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# United States Department of the Interior

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## Congressman Walsh Unveils New Road Signs for Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

SYRACUSE, NY - Motorists along the NYS Thruway from Albany to Buffalo, the I87 Northway, and a number of state roads are starting to see new gateway signs to the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, thanks to federal transportation dollars secured by Congressman James Walsh. Congressman Walsh will unveil the new road signs at the Syracuse Inner Harbor on Friday, August 17 at 10 a.m. The 162 brown and white signs, which include the National Park Service arrowhead logo and the words "Entering Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor," present a unified and consistent image that draws attention to the Corridor among the approximately 50 to 60 million people who will see them each year.

"The richness of the history along the Canalway touches nearly every aspect of the American experience, from our early days as a nation, to westward expansion, to the industrial revolution, to abolition and women's suffrage," said Walsh. "These signs will ask millions of people to explore the very things that made our region and our country what they are today."

Congressman Walsh also authored the legislation to recognize the significance of New York's canal system to our nation's history, designating the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor in 2000. The Corridor includes the 524 miles of navigable waterway that make up the NYS Canal System, including the Erie, Cayuga-Seneca, Oswego, and Champlain canals and their historic alignments. It encompasses 4,834 square miles in 23 counties and is home to 2.7 million people.

"The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor can be an ever more important economic engine that drives sustainable growth, tourism, recreation, and historic preservation in Upstate New York," said Eric Mower, Chairman of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission. "As a next step toward these objectives, these new signs will help to raise the profile of the corridor by increasing awareness of the significant historic, natural, and cultural assets along New York's canals."

"The Erie Canal was the transportation and engineering marvel of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and it's appropriate that we highlight its historic past and recreational future with highway signage throughout the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor," State Department of Transportation Commissioner Astrid C. Glynn said. "With the support of Governor Eliot Spitzer, Congressman Walsh, and agencies and communities throughout the corridor, these new signs will draw attention to the Erie Canal, encourage tourism and economic development, and reaffirm the importance of safe and reliable transportation infrastructure as we move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

[MORE...]

[ERIE CANALWAY ROAD SIGNS, CONTINUED]

Carmella R. Mantello, Director of the New York State Canal Corporation said, “The addition of over 150 gateway signs to the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor will help increase awareness of this nationally historic treasure that runs through our backyard. The New York State Thruway Authority and New York State Canal Corporation are pleased to partner with the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor to bring further attention to the history, culture, recreational appeal, and beauty of the 524-mile New York State Canal System.”

The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor is one of 37 congressionally designated National Heritage Areas. Managed by a 27-member commission and National Park Service staff, it partners with communities, governmental agencies, and nonprofit organizations to protect, enhance, and celebrate the corridor's nationally significant historic, natural, and scenic heritage.

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