



Erie Canalway News Release

For Immediate Release: **March 19, 2019**

Contact: Jean Mackay, Director of Communications and Outreach
518-237-7000 ext. 222, jean_mackay@partner.nps.gov

Canal Events on Tap for 2019

Festivals and events celebrate the Erie Canalway's heritage, recreational assets, and unique communities

WATERFORD, NY- The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and the New York State Canal Corporation have teamed up to sponsor **30 festivals and events** in 2019 to showcase the Canalway Corridor's nationally significant heritage and the tremendous recreational appeal of the waterway and Canalway Trail today. Events include recreational activities, canal festivals, and concerts on the waterfront.

The canal system is **scheduled to open May 17**, weather permitting.

"From community events to large festivals, these programs add up to big results for communities and for the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor as a whole," said **Bob Radliff, Executive Director of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor**. "We are proud to partner with these organizations that bring more people to the waterfront to celebrate New York's extraordinary canals."

Cultural, heritage, and recreational events within the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor deliver \$1.3 billion in economic benefits to communities. Erie Canalway and NYS Canal Corporation's investment in event sponsorships is expected to be matched 10:1 by sponsors and volunteers and **attract 250,000 people**. Sponsored events are just a few of the more than **400 events that take place each year along New York's canals**.

"These family-friendly community events give canal corridor visitors more reasons to explore and enjoy New York's Canals and Canalway Trail, while celebrating our state's unique heritage," said **Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton**. "We will continue to partner with the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor to support activities that showcase New York's more than 200 Canal communities and are vital to the upstate economy."

This year's **event highlights include**: *Boat Float Bash* in Chittenango (June), the *Adaptive Paddling Extravaganza* in Lockport (July), *Tugboat Roundup* in Waterford (September), and *Rome's Locktoberfest* (October). The *Tall Ships* will be in Buffalo's port from July 4 - 7, and the annual *Cycle the Erie Canal* bike tour from Buffalo to Albany is July 7 - 14.

Visit www.eriecanalway.org/explore events for events sponsored or see attached for a list.

The NYS Canal System includes four historic canals: the Erie, Champlain, Oswego and Cayuga-Seneca. Spanning more than 500 miles, the waterway links the Hudson River with the Great Lakes, the Finger Lakes and Lake Champlain. The canals form the backbone of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and connect hundreds of unique and historic communities. The 365-mile Erie Canalway Trail is a multi-use trail from Albany to Buffalo, much of it along the canal's former towpath. Together the canals and trail create a world-class recreationway that is a vibrant, scenic and unique New York resource.

ABOUT THE ERIE CANALWAY

Nearly 200 years after its construction, the Erie Canal remains an iconic symbol of American ingenuity and determination. The **Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor** preserves our extraordinary canal heritage, promotes the Corridor as a world-class tourism destination, and fosters vibrant communities connected by more than 500 miles of waterway. We achieve our 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

The **New York State Canal Corporation**, a subsidiary of the New York Power Authority, oversees the operation and promotion of the New York State Canal System. The Canal Corporation's mission is to transform the Canal System into a world class recreationway and inland commercial waterway, and to foster recreation, tourism and economic development while preserving the natural environment and cultural heritage of the canal. For more information on the New York State Canal System and the Canal Corporation, please visit www.canals.ny.gov.

####