



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canal Society Announces Conference to be held in Geneva
State-wide Event to Showcase Finger Lakes Region and the Canal

(Geneva, NY)—The Canal Society of New York State has announced that the 15th New York State Canal Conference will be held on September 21-23, 2014 in Geneva, New York. The conference is being co-presented by the New York State Canal Corporation and Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor. The conference will include presentations of major importance to canal communities, tourism professionals, and others working to enhance, protect and promote the NYS Canal system.

"The 2014 New York State Canal Conference will showcase the Finger Lakes Region and Cayuga-Seneca Canal as well as Seneca Lake and the City of Geneva," said Conference Chair Kal Wysokowski. "Our program includes keynote speakers Mr. Robert Gioia, Chairman of Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation, Mr. John Robinson, from Our Ability Tour, and Mr. Gavin Landry, Executive Director of Tourism, I LOVE NY. A number of break-out sessions will focus on critical issues such as eco-tourism, crafting the nomination of the canal barge system for the National Register of Historic Places, and a close look at the economic impact of the Canalway Trail from Parks and Trails New York. Mobile workshops will take us to the Erie Canal Heritage Park at Port Byron and the Lyons Dry Dock."

"As a community, the City of Geneva is proud to host the 2014 New York State Canal Conference, as the canal has played a significant role in shaping the economy of the City, and New York State as a whole," said City of Geneva Mayor Ron Alcock. "The conference will show how we continue to depend on the recreational and commercial activities of the waterway, and will outline development opportunities that will enhance our economic fortunes for the future."

Canal Corporation Director Brian U. Stratton said, "The New York State Canal Conference presents an opportunity for canal stakeholders from across the Empire State to build upon the past year's accomplishments and explore future opportunities to capitalize on our historic Canal system. Whether it is the transformative impact of Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Councils, the resurgence in commercial shipping, or the Canal system's role as an upstate tourist destination, there is a palpable sense of hope in communities all throughout the Canal Corridor. With the Canal system already supporting \$6.2 billion in non-tourism related and nearly \$380 million in tourism related economic activity, this conference is a vital piece of

continuing to use the Canals to produce real change for some of New York's most iconic and historic communities."

"This is a great opportunity to bring people together to focus on the past, present, and future of New York's legendary canals. The conference inspires and informs our work to enhance and celebrate the Erie Canalway for all to use and enjoy," said Bob Radliff, Executive Director of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor.

On the evening of Monday, September 22, the Spirit of the Canal Award will be presented to Mr. Craig Williams, retired New York State Canal Museum director.

Additional major sponsors include Brookfield Renewable Energy Group, Bergmann Associates and AJ Costello & Son Development. The Ramada Geneva Lakefront Hotel will serve as the event's venue.

For more information on the Canal Conference or the Canal Society of New York State, visit www.canalsnys.org

New York State Canal Corporation www.canals.ny.gov

Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor www.eriecanalway.org

For registration information contact The Rivers Organization at rick@riversorg.com.

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