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For more information please contact:
Cheryl Huber
(212) 838-9410 ext. 311-office
(917) 363-1237-mobile

NEW YORKERS FOR PARKS PROTESTS PARK CLOSURES

May 17, 2010—New York, NY, Today New York State began locking the gates to 41 parks and 14 historic sites across the state due to budget cuts. New Yorkers for Parks (NY4P) opposes this decision, which will drastically reduce open space opportunities for New York residents and tourists.

“New Yorkers for Parks is dismayed that the State has decided to move forward with their plans to shut parks to New Yorkers across the state,” said Lee Stuart, Executive Director of New Yorkers for Parks. “This decision is short-sighted,” she added. “Maintenance costs will only become greater as the parks remain uncared for. Locking the gates will lead to decaying equipment, overgrown green spaces, and unsafe activities in these sites, requiring extensive funding to reopen them.”

New Yorkers for Parks attended a rally and met with legislators in March in Albany to protest these cuts, which will result in limited access to 79 parks and historic sites in the state. In New York City, Bayswater Point State Park will be closed, and Riverbank State Park’s operating hours will be reduced. In addition, the swimming pool at Riverbank will be closed for the summer and classes for seniors will be eliminated, drastically reducing services for the many residents of Harlem and beyond who depend on this park.

“These park closures, which deny access to New Yorkers, must not be a first step toward abandonment,” stated Lee Stuart of New Yorkers for Parks.

New Yorkers for Parks is the citywide, independent organization dedicated to ensuring that all New Yorkers enjoy a world-class parks system.

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