



NEWS RELEASE

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For more information:

Al Hastings, alhastings0403@gmail.com, cell: 607-423-2769

April Amodei, aprilamodei@gmail.com, cell: 315-406-6213

Jonathan Duda, jduda@ptny.org, cell: 518-768-7028

www.ptny.org/canaltour

More than 300 cyclists to make 400-mile cross-state bicycle trip

—After going virtual for a year, the popular tour is back departing from Buffalo July 11 with cyclists arriving in Fairport July 12—

ALBANY, N.Y. – More than 300 cyclists are crossing New York State via the Erie Canalway Trail between Buffalo and Albany as part of the 23rd annual *Cycle the Erie Canal* tour organized by the statewide nonprofit Parks & Trails New York. Cyclists from 34 states, DC, and Israel have turned out to experience one of our nation’s most significant and historic heritage regions.

This year, participants and planners are extra enthusiastic being that last year’s tour went virtual due to the pandemic. The decision to go ahead with the live event was a difficult one that was not confirmed until well into the usual planning stages. Thus coordinators have faced many challenges and engaged in much creative thinking to put together this year’s event under the proper guidelines to keep it safe for riders, staff, volunteers, and the numerous communities through which the tour will proceed. Registration has been limited to less than 50 percent of the usual 650 rider capacity, meal processes have been adjusted, and facility access has been minimized. But the lucky 300+ riders who successfully registered before capacity filled in less than 24 hours (a record for the tour) are as excited and ready to ride than any past tour.

On Monday, July 12 riders arrive in Fairport, having completed Day 2 of the 8-day, 400-mile tour. They will have visited local museums, taken a boat tour through a lock, and experienced the iconic Erie Canal that played such an important role in the growth of the nation.

On Day 2 riders will relax at rest stops in friendly “port” villages such as Holley and Spencerport, where a unique “lift bridge” carries Main Street over the canal. They will be able to take an excursion along the Genesee River bike path into downtown Rochester, with its spectacular waterfalls. They will also stop in Pittsford and visit Schoen Place’s popular boutiques, galleries, and cafes.

Covering between 40 and 60 miles per day, cyclists travel along the Erie Canalway Trail, now part of the 750-mile Empire State Trail. This east-west section from Buffalo to Albany is now more than 85 percent complete, thus riders can claim to pedal the most amount of trail since the tour’s inception.

“The 23rd annual *Cycle the Erie Canal* tour is a wonderful way to celebrate the Erie Canal Bicentennial. Plus, it’s fun, healthy, and good for the economy,” says Parks & Trails New York Executive Director Robin Dropkin. “We have cyclists aged 12 to 88 from 34 states, Washington D.C., and Israel, and they all get to experience what makes the Erie Canal and upstate New York so special.”

The Erie Canalway Trail contributes significantly to the economy of upstate New York. A recent study shows that the Erie Canalway Trail annually receives close to 1.6 million visits and generates an economic impact of \$253 million.

The NYS Canal Corporation and New York Power Authority, and the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor are the Premier State Sponsors of *Cycle the Erie Canal*. Nine regional tourism agencies also sponsor the ride.

Parks & Trails New York is New York's leading statewide advocate for parks and trails, dedicated since 1985 to improving our health, economy, and quality of life through the use and enjoyment of green space.

Schedule of Events for Medina & Fairport:

Sunday, July 10 Buffalo to Medina

Tent City Overnight Location: Medina Central Schools, 1 Mustang Ave., Medina, NY 14103

8:00-11:00am – Morning Rest Stop–Amherst Veterans Park

11:00am-4:00pm – Afternoon Rest Stop–Middleport Municipal Park

Monday, July 11–Medina to Fairport

Tent City Overnight Location: Center Park West, 1100 Ayrult Road, Fairport, NY 14450

8:00am – 11:00am – Morning Rest Stop – Holley Canal Park

11:00am – 4:00pm – Afternoon Rest Stop – Genesee Valley Park (Genesee Waterway Center),
Rochester

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