

Erie Canalway News Release

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Paddling Stewardship Program for New York State Canals Launched

Individuals and groups invited to adopt a section

WATERFORD- The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, along with the New York State Canal Corporation, has launched the **NYS Canalway Water Trail Stewardship Program** to help ensure the Erie, Cayuga-Seneca, Champlain, and Oswego canals are welcoming and safe for paddlers. Individuals, families, groups, and organizations are invited to adopt a section of the 450-mile NYS Canalway Water Trail from May through October.

“As we invite more paddlers to use the NYS Canal System, we are providing resources, improving access, and now promoting good stewardship to ensure that paddling here is a world class experience,” said **Bob Radliff, Executive Director of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor**. “We are thrilled that outdoor enthusiasts, including boaters, cyclists, nature lovers, and paddlers, are enjoying this National Historic Landmark. With that, comes the need for good stewardship to protect the waterway.”

The canal system opens for the season on May 21.

Volunteer stewards will perform light maintenance at launch sites, observe and report issues, and act as friendly ambassadors for paddlers using the waterway. Volunteers will steward a section of approximately 10 miles of the Water Trail, contributing about 4-6 hours a month. All volunteers will complete a virtual orientation, be provided t-shirts and supplies, and have access to additional training. All volunteers must be at least 12 years old (with adult supervision).

New York State Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton said, “New York’s Canals helped to build the nation and the Empire State, and we are excited to partner with like-minded organizations and individuals to help maintain these incredible and historic waterways. As we continue to make investments in our Canals and neighboring communities through Governor Cuomo’s *Reimagine the Canals* program, this new initiative ensures our waterways will be safe and clean for visitors from across New York and beyond, and underscores our commitment to maintaining the Canals’ status as a tremendous resource and economic driver for generations to come.”

To learn more and sign up, visit www.eriecanalway.org/watertrail or contact program manager Mona Caron at mona_caron@partner.nps.gov or 518-237-7000 x204.

The NYS Canalway Water Trail is comprised of 450 miles of canals and interconnected lakes and rivers. It includes the Erie, Cayuga-Seneca, Oswego, and Champlain canals. With more than [140 access sites](#), numerous paddling rentals locations, and several boater-biker-hiker facilities that allow overnight camping at canal parks, it's easier than ever for paddlers to enjoy the waterway for a few hours or a multi-day trip. A comprehensive Guidebook and Map Set for paddlers is available at Erie Canalway's website.

Generous financial and technical assistance for the NYS Canalway Water Trail Stewardship Program was provided by the National Park Service through its Connecting Trails to Parks and Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance programs, the New York State Canal Corporation, Montgomery County and Northwest River Supplies (NRS).

The **Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor** works to preserve the Nation's extraordinary canal heritage, promote the Corridor as a world-class tourism destination, and foster vibrant communities connected by more than 500 miles of waterway. It achieves its mission in partnership with the National Park Service, New York State agencies, non-profit organizations, local residents, and more than 200 communities across the full expanse of upstate New York. www.eriecanalway.org

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ATTACHED PHOTO AND SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POST:

Attention paddlers! The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, along with the New York State Canal Corporation, has launched the **NYS Canalway Water Trail Stewardship Program** to help ensure the Erie, Cayuga-Seneca, Champlain, and Oswego canals are welcoming and safe for paddlers. Individuals and groups are invited to adopt a section of the waterway and perform light maintenance, report issues, and act as friendly ambassadors. Learn more and apply here: [Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor :: Stewardship](#)