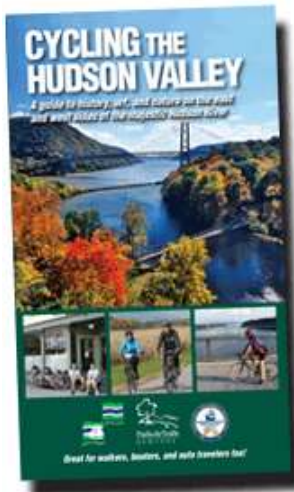


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HOT OFF THE PRESSES! Cycling the Hudson Valley Guidebook



The adventure, sightseeing, and outstanding bicycling awaiting visitors along New York's famed Hudson River Valley are highlighted in Parks & Trails New York's new bicycling guidebook *Cycling the Hudson Valley: A guide to history, art, and nature on the east and west sides of the majestic Hudson River*.

Developed in partnership with the [Hudson River Valley Greenway](#) and [Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area](#), the guidebook includes routes on both sides of the Hudson River. It also spotlights attractions, campgrounds, breweries, vineyards, bike shops,

information centers, and service areas. The guidebook, an indispensable tool for cyclists and a key resource for other outdoor enthusiasts, serves as the perfect companion for touring a segment of the Hudson Valley or the entire route between Albany and New York City.

The 142-page, spiral-bound guidebook, modeled after PTNY's, [Cycling the Erie Canal](#) guidebook, includes 40 easy-to-read maps and is divided into seven bridge-to-bridge sections.

Cycling the Hudson Valley retails for \$23.95. [Order yours today!](#)

Setting the course for bike-ped funding in New York

PTNY is dedicated to maximizing the impact of the new federal transportation bill (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century or MAP-21) on funding for trails and infrastructure that supports and encourages bicycling and walking. In the coming

JULY 2012

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**Celebrating 25
years
of advocacy for
New York's parks
and trails**

TrailFinder Trail of the Month

Pat McGee Trail



A bike ride or walk through the woodlands, wetlands, and farmlands along Cattaraugus County's [Pat McGee Trail](#) offers a refreshing respite from the summer heat. Named for the long-time local state senator who championed the trail project, the 12-mile stone dust trail crosses the eastern Continental Divide,

weeks, we will be working with the [NY Bicycling Coalition](#) and trail groups around the state to formulate a coordinated plan of action.

In the past, because there was dedicated funding for the Recreational Trails, Transportation Enhancements, and Safe Routes to School programs, our state lawmakers and elected and agency officials were required to invest in bicycling and walking. With this new bill, that funding is no longer a given. States now have the potential to opt out of much of this funding. Never before has it been so important to speak out for trails and bicycle-pedestrian funding.

Here's what you can do:

1. **Urge [NYS DOT](#) Commissioner Joan McDonald to release existing dedicated Transportation Enhancement Program funds for a new round of grant funding.** NYSDOT still has up to \$50 million dedicated for the Transportation Enhancements Program that should be put to work to build trails, sidewalks, and other infrastructure for biking and walking. If there is no grant round and these dollars are not obligated, they are at risk of being returned to the federal government when it requests rescissions.
2. **Urge [Governor Cuomo](#), your state [Senator](#) and [Assemblyperson](#), and [NYS DOT](#) Commissioner McDonald to guarantee that NYS will NOT opt out of Recreational Trails or Transportation Alternatives funding.** Already some states are planning to draft legislation that outlines how they will implement the federal transportation bill. It is not too early to start inquiring what NYS will be doing. Our state lawmakers can play a key role in whether NYS chooses to use its Recreational Trails and Transportation Alternative dollars to support trails, bicycling and walking. All NY's state representatives are up for re-election in November. Make sure you know where incumbents and challengers stand on funding for active transportation.
3. **Get involved with your [MPO or DOT regional bicycle and pedestrian advisory group](#).** MPOs will control half of the Transportation Alternatives funding that can be used for trails and infrastructure for biking and walking. Attend a meeting of your MPO or DOT region bike-ped advisory committee and advocate for a strong focus on trails, bicycling and walking. If your MPO or DOT region doesn't have an advisory group, advocate for starting one.

Read America Bikes' [detailed analysis](#) of MAP-21.

News from State Parks

Dickinson Fire Tower opens at Grafton



Thanks in large part to the dedication of the volunteer

meaning that at one end of the trail rainfall travels to the Atlantic Ocean while from the other end it reaches the Gulf of Mexico. Signage explains the unique geology, history, and diverse and abundant flora and fauna along the former rail corridor that connects the western New York villages of Cattaraugus and Little Valley with the City of Salamanca.

For more information on this trail and others like it, visit [Trail Finder](#), PTNY's interactive guide to multi-use trails throughout New York State.

14th annual Cycling the Erie Canal

More than 500 riders from 35 states and four countries took part in PTNY's 14th annual Cycling the Erie Canal bike tour July 8-15.



Special VIP guests

Team New York - NYS Canal Corporation Director Brian Stratton led a rotating team of New York officials from the Governor's Office, Empire State Development, Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Dept. of Environmental Conservation, and other key agencies. [Read more](#) about Team New York.

First Niagara Bike Ambassadors - Bike



[Friends of Grafton Lakes](#), visitors to [Grafton Lakes State Park](#) can now enjoy panoramic views of the Adirondacks, Green Mountains and Taconic

Range. The newly restored Dickinson Hill Fire Tower opened in June and was recently added to the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey, the Friends, and others were on hand for a [ribbon-cutting ceremony](#).

The Friends, under the leadership of Dick Gibbs, spearheaded the [restoration](#) of the 60-foot tower, originally constructed in 1924. The tower was largely rehabbed with volunteer labor and donated materials. ([Read a profile of Dick Gibbs](#) that ran in the Winter issue of PTNY's [You Gotta Have Friends](#) e-newsletter)

NYS Parks by the numbers

PTNY was on hand for the 549th meeting of the [State Council of Parks](#) (SCOP), a central advisory body for the state park system, and gathered some interesting stats.

- 58 million - Total number of park and historic site visitors in 2011, second only to California and up 1 million from 2010
- 21% - Decrease in permanent FTE staff since 2008
- \$72 million - Total revenue generated in 2011, more than any other state park system in the nation
- 0.21% - Percentage of NYS budget devoted to parks
- 30% - Decrease in [State Park Police](#) force since 2008
- 3 - Number of years since a State Park Police Academy has been held; a new academy will be held this fall
- 91% - Occupancy rate at [camping](#) sites over Memorial Day weekend, up 31,000 nights compared to 2011
- 244,000 - Number of rounds of [golf](#) played in 2012 so far

New Trump restaurant coming to Jones Beach

State Parks [announced](#) in June it reached an agreement with The Trump Organization to advance construction of Trump on the Ocean, a 38,560 square foot facility at the Central Mall boardwalk at [Jones Beach State Park](#). There has always been a restaurant where the new facility will be built, but the site currently sits empty. The project was stalled for several years due to lawsuits relating to building design. Trump on the Ocean LLC will invest more than \$24 million in private funds to develop the facility; no state funding is being provided.

Upcoming public hearing on master plans for Hudson Valley parks



ambassadors from our official bank sponsor, [First Niagara](#), rode and [reported daily](#) on their adventures.

Team Erie Canalway - Several [Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor](#) staff members came along and happily shared their knowledge of all things Erie Canal.

Sal the Mule - The iconic mascot of the Erie Canal, Sal the Mule, came out of retirement and went the distance from Buffalo to Albany, travelling in a special bike bag that circulated among riders.

[View photos](#) and read some of the [media clips](#) from the tour.

A big thank you to our bike tour sponsors: [NYS Canal Corporation](#), [Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor](#), [First Niagara](#), [CSEA](#), [Brookfield](#), [Wegmans](#), [Terry](#) and [I Love NY](#) .

Cub Scouts help out on I Love My Park Day



The great stories from [I Love My Park Day](#) keep pouring in. One such story came to us from the [Clay Historic Park](#) in the town of Clay outside of Syracuse. Cub Scout Troop 620, with the help of Boy Scouts and leaders, cleaned the town-owned park for the fourth year in a row. Since adopting the park four years ago, the troop has also

A [Draft Master Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#) (DEIS) is now available for [Ogden Mills and Ruth Livingston Mills Memorial State Park](#), [Margaret Lewis Norrie State Park](#) and Staatsburgh State Historic Site. The master plan outlines State Parks' vision for potential capital improvements, operational enhancements and natural and cultural resource stewardship within the parks and historic site for the next 10-15 years. A public hearing will be held at 7:00 pm on **Thursday, July 26, 2012** at the Taconic Regional Headquarters in Staatsburg. Copies of the Draft Plan/DEIS are available for review [online](#). Submit comments by **August 10, 2012**. [More details](#).

NY Works improvements taking shape

The NYS budget adopted in April included \$89 million for infrastructure improvements at 48 state parks and historic sites as part of the New York Works Fund. Many of those projects were shovel ready, and improvements have been taking shape around the state.



A \$1.5 million [replacement](#) of the athletic field in [Riverbank State Park](#) in Harlem is one the first NY Works projects to be completed. The field, which had been closed since January 2012 for safety reasons, will allow the Park

to continue serving the approximately 250,000 school, youth program, and recreational visitors per year who currently play football and soccer on what was a heavily-worn and deteriorated field.

At [Chenango Valley State Park](#) near Binghamton a [new bathhouse](#) was constructed, replacing an aging 1960s structure with one built utilizing green elements, and providing accessible public restrooms and changing areas, a new food service concession, lifeguard locker rooms and a health/safety center.

Two PTNY Healthy Trails Healthy People Trails make significant progress

[Albany County Rail Trail](#)



An agreement between Albany County, the towns of New Scotland and Voorheesville, and the [Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy](#) (MHLC) paved the way to open two additional miles of unimproved trail connecting

added picnic tables and removable benches.

Thanks to the scouts for showing this park lots of love.

Public Workshop for Syracuse section of Erie Canalway Trail

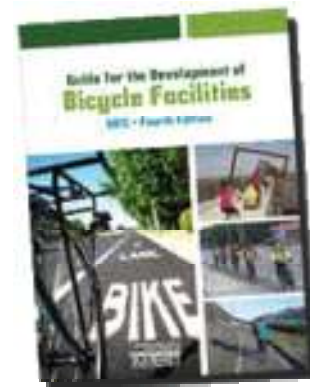
The [Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council](#) and the City of Syracuse are developing a route for the Erie Canalway Trail through the City of Syracuse. A [public workshop](#) will let people share their vision for both a temporary route and the eventual plan for a permanent off-road route for the trail between Camillus and Dewitt.

The workshop will be held at **6pm, July 26**, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 701 East Genesee Street in Syracuse.

Great Hudson Valley Pedal

There is still time to register for PTNY's annual [Hudson Valley Pedal](#) bicycle tour. The ride kicks off from Albany on July 31 and ends in New York City on August 5 and features six fantastic bridge crossings.

AASHTO releases updated bike guide





Voorheesville to Upper Font Grove Road in the town of New Scotland. It is the second section of trail

to open. A 1.3-mile stretch opened last May in Delmar thanks to a similar agreement between MHLC, the Town of Bethlehem, and the County.

On the very next day after the agreement was signed, a cadre of 50 volunteers mobilized to perform clearing of brush and debris on the new section of trail to make it easier for the county to access the corridor to make improvements.

[Kingston Point Rail Trail](#)

The City of Kingston, Trolley Museum of New York, and the [Kingston Land Trust](#) have completed a lease transfer that will allow the land trust to move forward with the planned conversion of the municipally-owned corridor to a two-mile rail trail. [Alta Planning and Design](#) is preparing a preliminary design for the corridor. Later this year a series of public workshops will allow residents to provide input on the trail plan.

Both projects are recipients of technical assistance through Parks & Trails New York's [Healthy Trails, Healthy People](#) program.

Love your park this summer and win prizes from REI!

Love your park? We know you do, and we want to give you more ways to show it!



On I Love My Park Day in May, volunteers from around the state gave back to the parks and historic sites they love by rolling up their sleeves and pitching in with needed projects. This summer, you can get creative and express your love for parks through a photo and be entered to win some great [prizes](#)!

The rules are simple:

- Take a photo of yourself holding a sign that says why you love your park.
- One word might be all you need, or you might need a few. It's up to you!
- Get creative! You can say it with just words, or you can add drawings.
- Get family and friends involved - group photos are great, too!
- Take your photo in any public park in New York State.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials has released its latest edition of the [Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities](#). Last updated in 1999, this 200-page publication has undergone extensive revision and expansion and includes guidelines to design, build, modernize, and preserve bicycle facilities, signage, and bicycle parking facilities that can accommodate daily commuters and recreational users.

Grants Available Great Outdoors Grants

The [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](#) (NFWF) has announced the [America's Great Outdoors Landscape Conservation Stewardship grants](#), a new grant program that supports training, mentoring, and capacity building for new and existing non-profit organizations, including trail groups. Deadline: **July 31, 2012**.

Greenway Conservancy Small Grants Program

The [Hudson River Valley Greenway](#) has up to \$20,000 in matching grants available for trail projects, including planning and design; construction and rehabilitation; and education and interpretation. [Application](#) deadline is **August 17, 2012**.

PTNY conducts trail intercept surveys in Granville

PTNY staff visited the Village of Granville's D&H Rail Trail in June to survey

- As examples, [see why PTNY staff love their parks in these photos](#).
- Send your photo, along with your name, contact information, and the name of the park you love, to ilovemypark@ptny.org by August 31, 2012 to be entered to [win great prizes from REI](#), including a Half Dome tent and footprint, valued at over \$200!



It's that easy!

So next time you're in a park this summer, remember to tell us why you love it!

Visit <http://www.ptny.org/showparkslove> for full information on rules, eligibility, and prizes.

Legislative Session Wrap-Up

We've come a long way since 2010 when many state parks and historic sites were on the chopping block. This year's legislative session, which wrapped up at the end of June, brought a revitalization to our state park system, and may result in more good news for New York's environment.

NY Works Fund

The Governor and Legislature reached a budget agreement in April that included \$89 million for capital improvements at state parks and historic sites in every region of the state. This historic infusion of capital will bring jobs and address critical needs in our state park system, things like replacing aging water and sewer lines and repairing bridges, roads and swimming pools

Enhanced EPF

In the final days of the legislative session, the NYS Senate and Assembly approved legislation that will enhance the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), a [priority](#) for PTNY. The legislation will use revenue from the state's existing Bottle Bill program to increase the EPF from its present level of \$134 million over the next several years. The bill now awaits the Governor's signature. [Read a statement](#) about the enhanced EPF, released by the [Friends of New York's Environment](#), a broad partnership of more than 100 organizations, including PTNY.

Canal trail volunteers

While NYS Canal Corporation employees do a great job of keeping the more than 500-mile Canal System well maintained and attractive, the success of our canal system also depends on many volunteer efforts. Unfortunately, volunteer groups and individuals must now pay a \$15 to \$25 work permit fee for the privilege of donating their time, talent, and materials to improving

trail users. While the day was hot, the trail proved popular, with over 40 people observed on the trail. As to be expected most of the respondents were local residents, though several traveled more than 20 miles to use the trail. Regardless of where they were from, each person surveyed was pleased with the trail, with most reporting that they used the trail three times a week or more.

These surveys were conducted as part of PTNY's [Healthy Trails, Healthy People](#) program.

New NYC Parks Commissioner

After more than a decade Adrian Benepe is stepping down from his role as [NYC Parks](#) Commissioner, and will be succeeded by Veronica White, founding executive director of [NYC Center for Economic Opportunity](#).

While in office, Benepe added 730 acres of parkland across the five boroughs and planted over 600,000 trees as part of the Million Trees Program. Benepe will become the Senior Vice President for City Park Development at the [Trust for Public Land](#), a nonprofit organization working to expand parkland nationwide.

Tonko introduces River Basin Commission at Mighty Waters Conference

At this year's third annual [Mighty Waters](#) conference, held at Union College in June, Congressman Paul Tonko [proposed](#) the Hudson-Mohawk River

the canal, the Canalway Trail, and other associated Canal Corporation lands.

[Legislation](#) passed by the Senate and Assembly and headed to the Governor's desk would allow the Canal Corporation to waive a fee for a work permit for work on canal lands if it believes the project would add value to canal lands without any cost to the Canal Corporation or the State. [Read PTNY's memo of support on the bill.](#)

Longer building leases at Knox Farm State Park

The Legislature passed a [bill](#) that would authorize State Parks to enter into agreements with private individuals who are willing to invest private funds to rehabilitate and maintain vacant and at-risk buildings in [Knox Farm State Park](#), adding this property to approximately 50 others previously designated by the Legislature as requiring longer term leases in order to attract private funds for repair and rehabilitation efforts. This bill awaits the Governor's signature. [Read PTNY's memo of support on the bill.](#)

Ensuring parks & trails are part of Regional sustainability planning

In his 2011 State of the State address, Governor Cuomo announced the [Cleaner Greener Communities Program](#) (CGC), a \$100 million competitive grant program to encourage communities to develop regional sustainable growth strategies. There are two stages of the program: in stage one - the Regional Sustainability Planning stage - each region of the state (as defined by the 10 Regional Economic Development Council regions) will develop a comprehensive sustainability plan; in stage two - the Implementation Grant stage - funding will be provided on a competitive basis for implementation of specific projects that provide the greatest opportunities for achieving carbon reductions, energy efficiency savings, and renewable energy deployment consistent with a region's sustainability plans.

PTNY is working to ensure that expanding, promoting, and protecting a network of parks, trails, and greenways is an integral part of all the regional sustainability plans. Some regions already have opportunities for public input. The Southern Tier, for example, has an [interactive website](#) where the public can comment on draft goals. [Contact your regional planning team](#) and find out how you can get involved.

PTNY Growing the Grassroots grant spruces up website for Southern Tier org



A PTNY Growing the Grassroots capacity building grant helped [The](#)

Basin Commission. Aimed at providing better river and stream monitoring for the entire Hudson-Mohawk Basin, the Commission would carry out projects and conduct research within 13,500 square miles in five states.

Two paddles highlight water trails in the Finger Lakes

Two July paddling events are drawing attention to the potential for water trails within the Finger Lakes. [The Finger Lakes Land Trust](#) led a group of kayakers on a five-day trip from Ithaca to Oswego, beginning July 18. Also on July 18, a second group, led by Karl Beard of the National Park Service Rivers and Trails Program, paddled from [Seneca Lake State Park](#) at the head of the lake through the Cayuga-Seneca Canal to the top of Cayuga Lake. The [America's Great Outdoors Initiative](#) last year selected improvement of access to the Finger Lakes as one of two projects in New York State deemed most promising for protecting special places and reconnecting Americans to the outdoors.

Canal Splash August 10 - 12





[Tanglewood Nature Center](#) purchase web development software, enabling it to create and update its website and receive camp

memberships, event reservations, and donations on line. Now, 95% of the Chemung County group's membership renewals are completed online.

"Thank you for the grant and the opportunity to improve communication with our members and the community at large. It really was a success," commented Elaine Farwell, Tanglewood Executive Director.

Thank you to our Green Partner - REI



[REI](#) is dedicated to inspiring people to love the outdoors and take care of the places they love. From local educational events to volunteer efforts to protect natural spaces to partnerships with regional and national nonprofits, REI works with local communities to preserve the environment and get people outside.

This focus engages a full spectrum of REI resources to mobilize communities around outdoor stewardship of public lands, natural areas, trails, and waterways, including: involving store teams in volunteering; partnering with nonprofits; and mobilizing other volunteers. In 2010, for example, REI hosted more than 540 outdoor volunteer projects that engaged more than 31,000 people. In May 2012, REI was a Premier Sponsor of PTNY's [Love My Park Day](#) and continues to promote and support our outdoor programs.

Lyons Trail of Hope offers universal access

A unique trail opened in the Wayne County Village of Lyons, built especially to provide access to nature for persons of all ages and abilities. Developed by [Trail Works](#), the advocacy group for trails within the county, the aptly named [Trail of Hope](#) is a shining example of a broad-based community effort. More than 300 volunteers and \$25,000 of donated materials were contributed to the effort, spearheaded by Trail Works board member Mark DeCracker.



Located next to the Lyons Community Center and within sight of the Erie Canal, the quarter-mile trail meanders through small themed gardens, many of them designed and planted by youth from the Community Center's after

Communities throughout the NYS Canal System will celebrate their heritage this August with over 50 events, many of them free of charge. A complete listing of events can be found on the NYS Canal Corporation [website](#).

Google adds Streetview for hiking trails

Google continues to map the world in unique ways. By utilizing an ingenious, [backpack-mounted camera](#), Google employees can now capture images of routes only reachable by foot. Operating in much the same way as Streetview, these maps will allow Google users to virtually hike a trail from their computer. But, isn't it more fun to really hike a trail?

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_____ school program, in conjunction with the [Wayne County Cooperative Extension Creating Healthy Places Project](#). Another section of trail traverses a natural wooded area and parallels a neighboring brook. In the future a short spur will connect to the Erie Canalway Trail. More than 150 persons, attended a recent ceremony held to dedicate the trail to two Lyons High School grads, the late Jim Tuscher, a life-long advocate for people with disabilities, and Leigh Ann Henry, who enjoys the trail from her wheelchair.



Parks & Trails New York is a member of Earth Share New York, an alliance of leading nonprofit environmental organizations. For more information about workplace giving to Parks & Trails New York and Earth Share, check out www.earthshareny.org.

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