

# *2012 Annual Report*

## New York State Council of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation





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**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
Governor

**Rose Harvey**  
Commissioner

**Lucy R. Waletzky, M.D.**

## **New York State Council of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation**

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor  
Executive Chamber  
Albany, NY 12224

January 2013

Dear Governor Cuomo,

The State Council of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation is pleased to submit its 2012 Annual Report. This report highlights the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's achievements during 2012, and sets forth recommendations for the coming year.

First, on behalf of the State Council of Parks, I would like to convey my deepest gratitude for providing State Parks with \$90 million in new capital funds in your 2013-14 Executive Budget submission. This funding would build on the strong foundation created last year through the historic NY Works initiative. As you will see in this report, State Parks put that funding to work and significant capital improvements were made throughout the park system, including repairing dilapidated bathrooms, replacing outdated or building new playgrounds statewide, and upgrading drinking water systems. Your support for continued capital funding demonstrates your remarkable commitment to ensuring that New Yorkers continue to have safe, healthy and affordable access to their beloved state parks and historic sites. A second round of funding will allow for critical projects at dozens more parks and historic sites, create more local jobs, encourage tourism and continue our efforts to ensure that our state parks and historic sites remain popular destinations for generations to come.

We also greatly appreciate your strong and inspiring leadership in overseeing New York's response to the devastating effects of Hurricane Sandy and for highlighting the damage to our state parks. More than 50 state parks and historic sites on Long Island, New York City, and the Hudson Valley suffered damage. They served an essential purpose as buffers and setbacks, and absorbed some of the fury and damage of the flooding. While most have reopened, some including Jones Beach, Robert Moses, and Orient Beach State Parks experienced major damage. Initial estimates are that the total cost of addressing storm damage to our parks will exceed \$100 million. Cleanup and repair efforts are underway, with the goal of completing rehabilitation efforts to allow all parks to fully reopen by Memorial Day, and perhaps they can be a small part of our State's mitigation and alternative solutions to more frequent and fierce storms.

The State Council wants to express again our gratitude for the New York Works initiative you launched a year ago. State Parks received \$89 million in new funding, which in turn has leveraged \$54 million in other public and private funds, for a total of \$143 million to begin the work of revitalizing the state park system. New York Works provides funding for a total of 106 construction projects in 55 parks and historic sites (some parks have multiple projects). I am very pleased to report that construction has started at more than two-thirds of the 106 projects, with the remainder slated to begin over the coming months.

New York Works is dramatically improving the experiences of park visitors, while creating engineering and construction jobs in local communities across the state. New Yorkers are voting with their feet: attendance at our state parks and historic sites exceeded 60 million visitors in 2012. We look to continue forward momentum. The State Council of Parks strongly supports your inclusion of \$90 million of critical new capital funding for state parks infrastructure and much needed improvements in your 2013-14 Executive Budget.

Meanwhile, I am pleased that the support network for our parks continues to grow and contribute. The Alliance for New York State Parks (an initiative of the Open Space Institute devoted to supporting state parks), individual State Council of Parks members and Commissioner Rose Harvey, have made great progress in laying the groundwork for philanthropic and business investment in our parks, and the thoughtful planning of efforts to restore and enhance our flagship parks at Jones Beach, Niagara Falls and Riverbank. Private fundraising campaigns are well underway at Minnewaska and Fahnestock State Parks.

Additionally, the Office of Parks, State Council of Parks, the Alliance and longtime partner Parks & Trails New York are working together to assist the further development of existing parks and historic sites friends groups. Last May, you embraced and launched a hugely successful "I Love My Parks Day," galvanizing thousands of volunteers to improve our parks. We look forward to working with you to make I Love My Parks Day even bigger and better in 2013. Thank you.

Although not under our jurisdiction, your commitment to acquiring more than 69,000 acres of the former Finch-Pryun lands from The Nature Conservancy in the Adirondack Park is another major park accomplishment for which the wildlife, as well as the people, will always be grateful.

Finally, please accept my appreciation for your appointment of a number of new Commissioners to our Regional State Park Commissions during 2012. The new members join a group of 77 community leaders across the state who volunteer their time, skills, and support to make tangible improvements to our parks and historic sites.

Thank you for your ongoing support for New York's magnificent park system and for considering the recommendations set forth in this report.

With warm regards



Lucy Rockefeller Waletzky, M.D., Chair



## The State Council of Parks has adopted five priorities for 2013:

### 1. Keep State Parks and Historic Sites Open, Safe, Affordable and Accessible.

The State Council of Parks urges adequate state funding to keep all 214 state parks and historic sites open. It also supports efforts to reinvent, redesign and automate park operations to leverage state resources to provide safe, clean and affordable recreational and education experiences to the more than 60 million people who visit our facilities annually.

### 2. Increase, Deepen, and Improve the Visitor Experience

Understanding that connecting our citizens to their parks and historic sites is central to our mission. The State Council of Parks will support and encourage programs and opportunities to invite all New Yorkers to explore, experience, and enjoy our magnificent state park system. We will also support initiatives that develop programs to encourage healthy, active lifestyles, particularly among our youth.

### 3. Build a 21st Century Green and Sustainable Park System

In 2012, thanks to the leadership of Governor Cuomo, New York took an enormous step forward to address the backlog of capital needs in the state park system. New York Works provided \$143 million in total funding for infrastructure repairs, the largest capital infusion in the history of the park system. The State Council of Parks strongly supports Governor Cuomo's Executive Budget submission which includes \$90 million of critical new capital funding in 2013-14 for state park improvements and infrastructure projects.

### 4. Public-Private Partnerships

The State Council and Regional commissions will continue to help establish and strengthen partnerships with friends groups, for-profit, non-profit, governmental entities and volunteers for a wide range of support, from direct monetary contributions and formal concession agreements to operations and programming. The State Council will continue to pursue private funding from individuals, corporations and foundations—building on the strong legacy of private support for the New York State park system.

### 5. Promote and Celebrate our Parks

The State Council will continue to assist the agency in implementing a marketing plan to create a strong brand for our parks and historic sites. We also support the message of "this parkland is your parkland" to promote stewardship and responsibility among our park visitors and partners.



*Chimney Bluffs State Park*

# State Council of Parks and Regional Park Commissions



The State Council of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation – known simply as the “State Council of Parks” – is a 14-member body established by Article 5 of the state Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law (PRHPL). The State Council is comprised of the Chairs of the eleven Regional Park Commissions, the Chair of the State Board for Historic Preservation, and the Commissioners of State Parks and Environmental Conservation.

As defined in PRHPL Section 5.09, the State Council’s powers and duties are to: a) review the policy, budget and statewide plans of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and make appropriate recommendations regarding their amendment or adoption; b) submit reports to the Governor, not less than once each year, concerning progress in the area of state parks, recreation and historic preservation, including recommendations for the future, and covering such other matters as the council may deem appropriate; c) and act as a central advisory agency on all matters affecting parks, recreation and historic preservation.

The eleven Regional Parks Commissions, created by PRHPL Article 7, represent each of the State Parks Regions, with the exception of the Palisades (which is represented by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission) and the Adirondack & Catskill Park Region (which is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Conservation). Regional Commission members must be residents of the state and are appointed to seven

year terms by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, and serve without compensation. Regional Commissions serve as central advisory bodies on all matters affecting parks, recreation, and historic preservation within their respective regions, with particular focus on the operations of state parks and historic sites. The Commissions are also charged with reviewing and approving the Region’s annual budget request prior to its submission to the Commissioner of State Parks.

## State Council of Parks Members

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>LUCY ROCKEFELLER<br/>WALETZKY,</b><br>Chair and Taconic Commission | <b>JEAN KNOX,</b><br>Niagara Frontier<br>Commission               |
| <b>DALTON BURGETT,</b><br>Allegany Commission                         | <b>PHILIP WHITE,</b><br>Palisades Commission                      |
| <b>EDWARD AUDI,</b><br>Central Commission                             | <b>HEATHER MABEE,</b><br>Saratoga-Capital District<br>Commission  |
| <b>DAVID BANFIELD,</b><br>Finger Lakes Commission                     | <b>HAROLD JOHNSON II,</b><br>Thousand Islands<br>Commission       |
| <b>PETER HUMPHREY,</b><br>Genesee Commission                          | <b>ROBERT MACKAY,</b><br>State Board for<br>Historic Preservation |
| <b>BRYAN ERWIN,</b><br>Long Island Commission                         |   |
| <b>JANET FELLEMAN,</b><br>New York City Commission                    |   |



# Overview





# New York State Parks & Historic Sites Overview



The state park system is one of New York's greatest treasures. Today, the system totals 214 state parks and historic sites encompassing nearly 350,000 acres. New York's parks and historic sites provide affordable outdoor recreation and education opportunities to more than 60 million visitors each year. These facilities contribute to the economic vitality and quality of life of local communities and directly support New York's tourism industry. Parks also provide a place for families and children to recreate and exercise, promoting healthy lifestyles and helping combat childhood obesity.

The Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) is responsible for the operation and stewardship of the state parks system, as well as advancing a state-wide parks, historic preservation, and open space mission. The agency has an "all funds" operating and capital budget of approximately \$329 million (FY2012-13 adjusted budget) and is staffed by 1,736 permanent employees and more than 4,400 seasonal positions during peak operating season. Drawing on these resources, OPRHP is

responsible for operating an extensive network of public recreational facilities that includes 5,000 buildings, 28 golf courses, 36 swimming pools, 63 beaches, 27 marinas, 40 boat launching sites, 18 nature centers, 817 cabins, 8,355 campsites, more than 1,350 miles of trails, extensive utility systems, 104 dams, hundreds of miles of roads, and 604 bridges.

New York's state park system has long been recognized as one of the best and most diverse in the nation. Among the fifty states, we rank first in the number of operating facilities and first in the total number of campsites. We are fifth in total acreage and second in total annual visitation. Attendance at Niagara Falls State Park is greater than that of Grand Canyon and Yosemite National Parks combined, and more than twice as many people visit Jones Beach each year than visit Yellowstone. Niagara Falls is the oldest state park in the nation and Washington's Headquarters is the first property acquired with public funds for the express purpose of historic preservation and patriotic visitation.

<sup>1</sup> The term "state park system" as used in this report refers to New York's 179 state parks and 35 state historic sites.



*Gilbert Lake State Park*



*Taconic State Park - Copake Falls Area*



*Moreau Lake State Park*



# *Priorities*



# State Council of Parks Priorities



The State Council of Parks has identified five priorities for 2013:

## 1. Keep State Parks and Historic Sites Open, Safe, Affordable and Accessible

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*Ganondagan State Historic Site*



*Jones Beach State Park Theodore Roosevelt Nature Center*



*Saratoga Spa State Park*



# *Budget*





*Fair Haven Beach State Park*

## State Parks Operating Budget

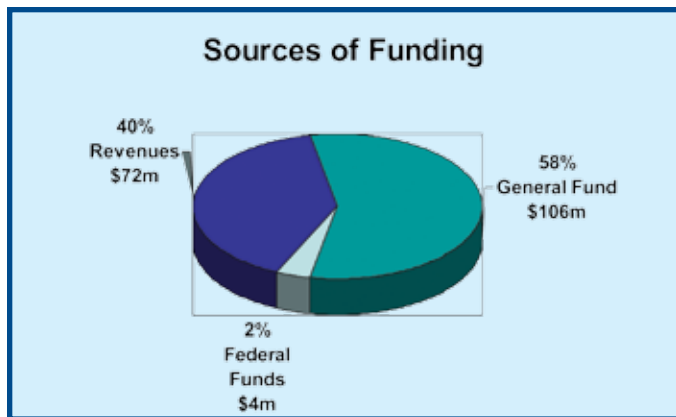
OPRHP is a “direct operations” agency – it runs facilities throughout the state. Ninety percent of the agency’s operating budget goes to pay the direct costs incurred in operating New York’s 214 State Parks and Historic Sites. The agency is also responsible for administering the historic preservation, marine resources and snowmobile programs.

The enacted 2012-13 State Budget includes \$186 million in appropriations for OPRHP agency operations (encompassing state General Fund support, federal programs, agency-generated special Revenue funds). This represents a General Fund spending reduction of about 17 percent from 2009-10 to 2012-13.

period in 2011. Revenue was up 6.3 percent year to date. The revenue trend must continue to support our operating needs.



*Saratoga Performing Arts Center , Saratoga Spa State Park*



### State Parks Operations – 2012 Summer Season

We are pleased to report that during the 2012 summer season, all parks and historic sites remained open and that visitation through Labor Day was record setting.

Through the summer season, State Parks welcomed nearly 44 million visitors, an 8.6 percent increase over the same

State Parks hosted several major events that drew millions of visitors, including a string of sold out concerts at the Jones Beach Theater, Saratoga Performing Arts Center and Artpark. Nik Wallenda’s tight rope walk across Niagara Falls not only brought thousands of visitors to



*Nik Wallenda’s tight rope walk across Niagara Falls*

the park, but attracted millions of television viewers and world-wide attention to Niagara Falls State Park. And, once again, the world's best golfers played on the Bethpage Black course during the Barclays golf tournament which brought thousands of fans to the famed park during a week of play in August.



*Bethpage State Park, Black Course*

In October, Governor Cuomo announced New York's newest park – Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms State Park, located on Roosevelt Island in New York City. The park will be operated by the non-profit Four Freedoms Conservancy.

New York's state parks also welcomed many more campers in 2012, with nearly 13,400 more overnight stays than in 2011, a 7 percent increase. Each of the major holiday weekends, Memorial Day, July 4th, and Labor Day saw camping increases, with nearly 95 percent of our campsites occupied over Labor Day weekend, an 8 percent increase over last year.

### **FY2013-14 Operating Budget Recommendation:**

From 2008 through 2011, State Parks absorbed significant reductions to its operating budget. The agency's permanent staffing level has been reduced by more than 20 percent, and budgets for seasonal staff and non-personnel expenses have been reduced by roughly 10 percent.

In response, State Parks has advanced a number of administrative efficiencies and strategic actions such as expanding the practice of managing smaller parks as "satellite" facilities of nearby larger parks, and entering into new partnerships with local governments and non-profit organizations to operate parks and historic sites.

Further budget reductions would result in reduced operations and maintenance efforts, negatively impacting the experiences of the park system's 60 million visitors. The State Council of Parks opposes further reductions to the agency's operating budget in fiscal year 2013-14.



*Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms State Park  
www.amiaga.com*

## Hurricane Sandy (Super Storm)

State Parks experienced widespread and devastating impacts from Super Storm Sandy which made landfall on October 29, 2012. More than 50 state parks were affected by the storm. Preliminary damage estimates for the parks on Long Island, New York City and the Hudson Valley exceed \$100 million. Several of Long Island's parks remain closed weeks after the storm, and Jones Beach and Robert Moses State Parks, among the most popular in the park system, were severely damaged. Impacts include significant beach and dune erosion, undermining of park roadways and parking areas; heavy damage to boardwalks; disrupted utilities, including power, water and sewer lines; and wind and flooding damage to numerous park buildings.

Rebuilding and restoring the most affected state parks will take significant time and resources. Clean up and repair efforts are underway, with the goal of enabling efforts to allow all parks to reopen by Memorial Day. Fortunately, a significant portion of the repair costs will be eligible for funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).



*Jones Beach Theater, Jones Beach State Park*



*Orient Beach State Park*



*Gantry Plaza State Park*

## I Love My Park Day 2012

Thanks to thousands of volunteers who pitched in on Saturday, May 5, 2012, the first ever I Love My Park Day was a resounding success. Organized in partnership with Parks and Trails New York, the purpose of I Love My Park Day is to improve and enhance state parks and historic sites; boost volunteerism; and raise the visibility of the entire state park system and its needs.

Volunteers took part in dozens of cleanup, improvement, and beautification projects at 40 state parks and historic sites across the state. At Allegany State Park, volunteers and park staff worked together to restore the historic Sweetwater Spring. At Thacher State Park, volunteers cleared trails, planted flowers and built

a bridge. Hundreds of volunteers cleaned up shores at Green Lakes, Bowman Lake, Hempstead Lake and Rockland Lake State Parks. State Parks was proud to have the support of Governor Cuomo who invited New Yorkers to participate in I Love My Park Day, and who himself volunteered at FDR and Roberto Clemente State Parks. Governor Cuomo also issued a proclamation declaring the first Saturday in May as I Love My Park Day.

Together with Governor Cuomo and PTNY, State Parks will continue to build on the momentum of the inaugural I Love My Park Day to engage new volunteers and build a strong community of park stewards every day of the year.

*Governor Cuomo with Lucy Rockefeller Waletzky, State Council of Parks Chair, at the FDR State Park I Love My Park Day.*

**I LOVE MY PARK**  
days



*Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park*

## State Parks Introduces Mobile App

Through an innovative partnership with American Park Network, New York State Parks launched the official *Oh, Ranger! NY State Parks*, a free iPhone application (app) that gives visitors on-the-go the ability to access valuable park information. This new app includes more than 200 state parks, historic sites, golf courses, campgrounds and nature centers with amenities, directions and links to important numbers and services.



The *Oh Ranger! NY State Parks* app is designed to provide everything a visitor needs to become familiar with a property, including contact information, directions, amenities, maps and events. Information is updated regularly and users can search by zip code and desired activity to find locations near them to go hiking, camping, boating, birding, and discover historic sites, nature centers and more.







*Bear Mountain State Park*

## State Parks Capital Budget

2012 was an historic year for the New York State Park's capital program. Launched by Governor Cuomo and approved by the Legislature in the 2012-13 state budget, the New York Works initiative, designed to reinvent state economic development with an innovative new strategy to rebuild the state's infrastructure, invested \$89 million



to rehabilitate state parks. Leveraged with other funds, a total of \$143 million was invested in state parks capital projects in 2012, the single largest infusion



*Work on the Riverbank State Park athletic field.*

in history of capital dollars in to the state park system.

New York Works funded projects in every region of the state that will enhance the visitor experience and enable our parks to re-emerge after years of decline in capital infrastructure. Highlights of the program include: \$25 million for restoration and repairs at Niagara Falls State Park; over \$9 million for the rehabilitation of popular athletic facilities, picnic areas and playgrounds at Riverbank and Roberto Clemente State Parks in New York City; over \$34 million for infrastructure projects at state parks and historic sites in the Hudson Valley, including \$9 million for road and water system repairs at Bear Mountain State Park and over \$4 million to restore historic stone work at Mills Man-



*Repairs at Niagara Falls State Park*

sion in Staatsburgh; and \$1.35 million for new or improved playgrounds at 20 state parks across the state. These playgrounds will be ready for visitors by the spring of 2013.

State Parks made excellent progress on New York Works capital projects in 2012. As of early November, construction had started at 70 of the 106 total New York Works projects and another 20 projects were in the process of working toward an executed contract to begin work. Only a small number of projects are left to be bid this year or early next.

### 2013-14 Capital Recommendation

To continue this forward momentum, the State Council of Parks strongly supports Governor Cuomo's inclusion of \$90 million of new capital funding for state parks infrastructure and much needed improvements in the 2013-14 Executive Budget. The State Council will continue to support efforts to leverage the public investment through private fundraising and partnership opportunities.

# Annual Highlights



*Volunteer F.O.R.C.E.S. Program  
(see page 18)*



# Annual Highlights

*Hamlin Beach State Park*

## Allegany Region

**Allegany State Park:** The Environmental Education and Interpretation Department held two special summer events on the Red House Lake beach. The summer kicked off with the first annual Rock the Park concert where event t-shirts were sold with all proceeds going to support the department. The park, along with sponsor J-Conn Enterprises, entertained Park campers and visitors of over 400 with an evening of free live music by two local artists. During the fifth annual Beach Party, which is partnered with the Cattaraugus County Arts Council, the crowd was especially thrilled with the Zippo Corporation-sponsored fireworks display at the end of a night of music and dancing.

Sweetwater Spring, a historic landmark was restored by park employees and volunteers as a part of the Love My Park Day event. The stone structure was cleaned; a new donated replica of the original sign was installed as well as a Peebles Island produced interpretive panel journaling the history of the landmark.



*Sweetwater Spring*

**Quaker Area:** Completions are being made to the family Group Camp 5 located in the Quaker Area. Final touches are being made to the 18 sleeping units, new washhouse and



*Group Camp 5*

to the existing main mess hall. Reservations have started being accepted and have been overwhelmingly received by the public for next season. Volunteers with tools and paint from the Sherman Williams Paint Company donated time on an October weekend, painting 25 cabins located in the Quaker Area. Park personnel re-

placed two large culverts that had structurally deteriorated: one being on the entrance road to Group Camp 12 and the other on the Old Bova Ski Area Rd.

**Midway State Park:** The Friends of Midway State Park is a nonprofit organization founded in 2010 with the purpose of working with the state to promote, preserve, maintain and financially support this historic amusement park. It has grown to over 100 members and has been actively involved in numerous projects, some of the most notable being the restoration of the passenger cars on the Chautauqua choo-choo miniature train, reviving and co-sponsoring the July 4 Fireworks Tradition, acquiring and displaying a restored 1957 Pony Tractor vintage ride from the 1950s, and raising \$7000 to date toward the restoration of the 1946 Herschell Carousel. This organization is actively moving ahead with many other projects and its membership is growing.

**Completed Regional Capital Projects:** At Long Point State Park, a new 4000 gallon fuel tank was installed for the operation of the park's marina. A new park office building was constructed at Midway State Park, and upgrades to the electric, wiring and lights were made to the pavilion. A project at Lake Erie State Park restored the camper pad to the park's 102 campsites.

## Central Region

**Green Lakes State Park:** Grant funding from the Federal Highway Administration's Recreational Trails Program (RTP) along with support from the Environmental Protection Fund enabled upgrades to the most heavily used trail in the region, the nearly 3 mile long "Lake Trail." The RTP trails crew continues its impressive work on trail improvements outlined in the 2011 Green Lakes Master Plan. Both the Round Lake and Green Lake Trails were resurfaced in the summer of 2012. An eroding trail above Green Lake that threatened the main lake trail and the lake below was closed in favor of a new trail alignment, while the slopes above the lake were secured by biodegradable erosion blankets and native seeding in a pilot project to protect the water quality of the lakes from sediment contamination. The creation of a new gravel parking lot and connector trail near the



*View from trail at Green Lakes State Park*

a federal Recreation Trails Program and an EPF stateside match is \$300,000.

campgrounds has improved access to the upper grassland trail system occupying the western half of the park. The total cost of the ongoing trail improvements, funded through

viewing the lake and play area is also provided. Clark Reservation, a unique natural area with a sensitive ecology, will incorporate educational, nature-themed play equipment in an area that will include interactive signage to further explain the story of woodland animals and their habitats, as well as ecological requirements for their existence.

**Chenango Valley State Park:** Land and Water Conservation Fund and the State Park Infrastructure Fund provided funds for the rehabilitation of the Beach Bathhouse complex. This new building, valued at \$1.4 million, provides space for patron restrooms, lifeguard/first aid services and a concession area. Water and energy efficient fixtures and appliances were added to the complex, which features a smaller, well-organized building layout and reduced paved surfaces. The building and beach area are now fully accessible and ADA compliant.



*Beach Bathhouse complex*

**Glimmerglass State Park:** New York Works funded the region's first green parking lot in September 2012. The rehabilitation of this heavily-degraded lot will improve accessibility to the park's beach, bathhouse, and day use areas and will provide enhanced opportunities for education and recreation, including a new basketball court. The reduction of the impermeable asphalt surface area by approximately 40% and the installation of grass parking areas and vegetated bioswales in the parking lot will reduce direct runoff to the lake, improving lake water quality.

**Playgrounds:** New York Works funded two new playgrounds to replace outdated playground equipment at Verona Beach State Park and Clark Reservation State Park. Verona Beach, located along the eastern shore of Oneida Lake, has adopted a nautical theme with an abstract ship wreck design. An accessible picnic and patio area for informal game play and



*Verona Beach State Park*

**Chenango Valley State Park:** Chenango Valley State Park received upgraded water distribution infrastructure valued at \$1.2 million through a project funded by New York Works. Over 30,000 linear feet of main line and service lateral piping was installed throughout the park. The project also included building renovations at the existing pumphouse, the redevelopment of the two existing wells, new submersible well pumps, and new pump controls. The campgrounds and picnic areas also received new water fountains as a result of the installations. In addition to providing a quality water source throughout the park, the new infrastructure will reduce maintenance and operation costs.

**Volunteer F.O.R.C.E.S. at SUNY-ESF and beyond:** The pilot program Volunteer FORCES (Friends of Recreation, Conservation and Environmental Stewardship) continues to engage students from colleges and universities throughout the Central and Finger Lakes regions, including the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), Syracuse University, Hartwick College, Cornell University and Hobart & William Smith Colleges. Since 2008, over 500 students have contributed to Natural Resource Stewardship and park improvement projects throughout Central New York's parks. Most notably over the past year, Central Region welcomed a significant number of current and former members of ESF Volunteer FORCES into internship and employment opportunities, including two Federal Work-Study Stewards, two recent graduates, and four ESF graduate students. The ESF graduate students are all conducting master's level research and educational programming through a New York Works funded project to conserve and protect the rare and threatened American hart's-tongue fern at Clark Reservation and Chittenango Falls State Parks. The FORCES program got an additional boost in July when Commissioner Rose Harvey and SUNY ESF President Neil Murphy signed an agreement that formally announced a long term partnership between NYS Parks and ESF. The agreement may be viewed at <http://www.nysparks.com/environment/documents.aspx>

## Finger Lakes Region

**Taughannock Falls State Park:** Three years ago a patron approached park staff at Taughannock Falls and suggested that the park offer canoe/kayak racks for rent, noting that he and other patrons would be interested in storing their car-top boats at the park. That winter,

the park built a canoe/kayak rack with twelve slots and rented all of them for \$100/year. The next winter, the park built a second rack and it was also fully rented over the summer. The park plans to build a third, plus a fourth for transient rental by the park's cabin area, and a fifth designed for small sailboats. A rack costs \$300-\$500 to install and brings in \$1,200 in revenue each year. The region intends to expand this successful revenue generating park amenity to other parks this year.

**Black Diamond Trail:** New York Works funded two bridges on the Black Diamond Trail (BDT). The BDT is a planned trail that connects four state parks:



*Black Diamond Trail*

Taughannock Falls, Alan Treman Marina, Buttermilk Falls, and Robert Treman. Phase one is an 8 mile section connecting Taughannock Falls in Trumansburg with Alan Treman

Marina in Ithaca. This section follows an old railway bed that once carried the luxury passenger train The Black Diamond Express. With the completion of these two bridges this trail segment can be opened for pedestrians from end to end. Ultimately, the trail will be surfaced to make it ADA accessible and bicycle friendly.

**Boat Launches:** Over the winter of 2011-2012, the region reconstructed two boat launches, one at the north end of Canandaigua Lake and one in the middle of Honeoye Lake. Both are busy sites that provide much needed public access to the lakes. Both reopened for the summer season this year and provide expanded facilities to handle growing use.

**Cell Phone Tour:** A regional environmental educator worked in partnership with the company On Cell to establish a cell phone

tour at Taughannock Falls State Park. The tour includes nine stops in the park where patrons can scan a QR code with their smart phone or call a phone number on their cell phone. The scan leads to a mobile website where patrons can read about the unique nature of where they are standing. With the phone call the same information will be read to them. About 2,000 patrons accessed the system this summer. Work is underway to expand the cell phone tours to other parks.



## Genesee Region

**Letchworth State Park:** The feasibility study for the proposed Nature Center was completed and delivered by the consultants. After review and discussion by agency staff and regional commissioners, it was decided to move forward with a revised version of the original concept. Site visits were held to finalize the location and design work is beginning on the basic floor plan as well as external and internal renderings. Meetings are being held this fall to formulate the plan for the fund-raising campaign which should kick off in early 2013.

The Friends of Letchworth was awarded a CFA Grant for development of interpretive signs about the organization of the Iroquois Nations. These signs were designed with the assistance of Peebles Island staff and completed in late fall. They will be installed along the Clan Trail between the William Pryor Letchworth Museum and the Council Grounds in 2013.

Three major New York Works projects totaling over \$4.8 million were either completed or underway in Letchworth by the end of the year. The rebuilding of the failed slope and roadway that closed the Council Grounds area to vehicle traffic was completed in late summer and the area re-opened to the public on Letchworth's *Native American Heritage Day*, September 15. Construction began in late October on the replacement for the Cabin Area D comfort station, showers and laundry facilities. Bids for the Letchworth Waterline project connecting to the Village of Castile were opened on November 15 with contract award and start of construction anticipated for early 2013.

**Hamlin Beach State Park:** The master planning process for Hamlin Beach State Park was completed in late summer and

included two public meetings in the Towns of Hamlin and Greece in early June. Four area plans were finalized for the West Park (Areas 5 & 6), Yanty Marsh,



*Yanty Marsh*

Park Entry and the CCC/POW Camp. These plans include new interpretive trails, recreational and vehicular access improvements, site and habitat preservation activities, picnic facilities and cabins. The park will begin implementation of these plans in 2013.

A large New York Works project is also underway at Hamlin Beach. Construction started in November on the

rehabilitation of the inadequate and failing electrical system in the 264 site campground. This \$2.8 million upgrade will provide higher amperage and safer hook-ups eliminating frequent outages and the issuance of numerous refunds to patrons for loss of electrical service.

The Friends of Hamlin Beach State Park have also received final authorization of its tax-exempt status and can now be fully engaged in fundraising and assisting with a wide range of projects. An agreement is being developed for them to have use of the park house at the CCC/POW Camp site as an office and interpretive facility and for them to operate/manage the CCC/POW Camp site area in conjunction with Parks. The Friends are also receiving training from Parks' Historic Preservation staff in the care and cataloging of documents and artifacts related to this site.

**I Love My Park Day:** The first annual I Love My Park Day was a success across the region as events and projects were held at three different facilities: Letchworth, Hamlin Beach and the Genesee Valley Greenway. The friends groups for each of these facilities were very actively involved in planning the events and performing the work, and some of the regional commissioners also participated. Projects included landscaping, trail work, tree & shrub planting, installing flower beds and removal of invasive species. The day was rounded out by interpretive programs, lunch for the volunteers and meetings of the Friends groups. The region is looking to expand this program to all its major facilities for 2013.

## Long Island Region

**Hurricane (Super Storm) Sandy:** Beginning Monday, October 29, 2012 the Long Island Region began to notice the effects of impending storm, Hurricane Sandy. Although Sandy was downgraded to a tropical storm, when combined with two other weather systems affecting the Northeast at the time, she caused significant damage to Long Island State Parks. Sandy's strong winds and rain blanketed the island during high-tide. She left behind significant flooding from the ocean and bay waters which caused a significant amount of damage to state parks on Long Island. All parks were closed due to fallen trees, hanging electrical wires, massive flooding, and loss of electrical power, and heat. To date several parks are still closed and will remain closed until they are safe to reopen. Major damage includes the



*Flooding at Jones Beach State Park*

Jones Beach State Park 2.5 mile boardwalk which was blown apart and now looks like a roller coaster, and the Robert Moses Traffic Circle, portions of which collapsed. Portions of Ocean Parkway broke away and fell into the ocean during the storm.

### Bayard Cutting

**Arboretum:** A major event for the region was the establishment of the first and only community sponsored agriculture (CSA) farm in a New York state park at Bayard Cutting Arboretum. The CSA provided 24 weeks of fresh, organically grown vegetables to 50 families.



*Bayard Cutting Arboretum*

### Bethpage State Park-

#### Barclays PGA:

Bethpage State Park hosted the Barclays PGA golf tournament with 100,000 spectators over the course of one week in August. The tournament was played on the Bethpage State Park Black Course which was also the site of the 2002 and 2009 U.S. Open Golf Tournaments. Proceeds from Barclays tickets ordered on-line, amounting to \$26,000, were deposited into the Natural Heritage Trust.

**Regional Playground Construction:** With funds from New York Works, the region will build or create new playgrounds at two parks and install new playground equipment at ten parks across Long Island. The playgrounds will be accessible to people with disabilities and have distinct areas for younger and older age groups. Each playground will have its own unique themes reflecting characteristics of the park. Playground improvements will be coupled with site improvements, including shade trees or canopies, seating, water fountains and trail/walkway connections to the rest of the park. The parks that will receive the new or improved playgrounds are: Brentwood; Belmont; Bethpage; Heckscher; Hempstead; Hither Hills; Montauk Point; Orient Beach; Sunken Meadow and Valley Stream.

**Nissequogue River State Park:** The Kings Park Psychiatric Center demolition project has attracted much attention from community groups, community leaders, government officials, and news media. The National Salvage Company began mobilization and prep work in June, and started demolishing the first building on August 13, 2012. The project continues on schedule and should be complete by fall 2013.

### Major Motion Pictures and TV Network

**Filming:** In Spring, 2012, Paramount Overseas Productions Inc. began filming the epic "NOAH" at *Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park*. This

large production was directed by Darren Aronofsky and stars Russell Crowe, Anthony Hopkins, Emma Watson and Jennifer Connelly. The 5-acre set, built on the south end of the park property in large, open fields and nearby woodlands featured a 6-story ark, a 60,000 gallon water tank, 30,000 gallon wave pool and one of the most elaborate rain systems ever assembled. Production concluded in early November and the movie will be released in theaters in 2014. *Caumsett State Historic Park* is hosting two major filming productions, at the same time, same filming locations, while utilizing similar sections of the park. One is the movie “Winter’s Tale” with Russell Crowe, Colin Farrell, and Jennifer Connelly, the other is a television production called “Zero Hour” starring Anthony Edwards.

## New York City Region

**Clay Pit Ponds State Park:** Located within the park is Gericke Farms, the oldest continuous organic farm in NYC. Local school groups made approximately 2,500 student visits to cultivate a bumper crop in a garden this year. Eagle Scouts from Staten Island continue to complete service projects. This year they constructed stairs and foot bridges on the nature trails washed out by Hurricane Irene and developed an addition to the peacock structure.

**Riverbank State Park:** On June 29th, the park’s main athletic field was reopened. New York Works funds of \$1,500,000 replaced the worn and torn artificial turf with a new surface and support base while clearing the field and



*Riverbank State Park*

track drainage system. From the start of design to opening, the project was completed in less than eight months. Baseball is a strong team sport in this park and this year at the annual game between the Riverbank and Roberto Clemente teams, the Yankee’s pitcher, Ivan Nova was a special guest. His visit was facilitated by the Coca Cola Company who also presented a \$10,000 check for a batting cage at the park’s baseball diamond.

**Roberto Clemente State Park:** Governor Cuomo was on hand with over 100 volunteers to assist with the cleanup of the main plaza during the ‘I Love My Park Day’ in May. In October, the ‘Celebration of Harlem River’ was held in the park and on the waterfront in conjunction with the National Park Service and several Bronx organizations. This park suffered damage by Hurricane Sandy when the gymnasium and warehouse were flooded. With the efforts of the staff and the Commissioner, the area was cleaned and in December the park

hosted a tribute to U.S. Men’s Olympic Gymnast, John Orozco from the Bronx.

### Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms State

**Park:** In October, Governor Cuomo announced that the Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms State Park, located on Roosevelt’s Island, would become the state’s 179th state park. The park derives its name from a January 6, 1941

speech delivered by President Roosevelt, in which he described his vision for a world founded on four essential human freedoms:



*Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms State Park, © Paul Warchol*

freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. Park maintenance, programming and security will be provided cooperatively by State Parks, Four Freedoms Park Conservancy, and the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation.

## Niagara Frontier Region

**Niagara Falls State Park:** The eyes of the world were on Niagara Falls State Park as daredevil Nik Wallenda walked across the Falls on a tightrope. Millions watched from around the world and the park hosted over 4000 spectators and over 300 members of international media and in an event that generated much buzz and excitement.

**Reservoir State Park:** Six million dollars in renovations at Reservoir State Park were completed with funding from Niagara Power Authority Relicensing Fund in the spring. The park is now home to upgraded softball diamonds, hiking and walking trails, comfort stations, parking facilities and a warming station.



### Niagara Gorge Rim:

*New stairs at Whirlpool overlook*

Gorge Trails were overhauled this year along the Rim, creating almost 8 miles of trail between Niagara Falls State Park and Artpark State Park. New stairs were installed at the new Whirlpool overlook and trails were cleared along several sections in order to provide seamless access to this magnificent resource.

**Ft. Niagara State Park:** The ribbon was cut at Ft. Niagara State Park after a \$1.4 million dollar park wide electrical upgrade. It was funded through the Niagara Power Authority Relicensing Fund.

**Earl W. Brydges Artpark:** Renovations to Artpark's outdoor amphitheater were completed as patrons enjoyed outdoor concerts all summer long. Improved patron access into the seating area, new service areas for concessions, a new restroom building, a reformed bowl area for



*Artpark State Park*

seating, and an enlarged and improved Sponsor area were all met with rave reviews from concert goers. Artpark & Company, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, presents all of the programming in the State Park. Artpark is dedicated to presenting the finest in performing and visual arts programs, including Broadway musicals and classical, jazz and pop music concerts; art exhibits; classes, workshops and demonstrations, and tours of the park's geological and historic sites and nature trails.

**Knox Farm:** The Friends of Knox Farm State Park hosted a concert by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra which, while it was a free concert for the general public, it also served as a fundraiser for the Friends group who provided special seating and a "Tapas on the Terrace" meal prior to the concert.

## Palisades Region

**Regional Capital Improvement Projects:** The Palisades Region is undergoing several capital project facility improvements through the New York Works program and through cooperation of the Palisades Parks Conservancy. These projects include the following improvements. Approximately \$1.5 million funded potable water service upgrades at Bear Mountain State Park. The Cohasset Sewage Treatment Plant at Harriman State Park, which serves several of the group camps in the park, received \$2.1 million in renovations; and \$3.3 million in renovations to the group camps in Harriman State Park will include repairs to 66 roofs, 20

bathrooms, camp road improvements, electrical service and power lines, water distributions systems and several dock and swimming cribs. Another \$2.6 million was invested in repairs to Seven Lakes Drive, the main public road through Harriman State Park.

**Minnewaska State Park:** Over \$1 million in renovations have been made to the carriage roads at Minnewaska State Park Preserve. The carriage road trails are very popular and are used for hiking, biking and cross-country skiing.

### Washington Headquarters State Historic Site:

Renovations of the Museum at Washington Headquarters Historic Site were completed in the fall of 2012. This included the new exhibit, *Unpacked & Rediscovered: Selections from the Washington's Headquarters' Collection* which opened to the public on December 1. The Museum has undergone renovations over the past few years to provide a more appropriate and stable environment for the artifacts. The collection has been recognized as a micro-

cosm of collecting in America, from the birth of the nation to the present, from things used in battle to things used in homes, from souvenirs of travel and



*Artifacts at Washington Headquarters*

childhood, to how we remember our own heroes and history. Washington's Headquarters, the first publicly owned historic site in the nation when it opened in 1850, is a very important historic site. Hasbrouck House served as General Washington's headquarters for 16 ½ months, the longest of all his headquarters during the 8 year Revolutionary War. It was here that General Washington created and awarded the Badge of Military Merit, forerunner of today's Purple Heart, and penned his Circular Letter, sent to the thirteen state governors, where the General shared his views on the future of the nation, and is considered to be the cornerstone of the Constitution.

**Palisades Park Conservancy:** The Palisades Park Commission in conjunction with the Palisades Parks Conservancy (our non for profit partner) held the annual fundraising dinner on September 15, 2012. The dinner honored PIPC Commissioner Barnabas McHenry and Congressman Maurice Hinchey and raised over \$82,000 towards the restoration of the Tower of Victory at Washington's Headquarters. The Commission and Conservancy have also partnered with the Alliance for New York State Parks on a fundraising effort to restore the Hamilton Point Carriage Roads at Minnewaska



State Park Preserve. Taking advantage of a challenge grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Alliance for New York State Parks program at the Open Space Institute has raised over \$380,000 to date toward the reconstruction of the Hamilton Point Carriage Road, which is expected to start next year.

## Saratoga-Capital District Region

### Grafton Lakes State Park:

Thanks to an extraordinary volunteer effort by the Fire Tower Committee of the Friends of Grafton Lakes State Park, and assistance from the New York State Police, the historic Dickinson Hill Fire Tower was faithfully restored and reopened to the public as an exciting new hiking destination on the Taconic Ridge. The only one of its kind in Rensselaer County, the 65 foot tower offers panoramic views of the Adirondack and Green Mountains.



*Dickinson Hill Fire Tower*

**Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site:** Tropical storms Irene and Lee heavily damaged this sprawling site that preserves and interprets the cultural and engineering history of the Erie Canal. But the flood waters also revealed the original remains of the British Fort Hunter, built in the early 1700s, adding a whole new dimension to the interpretation of this historic site. Recovery work is underway to restore site amenities including new interpretive signage to highlight the flood's unexpected discoveries.

**Crown Point State Historic Site:** The historic remains of British and French forts on Lake Champlain can now be seen and interpreted from a whole new vantage point thanks to the newly completed Crown Point Bridge. The new bridge offers pedestrian and bicycle access to better link the State Historic Site to other cultural and recreational resources over the bridge in Vermont. Bridge tours offer magnificent views of the lake as well as a bird's eye view of the historic fort ruins, their strategic position, and their significance in our nation's development.

**Geocache Challenge:** Geocaching is an increasingly popular outdoor activity where participants use GPS and other mobile devices to find hidden containers in parks. The region launched an exciting new program this spring to introduce park patrons to this fun activity. Eleven parks and historic sites hosted 44 geocaches. Sponsors of the program included Ben and Jerry's and Eastern Mountain Sports.

**Plants for Parks:** A new partnership with local nurseries and independent flower growers is adding affordable beau-

ty to the Region's facilities. Member businesses of New York Flower Power Inc. are donating flowers and plants to nearby state parks and historic sites. Through the partnership, parks receive a welcome addition of colorful gardens and floral displays to greet the public, while patrons learn about the stunning local options for home gardens. The partnership has yielded eye-popping results at the entrances



*Saratoga Spa State Park*

to Saratoga Spa State Park and Schuyler Mansion. From hanging baskets on contact stations, to doorway displays at park offices, to full-blown gardens, the Region is most grateful for this extraordinary donation from our neighboring nurseries.

## Taconic Region

**Taconic State Park:** Taconic State Park celebrated the completion of its furnace cover project at the historic Copake Iron Works, located within the Park, with a ribbon cutting ceremony on November 11. Construction of a protective cover for the 19th century blast furnace began in October 2011 under the supervision of Edgar Masters, an early supporter of the group and since June 2012, a commissioner for the Taconic Region OPRHP. Edgar's staff has worked throughout the past year to bring the project in on schedule and on budget. Milbrey Zelle, president of the Friends group, said in a press release, "history lovers everywhere are breathing a sigh of relief this week knowing that our beloved furnace has some protection from the further ravages of tempest and time." The furnace cover project was funded by contributions from more than 225 individuals, businesses and foundations including a 50% matching grant from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund. Friends of Taconic State Park is within \$1,000 of meeting its \$150,000 fundraising goal.

**Staatsburgh State Historic Site:** After more than a century use, this Gilded Age mansion's east portico, roof and estate wall were all in desperate

need of structural and aesthetic rehabilitation. Funding for the projects was provided by Governor Cuomo's New



*Work being done on the Portico of the Mills Mansion*

York Works. In 1895 this opulent Beaux Arts mansion was renovated by renowned architect Stanford White, of the well-known architectural firm, McKim, Mead & White to build what now stands as the portico entrance. The imposing portico and the grand estate wall are vital to the history of the site, and make a first impression on patrons entering the site as well as people traveling down the road. The work is to be completed in a year, but will improve the site for many years to come.

**John Jay Homestead State Historic Site:** Work is underway at founding father John Jay's 1801 Carriage Barn.



An education and visitor center is being built in the historic structure. The revamped facility will include a main exhibit gallery with a welcome desk and gift shop, a map-model of the property, computer kiosks with exhibit content, and period news magazines featuring articles relevant to John Jay's life. The 1911 addition to the building will feature a video viewing area, and an activity center

with a replica governess's cart, similar to one the Jay children rode in, and discovery boxes full of historical things for patrons to explore. In the horse stalls, visitors will one day see realistic models of horses and experience a sound and light show emphasizing the importance of horses to the Jay family and Bedford Farm. The Friends of John Jay Homestead, combined with grants from the federal and state government, raised the money needed to restore the Carriage Barn structure. This is just the first step in expanding the educational programming at the Carriage Barn.

**Clermont State Historic Site:** Work on the Gardener's Cottage is almost complete. The Friends of Clermont, in collaboration with the state, stabilized the oldest part of the cottage within the last decade, but the building remained vacant and abandoned until this year. The Friends raised \$500,137 for the project. The Gardener's Cottage is a stunning example of early 19th century rural vernacular architecture, with some elegant Federal touches. Inside Clermont's gardeners once enjoyed the large fireplaces and original detailing still found along the wide carrying beams. During the Great Depression, Alice Livingston, the owner of Clermont and its 500 acres, dismissed her servants and moved from the riverside mansion into this small cottage, where she lived the rest of her life. By the end of this year, the building will become the James D. Livingston Research Library and public meeting rooms for lectures and symposia. What had once been Janet's apartment over the garage will become the main library room, lined with bookcases and set off by cherry reading tables, which, placed together end-to-end, can be used for meetings of the Friends' trustees or small conferences. The rest of the cottage will contain restored meeting rooms and offices.

**New Regional Commission Members:** This year, the Taconic Regional Commission had the wonderful news that Governor Cuomo appointed two new excellent commissioners, Randall Fleischer and Edgar Masters. In addition, the Commission is happy



to have James Chisholm, Chairman of the Westchester County Parks, Recreation and Conservation, join the Commission as an ex officio member.

## Thousand Islands Region

**Cumberland Bay State Park:** This Park is back and better than ever! Record spring flooding on Lake Champlain in 2011 led to severe damage at Cumberland Bay State Park in Plattsburgh and to the decision to close the park for the 2011 season. But, flood damage was cleared and the park's shore wall was rebuilt. A new playground was installed near the park's beautiful sand beach on Lake Champlain and the park opened to robust camping and day-use attendance in 2012.

**Higley Flow State Park:** This popular camping park in St. Lawrence County is seeing the convergence of three exciting construction projects in 2012-2013. First, a new comfort



*New comfort station*

station funded under New York Works, was completed in September and awaits park patrons when they return in May 2013. A new playground, also a New York Works project, is being constructed by regional park staff

over the fall and winter months and will greatly enhance the recreational opportunities at the park's beach area. And, in partnership with the Friends of Higley Flow State Park, which secured a grant under the new Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process, a new environmental education/ski warming building will soon be added to the park's amenities.

**Regional Playground Construction:** The region will build or create new playgrounds at three parks, Whetstone Gulf, Higley Flow and Point Au Roche. The playgrounds will be accessible to people with disabilities and have distinct areas for younger and older age groups. Each playground will have its own unique themes reflecting characteristics of the park. Playground improvements will be coupled with site improvements, including shade trees or canopies, seating, water fountains and trail/walkway connections to the rest of the park.



# Division of Law Enforcement

## New York State Park Police

2012 has been an exceptionally busy year for the men and women of the New York State Park Police and all the staff of the Division of Law Enforcement. Record setting temperatures and park visitation, huge special events, a particularly busy concert season at three major venues, and the catastrophic damage caused by Hurricane Sandy, kept Park Police personnel on the move throughout the year.

The most positive event of 2012 was the commencement of the first Basic School for newly hired police officers



*New York State Park Police Academy Recruits*

since 2007. On November 5, at the New York State Park Police Academy in Rensselaerville, Park Police enrolled forty recruits in its basic training school.

## Special Events

- Park Police opened the summer season with the Jones Beach Air Show which was headlined by the U.S.



*The Jones Beach Air Show*

Navy's Blue Angels. The Jones Beach Air Show is one of the leading air shows in the world and attracts hundreds of thousands of spectators each year.

- In June, Park Police personnel worked with staff from multiple state, federal, Canadian and local agencies



*Buckle Up NY event at Lake Welch State Park*

to provide an extraordinary public safety detail for Nik Wallenda's high wire crossing over Niagara Falls from New York to Canada.

- In August, a Park Police detail consisting of members from throughout the state was deployed during the Barclays Golf Championship at Bethpage State Park on Long Island, a tournament that attracts the greatest names in professional golf and attracted tens of thousands of spectators each day.
- In 2012, Park Police provided services to State Park's three major concert venues, Jones Beach, Saratoga



*Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC)*

Performing Arts Center (SPAC) and Artpark. The concert season was very active as many major acts were touring. The popular jam band Phish

scheduled five concerts at two of the venues, Jones Beach and SPAC, during the peak week of summer visitation that attracted thousands of concert fans and the Park Police patrol detail was made up of personnel from every

part of the state. Artpark attracted more than 117,000 spectators for eighteen events. SPAC conducted 23 concerts and served more than 281,000 spectators. At the Jones Beach Theater we hosted more than 356,000 fans at 37 concerts.

## Hurricane Sandy

Park Police personnel were among the first responders involved with Hurricane Sandy. Before the storm struck Long Island, New York City and the lower Hudson Valley, Park Police were evacuating residents from Fire Island and other coastal areas. The devastating storm caused damage that made many state park facilities unsafe for the public. Park Police manned traffic and security posts after the storm and assisted residents to gain access to the worst hit areas by escorting them to their damaged homes.

## Noteworthy Incidents

- Across the state, Park Police officers and rangers responded to multiple lost, stranded or injured hikers as well as suicidal and despondent persons and made rescues involving high angle rescue techniques, swift water rescues and conducted severe weather operations in heavy snow, hurricane conditions and extreme terrain.
- At Niagara Falls State Park, the Park Police swift water rescue team rescued a dog that had run away from its family during the July 4th fireworks display and became stranded on an island in the Niagara River above the falls. The dog was not seen until July 13. The rescue was



Niagara Falls State Park

the subject of great joy for the family and received much media attention. In January, officers observed a suicidal subject approaching the falls and with the assistance of other members were able to talk the subject back from the brink.

- A man faked his drowning at Jones Beach State Park during a very busy beach day. A major search and recovery operation involving Park Police, lifeguards, marine patrols, Coast Guard and police aviation were activated. A subsequent investigation by Park Police detectives on Long Island led to the arrest of the suspect and charges of Insurance Fraud.
- Park Police responded when park staff reported finding a two-year-old on a beach. The two year old was left behind by a day care center.
- A search for a missing 76-year-old at Caleb Smith State Park ended miraculously with the missing subject being located by a police canine after days of searching.
- A huge wild fire on West Mountain at the Anthony Wayne Recreation Area (Palisades) was battled for



Anthony Wayne Recreation Area (Palisades)

days by state park forest rangers, state park staff, local firefighters and DEC forest rangers and staff. The fire burned more than 480 acres before it was brought under control.

In August, Park Police hosted a “National Night Out Against Crime” event at Riverbank State Park with various



“National Night Out Against Crime”

community groups, including law enforcement, FDNY, health groups and neighborhood organizations. National Night Out is a national initiative to promote neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships for a safer nation.



# Division for Historic Preservation

*John Brown Farm State Historic Site*

**H**istoric and cultural resources help establish New York's distinctive quality, character, and sense of place, and historic preservation helps to safeguard and renew these irreplaceable assets. The Division for Historic Preservation (DHP) provides a wide range of programs and services that preserve, interpret, and enhance state historic sites and state historic parks and help communities achieve the social, economic, and environment benefits associated with historic preservation.

## Path through History

In March, Governor Cuomo launched Path through History (PtH) to highlight the state's history and culture while bolstering tourism, economic development, and job growth. PtH is an extension of the Regional Economic Development Councils, which help to coordinate and advance an array of regionally-based economic development strategies. PtH goals include connecting New York's historic and cultural attractions, expanding and enhancing the stories they tell, promoting and increasing visitation to historic and cultural attractions, and integrating them into statewide tourism efforts. PtH actions include promoting New York history and its assets through enhanced highway signage, coordinated marketing approaches and projects, and advanced technology, including websites, social media, and mobile apps. The Governor's office is leading PtH, in partnership with DHP, OPRHP regional directors, and ten regional PtH workgroups. The initiative promises to not only maximize heritage and cultural attractions across the state, but to also draw attention to the agency's scenic and historic treasures.

## 2012 New York State Historic Preservation Awards

On December 13, OPRHP honored excellence in the protection and rejuvenation of New York's historic and cultural resources at its annual historic preservation awards ceremony, which followed the 150th meeting of the New York State Board for Historic Preservation. The meeting and ceremony were held in Chancellors Hall at the State Education Building in Albany. This year's awards paid tribute to State Assemblyman Jack McEneny for his commitment to safeguarding New York State history; Bob MacKay, chair of the State Board for Historic Preservation, for his leadership of the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities; the Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Partnership for its contribution

to revitalizing Brooklyn's historic neighborhoods; the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for its restoration of the TWA terminal at JFK; the repair of the flood-damaged Laraway Inn in Prattsville, which was inundated during Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee; the rehabilitation and reuse of the Chasan Building in downtown Troy; the restoration and reopening of the Nine Mile Creek Aqueduct in the Town of Camillus Erie Canal Park; and the rehabilitation and reuse of the administration building at Green Lakes State Park by OPRHP's Central Region.

## New Exhibit at Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site

The staff of the Division's Bureau of Historic Sites and Parks was instrumental in developing, creating and installing "Unpacked and Rediscovered: Selections from Washington's Headquarters' Collection," which opened to the public on December 1, 2012. The exhibit features rare, curious, and important artifacts not seen by the public for many years. Displayed in two galleries of open storage, this selection of over 1,300 amazing objects was amassed over 160 years and represents the very roots of the American preservation movement. In each of the galleries, using iPad technology, visitors can access a custom-designed electronic catalog application for self-directed learning. Along with "Unpacked and Rediscovered," the two first-floor exhibits have been refreshed and will also be reopened.

## Disaster Recovery

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is responsible for consulting with all state and federal agencies to identify the impacts of those agencies' actions on historic and cultural resources and to work with them to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse impacts. When disaster strikes, emergency provisions go into effect and the SHPO's response needs to be immediate. The recovery phase generally involves a significant increase in projects for SHPO review, along with increased interest in assistance through both the commercial and the residential tax credit programs for rehabilitation. Following Hurricanes Irene and Lee, the SHPO developed an expedited process that allowed for immediate response to over 1,000 federal and state undertakings. Emergency response to Superstorm Sandy is underway and the recovery efforts are expected to place an unprecedented demand upon SHPO services and technical assistance.

# Environmental Sustainability



*Before- Little Dam Lake Restoration*



*After- Little Dam Lake Restoration*



*Northern Cricket Frog*

*Northern Cricket Frog Habitat restoration in Sterling Forest*



*Deer Exclosure with forest regeneration*

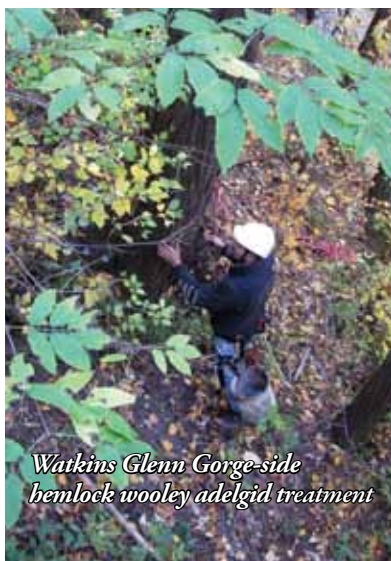
*Letchworth State Park Assessment of Biodiversity and Deer Populations*



*Forest vegetation and biodiversity monitoring sub-plot*



*"Special concern" species Grey Petaltail*



*Watkins Glenn Gorge-side hemlock woolley adelgid treatment*

Along with providing recreation and cultural resources, New York's state parks are home to an extraordinary diversity of plants, animals and natural communities. An almost decade long partnership with NYS Natural Heritage Program has resulted in the identification and mapping of the natural communities, plants and animals found in state parks. Full natural community mapping was completed for 105 parks totaling over 280,000 acres. In addition, targeted surveys for rare species and natural communities of statewide significance were carried out in 78 parks. The findings from this project are significant. State parks and historic sites are home to more than 900 occurrences of 358 different rare species and natural community types. For 104 rare species and natural community types, OPRHP properties support the only known occurrences of these on state public lands. Seven of these species or community types have just one known existing occurrence in the entire state! For example, the state endangered Chittenango ovate amber snail is found only in a single state park in Central New York.

In 2012, State Parks regional biologists and environmental staff completed more natural resource stewardship projects. These projects



*J.B. Thacher State Park Mole Salamander Habitat Enhancement*

protect, maintain and enhance natural resources, habitats, ecosystems and species found in State Parks. Projects completed throughout the state included over 100 invasive species removal projects, grassland and habitat restoration projects, shoreline, stream and riparian corridor enhancements, protection of rare, threatened and endangered species, and emerald ash borer and hemlock woolly adelgid monitoring, control and outreach. Some examples of the projects are pictured left. For more highlights from around the state, with more detailed descriptions and photos please visit [www.nysparks.com/environment](http://www.nysparks.com/environment).

In November 2012, a scientific journal published an article that resulted from collaboration with State Park Visiting Scientist, Dr. George Robinson from SUNY Albany. The paper explains the stewardship potential of State Parks and how important they are for biodiversity conservation (Robinson, George R. 2012. Assessing the Conservation Significance of a State Park System, New York, USA. *Natural Areas Journal*. 32(4):412-419).

# Natural Resource Stewardship

*Red-spotted Newt*

## Partnerships: Helping NYS Parks and Biodiversity

NYS Parks Environmental Management Bureau and Regional Biologists partner with nearly 150 different groups across the state to help advance the mission of conserving and restoring NYS Park's natural resources and environment. Partners range from other state agencies to local community groups and schools. Engaging with university and other higher learning institutions allows researchers to utilize State parks as a laboratory and help parks monitor and learn about its ecosystems. Partnering with school groups provides a learning opportunity and as well as helps to maintain parks by doing service projects such as invasive species removals.

## Audubon in the Parks

Audubon in the Parks is an initiative partnership with Audubon New York and OPRHP, the Regional Commissions, and Audubon Chapters and Friends Groups. The goal of the partnership is to advance bird conservation in state parks, specifically targeting Bird Conservation Areas (BCAs) and Audubon Important Bird Areas (IBAs). This unique public/private partnership focuses on restoring and enhancing habitat at state parks that are important for bird conservation, as well as connecting people to these important areas. Audubon chapters currently working in 19 state parks and are actively exploring work at 23 other sites. Several highlights of ongoing Audubon in the Parks projects underway throughout the state:



*Hummingbird*

### Schodack Island State Park (Saratoga Capital Region):

This spring, volunteers from the Audubon Society of the Capital Region and Audubon New York initiated Cerulean Warbler monitoring at the Park to help inform management of invasive species currently degrading areas of the site that are ideal habitat for Cerulean Warblers and Bald Eagles.

**Joseph Davis State Park (Niagara Region):** OPRHP, Audubon NY and the Buffalo Audubon Society are evaluating and improving avian habitat and interpretation at this Park. This project is enhancing critical bird habitat along the upper Niagara River Corridor, attracting migratory bird populations and also improving public enjoyment of this important resource.

**Green Lakes State Park (Central Region):** OPRHP staff are working with Onondaga Audubon and Audubon NY to implement the grassland management plan adopted for the Park during their master planning process. Volunteers are coordinating bird and invasive species surveys. Green Lakes is poised to be the largest intact grassland bird habitat on state parkland.

**Clarence Fahnestock State Park (Taconic Region):** The Putnam Highlands Audubon Society is conducting field trips and Christmas Bird Counts within the Park, contributing to the creation of a bird checklist. The Chapter organized a spring "I Love My Parks" work day to install native plants for the Park's Ann Odell Bird and Butterfly Garden.

**Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve and other NYC Parks:** NYC Audubon coordinates field trips to this Park to introduce underserved communities to their nearest BCA and IBA. They also connected a college ecology class to the site and partnered with CBS.com to organize a trail maintenance and invasive species removal work day. Both the Chapter and Audubon New York staff will continue to maintain and monitor Chimney Swift towers installed at Clay Pit as well as Gantry Plaza, East River Roberto Clemente and Riverbank State Parks.

**Sunken Meadow and Nissequogue River State Parks (Long Island Region):** OPRHP environmental staff have been working with volunteers from Four Harbors Audubon Society to install American Kestrel and Eastern Bluebird boxes, coordinate invasive species removal workdays with students, and plant native species at these Parks. The Audubon volunteers are installing bird and butterfly demonstration gardens at these parks by working with multiple partners to acquire seeds and grow the plants for the project.

# Appendix 1:

## Roles & Responsibilities of State Council and Regional Commission Members



### Roles and Responsibilities: Members, State Council of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

The State Council, created by Article 5 of PRHPL, consists of the Chairs of the eleven Regional Parks Commissions (including a representative of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission), the Chair of the State Board of Historic Preservation, the Commissioner of State Parks, and the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation. The Governor appoints the Chair and Vice Chair of the State Council. The Council meets at least four times per year through in-person meetings and conference calls. The Council's statutory responsibilities include:

- Act as a central advisory agency on all matters affecting parks, recreation, and historic preservation.
- Review the policy, budget, and statewide plans of the agency and make appropriate recommendations regarding their amendment or adoption.
- Submit reports to the Governor, not less than once each year, concerning progress in the area of state parks, recreation, and historic preservation.

#### **To advance these responsibilities, State Council of Parks members shall:**

1. Endeavor to attend all State Council of Parks meetings.
2. During State Council meetings and through other channels, educate other Council Members, the State Parks Commissioner, and other Executive and OPRHP Staff about issues, priorities, challenges, and opportunities within their respective regions.
3. Communicate State Council and agency priorities and initiatives to all Regional Commission members. Encourage, motivate, and support fellow Regional Commissioners to enable them to fully engage in state parks issues.
4. Become educated about statewide parks, recreation, and historic preservation issues.
5. Develop and submit a written annual report to the Governor each October.
6. Undertake all responsibilities of Regional Parks Commissioners (attached).





## Roles and Responsibilities: Members, Regional Park, Recreation and Historic Preservation Commission

The ten Regional Park, Recreation and Historic Preservation Commissions, created by Article 7 of PRHPL, represent each State Parks region, with the exception of the Palisades (represented by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission) and the Adirondack/Catskill park region. Each Regional Commission consists of seven to fourteen members (the number for each commission is set in law). All Commission members, who must be residents of the state, are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate for seven-year terms. The Governor designates the chair of each Commission. Each Regional Commission meets at least four times per year. The Regional Commissions are charged with acting as a central advisory body on all matters affecting parks, recreation, and historic preservation within their respective regions, with particular focus on the operations of the state parks and historic sites.

### To advance these responsibilities, Regional Parks Commissioners shall:

1. Endeavor to attend all Regional Parks Commission meetings.
2. Learn about the operations, priorities, and programs of the region, and participate in the annual review and approval of the regional budget. Remain in regular contact with the Regional Director. Visit as many state parks and historic sites in the region as possible, and become acquainted with regional staff and park managers.
3. Serve as an advocate for the state parks and historic sites within the region, including:
  - “Adopt” one or more state parks, or historic sites, so that every park and site in the region has a Regional Commissioner with whom they have a special

relationship. Actively participate in the formation or enhancement of Friends Groups, including considering making personal financial contributions, and assisting in fundraising efforts.

- Meet with State Legislators and other elected officials to educate them about issues, challenges and opportunities facing state parks and historic sites and advocate for state park funding and policy priorities.
4. Enlist the support of parks user groups, environmental and historic preservation organizations, land trusts, local community and business leaders, tourism officials, and other partners to advance state parks goals and priorities.
  5. Become educated about parks, recreation, and historic preservation issues throughout the region, with particular emphasis on issues – such as inappropriate development, sprawl, illegal ATVs, climate change, invasive species, etc. – that threaten state parks and historic sites. Testify or appear as appropriate at environmental review hearings, local planning meetings, etc. regarding proposed projects that impact park and historic site resources.
  6. Participate as appropriate in continuing education opportunities such as: attending the annual Facilities Managers conference; participating in park master planning, trailway development, and parkland designation efforts (such as Bird Conservation Areas and Natural Heritage Areas) for individual parks; and attending parks, open space, and historic preservation conferences and training programs.
  7. Assist in identifying qualified individuals to fill vacant Regional Commission positions.

# Appendix 2: Partnerships

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation actively engages in a range of partnerships with for-profit, non-profit and governmental agencies. Below is a sample list of those organizations with which the agency has or has recently had such a partnership.

## Corporate Partners

Bethpage Federal Credit Union  
Bonacio Construction  
Brookfield Power  
Cablevision  
Cascadian Farms  
Citibank  
Clear Channel Broadcasting  
Clif Bar  
Cox Broadcasting  
D.A. Collins  
Dasani  
David Lerner Associates  
Dick's Sporting Goods  
DirectTV  
Dowling College  
Drake Bakeries  
Dunkin Donuts  
Emblem Health  
Entenmann's  
Farmingdale College  
First Niagara Financial Group  
Fisheye Virtual Tours  
FUZE Beverage  
Geico  
Good Solutions Group

Hard Rock Café  
Long Island Radio Group  
Macy's  
Naudus Communications  
National Grid  
Nestle/ Juicy Juice  
New Living Magazine  
New York Islanders  
Newsday  
Nissequogue River Fly  
Fishing School  
Odwalla  
Cablevision  
Radio Disney  
Red Bull  
Runner's Edge Sporting Goods  
Sony PlayStation  
Sports Authority  
Stewarts  
Street Gear Inc.  
Super Runners Shop  
The Fisherman Magazine  
The Northface  
Thompsons Water Seal  
TV 10/55  
Verizon  
WABC-TV  
Zippo Manufacturing Co.

## Concession Partnerships

Balloons over Letchworth  
Bethpage Associates  
Delaware North Parks & Resorts  
Destination Cinemas Inc.  
Golf/ Confer Bethpage Guest Services  
J&B Restaurant Partners  
Maid of the Mist Corp.  
Nikon at Jones Beach Theater/ Live Nation  
Professional Golf Inc.  
ReserveAmerica/Active Network  
Rich Products/Be Our Guest, Ltd.  
Tower Optical

## Non-Profit Partnerships

Adirondack Mountain Club  
Alliance for New York State Parks  
Audubon New York  
Citizens Campaign for the Environment  
Concerned Mountain Bikers of Long Island

Dyson Foundation  
Fire Island Lighthouse Preservation Society  
Harriman Group Camps  
Home Made Theater  
Islip Arts Council  
Long Island Philharmonic  
Mohonk Preserve  
National Museum of Dance  
New York Restoration Project  
NYS Broadcasters Association  
NY/NJ Trail Conference  
Parks and Trails New York  
Saratoga Automobile Museum  
Saratoga Performing Arts Center  
Scenic Hudson  
The Nature Conservancy  
United States Golf Assoc.

## Inter-governmental and Municipal Partnerships

Cattaraugus County Economic Development Department  
City of Niagara Falls  
Empire State Development Corporation  
Long Island Power Authority

Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority Police  
MTA Long Island Bus  
National Park Service  
New York Lottery  
New York Power Authority  
Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation  
Orleans County  
Oswego County  
The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey  
Town of Aurora  
Town of Babylon  
Town of Brookhaven  
Town of East Hampton  
Town of Hamburg  
Town of Hempstead  
Town of Islip  
Town of Lewiston  
Town of Oyster Bay  
Town of Schodack  
Town of Sodus  
United States Fish & Wildlife Service  
Wantagh Fire Department  
Washington County

## Friends Groups

Allegany State Park Historical Society  
Artpark & Company  
Bannerman Castle Trust  
Bayard Cutting Arboretum Trust and Bayard Cutting Horticultural Society  
Calvert Vaux Preservation Alliance  
Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum (agency affiliate Old Erie Canal State Park)  
Dutchess County Historical Society (Clinton House)  
Fort Montgomery Battle Site Association  
Foundation for Long Island State Parks, Inc.  
Friend of the National Purple Heart of Honor  
Friends of Caleb Smith State Park Preserve  
Friends of Chenango Valley State Park  
Friends of Cherry Plain State Park  
Friends of Clay Pit Pond State Park Preserve  
Friends of Clermont  
Friends of Connetquot State Park, Inc.  
Friends of Crown Point State Historic Site  
Friends of East River State Park  
Friends of Evangola State Park  
Friends of Fahnestock & Hudson Highlands State Parks  
Friends of Fort Crailo State Historic Site  
Friends of Fort Ontario  
Friends of FDR/Trump State Parks  
Friends of Ganondagan, Inc.  
Friends of Gantry Neighborhoods Parks  
Friends of Genesee Valley Greenway  
Friends of Glimmerglass State Park, Inc.  
Friends of Grafton Lakes State Park  
Friends of Grant Cottage, Inc.

Friends of Hamlin Beach  
Friends of Herkimer Home  
Friends of Higley Flow State Park, Inc.  
Friends of John Brown Farm/John Brown Lives  
Friends of John Jay Homestead  
Friends of Johnson Hall  
Friends of Knox Farm State Park  
Friends of Letchworth State Park  
Friends of Lorenzo  
Friends of Midway State Park  
Friends of Mills Mansion  
Friends of Mine Kill /Max V. Shaul  
Friends of Minna Anthony Common Nature Center  
Friends of Montauk Downs State Park  
Friends of Moreau Lake State Park  
Friends of Peebles Island  
Friends of Philipse Manor Hall, Inc.  
Friends of Point au Roche State Park  
Friends of Robert H. Treman State Park  
Friends of Robert Moses State Park Nature Center, Inc.  
Friends of Rockland Lake & Hook Mountain State Parks  
Friends of Sampson State Park  
Friends of Saratoga Spa State Park  
Friends of Schodack Island State Park, Inc.  
Friends of Schoharie Crossing  
Friends of Schuyler Mansion  
Friends of Senate House, Inc.  
Friends of Stony Point Battlefield and Lighthouse

Friends of Taconic State Park  
Friends of Thacher State Park and Thompsons Lake State Parks  
Friends of the 30 Mile Point Lighthouse  
Friends of the Catharine Valley Trail  
Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct  
Friends of the Rockefeller State Park Preserve, Inc.  
Friends of the Shawangunks  
Friends of the State Historic Sites of the Hudson Highlands  
Friends of the Sterling Forest Partnership  
Grand Island Historical Society at River Lea (Beaver Island)  
Harlem Valley Rail Trail Association & Friends of the Iroindale School House  
Hyde Hall  
Jones Beach Rescue  
Little Stony Point Citizens  
Lloyd Harbor Historical Society  
Martin House Restoration Corporation  
Nissequogue River State Park Foundation  
Old Fort Niagara Association  
Palisades Camp Association  
Palisades Interstate Parks Conservancy  
Planting Fields Foundation  
Riverbank Partnership  
Sackets Harbor Battlefield Alliance  
Sonnenberg Inc.  
The Caumsett Foundation  
The Council of Parks Friends (Clark Reservation State Park)  
The Olana Partnership  
Walkway Over the Hudson  
Walt Whitman Birthplace Association





**New York State Council of Parks,  
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

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