

MAPPING A NEW YORK CITY OASIS

EVER WONDER WHERE ALL THE PUBLIC ACCESS PIERS ARE IN NEW YORK CITY? Or how to view your favorite parks from above?

Enter the New York City Open Accessible Space Information System Cooperative, also known as OASIS. OASIS is a website collaboration made up of both public and private partnerships focused on "developing an accessible information system to help enhance the stewardship of open space so these areas are linked, diverse, and sustainable for the benefit of all New York City residents."

Involving more than forty state and city agencies, including Parks & Recreation, non-profit organizations, community groups, academic institutions, and private companies, OASIS has been able to develop an online interactive mapping and data-analysis program by pulling together several layers of detailed information about particular locations, with additional attention paid to how a specific location ties in to the City as a whole.

For everyone from professional urban planners, gardeners, high school students and teachers, to New Yorkers looking to explore the city, the OASIS website makes it easy to get the information needed to improve and support the parks and gardens in our communities in an accessible and dynamic way.

Go to www.oasisnyc.net and view layers of information on top of an aerial photo of your neighborhood. Get details on wetlands, parks, piers, cemeteries, and ponds. Find out the boundaries of your city council and community board districts, who your city council members are and how to contact them, or learn the property owners on your block.

This fall, similar maps will be available at www.nyc.gov/parks. Maps at this site will include the above resources, plus additional information on programs, events, facilities, capital projects, and park ratings.

The OASIS team is currently working to create a stewardship data layer, which will identify the groups working to protect and care for each of the open spaces in New York City. Activists interested in a particular park or garden will be able to find partner groups by clicking on the map; or, if no group exists, create one themselves. To be listed as an open space steward, log on to www.itsmypark.org to fill out our organization survey.

OASIS's most recent project -- one that will be expanded citywide -- centered around a "Neighborhood Tree Survey Pilot Project" funded by the Forest Service. OASIS partners, such as Trees New York, Council on

the Environment, NYPIRG's Community Mapping Assistance Project, and ESRI, a provider of computer mapping software, trained 29 Citizen Pruners to use aerial photos, maps, and data from the innovative online application to collect detailed information on 322 trees in Hunts Point in the Bronx, Manhattan's Lower East Side, and New Brighton on Staten Island. "We wanted a sampling of neighborhoods that have a diversity of the amounts of trees," said Matthew Arnn, director of the Forest Service's New York Metro Initiative. "Staten Island being one of the greener areas, Manhattan being densely populated and Hunts Point being generally considered one of the grayer neighborhoods."

In the end, the researchers found that the 322 trees had a combined value of \$1,038,458 and that, on the average, each tree was valued at \$3,225. That is how much it would cost to replace each of those trees. Remarkably, the survey also determined that the 322 trees remove 500 pounds of pollutants each year.

While this is just one way to place value on a tree, this knowledge, like the online map, can potentially have a profound effect on the way we treat our environment. As one OASIS online visitor said of the interactive website, "it empowers the average person with [a desire] to be useful in their community and a vision to make their space a little better."

OASIS CAN BE USEFUL TO YOU IN MANY WAYS:

- Park lovers can explore green spaces that they never knew existed;
- Maps can be used in presentations to elected officials and community boards;
- Information on the website can assist writers, urban planners, and city council staff with articles and reports;
- Students can do investigative research for school papers about environmental concerns, urban planning, architecture, and city open space;
- City dwellers, community leaders, and volunteers alike can use maps and aerial photos to plan hikes, cleanups and other events;
- Residents can inquire about the property values of their neighborhood or other areas in relation to trees and open spaces;
- Those interested in photography, geography, or cartography will find the site informative and exciting;
- Visitors to the site will gain more awareness about open space and environmental concerns in general, and be able to actively participate in protecting and improving city green areas.

MORE MAPPING RESOURCES:

www.nyc.gov/html/ops/html/my_stats.html

www.gis.com

www.nationalgeographic.com/maps/

www.greenmap.org

www.census.gov

Visit www.oasisnyc.net, or call 212.264.8000 for more information.

CENTRAL PARKS TO THE CITY: NEW ARSENAL GALLERY EXHIBIT

CENTRAL TO THE CITY: MANHATTAN SQUARES, NOW ON VIEW AT THE ARSENAL GALLERY, features vintage and contemporary photographs, renderings, postcards, park plans, and memorabilia that tell the story of Manhattan's first parks. From the central business districts and civic centers to residential enclaves, Manhattan's squares are essential public crossroads, full of the vitality and diversity that characterizes New York. The show will explore these public spaces from their 19th-century origins to their present day incarnations. Sponsored in part by America Lawyer Media and Sunoco, Inc.

Arsenal Gallery, 830 Fifth Ave., 3rd Floor. Free admission Monday - Friday, 9:00am - 5:00pm. Visit www.nyc.gov

SAVE THE DATE

PARTNERSHIPS' FALL "IT'S MY PARK!" DAY WILL TAKE PLACE ON **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18**. Join us for cleaning, painting, planting, and all-around celebrating in a park near you. Keep an eye on our website (www.itsmypark.org) and watch this space for details.

Partnerships for Parks 212.360.1310
To volunteer or to join your local parks group: 212.360.1357
For information about special events or to report graffiti, vandalism, or crime call The New York City Citizens Service Center: 311

www.itsmypark.org
www.nyc.gov/parks
www.cityparksfoundation.org

Partnerships for Parks, a joint program of City Parks Foundation and New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, believes that parks are essential to the life of New York City, and that community involvement is essential to the life of a park. We work to start, strengthen, and support neighborhood park groups; to link them together so that they can learn from each other and be stronger collectively; and to promote parks in general so people will join in efforts to restore and preserve them.

Dana Litvack, Director of Operations

This issue of the Leaflet was edited by Blaise Kearsley

Partnerships for Parks is a joint program of

CityParks
Foundation



City of New York
Parks & Recreation

DIVE INTO UNIQUE VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

- **HEAD FOR THE BEACH.** Join a cleanup team or form one of your own on **Saturday, September 20** and be part of the annual **International Coastal Cleanup**, coordinated by the **American Littoral Society**.

Cleanup sites will be listed in September at www.alsnyc.org, or call **1.800.449.0790**. To form your own team, email Barbara Cohen at alsbeach@aol.com, or call **718.471.2166**.

- **WHERE EAGLES DARE.** Did you know that bald eagles have been reintroduced to Inwood Hill, the last natural forest in Manhattan? Help protect the eagles and their forest habitat by getting involved with stewardship at Inwood Hill Park.

Attend an orientation session led by the **Urban Park Rangers**, the **Natural Resources Group**, and *Partnerships for Parks* on **Sunday, September 14** at **12pm**. For more information call **212.304.2365**.

CITY PARKS NEWS

CITY PARKS FOUNDATION'S FREE PUBLIC PROGRAMS IN PARKS ACROSS THE CITY'S FIVE BOROUGHES ARE IN FULL SWING. From tennis and golf lessons to readings, puppet shows, concerts, and more, City Parks Foundation (CPF) brings high quality programs for children and their families right into neighborhood green spaces. Now, CPF announces the launch of its newly designed website, with a sophisticated search feature, extensive program information and more. For more about CPF programs and information on this summer's scheduled park events throughout the city, visit www.cityparksfoundation.org.

"The true New Yorker secretly believes that anyone living anywhere else has got to be, in some sense, kidding."

- John Updike

Got a nature or city quote that you'd like to share? Email Blaise Kearsley at blaise@partnershipsforparks.org.

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