

# STATE OF NEW YORK

7326--A

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

March 25, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. KIM, McDONALD -- read once and referred to the Committee on Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the parks, recreation and historic preservation law, in relation to establishing the New York state park adopt-a-trail stewardship program; and to amend the state finance law, in relation to establishing the state park adopt-a-trail stewardship program fund

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The parks, recreation and historic preservation law is  
2 amended by adding a new section 3.27 to read as follows:

3 § 3.27 State park adopt-a-trail stewardship program. 1. a. The commis-  
4 sioner may enter into stewardship agreements with any person or persons  
5 for the purposes of preserving, maintaining, or enhancing a trail or  
6 trails in state-owned parks or any portion thereof in accordance with  
7 the policies of this chapter.

8 b. In the commissioner's discretion, the commissioner may establish  
9 permanent or temporary agreements with parks' friends groups or other  
10 local community non-profit groups, such as parks' friends groups, to  
11 administer the program. If more than one group is interested in adminis-  
12 tering the program, the commissioner shall develop an open and compet-  
13 itive process to select the best group to administer the program. For  
14 the purposes of this section, "parks' friends groups" shall be defined  
15 as non-profit organizations that have been designated as 501(c)(3)  
16 organizations under federal law established primarily to support a  
17 specific park area or group of parks.

18 2. The stewardship agreement shall provide that the trail area be  
19 preserved and maintained in its natural, cultural and historical state  
20 or managed to enhance or restore the natural, cultural, historical and  
21 heritage values it provides, consistent with the provisions of this

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 chapter. Activities may include: remediation of vandalism and storm  
2 damage; disposing of litter and trash; establishing or maintaining  
3 access to nature trails; providing interpretive services for school  
4 groups and other citizens; lawn maintenance and tree trimming; plant-  
5 ings, installation, repair or replacement of benches, kiosks, picnic  
6 tables and shelters; and otherwise providing positive benefits to the  
7 trail area.

8 3. Stewardship agreement with any person or persons may provide for  
9 assistance of personnel, facilities and supplies of the office for the  
10 purposes of supporting appropriate activities under such stewardship  
11 agreement, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

12 4. The office shall establish procedures by which a person or persons  
13 may apply for a stewardship agreement, and shall be responsible for  
14 working with such person or persons to identify specific sections of a  
15 state-owned park trail and specific activities deemed appropriate for  
16 such stewardship agreement. The office may consider factors such as  
17 safety, environmental, cultural and historical sensitivity, need, cost,  
18 and other factors deemed relevant in determining which trail areas or  
19 activities may be eligible or appropriate for a stewardship agreement.

20 5. a. The office shall provide recognition of the stewardship activ-  
21 ities by displaying appropriate signage, as described in paragraph b of  
22 this subdivision, on or near the adopted trail area, and may provide  
23 recognition by such other measures as it may determine to be appropri-  
24 ate, including but not limited to press releases, certificates, and  
25 newsletters.

26 b. Sponsorship may be indicated by having hiking trail marker signs  
27 that display the name of the trail sponsor. Trail signs shall be circu-  
28 lar and not be more than five inches in diameter, unless deemed neces-  
29 sary to be larger for safety reasons or if the sign is an important  
30 marker such as the first sign of the trail. The name of the sponsor  
31 shall not take up more than twenty-five percent of the sign and shall  
32 not impede upon the other information displayed on the sign. Upon the  
33 expiration of a temporary sponsorship agreement, the trail sponsor shall  
34 be responsible for removing all trail marker signs that display the  
35 name.

36 6. The stewardship agreement may be modified in scope or altered in  
37 any other manner at the sole discretion of the office, not inconsistent  
38 with the provisions of this section. The person or persons shall have  
39 the option of renewing the agreement subject to the approval of the  
40 office and the continuation by the office of the state park adopt-a-  
41 trail stewardship program. The office may immediately remove the signs  
42 and it may terminate the agreement upon thirty days notice, if in its  
43 sole judgment it finds and determines that the person or persons are  
44 violating the terms and conditions of the agreement.

45 7. The commissioner shall determine in the commissioner's discretion,  
46 which trails or portions thereof shall be sponsored in accordance with  
47 the provisions of this section. Nothing in this section shall require  
48 the commissioner to authorize the stewardship of any particular trail or  
49 portion thereof.

50 8. Any funds designated to fund the stewardship program established by  
51 this section shall be held in the state park adopt-a-trail stewardship  
52 program fund established in section ninety-seven-wwww of the state  
53 finance law.

54 9. No agreement entered into pursuant to the state park adopt-a-trail  
55 stewardship program shall result in the displacement of any currently  
56 employed worker or the loss of position, including the partial displace-

1 ment such as reduction in the hours of non-overtime labor, wages or  
2 employment benefits, or result in the impairment of existing collective  
3 bargaining agreements.

4 § 2. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 97-wwww  
5 to read as follows:

6 § 97-wwww. State park adopt-a-trail stewardship program fund. 1.  
7 There is hereby established in the joint custody of the state comp-  
8 troller and the commissioner of parks, recreation and historic preserva-  
9 tion a special fund to be known as the "state park adopt-a-trail  
10 stewardship program fund".

11 2. Such fund shall consist of all moneys credited or transferred ther-  
12 eto from any other fund or source pursuant to law. Moneys in the fund  
13 shall be kept separate and shall not be commingled with any other moneys  
14 in the custody of the comptroller.

15 3. Moneys of the fund may be expended for the purposes provided in  
16 section 3.27 of the parks, recreation and historic preservation law  
17 according to the requirements of such section. Moneys shall be paid out  
18 of the fund on the audit and warrant of the state comptroller on vouch-  
19 ers certified or approved by the commissioner of parks, recreation and  
20 historic preservation.

21 4. The fund shall be held within the business and licensing services  
22 account as established in section ninety-seven-y of this article.

23 § 3. This act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after  
24 it shall have become a law. Effective immediately the addition, amend-  
25 ment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implemen-  
26 tation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and  
27 completed on or before such date.