



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating the Centennial
of New York State Parks!



Dear Friends,

What a year! The 2024 Centennial of our State Parks was full of celebration and wins for our public lands. We couldn't imagine a better lead up to our 40th anniversary in 2025.

We fought for and won a record-breaking \$100m investment for ailing infrastructure like the bathhouses at Jones Beach, swimming access in Harriman State Park, and the creation of High Falls State Park in Rochester. We also introduced our legislative package—Greenway Trails for a Green Future—to make sure our greenways are safe, accessible, maintained, and growing. Truly, in 2024 we did not rest on our laurels for this impactful time period. And—as ever and always—we wouldn't have been able to do it without YOU.

Supporters like you are what made this our biggest year of volunteerism to date, with the launch of the Love Our New York Lands series of events. This year we saw four volunteer events across the year, from standard favorites like I Love My Park Day and Canal Clean Sweep to new additions Fish & Wildlife Day and Adirondack & Catskills Day. And New Yorkers like you showed up! We hosted 8,500 volunteers at 355 events for a total of 34,000 hours of direct service planting trees, removing invasive species, planting pollinator habitats, and so much more.

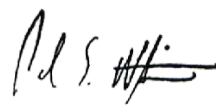
We also connected the most advocates to power of any prior year. Our Park Advocacy Day and inaugural Greenways Advocacy Summit saw hundreds in attendance, from all walks of life. These individuals, groups, and partners had one big thing in common: their commitment to fighting for a fully-funded, thriving network of parks and trails accessible to ALL New Yorkers. Both the Governor and legislature got the message, with \$940m invested in our public lands. We are so humbled and proud to be advocating with such a dedicated group, and know that we will keep pushing for our most treasured outdoor spaces.

And, because coming together to work on things we care about seems to be the theme, we also launched our biggest Friends Conference yet. From incorporating diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility into the bedrock of programming to data collection for greenway trails, we ran the gamut of important and timely topics. Health—and the critical role of our public lands for our collective good—was a throughline in all we did, and you can expect even more from us around this holism in the future.


If we seem excited for the celebration of this Centennial Year it is because we are. We are so grateful to be able to do the work we do, with the partners, communities, and individuals who join in. You've heard us say many hands make light work, and we are in awe of those—like you!—who lift with us.

With all our gratitude,




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www.ptny.org

PTNY BY THE NUMBERS 2024

Park & Trail Partnership Grants

\$1.85 million
awarded to Friends Groups

\$352k in private match funding
28 grants awarded
36 groups supported

State Funding

\$940 million
for public lands

\$450M State Parks Capital
\$400M EPF Funding
\$90M DEC Capital

Stewardship

8,750 volunteers
46k volunteer hours
355 volunteer sites
6 statewide events

Advocacy

152 groups at Friends Conference
140 PAD attendees
83 GAS attendees
13 advocacy events hosted

Resources

17 reports created
8 sign-on letters
3 advocacy webinars

Greenway Trails

231 Bike Friendly businesses
14 Trail Towns supported
3 new Trail Towns

PUSHING FOR PUBLIC LANDS

2024 saw PTNY and partners expand our advocacy to reach more legislators—on more critical subjects—than ever before. Launched with the largest Park Advocacy Day PTNY and partner OSI have ever hosted, we also added on an impactful Greenways Advocacy Day in May, 2024.

February saw a record-breaking 140 advocates, representing 22 groups, from across the state to the Capitol in Albany for Park Advocacy Day (PAD). Together, we celebrated the progress made for the NYS Park System over the past 100 years while fighting to ensure these public lands are funded and protected well into the next century and beyond.

During PAD, attendees engaged with over 80 legislative offices... more than double our impact from the previous year! In addition to connecting with our state legislators, PAD brought together a diverse group of advocates from all across NY. From Long Island to Buffalo, advocates from 50 different Friends groups, 8 NYS Regional Park Commissions, and a dozen unique partner organizations showed up with a driving passion to share their stories on how funding for our public lands continues to impact their work, lives, and communities.

PAD had some big outcomes, most notably the Governor's provision of \$100 million for NYS Centennial projects. The \$100m will address the dilapidation that has led to closing of crucial resources like the Lake Sebago beach in Harriman State Park, multiple facilities at Jones Beach, and create the High Falls State Park in Rochester. PTNY proudly fought on the front lines to push for crucial investments like these—closing the gap in the \$3.5 billion dollar capital backlog—to ensure NYS Parks not only maintain their premiere status in the United States, but are seeing cost savings in the future through critical investments now.

Not to be outdone, the inaugural Greenways Advocacy Summit—the premier gathering of advocates dedicated to expanding New York's network of multi-use trails—was a huge success. Nearly 100 advocates, planners, business owners, and leaders joined us in Albany on May 20 for a day designed to ignite enthusiasm and collaboration among stakeholders who play a key role in shaping the future of our greenway system. Participants engaged in over 40 legislative meetings to secure the Greenway Trails for a Green Future bill package and advocate for trail planning and construction funding in the 2025 state budget.

With the support of die-hard multi-use trail supporters like Assemblymember Patricia Fahy, every bill saw movement in its Committee, with passage of the Empire State Trail Detours bill by both houses of the NYS Legislature. The bill package focused on measures to ensure that our trails are safe, welcoming, appropriately funded and... most importantly... growing. Like our dedicated advocacy work to close gaps in the Erie Canalway Trail leading to an 85% off-road resource, our Greenway Trails for a Green Future legislative package is key in building our vision of a truly connected, safe, and accessible network of greenways reaching ALL New Yorkers.

And if you think our advocacy in 2024 was phenomenal, just wait to see what's on tap for our 40th anniversary in 2025!





CELEBRATING NYS PARKS CENTENNIAL

with our biggest volunteer push ever,
8,500 strong for 34,000 hours!

It's no secret that 2024 was the year we celebrated New York State Parks' 100th anniversary, but did you know it was also the year that we welcomed the most volunteers ever at our expanded slate of events?

Love Our New York Lands, run in partnership with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Canal Corporation, and State Parks, expanded to four events this year! Anchored by mainstay favorites Canal Clean Sweep (a three-day clean up of the Erie Canalway Trail in celebration of Earth Day) and I Love My Park Day (largest single-day statewide volunteer event in NY), PTNY and partners really upped the ante for public lands stewardship with the addition of Fish & Wildlife Day and Adirondack & Catskills Day.

Love Our New York Lands (LONYL) creates a culture of appreciation for our public lands, acknowledging their importance in our lives and encouraging a sense of collective responsibility in their health and wellbeing, now and for the future. This message is even more critical as we celebrated Parks' Centennial Year, where we focused on what a committed legacy of stewardship has provided our families, communities, and state now... and what our responsibility to these shared treasures is moving forward. LONYL has also helped unite PTNY's two flagship volunteerism events under one mission: to celebrate and enhance all of our public green spaces for use and enjoyment by all.

Welcoming more than 8,500 volunteers at 355 sites donating 34,000 hours of service, LONYL's Centennial launch was the most successful volunteerism year in PTNY history! Participants cleaned up trails and the Erie Canal, planted pollinator gardens, removed invasive species, painted picnic tables, and so much more. Don't miss out as Canal Clean Sweep celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2025! Just in time for PTNY's 40th anniversary.

THE HISTORY OF I LOVE MY PARK days

Did you know that I Love My Park Day started as a clarion call to draw attention to the needs of our NYS Parks System? In the spring of 2010, due to the financial crisis, New York State closed down state parks for the first time in 125 years! Imagine, 88 parks, about 40% of the whole system, were all set to stay shut for the entire summer. Even through world wars, the Great Depression, and other devastating events, NYS Parks stayed open.

Thanks to PTNY's advocacy campaign, led by the great Robin Dropkin, the closures became the hottest topic in Albany. Right before Memorial Day weekend, the governor and the legislature restored \$11 million for the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation just in time for the recreation season. PTNY's grassroots campaign was instrumental in keeping all parks open in the face of severe proposed budget cuts.

Just two years later PTNY and the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation hosted the first annual "I Love my Park Day," a statewide event to help improve and enhance New York's State Parks and Historic Sites, bringing visibility to the entire park system and ensuring we never take our parks for granted. Over the years, the well-loved I Love My Park Day has grown to be the largest single-day, statewide volunteer event in NYS!

ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day 

BUILD A STRONGER FUTURE FOR NY'S PARKS AND TRAILS!

5 WAYS TO SUPPORT PTNY

1. Become a Member
2. Donate (with employer match!)
3. Give at the office with 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

ptny.org/get-involved/ways-to-give

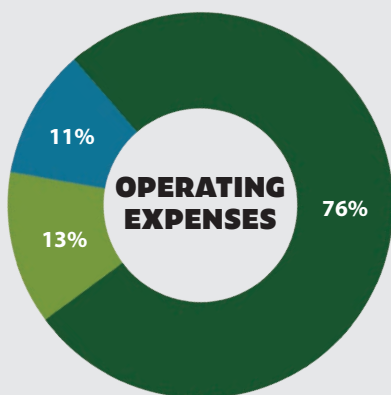
5 WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

1. Volunteer for Love Our New York Lands
2. Join us in advocating for your favorite places
3. Join a Park or Trail Friends Group
4. Adopt a Trail
5. Sign up to receive our newsletter for park and trail updates

ptny.org/get-involved/volunteer

2024 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

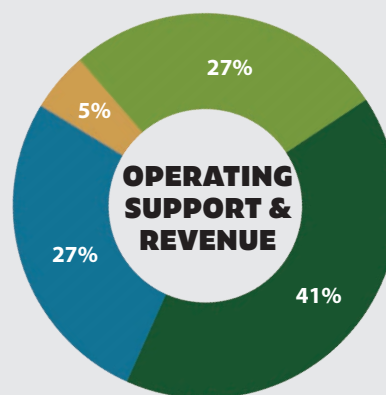
*pending finalization



Programs—Conservation, Education & Advocacy
\$1,843,934

Fundraising
\$306,621

Management & General
\$253,469



Programs Revenue
\$835,449

Grants
\$546,484

Individual, Foundation & Corporate Contributions
\$556,981

Other
\$111,627

THANK YOU!

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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In Honor of Paul Steely White, from Peter Frishauf
In Honor of Paul Steely White, from Gregory Olsen

PTNY honors the memory of long-time Executive Director and dedicated public lands advocate Richard White-Smith. You will be missed but your impactful legacy lives on across New York State.




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**"For me the door to the woods is the door to the temple."
-Mary Oliver**

“

Parks bring people together, connect us with nature, and protect the landscapes that make New York special, but they don't take care of themselves. It takes all of us stepping up to keep them thriving. Parks Advocacy Day was a great reminder of how important it is to show up and speak up for these spaces. **Thank you, Parks & Trails New York!**

Ronald Zorrilla
Co-Founder/CEO, Outdoor Promise