WATER TOURISM IN THE FINGER LAKES

STEVEN LAROS
FINGER LAKES VISITORS CONNECTION
NYSAC CONFERENCE
09/20/22
FLX Acclaim

• Travel and Leisure Top 50 Destinations
• Visitors come for the water, the wines, fantastic views
• Visitors leave loving the wine, the views, and the calm and freshness associated with lake country
Water is the driving force of all nature

LEONARDO DA VINCI
Canandaigua Outlet

As the water leaves Canandaigua Lake it travels for 38 miles from the north end. The initial flow south to north down through 40 rivers and waterfalls. This paddle starts when the water calms a bit, north of Manchester and travels east through Phelps. Here, the Canandaigua Outlet is "low and unsteady" according to our experts, Sue and Rich Fawcett. You’ll travel alongside the Thruway in many locations, however, you are more often in remote wilderness areas where you can enjoy the birds above and the fish below. Sometimes, as low as some levels, you may need to push or walk the sly stream bed. Online directions help with the details. This route has several launch options, depending on how you wish to travel.

Launch on west side of the Rt. 96 bridge in Manchester. Take out point is at Strofer Rd. There is a 4 car parking area south of the bridge. This is approximately 2 miles from the start. For a longer trip, continue to Fishers Rd, just after going under the NYS Thruway about another 1 mile. You can park near here and water access is upstream on the right. You can continue to Lyons from here, but the take-outs become much more difficult.

Another launch site is on the corner of Rt. 96 and Co. Rd. 6. There is a 50 ft doc to water level, upstream on the right. Requiring more portaging.
Quad-Adventure Escape
Naples, NY

Bring your kayaks, your bikes, fishing poles and your hiking shoes for this Quad-faceted adventure. While Naples is best known for all things grape and art, it's also a great town for outdoor adventures. There's wildlife in the marshlands, geopark sites along your route, waterfalls and streams, and culinary pleasures along the easy paddling route. Midway through, check out Grimes Glen, Ontario County's newest park. You can hike again in Conkle's Gap and then put your kayaks in at your starting point and enjoy the Hi Tor Wildlife Management Area. Naples has several fall-up access points, so consider bringing that paddle along too. Look for Let's Go Paddle Trail #2 to take full advantage of this option. These last bits of advice on this tour bring the camera, treat yourself to a piece of that famous Naples grape pie, and make plans to come back again and again for the art, the food, and the wind!

Directions:
1. Start at Canandaigua Lake Fishing Site in Woodsville
2. Take a left on Rt 215 toward Village of Naples
3. Turn right onto Mt. Pleasant St (Rt 14)
4. Induce up through Winemakers, road becomes West Ave.
5. Turn left onto West St (Rt 14)
6. Turn right onto Elizabeth St (Rt 14)
7. Turn right onto Vine St (Rt 1)
8. At intersection, go left on Rt 1
9. Go south on Rt 1 for 2 miles
10. Lakeview Drive on right
11. Follow Lakeview Drive to end
12. Turn right onto Rt 114 (Rt 215) for 2 miles
13. Return to Canandaigua Lake Fishing Site in Woodsville

Admissions:
Canandaigua Lake Winery Trail
Artists' Guild from the Finger Lakes
Beverly Theatre
Genesee Valley
Naples Craft Brewery
Rustic Mark
Joseph's Wines and Spirits

Event:
Naples Concerts for Kids - Last weekend, September

[Map of route]
West River Marsh
Canandaigua Wake and Water Camp

• 4 & 5 day kids camps
• Wake boarding
• Paddle Boarding
• Kayaking
• Fishing
• Appreciate their surroundings
Canandaigua Lake Water Trail

- Independently owned access sites
- Non-motorized boating
- Destination sites
- Customizable itineraries
Growth and Change

- Environmental Sensibilities
- Shared Environment
- Flourishing of our companion industries
- Access
Maintaining our Sense of Place

• A great place to visit is a great place to live is a great place to do business
Threats to water quality include:

- Climate Change
- Irresponsible Development
- Chemical Contaminants and stormwater management
- Invasive Species
Staying in our lane – but reinforcing that we’re all on the same road

- Common messaging about care of our assets
- Volunteerism
- Every promotion reinforces the co-caring for our waterways.
- Education
Our role in this

• Many partner agencies
• A unified vision for the place that we live and the water that we drink
• Let scientists be scientists
• Respect the residents and share in the responsibilities
Thousands have lived without love
not one without water

W.H. AUDEN
Questions: Steven Laros
Steve@VisitFingerLakes.com
~25 miles along **Lake Ontario/Great Lakes Seaway Trail** and the **Erie Canal**

- Within an hour drive of **Niagara Falls USA & Canada**, **Buffalo** & **Rochester**
- We are served by **3 International Airports** within an hours drive, **Buffalo/Niagara**, **Niagara Falls** and **Rochester**.
- Accessible to the **NYS Thruway (I-90)** by Exits 48/Batavia & Exits 48A/Pembroke/Corfu
The Official Orleans County Travel Guides

OC Travel Guide: 60,000/yr
Fishing Guide: 20,000/yr
Tear Off Maps: 10,000/yr
According to NYS DEC study in 2017, total economic impact from fishing in Orleans County was $28 million. Out-of-state anglers account for 70%. Orleans County has:

- Over 40 Charter Fishing & Guide Services
- 9 Marinas that can accommodate over 400 boats
- Lodging, Campgrounds, Cabins & Cottages
- NEW – Choice Hotels – Comfort Inn
- 3 Dedicated Bait & Tackle Shops

• Many of these anglers are traveling from out of state for extended stays (PA, OH, NJ, MD, VA)

• According to the Great Lakes Recreational Boating report, the average Trip Spending ranges from **$100/day for a craft under 21’** to **$285 for craft over 40’**.

• This includes spending on lodging, marina services, restaurants, fuel (boat & auto), maintenance, supplies, entertainment and shopping.
A 60’ x 16’ Billboard on NYS I-90, just east of the Batavia Exit.
FIND WHAT YOU LOVE IN NEW YORK STATE

OAK ORCHARD RIVER | POINT BREEZE

ILOVENY.COM
Co-op Programs

A face only an angler could love.

Come for the fishing, get hooked on the region.

World-class fishing abounds in Niagara Falls USA and Orleans County — with abundant rivers, streams, the historic Erie Canal and Lake Ontario! The region attracts millions of visitors each year for fishing, boating and more. So when you're looking for relaxation — then visit us at scenic hiking and enjoy the site to a variety of nature and culinary delights.

Or in your next outdoor adventure with Niagara Falls USA and Orleans County.

Visit niagarafallsusa.com/fishniagaraorleans

Located along the
- Seaway Trail
- Niagara Wine Trail
- Erie Canalway Trail

Take the Road Less Traveled
from LAKE ONTARIO
to LETCHWORTH!

Home of Letchworth State Park
Voted #1 State Park in the USA
& #1 Attraction in NYS
in the Greater Niagara USA Region

Request Wyoming & Orleans County Travel Guides at:
gowyomingcountyny.com • 800-839-3919
orleanscountytourism.com • 800-724-0314
Oak Orchard Lighthouse History

The only lighthouse in Orleans County, the Oak Orchard Harbor Light, was built in 1871 on a wooden pier 1,200 feet from the mouth of the Oak Orchard River. In December 1916, it was swept away by a violent storm. In 2010, through a grass roots effort, a replica of the Oak Orchard Lighthouse was rebuilt on firmer ground in Point Breeze, oakorchardlighthouse.org

Oak Orchard Harbor

Oak Orchard Harbor offers a pleasant destination for the cruising sailor, power boater or sail kayaker. The tree-lined gorge, carved by the Oak Orchard River, provides a scenic backdrop for a full service port featuring a professional charter fleet, sailing clubs, parks, marine sales and repairs, fuel, pump out stations, lodging and restaurants. The harbor is protected by two parallel jetties and a break wall at the mouth of the river.

Navigation Aids

- 43° 22.5'N 78° 11.36'W
- Breakwall Light B (fl W 6s)
- 30' height, 9 mile visibility
- US Light List No. 2365
- Lake Ontario State Parkway Bridge clearance: 54'

* Based on information available at printing, subject to change.

Orleans County Marine Patrol is stationed at the OC Marine Park.

Photo by Kurt Wamnenwetsch

Orleans County Sheriff Marine Patrol

Sheriff Christopher Bourke

Marine Patrol: 585-682-4366
Dispatch: 585-589-5527

Stationed at Orleans County Marine Park. Search and rescue, vessel inspections & US Power Squadron boating safety course training.
Orleans County is situated along a variety of national and statewide trails that link geographical assets, nature and history such as the Great Lakes Seaway Trail and Erie Canalway Trail. Locally, trails further define our heritage including the Cobblestone Trail and Country Barn Quilt Trail. The east end of the Niagara Wine Trail in Orleans County links to the neighboring Finger Lakes Wine Trail to the immediate east. (See page 32 for the Wine Trail) Enjoy our trails by boat, bike, motorcycle, or conventional methods!

THE GREAT LAKES SEAWAY TRAIL is a 518 mile scenic driving route that follows the shores of Lake Erie, the Niagara River, Lake Ontario, and the St. Lawrence River in New York and Pennsylvania. Follow 25 miles along the Lake Ontario State Parkway and Route 18 in Orleans County. One of the first roads in America to be designated as a National Scenic Byway, the Great Lakes Seaway Trail includes unique historical locations such as the Oak Orchard Lighthouse in Point Breeze, cultural heritage sites as well as outstanding views and scenic vistas. Fish at the 2013 Ultimate Fishing Town of Point Breeze and Oak Orchard River year round. Schedule a drive on Tuesday evenings (June 25-Aug 2, 2022) for a concert series in the Orleans County Marine Park (www.oakorchard.org). For more information, visit www.seawaytrail.com.

![Map of Great Lakes Seaway Trail](image)

*Courtesy of Patrick McGurn*
Cruise the Erie Canal and stay at one of our 3 ports in Medina, Albion or Holley.

25 miles of the 360 mile Erie Canal cuts through Orleans County and includes 3 port villages: Medina, Albion & Holley. (Highlighted above in yellow.)

**YEAR ROUND ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:**
- Hike or cycle the 25 mile stone dust towpath in Orleans County
- View the bluebirds at 180 nesting boxes in and around Albion and 44 in Medina
- Visit Holley Falls, Medina Falls & Aqueduct
- Drive under the Erie Canal at the Culvert

**WHEN THE WATER FLOWS FROM MID-APRIL TO MID-OCTOBER, ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:**
- Canalside concerts & festivals at the ports of Holley, Albion & Medina
- Boating, canoeing, kayaking or stand-up paddle boarding
- Fish for bass, catfish, carp, yellow perch, sunfish and more

Orleans County has partnered with Visit Rochester and Wayne County Tourism to develop the 100 Must-See Miles on the Erie Canal brochure (left). It features the Top 50 Points of Interest including historical sites, recreational activities and nature sites along the 100 miles from the canal ports of Medina (Orleans County) to Clyde (Wayne County). Order your copy at www.100mustseemiles.com or pick up at our local libraries.

Left: Dive UNDER the Erie Canal at the Culvert in Medina, as proclaimed in Ripley’s Believe it or Not! Climb the embankment or hike the trail to view the introspective panel (above) and watch boats cruising OVER Culvert Road north of Route 31 and south of Route 104.
Follow the wooded trails to picturesque Holley Falls in Holley year round.

At the turn in Medina, the canal is running in an aqueduct above the Oak Orchard River so if you stop and look over the edge, you can view the waterfalls and river below.

Whether you are an avid cyclist or a family looking to get more active, set your sights on adventure and fun along the 524-mile NYS Canal System and 365-mile Erie Canalway Trail. Reach your one-of-a-kind, personal mileage goal - whether cycling, paddling, running, hiking or walking - and discover all you can do along New York’s canals!

In 2021, 1,455 challenges logged in to trace history and tracked 238,921 Miles! Gather family and friends, set your mileage goal and join the fun in 2022! Register at www.canalwaychallenge.org.

Over 500 cyclists will participate in the 24th Annual Cycle the Erie Canal event July 10-17, 2022, riding 400 miles from Buffalo to Albany. The first leg of the journey is an overnight stop in Medina (above). Albion will welcome cyclists Monday morning, proceeded by a lunch stop at the Holley Canal Park (left) before heading east. Learn more at www.CycletheErieCanal.com.
Fall Fishing Program

More Water

MORE FISH

Get more information

Fall Fishing Program

More Brown Trout
More Steelhead
More Atlantic & Pacific Salmon

Explore world-class fishing destinations supplied with water from the Erie Canal on Lake Ontario tributaries in Western New York.

The Canal Corporation is releasing more water from the Erie Canal into Lake Ontario tributaries, over an extended period—creating a longer fall fishing season, improving conditions for the fish and making the angling experience more exciting.

As part of New York State’s Fishing Heritage Canals, NYSFHA and the Canal Corporation are expanding fishing opportunities to promote outdoor recreation and local businesses.

NEW YORK STATE POWER AUTHORITY | CANAL CORPORATION
Medina, NY – Orleans County

CORNING MUSEUM OF GLASS MOBILE HOTSHOP

SEP 29 – OCT 1

canals.ny.gov/onthecanals

FREE
Lake Ontario Sportfishing Promotion Council
Cayuga, Jefferson, Monroe, Niagara, Orleans, Oswego, and Wayne counties

Promoting sport fishing on the New York shores of Lake Ontario
Website

OrleansCountyTourism.com

LakestoLetchworth.com (Wyoming/Orleans)

100MustSeeMiles.com (Orleans-Monroe-Wayne)

FreshAirAdventuresNY.com (AGLOW)
Media

Google Ad Words and Facebook Campaigns

- Compelling & focused messages lead to the strongest consideration by potential visitors
- It’s important to convey the emotional value of family memories created here, using the most desirable family activities and awe-inspiring world class destinations
Create MEMORIES that MATTER ... at the OAK!

Venture north to the open waters of Lake Ontario and tributaries for some of the finest year round fishing for trout and salmon found anywhere in America! You will find:

- The Oak: A safe harbor with 7 marinas
- Inviting Vacation Rentals
- Fun Campgrounds
- Family Friendly Restaurants
- Expert Fishing Charters and Guides
- Tackle Shops & more!

Order our Fishing & Travel Guides at OrleansCountyFishing.com or call 585.589.3100
@theoakorchard

Bring the Entire Family!

2022 Derbies & Tournaments

King of the Oak Series
June 10 • July 2
August 13 • Sept. 4

Oak Orchard Open Tournament:
June 11-12

Youth Fishing Derby: July 16

LOC Summer Derby: July 2-31

Greater Niagara Fish Odyssey: Aug. 19-28

LOC Fall Derby: Aug. 19-Sept. 5

Orleans County is within an hour drive of
Niagara Falls USA & Canada
Buffalo • Rochester
Six Flags/Darien Lake Theme Park
Batavia Downs Gaming
Letchworth State Park
Finger Lakes Wine Region

© NYSDEC
Metrics to Gauge our Visitors

Accurate metrics are necessary to seek project funding & enhancements

- Occupancy (Bed) Tax
- Website Analytics
- Fishing License Registrations
- Facebook Activity
- Attendance records:
  - State Campground data
  - Event Ticket Sales
  - Log Books
Thank You - NYSAC

A rising tide lifts all boats!

Dawn Borchert, Tourism Director
585.589.3102 (office)
dawn@orleanscountytourism.com
www.OrleansCountyTourism.com
www.OrleansCountyFishing.com
Erie County Waterways & Tourism

Dan Castle, AICP, Commissioner
Erie County Department of Environment and Planning
Erie County Waterfront Tourism Initiatives

Projects/Initiatives:
• Buffalo and Erie County Greenway Fund Standing Committee
• Erie County Parks Master Plan
• Shoreline Trail
• Canalside and Outer Harbor
• Fishing – Hot Spot Map

Partnerships:
Visit Buffalo Niagara, NYPA, NYS Parks, Niagara River Greenway Commission, City of Buffalo Parks, Erie Canal Harbor Development Corp, Erie County Fisheries Advisory Board, Municipalities, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper, Ralph Wilson Jr Foundation, Erie County Dept of Sewerage Management
Buffalo & Erie County Greenway Fund Standing Committee (BECGFSC)

**WHEN**  
2007-2057

**WHY**  
The BECGFSC receives funds from the New York Power Authority (NYPA) as part of the settlement agreement related to the Niagara Power Project.

**WHAT**  
$2M/year of grant funds are allocated by the Committee to beautification and improvement projects within the Buffalo and Erie County portion of the Niagara River Greenway area.

**WHO**  
Municipalities and nonprofits are eligible to apply.

**HOW**  
Approximately $30 million has been awarded since the grant program began.
BECGFSC - Projects Funded To Date

- Scenic Woods
- Tonawanda Pavilion & Boardwalk
- Margery Gallogly Nature Sanctuary
- Isle View Park Projects
- Fisherman’s Landing
- Shoreline Trail Riverwalk Section
- Riverside Park Projects
- Fenian Marker
- War of 1812 Projects
- Waterfront Feasibility Study
- Black Rock Canal Park
- Bird Island Pier
- Naval Park Projects
- Buffalo Lighthouse Projects
- Buffalo Scholastic Rowing Association
- Tifft Nature Preserve Projects
- ADA Accessible Fishing Pier
- Tonawanda Intermodal Transit Hub
- Tonawanda Kayak Launch
- Scajaquada Creek Trail
- Delaware Park Projects
- Front Park Projects
- Porter Avenue Project
- LaSalle/Centennial Park Projects
- Moving Water Education Zone
- Cazenovia Boating Center Projects
- Buffalo Heritage Carousel
- Buffalo River Rowing Center
- Fireboat Cotter Repairs
- Valley Community Projects
- Cazenovia Park Projects
- Union Ship Canal
Erie County Parks Master Plan

WHEN 2018

WHY Erie County is home to 10,000 acres of parkland.

WHAT A master plan for the County’s park system, primarily focused on the preservation, enhancement, and improvement of the existing system assets and landscape setting.

The County’s waterfront parks each have specific recommendations.
Erie County Parks Master Plan

**Waterfront Parks** (along the Niagara River or Lake Erie)
- Isle View Park
- Black Rack Canal Park
- Tow Path Park
- Wendt Beach Park
- Bennett Beach Park

**Buffalo River Natural Habitat Parks**
- Thomas F. Higgins Riverfront Bridge and Park
- Red Jacket Natural Habitat Park
- Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park
- Times Beach Nature Preserve

*designated an EPA Area of Concern*
Erie County Parks Master Plan

Waterfront Parks

5 County-owned waterfront parks on 261 acres has leveraged over $3 million in funding since 2018
Erie County Parks Master Plan

Use of ARP Funds

American Rescue Plan money funding parks improvements, including several million to stabilize Wendt Mansion and enhance Wendt Beach Park.
Erie County Parks Master Plan

Buffalo River Natural Habitat Parks

4 County-owned parks on 30 acres along the Buffalo River has leveraged $22 million in EPA funding
Shoreline Trail

Spine of the County’s waterfront system:
• Links Erie County with Niagara and Chautauqua counties.
• Connects to multiple other trails.
• Most heavily used trail system in Erie County.

Improvements funded by a combination of state, county, and federal funding and the Ralph C Wilson Foundation.
Canalside/Outer Harbor - Partnerships

State-owned land in the City of Buffalo, controlled by the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation (ECHDC)

• Erie County Executive is an ex-officio ECHDC Board member, contributing to project development.
• Over 400 acres of waterfront land.
• 2 million annual visitors.
• Millions in both public and private investment since 2008, spurring millions more in tourism revenues.

Improvements include:
• Amphitheater (planned).
• Creation of Buffalo Harbor State Park.
• Festivals, public art, historic replicas, solar-powered carousel, and more.
Fisheries Advisory Board

Erie County has a major fishery industry with fishing access on Lake Erie, the Niagara River, and a number of tributaries.

The industry supports numerous marina and launch sites, shore fishing access sites, and charter captains.

Erie County supports the industry through the Fisheries Advisory Board (FAB). The FAB advises the County on matters concerning the protection, development, and access to fisheries.
Fishing – Think Regional

In partnership with Chautauqua and Niagara Counties, Erie County has developed WNY Fishing Hot Spot Map.

The map:
• Promotes Great Lakes fishing resources
• Establishes an online presence
• Delivers real-time fishing reports to users
THANK YOU

Questions?

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