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The Olana Partnership Awarded \$24,380 for Historic Landscape Tours this Spring

Grant will provide interpretive materials for three new tour options

Landscape tours will increase visitation and have positive impact on local economy

Hudson, NY – The Olana Partnership was awarded a \$24,380 matching grant from the Environmental Protection Fund’s (EPF) Park and Trail Partnership Program to provide interpretive materials for historic landscape tours launching alongside regular house tours this spring. The launch of landscape tours is part of the organization’s celebrations around the 50th Anniversary of the saving of Olana from destruction in 1966.

The grant, announced yesterday by Governor Cuomo, is one of 20 awards totaling \$450,000 for organizations dedicated to the stewardship and promotion of New York’s State Parks and Historic Sites. The grants, funded through the EPF, will be matched by nearly \$242,000 in private and local funding and will support projects to strengthen Friends groups and enhance public access and recreational opportunities at state parks and historic sites across the state. The Park and Trail Partnership Program grants are administered by the State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation and Parks & Trails New York, a statewide non-profit group.

Olana guided landscape tours will increase visitor access to Frederic Church’s artist-designed landscape. According to Sean Sawyer, President of The Olana Partnership, “Visitors will now have the opportunity to go out into the landscape via guided walking, driving or cell phone tours

to stop at the many thoughtfully composed views and vantage points that Frederic Church painted. Visitors will also learn the importance of the integral viewshed and see recent and ongoing landscape restoration projects.” Olana is a destination for nearly 150,000 visitors annually and offering these tours will increase the length of time visitors stay both at Olana and in the region, a positive impact on the local economy.

Friends groups—nonprofit organizations often made up entirely of volunteers—are essential to the stewardship and promotion of our state park system. These dedicated groups raise private funds for capital projects; perform maintenance tasks; provide educational programming; and promote public use through hosting special events.

“Across New York State, Friends groups are essential to the stewardship and promotion of our State park system,” State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey said. “I applaud Governor Cuomo for getting behind this innovative strategy to leverage the private fundraising and volunteer services our Friends Groups already provide to do even more, and I thank Parks & Trails New York for its work to make it happen.”

“The state’s investment in grassroots Friends Groups will complement Governor Cuomo’s extraordinary commitment to the revitalization of the entire state park system,” Parks & Trails New York Executive Director Robin Dropkin said. “These grant funds will enable groups to leverage more private and federal funding, marshal more volunteer power, and augment the state’s historic investment in parks. We look forward to seeing the transformational results from these innovative and important projects.”

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The Park and Trail Partnership Program grants are designed to:

- enhance the preservation, stewardship, interpretation, maintenance and promotion of New York State parks, trails and state historic sites;
- increase the sustainability, effectiveness, productivity, volunteerism and fundraising capabilities of not-for-profit organizations that promote, maintain and support New York State parks, trails and state historic sites; and
- promote the tourism and economic development benefits of outdoor recreation through the growth and expansion of a connected statewide network of parks, trails and greenways.

The Park and Trail Partnership Program is open to recognized Friends organizations whose primary mission is the preservation, stewardship, interpretation, maintenance and promotion of a specific New York State park, trail or historic site (or multiple such sites) under the jurisdiction of State Parks. More information about the grant program is available at <http://ptny.org/our-work/support/park-trail-partnership-program>.

The Park and Trail Partnership Program, in addition to other grassroots efforts, complements the exciting revitalization and transformation of the entire State park system through Governor Cuomo's *NY Parks 2020* plan.

[Parks & Trails New York](#) is the leading statewide advocate for parks and trails, dedicated since 1985 to improving the health and quality of life of all New Yorkers by working with community organizations and municipalities to envision, create, promote, and protect a growing network of parks, trails, and greenways throughout the state for all to use and enjoy.

About Olana and The Olana Partnership: Olana is the greatest masterpiece of Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900), the preeminent American artist of the mid-19thC and the most important artist's home, studio and designed landscape in the United States. Church designed Olana as a holistic environment integrating his advanced ideas about art, architecture, landscape design, and environmental conservation. Olana's 250-acre artist-designed landscape with a Persian-inspired house at its summit embraces unrivaled panoramic views of the Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountains and, today, welcomes more than 150,000 visitors annually.

Olana State Historic Site, a historic site administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Taconic Region, is a designated National Historic Landmark and one of the most visited sites in the state. The Olana Partnership, a private not-for-profit education corporation, works cooperatively with New York State to support the restoration, conservation, and interpretation of Olana State Historic Site. 2016 will mark the 50th anniversary of this public/private partnership. To learn more about Olana and The Olana Partnership, please visit www.olana.org

More information on the Park and Trail Partnership Program can be found at www.ptny.org or by calling 518-434-1583.

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