

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

connecting you with the joy and awe of the outdoors





Dear Friends of New York's Parks and Trails,

What a year of changes. What a time of growth.

To say 2023—the lead-up year to 2024's Centennial for State Parks—was a full one would be an understatement. From the loss of our inimitable, long-standing Executive Director Robin Dropkin to launching our inaugural Cycle the Hudson Valley tour and much more, 2023 was full of joys, challenges, and sorrows.

But our public lands were there for us through all of it.

You may have heard the terms “joy” and “awe” from us many times when speaking of our parks, trails, and other public green spaces. While descriptive, these words can also be amorphous and hard to pin down. But honestly, that's because they're working to define more than 84 million individual experiences in our NY State Parks alone... over 3.95 million trips—short or long—on our Canalway Trails.

Each of those experiences, from an evening jog to a month-long sojourn on the Erie Canalway Trail, is deep, meaningful, and personal. While we do a lot at PTNY, especially with a small team, our real and main goal is to ensure there are more of these undefinable, joyous experiences throughout our state for more and more communities.

That's why you, a dedicated supporter and lover of our public green spaces, are so important to our work and vision. You are the partner beside us as we help nonprofit groups create the best eclipse events, you're with us as we work with trailside communities to build strong economies across the state, you lift with us during flagship statewide volunteer events like I Love My Park Day and Canal Clean Sweep.

You help us create all these individual, joyful, awe-filled experiences happening every day in our public lands.

So thank you. Thank you for being with us in fair times and foul. Thank you for building that joy, awe, and dedication to a truly connected, accessible, and bountiful network of public green spaces.

We are so grateful to celebrate and build with you—for our communities now and for the future generations to come.

With awe, joy, and appreciation,



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Parks & Trails New York
33 Elk Street, Albany NY 12207
(518) 434-1583
www.ptny.org

Making Moves for NY's Public Lands

PTNY BY THE NUMBERS



\$1.8 million

in Park and Trail Partnership Grants

27 projects funded in advance of NYS Parks' Centennial

\$352,000 leveraged in private matching funds



84+ million

visits to State Parks

6% increase over 2022

Economic impact on par with the agricultural industry

\$3.7 billion in benefit for NYS created annually!



8,000+

volunteers from across the state

300+ events at NYS parks & trails

30,000 service hours to public lands



800+

miles logged

1,000 cyclists hosted

25 years of Cycle the Erie Canal

1 year of Cycle the Hudson Valley



\$250 million

request for Parks Capital funding

\$90 million request for DEC Adventure NY Capital funding

\$400 million for the Environmental Protection Fund—\$2 million for the Park and Trail Partnership Grants

\$354 million request for State Parks Operations for an additional **237** full-time Parks staff



3.9+ million

visits to the Canalway Trail System

97,000+ visits to the Genesee Valley Greenway

14 Trail Towns established

\$50,000 distributed in grants

108,000+ guests hosted



Park and Trail Partnership Grants Invest in New York's Public Lands for the Centennial

Celebrating 8 years in 2023, [PTNY's Park and Trail Partnership Grants](#) (PTPG) are working harder than ever to support the stewardship groups caring for our public lands. With more than **220 projects funded**, investing **\$8.1 million in grants** and leveraging **\$3.1 million in private matching funds**, this small grants program packs a BIG impact! And in advance of the Centennial celebration in 2024, investing in nonprofit groups serving public lands has been more important than ever.

Check out a couple of our favorite projects from 2023's applications...

The "EAclipse" at Knox Farm State Park

It's no secret that here at PTNY we're just a little bit excited for the Centennial... but 2024 is seeing another big event at NY State Parks—the eclipse. What better than an event celebrating both? PTNY awarded a grant of \$35,000 to the Friends of Knox Farm State Park to host more than 2,500 people during the eclipse on April 8, 2024. The celebration features science displays by celestial experts from NASA, riveting robotics demonstrations, a sizable screen showing real-time eclipse coverage across the country, and music, food, drink and fun!

Swimming for All at Hamlin Beach State Park

PTNY and our administrative partner—the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation—have been putting their grant funding where their goals are to make our public lands welcoming to all New Yorkers. We couldn't be prouder to support swimming accessibility for those using wheelchairs and other mobility devices. A \$29,000 grant will help with purchase of Mobi Mats, movable infrastructure to create access to the beach, and other infrastructure allowing folks of any mobility to enjoy the benefits and pleasures of a dip in Lake Ontario.



What's up with that logo??

You might have noticed a change around one of our favorite images... the PTNY logo! In honor of the long-standing guidance from our departed executive director, Robin Dropkin, and in celebration of some BIG milestones (Centennial Year in 2024! Bicentennial of the Erie Canal AND 40th Anniversary of PTNY in 2025!) we've added a "north star" to our tried-and-true logo. The star represents where we've been... while shining a light on the path to our vision of an even greener, more equitable future for New York's parks, trails, and public lands.



Building a Bright Future for NYS Public Lands with Advocates from Across the State

Advocacy in Advance of NYS Parks Centennial

Many hands make light work, and with some heavy advocacy lifts in 2023 we are grateful to have a dedicated (and growing!) group of supporters, partners and advocates for New York's parks, trails, and public lands.

With a \$3.5 billion backlog in critical infrastructure needs for our State Parks, and the Centennial Year in sight, it's never felt more important to band together to support the spaces that bring us such joy, awe, and peace year after year.

Luckily—from the grassroots to the grasstops—PTNY is connected with some fantastic individuals, groups, and legislators. With a focus on building an impactful and expansive “big tent movement” to support our public lands, we traveled across the state stumping for parks, greenways, and the communities who rely on them.

From looking to increase connectivity in our greenways network by using next-century data to identify and plan for 1,200+ new miles of trail in the coming years, to working on building a well-funded and safe multi-use trail system with the Greenway Trails for a Green Future legislative package, it's not just State Parks that have been in our sights. Connecting under-accessed communities with the benefits of these linear parks is a call to action we'll be carrying forward into the future—and we plan to succeed.

If you love all things greenways—not to mention the economic, health, and wellbeing benefits they bring to our communities and state—check out what we're up to (and how you can support) at our [Greenway Trails for a Green Future](#) page on our website. We've got some big dreams for the future of New York's public green spaces, but we need you to make them a reality!



Build a Stronger Future for New York's Parks and Trails with Us!

5 Ways to Support

1. Become a Member
2. Donate (and get your employer to match)
3. Give at the office through EarthShare.org
4. Give Stock, Mutual Funds, or support PTNY through you Donor Advised Fund
5. Become a Park & Trail Champion with a recurring monthly gift

Visit ptny.org/get-involved/ways-to-give to learn more or contact Linden Horvath, Sr. Dir. of Development, Comms., & Marketing, at lhovath@ptny.org or 518-434-1583.



DONATE HERE

5 Ways to Get Involved

1. Volunteer for I Love My Park Day or Canal Clean Sweep
2. Join us in advocating for your favorite places
3. Join a Park or Trail Friends Group
4. Adopt a Trail
5. Sign Up: Receive updates on important park and trail issues and newsletters full of new outdoor places to explore

Visit ptny.org/get-involved/volunteer to learn more, call us at 518-434-1583 or email ptny@ptny.org.

YEAR IN REVIEW 2023 Financial Summary

*actual unaudited

Individual, Foundation & Corporate Contributions
\$613,515

30%

26%

Grants
\$530,510

Operating Support & Revenue

14%

Other
\$281,931

30%

Program Revenue
\$639,828

Fundraising
\$183,651

9%

Management & General
\$143,258

8%

Programs
Conservation,
Education & Advocacy
\$1,557,932

83%

Operating Expenses

Thank You to Our Members and Donors

Parks & Trails New York thanks all who make our work possible: our donors giving anywhere from \$1 to \$100 and those volunteering, protecting, and advocating for our parks, trails and public lands. You keep our green spaces safe, beautiful, and welcoming today and for future generations.

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"Awe is considered one of the core positive emotions; it is basically something that blows your mind. A deeply powerful, awe-inspiring experience can change someone's perspective for a long time, even permanently."

- The Nature Fix, Florence Williams - Austin Rose

Thank You.

Thank you for working to increase access, joy,
and awe in New York's public lands across the state.
Your support makes so much possible, for so many.

