

Canalway Trail Gap Segment  
Assessment Report  
Wayne County, New York

November 1998

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## Acknowledgments

New York Parks and Conservation Association gratefully acknowledges the organizations whose financial support for the Canalway Trail Partnership Project has made this report possible:

New York State Senate  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
through the  
National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program  
Philip Morris Companies, Inc.

This assessment reports on extensive work done to advance the completion of the Canalway Trail in Wayne County. For that work and for invaluable help in completing this assessment NYPCA thanks James Coulombe, Senior County Planner, Wayne County Planning Department.

This assessment was prepared by David P. Adler, RLA, Canalway Trail Partnership Project Coordinator.

## Introduction

This report is a product of the Canalway Trail Partnership Project. Under the Canalway Trail Partnership Project, New York Parks and Conservation Association (NYPCA), in partnership with the NYS Canal Corporation and the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, is organizing and assisting canal communities to plan and develop the Canalway Trail where critical gaps exist. When completed, the Canalway Trail will be a 524 mile continuous multi-use pathway along the New York State Canal System.

In Wayne County a significant amount of planning had been done prior to the start of the Canalway Trail Partnership Project. The focus of this document is to report on work done in Wayne County to advance the development of the Canalway Trail there and to illustrate the importance to the economy and quality of life for 1) canal communities to link the canal to their downtowns and other major attractions; 2) canal communities within the county to link to each other; and 3) the canal communities and county to become an integral part of the cross state trail system. As the linkages occur, the economic benefits of the Canalway Trail will mushroom.

With the assistance of significant Canal Corridor Initiative funding from US Department of Housing and Urban Development, numerous canal communities in Wayne County are developing an economic infrastructure. These projects will support and encourage tourism while simultaneously being supported by the “quality of life” related economic benefits provided by this multi-use pathway system.

NYPCA is a statewide non-profit citizens’ organization dedicated to protecting New York’s parks and helping communities create innovative and popular forms of park lands such as greenways, rail and canal trails and heritage corridors.

### ***Location***

The trail segment in this assessment is a thirty-three mile route which is located east of Rochester traversing Wayne County. Wayne County is situated south of Lake Ontario, between the major metropolitan areas of Syracuse and Rochester.

The trail generally follows the route of the current Erie Canal with some sections of the old Erie Canal in the eastern part of the county. East of Lyons the trail follows the route of the old Erie Canal for approximately ten miles to the county line. Along its route, the trail passes through the heart of many historic canal villages where canal revitalization projects have been finished recently or are planned in the near future. From west to east these towns and villages include the Towns of Macedon, Palmyra, Arcadia, Lyons and Galen, the Villages of Palmyra, Newark, Lyons and Clyde. The trail also passes the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge. (See figures 1 and 2)



*Fig. 1 Location of Wayne County in New York State*



*Figure 2. Wayne County and surrounding areas.*

## ***Landscape Character***

The character of landscape that this trail segment passes through varies from rural farmland to small towns. The trail passes through scrub vegetation, second growth open fields, farm fields, village streets and rural small towns. Canal service roads, creek beds, utility right-of-way (R.O.W.) can be found along the trail corridor.

In the western end of the county an existing trail comes east from Rochester. The existing segment ends in the Village of Palmyra. It can be said that the landscape character of this section of the trail comprises the many varied experiences of rural Upstate New York. The traveler's enjoyment of this segment will be enhanced by the many views of bucolic farmland, openland and forest mixed with the vibrancy of historic canal communities.

## ***From Canal Recreationway Plan***

The Canal Recreationway Plan of 1995 identifies this section as composed of the following segments in exhibit 7-7 *Canal Trail Route Segments*:

Trail Segment	Location	Miles	Ownership	Right of way status <sup>1</sup>	Comments
ET-8 (part)	Fairport to Palmyra (Route 21 Bridge)	11.5	Canal Corporation	2	Cleared Trail needs improvement
ET-9	Route 21 Bridge to Harrison Spillway	1.75	Wayne County	2	Cleared, needs improvement abandoned rail R.O.W. north side of canal
ET-10	Harrison Spillway to Lock E-28A, Lyons	11.25	Canal Corporation service road; Wayne County rail R.O.W.	2	Cleared, needs improvement at Conrail crossing north side of canal.
ET-11	Lock E-28A to Lock E-27, Lyons	1.25	State Road	2	Along Old Route 31 across Ganargua Creek.
ET-12	Lock E-27 to Lock 25, Montezuma	19	Wayne County NIMO, unknown	3	Alignment follows the old canal R.O.W. abandoned railroad lines north side of canal.

These characterizations correctly describe the state of the Canalway Trail planning in this area in 1995. This document updates the information based on the work done between 1995 and 1998 mainly by the Wayne County Planning Department.

<sup>1</sup> The Recreationway Plan divides the status of trail R.O.W.s into four groups as follows:

- 1 Improved Trail in use
- 2 R.O.W. assembled-Trail needs improvement
- 3 Trail sited, R.O.W. or easement to be acquired
- 4 Trail not sited.

The Recreationway Plan also identifies several facilities in Wayne County as trail support facilities. In Exhibit 7-8 *Proposed Canalway Trail Support Facilities, Hiking and Cycling* the plan identifies the Villages of Palmyra, Newark, Lyons, and Clyde for support facilities of varying levels.

Palmyra - C<sup>1</sup> Full Day Hiking and Bicycling Stop, Canal Service Port and Lock #15

Newark - A<sup>1</sup> Half Day Hiking Stop, Canal Service Port #16

Lyons - B<sup>1</sup> Full Day Hiking Stop, Canal Service Port #18

Clyde - B<sup>1</sup> Half Day Hiking Stop, Canal Service Port #21

### ***Trail Partners***

The primary entity involved in the routing and planning of the Canalway Trail in Wayne County has been the Wayne County Planning Department. The department has made a significant commitment to trail development in the county and to the Canalway Trail in particular.

All canal communities in Wayne County have been participating in the Canalway Trail development. They are the Towns of Macedon, Palmyra, Arcadia, Lyons and Galen, and the Villages of Macedon, Palmyra, Newark, Lyons and Clyde. New York Parks and Conservation Association participates in an advisory and advocacy capacity through the Canalway Trail Partnership Project. The New York State Canal Corporation has participated in its capacity as owner of some of the property that the trail corridor will go through and setting of standards for the trail on a state-wide basis.

Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation will be participating in their capacity as owners of land on which the route has been proposed. Their anticipated cooperation will greatly enhance the success of the project.

Trailworks, Inc., a county-wide trail advocacy group is working on a plan for a county-wide hiking and bicycling trail system. This plan would define a network of multi-use trails of varying recreation and transportation uses. This trail network would link with the Canalway Trail at various locations and enhance the economic and recreational benefits of the trail.

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<sup>1</sup> Canal Service Packages are defined as follows:

Package A: Telephone, trash drop and information signage. For recreational boating stops: Dock or boat fenders and tie-ups.

Package B: Includes all of above plus restrooms, potable water and picnic area. For recreational boating stops: Water and electric service, sewage pump-out and, if necessary, floating docks.

Package C: Includes all of the above plus showers and laundry and supply shop. For recreational boating stops: Marine fuel service, boat launch, and repair shop, if possible. For trail stops: Tent campgrounds and, if possible, bicycle rental and repair shop.

## Resources

The most significant resource along this historic canal route is the beauty of farm and forest landscapes interspersed with charming canal villages.

The historic village centers in this segment are within easy walking and cycling distance from the trail and form the backbone of tourist services in this section. They all have services that would be of interest to persons travelling through the area. Super markets, drugstores, restaurants, and various other retail establishments are available. In addition, the Villages of Newark, Lyons and Clyde are undertaking canalside revitalization projects.

This segment lies between the City of Rochester and the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and the nationally significant sites in Seneca Falls and Waterloo. It is expected that tourists will travel through Wayne County on day and multiple day trips to take advantage of the natural and historic resources available in the region.

The attractive landscape and views available in Wayne County are a valuable existing resource. These viewshed resources attract tourists, including bicyclists, hikers, boaters and others. The rural views between the villages are further enhanced by canalside parks and other canal corridor revitalization projects in the towns and village centers. Several of the villages are planning renovations to these canalside parks that will provide rest stops for tourists using the Canalway Trail.

The historic buildings and districts in these canal communities are an important economic and cultural resource which enhances both tourism and quality of life. The Erie Canal Cultural Center, a Wayne County project in the Village of Lyons is an historic building being converted into a mixed use of art education, library, offices, retail and commercial.

In addition, Wayne County, working with a volunteer citizens group called Trailworks, Inc., is developing a network of multi-use trails that will connect to the Canalway Trail and bring tourists to the other county communities.

The current Erie Canal and the old Erie Canal are, of course, major resources which will become increasingly available to both residents and visitors as a continuous Canalway Trail is developed through the county.

## Economic Opportunities

The Canalway Trail in this section can play a significant role in the tourism development of the area. Wayne County is strategically located between the City of Rochester to the west and Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, Syracuse, Seneca Falls and the Finger Lakes region to the east and south. The villages along the trail in Wayne County are well placed to provide services to tourists traveling between these destinations. People using the trail in Wayne County will stop overnight in the hotels, motels and bed-and-breakfast establishments, eat in the restaurants, shop and use other touring related facilities. This will increase the number of persons utilizing the various facilities.

When this section of the trail is completed it will link the broadly spread historic canal communities of Wayne County. Area business leaders should be aware that the completion of this segment will result in many bicyclists visiting from the surrounding cities, rural and suburban areas. Hiking and bicycling tourism from the east and west will find this area a fascinating and convenient spot to stop for a meal, shopping, repairs, rest, or overnight. The facilities that exist will enjoy increased usage and new opportunities will appear. Bicycle and hiking based tourism, including rentals and equipment repair and sales, will increase. Canal-side restaurants and overnight boarding establishments will enhance the trail experience and encourage visitors and residents to take further advantage of the recreational potential of the canal.

The concurrent development of trails linking the other parts of Wayne County to the Canalway Trail and each other will bring many additional visitors and tourists to the canal communities from all directions.

The completion of this segment of the Canalway Trail will provide an important recreational and transportation facility for area residents and showcase the significant historic resources of the canal. This will measurably add to the quality of life and the view that this is a great place to live and work. The economic implications are significant. The perceived quality of life in a community is a major factor in many businesses' decisions either to stay in a community or to relocate there.

### ***Canal Corridor Initiative***

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has implemented the Canal Corridor Initiative. This program is designed to aid communities along the NYS Canal System in planning and implementing economic development projects. This aid comes in various forms of grants, reimbursements and low interest loan programs.

Several communities along the Canalway Trail have been awarded funds under the Canal Corridor Initiative for various projects.

- The Village of Macedon's Canal Access Center, is now in design phase.
- The Village of Palmyra's port improvements, Canal Street renovations, **trail project** and renovation of the Aldrich Change Bridge are in design phase.



- The Village of Newark's Canal Park, industrial site, and **trail projects** are in final design phase awaiting permitting.
- The Village of Lyons' Canal Park improvements **including trails**, are in final design phase awaiting permitting.
- The Town of Galen's bridge raising project, which will allow larger tour and dinner boats through to Clyde from the Seneca River and Montezuma, is in design phase.
- The Village of Clyde is in the final design phase of the southside **trail** and canal park and creation of a Service Port location.
- Wayne County is in final design phase of renovations to the Hammett Building in the Village of Lyons for the Erie Canal Cultural Center and interpretive signage (in cooperation with Seneca and Ontario Counties).

Many canal communities in Wayne County have included trail development in their revitalization projects because they recognize the important economic role of trails in increasing public access to the canal and their downtowns. Wayne County views the Canalway Trail development as a priority project because they recognize that a continuous trail connecting its canal communities will enhance the economic benefits of these HUD revitalization projects.

These projects will greatly enhance the experience of tourists along the Canalway Trail in Wayne County. The financial incentives provided to the county, towns and villages by HUD will greatly improve the quality of life in these communities as well as fuel economic development.

## **Proposed Routing/Ownership/Condition of Trail**

The routing descriptions given below are preliminary. The exact routing will be done considering site-specific conditions and may differ from these descriptions.

This proposed routing is the product the Wayne County Planning Department. Other organizations that have participated in this process include Trailworks, Inc., NYS Canal Corporation, the towns of Macedon, Palmyra, Arcadia, Lyons, Galen, the villages of Macedon, Palmyra, Newark, Lyons and Clyde, and New York Parks and Conservation Association. (see also section on Trail Partners)

This description of the proposed routing proceeds from west to east. (See Figures 3-5)

### ***Ownership***

The majority of the land used for the trail in this section is owned by NYS Canal Corporation, Wayne County and the various municipalities.

In the central section, Wayne County owns a linear park along the old Erie Canal between the villages of Lyons and Clyde which is currently being used for the trail.

NYS Canal Corporation owns some of the land along the canal that is being proposed for trail development and all of the land on which the current trail exists in the western fifth of the county. NYS Department of Transportation owns Route 31 R.O.W.

Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation owns a portion of the land in the eastern end of the trail section. This land is a power line R.O.W. and is the towpath of the old Erie Canal.

### ***Acquisition needs***

- Easements or licenses will be needed where the proposed trail will follow the NIMO R.O.W. in the eastern portion of the Town of Galen.
- Easements will be needed for off road trail routing on NYS DOT R.O.W.'s along Rt. 31.
- Consolidated Rail, or its successor, may need to issue permits and/or easements for use of their rail bed.
- An easement will be needed to route the trail through private land in the western portion of the Town of Galen.

<b>Proposed Route Description</b>	<b>Present Condition of Trail</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
<b>Town of Macedon (6.5 miles)</b>		
The trail starts at the western border with Monroe County. The trail follows the north side of the canal and crosses a bridge between Quaker Road and Rt. 31 east of the Village of Macedon. The trail follows the south side of the canal to the border of the Village of Palmyra.	The trail is developed in this section and continues a developed trail that comes from the western part of the state.	NYS Canal Corporation owns the R.O.W. on the North side of the canal from the county line to Quaker Road. From the crossing to Aqueduct Park the ownership is mixed between NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) and Canal Corporation.
<b>Town of Palmyra (6 miles)</b>		
The trail route continues east on the south side of the canal and through the Village of Palmyra behind Canal Street on the old enlarged Erie towpath. East of the village the it crosses to the north side of the canal on Rt. 21. The trail route turns east on abandoned railroad R.O.W. north of the canal and follows this R.O.W. to the Port Gibson Road bridge. The trail route does not cross the canal but continues east on canal service road on the north side of the canal to the Arcadia Town Border.	The proposed trail route east of where the existing trail ends in the Village of Palmyra is mainly on abandoned railroad R.O.W. This will require clearing, grading and paving. The section on canal service road will need less clearing and grading but will require some and will require paving.	The trail route is owned in the west by the Village of Palmyra. The Rt. 21 portion (over the canal) is owned by NYS DOT. The Town of Palmyra owns a small section up to the railroad R.O.W. which is owned by Wayne County.

<b>Proposed Route Description</b>	<b>Present Condition of Trail</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
<b>Town of Arcadia (5 miles)</b>		
<p>The trail route continues east on the north side of the canal, using the canal service road to the Village of Newark where it follows adjacent to the canal as part of the village canal park. Just west of the town line the trail will be routed on the county linear park on the north side of the canal.</p> <p>There are various alignments for proposed trail routes east of the Village of Newark. Several routes on the south side of the canal have been proposed as well as a route on the north side. Some of these routes involve routing the trail under a railroad bridge on either the north or south</p>	<p>The condition of the canal service road is as above in the Town of Palmyra. The section through the Village of Newark has yet to be completed but is scheduled to be constructed in 1999 pending permitting.</p> <p>shore of the canal. At this time, it has not been determined if a trail could be built under the bridge without affecting canal navigation.</p> <p>The final determination of the bridge situation will, in part, drive the decision as to the trail routing in the Town of Arcadia east of Newark.</p>	<p>NYS Canal Corporation owns the service road and the Village of Newark owns the abandoned R.O.W. where the road to the industrial park has been constructed. East of the village the ownership is mixed public and private.</p>
<b>Town of Lyons (3.5 miles)</b>		
<p>The trail route continues east on the north side of the canal to the Canal Corporation Dry Docks. It follows Old Rt. 31 and crosses Ganargua Creek into the Village of Lyons at an existing Village Park. The trail route goes through the village's north canal park and past the planned Erie Canal Cultural Center. The trail continues east on existing county parkland to the border with the Town of Galen.</p>	<p>The R.O.W. for the trail will need clearing, grading and paving in the western section of the town. The section through the village will be completed as part of the canal park construction being undertaken with a HUD grant. The trail already exists in village and county parks. The linear county park east of the village is open for public use but is a rough, unpaved trail which should be improved with grading and paving.</p>	<p>Ownership in the eastern section is mostly Canal Corporation. There is some county highway right of way as the trail crosses Ganargua Creek. In the Village there is ownership by both the county and Canal Corporation. East of the village to the Galen Town line is owned by Wayne County.</p>

<b>Proposed Route Description</b>	<b>Present Condition of Trail</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
Town of Galen (12 miles)		
<p>From the town line the trail proceeds east on the route of the Old Erie Canal using the county linear park. This park ends outside of the Village of Clyde and the trail route continues on a planned section into the village. The trail then follows the north side of the present Erie Canal into the village to the Rt. 414 bridge where it crosses to the south side of the canal and follows an abandoned railroad R.O.W. east. The trail crosses the Erie Canal and then follows the route of a Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (NIMO) R.O.W., which is the towpath of the Old Erie Canal, southeast to the county line.</p>	<p>The trail R.O.W. along the Old Erie Canal in the county linear park is as noted above, needing grading and paving. The R.O.W. in the Village of Clyde is part of a planned park and other improvements. The railroad R.O.W. will need clearing, grading and paving. The NIMO R.O.W. will need minor grading and paving.</p>	<p>Wayne County owns the existing trail to the west of the village. The proposed route from the end of the trail to the Rt. 414 bridge is owned in places by the village and in places by the county. The Rt. 414 bridge is owned by DOT.</p> <p>The village and county own the railroad R.O.W. east of the village until it intersects with the Old Erie Canal towpath. In between the railroad and NIMO R.O.W. there is a small piece of old canal section in private ownership.</p>

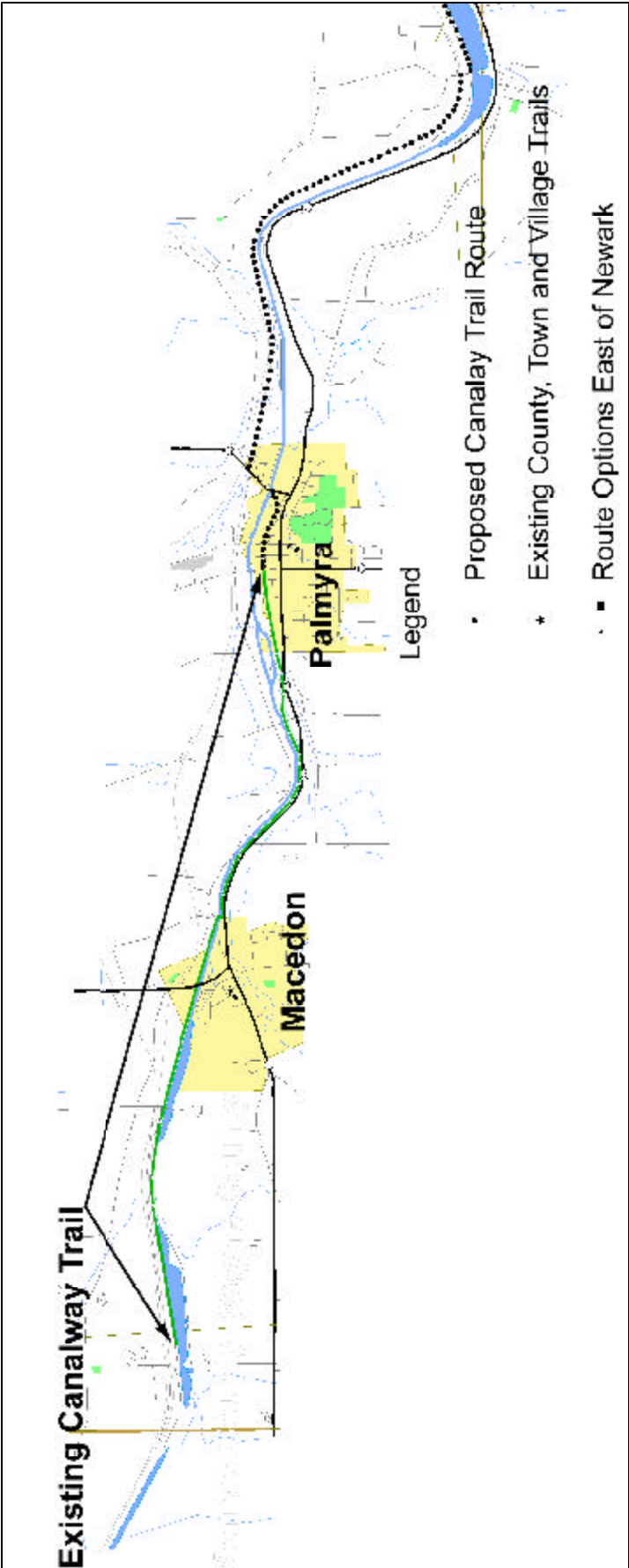


Fig. 3 Proposed Canalway Trail Route Western Third

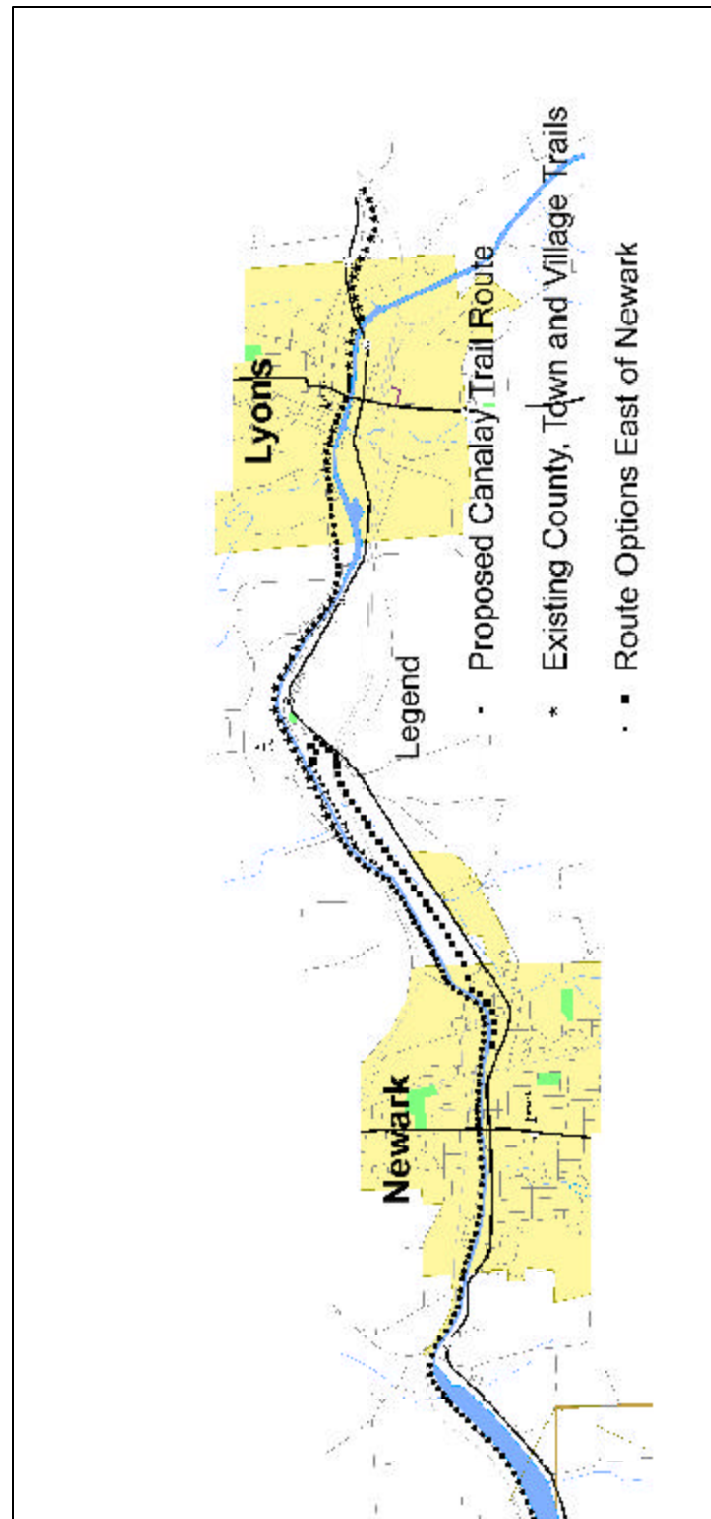
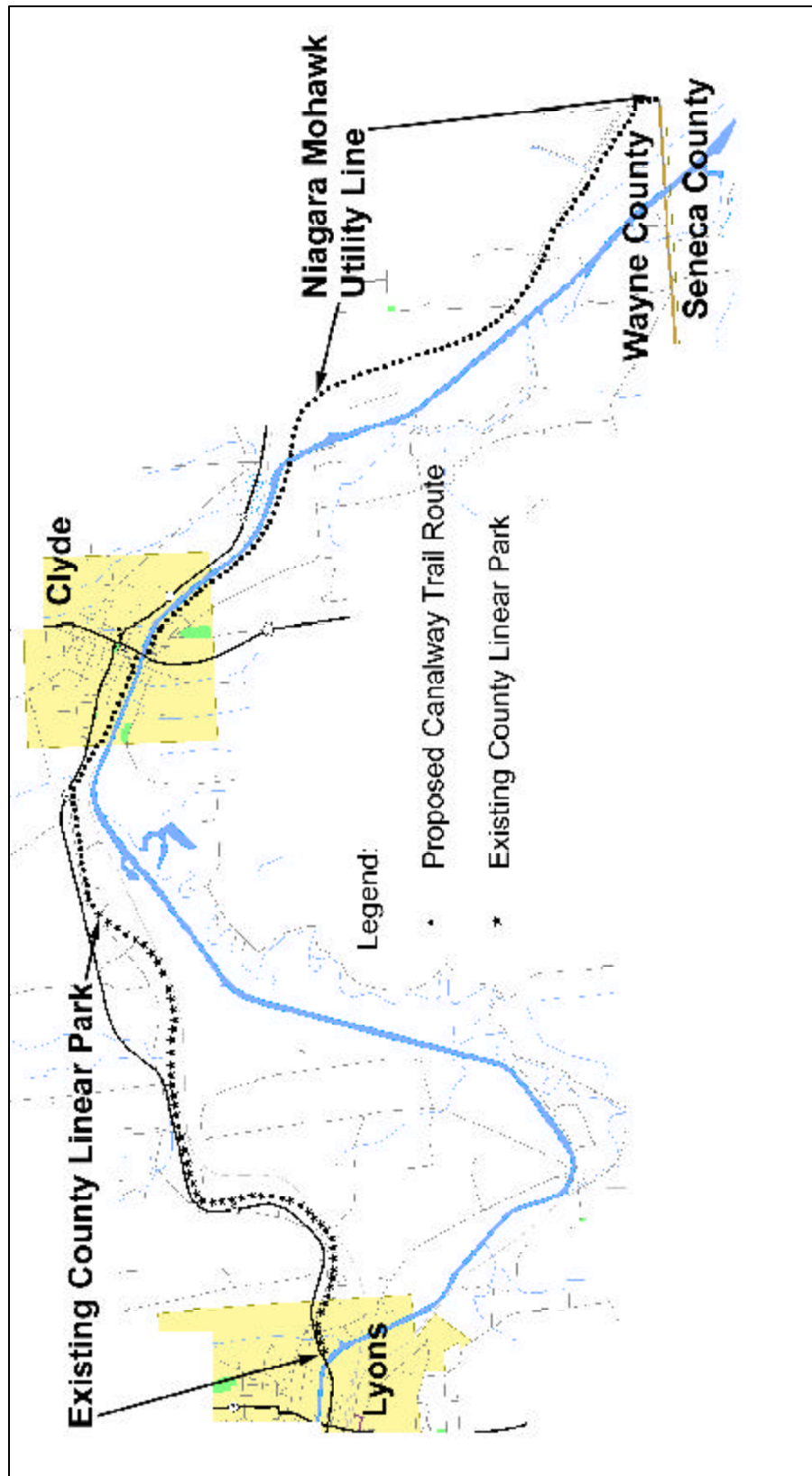


Fig. 4 Proposed Canalway Trail Route Central Third



*Fig. 5 Proposed Canalway Trail Route jEastern Third*



## **Constraints**

### ***Town of Arcadia railroad bridge***

East of the Village of Newark the canal passes under a railroad bridge carrying an active rail line owned by Consolidated Rail or its successor. The route of the trail is uncertain at this point because the narrow navigation channel limits the width of the trail that could be put along the canal under the bridge. Several trail width options have been discussed but at this time no definitive decision has been made as to either route the trail under the bridge or not. Conversations between New York Parks and Conservation Association and NYS Canal Corporation indicate that there is no room for trails of any width along the north shore of the canal. Further conversations with Wayne County indicate it may be acceptable to put a six foot wide trail on the south shore of the canal under the bridge.

The passage under the bridge, or on road alternatives should be finalized as soon as possible as it influences the route of the trail through the eastern part of the Town of Arcadia.

### ***Wetlands***

Some of the trail in Wayne County passes in the vicinity of regulated wetlands. These wetlands may need to be delineated in order to determine where the trail passes through them or within their buffer zones. The regional DEC office can perform this delineation but has to be asked to do so. If the trail goes through the wetland or within the buffer zone a permit for proposed trail construction may be necessary. It may also be necessary to apply for an Army Corps of Engineers permit. The presence of other, non-state regulated wetlands will determine this.

NYP&A has initiated discussions with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation headquarters to make it possible for a state-wide wetlands permit to be issued for the Canalway Trail as a whole. These discussions are at a very preliminary stage as of the date of this report, but it may be possible that a permit for all wetland crossings along the entire route may be issued by Spring of 1999. This would eliminate the need for many individual permits being applied for and administered. Similar discussions with ACOE have not taken place. However, ACOE is considering administering all canal related permits out of one office for NYS rather than the present situation in which canal permits are administered out of both NYS offices. This change of administration would help consolidate and coordinate ACOE permitting.

### ***Easements***

A variety of easements or acquisitions need to be negotiated. Alternative routes will be developed if necessary.

A significant portion of the trail route in the eastern end of the county in the Town of Galen is a Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation utility R.O.W. Negotiations for an easement on this property will be undertaken. A piece of privately owned land in the

Town of Galen will also need an easement. It may be necessary to negotiate some easements with Consolidated Rail, or it's successor, and NYS DOT on other properties.

## Cost Estimates

The standard cost estimates being used by NYS Canal Corporation for the Canalway Trail at this date are \$70,000 - \$80,000 per mile for stone dust surfacing and \$110,000-\$125,000 for asphalt surfacing. Asphalt is considered to be the most appropriate paving for the Canalway Trail. The stone dust surface encourages slightly slower bicycling, but is impassable to bicycles equipped with narrow tires, in-line skates and requires more maintenance after installation than the asphalt surface.

Approximately thirteen miles of this trail segment is either on road or is part of the completed Canalway Trail in the western part of the county. Striping and signage will be needed in the on road sections rather than grading, clearing and paving.

The remaining 20 miles will require various levels of grading and trail bed improvement as well as paving. This cost estimate averages out these various levels of improvement needed by using standardized figures.

The totals given below include an added twenty percent figure for engineering and design services and a five percent contingency.

Item	Cost	Amount	Unit	Sub Total
Asphalt Surfaced Trail	\$ 125,000.00	20	mile	\$2,500,000.00
Stone Dust Surfaced Trail	\$ 80,000.00	20	mile	\$1,600,000.00
Signage	\$ 7,000.00	33	mile	\$231,000.00
Striping Streets for Bike Lane	\$ 5,000.00	6	mile	\$30,000.00
Total for Asphalt Trail	Corrected to include contingencies and rounded up to the nearest quarter million dollars.			\$3,500,000.00
Total for Stonedust Trail				\$2,500,000.00

## **Key Needs and Opportunities**

### ***Wetland Delineation***

The wetlands (both DEC and ACOE regulated) should be delineated and surveyed as soon as possible. The DEC wetlands will be delineated by DEC in the field if requested, but it will still be the responsibility of the landowners or municipalities to survey the delineation. The ACOE should be contacted as soon as possible to determine the method for delineating those wetlands under ACOE regulation.

### ***Easements***

Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation, NYS DOT, private owners and Consolidated Rail, or it's successor, should be contacted as soon as possible to begin arranging any easements that may be necessary for the trail route. New York Parks and Conservation Association has initiated discussions with the state headquarters of NIMO to help expedite negotiations.

### ***Volunteer Organization***

Wayne County has been forward thinking in its formation of Trailworks, Inc. This organization is working with the county to develop a network of multi-use trails. This network will link with the Canalway Trail at several locations. The importance of a volunteer trail organization is high during trail design, development and construction. The organization can also work on advocacy issues and educating the general public as to the economic and recreational benefits of trails.

This group could also be active after the trail is constructed by becoming part of a statewide "Friends of the Canalway Trail" organization. This involvement would mean helping to develop and locally implement statewide trail maintenance standards as part of a statewide organization as well as organizing and administering local trail events and initiatives, which would enhance the economic benefits of the trail.