



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

## Senators Call for Increased Funding to Improve Safety at Zoar Valley

JIM RANNEY March 23, 2021

| ISSUE: **ZOAR VALLEY, DEC**



Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) and Senator George M. Borrello are calling for this year's state budget to include funding for improved signage and trail maintenance at the Zoar Valley Multiple Use Area. The 3,014 acre conservation area is located in southern Erie and northern Cattaraugus counties.

Zoar Valley is known for its spectacular scenery, deep gorges, cliffs, waterfalls and dense forest. Many visitors frequent the area to hike and enjoy its system of trails. Maintaining the trails and improving signage is critical to keeping visitors safe.

"The natural beauty of Zoar Valley attracts thousands of visitors to the region, especially the trail system along the north side of the gorge," Senator Gallivan said. "However, the terrain can also be dangerous for those who get lost or stray from the marked trails. Tragically, lives have been lost in falls and other accidents. The state has an obligation to maintain the trails, ensure they are clearly marked and provide signage to warn visitors of potential dangerous conditions."

"Our goal is to make sure people can safely enjoy Zoar Valley. We need to direct people away from the makeshift trails around the gorge so they stay on the trail system established by the Department of Environmental Conservation," Senator Borrello said. "I've spoken to the families of young people who have lost their lives in falls at the gorge. It's heartbreaking. The scenery at Zoar Valley is spectacular. We need to provide visitors to Zoar Valley with the tools and information they need to stay safe while taking in the natural wonders around them."

Senators Gallivan and Borrello have written to Senate leaders, requesting them to include funding for Zoar Valley in the FY 2022 enacted state budget. Budget negotiations are underway, with a final budget due April 1.