



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
James L. Seward

State Budget Includes Funding For The Catskill Park

JAMES L. SEWARD March 31, 2015

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT, BUDGET**

ALBANY, 03/31/15 -- State Senators James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) and George Amedore (R-Rotterdam) announced today that they have secured \$500,000 in this year's state budget to promote economic growth and preservation measures for the Catskill Park.

Senators Amedore and Seward successfully fought for the funding after receiving a request from the Catskill Park Coalition.

Senator James L. Seward said, **“Unlocking the full potential of the Catskill Park will highlight our natural assets, enhance quality of life for those who live and work in the region, and draw new explorers to this indescribably beautiful region. This \$500,000 state budget award is an investment in our future and I know it is an investment that will yield a strong return. I am pleased that, working in concert with Senator Amedore, we were able to secure this vital funding.”**

Senator George Amedore said, “The Catskill Park is a tremendous natural resource and this investment will benefit the entire state of New York, not just the Catskills region.

Unfortunately, the Catskill Park has been historically underfunded so this will be helpful in efforts to promote and protect the Catskill Park. I'm glad Senator Seward and I were able to partner to make sure this important initiative was included in the final budget.”

Executive Director of the Catskill Center and Co-Chair of the Catskill Park Coalition Alan White said, “The Catskill Park Coalition sincerely thanks Senator Seward and Senator Amedore for their leadership in securing this significant investment in the Catskill region to build a modern park. This line item will strongly enhance economic opportunity while meeting Governor Cuomo's conservation goals and principles, in line with New York State's proud and leading legacy of first-in-the-nation conservation. With this investment Senators Seward and Amedore are helping the region proactively and strategically plan for the future

while appropriately managing the extraordinary public amenity that is the Catskill Park and Forest Preserve.”

The \$500,000 line item for the Catskill Park will be used for comprehensive planning, land acquisition, stewardship and a grant program for small businesses. The line item was included in the Aid to Localities budget bill (S.2003-C) passed by the senate and assembly this week.

The Catskill Park was established by the New York State Legislature in 1904 and encompasses over 700,000 acres in Delaware, Greene, Sullivan, and Ulster counties. Within the park, over 250,000 acres make up the Catskill Forest Preserve and are designated as forever wild forest.