

Parks & Trails New York's

I LOVE MY PARK *days*



2019 Organizer's Manual 8th Anniversary



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

www.ptny.org/ilovemypark

About Parks & Trails New York

Parks & Trails New York is the leading statewide organization working to preserve and enhance a network of parks, trails and greenways for all New Yorkers for generations to come. Since 1985, our influential reports and advocacy efforts have been critical to keeping parks and historic sites open and protecting New York's natural, recreational, cultural and historical resources.



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Dear I Love My Park Day Organizer:

Thank you for volunteering to organize an I Love My Park Day event and joining the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) and Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) in celebrating New York's magnificent state parks and historic sites.

New York State is a leader in parks and conservation thanks to a long history of stewardship and generosity of private citizens. With more than 67 million visitors annually, our state park system is critical to our state's prosperity and well-being. We continue to need the support of the public and dedicated partners like you to make our parks and sites the very best they can be and keep these visitors returning year after year.

We appreciate all you do to help protect, promote and enhance New York's unmatched system of parks and historic sites and are proud to partner with you on this event.

Thank you again for being part of the eighth annual I Love My Park Day and supporting our state parks and historic sites.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rose Harvey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping "R" and "H".

Rose Harvey
Commissioner
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic
Preservation



OPRHP Commissioner Rose Harvey, PTNY Executive Director Robin Dropkin and NYS Governor Andrew Cuomo at the first-ever I Love My Park Day in 2012.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Dropkin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, flowing "R" and "D".

Robin Dropkin
Executive Director
Parks & Trails New York

1. INTRODUCTION

I Love My Park Day is organized by Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) in collaboration with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP). This Organizer's Manual will guide you through the I Love My Park Day planning process and provide you with tools and resources to ensure your event is a success.

Planning an I Love My Park Day event is not unlike planning other cleanup and improvement projects, but because your event will be one of many I Love My Park Day events happening across the state on the same day, a coordinated effort is key to maximizing attention on our state parks, historic sites, and public lands.

2. I LOVE MY PARK DAY OVERVIEW

What is I Love My Park Day?

I Love My Park Day is an exciting statewide event to celebrate and enhance New York's state parks and historic sites and bring visibility to the entire state park system. Volunteers from across the state participate in cleanup, improvement, and beautification events at New York State parks and historic sites. Volunteers celebrate New York's state park system by cleaning up park lands and beaches, planting trees and gardens, restoring trails and wildlife habitat, removing invasive species, and working on various site-improvement projects.

In 2015, in celebration of the fifth anniversary of I Love My Park Day, the event included new partnerships with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the National Park Service, with volunteer events at four locations in the Adirondack and Catskill regions of the state and at five national parks in New York State.

Why Hold an I Love My Park Day?

Holding a large statewide volunteer event provides enhanced visibility to the entire state park system while improving parks and historic sites, bringing in new volunteers and resources, and helping to build new partnerships.

How is it Organized?

PTNY – in partnership with OPRHP and local Friends groups – coordinates the event on the statewide level, providing outreach, promotion, technical assistance and this

how-to organizer’s kit for Friends groups and park staff to use for their individual events. Friends groups and park staff oversee cleanup, improvement and beautification projects, work with volunteers and reach out to the local community.

When is it?

I Love My Park Day 2019 is Saturday, May 4, 2019. As decreed by Governor Andrew Cuomo, the event is always held the first Saturday in May.

How Long Has I Love My Park Day Been Held?

The first-ever I Love My Park Day was held on Saturday, May 5, 2012. Forty state parks and historic sites from across the state hosted events. Thousands of volunteers – including Governor Cuomo – participated in the inaugural event.

During the sixth annual event in 2017, 8,000 volunteers completed more than 250 projects at 125 event locations.

How Can I Get Involved?

Contact PTNY at 518-434-1583 or ilovemypark@ptny.org to get started.

3. PLANNING YOUR EVENT

Communications with Parks & Trails New York

Once you’ve made the decision to host an I Love My Park Day event, it’s important to contact PTNY. PTNY will provide support for your event at the statewide level. This includes:

- Event listing on PTNY’s website with the ability for volunteers to register for your event online
- Publicity
- Technical assistance
- Promotional items

See page 10 for more.

Coordination with Your Park or Site Manager

Your park or site manager is an important partner in planning an I Love My Park Day event. Before moving forward, Friends groups should discuss it with the manager.

If a decision is made to move forward with planning an I Love My Park Day event, Friends groups and park managers are encouraged to work together and maintain regular communications throughout the planning process.

Designating a Coordinator and Organizing Your Team

Like planning any event, it is a good idea to assign one person to be the lead coordinator. Some groups may find sharing the responsibilities among two co-coordinators works best. The coordinator will be the primary contact for communications with PTNY and the park manager. He or she should be organized and a good task-master, able to delegate and track deadlines.

But the coordinator can't do it alone! Your group may want to form an I Love My Park Day team or committee to help divide tasks. The team should meet regularly to ensure planning is on track.

An I Love My Park Day planning committee could serve as an opportunity for your first outreach to the broader community. Individuals who may not yet be members of the Friends group might be willing to serve on an event committee, or it might be an opportunity to court individuals you are hoping to get involved in the Friends group.

Selecting Volunteer Projects

Start working with your park manager early on to decide on I Love My Park Day projects. Keep the events focused on cleanup, improvement and beautification projects. Also consider if the projects would be open to volunteers of all ages or if some projects (such as those involving certain tools) might not be suitable for young children or will require adult supervision. Think about what projects will encourage new volunteers to participate and get more involved with your Friends group.

Some ideas for event projects include:

- Trail maintenance
- Trash and debris cleanup
- Invasive species removal
- Tree or shrub/flower plantings
- Building bird or bat houses
- Weeding and mulching
- Developing a new trail or making a trail ADA compliant
- Applying woodchips to a playground area



Volunteers painting benches in Belmont Lake State Park on Long Island on I Love My Park Day in 2018.

- Cleaning up ball fields
- Painting (e.g., fences, exterior of building)
- Completing a simple repair or construction project (e.g., kiosks, benches, bird blind)
- Building new flower boxes or replanting existing flower boxes
- Putting together picnic benches
- Installing a pedestrian bridge

Below are additional tips based on the experience of previous I Love My Park Day organizers and feedback from volunteer evaluation surveys.

- Consider having a handful of projects that can be completed by volunteers with different skill levels.
- Have a backup project or two in case there are more volunteers than originally anticipated or work is completed early.
- Try to include projects that will have a visible result by the end of the day so volunteers can see what they have accomplished (plus, that makes for great before and after photos!).
- Consider whether or not projects are accessible to those with disabilities and how you will communicate event accessibility to the public.
- Many I Love My Park Day participants are looking for meaningful projects that will make a significant contribution to the park or site. These volunteers are also often willing to work more than just a couple of hours, and may even be willing to come back to finish a project on another workday. The online registration form now asks volunteers if they have any special skills (i.e., carpentry, masonry, landscaping, painting), allowing you to determine in advance if there is an opportunity for a more involved project.



Volunteers participate in some trail maintenance at Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve in Staten Island during I Love My Park Day in 2018.

Once you've assembled your team, designated a coordinator, and selected the projects, you are ready to begin planning the details of your event and reaching out to the community for volunteers and support.

Partnerships

Enlisting local partners is a great way to obtain additional publicity for your event. Partners can also be a source of volunteers for the event. It is a good idea to identify and secure a couple of key partners early on. Potential organizations to reach out to for partnerships include:

- Scout Groups
- YMCA
- AmeriCorps (see next page)
- United Way
- Local municipalities, especially parks and planning departments
- Chamber of commerce
- Tourism promotion association
- Schools and colleges (e.g., service fraternities, environmental and sustainability clubs, science departments)
- Community-based organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Environmental organizations and land trusts
- Audubon chapters
- American Legion Posts and Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis and Elks clubs
- Hospitals and health organizations
- Historical and preservation societies
- Senior citizens groups
- Youth centers
- Local businesses and corporations
- Outdoor recreation clubs and organizations (think of your park's user groups)
- Neighborhood associations
- Local and national park Friends groups

New Yorkers Volunteer (AmeriCorps) – Premier State Partner

The New York State Commission on National and Community Service is a Governor-appointed body that promotes volunteering, national service and civic engagement. Supported by the State Commission Office, New Yorkers Volunteer, the Commission administers the AmeriCorps program which places 2,900 current members in service at more than 560 sites throughout New York State. The Commission also oversees five Volunteer Generation Programs. In 2013, New Yorkers Volunteer joined the I Love My Park Day effort as a Premier State Partner to help recruit volunteers, promote the initiative and engage AmeriCorps members to support projects across the state.

The State Commission can help promote and support your I Love My Park Day event in the following ways:

- Volunteer Generation Programs will post opportunities on their website and reach out to their volunteer network in your region to recruit volunteers for you.
- AmeriCorps members will help plan and coordinate the day's activities (i.e., assisting with volunteer sign-in, leading project teams, assisting with setup the day before or morning of, etc.).
- I Love My Park Day sites can request teams of AmeriCorps members to complete specific, day-of service projects.

All contact information can be found on the New Yorkers Volunteer website (www.NewYorkersVolunteer.ny.gov). Additionally, you will have the opportunity to request the assistance of AmeriCorps members on the Event Information Form sent to you via email by PTNY, typically in February.

If you are interested in learning more about AmeriCorps resources to support your event, you will have the opportunity to participate on a conference call (details will be emailed to organizers).

Building Partnerships at the Old Croton Aqueduct

Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct and park staff decided to use I Love My Park Day in 2012 to launch a new invasive vine-removal project. In the process of planning this project, the Friends made numerous new connections with other organizations. They were successful in involving an expert from the Bronx River Parkway Reservation Conservancy and received additional support from the Westchester County Department of Parks, the Town of Cortlandt, the NY-NJ Trail Conference, and the Croton Conservation Advisory Council.

On I Love My Park Day, 35 volunteers collected enough invasive plants to fill 21 large trash bags, gathered a truckload of trash and cut vines to save numerous trees from strangulation.



“The volunteers felt a great sense of accomplishment since there was a visible difference before and after,” said Diane Alden, one of the Friends organizers. “They developed a sense of camaraderie during the event and felt supported by the way the event was organized. Many encouraged us to organize future events and expressed enthusiasm about participating. What more could we ask!”

Program and Press Event

I Love My Park Day is an opportunity to bring visibility to your park or historic site and the entire state park system, as well as to your Friends group. It's a way to recruit new volunteers and re-engage longtime supporters. PTNY and OPRHP will send out publicity statewide and promote all events but we encourage you to organize a short program or press conference in conjunction with the event project itself. The following are some ideas for a short program at your event.

- Have someone from your group welcome and thank volunteers.
- Let people know the event is part of a statewide I Love My Park Day and use the talking points from the Overview section and template press release.
- Tell people what's special and important about your park or historic site.
- Describe the efforts of your Friends group and how to get involved.
- Invite state and local elected officials and other community and business leaders to say a few words.
- Hold a raffle with giveaways.
- Recognize a dedicated volunteer with a special award.

Planning Tip – Hold a raffle

At Saratoga Spa State Park, park staff secure several gift card donations from local businesses ranging from \$10 to \$100. The gift cards are used as raffle prizes. Prizes are raffled at the end of the day's events as an incentive for volunteers to stay. Each volunteer is given a raffle ticket at registration.

Alternatively, a Friends group could sell raffle tickets at registration. **Please note:** authorized nonprofits must register with NYS in order to conduct a raffle where tickets are sold. More info: <http://www.gaming.ny.gov/charitablegaming/>.

The welcome event for the press and volunteers should be held before the cleanup projects begin as a way to kick off the day. There is no prescribed length or schedule of the day; it is up to each Friends group and park staff to decide what works best based on the park/site needs. Events may be just in the morning or just in the afternoon. If you're thinking about making it an all-day event, take into consideration what people will do for lunch.

Supplies

Once you have decided on your project and what volunteers will be doing on I Love My Park Day, you can begin to put together a list of needed supplies. For example, if your project is a trail cleanup, you'll want to make sure you have enough rakes, pruning clippers, bags, litter sticks, and gloves so there are no idle hands at your event. You'll also want things like refreshments to keep volunteers well-nourished.

(Alternatively, you can ask volunteers to bring their own supplies.) In general, plan to have the following ready before volunteers arrive:

- Tools and equipment necessary for the cleanup or improvement project
- Refreshments for volunteers (e.g., water, granola bars)
- Supplies for organizers (e.g., megaphone, clipboards, registration table, etc.)
- Promotional materials (banner or posters, membership brochures, I Love My Park Day promotional items, etc.)

Your park manager may be able to provide some tools and equipment. If your organization does not have the other supplies needed or does not have the budget to make purchases, local businesses are a good source of in-kind donations (see the Fundraising section for ideas).

Backup Plans

No matter how organized an event may be, there is always the possibility that something will not go according to plan. Consider what your group will do if the following situations (or others) arise:

- Inclement weather (see below)
- Speaker cancellation
- Illness of committee member
- Failure of vendor or supplies to arrive
- Walk-in participants who don't have tasks assigned to them

Inclement weather

In the event of inclement weather, it is up to each individual Friends group, along with park staff, to determine the course of action. PTNY and OPRHP publicize the statewide event and will hold a press event on the scheduled I Love My Park Day date regardless of weather conditions; however, your group may decide to schedule a rain date in advance. There is no problem with I Love My Park Day spilling over to other days and keeping the attention on parks and historic sites going longer!

Volunteer Registration and Communications

Registering Volunteers

As a service to local organizers and as a way to boost volunteer numbers, PTNY hosts an online volunteer registration form on its website. That means people are able to visit the PTNY website, find your event on a map, and sign up to volunteer for your event.

The online form includes the official volunteer service agreement required by OPRHP as well as a photo release. Volunteers cannot register to participate unless they agree to both forms. These are the official state agreements, so it works the same as when someone signs the forms in person at the park. This will save time on the day of the event as you do not need to collect these forms from volunteers who register online. The form also includes a place for a parent/guardian to sign for a minor. Any registrations received by PTNY for your event will be forwarded to the lead organizer of your event. Online registration is typically launched around April 1.

PTNY and OPRHP encourage Friends groups and park staff to take advantage of the online registration system and direct potential volunteers to the site to register.

Of course, it is very likely that volunteers will also register directly through the park or Friends group. Please email PTNY any registrations you receive so that we can keep an accurate record of who attended and how many volunteers participated. This will also ensure that we do not register more volunteers than can be accommodated at your event and allow us to communicate with volunteers about I Love My Park Day-related news. Names and email addresses are all that need to be provided to PTNY.

Walk-ins

It is also possible that volunteers will come to your event without having pre-registered. Be prepared by having a sign-up sheet that asks, at a minimum, for name and email address and by having extra volunteer service agreement and photo release forms. Following the event, these walk-in volunteers should be added to your contacts list. As with pre-registrants, sending PTNY a list of walk-in volunteers helps to ensure we have a complete record of how many volunteers participated.

Large Groups

PTNY has developed a special registration form for large groups that wish to register volunteers. PTNY will forward requests from large groups that wish to participate to the local organizer to ensure that the group can be accommodated.

Please note: Groups that sign up through PTNY's system are informed that they are not officially registered until they hear from you. Be sure to follow up directly with all group registrations in a timely manner.

See Appendix A for a Sample Timeline your group can use to help plan your event. The timeline is also available for download from www.ptny.org/ilovemypark.

Communicating with Volunteers

When planning your event, good communications with your volunteers is critical to making sure the day goes smoothly and volunteers have a good experience and want to volunteer again.

Volunteer registration will be available through PTNY's website; we will provide you with the volunteer's contact information when they register. If you would like a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that lists all registrations that have been received online for your site before I Love My Park Day, please email PTNY – otherwise, you can compile a list using the ongoing registrations you have received.

Be sure to contact volunteers right after they register and keep them informed regularly, up to the day of the event. Send them information on what to expect and how to prepare. In general, err on the side of more, rather than less, information, such as

- A review of the date, time and location, including the specific meeting location
- A rain date (if applicable)
- Directions to the event location (don't assume that volunteers have been to the park before or are very familiar with it)
- Information on parking
- What to wear
- What to bring
 - Are you asking volunteers to bring tools?
 - Are you providing water, snacks or lunch for volunteers? If not, be sure to let them know in advance to bring something to drink/eat.
- Any special instructions for parents of young children (i.e., all children under a certain age must have a parent present and/or the age-appropriateness of each project).
- We suggest you give volunteers an arrival time about 30 minutes prior to the start of the press or opening event and beginning of projects. This will allow volunteers time to sign in, select projects, and eat a snack, but still hear any opening remarks and find the event they signed up for.
- Let them know that volunteers will have free entry into the park that day.
- An advance thank you for volunteering. Help to get them excited for your event!

Some volunteers, particularly school groups, may be interested in receiving community service credit for their participation in I Love My Park Day. You can indicate in your communications to volunteers that credit can be obtained and who to see on the day of the event to sign any necessary paperwork.

Support from PTNY

In addition to online volunteer registration, PTNY will help Friends groups with I Love My Park Day planning in several ways.

Sample materials

Included in this manual and on the PTNY website are sample materials and templates your organization can use to help promote and plan your event (i.e., planning tools, template letters and press materials, flyers, signs, etc.). All of the templates found in the appendices are available for download from

<http://www.ptny.org/ilovemypark/resources.shtml> along with additional resources.

Website and social media

PTNY hosts a central website (www.ptny.org/ilovemypark) with tools for organizers, information on I Love My Park Day events happening around the state, a map where potential participants can find local events, and a volunteer registration form. The website will include information on your event (such as time, location, contact, what to bring or wear, etc.) and will enable visitors to register to volunteer for your event. See page 8 for more on volunteer registration.

PTNY and OPRHP will also promote I Love My Park Day and individual events using social media including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Promotional t-shirts and banner

PTNY will supply participating groups with promotional I Love My Park Day t-shirts to use at the event and give to volunteers. In addition, each site receives a banner to display at the event.

Planning support

PTNY hosts at least one webinar for all organizers. This is an opportunity to learn more about what PTNY and OPRHP are working on for I Love My Park Day, some of the other projects happening across the state, the resources available to you, and tips to help you as you

Business Partnerships at Max V. Shaul State Park

Volunteers from the Oneonta Home Depot pitched in at Max V. Shaul State Park for the first-ever I Love My Park Day in 2012. Not only did Home Depot provide people power, but the store also sent a truckload of donations to help make the day a success. Thanks to the donation of building materials, plants and flowers, and the use of power equipment, volunteers were able to build a raised flower bed around the entrance sign and flower boxes around the park. They also helped with tasks like digging the holes for new benches on the ball field.



prepare for your event, as well as for you to ask questions and share ideas with other organizers.

In addition, PTNY provides regular email updates to organizers. Staff is also available to answer any questions you have along the way.



4. FUNDRAISING

Fundraising for I Love My Park Day is not required in order to participate; however, for several reasons you may want to seek additional outside support. In addition to getting supplies and publicity, I Love My Park Day offers Friends groups an opportunity to raise their profile in the community by providing businesses and other partners a tangible and high-profile event to support. This is an opportunity to build relationships with new partners.

Sponsorships and Grants

Sponsors can help increase your capacity and help provide visibility for your event. Local businesses will often sponsor an event – either with a monetary contribution or an in-kind donation and volunteers – in return for listing their business on event materials.

When thinking of businesses to approach, it's a good idea to start with businesses to which your organization has personal connections. Then, consider which businesses have a natural connection to the type of event being held (e.g., Home Depot or Lowe's for cleanups, nurseries for plantings, etc.). You'll also want to see what grants nearby businesses, such as local banks, have available to local organizations.

In-kind donations

In-kind donations can also be valuable in helping support your event:

- Local media partners can provide free advertising.
- Home improvement and hardware stores can provide supplies and tools.
- Garden centers and nurseries can provide tools, as well as flowers, plants, and mulch.
- Grocery stores, food establishments, orchards, and farms can supply food and drinks for volunteers (i.e., water, cider, granola bars, pizza).
- Print shops and graphic designers can provide promotional materials.
- Outdoor retailers can donate gear for a raffle or other giveaways.

Many businesses, particularly large chain retailers, often provide gift cards that can be used to purchase supplies if you contact store managers (be sure to bring your tax ID when making purchases if your organization is exempt from paying sales tax).

These same businesses are also a great source of volunteers. Many businesses encourage employee volunteer days, so be sure to ask if they would be willing to promote volunteering for I Love My Park Day among their employees.

See Appendix B for a template letter your group can use when reaching out to potential sponsors. The letter is also available for download from www.ptny.org/ilovemypark.

Before you solicit

When approaching a business about sponsorship, be prepared with information on the event and on your organization as well as what types of visibility you can provide. Have I Love My Park Day information available, along with a brochure or handout about your Friends group. Know in advance what advertising you will be able to offer businesses. Will you list the business name or logo on your website with a link to the business? Will you include its logo on handouts and/or set up a table? Will its logo appear on a banner? Will a representative be able to say a few words at the event? Consider whether you will have different sponsorship levels and what each level means (e.g., \$500 gets a website listing, \$1,000 gets a logo on a banner). Note that PTNY can include sponsors on your event listing on the I Love My Park Day website.

Here are a couple of examples from Friends groups:

- The Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct created a photo album through Shutterfly using photos from the first I Love My Park Day. They had the photo album printed when the site was running a special, costing the Friends only about \$25. They then brought this album to local businesses when soliciting them for sponsorships and donations of the following year’s event. The Friends report that the businesses were all impressed and it was a good way to get sponsors onboard. The photo album can then be displayed on the registration desk at I Love My Park Day.



Template available at <http://www.ptny.org/ilovemypark/>

**Sample Event Guide:
Hamlin Beach State Park**

- The Friends of Hamlin Beach State Park recruited businesses to sponsor specific projects on I Love My Park Day. For example, Tops Friendly Markets sponsored a tree planting project. Not only did businesses support the event financially, but many sent teams of volunteers to participate. Park staff developed a program of the day's events (see right) that thanked sponsors on the back and included sponsor logos. PTNY has developed a template Event Guide that is available on the website.

Acknowledging sponsors

Oftentimes, businesses are interested in what visibility your event can provide. Here are some things you could offer a sponsoring business in advance and on the day of your event:

- Listing on website
- Logo or business name on flyers, in email announcements, on brochure or program of day's events (see sample above right)
- Promotions through social media
- Logo on banner
- Posters, cards, and other materials they can display in their establishments
- Opportunity to say a few words at the event
- Inclusion in local media advisory and press release

After the event

- Send sponsors a written thank you letter. If you had materials printed with business logos, send those along with the thank you.
- Thank sponsors on your website, email blasts, and social media.
- Provide sponsors with a certificate of appreciation or tent card(s) they can place on countertops or on a wall (see Appendix G for a template).

5. PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION

Once you have the what, when, where, how, and why figured out for your event, it's time to start recruiting volunteers to participate in I Love My Park Day.

Rack Cards and Posters

PTNY and OPRHP send promotional posters and rack cards to participating event locations. The posters should be displayed in prominent, high-traffic areas of your park/site. The rack cards may be used at your park/site or they can be left at prime locations in the community or used during tabling events, programs or presentations off-site.

Outreach to Members and Past Volunteers

Your membership, along with past volunteers, is the first place to start when recruiting volunteers. These are the people most likely to participate, so getting as many members to register is important for ensuring a good turnout. Reach out to members using various communications vehicles:

- Include an event ad in your printed newsletter.
- Do a special mailing, like a save-the-date postcard.
- Put information on your website homepage with a link to more information.
- Use social media like blogs, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to spread the word often.
 - Use #ILMPD in all your social media posts.
 - Follow us on Twitter (@NYstateparks and @PTNY) so you can re-tweet any information we send out, and tag us in your tweets so we see them.
 - When posting photos to Facebook, tag PTNY and State Parks so they show up on our pages as well.
 - When posting photos to Instagram, tag @ParksTrailsNY and @NYstateparks.

Outreach to Broader Community

I Love My Park Day is an opportunity to recruit new volunteers to your Friends group. In addition to reaching out to members and previous volunteers, consider methods to reach a wider audience:

- Ask partners to publicize the event to their members, both in print and online.
- Post flyers and rack cards on community bulletin boards (e.g., library, coffee shops, food co-op).
- Speak at community organization and scout troop meetings, local colleges, schools, etc.
- Post information to online event calendars.
- Reach out to local elementary, middle and high schools and PTAs.
- Ask local shops to post a flyer in windows, on bulletin boards in the shops, or in another visible location. Good shops to visit include outdoor and bike shops, food co-ops, and other earth-friendly establishments.
- Other locations to hang flyers:
 - Community boards
 - Libraries
 - High schools



The flyer is titled "I LOVE MY PARK day" with "day" in a green script font and "www.ptny.org" below it. The main heading is "Show New York's State Parks Some Love Saturday, May 5, 2018". Below this, it says "Volunteer on May 5th and be a part of this exciting statewide event to improve and enhance New York's state parks and historic sites and bring visibility to the entire state park system." There are three logos: "NEW YORK STATE PARKS", "PARKS & TRAILS NEW YORK", and "NEW YORK STATE DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION". A registration link "www.ptny.org/ilovemypark" is provided. A box on the right contains event details: "WHEN: Saturday, May 5, 2018", "TIME: 9:00 - NOON", "LOCATION: Robert H. Treman State Park (Lower Park)", "PROJECT DESCRIPTION: tree planting, trail clean up, picnic table building, various paint jobs, mill cleaning, other projects ...", and "MORE INFO: (607) 273-3440".

Flyer created by park staff at Robert H. Treman State Park in Ithaca.

- Coffee shops
- Churches
- Local colleges

Note that we will send you a poster to hang in a high-traffic, visible area of the park/site.

Outreach to Media

Newspaper, radio and television coverage is invaluable in generating public awareness of your group, your park or historic site, and your project. If your organization has not yet done much media outreach, I Love My Park Day is a good opportunity to introduce your organization to the media.

Start by developing a list of local newspapers and radio and television stations and call them to find out who is the best person to contact for state park and historic site news and events such as I Love My Park Day. Also inquire how they prefer to receive information. Nowadays, many media representatives prefer to receive material electronically – get the newsroom’s main email address so you can send them releases and pictures.

Newspapers may run event information on a printed and/or web calendar free of charge. Many radio and television stations also have free events pages on their websites, so ask them to post information about I Love My Park Day for you. Getting information to the appropriate person as soon as details are finalized is important.

More in-depth coverage, however, involves sending a press release – usually multiple times – far in advance of your event along with follow-up calls. Reporters need enough lead time to be able to plan to attend your event. It’s a good idea to send the first press release one month in advance of your event and then follow up with phone calls to make sure the release was received, see if there are any questions, and try to get a commitment from the media outlet to cover the event.

Send a media advisory a few days before the event with key details (who, what, when, where) followed by the final press release the day before or day of the event. Thursday and Friday before the event call the newsrooms to remind them of the event and see if they will be covering it. Find out who from the newsroom you should speak to the day of the event. If they will not be able to cover the event, make it easy for them: offer to send them pictures, quotes and information on participation right after the event. With the information and pictures you provide them that day the media outlets can report

that night or the following morning on the success of your I Love My Park Day event. Keep track of the coverage your event receives so you can report on it after the event to your members as well as to PTNY.

Another good avenue for getting the word out is letters to the editor or Op Ed pieces. Friends members might submit letters in advance of the event, and volunteers might submit letters after the event.

When preparing information for the press or speaking with reporters, use I Love My Park Day materials to find key messages that relate to your park or historic site. Using these messages helps ensure consistency in coverage across the state.

See Appendix C for a template press release and a template media advisory. You can also download these templates from www.ptny.org/ilovemypark.

Outreach to Elected Officials

I Love My Park Day is an opportunity to invite local and state officials to visit the park or historic site and meet your Friends group. Officials to invite include the local mayor, town or county supervisors, village board members, state Assemblymember, state Senator, and Congressperson. We recommend reaching out to officials with a formal invitation that includes an invitation to say a few words to participants as part of a short program (see Appendix D for a template invitation). You may need to follow up with a phone call.

If any local officials will be attending and/or speaking at your event, it is important to include that information in any media advisories and press releases. We also recommend setting aside I Love My Park Day t-shirts to give to each official that attends and making sure someone is ready to greet officials when they arrive.

Please note that PTNY and OPRHP will be in communications with the Governor's office.

6. AT YOUR EVENT

Assignments

Before your event, you'll want to make sure everyone on your committee and in your Friends group is clear about what their responsibilities are that day – what they are to bring, and what will they be doing once there. By assigning tasks to different team and

Friends' group members, you can spread the workload and make sure everyone is invested in the success of the event. Some jobs to assign include

- Greeting people
- Volunteer group/project leaders
- Putting up signs early in the day or the day before
- Handing out tools
- Signing in volunteers and answering questions
- Taking pictures of speakers and volunteers in action, including before and after photos
- Taking video of the day's events
- Welcoming speakers and dignitaries

At Riverbank, for example, the event is broken up into different work zones. Each work zone has a team leader. On the morning of the event, there are sheets prepared describing all the projects going on that day. See below for an example.

Zone Assignment	Description	Location	Team Leader
Zone 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remove weeds from raised planters - Remove weeds under benches - Sweep debris from sea rail - Put debris in black bags for collection 	<p style="text-align: center;">South End of the park</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Softball field</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Handball and Basketball courts</p>	John Smith
Zone 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean the playground equipment - Remove all weeds under benches - Remove weeds from playground perimeter or boarder and planters 	South End Playground Area	Susan Jones

	- Place all debris in black bags for collection		
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Practicalities

No matter what you have planned for the day, there are a few practicalities to consider:

- Emergencies: While unlikely, it is always possible that there may be an emergency at your event – someone might get hurt or become ill suddenly. Talk with your park or site manager about how emergencies will be handled and have phone numbers on hand.
- Restrooms: If restrooms are not readily available in existing park facilities, port-a-johns may need to be rented.
- Food: Volunteers appreciate refreshments, especially when engaged in physical labor. As noted earlier, local businesses are a good source of food and drink donations. If refreshments cannot be provided, be sure to let volunteers know to bring a snack and a water bottle.
- Transportation and parking: Consider how volunteers will get to the event site – will they drive there or will they need to park elsewhere and take a shuttle? Are special permits needed for parking? How will you communicate with volunteers and the media about how to get to your event and where to park? We strongly recommend putting up directional signs so that new visitors to the park or those less familiar with the park’s layout will be able to easily find the event.

While many state parks and historic sites are not yet charging entrance fees in early May, if your site is charging a fee consider giving the toll booth operator a list of the names of volunteers so they do not have to pay the fee along with instructions for how to handle volunteers who have not pre-registered.

- Latecomers: We recommend assigning one person to remain at the main meeting location to greet latecomers and make sure they are able to connect with a project team.

Press Kits

If you decide to hold a press event as part of I Love My Park Day, we recommend putting together press kits to hand out to the media. The press kit can be compiled into a folder with pockets and include

- A press release – make sure to include the names and telephone numbers of people to contact for more information (see template)
- An I Love My Park Day overview fact sheet
- A sponsor list
- A speaker list with short biographical profiles
- A newsletter from your organization (if available)
- A brochure or fact sheet about the Friends group that includes information on how to get involved

Planning Tip – Say Cheese!

As you plan your I Love My Park Day events and projects, be sure to think about taking photos and videos of the day. You might assign one or two people to be responsible for taking photos and videos. You might also ask participants to share with you any photos they take that day. Some things to take photos of:

- Before and after shots of cleanups and other projects (see example on p. 4)
- Friends group members with elected officials or sponsors and partners
- A posed group shot of all the volunteers
- Volunteers at work
- Speakers at press event (if applicable)
- Families engaged in projects

Engaging Volunteers

I Love My Park Day provides an excellent opportunity to engage new volunteers and reinvigorate long-time supporters. Think about how you will capture the energy and enthusiasm on I Love My Park Day for future events and activities. Some ideas include

- Having information and a sign-up sheet for another upcoming volunteer workday(s) and encouraging volunteers to sign up right there to come back to the park or historic site. This works really well if you have a project that starts on I Love My Park Day and continues on a second workday (or as many as needed).
- Setting up a table with information about your Friends group and assigning a Friends representative to work the table before project work begins, during any breaks, and at the end of the event. Include materials on programs, upcoming events and membership. Have a sign-up sheet for the Friends email list.
- Making note of some particularly enthusiastic new volunteers and following up personally with a phone call.

Day-of Checklist

- Important phone numbers
 - Committee members
 - Park manager
 - Vendors
 - Speakers
 - Volunteers
 - Media contacts
 - Emergency numbers
- Signs
- Table(s)
- Watch
- Clipboards
- Megaphone or PA system
- Banner/poster
- Cleanup/improvement tools and equipment
- First-aid kit
- Refreshments
- I Love My Park Day t-shirts and other promotional items
- Membership brochures and copies of recent newsletter
- I Love My Park Day fact sheet
- Friends email list sign-up sheets
- Project sign-up sheets
- Volunteer handouts or packets
- Pens and markers
- Tape
- Extra copies of Volunteer Service Agreement
- Extra copies of Photo Release forms
- Camera
- Press kits

Planning Tip – Dress the Part

PTNY provides t-shirts to organizers to give to volunteers on I Love My Park Day. Friends representatives may wish to wear Friends t-shirts or caps to distinguish themselves as event organizers.

7. AFTER YOUR EVENT

Congratulations! The hard work is over and you can celebrate your success (really, go out for a celebratory dinner with your team!). Before you relax completely, though, there are just a few follow-up tasks to complete. These will help make sure future I Love My Park Day events are improved and equally – if not more – successful.

Media Follow Up

Right after the event is over gather your digital pictures and email a few of the best along with the number of participants and quotes from volunteers, organizers and community leaders to your media contacts. This way even media outlets that may not have the staff to cover the weekend event will have the information and pictures it takes to write a story and broadcast, print or post it on their websites.

The day after the event, reach out to media contacts who have not yet run a story. Send them links to photos on Flickr and let them know how many volunteers participated and what was accomplished. Ask them if they will run a follow-up story.

Share Your Photos on Instagram, Facebook and Flickr

Post your photos from the event to keep the buzz going on social media.

- On Instagram use hashtag #ILMPD. Be sure to tag @ParksTrailsNY and @NYstateparks.
- Add your photos to Flickr and add them to PTNY's Flickr group: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/ptny/> and tag the photos with "ILMPD."
- Create a Facebook photo album with photos from the day.

Thank Yous

It's a good idea to thank key individuals and partners right after the event. This will help build relationships and ensure their participation in future events. A personal, hand-written thank you provides a nice touch for those that made a special contribution. People to thank include

- Corporate sponsors – monetary and in-kind
- Media sponsors
- Local officials and community/business leaders that attended or spoke at the event
- Key volunteers

A thank-you to all the event volunteers is also a nice idea. Sending a handwritten note to 100 volunteers might not be feasible, so an email in this case would be appropriate. See the appendices for template thank-you letters.

Committee Debrief – Think About Next Year's Event

It's also important for the organizing committee to meet while the event is still fresh in everyone's minds. Talk



Remember to have fun! Volunteers at Letchworth State Park celebrated both I Love My Park Day and Cinco de Mayo while they worked.

about what worked well and what didn't. Be sure to take notes so you have them handy when you start planning the next I Love My Park Day. There may also be some notes that are important to share with PTNY.

PTNY Evaluation

PTNY will be looking to Friends groups and park staff to help improve the event for future years. PTNY will email the group's lead organizer with a link to an online evaluation form. Your responses are important to ensuring the event is successful in future years and continues to grow.

Some of the information and data PTNY will be looking to collect from organizers include

- Number of volunteers
- Number of volunteer hours worked
- Description of what was accomplished
- Specifics on what was accomplished (e.g., miles of trails cleared, bags of litter collected, trees planted, etc.)
- List of local sponsors and an estimate of the value of the goods and/or services provided
- Information on press coverage and outreach completed
- Information on local elected officials in attendance
- Usefulness of different resources and tools for organizers

This information helps us tout the success of I Love My Park Day and promote the event all year.

In addition to the survey, PTNY and OPRHP will host a webinar a few days after the event to provide an opportunity for organizers to provide feedback and share ideas for an even better I Love My Park Day.

Event Report

The event promotion doesn't end once the event is over. Publishing a summary on the day's activities along with photos lets people know what you've accomplished and will hopefully attract more participation next year. You can also use it next year when approaching sponsors, writing grants, and recruiting volunteers. A report can go on your website and Facebook page, and in any printed or electronic newsletters. In addition, PTNY will put stories and photos from I Love My Park Day on its website and in other communications vehicles.

Volunteer Follow-up

It's a good idea to follow-up with new volunteers soon after the event. In addition to a thank you sent immediately after the event, solicit their feedback on the event. Invite them to the next Friends meeting or volunteer or educational event. Send them a membership or donation solicitation. Contacting new volunteers before too much time has passed will help engage them in your Friends group.

Thanks for participating in I Love My Park Day!

Have questions? Call PTNY at 518-434-1583 or email ilovemypark@ptny.org.

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE TIMELINE

Month	Task	Lead	Others	Status
January	Confirm participation with PTNY			
	Designate coordinator and assemble team			
	Meet with park manager and decide on project			
	Begin promotions (save the date on website, newsletter, etc.), submissions to calendars			
	Make preliminary list of supply needs			
	Make list of potential partners			
	Make list of potential sponsors			
	Develop event program			
	Decide about award and/or raffle			
	Begin fundraising			
	Seek partnerships			
February	Invite speakers			
	Continue outreach and promotions			
	Continue outreach to sponsors and partners			
	Participate in webinar for organizers hosted by PTNY and OPRHP			
March	Continue outreach and promotion			
Early April	Send first press release			
	Continue outreach and promotions			
	Follow up with media			

	Order any printed needs (banner, signs, etc.)			
Mid-April	Participate in webinar for organizers hosted by PTNY and OPRHP			
Late April	Send second press release			
Early the week of	Confirm volunteers, vendors and speakers and send them logistics information			
	Send media advisory (Thursday or Friday)			
Day of	Send final press release (can also be sent day before)			
	Pre-event check on supplies, equipment, sounds system, etc.			
	Take photos!			
	Tweet updates throughout the day – include #ILMPD			
	Send photos to ilovemypark@ptny.org or Alison.Lynch-Coudriet@parks.ny.gov			
	Have fun!			
Post event	Follow up with media contacts			
	Send thank yous			
	Hold debriefing meeting			
	Participate in webinar hosted by PTNY and OPRHP			
	Complete PTNY evaluation			

	Post report with pictures on website and Facebook, and include in print and electronic newsletters			

APPENDIX B: TEMPLATE SPONSOR LETTER

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

Dear _____,

Please join us in an exciting statewide event. I Love My Park Day will celebrate and improve park lands and beaches, plant trees and gardens, restore trails and wildlife habitat, carry out site improvement projects, and bring visibility to the entire New York State park system and its needs.

_____ (Friends group name) invites you to participate in the 8th annual I Love My Park Day as a sponsor. The day offers opportunities for companies to:

- Demonstrate environmental leadership
- Support community pride
- Provide hands-on volunteer and team-building activities for employees
- Attract positive media coverage and generate good will among customers, employees, elected officials, and the general public

_____ (Friends group name) is organizing an event at _____ (park or historic site). The event is being coordinated at the state level by Parks & Trails New York in cooperation with the state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Saturday, May 4, 2019

_____ **(park or historic site name and location)**

We hope that _____ (name of company) will join us in celebrating _____ (park or historic site), and help to make this event a notable success by participating as a Sponsor and by the attendance of employees on May 4. Sponsors enjoy several benefits, including:

(include whatever benefits your group will provide sponsors, such as:

- Logo and name on banners and signs at event location
- Recognition in all press materials, media event, etc.)

_____ (Friends group name) is eager to work with _____ to provide for additional participation and acknowledgement of its support.

_____ (Friends group name) has been dedicated since _____ (year founded) to protecting and promoting _____ (park or historic site). (Here you may want to include additional information on your group's past successes and accomplishments.)

We look forward to sharing this festive event with many friends of _____ (park or historic site) as a tribute to our natural heritage and to public service at its best.

Sincerely,

_____ (contact name)
_____ (title)

P.S. **Please reply by _____ (date)** to ensure that _____ (name of firm) will be included as a Sponsor.

Encl.

APPENDIX C: TEMPLATE PRESS RELEASE & MEDIA ADVISORY

To be sent as often as needed starting about one month prior to the event and updated as more details are finalized. Check www.ptny.org/ilovemypark for the most up-to-date versions.

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release:

_____ (date)

Contacts:

_____ (name, Friends group, phone number and email address of person who will be the media contact for your group)

Sarah Braymer, Parks & Trails New York: 518-434-1583; sbraymer@ptny.org

Randy Simons or Dan Keefe, Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation: 518-486-1868

_____ **(Friends group) to Host I Love My Park Day Event on Saturday, May 4**

Volunteers Participating at Events Across New York to Celebrate State Parks and Historic Sites

(_____ (city), NY):

_____ (Friends group) will host volunteers at _____ (park or historic site) as part of more than 125 cleanup, improvement and beautification events happening statewide on Saturday, May 4. I Love My Park Day is an exciting statewide event to celebrate and enhance New York's state parks, historic sites and public lands and bring visibility to the entire state park system and its needs. Volunteers from across the state will participate in cleanup, improvement, and beautification events at New York State parks and historic sites. Volunteers will celebrate New York's state park system by cleaning up park lands and beaches,

planting trees and gardens, restoring trails and wildlife habitat, removing invasive species, and working on various site improvement projects.

(Describe here in a paragraph or two the event and project you are planning, including a quote.)

(Here describe your park or historic site and why it is important.)

I Love My Park Day is coordinated at the statewide level by Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) in partnership with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP). Friends groups and park staff will oversee cleanup, improvement and beautification projects and work with volunteers.

New York State is a leader in parks and conservation because of a long history of stewardship and generosity of private citizens. Friends groups and volunteers are more important than ever to keep parks beautiful, clean, and welcoming for all to visit and enjoy. Volunteer participation in a cleanup day will help enhance these important places during lean budget times and show elected leaders that there is strong public support for our park system.

(Include here mention of any sponsors of the event or key partners participating in the day.)
Statewide sponsors include (TBD).

Those interested in volunteering in the project at _____ (park or site) can register to volunteer by visiting www.ptny.org/ilovemypark or by calling _____ (Friends group phone number).

About _____ (Friends group): (Here provide a brief description of your Friends group.)

About PTNY: Parks & Trails New York is the leading statewide organization working to preserve and enhance a network of parks, trails and greenways for all New Yorkers for generations to come. Since 1985, our influential reports and advocacy efforts have been critical to keeping parks and historic sites open and protecting New York’s natural, recreational, cultural and historical resources. For more information, visit www.ptny.org.

About OPRHP: The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation oversees 180 state parks and 35 historic sites, which are visited by more than 67 million people annually. A recent study by Parks & Trails New York found that New York State Parks generates \$5 billion in economic activity annually and supports 54,000 jobs. For more information on any of these recreation areas, call 518-474-0456 or visit www.nysparks.com, connect on Facebook, or follow on Twitter.

Check www.ptny.org/ilovemypark for updated press release templates.

To be sent a few days in advance.

MEDIA ADVISORY

_____ (date)

Contacts:

_____ (name, Friends group and phone number for media contact for Friends group)

Sarah Braymer, Parks & Trails New York: 518-434-1583; sbraymer@ptny.org

Randy Simons or Dan Keefe, Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation: 518-486-1868

_____ **(Friends group) to Host I Love My Park Day Event on Saturday, May 4**

_____ **(Number of expected volunteers) Volunteers Expected to Participate at _____ (Name of park or historic site) to Celebrate State Parks and Historic Sites**

(_____(city), NY):

_____ (Friends group) will host volunteers at _____ (park or historic site) as part of more than 125 cleanup, improvement and beautification events happening statewide on Saturday, May 4. I Love My Park Day is an exciting statewide event to celebrate and enhance New York's state parks, historic sites and public lands and bring visibility to the entire state park system and its needs. Volunteers from across the state will participate in cleanup, improvement, and beautification events at New York State parks and historic sites. Volunteers will celebrate New York's state park system by cleaning up park lands and beaches, planting trees and gardens, restoring trails and wildlife habitat, removing invasive species, and working on various site improvement projects.

_____ (number of expected volunteers) volunteers are expected to participate at an I Love My Park Day event at _____ (park or historic site).

WHO: (Names of all local participants, including sponsors, elected officials and public agencies, schools, nonprofit groups, special guests, and other volunteers.)

WHAT: (Describe the project(s) to be completed.)

WHEN: Saturday, May 4, 2019 at _____ (time)

WHERE: (Park or site name and address. Provide directions if necessary.)

CONTACT: (Primary event contact information, including phone number, email and website address, if applicable)

I Love My Park Day is coordinated at the statewide level by Parks & Trails New York in partnership with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Friends groups and park staff oversee cleanup, improvement and beautification projects and work with volunteers. More information is available at <http://www.ptny.org/ilovemypark>.

Check www.ptny.org/ilovemypark for updated media advisory templates.

APPENDIX D: TEMPLATE INVITATION TO ELECTED OFFICIAL

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

Dear _____,

_____ (Friends group) invites to you to join us for an exciting statewide event to improve and enhance New York's state parks and historic sites and bring visibility to the entire park system and its needs. The eighth annual I Love My Park Day will take place on May 4, 2019, where thousands of volunteers across the state will participate in cleanup, improvement, and beautification events at more than 125 New York state parks, historic sites and public lands.

Here in _____ (city or region), volunteers will pitch in at _____ (park or historic site) from _____ (start time) until _____ (end time). Volunteers will help _____ (include here some examples of the kinds of projects volunteers will help with).

We will kick off the event at _____ (park or historic site) with a press conference. The press conference will begin at _____ (time) at _____ (specific location). We would welcome your participation in this press event, and in any part of the day's activities.

I Love My Park Day is coordinated at the statewide level by Parks & Trails New York in partnership with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Friends groups and park staff oversee cleanup, improvement and beautification projects and work with volunteers. More information is available at <http://www.ptny.org/ilovemypark>.

We hope you will join us in celebrating our magnificent state park system and take the opportunity of this statewide event to visit _____ (park or historic site) and help out on this exciting day. I will follow up with your office. You may also reach me at _____ (phone number).

I hope to see you on I Love My Park Day.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX E: TEMPLATE FLYER



**Show New York's State Parks Some Love
Saturday, May 4, 2019**

Volunteer on May 4th and be a part of this exciting statewide event to celebrate and enhance New York's state parks and historic sites and bring visibility to the entire state park system.

Register to volunteer at
www.ptny.org/ilovemypark



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

Put your event details here, i.e.:

WHEN: Saturday, May 4

TIME:

LOCATION:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

MORE INFO: (Number to call)

APPENDIX F: TEMPLATE THANK YOU LETTERS

Thank you to Sponsors

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

Dear _____,

Thank you for supporting the eighth annual I Love My Park Day, May 4, 2019. With your help it was a tremendous success, exceeding our most ambitious hopes and expectations. Truly, New Yorkers love their parks, and are willing to show it!

_____ (number) volunteers pitched in to improve _____ (park or historic site). (Here describe some of what was accomplished.)

Overall, thousands of volunteers pitched in on cleanup, improvement, and beautification projects at more than 125 state parks and historic sites across the state as part of I Love My Park Day.

We've enclosed some photos taken at the event, as well as an I Love My Park Day t-shirt; we hope it will remind you throughout the year of our appreciation for your environmental leadership in supporting this landmark event.

The press coverage was extensive, including TV, radio, and print coverage both in advance of and following the event, with articles in _____ (list some of the media outlets that covered your event).

The day was a great boost for _____ (park or historic site) and for our Friends group. It brought out our dedicated current members – and attracted many new ones with their commitment and accomplishments.

We are eagerly looking forward to next year's event – Saturday, May 4, 2019. Please Save the Date! With the support of green partners like you, it will be even bigger and better.

Sincerely,

Thank you to Elected Officials

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

Dear _____,

Thank you for joining the _____ (Friends group) and volunteers at _____ (park or historic site) on Saturday, May 4 and being part of the eighth annual I Love My Park Day.

We are very gratified at the success of the event. Volunteers took part in cleanup, improvement, and beautification projects at more than 100 state parks and historic sites around the state. At _____ (park or historic site), volunteers _____ (describe what the volunteers accomplished on I Love My Park Day). New and veteran volunteers came out to give back to the park/historic site they use and enjoy all year and create a community of park stewards. [You might want to note here a particular achievement, like if your Friends group enjoyed the best turnout ever for a volunteer event or if new members joined as a result.] Through TV, print and radio coverage, I Love My Park Day put our state parks system, its needs, and the strong public support for parks in the public's eye.

We plan to build on this tremendous momentum by quickly engaging the new volunteers that turned out.

Again, thank you for your participation and for all you do for the _____ (region/town/community).

Sincerely,

Thank you to Volunteers

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

Dear _____,

Thank you for joining other volunteers at _____ (park or historic site) on Saturday, May 4 and being part of the eighth annual I Love My Park Day. The _____ (Friends group) appreciated your coming out to help enhance the park/historic site. The park/historic site looks great with _____ (describe some of the ways in which the park/site has improved thanks to the work completed on I Love My Park Day) thanks to the hard work of the volunteers.

We look forward to seeing you again soon at the park/historic site. (You may want to mention an upcoming Friends meeting or other event.)

Sincerely,

APPENDIX G: TEMPLATE CERTIFICATE FOR SPONSORS

Certificate of Appreciation

Awarded this 4th day of May 2019 to:

Place Name of Business Partner Here

*For their support and sponsorship of the 8th annual I Love My Park Day
at **YOUR PARK/SITE NAME**
to help restore and beautify New York State Parks
and Historic Sites for all to experience and enjoy.*

Place Your Logo Here



Friends Representative Name
Title

APPENDIX H: LOGO USE GUIDELINES

Please see

<http://www.ptny.org/ilovemypark/downloads/ILoveMyParkDay-LogoGuidelines.pdf> for guidelines on the use of the I Love My Park Day logo.



These and many more templates are available for download online at www.ptny.org/ilovemypark.