

## **Book Review: *Cycling the Erie Canal***

by  
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the newsletter of the Mohawk-Hudson Cycling Club*

Parks & Trails New York is now offering a guidebook, entitled *Cycling the Erie Canal*. Robin Dropkin and Kevin McLoughlin, its authors, have done a superb job of compiling much of the information necessary to tour the Erie Canal Corridor by bicycle. The book is printed in color, on durable, glossy paper. It's presented in an easy-to-use format in a wire loop-bound book, sized to fit conveniently in a handlebar bag.

The route described follows both the active and historic sections of the canal. It's important to remember that the Canalway Trail is in progress. The material presented in this book is a "snapshot in time," showing the trail as it is presently, in the summer of 2004. The book states that the off-road portion of the Canalway Trail is 60% complete, and estimates that it will be complete in 2007.

The book begins with an overview, including a brief history of the Erie Canal. The map section follows, with 42 maps, divided into four regions, arranged west to east. Maps include airports, train and bus stations, locating symbols for bike shops, motels, bed & breakfasts, campgrounds, restrooms, and various other services and points of interest. Unlike strip maps, which are rotated to read top to bottom or bottom to top, these maps are oriented by the compass (with north pointing up), making them easy to read. The pages that face the maps identify area attractions and include area-specific notes and photos.

Lodging is identified in an index at the end of the map section, keyed to the numbered symbols on the maps. This index includes street addresses and phone numbers of lodging facilities. Likewise, bike shops appear in their own index, keyed to the numbered symbols on the maps. This index also includes addresses and phone numbers. A handy travel distance chart appears in the Travel and Logistics section.

I've planned several self-contained tours myself, and I appreciate a guide that provides maps, as well as information on lodging and other services, all in one place, in an easy-to-use format and a convenient size.

To obtain a copy of [Cycling the Erie Canal](#), write to:

Parks & Trails New York  
29 Elk Street  
Albany, New York 12207