

For Immediate Release

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**Change of leadership at Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail
sees group rolling ahead on trail development.**

ORCHARD PARK, NY — JULY 9, 2015. Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail, Inc. (ECRT), a 501(c)3 organization, recently inducted Gary Willert of Glenwood (Colden) and Deborah Fenn of the Town of Aurora as co-chairs of the organization. Together they have stepped in to replace departing president Anne Bergantz, formerly of Orchard Park. Bergantz, who will continue to play an integral role on the board of directors, moved to Buffalo last fall. It was determined that, ideally, officers of the board should live on or near the former rail corridor, and the new co-chairs fulfill this qualification.

Bergantz' exceptional background in urban planning, environmental management and trail development made her the ideal candidate to lead the fledgling ECRT through its formative years as the bridge organization between Buffalo Pittsburgh Railroad (BPRR) and New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Her invaluable expertise will continue to support the organization as they commence with current direct negotiations with BPRR.

Gary Willert has been a member/director of ECRT since 2013, initially an active member of the Colden Citizens for a Community Trail from 2009 through 2012. Willert retired from Moog Inc. in 2014 after 41 years of service, the last 14 of which were as a Sr. Contract Administrator. He has since been hired at Excelco/Newbrook Inc. of Silver Creek, NY in the same capacity. Willert has served on the Town of Colden Board of Assessment Review for six years, as the Historian for the Western New York Herb Study Group (WNYHSG) from 2011 through 2012, and is a current member of the Pentagon Chapter of the National Contract Management Association (NCMA), having served as past vice-president and president of the NCMA Western New York Chapter (2004-2005).

Deborah Fenn has been on the ECRT board since its inception, serving as vice president since 2008. In addition to her work with ECRT, Fenn serves on the board of directors of the Western New York Land Conservancy. She is also a member of the Aurora Open Space Committee, a group that recently secured the Mill Road Overlook, now a public parkland in the Town of Aurora. Recently retired, Fenn had a significant administrative career spanning healthcare marketing and communications at Millard Fillmore Hospitals, Community-General Hospital in Syracuse and at Elderwood Affiliates. In 2002 she received her teaching certification and taught secondary social studies and English at West Valley Central School. Fenn also lends her marketing expertise to husband, Peter's annual Buffalo Amputee Golf Classic.

Currently, ECRT is in direct negotiations with BPRR to secure title to the former rail line. The 27-mile corridor traverses five municipalities and two counties, passing

through some of the south towns' most picturesque communities and spectacular vistas in all of Western New York. ECRT is the leading negotiations with the rail company. It is hoped that an agreement with the railroad will be secured within the year. For more information about ECRT, visit www.ecattrail.org.