

CHAMPLAIN CANALWAY TRAIL; WATERFORD-MECHANICVILLE:

WATERFORD-MECHANICVILLE, NEW YORK

-BIKE IT OR HIKE IT-

Last Updated: July 11, 2021

Length: Champlain Canalway Trail; Waterford section; 3.2 miles
Champlain Canalway Trail; Halfmoon section; 2.6 miles
Flight of Locks Trail Detour; 2.4 miles

Difficulty: Champlain Canalway Trail; Easy. Flat, stone dust towpath.
Flight of Locks Trail Detour; Moderate to Difficult depending on how good of shape your in.

Directions:

To Start from Waterford (Fulton Street/Mill Road parking area) [Southern section]; Take I-787 north to Route 787 north to Route 32 (Saratoga Ave) across the *Mohawk River* into Waterford. Look to your right for a round *Canalway Trail* sign just past a retail plaza. Turn right here down Fulton St. Cross an iron bridge over the canal and turn right along the dirt Mill Rd. This will take you to a dirt parking lot next to the cement dam across the *Mohawk River* and the beginning of the *Champlain Canalway Trail* on your right.

To Start from Halfmoon (Brookwood Road) [Central section]; From the intersection of Routes 4 & 32 in Waterford head north 3.6 miles along Routes 4 & 32. Turn left on Brookwood Rd, cross the RR tracks and turn left into the **Halfmoon Treatment Facility** where you'll find a **parking lot** on your right. A path will take you up to the trail.

To Start from Halfmoon (Upper Newtown Road) [Northern section]; From the intersection of Routes 4 & 32 in Waterford head north 5.3 miles along Routes 4 & 32. Turn left on Upper Newtown Rd, cross over the RR tracks and you'll come to the parking lot on your left.

The **Champlain Canalway Trail** is a planned continuous trail from Waterford (where the *Erie Canal* departs from the *Hudson River*) north to Whitehall. The modern day *Champlain Canal* follows the *Hudson River* north to Fort Edwards where the man-made canal branches away from the *Hudson River* towards Whitehall. In Fort Edwards the **Feeder Canal Trail** connects to the **Champlain Canalway Trail**. The original 25-foot-wide *Old Champlain Canal* was enlarged many times and the current *Champlain Canal* parallels the original canal from Fort Edwards to Whitehall at the foot of *Lake Champlain*. The trail will mostly follow sections of the *Old Champlain Canal*. For more information visit; [CANALWAY TRAIL](#) and [2018 CHAMPLAIN CANAL ACTION PLAN](#) .

I have broken the **Champlain Canalway Trail** into 5 sections: Starting from the Southern End; **Champlain Canalway Trail; Waterford-Mechanicville**, [Champlain Canalway Trail; Mechanicville-Schuylerville](#) , *Schuylerville to Fort Edward is all on-road*, [Champlain Canalway Trail; Fort Edward-Fort Ann](#) and *Fort Ann to Whitehall is mostly all on-road*.

The **Champlain Canalway Trail** is part of the **Empire State Trail** , which will be a continuous 750-mile route spanning the state from New York City to Canada and Buffalo to Albany, creating the longest multi-use state trail in the nation.

Starting from Waterford (Fulton Street/Mill Road) [Southern section]; In front of you lies a dam across the *Mohawk River*. To the left are some rocky falls on the river and *Goat Island* beyond them. To your right is the *Old Champlain Canal*. Picnic tables located here as well. Look for the *Old Champlain Canal Lock #4* with the wooden bridge crossing over it. The **Champlain Canalway Trail** starts here following the *Old Champlain Canal* northwards along its east bank, passing by the iron **Fulton Street Bridge**.

Note; If you head back to Saratoga Ave (Route 32) and travel left on-road (sidewalk available) you'll cross a bridge over the *Mohawk River* and come to Route 787 after 0.7 miles. Left is the start of the **Route 787 Path** , a paved trail that travels along the east side of Route 787 for 1.1 miles to Dyke Ave. Here you may connect to the on-road portion of the [Mohawk Hudson Bikeway](#) .

Continuing along the stone-dust **Champlain Canalway Trail**, it can be narrow at times as it travels through well shaded woodland. At 0.4 miles, you travel underneath the abandoned Mohawk Ave Bridge over the canal. Cross O'Connor Drive at 0.5 miles. Here the towpath was rebuilt in 2021 to Burton Ave as part of a Superfund Site. Next come to where the *Champlain Canal* crosses the *Erie Canal* at 1 mile. There is no bridge over the *Erie Canal* to where the *Champlain Canal* continues, so you must turn right for a very scenic detour. This brings you to **Lock 2**, a working lock on the *Erie Canal*. If you're lucky, you can watch the lock in action as it

raises or lowers a boat in the lock. Continue on by taking the gravel path to the right of the lock down to South St. Then head left over the canal via the 4th Street Bridge. Some great views from the bridge of the locks massive gates as well as views down stream of the *Waterford Harbor Visitor Center* and the bridge over to *Peebles Island State Park*. Head down the winding, narrow path to the brick lined **Canal Walkway** at 1.3 miles.

Note; The trail continues right, but first I would suggest a quick detour to your left to visit the **Waterford Harbor Visitor Center**. A map board is located here, as well as, restrooms and an info center. A small museum is located in the upper section, which you can access by going around the Visitor Center. If you continue along the **Canal Walkway** it travels underneath an old RR Bridge before bringing you to where the *Mohawk River* enters the *Hudson River* after 0.2 miles. Map board and boat launch located here.

Note; From the **Waterford Harbor Visitor Center** you can also access the **Uncle Sam Bikeway** on the east side of the *Hudson River* in Troy, as well as, the **Black Bridge Trail** to *Peebles Island State Park*.

Head right along the brick lined **Canal Walkway** traveling underneath the 4th Street Bridge to a stone-dust path alongside the *Erie Canal*. This will take you up alongside the *Old Champlain Canal Sidecut Locks*. These were *Locks* that were built to bypass the crowded urban ports along the main canal. Two small bridges cross over this *Sidecut* to **Lock 2**. There are interpretive sign boards here as well. A **parking lot** is located at the top of the *Sidecut*, where the *Old Champlain Canal* picks up again. Follow the canal right along the **Lock 2** access road to the junction of 5th and Broad Streets. The trail continues across Broad St. A short paved section of trail continues along the canal to a crosswalk over Division St at 1.6 miles.

Note; From here you can take a side diversion to the **Flight of Locks Trail** (The *Flight of Locks* is the first five **Locks (E2-E6)** along the *Erie Canal*, although, this route only covers **Locks 3-6**. This sequence of Locks is the largest lift in the shortest distance, only 1.5 miles, of any system in the world). Head left on-road along Division St all the way to 8th St and turn right. Turn left on Washington Ave and cross over the RR tracks. Come to the entrance for **Lock 3** after 0.5 miles. After checking out **Lock 3** continue north past the **Washington Ave parking lot** where you'll pick up a narrow, stone-dust trail on your left. Picnic tables located here. This trail follows the canal and Fonda Rd up past the **Fonda Road parking lot** to Flightlock Rd at 0.9 miles. From here the trail travels on-road (low traffic) along the canal up a sometimes steep grade. Pass by **Locks 4-6** before passing by **Guard Gates 1 & 2** where the road heads down to the **Flightlock Road Boat Launch parking lot** at 2.4 miles.

Here the wide trail reverts to stone-dust as it follows the canal. You'll pass an interpretive sign describing the former *Champlain Canal Weigh Lock* that used to be located here on the canal. That's why the canal briefly splits ahead. The trail travels underneath a railroad bridge at 1.8 miles and leaves the town behind. More isolated. A large marsh appears on your right. The canal starts to choke up with vegetation at 2.4 miles as you travel underneath some transmission lines. Pass by *Old Champlain Canal Lock #5*. There is another interpretive sign here. Head up a short paved hill to the top of an old landfill where the stone-dust trail continues. Wide open views of the surrounding hills as you travel along the top of the grassy mound. After 3.2 miles you travel through a gate out to Clute Rd. Head right, then left along Bells Lane. Travel on-road (low traffic) up Bells Lane (the *Old Champlain Canal* is hidden on your left by a berm) and you'll pick up a short paved trail on your left that leads up to Schoolhouse Lane. Across Schoolhouse Lane you'll pick up the old towpath on your right at 3.7 miles. Here the stone-dust trail follows an open corridor. You then pick up the *Old Champlain Canal* again on your left. At 4.2 miles you'll come to the **Halfmoon section** of the trail which is wide with a stone-dust surface. Cross Brookwood Rd at 5 miles.

Note; Just before **Brookfield Road** a spur trail on your right takes you to the **Halfmoon Treatment Facility parking lot**.

You'll quickly come to a sinkhole, where the canal disappears. I believe this is *Wilson's Culvert*, a large culvert that allows *Owl Creek* to freely pass beneath the *Old Champlain Canal*. You cross Lower Newton Rd at 5.4 miles. After 6 miles you'll see some old stonework from the canal. I believe this is remnants from the *Old Champlain Canal Lock #7*. Pass by an old bridge abutment at 6.5 miles. After 6.8 miles you come to the **Upper Newtown Road parking lot** in **Halfmoon** where the developed trail currently ends. As of now it appears to continue north as a grass lined trail.

Note; The next section of the **Champlain Canalway Trail** north to **Mechanicville** is on hold as of April 2021.

Note; The **Empire State Trail** continues right along Upper Newtown Rd out to Route 4 where it travels north on-road. See; **Empire State Trail** .

HH

[CLICK HERE FOR HUDSON VALLEY GREENWAY MAP](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR EMPIRE STATE TRAIL MAP](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR HALFMOON TRAIL MAP](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR MOHAWK HUDSON BIKEWAY MAP](#)

BEFORE YOU SET OUT BE SURE TO READ THE

[*WAIVER OF RESPONSIBILITY AND DISCLAIMER*](#)

BIKE IT OR HIKE IT

[HOME PAGE](#)