



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW YORKERS FOR CLEAN WATER AND JOBS APPLAUDS GOVERNOR CUOMO FOR PROTECTING JOBS AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN EXECUTIVE BUDGET PROPOSAL

Executive Budget Proposal Funds Critical Programs That Support Hundreds of Thousands of Jobs, Clean Water, State Parks, and Family Farms

NEW YORK – New Yorkers for Clean Water and Jobs’ coalition commends Governor Cuomo for his continued commitment to critical environmental programs in the 2022 Executive Budget. The Executive Budget includes funding for environmental programs that support jobs, conserve natural resources, update New York’s water infrastructure, and expand state parks.

The Executive Budget proposal includes:

- \$300M for the Environmental Protection Fund
- \$440M for State Parks capital projects over the next four years
- \$500M for critical water infrastructure projects across the state
- \$75M for capital projects by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

These investments are critical to New York’s economic recovery.

The coalition was also pleased to hear New York State budget director Robert Mujica state that Governor Cuomo remains committed to the \$3 billion Environmental Bond Act, and that through discussions with the Legislature, would determine when to place it on the ballot.

“Amidst a pandemic-fueled fiscal crisis, Governor Cuomo’s commitment to continue prioritizing and investing in environmental programs is remarkable. This Executive Budget builds on Governor Cuomo’s legacy of protecting New York’s environment and outdoor spaces,” said **Jessica Ottney Mahar, New York Policy and Strategy Director at The Nature Conservancy**. “Funding for these critical environmental programs will strengthen New York’s economy,

improve the health and well-being of communities across the state, and protect New York's natural resources."

"We are thrilled that Governor Cuomo's Executive Budget prioritizes environmental funding for programs that will mitigate the effects of climate change, invest in our water infrastructure, and create green jobs," said **Julie Tighe, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters**. "Governor Cuomo understands that we have to continue fighting the climate crisis while we are battling the pandemic. Investing in these environmental programs today will pay dividends for future generations of New Yorkers."

"Governor Andrew Cuomo's FY 2022 Executive Budget Proposal is another step towards rebuilding New York's aging environmental infrastructure and presents an opportunity to build a new green economy, said **Mike Elmendorf, President and CEO, NYS Chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC NYS)**. AGC NYS supports opportunities for the entire construction industry and all workers to lead the Empire State's green infrastructure economic resurgence. We look forward to reviewing the budget bills to learn more about the details of the Executive Budget and engaging with the Legislature to ensure that a budget that meets New York's broad infrastructure needs and drives our economic recovery is enacted. The Governor has again made clear that action by the federal government is essential to the realization of this aggressive plan and the recovery of our economy. AGC NYS and our members have been consistently hammering that message home to our Congressional Delegation and will continue to do so."

Said Robin Dropkin, Executive Director, Parks & Trails New York, "By maintaining the Environmental Protection Fund at \$300 million and proposing a \$440 million investment in State Parks over the next four years Governor Cuomo reinforces the value of our parks, trails and public lands to the economy of the state and the health of our communities. The Governor's strong support for preserving open space and our natural environment underscores the importance of public green space, made even more apparent during the pandemic."

"Governor Cuomo's historic commitment to revitalizing our state's magnificent parks is particularly appreciated as New Yorkers are flocking to the outdoors for comfort, inspiration, and physical and mental wellness during this time of need," said **Kim Elliman, Open Space Institute president and CEO**. "His investments in parks, the Environmental Protection Fund, and clean water infrastructure will be among the most enduring legacies left to the next generation of New Yorkers and we look forward to seeing these vital programs included in the final budget."

"Over 9 million acres of farmland, including some of the most productive, versatile, and resilient farmland in the country, forms the foundation for the farm sector which provides New Yorkers with necessary sustenance while generating over \$47 billion in annual economic impact and supporting more than 160,000 jobs. But this farmland is under increasing threat from development in New York." said **Samantha Levy, New York Policy Manager, American Farmland Trust**. "To feed New Yorkers and address climate change, it's critical to keep land in

farming and transition that land to a new generation through state programs and policies, like the farmland protection in the Environmental Protection Fund. AFT and our partners look forward to building on the Governor's proposal and working with the Governor and the legislature in the coming months to ensure funding for farmland protection in the EPF remains strong so that farmers across the state who want to permanently protect their land for future generations have the right tools to do so."

"New Yorkers are seeking the great outdoors and the Hudson River like never before due to the pandemic. Governor Cuomo's budget proposal recognizes that investing in these resources is critical to the well-being of millions of New Yorkers and to help diverse communities in the Hudson Valley become even better places to live, work and play," said **Andy Bicking, Director of Public Policy, Scenic Hudson**. "We look forward to working with the governor and Legislature to secure these funds in the state budget and call upon Congress and the White House to support the state's call for COVID relief."

"We applaud the Governor's budget proposal which makes critical and much needed investments in clean water infrastructure and the Environmental Protection Fund—both programs do so much to protect our environment, our communities and create important green jobs. We also look forward to further discussions of an Environmental Bond Act and making the case that it's a responsible way to rebuild after the COVID crisis," said **Kate Kurera, Deputy Director, Environmental Advocates NY**.

Rich Schrader, New York Policy Director at NRDC, said: "In the midst of extraordinary budgetary and public health challenges, Governor Cuomo is upholding his commitment to safeguarding New York's vital natural resources. These critical funds will protect the water we drink, provide safe places for our children to play, and support hundreds of thousands of jobs. Investing in New York's bedrock infrastructure will help advance the state's green economy, get workers back on their feet, and create healthier, more vibrant communities."

"Against the backdrop of the ongoing pandemic and budgetary challenges, Gov. Cuomo leads by example, supporting environmental programs that provide New Yorkers with access to public spaces, clean water and jobs," said **Mark Rupp, Director, State-Federal Policy and Affairs, Environmental Defense Fund**. "With a real partner in the Biden-Harris Administration, the Governor's budget is a bridge to an economic renaissance that lifts up all communities. These investments can be further enhanced through the \$3 billion Environmental Bond Act the Cuomo Administration supports."

"Funding for state environmental programs is not only critical to updating and expanding our green infrastructure, it's an investment that creates thousands of clean jobs and supports a healthy recovery in New York," said **Adam Ganser, Executive Director, New Yorkers for Parks**. "We applaud Governor's Cuomo's commitment to a future-focused vision, including the \$440 million that will ensure our parks are vibrant, accessible spaces for all over the next four years."

"The voices of those calling for a better future, for investment in healthy, resilient, environments and public open space have been heard during these trying times, said **Cortney Worrall, President and CEO of the Waterfront Alliance**. I applaud Governor Cuomo for recognizing the importance of investing now in public health, jobs, and clean environments in any, and especially during this challenging budget cycle."

"Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper applauds Governor's Cuomo's commitment to preserving funding for critical environmental programs as part of the proposed 2022 Executive Budget. Funds from these programs are crucial to protect water quality and ensure the resiliency of natural and human ecosystems within our Great Lakes region." **Jill Jedlicka, Executive Director, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper**

"Riverkeeper is grateful for the Governor's commitment to the Environmental Protection Fund and water infrastructure funding in this challenging time for New Yorkers," said **Riverkeeper Legislative Advocacy Manager, Jeremy Cherson**. "The funding included for the Clean Water Infrastructure Act and the Environmental Protection Fund will build upon one of the most successful and ambitious clean water and environmental programs in the nation."

"ADK applauds Governor Cuomo for recognizing that investing in clean water, environmental stewardship, and recreational access is critical for the state's economic recovery." said **Michael Barrett, ADK Executive Director**, "The Governor's leadership during this very difficult year is very much appreciated and we look forward to working with him to protect and steward New York's Forest Preserve."

"Environmental protections are in essence investments in New York's economy and quality of life. The protection of open space, and protection of our state forests and Forest Preserve, are vital parts of New York's efforts against climate change. We commend Governor Cuomo for fully funding the Environmental Protection Fund in these incredibly challenging times, and investing in clean water, state parks and the New York Works program that funds environmental projects," said **Peter Bauer, Executive Director, Protect the Adirondacks**.

"We applaud the governor's commitment to the environment in the proposed budget. These investments are vital to the future of the Finger Lakes region, in terms of public health, the economy, and our natural environment" said **Andrew Zepp, Executive Director, Finger Lakes Land Trust**.

"At this time when we continue to face incredible challenges to the public's health and wellbeing, we are appreciative of the Governor recognizing the importance of our environmental resources as being part of the solution. The Environmental Protection Fund and the prospect of an Environmental Bond Act will help us move forward, encourage local partnerships, create more parks and preserves for people to explore and find comfort, protect our drinking and surface water resources, expand our access to renewable energy sources, save more productive farmland and support locally grown products that feed our communities, and so much more. We look forward to working with the Governor's team as well as our members

in the NY State Senate and Assembly toward a brighter, healthier and greener future,” said **John v.H. Halsey, President, Peconic Land Trust.**

“Ducks Unlimited applauds Gov. Cuomo’s support of the Environmental Protection Fund,” said **Ed Farley, Ducks Unlimited regional biologist for New York.** “The best way to preserve our woods and waterways for future generations is to engage in strong conservation measures today. This budget proposal, and Gov. Cuomo’s continued commitment to making the \$3 billion Environmental Bond Act a reality, shows New York’s desire to create healthier habitats for wildlife and recreation enthusiasts.”

"Perhaps now more than ever in our lifetimes do we recognize the importance of access to and protection of our natural resources for the health of all forms of life. We're proud to be part of this coalition and commend Governor Cuomo for his continued commitment to support positive environmental policies. At a time when economic recovery is on everyone's mind, funding a variety of critical environmental projects, including expanding access to recreation and supporting New York waterways, will not only help us create jobs but will be crucial in ensuring a resilient natural environment, healthy communities, and a thriving local economy," said **Suzie Ross, Chairperson, Green Ossining; Member, Climate Reality Project - Westchester Chapter.**

“Atlantic States Legal Foundation applauds Governor Cuomo’s Executive Budget proposal and for making a considerable investment in the environment and economic recovery. The past four years have been difficult, including the effects of COVID-19, which affected everyone in New York state and throughout the country and the world,” said **Lhakpa Tsering, Executive Director, Atlantic States Legal Foundation.**

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New Yorkers for Clean Water & Jobs

New Yorkers for Clean Water & Jobs is a broad coalition formed to demonstrate the vast support for New York environmental funding and programs that protect clean water and air, create jobs, and address the climate crisis. For more information on the website, please visit: www.cleanwaterandjobs.org. Follow us on social media: [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).