

Part 2
Existing Conditions and Background Information

Existing Conditions

Physical Resources

Bedrock Geology

From Rochester heading south to Cuba and Hinsdale

Silurian

- Akron Dolostone, Cobleskill Limestone and Salina Group
 - Akron dolostone
 - Camillus Shale
 - Vernon Formation

Devonian

- Onondaga Limestone and Tri-states Group
 - Onondaga Limestone

- Hamilton Group
 - Marcellus Formation
 - Skaneateles Formation
 - Ludlowville Formation

- Sonyea Group
 - Cashaqua Shale

- Genesee Group and Tully Limestone
 - West River Shale

- West Falls Group
 - Lower Beers Hill
 - West Hill Formation
 - Nunda Formation

- Java Group
 - Hanover Shale

- Canadaway Group
 - Machias Formation

- Conneaut Group
 - Ellicot Formation

Soils

As much of the Greenway follows the route of the Rochester Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad, major expanses of the Greenway Trail are covered with a layer of cinder and/or turf and other man-made fill. In general, the soils underneath the Greenway tend to be gravelly or silty clay loam. The entire trail is fairly level, with the majority of slopes being less than five percent.

A complete, narrative description of the soils can be found in Appendix F

Natural Resources

Flora

A complete biological inventory of Greenway property is not presently available (October 2013). However, SUNY Geneseo botany students began to inventory flora within sections of the corridor. The New York State Natural Heritage Program has targeted the GVG for a Natural Heritage inventory in 2014. The inventory will focus on a few selected areas that are wide enough to contain some natural area or that cross over streams or wetlands that have potential for rare species based on models and known records in the watershed.

Not listed by Natural Heritage, but of interest to local naturalists, is a fine display of spring wildflowers southeast of the intersection of the Greenway Trail and the Lehigh Valley Trail. There is also a large population of horned bladder wort (a carnivorous plant) in the pond at Caledonia. Hackberry, an uncommon tree with very warty bark, can also be seen along the trail south of Route 20 and within the village of Mt. Morris. Black walnut is also common in the same locations.

Significant Ecological Communities

There are a number of significant plant communities along the trail:

Table 3 Significant Ecological Communities

Significant Ecological Community	Nearest Mile Marker
Floodplain Forest	14
Hemlock-Northern Hardwood Forest (good example)	51
Maple-Basswood Rich Mesic Forest (good example)	52
Red Maple-Tamarack Peat Swamp	84
Rich Sloping Fen	XX

Rare and Endangered Species

Eleven (11) rare, threatened or endangered plants are located in the Natural Heritage database on lands adjoining the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park.

Since the trail itself follows the highly disturbed bed of the Pennsylvania Railroad no rare plants are believed to be growing on the actual trail surface area.

Invasive Species

Invasive species are found along the corridor. No comprehensive survey of invasive species has been completed. Those found include, but are not limited to, phragmites, purple loosestrife, honeysuckle, autumn olive, oriental bittersweet and barberry. A more complete inventory of Invasive Species in the Greenway should be undertaken.

Fauna

Deer, fox, turkeys, snapping turtles, and many other animals have been noted on the corridor. The Greenway also passes near a great blue heron rookery and an area inhabited by the short-eared owl.

The silver maple-ash swamp in the flood plain of Black Creek in Monroe County is a significant wildlife habitat area.

Beaver activity needs to be managed in several locations as the animals have built dams in adjacent streams, causing flooding and erosion of the Greenway.

Oatka and Wiscoy Creeks provide cold water fisheries. Opportunities for warm water fishing are provided by the Genesee River.

Endangered Species

Eleven species of rare animals are located in the Natural Heritage database on lands adjoining the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park.

Water

Rivers and Streams

The Genesee Valley Greenway State Park passes along the banks of the Genesee River in Monroe, Livingston, Wyoming and Allegany counties; Black Creek in Allegany County; Black Creek in Monroe County; and Keshequa Creek in Livingston County.

The Greenway also crosses these creeks in the following counties:

Monroe County

Oatka Creek

Livingston County

Dugan Creek, White's Creek, Brown's Creek, Salt Creek, Beard's Creek, and Buck Run.

Allegany County

Cold Creek, Wiscoy Creek, Crawford Creek, and Caneadea Creek.

Cattaraugus County

Olean Creek

Genesee River

The Genesee River is included in the National Park Service Nationwide River Inventory Program. Segments incorporated are listed in Table xx:

Table 4 National Park Service Nationwide River Inventory Program

River	County	Reach	Length (miles)	Year Listed/ Updated	Description
Genesee River	Allegany, Wyoming, and Livingston	Portageville to NY Route 19 Bridge at Belmont	40	1982/ 1995	Hydrologic-Unique large, undeveloped high order river. Recreational-Class I paddling through most of segment.
Genesee River	Allegany	Rt. 19 bridge at Belmont to Rt. 19 bridge at Shongo	25	1995	Recreational-Mostly Class II paddling.
Genesee River	Wyoming	Mount Morris to Portageville	21	1982/ 1995	Geologic-Three significant waterfalls. The most outstanding example of representative river related topographic features in the section. Recreational-Class II and III paddling for six miles between Lee's Landing (below Lower Falls) and St. Helena. Scenic-Segment is within Letchworth State Park and has a "scenic" designation under the New York State Rivers Program for its scenic qualities.
Genesee River	Monroe, Livingston	NY State Thruway to Rt. 36 near Mount Morris	40	1982	Hydrologic-(Unique largely undeveloped, high order river.)
Genesee River	Allegany, Wyoming, Livingston	Portageville to Belmont	40	1982	Hydrologic-(Unique large, undeveloped, high order river.)
Genesee River	Wyoming	Mount Morris to Portageville	7	1982	Geologic-(Three significant waterfalls. The most outstanding example of representative river related topographic features in the section.)
Genesee	Monroe and	NY Route 252 to	49	1982/ 1995	Hydrologic-Unique, largely

River	County	Reach	Length (miles)	Year Listed/Updated	Description
River	Livingston	Route 36 near Mt. Morris			undeveloped, high order river. Recreational-Class I paddling through entire segment except for one mile of Class II waters near NY Route 36.

Ponds and Lakes

Several ponds along the Greenway were originally constructed as canal turning basins such as those located near York Landing in the Town of York, Livingston County. There is also a complex of ponds adjacent to the Greenway north of Cuylerville in the Town of Leicester in Livingston County.

The Greenway borders Rockville Lake in the Town of Belfast in Allegany County. Rockville Lake was constructed as a water source for the canal.

Cuba Lake in the Town of Cuba in Allegany County is located a short distance from the Greenway. It also was constructed as a water source for the canal.

Wetlands

State and federally protected wetlands occur in many locations along the Greenway.

In Monroe County, the Greenway passes adjacent to both Class I and II state freshwater wetlands and federally protected wetlands in the Black Creek and Little Black Creek areas in the Town of Chili.

In Livingston County, federally protected wetlands are located adjacent to the Greenway in the Towns of Caledonia, Leicester and Portage.

In Wyoming County, the Greenway passes by several federally protected wetlands and one Class I state freshwater wetland in the Town of Genesee Falls.

In Allegany County, the Greenway is adjacent to numerous federally protected wetlands in the Towns of Hume, Caneadea, Belfast, New Hudson and Cuba, as well as several Class I, II and III state freshwater wetlands.

In Cattaraugus County, no state or federally protected wetlands occur along the Greenway in the Town of Hinsdale.

Cultural Resources

Archaeological

As a result of hundreds of years of human habitation, the area encompassing the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park has been found to be rich in archeological resources. Within Allegany, Livingston, Monroe, and Wyoming counties the corridor is located in areas of

multiple site sensitivity based on the New York State Archeological Sensitivity map. (www.oprhp.state.ny.us/nr/maine.asp)

Shovel tests and other means of in-depth archeological survey and investigation have been conducted in the corridor at a few specific locations where extensive soil excavation occurred.

Prehistoric

A State historic marker recognizing the previous existence of O-HA-GI, the only Tuscarora village in the county, is located at the trail intersection with Chandler Road in the Town of York, Livingston County.

The Caneadea Reservation was located adjacent to the current Greenway location in Houghton, in the Town of Caneadea.

Historic

National Register Eligibility

On April 30, 1997, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) determined that the entire length of the Genesee Valley Canal from Rochester to Millgrove as well as all of its associated components including bridges, locks, aqueducts, culverts, and other features that are directly associated with the canal and the railroad appear to meet eligibility criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. See Appendix H for Eligibility Evaluation by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

A variety of additional historic resources are located along the Greenway which have connections to the canal and railroad. Some of these were used directly in operation of the canal and railroad. Others, such as homes and commercial structures, were constructed to serve the families and businesses who chose to settle along the canal and railroad in order to take advantage of the economic opportunities that they provided. The information contained in this section does not represent a comprehensive survey of historic resources within and adjacent to the corridor. A formal historic resources survey of the corridor has not been undertaken.

Buildings and Districts

Historic resources that have been listed on or determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places that are located within two miles of the corridor:

- Village of Scottsville National Register Historic District
- Village of Mt. Morris National Register Historic Districts
- Union Block, Nunda
- Edgerley, Portage
- Portage High Bridge, Letchworth State Park
- Lattice Road Bridge, Town of Caneadea (HAER survey)
- Rail and Titsworth Canal Warehouse, Belfast
- Cuba South Street National Register District
- Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge, Genesee Valley Park (NR eligible)

- RG&E Generating Station Building, Mt. Morris (NR eligible)

Canal Features

Canal maps, railroad valuation maps, the 1998 survey of canal structures prepared by David L. Kipp of the Canal Society of New York State, and FOGVG culvert inventories provide information on types of canal structures and their location. No systematic inventory has been undertaken to document the remains of all structures related to the corridor's use as a canal. However, FRA Engineering, P.C. conducted an extensive evaluation of the most significant stone arch culverts in 2004. The report is entitled *Genesee Valley Greenway State Park Assessment of Stone Arch Culverts*. A list of culverts and other structures is contained in Appendix I.

Canal Prism

The canal prism is the ditch, 42 feet wide at the top, 26 feet wide at the bottom, and four feet deep, that was dug and filled with water to carry boats. In a number of locations, varying amounts of water still remain within the original canal prism.

Much of the original canal prism or ditch remains, but in places it no longer retains its original dimensions. FOGVG volunteers have begun to document the dimensions and condition of the prism. In some areas, the prism's width was decreased by the railroad to provide a straighter path for the trains. In other areas, the railroad filled in the prism to site stations or other support buildings. Since the railroad ceased operating, the prism has been eliminated in some places to accommodate the activities of adjacent landowners and previous landowner, RG&E.

Canal Locks

Locks were 90 feet long and 15 feet wide. There were three types of locks: cut stone locks, composite locks consisting of less quality stone with sides lined with wood, and fully wooden-sided locks. Some locks survive almost fully intact, such as the dressed cut stone Lock #2 in the Town of Chili or some of the composite locks located in Letchworth State Park. Others are only partially extant due to deterioration or plundering of their stones. In the case of wooden locks, a few metal tie rods or a change in the contours of the prism are all that remain as evidence of their existence. For a few locks, no visible physical evidence exists.

Bridges and Aqueducts

No canal era bridges are known to exist but plans for these bridges are located in the New York State Archives. Location of foundations of aqueducts are included in the Kipp list.

Structures/Foundations

- Foundations of unknown nature, Black Creek, Town of Chili
- Foundation of Lock Keeper's House, Lock #5, Town of York
- Foundation of mill, York Landing, Town of York

- Former mule barn, Village of Mt. Morris

Waste Weirs

Waste weirs consisted of a wooden gate that could be raised and lowered, set into stone foundations on either side. They were used to control the level of water in the canal.

Mill Races

One mill race was located adjacent and parallel to the canal from the Genesee River to Main Street in Mt. Morris.

Feeder Canals

Feeder canals were used to supply water to the canal from sources such as reservoirs and creeks in the area.

- Between Oatka Creek and the canal at Canawaugus Park in the Village of Scottsville
- Near Short Tract Road and SR 436 in the Town of Portage, the ponds on the south side of the road served to supply the canal via a feeder canal
- Parallel to and south of Wiscoy Creek to feed canal from dammed part of Wiscoy Creek
- Between the Genesee River and the main canal corridor at Oramel, owned by New York State DEC
- Rockville Lake, the old spillway structure
- From Cuba Lake the canal summit was fed to the north and south
- Oil Creek Feeder
- Ischua Creek Feeder – crossed Oil Creek via an aqueduct to the canal summit above Hinsdale

Other Canal Features

Turning basins – there were many turning basins - the three basins near York Landing are still filled with water and appear to be relatively unchanged from their original dimensions

Railroad Features

Railroad valuation maps provide information regarding location of various structures related to the functioning of the railroad, but no systematic inventory of existing railroad features has been completed, so the elements noted here do not represent a complete list of what may exist within the corridor

Bridges and Associated Structures

- Most of the Pennsylvania Railroad bridges were removed when the corridor was sold to RG&E. When most of the Monroe County section of the corridor was sold to the State, the bridge over Oatka Creek in Scottsville was retained as was the

bridge over the canal when this section of corridor was sold to the City of Rochester.

- Thru truss bridge over the Erie Canal in Genesee Valley Park in the City of Rochester
c. 1918
- Half thru plate girder bridge over Oatka Creek in Scottsville
- Concrete platform bridges at Samps Creek in the Town of Leicester, Keshequa Creek in the Town of Mount Morris, unnamed stream in the Town of Hume, and Black Creek in the Town of New Hudson.
- Stone bridge abutments, in varying states of preservation, devoid of any bridge structures are located at Leicester (Genesee River), Groveland (Sonyea State Forest – Keshequa Creek), Tuscarora (Keshequa Creek), two sets south of Tuscarora (Keshequa Creek), Portageville (Genesee River), Rossburg (Wisconsin Creek), Fillmore (Cold Creek), Houghton (Houghton Creek), Caneadea (Caneadea Creek), two sets near Rockville (Black Creek), near South Road in the Town of New Hudson (Black Creek tributary). Bridge piers remain in the Genesee River at Portageville.
- In Mt. Morris existing railroad bridge piers and abutments were used in 2012 to construct a new pedestrian bridge for the Greenway trail over the Genesee River.

Telephone Poles

Various locations, especially between Brook and Morgan Roads in the Town of Chili, Monroe County

Railroad Mile Posts

These railroad artifacts were made of wood, (possibly oak, creosote treated), 8-5/8" x 7" x 5 feet tall, with the top 4" beveled. Some are clad in metal on two sides and painted white on the other two sides. Those known to exist are:

- milepost, south of York Landing, Town of York, Livingston County. The number is not legible.
- milepost 40, directly north of Sonyea and Ridge Road, Town of Mt. Morris, Livingston County
- unnumbered, Letchworth State Park, just north of canal and rail trail intersection, Town of Portage, Livingston County
- milepost 66, Town of Hume, Allegany County (triangular shape, 9-5/8"x9-5/8"x13-1/4", 4 feet tall, beveled on the 9-5/8" sides)
- milepost 70, south of Fillmore, Town of Hume, Allegany County
- milepost 81, directly above Lock 85, Town of Belfast, Allegany County (same triangular design as milepost 66)

Culverts

See list of culverts (Appendix I). Railroad era culverts were made of a variety of materials. Some had stone headwalls. They were generally shorter in length than canal era culverts as they extended only under the width of the rail bed.

Whistle and Signal Poles

Concrete marker with “W” is located near Kapprel Road section in the Town of Mt. Morris, north of Tuscarora

A metal whistle post is located north of Brook Road in the Town of Chili

Water tower foundations

Possible water tower foundation just south of Caneadea, near the former NYSDOT sub-residency

Structures/foundations

Coal bins, Village of Mt. Morris south of the intersection with Lake Street

Scenic Resources

Trail users have mentioned the following as scenic views:

- The canal prism
- The tunnel of green created by the canopy of trees overhanging the trail
- Pastures and farm fields adjoining the trail
- Oak trees among farm fields in Caledonia and Wheatland
- Keshequa Creek gorge and surrounding hills
- Small waterfalls in Sonyea State Forest
- Genesee River gorge and waterfalls in Letchworth State Park
- Amish farmsteads and farming practices

Trail Resources

Trail Heads and Trail Parking Areas

All road crossings are informal trail heads as they serve as access points to the Greenway. Areas where off-road parking is possible, however, have the characteristics needed to become designated parking areas and major trail heads.

Some parking lots were already established for other uses and thus need no further development to accommodate trail users such as the parking lots at Genesee Valley Park, Canawaugus Park, and the Parade Grounds at Letchworth State Park. Greenway parking lots have been built at Little Black Creek and Brook Road in the Town of Chili, York Landing in the Town of York and Route 305 in the Town of Belfast. The Mt. Morris VFW has developed a parking area that serves their park and the Greenway. The gravel area at the north side of Route 20 in Caledonia serves as a place to park and access the trail. A parking lot is located adjacent to the Yard of Ale Restaurant in Piffard in the Town of York. The grassy areas at the Route 408

trail head in the Town of Nunda and the Oakland Road trail head in the Town of Portage are also used for parking.

Signs

Signs to be installed and existing signs include regulatory, warning, directional and informational signs. They include:

- Located on the Gates: Stop sign, information/welcome sign, “Do Not Block Trail” sign
- Located along the trail: Adopt-A-Trail signs, Stop Ahead signs, Boundary line signs, Barrier Ahead signs, Detour directional signs
- Located at farm lane and driveway crossings: Trail Crossing Ahead signs (erected at the discretion of adjacent landowners on their property at approach to trail)
- Located on the roadside: Logo signs (erected at approach to trail crossing), Bicyclist Crossing logo (erected on roadsides at approach to trail crossing where DOT determines sight distance is not optimal)
- Mile Markers: White painted, wooden, RR tie shaped posts will mark trail miles

Barriers

Trail Gates are located at most road crossings where the Greenway is open to the public in Monroe and Livingston counties. The trail gates will be installed at all public crossings where there is no other deterrent to access by ordinary highway traffic.

To prevent access to the trail, farm gates are located in some places where the trail is closed.

Utility pole sections are placed across the trail in some locations where sections of rail bed are missing due to erosion.

Bridges

There are existing railroad bridges in Genesee Valley Park and Scottsville.

Newly constructed Steadfast bridges in Cuylerville, were installed in 2001.

There are concrete platforms at Samps Creek in the Town of Leicester, Buck Run in the Town of Mt. Morris, Keshequa Creek in the hamlet of Tuscarora in the Town of Mt. Morris, unnamed stream in the Town of Hume and Black Creek in the Town of New Hudson.

Stone bridge abutments, in varying states of preservation, devoid of any bridge structure are located at Groveland (Sonyea State Forest – Keshequa Creek), Tuscarora (Keshequa Creek), two sets south of Tuscarora (Keshequa Creek), Portageville (Genesee River), Rossburg (Wiscoy Creek), Fillmore (Cold Creek), Houghton (Houghton Creek), Caneadea (Caneadea Creek), two sets near Rockville (Black Creek), near South Road in the Town of New Hudson (Black Creek tributary)

A new pedestrian bridge over the Genesee River was constructed on existing railroad bridge piers and abutments in Mt. Morris. Bridge abutments and piers still exist in Portageville

Trail Furnishings

Benches have been installed south of Route 20, at Lock #5 (2), and at York and Emerson's Basins in the Town of York and other locations along the trail. The installation of benches is primarily a volunteer effort and will proceed as volunteers step forward.

Recreational Resources/Activities

Current Trail Usage

The cinders of the former rail bed serve as a level, 12-foot wide trail open for hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling.

Presently, forty-two miles of the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park are open to the public in Livingston and Monroe counties, thirty-two miles between Rochester and the Livingston County Village of Mt. Morris and another ten miles in the Livingston County Towns of Nunda and Portage.

In the Wyoming County Town of Genesee Falls, approximately 2.5 miles of the former rail bed have served as part of the Finger Lakes Trail (FLT) since 1968. (In 1998, 1.2 miles of this section of FLT and Greenway was also designated North Country National Scenic Trail. On June 26, 1999, this small section of Greenway and FLT also became a National Millennium Trail, by virtue of the North Country National Scenic Trail receiving this distinction.)

In Allegany County, between Belfast and Oramel, 3.1 miles of rail bed are being used as an off-road link between the two communities. Five miles of Greenway have been cleared of brush and trash and are being used by the public in Allegany County between Gleason Hill Road and Route 305 in the Town of Belfast and between Tibbetts Hill Road and South Road in the Town of New Hudson. 1.2 miles of trail are being used between Route 243 and the Route 19 crossing north of Caneadea.

In other locations in Wyoming and Allegany counties, the absence of bridges and culverts and areas of significant erosion, caused by the Genesee River and Black Creek, compromise the integrity of the rail bed and restrict its use. Furthermore, from the Village of Cuba north to .35 miles south of Jackson Hill Road in the Allegany County Town of Cuba, the rail bed has been sold to private landowners.

Greenway development has taken place on the section of former canal and Pennsylvania rail bed located in Cattaraugus County. Portions of the corridor were previously sold by RG&E to private landowners and to New York State for the construction of Interstate 86, making creation of a continuous trail to the Town of Hinsdale more difficult. Nevertheless, Hinsdale citizens have cleared Lock #102 and begun to develop a trail along some of the former canal corridor that is privately owned, south of the State-owned section. In the past the Town of Hinsdale submitted a TEA-21 application for funding to assist with Greenway trail development in the town.

Interest has also been expressed in eventually linking the Greenway at Cuba with Hinsdale, Olean and Allegany State Park, but no route has been identified.

Other Trail Uses

Private Crossings

In places, the rail bed is used to access adjacent farm fields where no other means of access exists. Driveways and farm lanes also cross the rail bed in a number of locations. There are also places where private individuals or businesses are utilizing the rail bed or former canal property for driveways, parking areas or where buildings have been constructed on the canal and railroad corridor land. These uses have been examined and in some cases recognized with easements and occupancy agreements undertaken by RG&E prior to transfer of the property to New York State. Some easements have also been granted since the property has been transferred to OPRHP. A list of these agreements can be found at OPRHP headquarters in Albany, NY and at the Genesee regional office in Letchworth State Park.

Utility Easements and Licenses

Easements for telephone, sewer, water, gas, and electric exist along and across Greenway lands. Descriptions of these easements are also available at OPRHP headquarters in Albany, NY and at the Genesee regional office in Letchworth State Park.

Informal Use

Some sections of the Greenway that are not officially open are, nevertheless, being used by the public. For example, the section of Greenway between Route 305 and Tibbetts Hill Road in the Towns of Belfast and New Hudson is not open because a bridge has been removed, but some persons do use the trail. This use is not encouraged by OPRHP.

Illegal Uses

The Greenway is used illegally for dumping and parking of equipment and vehicles. Motorcycle, motor vehicle, and all-terrain vehicle use of the Greenway is not allowed, but does occur.

Adjacent Parks

The Genesee Valley Greenway State Park passes through or adjacent to a number of different state, county, and local parks which provide picnic and additional facilities for trail users.

State Parks

Letchworth State Park, Leicester and Portage. The Greenway intersects with the northern entrance to the west side of the Letchworth State Park at Route 36 in the Town of Leicester. At the southern end, beginning at Oakland Road in the town of Portage, the Greenway enters the eastern side of the park and continues through the park to Portageville.

State Forests

Sonyea State Forest, Groveland and Mt. Morris. The Greenway is located in the midst of the Sonyea State Forest. Erosion of the rail bed and entry roads has made it difficult to access this State land and the sections of Greenway within.

County and Local Parks

North to South:

- Genesee Valley Park, City of Rochester and Town of Chili
- Canawaugus Park, Scottsville
- Boyd-Parker Memorial Park, Cuylerville (within one mile)
- Livingston County Park, Mt. Morris (within one mile)
- Bellamy Park, Mt. Morris
- Veterans Memorial Park, Mt. Morris
- Kiwanis Park, Nunda
- Genesee Falls, Portageville
- Miller Park, Fillmore
- Belfast
- New Hudson Fire Company Firemen’s Field, New Hudson
- Firemen’s Park, Cuba
- American Legion Park, Hinsdale

Tourism Resources

Several bed and breakfasts, hotels and motels, and golf courses are located adjacent to or less than one mile from the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park. A few campgrounds are within five miles of the Greenway. Restaurants and coffee shops are located less than one-half mile from the trail at various locations, including Scottsville, Piffard, Cuylerville, Mt. Morris, Tuscarora, Nunda, Portageville, Fillmore, Houghton, Belfast, and Cuba.

Numerous other attractions (such as local museums, historic villages, local parks, seasonal festivals and events) are located close to the Greenway, providing opportunities for enhancing the stay of visitors.

Transportation Links

Road Crossings

The Genesee Valley Greenway State Park crosses major federal and state highways.

- Monroe County: Route 383 in the Town of Chili (a signalized crossing), Route 253 and Route 251 in the Town of Wheatland.
- Livingston County: Route 5 and Route 20 in the Town of Caledonia, Route 63 in the Town of York, Route 20A and Route 39 in the Town of Leicester, Route 408 and Route 36 in the Town of Mt. Morris, Route 408 and Route 436 in the Town of Nunda, Route 436 in the Town of Portage.
- Wyoming County: Route 436 in the Town of Genesee Falls.
- Allegany County: Route 19A and Route 19 in the Town of Hume, Route 19 and Route 243 in the Town of Caneadea, Route 305 in the Town of Belfast.
- Cattaraugus County: Route 16 in the Town of Hinsdale.
- The Greenway also crosses numerous town and county roads.

Intersecting Trails

The Genesee Valley Greenway State Park intersects with the following trails:

- The Erie Canalway Trail and Genesee Riverway in Rochester’s Genesee Valley Park
- The Lehigh Valley Trail at Wadsworth Junction in the Town of Caledonia in Livingston County
- The Finger Lakes Trail at Sickles Avenue in Mt. Morris and at River Road in Letchworth State Park in the Town of Portage
- The Letchworth Branch of the Finger Lakes Trail from River Road in Letchworth Park to Whiskey Bridge in the Wyoming County Town of Genesee Falls.
- The Greenway and the main Finger Lakes Trail share the same route in the Town of Genesee Falls, from Whiskey Bridge to .8 mile south of River Road. (This 1.2 mile section of Greenway is also part of the North Country National Scenic Trail.)
- Local snowmobile trail in the Town of York in Livingston County
- Snowmobile trail 2C in Belfast and trail S34B in Fillmore.

The Greenway intersects with a local snowmobile trail in the Town of York in Livingston County. In Allegany County, the Greenway intersects with snowmobile trail 2C in Belfast and trail S34B in Fillmore.

Farm Road Crossings

A farm road is a road on farm property used exclusively for the purpose of moving farming equipment, crops, animals and other agricultural purposes from one place on a farm to another. In some cases these farm roads cross the Greenway and/or are concurrent with it for a certain length.

Numerous existing crossings have been identified and are documented on OPRHP property maps available in the Real Property Office at OPRHP offices in Albany, New York.

Community Emergency Services

Enforcement

In addition to the New York State Park Police, Livingston and Monroe County Sheriffs, Mt. Morris and Nunda Village Police, and New York State Police provide enforcement assistance.

Fire and ambulance

Local fire and ambulance companies respond to emergencies along the trail. All entities have been provided with maps of the trail, indicating which sections are presently open to the public and where gates are located. Some emergency agencies are discussing the purchase of ATVs to make it easier to reach persons in need of assistance.

Capacity to Withstand Projected Use

The Genesee Valley Greenway State Park trail’s former use as the bed of the Pennsylvania Railroad, Rochester Branch makes it an ideal surface for a multi-use trail. The rail bed was built to withstand the weight of multi-ton trains, to drain well, and to be elevated in areas prone to flooding. However, years of neglect and deferred maintenance combined with proximity to the

banks of the Genesee River, Keshequa Creek, and Allegany County's Black Creek means that sections of the trail show the effects of water erosion. This results in constant problems requiring continued maintenance, not unlike the situation experienced by the canal and railroad operators.

Sources of Support

The public and private investment in the development of the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park has enhanced its value, generated widespread community interest, participation, and satisfaction, and publicized the effort to audiences well beyond traditional trail user groups. The extensive list of those contributing to the Greenway's development is not only significant for what it represents in terms of current level of support, but also for the experience and direction it provides for developing further efforts.

Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway (FOGVG)

FOGVG, local committees, and participants in the Greenway Adopt-a-Trail Program provide assistance to OPRHP for operation and maintenance of all open sections of the Greenway under a Memorandum of Agreement between FOGVG and OPRHP. This assistance involves keeping the rail bed cleared 12 feet wide and 12 feet high and undertaking other activities such as routine maintenance inspections, gate painting, and minor repairs to trail surface, signs, trail amenities, etc. OPRHP is responsible for inspection, maintenance, and repairs to major structures, such as bridges and culverts. See Appendix J for the Memorandum of Agreement.

For several years, FOGVG has solicited organized and implemented annual donations of 2000-3000 hours of volunteer efforts. FOGVG local committees, consisting of local resident volunteers, meet to plan work days and trail events and help oversee maintenance of the trail. Local committees represent all open sections of trail. Aiding the local committees are approximately twenty-five trail adopters.

Youth Involvement

The Letchworth District Boy Scouts, representing Livingston and part of Wyoming counties, have committed three years of fall camporees to the Greenway. Other groups that have contributed to gate painting and trail clean up include seventh graders in a school drug prevention program and youth wishing to fulfill a requirement for community service, whether because of a local court sentence or a high school participatory government class

Corporate Volunteers

Eastman Kodak employee Make a Difference Day volunteers.

BOCES

A relationship with Genesee Valley BOCES, located in Mt. Morris and serving students from 12 school districts in Livingston, Genesee, Wyoming, and Steuben counties, resulted in three different Career Exploration Program classes (youth at high-risk for high school dropout) performing trail clearing in Mt. Morris. The Village of Mt. Morris purchased the tools and gloves for the students. Also, using a \$10,000 New York State Education Department Environmental Education Empowerment Grant written by BOCES specifically to involve

students in work on the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park, the Metal Trades and Auto Body classes purchased materials, fabricated, painted, and installed 8 pairs of metal gates at trail road crossings in Monroe and Livingston counties. Students have contributed more than 5000 volunteer hours to this project. Work was conducted in accordance with designs supplied by OPRHP, and in cooperation with DOT, DEC, OPRHP, and FOGVG.

Government

County, town, and state highway departments have assisted with installation of motorist – directed signage at trail crossings.

Sources of Support

Private Funding

The Friends of the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park have received and will continue to seek funds from a number of sources to aid with development and interpretation of the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park. These sources include membership dues, year-end support campaigns, and small private grants.

Public Funds

The major source of public funding for development of the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park has been from the FHWA through the NYS DOT. The NYC DOT administered the Transportation Enhancements Program (TEP) currently under the SAFETEA-LU transportation bill. The last round of TEP funding will be made in 2013. The Greenway has also been awarded funds through OPRHP from the National Recreational Trails Act for development and equipment purchases.

Corporate Support

As part of a DEC settlement, RG&E provided a number of enhancements to the Greenway in the Town of Chili. RG&E has constructed the Brook Road parking lot which serves both the Greenway and open land donated by RG&E to the Genesee Land Trust. They also created a parking lot, pocket park, and hand carry boat launch adjacent to the Greenway at Little Black Creek. RG&E is also constructing a one-mile trail detour adjacent to Scottsville Road between Little Black Creek and the CSX tracks.

Other local companies have donated heavy equipment for trail clearing and gravel to restore .5 mile of eroded trail surface.

Support from Counties

In Monroe County the County has paved the two miles of trail in the Town of Chili, as compensation for use of the corridor for installation of a sewer force main. In cooperation with the City of Rochester, the County has also added an additional paved link between the Greenway and the southern terminus of the City of Rochester's Genesee Riverway Trail, creating a one-mile paved loop with direct access to the Erie Canal Recreationway and the Olmsted designed Genesee Valley Park.

In Livingston County, the Highway Department stoned and graded a parking area in the Town of Nunda.

The Seneca Resource Conservation and Development Council (Seneca Nation) donated the wood decking and the Allegany County Department of Public Works donated the steelwork, fabrication and installation of a bridge on the existing Pennsylvania railroad abutments near Rockville Lake in the Town of Belfast. Allegany County has also offered to convey an abandoned stretch of highway at the Tibbetts Hill Road trail intersection for use as a trailhead parking area.

Support from State Agencies

NYSDOT has assisted the Greenway by installing a crossing signal at the Paul-Scottsville Road trail intersection in the Town of Chili. As part of the Route 251 bridge reconstruction project, NYSDOT has installed a wooden boardwalk and interpretive signage, linking the Greenway trail at Scottsville's Canawaugus Park with Scottsville's Main Street business district. NYSDOT has also agreed to design the Route 251 bridge abutments to match the color and form of the adjacent canal era guard locks and aqueduct abutments, and construct a landscaped parking lot at Canawaugus Park to accommodate the growing and anticipated use of this area as a major Greenway gateway.

Enhancement of the Greenway was also included in NYSDOT's Mt. Morris Village Route 36 replacement project. NYSDOT built trail crossings at Route 36 and Route 408 and a 300-foot bridge carrying the Greenway across the Genesee River on the existing historic railroad abutments.

National Media - Support from Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC)

The Greenway has received national attention as a result of a number of efforts of the Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC).

- Inclusion of the Greenway in the RTC *Great Rail Trails* series of guidebooks since 1993.
- Mention of the Greenway's National Trails Day activities in their July-September 1997 newsletter, mailed to 80,000 RTC members.
- A description of the Greenway in the 1995 publication, *Towpaths to Trails: A Summary of America's Historic Transportation Canals and their Recreational Potential*.
- The Mt. Morris local committee's solution to illicit ATV usage was mentioned in the RTC-National Park Service's *Towpath-To-Trails Fact Sheet "Addressing Canal Trail Concerns"*
- A photo of volunteers clearing Lock #2 was included in the fact sheet *"Canal Trails: Management and Maintenance Issues."*

New York State Media

- An article about the Greenway was included in DEC's *Conservationist*, which has a distribution of more than 125,000 persons nationwide
- Stories about the Greenway have been included in the *Parks & Trails New York (PTNY)* newsletter and *On the Trail*, a statewide newsletter for snowmobilers

- Footage of Governor Pataki’s visit to the Greenway is included in the DEC’s video on the benefits of open space conservation, shown across the state in conjunction with public meetings on the Open Space Plan.

Regional Media Support

Stories about Greenway development and events have been included in the Wellsville, Olean, Rochester and Buffalo dailies as well as Monroe, Livingston, Allegany, and Cattaraugus County weeklies.

The Genesee Valley Greenway State Park is included in Rochester area hiking and biking trail guidebooks. The Greenway is also included on the Livingston County highway map.

Broadcast media

- Radio interviews with project partners
- Television coverage when the first sections of trail were opened in 1992
- Coverage of Governor Pataki, DEC Commissioner Zagata and OPRHP Commissioner Castro’s visit in 1996
- When the RG&E Environmental Benefits project was announced by Attorney General Vacco and DEC Commissioner Cahill in 1998
- A special program, focusing on the historic locks and culverts and the visit of dry stone mason Richard Tufnell, was aired on WXXI radio and sent over the Associated Press wire as well
- The Greenway was the topic of one of the half-hour “Speaking of Rochester” programs with Barber Conable, produced by Rochester public television station, WXXI. This program was aired multiple times in the Rochester regio

Internet

FOGVG maintains a web site that serves as an important communication vehicle for the project and is linked to a number of other sites. The web address is www.fogvg.org.

The OPRHP public website has a web page for Genesee Valley Greenway State Park. The web page has information about the Greenway hours, locations, amenities and activities. That web address is <http://www.nysparks.com/parks/189/details.aspx>.

An interactive map is available online with information about the Greenway, its URL is <http://bit.ly/107F6jo>.

Donations of Land

Development of Genesee Valley Greenway State Park has stimulated donations of adjacent lands to the State. This adds to the acreage available for public use, protects valuable floodplain and wetlands resources, improves water quality in the Genesee River watershed, and preserves scenic views beyond the Greenway corridor. The 277 acres RG&E donated to the local land trust and an additional RG&E donation of 57 acres to the State as part of FERC relicensing, has helped preserve the extensive Black Creek wetland and Genesee River flood plain habitat located on either side of the Greenway in the Town of Chili. The State also received a donation

of eight acres from an adjacent landowner in Caledonia. This land, located between the Greenway and the Genesee River and adjacent to the iron truss Lehigh Valley Railroad bridge (planned to serve as a link between the Greenway and the Lehigh Valley Trail), contains wildflowers and 800 feet of river frontage.

Level of Use as an Indication of Support

One of the best ways to indicate the present level of support for the Greenway is in the amount of use. While no formal survey has been conducted, observations by DEC, OPRHP, and FOGVG indicate a steady increase in use. Local groups such as the Genesee Valley Hiking Club, Sierra Club, Wednesday hikers, the Rochester Bicycling Club, Boy Scouts, and several horse and snowmobile clubs, are using it for their organized outings. Three Livingston County high schools and SUNY Geneseo use the Greenway for cross-country team practice. Each year, the Livingston County Cornell Cooperative Extension uses the Greenway for their 4-H Walkathon as it allows the more than 200 participants to complete ten miles of hiking without having to contend with highway traffic. The US Marine Corps uses the trail for its physical fitness runs and has even marked distances on the trail surface. Finally, the Livingston County Healthy Heart Program has distributed maps of the Greenway to WIC mothers and at Wellness Fairs and the Livingston County Tobacco Control Coalition has promoted “hike the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park” on their Tobacco Free Living monthly calendars.

State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR)

The State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) requires that state and local agencies incorporate the consideration of environmental factors into their planning and decision-making. This section contains a description of the potential environmental impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the Genesee Valley Greenway State Park Management Plan. This management plan provides a consistent approach to the operation of the Greenway since the Agency acquired jurisdiction of the entire Greenway in 2010. It focuses primarily on providing guidance for the ongoing and day to day operations, maintenance and management of the Greenway and largely formalizing existing practices.

In general, activities that involve maintenance, rehabilitation, replacement in kind, minor construction, minor temporary uses as well as mapping and information collection do not require further environmental review under SEQR. On the other hand, actions that are new or involve a significant change from existing conditions or uses are likely to require further environmental review under SEQR. The extent of environmental review needed can vary depending on the scope of the project and its expected impacts. As most of the trail is already constructed, there are few new actions, activities or facilities proposed. The type and extent of environmental impacts were identified primarily through the completion of a Full Environmental Assessment Form (EAF), as well as input received from the public at the three information meetings and the associated comment period.

A number of the activities identified in the plan can be considered procedural such as addressing encroachments and contested ownership. The plan puts a priority on addressing areas of discontinuities in order to meet a primary goal for the Greenway to provide a continuous trail open to the public. Other activities aimed at opening a continuous trail may potentially generate environmental impacts such as clearing brush and limbs, as well as the restoration of bridges and culverts and construction of new amenities. Resources that could be affected include physical resources (soil, water) and biological resources (flora, fauna).

Physical Impacts

Typically vegetation removal can result in the movement of soils and potential runoff or erosion. Wherever possible and practical, unwanted vegetation such as herbaceous and woody weeds and invasive species will be removed by hand pulling and shoveling. This approach will result in minimal soil disturbance. If it is expected that soil disturbance might occur, measures will be taken to insure that erosion does not occur. For example silt fencing may be installed in limited areas to protect downstream resources such as streams. Any areas where soil is disturbed will be seeded shortly after disturbance. Any measures taken will be maintained until vegetation has become established and will be in accordance with the NYS Storm Water Management Design Manual.

New associated amenities and facilities, such as the location of new kiosks, parking areas, pocket parks, and camping will only be constructed on lands owned or leased by OPRHP or where OPRHP has secured a permanent easement. The location, capacity and design will

comply with all zoning land use and environmental regulations. Wherever possible, green infrastructure will be used to mitigate storm water runoff.

Proposed locations for new facilities were developed by the FOGVG, DEC and OPRHP prior to the development of this management plan. Pocket parks consisting of a small mowed land area will be located at places of historic or scenic interest. No structures will be located within 10 feet of the nearest edge of the tread way and will not impede travel along the trail. Camping, at low impact primitive tent sites consisting only of a composting toilet and fire ring, will be by permit only and located where community facilities are not within reasonable distance of the trail. Tents will be pitched at least 10 feet away from the trail. Locations recommended for amenities may be revised if usage patterns demonstrate a need. In areas where such amenities are planned OPRHP staff will reach out to adjacent landowners to alert them to the upcoming plans.

The GVG contains several culverts that carry DEC regulated streams under the Greenway. Any rehabilitation projects that may occur on these culverts and in areas adjacent to wetlands will require consultation with DEC regarding water quality protective measures that may be required to be incorporated into the construction design. Work on replacing bridges will require similar consultation. In most cases, the abutments or foundations for these bridges are already in place.

The Greenway will be managed in a way so as to protect water quality and maintain populations of fish and other aquatic life. This includes applying best management practices to all construction and repairs in order to reduce erosion and siltation, and following all DEC guidelines and regulations for work in or near waterways. The plan calls for regular maintenance of these culverts to insure that debris does not impede normal stream flow. Keeping the culverts clear will protect the Greenway from flooding and also be beneficial to the stream habitat. Once removed, debris will be disposed of properly.

Biological Impacts

The removal of vegetation will minimally impact flora and fauna. Sections of the trail that have not been previously opened will require removal of overgrown vegetation on the trail. The trail will be cleared and maintained to 12 feet wide with two foot wide shoulders on either side and 12 feet high wherever possible. Maintaining trail clearances is the responsibility of all partners. Brush will be hauled away and disposed of properly. Where the width of the Greenway allows, some brush may be used off the side of the trail to enhance habitat. Trees to be removed are small in size and not old growth. Many species of trees and vines and vegetation to be removed are non-native as well. Nonetheless vegetation removal will impact habitat of local wildlife. As mitigation, vegetation removal will be timed to take place to avoid periods of greater biological activity such as bird breeding and nesting periods. This does not include hazardous tree removals which are required year round.

In areas where beaver activity has caused flooding on part of the trail, beaver activity is being mitigated through removal of the beavers under a permit with the DEC and consistent with OPRHP policy on Fish and Wildlife Management. Beaver habitat assessments will assist in

identifying where beaver are most likely to cause problems with the trail and allow us to take actions to prevent beaver problems before they occur. Beaver exclusion devices may be included with the culvert construction/rehabilitation.

New York Natural Heritage Program staff have not surveyed the entire Greenway, but they have done some targeted surveys for rare plants and a few natural communities. Since the trail itself follows the highly disturbed bed of the Pennsylvania Railroad no rare plants are believed to be growing on the actual trail surface. In the 2014 field season, this work will be conducted and the reports and recommendations will be incorporated into this document. In the interim, where practical, field checks of existing resources will be undertaken prior to beginning construction projects.

Historic Resources

The GVG and its associated lands contain significant cultural and archeological resources. The 90 miles of the Greenway are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Any work other than normal maintenance and repair will be subject to review by the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau under Section 14.09 of the New York State Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Law. Certain categorical exclusions from this review have been identified for actions such as replacement of trail surfacing, utility placement, bridge construction on existing abutments, culvert replacement or other construction in already disturbed areas.

Along the length of the greenway there are varying conditions of the historic features. Drainage along the Greenway needs to be maintained and maintenance of culverts must be undertaken. Most are in some state of disrepair and deterioration and some culverts will need complete reconstruction. A Stone Culvert Historic Restoration Evaluation Form was developed to provide a logical and rational evaluation to evaluate and identify those culverts that require full historical restoration and those that can be replaced with more modern techniques.

Aesthetic Impacts

In some places vegetation removal from opening the trail may result in currently vegetated areas to become more open in character. This change in local aesthetics may make the trail more visible to adjacent landowners and also make surrounding land use more visible to trail users. These changes could be considered beneficial or adverse. In areas where such removals are planned OPRHP staff will reach out to adjacent landowners to alert them to the upcoming changes. Adjacent land uses in the vicinity of the areas that have yet to be opened are largely rural and agricultural with few adjacent residences and neighbors. Wherever possible the trail and associated amenities will reflect the character and or will be integrated into the landscape. Grading and landform modifications will be as minimal as possible.

Beneficial Impacts

The management plan will have several important beneficial impacts. It will provide additional protection of this resource through improved maintenance practices. A primary goal of the management of the greenway is to open the entire length to public use while protecting the

integrity and continuity of the corridor. This will result in an improved recreation experience for its users by eliminating impediments to access such as encroachments and discontinuities.

Improved signage and kiosks will be placed along the GVG conforming to statewide trail sign guidelines and are important amenities which will provide park users with information. They are the public's introduction to understanding and using the Greenway. Panels will interpret the natural and historic resources associated with the greenway's corridor.

Summary of Environmental Effects

Based on the review of the impacts OPRHP determined that the short and long term actions associated with the management plan are not expected to be potentially large or significantly adverse. **OPRHP has issued a negative declaration under SEQR on this project.**

Additional Environmental reviews

Future actions for the GVG will range from minor rehabilitation projects on open sections of trail that are needed to improve safety and accessibility, to site work on unopened sections. As these projects are advanced, a determination will be made as to whether they will require review under SEQR. Examples of projects that could be reviewed individually under SEQR without triggering a full EAF or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) include development of small ancillary parking facilities or trail surface improvements.

Examples of future proposals that might trigger a larger review under SEQR include significant rerouting or elimination of portions of the trail or proposals that may significantly impact the environment or affect the quality of recreation.

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