

MOHAWK TOWPATH SCENIC BYWAY:

CLIFTON PARK & HALFMOON, NEW YORK

-BIKE IT OR HIKE IT-

Last Updated: July 10, 2021

Length: Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway; 28 miles

Crescent Trail; 1.8 miles

Mohawk Towpath Byway Trail; 6.4 miles

Difficulty: Easy. Flat, stone dust trail.

Directions:

From Route I-87 take exit 8.

For the Crescent Trail; Travel east on Crescent Rd/Crescent Vischer Ferry Rd. Just before Route 9 take a right on Canal Rd for the **Crescent Park parking lot** or continue across Route 9 to the **Terminal Rd parking lot**.

For the Mohawk Towpath Byway Trail [Eastern End]; Travel east on Crescent Rd/Crescent Vischer Ferry Rd. Take your first right on Dunsbach Rd, then a right on Clamsteam Rd. Follow to Towpath Rd. The **Clamsteam Road parking lot** is straight ahead.

For the Mohawk Towpath Byway Trail [Central/Western End]; Travel west on Crescent Rd for 2.2 miles. [**Central End**] Turn left down Van Vranken Rd, then right on Riverview Rd. The **Vischer Ferry Preserve parking lot** is on the left. Head right to access *Clutes Dry Dock*. [**Western End**] Continue west on Riverview Rd to Vischer Ferry and head left. Take your first left down Ferry Dr to the **Ferry Drive parking lot**.

The **Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway** follows both the *Erie Canal* and the *Mohawk River* from Schenectady to Waterford, highlighting the canal's cultural sites. The *Byway* is a road route, but includes trails that follow the route. Along its southern route you can follow the [Mohawk-Hudson Bikeway](#). Its eastern route follows the [Champlain Canalway Trail; Waterford-Mechanicville](#) and its northern route follows the [Flight of Locks Trail](#) located in Waterford, the [Crescent Trail](#) located in Halfmoon and the [Mohawk Towpath Byway Trail](#) located in both Clifton Park and Halfmoon. For more information visit; [MOHAWK TOWPATH SCENIC BYWAY](#), [FRIENDS OF THE MOHAWK TOWPATH BYWAY & VISCHER FERRY PRESERVE](#).

CRESCENT TRAIL:

Starting from the Terminal Rd parking lot; The paved **Crescent Trail** starts at the eastern end of the parking lot. An informational sign tells the history of the *Crescent Aqueduct*, which carried the *Erie Canal* over the *Mohawk River* from 1825-1915. The trail travels underneath the Route 9 bridge, where a fishing pier and bench overlooks the *Mohawk River*. You'll come to the **Crescent Park parking lot** at 0.3 miles. Picnic tables, benches and another informational sign board are located here. The trail now continues as stone-dust between the river and Canal Rd. A cross-walk takes you across Canal Rd at 1.4 miles where the trail pulls away from the road and into the woods. After crossing over a wooden bridge another parking lot will be on your left. The trail returns to Canal Rd next to the junction of Beech Rd at 1.8 miles where it currently ends.

Note; To loop back, take a left and travel on-road along Canal Rd (low traffic) and along the river. This will return you to the stone-dust trail at 2.3 miles where you can head back to the parking lot.

To connect to the **Mohawk Towpath Byway Trail** travel on-road along Towpath Rd for 0.8 miles. The old canal is buried along your right. This brings you to the **Clamsteam Road parking lot** on your left after 2.6 miles.

MOHAWK TOWPATH BYWAY TRAIL:

Starting from the Clamsteam Road parking lot; (Re-zeroing mileage) A sign board, picnic tables and informational sign are located here. You'll also find a stop along the **Mohawk Scenic Byway Audio Tour** (518-649-9990) here. The wide stone-dust **Mohawk Towpath Byway Trail** travels above the *Mohawk River*. I believe the *Old Erie Canal* along this section is filled in on your right. Come to Towpath Rd after 0.25 miles. I-87 lies straight ahead covering the old canal so you'll need to detour left on-road (low volume traffic) along Towpath

Rd traveling underneath the highway. A ramp on your right at 0.4 miles will then take you up and over a berm bringing you down to the **Old Erie Canal**. You'll spot lots of turtles and Blue Herrings. Follow the Towpath west and across a bridge at 0.8 miles. Right is *Wagers Pond* and left leads to the *Mohawk River*. Check out the stonework of the old canal as well. Travel underneath a bridge across the canal at 1.2 miles.

Note; A path leads up to this iron bridge over the **Old Erie Canal** where a stone-dust trail then travels around the old **Clutes Dry Dock-1825** area. Informational sign. Come to an intersection. Right leads to the **Clutes Dry Dock parking lot** off Riverview Rd. Left, a grass path leads to a small bridge overlooking the canal.

Continuing along the trail, pass by an old stone abutment before coming to an intersection at 1.9 miles. Sign board here.

Note; Right takes you over the canal and out to Riverview Rd.

The old Towpath straight ahead is not developed so head left along the stone-dust trail. This takes you south through *Vischer Ferry Nature & Historic Preserve*. Cross a bridge, pass by some open grass areas (overlooks for the *Mohawk River*) and pass a large brown structure before the trail turns north along a causeway. Return to the **Old Erie Canal** at 2.9 miles.

Note; Straight takes you over the canal, via the old **Whipple Iron Truss Bridge**, to the **Vischer Ferry Preserve parking lot**. Map board located here.

Continuing left along the Towpath a causeway takes you between the canal and a large marsh. Pass by two more old stone abutments. Head into the woods and you'll pass by the old **Lock 19**, an 1842 double chamber lock at 4.3 miles. Come to another intersection at 4.5 miles. A gravel road heads left, continue straight along the stone-dust Towpath. You'll finally get some views of the *Mohawk River* and the canal will be along your right again at 4.9 miles. You come to the **Ferry Road parking lot** at 5.2 miles (A ferry used to cross the river here from 1790-1922).

Note; You can loop back on-road from here by turning right up Ferry Rd, then right along Riverview Rd through scenic Vischer Ferry and back to the **Vischer Ferry parking lot**.

Continue straight along the Towpath as it travels alongside the river and up to the *Vischer Ferry Power Plant*. This section consists of hard packed dirt and gravel. You then travel up a steep road to the **Sugar Hill Road parking lot** at 6.4 miles. An overlook of the *Mohawk River*, dam and **Lock 7** across the river are located here. You can then loop back on-road by heading out Sugar Hill Rd, turning right on Riverview Rd, traveling through the Vischer Ferry Historic district and returning to the **Vischer Ferry parking lot**. The on-road sections travel along low traffic roads with little or no shoulders.

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[CLICK HERE FOR MOHAWK TOWPATH SCENIC BYWAY MAP](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR MOHAWK TOWPATH BYWAY MAP](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR CRESCENT TRAIL/MOHAWK TOWPATH BYWAY MAP](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR CAPITOL REGIONAL MAP](#)

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