 state parks across the United States, vacationers have a lot of places to choose from to get their nature fix. But which are the best to visit? After four weeks of voting, Letchworth State Park took home top honors in USA TODAY's 10 Best Readers' Choice award for Best State Park.

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## Achieving a Balance

With the new gas storage lease proposed for Allegany State Park, PTNY believes the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has achieved a balance between the energy needs of the neighboring community and the protection of the biological, natural, cultural and recreational resources that will ensure the park remains a viable resource for future generations.

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## New Historic Records Database

The public now has access to more than 1.5 million pages of historical documents collected by State Parks' Division for Historic Preservation since 1966. The Cultural Resource Information System, or CRIS, is an interactive, web-based platform that offers the public convenient access to the extensive collection of historic records.

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## Can You Smell Spring?

When out enjoying state parks this spring, pay special attention to the edge of streams, wetlands and other wet areas for skunk cabbages, a tell-tale sign of spring's arrival. Don't let cabbage in the name fool you, though; these plants are not edible.

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## Climbing to National Attention

Niagara Falls is one the most famous waterfalls in the world, welcoming 20 million visitors a year. In January, National Geographic's 2014 Adventurer of the Year, Will Gadd, brought the state park once again to national attention with his historic climb.

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## Featured Friends: Volunteer Profile

Although each was drawn to the Friends of Hamlin Beach for different reasons, Holly Jennejahn and Jeanine Klopp have teamed up to chair the Friends' I Love My Park Day committee for the second year. This model has helped the all-volunteer Friends continue their track record of hosting highly successful I Love My Park Day events.

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## Short Takes/Resources

PTNY's Friends [Online Resource Kit](#)

## Calendar

May 2: [I Love My Park Day](#)

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