

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
Upstate New York

Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

*Discover the waterway that
shaped and strengthened
the nation, created the
Empire State, and made
New York America's
preeminent seaport city.*



Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor

At the beginning of the 19th century, New Yorkers, led by Governor De Witt Clinton, had the vision and conviction to build the Erie Canal, a 363-mile long waterway connecting the Hudson River at Albany with Lake Erie at Buffalo. Opened in 1825, the Erie Canal provided the first all-water link between the Atlantic seaboard and the Great Lakes. It quickly became the most successful and influential canal in North America.

More than just a heroic feat of engineering, the Erie Canal opened the interior of the continent, providing a safe and reliable route for west-bound migrants and manufactured goods and east-bound products of forests, farms, and mines. Connecting places, people, and ideas, it strengthened the union and fostered social and reform movements.



Parks & Trails New York

Bicycling along the Canal Trail



NYS Canal Corp.

Fairport Canal Days

Celebrated in art, literature, story, and song, it helped establish an American identity, both here and abroad.

Although its success sparked a canal building boom throughout the eastern U.S. and Canada, the Erie Canal remained preeminent. It made New York the Empire State and confirmed New York City's status as the young nation's most prosperous and vibrant seaport.

Enlarged several times during the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Erie Canal continues in service today, along with the connecting Champlain, Oswego, and Cayuga-Seneca Canals. Operated by the New York State Canal Corporation, the system is now actively used for boating and fishing as well as hiking and cycling along the cross-state Canalway Trail.



ABC Creative Group / Mid-Lakes Navigation

Canal boat touring at Seneca Falls



NYS Canal Corp.

An afternoon walk on the Oswego Canal

Congressional designation of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor recognizes the significance of the Erie Canal to our nation's history. The future of this national treasure will be to serve once again as a key destination and source of revitalization to the over 200 canal communities within the Heritage Corridor.



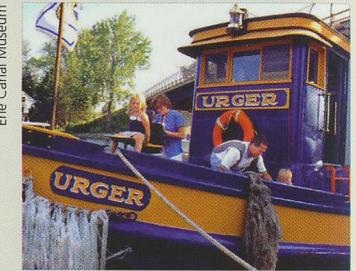
New York State Museum

Entering a lock on the Champlain Canal at Waterford during the 1890s



Erie Canal Museum

Erie Canal Museum at Syracuse



Media Artists

Educational programs on the tugboat "Urger"



The Heritage Corridor includes the 524 miles of navigable waterway of the New York State Canal System, including the Erie, Cayuga-Seneca, Oswego, and Champlain Canals, the historic alignments of these canals, and immediately adjacent municipalities.

Places to Remember

National heritage corridors are special places designated by Congress. Each is distinctive, selected because they illustrate significant chapters in the American experience. Corridor features and stories remind us of the connections between geography and human events that shaped the course of American history.

National heritage corridors promote cooperative preservation and community renewal efforts through joint efforts by governments, organizations, businesses, and individuals.

Places to Live

National heritage corridors are more than monuments to the past, they represent living traditions. Residents are proud of their heritage and many have worked for years to preserve the distinctive character of their communities.

Places to Visit

You can enjoy this experience by exploring 234 communities and over 500 miles of interconnected waterways along the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor. On-water activities include canoeing and kayaking, motor boating, and fishing. You can also enjoy the waterfront parks in communities and at canal locks across the state where you can picnic, fish, and walk or bike along canal-side trails.

Take time to stroll through canal towns where you can visit museums, visitor centers, and shops, dine at local favorite restaurants, and spend a night at one of the many inns, bed and breakfasts, or hotels throughout the Corridor.

Many partners serve on the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission, the organization charged by Congress to take the lead in crafting a shared vision for the Corridor's future. The National Park Service and a number of New York State agencies provide advice and support.

"15 miles on the Erie Canal" ...and more. National Park Areas of Upstate New York



The National Park Service invites you to experience the beauty and history of Upstate New York. We offer a variety of programs and events that will make your visit a memorable one.

The National Park Service cares about special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Experience Your America!

www.nps.gov

Cover image: "Canal Scene, Moonlight"
[Erie Canal at Little Falls, 1870s] Currier and Ives,
from the collections of the Erie Canal Museum

For more information on activities and events, please contact:

Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor
PO Box 219
Waterford, NY 12188
(518) 237-7000
www.eriecanalway.org