



# NEWS FROM **ULSTER COUNTY** County Executive Jen Metzger

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**\*\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\*\***

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## **Ulster County's Free 'Nature Bus' Returns for 2025 Season KICKS OFF EARTH WEEK, ADDING NEW PALTZ STOPS**

**KINGSTON, NY** - Ulster County is excited to announce the return of its trailblazing initiative — the Nature Bus — kicking off during Earth Week on Saturday, April 26, and running every Saturday through the end of September. Spearheaded by County Executive Jen Metzger in partnership with Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT) and the Department of Tourism, the Nature Bus offers residents and visitors the opportunity to explore the County's breathtaking natural and recreational attractions, including Sojourner Truth State Park, Mohonk Preserve, Minnewaska State Park Preserve, Black Creek Preserve, Walkway Over the Hudson State Park, and Kingston Point Beach — and it's all free of charge.

In addition to stops in Kingston and Ellenville, the Ulster County Nature Bus will expand service to New Paltz, offering a convenient way to enjoy nature and outdoor fun — no car required. All Nature Bus routes are accessible by people of all ages and abilities.

"The Nature Bus offers a fun, convenient, and affordable way for our residents to visit and explore Ulster County's magnificent parks and nature preserves," **said County Executive Jen Metzger**. "We have incredible natural and recreational resources in Ulster County, and we want everyone to be able to enjoy them, whether for strolling, swimming, hiking, biking, picnicking, birding, or just spending time with friends and family."

An estimated 7.5% of County residents do not own a car, and this percentage is significantly higher in the more urban centers of Kingston, Ellenville, and New Paltz.

**The 2025 Nature Bus routes:**

- **Ridge Route:** From New Paltz, the Nature Bus picks up riders at the NYS Thruway Park and Ride, New Paltz Gardens, and New Paltz Trailways; from Ellenville, the Nature Bus departs from Liberty Square. Destinations include the Mohonk Preserve Testimonial Gate Trailhead, Mohonk Preserve Visitors Center, and Minnewaska State Park Preserve.
- **River Route:** The Nature Bus departs from Kingston Plaza, with a stop at Garraghan Drive. Destinations include Sojourner Truth State Park, Kingston Point Beach, Black Creek Preserve, and the Walkway Over the Hudson State Park.

Both routes will run for the Earth Week kick-off on Saturday, April 26. **For route start times, dates and locations, please visit [participate.ulstercountyny.gov/nature-bus](https://participate.ulstercountyny.gov/nature-bus).** After the Earth Week launch, the River and Ridge routes will run on a rotating basis on Saturdays through late September.

“I am so proud to be a part of an initiative that allows the County to showcase its commitment to sustainability,” **said Lisa Berger, Ulster County Director of Tourism.** “I am certain that the Ulster County Nature Bus will once again be a resounding success.”

“We’re thrilled to offer the Nature Bus as an accessible way for residents and visitors to experience the natural beauty of Ulster County,” **said Toni Roser, Director of Ulster County Area Transit.** “This free Saturday service makes it easy for everyone to explore scenic outdoor destinations, whether on foot or by bike — and with bicycle racks on board, riders can enjoy the journey and the destination.”

“The Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation is excited to partner with Ulster County on the Nature Bus for the 2025 season,” **said Joshua Laird, Executive Director of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission.** “We are thrilled to be able to provide stops at both Minnewaska State Park Preserve as part of the Ridge Route and at Sojourner Truth State Park on the River Route. Ulster County continues to improve this program, and we look forward to being able to provide access for all users of the Nature Bus. It is an excellent free program that has been needed in the region and improves tourism to our parks.”

“As New York State’s first Leave No Trace Gold Standard Site, we’re excited to collaborate with Ulster County to provide expanded, sustainable access to nature,” **said Mohonk Preserve Director of Visitor Experience Andrew Bajardi.** “We look forward to welcoming visitors to choose their own adventure at Mohonk Preserve.”

"The Nature Bus is a meaningful way for people without their own cars to experience the beauty of Ulster County's outdoor attractions," **said Seth McKee, Executive Director of the Scenic Hudson Land Trust.** "Scenic Hudson is gratified that the Nature Bus will bring people to parks that we are proud to have helped create for the public — Black Creek Preserve, Sojourner Truth State Park, and Walkway Over the Hudson. Each of these parks offer exciting and unique experiences for Hudson Valley residents and visitors alike and getting to them on the Nature Bus is one more way to connect people to nature!"

All routes are designed to accommodate individuals of all ages and abilities, with buses equipped with bike racks.

For detailed bus schedules, more information, and updates, please visit <https://participate.ulstercountyny.gov/nature-bus>.

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