



# ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY, & AGRICULTURE



## OFFICES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

New York State's environmental, energy and agriculture agencies are on the front lines of the on-going fight against climate change; are tasked with conserving and protecting precious natural resources; promoting New York State as a natural destination for tourism and recreation; ensuring the integrity of freshwater resources; and supporting the kind of agricultural development that is critical to New York State's robust farming industry.

The **Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC)** mission is to conserve, improve, and protect New York's natural resources and environment while enhancing the health, safety, and well-being of New York State's citizens.

The **Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP)** provides safe, enjoyable recreational and educational opportunities for New York State residents and visitors, and functions as a steward of New York State's valuable natural, historic, and cultural resources. OPRHP operates the State Park System, a network of over 250 parks, historic sites, recreational trails, golf courses, boat launches, and more. In 2022, the system welcomed more than 78 million visitors.

Together, DEC and OPRHP oversee 5.35 million acres of open space statewide, including 2.6 million acres in the Adirondack Park and nearly 300,000 acres in the Catskill Forest Preserve.

The **Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM)** has wide-ranging responsibilities, including food safety inspection, agricultural economic development, farmland protection, animal and plant health surveillance, and operation of the Great New York State Fair.

The **Department of Public Service (DPS)** functions as the staff arm of the **Public Service Commission (PSC)**, which regulates the rates and services of public utilities – an industry with an estimated \$33 billion in annual revenue. DPS oversees the siting of major utility infrastructure and provides oversight of cable franchise agreements and telecommunications service.

The **New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's (NYSERDA)** advances innovative energy solutions in ways that improve New York's economy and environment. NYSERDA is the primary state entity tasked with energy market research and development and oversees a variety of energy programs including the electric vehicle rebate program and NY-Sun, designed to make solar energy more accessible.

The **New York Power Authority (NYPA)** supplies power statewide through two large hydroelectric facilities and more than 1,400 miles of transmission lines. NYPA is also helping to lead the transition to a carbon-free, economically vibrant New York through customer partnerships, innovative energy solutions, and the responsible supply of affordable, clean, and reliable electricity.

## LEADING THE NATION

From the beginning of her administration, Governor Hochul has made it clear that combating climate change remains a top priority for New York State. Acknowledging that the cost of inaction greatly outweighs the cost of any actions we can take together, New York will continue to pursue an aggressive agenda that will lead the nation in transitioning to a sustainable green energy economy, in a way that is both environmentally effective and economically affordable for all New Yorkers.

In the FY 2025 Executive Budget, Governor Hochul is proposing the Renewable Action Through Project Interconnection and Deployment (RAPID) Act. The RAPID Act will create a one stop-shop for the environmental review and permitting of major renewable energy and transmission facilities within the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES) at DPS. This will build on the on-going success of both ORES and the existing transmission permitting process at DPS. The state's transmission permitting process will now feed into a clear statutory framework that balances transparency and environmental protection with the need for fast decision-making.

In furtherance of our climate goals, Governor Hochul is also advancing the Affordable Gas Transition Act, which supports responsible, equitable, and

effective gas system transition planning, including the elimination of the so-called “100-foot” rule and other provisions of law that restrict the Public Service Commission from protecting consumers and ensuring an effective transition to clean energy. This legislation will protect utility customers from bearing the cost of unwarranted investment in fossil fuel infrastructure, establish new rules and guidelines applying to the extension of gas service in alignment with the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, and will not impact the safe and reliable delivery of service to existing customers.

## PROPOSED FY 25 BUDGET ACTIONS

In addition to announcing critical new programs and advancing new investments on the climate front, Governor Hochul’s proposed budget will provide the funding New York needs to preserve, protect, and enhance our natural resources, expand our outdoor recreation opportunities, and drive economic growth through sustainable agriculture and eco-tourism. Highlights of the FY 2025 Executive Budget include:

**Clean Water Infrastructure Funding.** An additional \$500 million in clean water infrastructure funding, over two years, is advanced to bring the State’s total clean water investment to \$5.5 billion since 2017. This continued investment in our State’s infrastructure will ensure New Yorkers have access to clean drinking water and will allow municipalities to invest in efficient and effective wastewater treatment strategies.

**Environmental Protection Fund.** \$400 million for the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) is again provided to support critical projects that work to mitigate the effects of climate change, improve agricultural resources, protect our water sources, advance conservation efforts, and provide recreational opportunities.

**Sustaining our Environmental Resources.** \$95 million for DEC to address a variety of capital needs to facilitate access to state lands, ensure the safety and durability of our state’s dams, rehabilitate campgrounds, and upgrade a variety of widely used recreational facilities. This funding will also provide critical repairs to other public property, including wetlands, trails, waterfronts, and fish hatcheries.

**Make New York Greener.** To advance the State’s net-zero carbon emissions goals under the Climate Act, \$47 million is committed to facilitate the planting of 25 million trees by 2033. Capital investments in the Saratoga Tree Nursery and multi-year annual grants to municipalities to plant trees in support of resilient reforestation and urban forests, are key components of this initiative.

**Investing in Our State Park System.** \$200 million for OPRHP to invest in enhancing and improving state parks. This substantial level of funding will aid the ongoing transformation of New York’s flagship parks and support critical infrastructure projects throughout the park system.

**Celebrating Our State Parks’ Centennial.** \$100 million for projects to celebrate 100 years of New York State Parks and particularly to support OPRHP’s plans to transform the Jones Beach East Bathhouse.

**New York Statewide Investment in More Swimming (NY SWIMS).** \$150 million for OPRHP and partner agencies to invest in various grant programs that will enhance and expand municipal swimming opportunities throughout the State through installation of innovative floating pools, renovation and construction of municipal inground pools, and the provision of pop-up pools.

**Energy Affordability Guarantee.** \$50 million to ensure that customers who fully electrify their homes through the NYSERDA EmPower+ Program do not spend more than six percent of their income on their electric bill.

**Canal Infrastructure Investments.** \$50 million is being provided for the improvement of the Canal System. These funds will be used for dam and lock repair, flood mitigation, infrastructure improvements, canal system resiliency, and other projects that will improve the overall canal system.

**Bolster New York’s Dairy Industry.** \$34 million is provided over two years to expand dairy processing capacity through grants for on-farm milk storage technologies and processing infrastructure to mitigate transportation issues during periods of intense winter weather and road closures; improving dairy supply chain efficiency and avoiding raw milk dumping related to emergency events.