



Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Governor Cuomo Recognizes Seven Innovative Programs Resulting in a Healthier Environment and Stronger Economy**

NEW YORK (November 17, 2015) - Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced New York State recognized seven organizations at the 12th Annual New York State Environmental Excellence Awards for their state-of-the-art programs and commitment to environmental sustainability, social responsibility and economic viability.

"These organizations make clear that by using innovative green programs, we can achieve strong environmental goals while growing the economy," Governor Cuomo said. "They are a role model for businesses across the state looking to reduce their environmental impact, and I encourage everyone to learn more about what they can do to help protect our beautiful natural resources for generations to come."

Winners this year include the National Hockey League, headquartered in New York City with teams in New York City, Long Island and Buffalo, that was recognized for its efforts to reduce the league's environmental footprint, engaging millions of fans, businesses and communities in sustainable actions. The full list of winners is below.

The State Department of Environmental Conservation Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos honored the recipients today at the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, SUNY Polytechnic Institute in Albany.

"This year's awards recognize innovative programs, smart business decisions and unique collaborative initiatives that improve New York's environment and contribute to a stronger economy," said DEC Acting Commissioner Basil Seggos. "These seven organizations are models of excellence. They are having a positive impact on our economy and their voluntary, innovative and sustainable actions address the environmental challenges facing our communities, state, nation and the world. Presenting the awards at the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, SUNY Polytechnic Institute is fitting because here, through the vision and leadership of Governor Andrew Cuomo, New York is setting an example of global education, research and development and technology that is critical for the next generation of scientists and researchers."

The Department of Environmental Conservation established the awards program in 2004 to recognize those who improve and protect New York's environment and contribute to a

more healthy economy by advancing sustainable practices and by forming creative partnerships. To date, it has recognized 66 award winners.

A statewide review committee made up of 25 representatives from the public and private sectors provided the Department of Environmental Conservation advice in selecting the award winners from an array of competitive applications received in May.

**The 2015 winners include:**

- **NHL GREEN (New York County):** The NHL Green initiative was born and is being implemented here in New York State (the NHL is headquartered in New York City and three franchises are located within NYS) and is setting an impressive standard for national and international sporting leagues. The NHL's sustainability report, the first of its kind from a professional sports league, sets a national and international sporting industry precedent. The environmental, social and economic benefits for New York and the nation are extraordinary and far-reaching. The NHL is reducing its environmental footprint and engaging millions of hockey fans, global businesses and local communities in sustainable action.
- **Jacob K. Javits Center's Sustainable Transformation (New York County):** The Center recently completed an impressive and comprehensive sustainable transformation. A five-year renovation project transformed the Javits Center into one of the nation's busiest and greenest convention centers. The Center's state-of-the-art, 7-acre green roof, the second largest in the nation, will prevent approximately 6.8 million gallons of storm water runoff annually, and also reduce heat gain. As a result, the facility's yearly energy consumption is projected to be decreased by 26 percent. The green roof has become a habitat for more than 10 bird species, serving as a wildlife oasis in an environment dominated by concrete and steel. The pixelated glass panels are bird-friendly, reducing bird collisions by 90 percent since installation. The Center serves as an outstanding model for the convention center industry and is achieving significant environmental, economic and social benefits for nearby communities and all New Yorkers.
- **Intervale Lowlands Preserve's Ecosystem Monitoring and Management Program (Essex County):** Intervale Lowlands Preserve, located near Lake Placid, is using innovative, high-tech approaches to ecological management, monitoring and research all which are

advancing New York's commitment to combat climate change. This relatively small Adirondack preserve serves as an outstanding model of environmental stewardship.

- New York City's Clean Soil Bank (New York County): The New York City Mayor's Office of Environmental Remediation was honored for its Clean Soil Bank Program, the first of its kind in the nation. The program enables real-time, no-cost transfers of excavated soil for fill at nearby construction sites. This is significantly reducing truck traffic, improving air quality and saving taxpayer dollars. This sustainable program enables excavated native soil to be repurposed by sites needing soil. It is an outstanding example of environmental, social and economic excellence.
- New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation's Solar Program (Albany County): NYS Parks has developed and implemented an innovative, triple-bottom-line business model for advancing sustainability and promoting the use of solar power. As part of the effort, NYS Parks has become the only state agency to train in-house staff as solar installers who are approved by the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority.
- Town of Williamson's Strategic Plan to achieve Electricity Independence (Wayne County): The town of Williamson, Wayne County, is one of New York's designated Climate Smart Communities. Williamson is the first New York town to use solar energy to power all of its municipal buildings as part of its commitment to reduce their environmental footprint. Achieving "net zero" means that the total electricity being used by the town is less than or equal to the alternative energy being produced. The town has advanced renewable energy technologies and created "green-collar" jobs. This demonstrates an outstanding commitment to environmental excellence and sets an extraordinary benchmark for other New York municipalities.
- Upper Susquehanna Coalition's Stream Team Flood Response Training Program (Tioga County): Upper Susquehanna Coalition was honored for its Stream Team Flood Response Training Program. The Coalition is a unique collaboration of 16 New York Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The training program takes an innovative and hands-on

approach to teach local and agency officials and personnel, contractors and landowners how to effectively address stream management issues in post storm situations which will prevent or lessen unnecessary environmental and economic damages. This sustainable, statewide training campaign is enhancing New York's capacity to respond to increasingly common extreme weather events. As a result, there are more local communities using sustainable stream work practices. In addition, more local and agency officials and personnel, contractors and landowners are trained to effectively address stream management issues in post storm situations.

For additional information about the program and past winners, and to learn about applying for the 2016 Environmental Excellence Awards, visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/945.html>.