



29 Elk Street  
Albany, NY 12207  
518-434-1583

## NEWS RELEASE

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**Media Contact:** Alison Jenkins, Parks Program Director  
518-434-1583  
[ajenkins@ptny.org](mailto:ajenkins@ptny.org)  
[www.ptny.org](http://www.ptny.org)

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### I Love My Park Day Partners Encourage New Yorkers to Give Back *Volunteers sought for more than 135 events across the Empire State on May 5* *AT&T announces major contribution to annual event*

(Albany, NY) Elected officials join Parks & Trails New York and representatives from AT&T at the Schuyler Mansion State Historic Site today to encourage all New Yorkers to register to volunteer on Saturday, May 5, 2018 for the statewide I Love My Park Day.

I Love My Park Day is an exciting statewide event, coordinated jointly by Parks & Trails New York, a statewide nonprofit advocacy organization, and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) with support from Governor Cuomo, and in partnership with local Friends groups. It is a day to celebrate and enhance New York's parks, historic sites, and public lands, and bring visibility to the entire park system and its needs. More than 135 state parks, historic sites and public lands, and national parks will participate in every region of the state, from Long Island to Buffalo, from the Southern Tier to the Thousand Islands, and from the Hudson Valley to Lake Champlain.

“New York State is a leader in parks and conservation because of a long history of stewardship and generosity of private citizens,” said Parks & Trails New York Executive Director Robin Dropkin. “I Love My Park Day gives us a great chance to do our part, by helping out at the parks we love.”

Since its inaugural year, I Love My Park Day has tripled in size and impact. The seventh annual I Love My Park Day is expected to draw 8,000 volunteers across the state. Volunteers of every age and walk of life will roll up their sleeves to clean up park lands and beaches, plant trees and gardens, restore trails and wildlife habitat, and remove invasive species. These efforts will bring real, tangible enhancements to New York's treasured outdoor spaces, keeping them beautiful and inviting to the more than 71 million people who visit the state park system each year.

“I Love My Park Day provides an opportunity for volunteers to work together to enhance and give back to the parks we cherish,” said State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey. “I encourage all New Yorkers to participate in lending a hand as we look to ensure that future visitors can continue to enjoy our state's remarkable parks and historic sites.”

I Love My Park Day would not be possible without the support of statewide sponsors and partners. AT&T, a top supporter of the event since its inception in 2012, has contributed a total of \$90,000 to support I Love My Park Day, including \$15,000 this year to assist with the beautifying of New York state parks and trails.

“New Yorkers love their parks, and it’s not a surprise that ‘I Love My Park’ Day has grown exponentially in size since its inception in 2012,” said Marissa Shorenstein, president of AT&T New York. “AT&T salutes the good work of the thousands of volunteers who will pitch in at more than 130 parks across the state, cleaning beaches and shorelines, improving trails, painting fences, clearing debris and making parks more accessible.”

AT&T’s continued support for I Love My Park Day aligns with the company’s legacy of environmental conservancy and ecological corporate citizenship. AT&T has set a long-term goal to enable carbon savings 10x the footprint of its global operations by 2025. In addition, AT&T is committing significant resources and expertise in the Internet of Things (IoT) to help make cities cleaner, safer and stronger through smart cities. The company has a respected reputation for its external support of environmental issues and for its numerous internal programs including the reuse or recycling of more than 7 million cell phones each year, building a fleet of more than 11,200 alternative-fuel vehicles and has encouraged more than 21.2 million customers to sign up for paperless billing.

“The investment in I Love My Park Day by our sponsors and partners is inspiring. We are especially grateful for the steadfast support of AT&T in the success of I Love My Park Day,” said Dropkin.

Other major supporters include Champion Sponsors Harney & Sons Fine Teas, Consolidated Edison, and Brookfield Renewable Energy Group.

“We are so thankful for the many public-private partnerships that constantly improve our parks and historic sites,” said Alane Ball Chinian, the Saratoga-Capital District Region Director for NYS Parks. “Here at Schuyler Mansion, Master Gardeners through Albany County Cornell Cooperative Extension, along with the Friends of Schuyler Mansion, have been instrumental in creating and maintaining the gardens at the site. They lead the charge every spring on I Love My Park Day to get the gardens up and going for the season, and then help maintain them throughout the year. Local partnerships like these and the many other volunteers who join us on I Love My Park Day and throughout the year across the region and state are essential to the sustained vitality of our parks and historic sites.”

Assemblymember John T. McDonald III said, “I Love My Park Day reminds us that we are fortunate to be surrounded by rich natural resources and historic places in Upstate New York. The day is a great opportunity to ensure that we care for those resources and preserve them for future generations. Thank you to all of the partners who are involved and the volunteers who will continue to support these parks year-round.”

Assemblymember Patricia Fahy said, “Our state parks and historic sites have played a critical role in our area for generations. Parks and public spaces give us the ability restore ourselves physically, replenish ourselves spiritually and re-connect to our natural heritage. ‘I Love My Park Day’ is a way for us to pay it forward as a community to ensure future generations can enjoy them for years to come. I look forward to another successful day and encourage residents to get involved and help give back to our parks again this year.”

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the National Park Service have volunteer events planned at 26 locations, including the Adirondack and Catskill regions of the state, and at five national parks in New York State. Also contributing this year are members of the New York State Excelsior Conservation Corps, a New York State AmeriCorps program initiated by Governor Cuomo and run by the Student Conservation Association.

At the Schuyler Mansion State Historic Site, volunteers will take part in beautification of the grounds, including a cleanup of the gardens, container planting, and raking.

For the sixth annual event last spring, 8,000 volunteers took part in more than 250 cleanup, improvement and beautification projects at 120 state parks and historic sites, contributing 20,000 hours of volunteer service.

To register to volunteer for the seventh annual I Love My Park Day, visit <http://ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day>

*Parks & Trails New York is the state's leading advocate for parks and trails, working since 1985 to expand, protect and promote a network of parks, trails and open spaces throughout the state for use and enjoyment by all. Learn more at [www.ptny.org](http://www.ptny.org).*

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