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**New Documentary *Treasures of New York:*  
*Rails-to-Trails* Brings Viewers Outside to Explore  
Innovative Rail Trails Across New York State**

*Premieres Thursday, May 18 at 8 p.m. on WLIW21*  
*Premieres Sunday, May 21 at 7 p.m. on THIRTEEN*  
*Streams Nationally Online at [wliw.org/treasures](http://wliw.org/treasures)*

At their height, railroads were an integral part of nearly every aspect of American life. But with advancements in technology and the decline of the rail industry during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, miles of tracks were forgotten. But over the last 50-plus years, through the imagination of trailblazers, neglected infrastructure has been transformed into thousands of miles of multi-use recreational trails across the country and throughout New York State. From grassroots beginnings, to an international movement, rail trails are changing the face of the New York's landscape, providing people with places to come together for recreation and a sense of community.

Beginning May 18, the Emmy-Award winning series, ***Treasures of New York***, will take viewers across New York State on a journey along various railway corridors that have been repurposed as recreational bike and pedestrian trails, in the new film ***Rails-to-Trails***.

The film brings viewers on a voyage across New York, detailing the history of some of the more than one hundred rail trails that line the state, including Manhattan's renowned "High Line" and Poughkeepsie's celebrated "Walkway Over the Hudson," exploring the natural beauty and rich history of New York, in the serene settings that allow people to escape the hustle of 21<sup>st</sup> Century living.

Exploring the history of railroads, from the Industrial Revolution, to the advancements in technology that ultimately led to the decline of the rail industry, the new documentary ***Treasures of New York: Rails-to-Trails*** – premiering on Thursday, May 18 at 8pm on WLIW21 and Sunday, May 21 at 7pm on THIRTEEN – examines the movement that turned discarded and

abandoned infrastructure into public parks and trails. Following the broadcast, the film will also be available for online viewing at [wliw.org/treasures](http://wliw.org/treasures).

***Treasures of New York*** takes a closer look at the opposition and the challenges involved in bringing these rail trails to life, as well as trails that are in the making, including the proposed “QueensWay” in New York City. The film also outlines Governor Andrew Cuomo’s plan for the “Empire State Trail,” a network of 750-miles of trails spanning from New York Harbor to Canada, and from Albany to Buffalo by the year 2020, resulting in the largest state multi-use trail in the country. The ambitious plan includes the 360-mile trail on the historic Erie Canal called “The Erie Canalway Trail.”

***Treasures of New York: Rails-to-Trails*** features interviews with Tom Sexton, Director, Northeast Region at the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy; Adrian Benepe, Senior Vice President, The Trust for Public Land; Andy Stone, Director, New York City Programs at The Trust for Public Land; Doug McPherson, Steering Committee Member of the Friends of the Queensway; Erik Ledbetter, Park Ranger and Railroad Historian; Michael Vitiello, President, New York Railroad Enthusiasts; Karl Beard, National Park Service, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance; Robin Dropkin, Executive Director, Parks & Trails New York; Tom Grasso, President Emeritus and Dan Ward, Board Member at the Canal Society of New York State; Dick Beamish, Co-Founder of Adirondack Recreational Trail Advocates and Editor of *Adirondack Explorer Magazine*; Steve Erman, Former Special Assistant for Economic Affairs at the New York State Adirondack Park Agency; Judy Moran and David Rocco, former Board Members of the Friends of the Walkway; and Elizabeth Waldstein-Hart, Executive Director, Walkway Over the Hudson, among others.

***Treasures of New York: Rails-to-Trails*** is a production of WLIW LLC in association with WNET. WNET is the parent company of WLIW21 and THIRTEEN, New York’s public television stations and operator of NJTV.

Ellen Sherman is producer of ***Treasures of New York: Rails-to-Trails***. Ann Benjamin is director. Marisa Wong is coordinating producer. Rachel Kahn Taylor is associate producer. Ally Gimbel is senior producer of the ***Treasures of New York*** series. Diane Masciale is vice president and general manager of WLIW21 and executive producer of local production, including the ***Treasures of New York*** series. Executive-in-Charge of Production is John Servidio.

Funding for ***Treasures of New York: Rails-to-Trails*** is provided by The Speedwell Foundation.

For more information about the series and this program, visit the ***Treasures of New York*** website at [wliw.org/treasures](http://wliw.org/treasures).

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#### **About WNET**

WNET is America’s flagship PBS station and parent company of THIRTEEN and WLIW21. WNET also operates NJTV, the statewide public media network in New Jersey. Through its broadcast channels, three cable services (KidsThirteen, Create and World) and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](#), [Charlie Rose](#) and a range of documentaries, children’s programs, and local

news and cultural offerings. WNET's groundbreaking series for children and young adults include [Get the Math](#), [Oh Noah!](#) and [Cyberchase](#) as well as [Mission US](#), the award-winning interactive history game. WNET highlights the tri-state's unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](#), [Theater Close-Up](#), [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](#) and [MetroFocus](#), the daily multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. In addition, WNET produces online-only programming including the award-winning series about gender identity, [First Person](#), and an intergenerational look at tech and pop culture, [The Chatterbox with Kevin and Grandma Lill](#). In 2015, THIRTEEN launched Passport, an online streaming service which allows members to see new and archival THIRTEEN and PBS programming anytime, anywhere: [www.thirteen.org/passport](http://www.thirteen.org/passport).