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MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 21, 2015

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Cyclists Ride to Commemorate 200 Years of Erie Canal, Call on Governor to *Close the Gaps* in Erie Canalway Trail

- Postcard Delivery on Pedestrian Bridge in Albany -

Tuesday, September 22, 2015

*6:15 PM, Cyclists leave from Watervliet, 4th Street
7:00 PM, Postcard Drop-off at Pedestrian Bridge in Albany*

WHO: Parks & Trails New York (PTNY), the state’s leading not-for-profit, park and trail advocacy organization, and Bike Barn Cohoes will be joined by cyclists who regularly use the state-wide Erie Canalway Trail.

WHAT: Cyclists will ride from Watervliet to Albany to commemorate bicentennial of Erie Canal’s completion, then gather on the Maiden Lane pedestrian bridge to drop-off hundreds of postcards urging the Governor to *Close the Gaps* that remain in the state-wide Erie Canalway Trail. Along the way, they will ride the Mohawk-Hudson section of the Erie Canalway Trail (ECT). The ECT extends 360 miles across New York State along the historic waterway, of which 281 miles (78%) are now open to the public. When complete, it will be the longest trail of its kind in the nation and a world-class destination for cyclists and other outdoor enthusiasts.

WHEN: Tuesday, September 22, 2015: Ride begins at 6:15 PM in Watervliet; postcard delivery at 7:00 at Maiden Lane pedestrian bridge in Albany

WHERE: Cyclists and supporters will ride from the trail parking area at 4th Street in Watervliet to the Maiden Lane pedestrian bridge in Albany’s Corning Preserve, where they will briefly gather for pictures and a postcard drop-off.

WHY: The ECT brings important economic and environmental benefits to the more than 3.7 million New Yorkers who live in the 14 counties along its route: 1.6 million annual visits, \$253 million in total trail-related sales, \$28.5 million in taxes, and 3,440 jobs supported according to a 2014 report by PTNY, *The Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail: An Assessment and User Profile of New York’s Longest Multi-use Trail*.

However, the ECT cannot reach its full potential and offer maximum economic and quality of life benefits until it is finished from Buffalo to Albany as a continuous, off-road trail. Since PTNY and the Canalway Trails Association New York (CTANY) launched their “*Closing the Gaps*” campaign in 2010 in conjunction with U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, interest in completing the ECT among citizens, community leaders, and local, state and federal government officials has reached an all-time high.

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