



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Help Improve Our State Parks at "I Love My Park Day"

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Did you know that in 2018, a record 74 million people visited New York State parks, historic sites, campgrounds and trails? From hiking and fishing to golf and beaches, there's something for everybody in the New York State parks system.

As we finally say goodbye to the cold of winter, our state parks are getting prepared for the millions of visitors expected to soon enjoy them—and you can play a role in helping get them ready. On May 4, volunteers in every corner of the state are invited to take part in "I

Love My Park Day,” an annual effort organized by the non-profit group Parks & Trails New York, along with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Each year, thousands of volunteers take part in “I Love My Park Day,” participating in 250 projects at more than a hundred state parks, public lands and historic places. Typically, volunteers will participate in a number of improvement efforts, including cleanup, clearing trails, planting gardens and trees, removing invasive species and more.

This year, more than 135 state parks, historic sites and public lands will be hosting “I Love My Park Day” events, including the following locations in our region:

- *Fort Ontario State Historic Site*
- *Selkirk Shores State Park*
- *Black River Trail*
- *Wellesley Island State Park*
- *Lakeview Wildlife Management Area*
- *Winona State Forest*
- *Westcott Beach State Park*

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Our state parks are tremendous resources for spending time with friends and family, enjoying the beauty of nature and getting active. I hope you will take this opportunity to pitch in and improve our area’s state parks and other sites. For more information and to sign up to take part in “I Love My Park Day,” visit <https://parks.ny.gov/events/my-park-day.aspx>