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April 7, 2021

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NEW YORKERS FOR CLEAN WATER AND JOBS APPLAUDS STATE FOR PROTECTING JOBS AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN FINAL BUDGET

Final Budget 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 the Governor and State Legislature for their continued commitment to critical environmental programs in the 2022 budget. The budget includes funding for environmental programs that support good-paying jobs, conserve natural resources, update New York’s water infrastructure, and improve parks.

The budget includes:

- \$3 billion Environmental Bond Act to be reauthorized for the November 2022 ballot
- \$300 million for the Environment Protection Fund
- \$500 million for clean water infrastructure projects
- \$440 million for capital projects at New York State Parks

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

“The inclusion of the Environmental Bond Act in the 2022 budget sends a clear message; the Governor and State Legislature continue to be committed to investing in clean water infrastructure and good, shovel ready jobs. Not only will the bond act strengthen New York’s waterways and parks, but it will strengthen our economy for years to come. Investing in infrastructure is how we are going to dig ourselves out of our current crisis, and we applaud all the leaders and champions involved in pushing this critical measure forward,” **said Marc Herbst, Executive Director, Long Island Contractors’ Association and President of NYRIC.**

“We applaud the Governor and State Legislature on prioritizing environmental funding in the final budget. Now, New York can invest in critical programs to mitigate the effects of climate change and protect clean water, all while creating good-paying, green jobs,” **said Julie Tighe, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters.** “We’re excited to see that the \$3 billion Environmental Bond Act will be on the November 2022 ballot so that we can put thousands of New Yorkers back to work protecting our water, parks and neighborhoods, and invest in disadvantaged communities. With \$300 million for the EPF, \$500 million for water infrastructure, and capital funding for Parks, we can create healthy communities and start New York’s economic recovery. We thank Governor Cuomo, Majority

Leader Stewart-Cousins, Speaker Heastie, Senator Todd Kaminsky and Assemblyman Steve Englebright for their continued commitment to protecting the environment.”

“The Nature Conservancy is thrilled the Environmental Bond Act is back on the ballot. Now voters will have the chance to vote yes for clean water and jobs on the November 2022 ballot. The Bond Act will support 65,000 good-paying jobs, safeguard clean water, improve parks, conserve wildlife habitat, and protect New Yorkers from the damaging effects of climate change, said **Jessica Ottney Mahar, New York Policy and Strategy Director, The Nature Conservancy**. We commend New York’s leaders for their commitment to environmental programs, including \$300 million for Environmental Protection Fund and \$500 million for clean water infrastructure projects, which preserve natural resources, strengthen our economy and, improve the health and well-being of millions of New Yorkers.”

“By passing the \$3 billion Clean Water and Jobs Bond Act and committing to a \$300 million Environmental Protection Fund, the Legislature and Governor Cuomo have acknowledged the essential role that New York’s irreplaceable natural resources will play in restoring the state’s post-Covid economy and assuring a healthier future for all residents. A successful Bond Act measure, if passed by the voters, will make once-in-a-lifetime investments in projects that matter – providing clean water, enhancing food security and farmland protection, creating new parks and trails, securing environmental justice, supporting local programs that help communities become more resilient to rising sea levels and confronting the climate crisis. Scenic Hudson looks forward to working with the state and our environmental partners to ensure its passage,” said **Andy Bicking, Director of Government Relations at Scenic Hudson**.

“With the reauthorization of the \$3 billion environmental bond act and significant funding for the Environmental Protection Fund, water infrastructure and parks, AGC NYS members are ready to get to work rebuild New York’s aging environmental infrastructure and drive economic recovery. We commend the Governor and Legislature for making these forward-looking investments,” said **Mike Elmendorf, President & CEO of the Associated General Contractors of New York State (AGC NYS)**.

“This is how we bounce back from a global pandemic! Time and time again the public has demonstrated unyielding support for investing in water infrastructure, our parks and environmental protection. The immense increase in attendance at our state parks, beaches, and open spaces illustrates the public’s appreciation for continued investments in protecting and restoring our environment through the EPF, wastewater funding and parks budget. CCE applauds Governor Cuomo and the NYS Legislature for their continued leadership in protecting New York’s critical environmental programs, especially when faced with the immense challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic,” said **Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment**.

“The New York Legislature has stepped up in a meaningful way to ensure that New Yorkers will be better protected from future disasters, while also having access to clean water, clean air and good jobs. Legislators delivered significant near-term gains for the environment by making investments in water infrastructure and parks. In addition, Legislators took a huge step for New York’s long-term future by advancing a \$3 billion Environmental Bond Act to New York voters next year. If approved, this bond will build coastal resilience and expand access to clean water and jobs in communities that have experienced historic inequities and have been disproportionately impacted by disasters, such as flooding and the pandemic,” said **Mark Rupp Director, State-Federal Policy and Affairs, Ecosystems at Environmental Defense Fund**.

"We are thrilled to see the \$3 billion Environmental Bond Act included in the New York State budget. This funding will open the door to major infrastructure improvements in low-income communities and communities of color across New York State, which have been hit the hardest by climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. We can invest in historically under-resourced communities to improve access to clean drinking water, protect against sea level rise, and expand parks to help mitigate extreme heat. We thank the Governor and Legislature for advancing the Environmental Bond Act this year," **said Sonal Jessel, Director of Policy at WE ACT for Environmental Justice.**

"We are thrilled that NY is once again a leader in investing in environmental infrastructure," **said Amy Chester, Managing Director of Rebuild by Design.** "The Bond Act will help communities address climate change, restore our State's ecology, and create 65,000 jobs."

"New York must take steps to make our communities climate-ready as soon as possible. The bold investments by the Governor and State Legislature today will put the Empire State in the lead on climate resiliency and will provide great returns in clean air and water, infrastructure jobs, and equitable access to parks and the outdoors for generations to come," **said Carter Strickland, New York State Director for The Trust for Public Land.**

Kate Kurera, Deputy Director at Environmental Advocates NY said, "We applaud state lawmakers and Governor Cuomo for working together to include an environmental bond act measure on next year's ballot. Studies have shown that a NY Bond Act will create tens of thousands of good green jobs, help New York State's economy recover from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, and protect our state's natural resources for future generations. This would not have been possible without the tireless advocacy of many grassroots, labor, and environmental organizations. We are hopeful that such broad support for the measure will translate into a YES vote by New Yorkers in 2022."

"Our farmers are on the front lines of climate change, bearing the brunt of extreme weather impacts while trying to remain financially viable to continue to feed us all," **said Samantha Levy, New York Policy Manager for American Farmland Trust.** "But our farmers are also a key part of the climate solution, and we must support them in reducing GHG emissions and increasing the amount of carbon they sequester in soils in order to slow climate change. We applaud Assembly Speaker Heastie, Senate Majority Leaders Stewart-Cousins, and Governor Cuomo for including the Environmental Bond Act in this year's state budget. If passed by voters, this once-in-a-generation investment into climate mitigation, clean water, and green jobs will provide \$100 million in dedicated funding for permanent farmland protection as well as robust funding for other projects that will ensure our farmers are able to continue to produce healthy food while combating climate change."

"The Land Trust Alliance applauds Gov. Andrew Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Sen. Todd Kaminsky and Assemblyman Steve Englebright for their steadfast commitment to land conservation," **said Land Trust Alliance Senior Program Manager Meme Hanley.** "Championing a \$300 million Environmental Protection Fund and encouraging voters to pass a \$3 billion environmental bond act maintains the Empire State's proud tradition of protecting its natural resources while boosting local economies and jobs. These moves empower land trusts across New York to protect critical water resources, prime agricultural lands, forests and urban open spaces as they enhance public access for recreation."

"Interest in birdwatching and the outdoors has soared during the pandemic, and we are pleased to see major wins for people and wildlife in the final budget. Over \$187 million in funding for New York Works

will help launch our first-ever New York State Birding Trail, and support improvements to our State Parks and DEC facilities. Reauthorization of the Bond Act, paired with historic funding levels for the Environmental Protection Fund, will enable us to substantially invest in safe recreation, clean air and water, and healthy habitats our birds need. We applaud Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature for their leadership and commitment to a greener, stronger future," **said Erin McGrath, Policy Manager at Audubon New York.**

"The imperative of our time is adapting our communities to the effects of climate change. To achieve that goal, we need to invest in the health, safety and welfare of our communities. The Environmental Bond Act represents a significant step toward creating a resilient and sustainable future for all New Yorkers," **said Illya Azaroff, FAIA, 2021 President AIA New York State.**

"As we look to the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are grateful for the state's historic investment in protecting and preserving our natural environment," **said Robin Dropkin, Executive Director of Parks & Trails New York.** "Millions of New Yorkers discovered or rekindled their appreciation for our state's parks, trails, and shared greenspace over the past year. This budget ensures that the state will continue to provide high-quality outdoor resources for all New Yorkers to enjoy.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has reordered the priorities of everyday New Yorkers and put into focus what is most important to a socially distant public: clean air and water, fresh food from local farms, and open space to find reconnection and rejuvenation. We applaud the legislature and the governor for recognizing that the \$3 billion Environmental Bond Act, a fully funded EPF, clean drinking water investments and a well-managed park system are pillars of stability for our economy and have long term impacts on New York's public and fiscal health," **said Roger Downs, Conservation Director at Sierra Club, Atlantic Chapter.**

"The Adirondack Council is grateful to Senators Stewart-Cousins and Kaminsky as well as Assembly members Heastie and Englebright for recognizing that the Adirondack Park is a national treasure that has helped to keep many New Yorkers physically and emotionally healthy during these times of pandemic, economic distress and restricted overseas travel," **said Adirondack Council Executive Director William C. Janeway.** "The park is more popular than ever, and it remains a vital source of clean water, wilderness and jobs for New York. This new investment will protect our natural assets, put people to work and create a better future for our children."

"Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper applauds Governor Cuomo's commitment to preserving funding for critical environmental programs as part of the New York State 2022 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," **said Jill Jedlicka, Executive Director of Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper.**

"This budget reflects New York's continued commitment to our state's environment. In the Finger Lakes Region, funding will help ensure clean water while supporting billions of dollars of economic activity through tourism and agriculture," **said Andrew Zepp, Executive Director of Finger Lakes Land Trust.**

"This news clearly underscores that our legislators understand the halo effect of supporting funding for environmentally focused programming as drivers of economic and job growth, health, and environmental resilience. With this news too, New York continues to lead the country in acknowledging the importance of environmental advocacy," **said Suzie Ross, Chairperson, Green Ossining.**

“The New York Climate Reality Chapters Coalition is thrilled at the demonstration of real leadership exemplified in the funding of environmental priorities in the budget,” **said Tim Guinee, Legislative Action Coordinator for the NY Climate Reality Chapters Coalition.**

“The new funding — including the \$3 billion bond act ballot initiative — approved in this year’s budget will continue fuel progress towards a healthier Hudson River teeming with life. It will also help shoreline communities become more resilient to the devastating impacts of the climate crisis,” **said Jeremy Cherson, Legislative Advocacy Manager for Riverkeeper.** “We thank Senator Kaminsky and Assemblyman Englebright for championing funding for these vital clean water, climate resilience and habitat restoration programs that benefit all New Yorkers.”

“Funding for clean water and parklands is critical to the health of our region, with nature providing an inclusive respite to restore mental and physical wellbeing. With a goal to ensure our parks and historic sites are maintained and preserved, Palisades Parks Conservancy is pleased to participate in the Clean Water and Jobs Coalition. We thank our state legislators for recognizing the importance of clean water, open spaces and jobs,” **said Heather Loebner, Executive Director of Palisades Parks Conservancy.**

“In a year that has highlighted the importance of clean air, clean water, and open spaces, Save the Sound applauds Governor Cuomo and the state Legislature for funding the programs that support these critical public resources in this year’s budget. They know that investing in a healthy and vibrant environment pays dividends—including job creation and a better quality of life for all New Yorkers. We’re excited that New Yorkers have the chance to cast their vote for strong environmental bonding in 2022,” **said Tracy Brown, Regional Director, Water Protection at Save the Sound**

"The Environmental Bond Act is an absolutely critical piece of legislation for the future of New York State," **said Nancy Smith, Executive Director of the Western New York Land Conservancy.** "If it passes, our community will be able to save more of our most important and threatened forests, meadows, wetlands, and streams. We are truly grateful for continued support of the EPF, which has helped us protect places like Mossy Point, and is helping us create The Riverline, a new nature trail and greenway in the heart of the city of Buffalo."

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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](#).