



Parks & Trails
NEW YORK

29 Elk Street
Albany, NY 12207
518-434-1583

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE February 15, 2013

Media Contact: Frances Gotcsik

518-434-1583

fgotcsik@ptny.org

www.ptny.org

Anne Bergantz

716-662-5159

ABergantz@ecatrail.org

www.ecatrail.org

Parks & Trails New York awards grants to strengthen Western New York park and trail groups

The statewide advocacy group Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) has awarded almost \$14,000 in Growing the Grassroots capacity building grants to 10 not-for-profit park and trail organizations. Both the **Chestnut Ridge Park Conservancy** and **Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail** have received awards. Award winners will use the funds to increase organizational visibility, generate community support, grow membership, and attract additional volunteers.

Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail, Inc.- received **\$1,600** toward the production of a short video showcasing the beauty and benefits of the proposed 27-mile rail trail. A key tool for partnership development, the video will be used during presentations to major donors. *“Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail is very grateful for the assistance received from Parks & Trails New York. The video can best communicate the beautiful setting, hilly woodlands, creeks, farms and villages that the right of way and future rail trail passes through. This video will help us reach and attract the community partners necessary for this effort to succeed”* stated ECRT President Anne Bergantz.

Chestnut Ridge Conservancy – received **\$1,500** toward the design and printing of brochures and newsletters to garner awareness and support for the organization and its efforts to restore iconic infrastructure in one of the largest county parks in the United States. *“The Chestnut Ridge Conservancy is honored to be a recipient of a 2013 Parks & Trails New York Capacity Building Grant. This generous donation from PTNY to the Conservancy will have an enormous positive impact on our ability to promote our organization to the public. Ultimately, we expect it to help increase awareness of the Park itself and increase the visitation and usage of this local treasure.”* Said Ron Michnik, a member of the Chestnut Ridge Conservancy Board of Directors. The CRC will be involved in a number of events at the park again this year. We encourage Erie County residents to come out to the park and enjoy the beautiful nature and scenery."

PTNY's program is unique in that it supports activities not normally covered by existing grants. Most grants available to not-for-profits fund capital projects and specific programs. PTNY's Growing the Grassroots capacity building grants focus on developing and strengthening the skills, processes, and resources that will allow park and trail groups to thrive and better foster the expansion, stewardship, and promotion of New York's parks and trails.

“Hundreds of not-for-profit organizations are working to build, protect, and promote our state’s parks and trails which contribute so much to our economy and quality of life,” said Robin Dropkin, Parks & Trails New York Executive Director. “With our Growing the Grassroots grant program, we can help propel these groups to new levels, enabling them to leverage more private funding and marshal more volunteer power to aid their stewardship efforts.”

Other organizations receiving 2013 Growing the Grassroots grants and the resources benefited:

Friends of Letchworth State Park, 14,000-acre state park known as the Grand Canyon of the East, Wyoming and Livingston Counties

Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct, 27-mile trail and linear state historic park, Bronx and Westchester County

Friends of Schodack Island State Park, Inc., 1,000-acre Hudson River state park, Rensselaer County

Friends of Ulysses S. Grant Cottage, state historic site, Adirondack cottage where President Grant spent his final days, Saratoga County

Friends of Peach Hill Park, 159-acre Town of Poughkeepsie park, Dutchess County

Great Swamp Conservancy, 36,000 acre wetland area south of Oneida Lake, Madison County

New York City Water Trail Association, non-motorized boating trail connecting 160 square miles of waterways in New York City’s five boroughs, Bronx, Kings, New York, Richmond and Queens County

Winona Forest Recreation Association, 9,233-acre Winona State Forest, Oswego County

Adirondack trail advocacy group awarded special challenge grant

In addition to the ten Growing the Grassroots Capacity-Building Grants, PTNY is providing Adirondack Recreational Trail Advocates (ARTA) with a special challenge matching grant of \$1,600 for outreach to advance its efforts to develop a multi-use trail between Lake Placid and Tupper Lake and eventually south through the Adirondacks to Old Forge.

Parks & Trails New York is the leading statewide advocate for parks and trails, dedicated since 1985 to improving the health and quality of life of all New Yorkers by working with community organizations and municipalities to envision, create, promote, and protect a growing network of parks, greenways and trails throughout the state for all to use and enjoy.

More information on the **Growing the Grassroots** grant program and Parks & Trails New York can be found at www.ptny.org or by calling 518-434-1583.

More information on **Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail** can be found at www.ecattrail.org, or info@ecattrail.org or by calling 716-771-2453.

More information on the **Chestnut Ridge Conservancy** can be found at www.chestnutridgeconservancy.org.