

NEWS RELEASE

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**PARKS & TRAILS NEW YORK AWARDS CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT
TO FRIENDS OF CONNETQUOT**

Friends of Connetquot is one of nine not-for-profit park and trail groups selected to receive a Capacity Building Grant from the statewide advocacy organization, Parks & Trails New York. The awards are designed to help groups increase organizational visibility and generate community support, grow membership, and attract additional volunteers.

“Grassroots groups play a key role in the development and promotion of our state’s many parks and trails which make such a significant contribution to the economy of our cities, towns and villages, as well as to the health and well-being of their residents,” said Robin Dropkin, Executive Director, Parks & Trails New York. “Made possible by a generous private donor, these nine grants are a small investment in strengthening our state’s not-for-profit park and trail organizations that will reap big benefits, enabling these groups to leverage more private funding and marshal more volunteer power to better fill the gaps in government spending created by challenging economic times.”

Friends of Connetquot received \$1,200 for a membership brochure and development of a tabletop display.

Robert Labuski, president of Friends of Connetquot said “Our organization is thrilled by the support of Parks & Trails New York. This grant will allow us to inform the community of the Friends’ ongoing work to restore and maintain the Connetquot River State Park Preserve in hopes that many more people will be encouraged to join us. In the present tough economy, this spectacular natural and historic treasure needs the community’s support more than ever.”

Awards were also granted to:

- Brooklyn Greenway Initiative, Brooklyn, Kings County
- Friends of Grimes Glen, Naples, Ontario County
- Friends of Kinderhook Trails, Kinderhook, Columbia County
- Friends of Taconic State Park, Copake Falls, Columbia County
- Friends of Rockland Lake and Hook Mountain, Inc., Valley Cottage, Rockland County
- Owasco Flats Nature Reserve, Moravia, Madison County
- Erie-Cattaraugus Rail Trail, Inc., Orchard Park, Erie and Cattaraugus Counties
- Association for Conservation of Recreational and Natural Spaces, Inc. Stafford Genesee County

Parks & Trails New York received 55 applications from organizations located in 30 counties throughout the state. This is the second year that Parks & Trails New York has offered this funding assistance.

Parks & Trails New York is a statewide not-for-profit organization that has nurtured New York's park and trail movements for more than 20 years, helping hundreds of groups and municipalities build, maintain, and promote parks, greenways and more than 1,200 miles of multi-use trails.

The Friends of Connetquot—a not-for-profit organization founded to support and supplement historic preservation and public education programs at Connetquot River State Park Preserve—is, in concert with the State, presently restoring the Oakdale Grist Mill, a historic structure within the preserve. The Friends' goal is to make the mill operational to expand the preserve's educational programs and activities and bring Long Island's mill history to life for the public.

On Saturday, March 27th, at 1:30 p.m. the Friends are offering the first of three historic lectures at the preserve. Gary Lawton, Regional Environmental Manager of Long Island State Park Region, will speak about the natural history of the preserve. The Friends invite the public to attend. Admission is free, but a \$6 parking fee applies. To reserve, please call 631-581-1005. For more information, please visit the Friends' website: www.friendsofconnetquot.org

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