



State of the State Address Fact Sheet: **New Investment in State Parks**

“Open space – clean, safe, attractive parks – are a third building block for livable communities...A peaceful park is not just a place for a picnic, it is an economic asset. It draws families to neighborhoods and businesses to communities.”

-Governor Eliot Spitzer (January 9, 2008)

The Challenge

- The State Parks and Historic Site system has grown by over 25 sites in the last 10 years.
- Annual capital funding has not kept pace with this expansion and the impact of inflation.
- These factors have left State Parks unable to maintain facilities at appropriate levels, unable to adequately develop lands acquired for new parks, and, if unaddressed, will create health and safety issues.
- Largely due to inadequate investment, the State has failed to capitalize on its unique natural assets to enhance quality of life for residents and visitors alike, and to spur economic growth.

Our Approach

- The Executive Budget will include \$100 million in new funding to invest in the maintenance and new development of our parks system across the State.
- In addition to taking a leadership position by advancing significant new funding, the Governor will commit to seeking out additional funding opportunities from the Federal government and philanthropic sources to maximize the level of investment.
- In addition, State Parks will build strong relationships with Empire State Development to ensure that the State’s parks, recreational facilities and historic sites are integrated with the ongoing effort to revitalize the State’s economy, particularly upstate, by highlighting our parks’ contribution to the State's unique quality of life.