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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – July 16, 2015

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Parks & Trails New York rolls out *CycletheErieCanal.com* to boost bicycle tourism in NYS

*Citing growing interest in cycling, new website designed to help visitors
plan a bike adventure along Erie Canalway Trail*

ALBANY, NY – CycletheErieCanal.com is a new website designed to promote cycling along the 360-mile trail that follows one of America’s most treasured waterways. Recognizing the rising popularity of cycling among baby boomers, families seeking more healthy vacation options and millennials, who often prefer bikes to cars, Parks & Trails New York is launching the new site to promote the Erie Canalway Trail as a cycling destination and bring more tourism dollars to upstate New York.

In the early 1800s the Erie Canal was built to transport goods to a growing nation and today the Erie Canalway Trail stretches along its bucolic shores between Albany and Buffalo, NY, offering historical sites, natural attractions, quaint towns and cultural venues along the way. The new www.CycletheErieCanal.com is designed with an interactive map, so riders can plan a ride based on location, distance or the types of attractions they wish to visit

“There are plenty of bike trails across the country, but none that follow such an historic and iconic waterway that truly shaped America,” says Robin Dropkin, Executive Director, Parks & Trails New York. “Cycle the Erie Canal is an exciting tourism opportunity and this website is an important step in attracting new visitors. It’s particularly appropriate to launch the new website this week, as 600 cyclists last week cycled from Buffalo to Albany on our 17th annual Cycle the Erie Canal cross-state tour.”

“Under Governor Cuomo’s administration, the New York State Canal Corporation, along with other New York State agencies, has proactively moved forward to plan, begin and complete projects for more than 30 miles of new and rehabilitated Erie Canalway Trail across New York,” said Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton. “The new CycletheErieCanal.com website will not only showcase these new improvements, but also highlights the Erie Canalway Trail and the communities that welcome cyclists from around the world.”

“*CycletheErieCanal.com* is a great new tool! Not only will it help cyclists plan a trip, but the site gives people a flavor of the communities, historic sites, natural beauty, and adventures that make the Erie

Canalway such a unique place,” said Bob Radliff, Executive Director of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor.

Whether for a leisurely afternoon or a week-long adventure to become an official “End-to-End,” www.CycletheErieCanal.com includes everything a visitor needs to plan a ride, including:

- **Rider reviews:** first-hand accounts from riders along the Erie Canal
- An **interactive map** of the trail to track distance and find accommodations and services
- Trip Planning: suggestions based on both **region** and **interest** (history, nature, culture, etc.)
- Information about the **annual Cycle the Erie Canal cross-state ride**, which attracts more than 600 cyclists each July, and covers 400 miles between Buffalo and Albany (This year’s ride is from July 12-19).

“The level grade of the Erie Canalway Trail makes it very accessible for riders of all ages and abilities,” Dropkin explains. “Cyclists on the trail tell us they love the variety of the trail – that they can experience everything from a waterfall to world class art by hopping off their bike and visiting one of the many communities along the way.”

According to Parks & Trails New York’s 2014 report, “[*The Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail: An Assessment and User Profile of New York’s Longest Multi-Use Trail*](#),” visitors generate approximately \$253 million in sales, 3,440 jobs, and \$28.5 million in taxes for New York’s upstate economy each year.

However, the same report notes that just 2.5% of estimated annual trail visits are made by persons residing outside the 35 counties surrounding the Erie Canalway Trail. The new site is designed to especially attract riders from beyond the Canalway corridor.

www.CycletheErieCanal.com is a project of Parks & Trails New York, the state’s leading advocate for improving health, economy and quality of life through the use and enjoyment of green space. The site was created with funding from New York State Economic Development/I LOVE NEW YORK, in partnership with the NYS Canal Corporation and the National Park Service Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor.

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