

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – March 23, 2023

Media Contacts:

Rebecca Murray, Project Coordinator, Parks & Trails New York
(518) 217-8575, rmurray@ptny.org

Shane Mahar, Communications Strategy Manager, New York Power Authority
(518) 603-0791, shane.mahar@nypa.gov



**A Call for Volunteers for the 18th Annual Canal Clean Sweep;
New York's Largest Earth Day Celebration Along the Canalway Kicks Off Friday, April 21**

Volunteers are encouraged to register today, as groups across New York State prepare for the 18th [Canal Clean Sweep](#), to be held April 21-23, 2023. Canal Clean Sweep is an annual clean-up event held across the New York State Canal System and Canalway Trail. With more than 100 events and more than 2,500 volunteers expected along the more than 400-mile-long Canalway Trail system and the 524-mile-long Canal system, Canal Clean Sweep is New York's largest Earth Day clean-up event. This weekend provides opportunities for thousands of residents to give back to their local communities and to show pride in one of New York's most iconic cultural and recreational resources.

Clean Sweep is scheduled to coincide with the annual Earth Day celebrations on Saturday, April 22. Canal Clean Sweep will be one of a number of events held around the state to recognize the ongoing commitment to improving the health of our natural environment, in addition to being part of a nationwide celebration to encourage people to get outside and enjoy our exceptional trails and trail systems.

The 2023 Canal Clean Sweep will take place following a full year of trail use since the completion and opening of the Empire State Trail, a 750-mile multi-use path spanning the state from Manhattan north to the Adirondacks and west along the historic Erie Canal corridor to Buffalo. Over the last few years, the Canalway Trail system has seen unprecedented use, reflecting significant investments made as part of the completion of the Empire State Trail, and increased interest and participation in outdoor recreational activities due to COVID-19. Through the efforts of volunteers across the state during Canal Clean Sweep 2023, communities will ensure the Canalway Trail system will remain a pristine recreational resource for locals and visitors alike.

To register, click on a pin on the [interactive map](#) by visiting www.ptny.org/canalsweep to sign up for the event you would like to attend. Make sure to note the date and time as most events occur the weekend of April 21-23, but some clean-ups might be earlier or later. Please keep in mind that volunteers can only register for public events through the interactive map. Those that are attending a private event should contact the host directly.

Canal Clean Sweep 2023 is organized by the non-profit Parks & Trails New York, in partnership with the New York State Canal Corporation.

Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton said, “The devoted volunteers who join us in celebrating Earth Day by helping preserve the landscapes and ecosystems along the Canal system and Empire State Trail are vital to ensuring that every visitor can enjoy and experience all that New York’s canals and trails have to offer. We are exceptionally grateful to the thousands of volunteers who have already signed up for this year’s Canal Clean Sweep, and to our partners across New York who contribute to the success of the event every year.”

“Canal Clean Sweep unites residents in canalside communities across 524 miles along the Erie, Oswego, Cayuga-Seneca, and Champlain canals. With nearly 100 events registered so far, we are so appreciative of the overwhelming support that stewards provide each year to prepare Canalway and Canalway Trail for the summer months,” **said Paul Steely White, Executive Director of Parks & Trails New York.** “I am excited to be part of the 18th annual event to celebrate Earth Day and showcase the canal system as a major recreation and tourism destination.”

About Parks & Trails New York

Parks & Trails New York is the state’s leading advocate for parks and trails. Since 1998, PTNY has been working in partnership with the New York State Canal Corporation to help canal communities plan, develop and promote the Canalway Trail. PTNY organizes Cycle the Erie Canal, an eight-day bicycle tour along the historic Erie Canal that attracts more than 650 participants each year. In 2021, the organization published an updated version of the popular guidebook, *Cycling the Erie Canal: A Guide to 360 miles of Adventure and History* along the Erie Canalway Trail. Learn more at www.ptny.org.

About the New York State Canal System

The New York State Canal Corporation runs the New York State Canal System, which includes the Erie, Champlain, Oswego and Cayuga-Seneca canals. Spanning 524 miles, the waterway links the Hudson River with the Great Lakes, the Finger Lakes and Lake Champlain. In 2017, the Canal Corporation celebrated the 200th anniversary of the groundbreaking for the Erie Canal, which occurred in the city of Rome on July 4, 1817. The Canal System includes the Canalway Trail, a network of approximately 400 miles of multi-use trails across upstate New York. The Canalway Trail follows the towpaths of both active and historic sections of the New York State Canal System as well as adjacent abandoned rail corridors. Together, the canals and trail create a world-class recreationway that is a vibrant, scenic, and unique New York resource. To learn more about the New York State Canal and Canalway Trail System or to obtain a free map, please call 1-800-4CANAL4 or visit the Canal Corporation’s website at www.canals.ny.gov.

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