



## Erie Canalway News Release

**For Immediate Release, February 6, 2018**

Contact: Jean Mackay, Director of Communications and Outreach  
518-237-7000, ext. 222

[jean\\_mackay@partner.nps.gov](mailto:jean_mackay@partner.nps.gov)

### **New Research Sheds Light on Canalway Corridor Visitors**

WATERFORD, NY- The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor today released results from a recently-commissioned study about current and prospective visitors to the 500-mile Canalway Corridor. The information is intended to help tourism promoters, businesses and heritage sites better attract and serve visitors, including boaters, cyclists, sightseers and vacationers.

“This new research really helps us understand who visits, what attracts them, the kinds of activities they engage in, and what they think of their experience. We are grateful that so many people took the time to offer their feedback and insights,” said **Bob Radliff, Executive Director** of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

**Ross D. Levi, New York State Executive Director of Tourism, said,** “The Erie Canal is a tourism crown jewel for New York State, providing countless opportunities for residents and visitors alike to discover its history, enjoy its water activities and explore its attractions in surrounding towns and villages. This study will help our tourism partners better understand canal visitors, which will help their marketing efforts and continue to increase tourism statewide.”

More than 1,000 people participated in online surveys and 20 provided in-depth interviews conducted by Rochester-based Level 7 Market Research on behalf of the National Heritage Corridor. Visitors and prospective visitors who live near the canal system, as well as those from other parts of New York and neighboring states, participated, providing a reliable and geographically-diverse research sample.

#### **Among the findings:**

- Recent and prospective visitors were drawn to the history of the area and to exploring local canal communities; boat tours/boating and attending festivals/events are major draws among prospective visitors.
- Most recent visitors rated their experience high— 8 out of 10.
- 70% of visitors who live in the Canalway Corridor selected “*Always been curious about the area*” and “*Destination for personal journey/accomplishment*” among their top reasons for visiting.
- Recent canal visitors tend to be older, travel in smaller parties, and have higher income households compared with prospective visitors. Most are savvy travelers who are three times more likely to travel internationally.
- Lack of awareness and knowledge are among the greatest barriers to visiting.

[MORE]

The research was funded by a grant from **Market NY** through I LOVE NY, New York State's Division of Tourism, as a part of the State's Regional Economic Development Council initiative.

The full study is available at: <https://eriecanalway.org/our-work/promote-tourism>

**The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor** spans 524 miles across the full expanse of upstate New York, encompassing the Erie, Cayuga-Seneca, Oswego, and Champlain canals and their historic alignments, as well as more than 230 canal communities. Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission and the Erie Canalway Heritage Fund work in partnership to preserve the region's extraordinary heritage, to promote the Corridor as a world class tourism destination, and to foster vibrant communities connected by the waterway.

[www.eriecanalway.org](http://www.eriecanalway.org)

####