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## **EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES INVESTMENT IN THE ADIRONDACK CRAFT BEVERAGE TRAIL TO BOOST TOURISM**

*Plans for expanded beverage trail and marketing include a mobile app and website*

Empire State Development (ESD) today announced plans for expanded Adirondack Craft Beverage Trail promotion to increase tourism in Warren, Washington, Essex and Saratoga counties and brand the region as a craft beverage destination in New York State. The Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce (ARCC) was awarded \$168,300 from ESD's Craft Beverage Industry Tourism Promotion Grant program to create an updated map of the beverage trail, which will directly connect visitors to the 22 participating craft beverage producers, and launch a new mobile app and website of the Beverage Trail. The Chamber will market the growing Adirondack Craft Beverage Trail throughout New York, and in Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Jersey to encourage increased visitation to the region and support of the thriving craft beverage industry. The Chamber unveiled its new initiatives this morning at Davidson Brewery in Queensbury.

"Tourism is the fourth largest employer in New York State," said Empire State Development President, CEO and Commissioner Howard Zemsky. "Agritourism draws millions of tourists to New York every year and events like The Adirondack Craft Beverage Trail are a driving factor for continued success and economic vitality in the North Country."

"We are thankful to be the recipient of one of Empire State Development's Craft Beverage Industry Tourism Promotions grants," said Adirondack Craft Beverage Trail Project Coordinator Greg Chanese. "This will go a long way in enhancing the initiative started in 2014 and help us reach the goal of branding this region as the craft beverage destination in New York."

The northern Capital Region and southern Adirondack regions have seen the number of local craft beverage businesses steadily increasing over the last several years as a

result of Governor Cuomo's commitment to an improved business climate for craft beverage producers. The Beverage Trail currently includes 22 craft beverage producers—13 breweries, 5 wineries, 3 distilleries, and 1 cider house—with additional producers joining the initiative in Warren, Washington, Essex and Saratoga counties. Governor Cuomo recently highlighted the growth of the industry, announcing the craft beer industry in New York State grew 59% from 2013 to 2014, with a total economic impact estimated at \$3.5 billion.

These new resources will allow residents and visitors to easily find and access the area's craft beer, wine, spirits and cider producers. The free mobile application will give turn-by-turn directions leading to the craft beverage makers in the region and includes a "push" notification feature alerting travelers when they are within a specified mileage (15 miles) of any of these makers. A complimentary paper map will also be published highlighting the craft beverage producers in the region and will be distributed through strategic distribution channels. A new website, [www.AdkCraftBev.com](http://www.AdkCraftBev.com), will link all of these initiatives together and will include direct links to the map, the mobile application and information on the craft beverage producers. The new website is expected to launch around Memorial Day weekend and the mobile app will launch around the Fourth of July weekend.

Additionally, the Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce has partnered with Warren County Tourism, Washington County Tourism, the Saratoga County Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Saratoga County Chamber and other private sector partners to help expand the marketing of the program through participation with tour companies, tradeshow, and expos throughout the year.

"Consumers look for trails as a defined way to navigate and explore a niche they are interested in, whether it is a craft beverage trail, a haunted history trail, Lakes to Locks Passage, or the Dude Ranch Trail," said Director of Warren County Tourism Department Kate Johnson. "Trails work well from a tourism standpoint as far as exposing a broader territory for exploration, thus allowing a local or traveler to experience more of our area than they might have. They make sense; they're educational and fun for all!"

The Craft Beverage Industry Tourism Promotion Grant program is a result of the Governor's commitments made at the second Wine, Beer, Spirits & Cider Summit to continue to support and provide resources for this growing industry. The \$1 million Craft Beverage Industry Tourism Promotion Grant, program was created to help grow tourism across New York State by promoting destinations, attractions, and special events explicitly related to the craft beverage industry. Working capital funding of up to \$250,000 is available for marketing-based tourism projects intended to create or retain jobs, increase tourism in the craft beverage industry and attract visitors to New York

State. Successful projects will support the Regional Economic Development Council's long term strategic plans for economic growth in regions, as well as align with current I LOVE NEW YORK marketing strategies.

Also available is a \$2 million Craft Beverage Marketing and Promotion Grant program created to increase the profile, awareness and sales of New York State produced wine, beer, spirits, and hard cider. Up to \$500,000 is available to eligible not-for-profit organizations to help cover the costs associated with marketing the craft beverage industry. This includes the purchase of recognized media advertising, production costs of print collateral and audio/visual, industry related tours, marketing materials, and website design, development, and updates. Applicants must incorporate the Taste NY initiative. Funding is provided by Empire State Development in coordination with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.

For more information on the Craft Beverage Industry Tourism Promotion Grant and the Craft Beverage Marketing and Promotion Grant programs, please visit <http://www.esd.ny.gov/BusinessPrograms/CraftBeverageGrantProgram.html>.

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