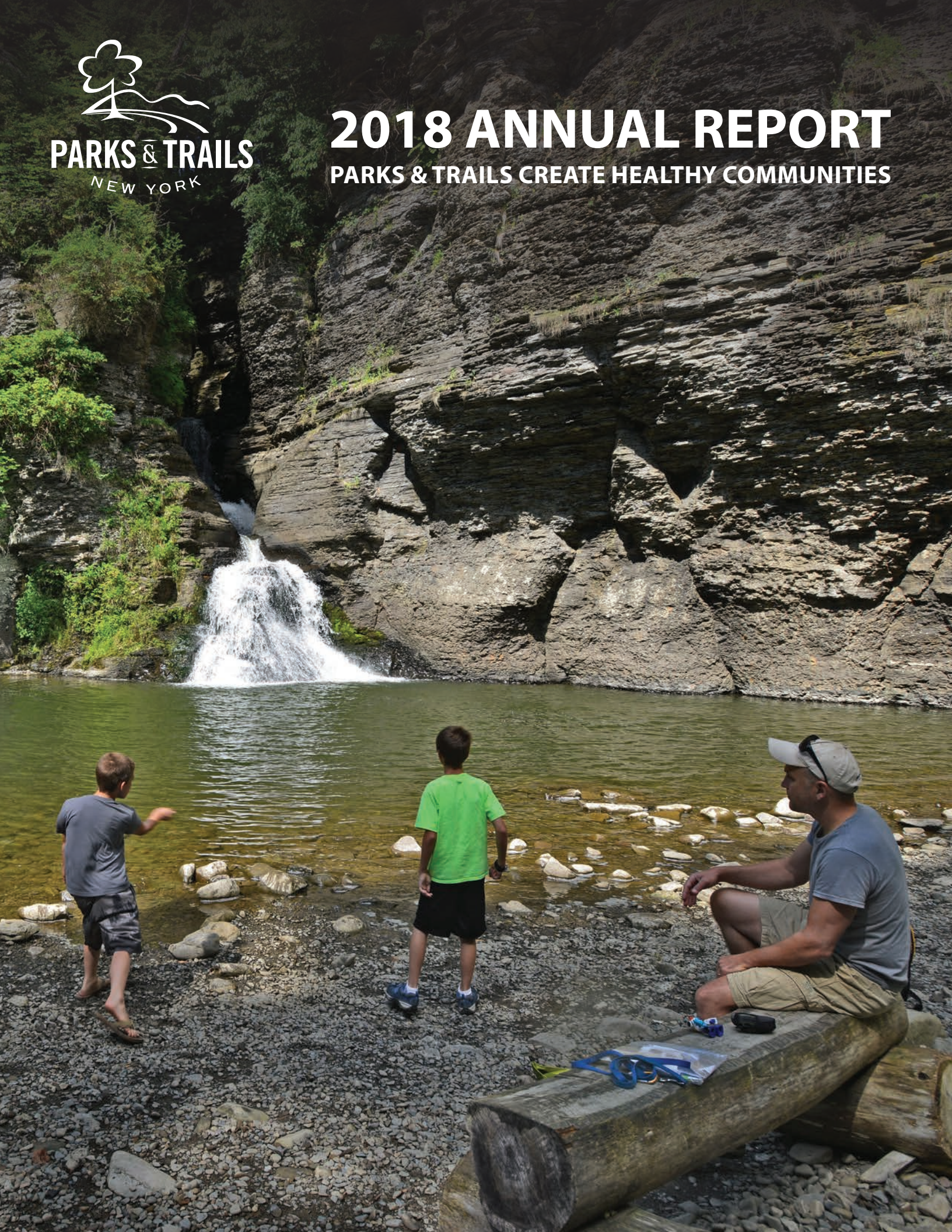




2018 ANNUAL REPORT

PARKS & TRAILS CREATE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



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Parks & Trails New York
29 Elk Street, Albany NY 12207
518-434-1583
ptny@ptny.org
www.ptny.org



Dear Friends of New York's Parks and Trails,

You know better than anyone that parks, trails, and green spaces are essential to our mental, physical, and economic health. We've seen this demonstrated time and again. Studies come out every year about how even a short walk in nature boosts our well-being. But that's just the beginning of the benefits parks and trails provide.

Parks & Trails New York released a study showing just how much state parks boost the economy, nearly \$5 billion each year. That's a \$9-\$1 return on investment! These valuable green spaces create dollars and jobs, increase property values, and reduce pollution.

With a record 74 million visitors to state parks in 2018, our parks and trails need ongoing investment to continue to boost our health and the economy.

Thanks to Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, the \$300 million Environmental Protection Fund is at a historic high. This critical fund supports the Park and Trail Partnership Program grants that improve parks and trails for millions of visitors. We are delighted that, at our urging, the budget for 2019-2020 adds an additional half a million dollars for the program, doubling the impact Friends groups can make in their communities.

The significant capital investment in parks over the last decade has brought about a true renaissance of our beloved park system. But now we need to invest in the people who care for our parks. Less operations funding means fewer lifeguards, rangers, police, maintenance and trade workers, all of which negatively impacts the visitor experience. That's why Parks & Trails New York continues to advocate for parks to receive more funding, so we can keep them safe, clean, and beautiful.

We had a huge win in Washington on the permanent authorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the most important federal funding source for parks, trails, and public lands in New York and across the country. But the fight is hardly over. While our advocacy efforts helped win permanent authorization, we're now working to secure full, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

We've come a long way since the threatened closure of nearly 100 parks and Parks & Trails New York's Save Our State Parks campaign almost 10 years ago, but there's still work to be done. These are challenging times for the environment with constant threat from development, lack of funding, and climate change.

We are grateful to have your continued support as we face these challenges and fight at the state and federal level for increased funding for our parks, trails, water, and air quality.

With gratitude and best wishes,



Joe Scott,
Board Chair

Robin Dropkin,
Executive Director

Robin Dropkin Joe Scott

Park and Trail Partnership Program

The Park and Trail Partnership Program (PTPP) grants strengthen grassroots Friends groups and enable them to make a bigger impact on our state parks, trails, historic sites, and public lands. From youth programs to trails, these grants result in new projects that improve parks and trails for millions of visitors.

BY THE NUMBERS

Since the transformative grants program launched in 2015, we have awarded **60 PTPP grants** totaling **\$1.4 million** and leveraging more than **\$585,000** in private investment.

2018 GRANTEES

New York's state park and historic site Friends groups are eligible to apply for PTPP grants, and in the 2018 grant cycle, for the first time, Friends groups for NYS Department of Environmental Conservation lands were eligible, **greatly increasing** the number of eligible groups.

In 2018, we awarded **\$450,000** in grants to **21** Friends groups in every region of New York.

For example...

- **Friends of Allegany State Park** received **\$4,250** to construct **2+ miles** of new trail in collaboration with a local mountain biking group.
- **Winona Forest Recreation Association** in the North Country received **\$19,082** to enhance multi-use trails in the state forest and increase public access.



Winona Forest Recreation Association: "These events are made possible because of the support we received from Parks & Trails New York. Our club is making a difference to the upstate communities, and NY in general. Folks came from all over the NorthEast and beyond. Area restaurants and hotels benefited."

- **Four Freedoms Park Conservancy** in New York City received **\$15,750** to redesign and install signage in the park, enhancing users' experience.
- **Friends of Ganondagan** in the Finger Lakes received **\$50,000** to restore and replace the Seneca Bark Longhouse roof, ensuring the safety of the historic structure and artifacts.



Before and After: First Day Hike participants at Little Stony Point's new visitor center.

- **The Little Stony Point Citizens Association** in the Hudson Valley received **\$39,946** to install **solar power** and a "green" incinerating toilet to provide better amenities at the Visitor Center.

...and many more!

WHAT FRIENDS GROUPS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE TRANSFORMATIVE GRANTS

"Training, equipment and supplies purchased through this project raised [our] visibility while improving the effectiveness of volunteer efforts to increase public access to and enjoyment of Letchworth Park. Our membership grew by an astounding 42.7%"

– Friends of Letchworth State Park.

"Thank you so much for this opportunity. The grant money gave us a much needed shot in the arm and boost of morale. We now can generate more money for our Park and we are able to do more for our community. Everyone is asking 'What is our next project?!'"

– Friends of Chenango Valley State Park.

EXPANDING THE IMPACT

This year, the state's 2019-2020 budget includes \$1 million for the Park and Trail Partnership Program. Imagine what our state's dedicated Friends groups will accomplish with double the resources!



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Empire State Trail on track while advocates start thinking bigger

In the past year, we've seen the Empire State Trail make great progress. The 750-mile multi-use trail is on track for completion in 2020, with 60+ construction projects spread across five state agencies. Construction will begin later this year on two major sections of trail in the Hudson Valley:



1. **Albany-Hudson Electric Trail (AHET)**, the 35-mile stretch between Rensselaer and Hudson is the longest section of new trail planned.
2. **Maybrook Trailway**, the 25-mile section will connect trails in the Hudson Valley with the Walkway Over the Hudson.



As the Empire State Trail goes full steam ahead, Parks & Trails New York is looking ahead to the future of New York's growing trail network with our Trails Across New York campaign.

VISION

More New Yorkers of all ages, abilities and backgrounds enjoying multi-use trails.

A world-class trail network that connects communities across the state with healthy recreation and transportation options and boosts local economies by encouraging outdoor tourism.

PRIORITIES

1. **Planning:** Create a coordinated, statewide trails plan that identifies dedicated funding for future projects and ongoing trail maintenance.
2. **Expansion:** Complete the Empire State Trail and develop connections to all parts of the state, including an extension to Long Island.
3. **Promotion:** Engage diverse audiences in promoting trails as healthy outdoor recreation destinations and provide resources that make getting on the trail easy.

In addition to health benefits, New York's outdoor recreation economy generates **\$41.8 billion** annually in consumer spending and supports **313,000 jobs**.

Whether at the state or federal level, our trails advocacy work aims to improve New York's economic growth, the health of its residents, and the sustainability of its communities in the face of climate change.

2018 TRAILS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Cycle the Erie Canal

- 20th anniversary ride has record 700+ riders and volunteers.
- 37 US States, Canada, UK, and Australia represented.
- Riders ranging in age from 6 to 82.



Reimagine the Canals Competition

PTNY wins with Erie Armada, a water-borne race and craft-brew festival, coming Fall 2019.



Canal Clean Sweep

110 clean-up events across the Canalway Trail, with hundreds of community groups and thousands of volunteers.



Trail Ambassadors

30 dedicated members providing assistance and information to visitors on the Canalway Trail.



Adopt-a-Trail

60 volunteer groups performing regular maintenance across 120 miles of the Canalway Trail.



Bike Friendly New York

nearly 100 bike-friendly businesses providing special accommodations for bicyclists.



Erie Canalway Trail End-to-Enders

record 900+ cyclists and hikers completed the entire Canalway Trail.



Get Involved!

5 WAYS YOU CAN JOIN THE CAUSE:

1. **Become a member of Parks & Trails New York** by making a tax-deductible donation by mail or online at ptny.org/donate.
2. **Double your donation** by sending us your employer's matching gift form.
3. **Give at the office** by setting up a convenient payroll deduction through EarthShare.
4. **Make a gift of stock**, mutual fund shares, or donor-advised funds by securely transferring from your brokerage account.
5. **Become a Legacy Society member** by including Parks & Trails New York in your estate planning.

Visit ptny.org/get-involved/ways-to-give to learn more or contact Anne Russell Gregory, Development Director, at argregory@ptny.org or 518-434-1583.

5 WAYS YOU CAN VOLUNTEER:

1. **Clean up and beautify a park or trail** by joining us for I Love My Park Day and Canal Clean Sweep.
2. **Advocate for your favorite outdoor spaces** locally or in Albany by joining us for Park and Trail Advocacy Days.
3. **Adopt-a-Trail** by adopting and maintaining a section of the Erie Canalway Trail.
4. **Join a park or trail friends group** and give back to your community's green spaces.
5. **Connect with us** by signing up for our e-news and following us on social media.

Visit ptny.org/get-involved/volunteer to learn more or call our office at 518-434-1583.

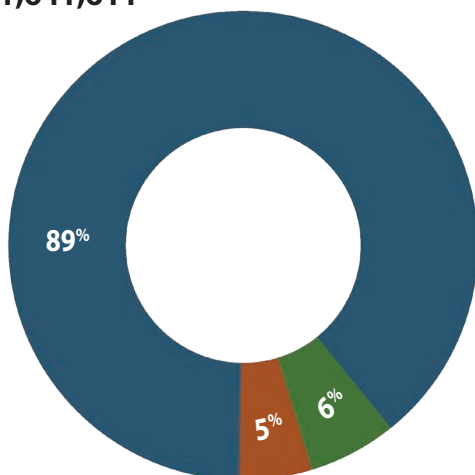


2018 Financial Summary

The charts represent overall income and expenses for Parks & Trails New York for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018.

OPERATING EXPENSES

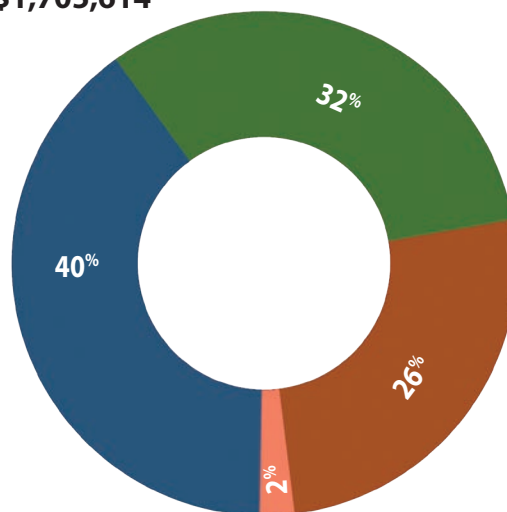
TOTAL: \$1,641,611



- Programs: Conservation, Education & Advocacy
- Fundraising
- Management & General

OPERATING SUPPORT & REVENUE

TOTAL: \$1,705,614



- Grants
- Program Revenue
- Individual, Foundation & Corporate Contributions
- Other

A copy of our complete audited financial statement can be obtained online at ptny.org/aboutus/financials or by calling Parks & Trails New York at 518-434-1583.

Thank You to Our Members and Donors

Gifts of \$100 or more

Parks & Trails New York thanks all who make our work possible, protecting and advocating for our public lands to keep them safe, clean, and beautiful.

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What does it take to protect our state's public lands?

An insider's look at how Parks & Trails New York is making a difference for your favorite green spaces, which are essential to our mental and physical health.

