



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, New Yorkers treasure our natural environment and understand the importance of its preservation for future generations, and we join in the annual celebration of Earth Day – an international observance that inspires appreciation for the planet we share by promoting responsible stewardship of our natural resources through education, public awareness, and community-based action; and

Whereas, New York is celebrated as the birthplace of America's modern environmental movement, due to early civic action that led to hallmark judicial decisions and the enactment of laws to protect our air, water, land, and other natural resources; a leader in environmental conservation, the Empire State supports community-based efforts to ensure a sustainable environment through programs like the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), conservation easements, preservation of wilderness areas and a vast network of parks, Cleaner Greener Communities, and NY Works, which preserve our landscapes, encourage healthy communities, and support myriad economic activities; and

Whereas, efforts to support the widescale deployment of renewable energy sources and the growth of the clean energy economy include the initial capitalization of a \$1 billion NY Green Bank; NY-Sun, which has supported the tremendous growth in the solar industry; and Build Smart NY, which is estimated to have reduced energy use intensity by seven percent in state facilities; these efforts can substantially reduce the emission levels of harmful pollutants, ensure that the air we breathe is cleaner, and help promote a cleaner, sustainable energy future; and

Whereas, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative has established New York State as a national leader in addressing climate change by reducing emissions from power plants by approximately 45 percent since 2005; and

Whereas, advancements in environmental protection are achievable through a wide range of strategies: improving and maintaining water quality through the Green Innovation Grant program and regional watershed and wetland protection programs, integrating green infrastructure to increase resiliency to better protect against extreme weather, reducing harmful discharges into the state's waters, instituting Smart Growth policies for urban and rural communities, and enhancing local waste reduction and recycling programs through technical assistance and EPF grant programs; and

Whereas, New York State continues to improve and enhance its spectacular system of State Parks, Historic Sites, and Park Preserves and has achieved the best attendance rates in over a decade, while undergoing a historic revitalization leveraged by the New York Works initiative; and

Whereas, opportunities to connect New Yorkers to nature have been achieved through the acquisition of 42,000 acres of Forest Preserve in the cherished Adirondack Park and through improved access to state lands and waters, including approximately 380,000 acres of State lands for recreational use, such as bird watching areas, trails, boat launches and hunting blinds – all of which provide greater opportunities to introduce the next generation to outdoor activities and demonstrate New York State's commitment to open space, land stewardship and eco-tourism; and

Whereas, protecting this planet, our environment, and its natural resources is the responsibility of people worldwide, and Earth Day provides an opportunity for each of us to reflect upon our role in promoting environmentally sustainable practices and conservation, and to consider steps we can take – however large or small – to make changes in our lives so as to better protect our planet, making the state more resilient to the Earth's changing climate and its natural resources for generations to come; and

Whereas, funding land trust grants, protecting open spaces, preserving and protecting forest lands that are vital to our economy and job market, as well as demonstrating responsible stewardship of our celebrated state park system, historical sites, and nature preserves, all support a robust tourism industry and connect millions of people to our state's great outdoors;

Now, Therefore, I, Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim April 22, 2014 as

EARTH DAY

in the Empire State.



Given under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State at the Capitol in the City of Albany this twenty-first day of April in the year two thousand fourteen.

Governor

Secretary to the Governor