

Who's on the Trail

Erie & Champlain Canalway Trails



2022 Trail Count Report

Published April 2023



Canal
Corporation



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Prepared by Parks & Trails New York for the New York State Canal Corporation. Who's on the Trail is made possible by financial support from the New York State Canal Corporation.



Introduction

The Canalway Trail system is one of New York State's premier outdoor destinations. The trail gives New Yorkers in more than 200 communities a dedicated place to walk, jog, and bike right from their doorsteps and is a draw for visitors from around the world. Between 2017 and 2020, the Canalway Trail was incorporated into New York's flagship Empire State Trail, part of a 750-mile trail network stretching from New York City north to the Canadian border, and from Albany west to Buffalo.

Since 2005, Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) and the New York State Canal Corporation (NYSCC) have monitored and measured the trail's popularity through annual Canalway Trail counts. The count process relies on electronic trail counters installed at selected locations along the trail. The counters use infrared pyroelectric technology to count the people passing within range of the sensor by detecting body temperature. PTNY typically will install counters for one year or longer, allowing this report to include full-year observed count data rather than estimates based on sample data.

In 2022, PTNY counted trail use at ten locations along the Erie and Champlain Canalway Trails. These counts were augmented by manual counts conducted by volunteers at six additional locations along the Erie Canalway Trail. Electronic counts were also performed by two partner organizations, the Genesee Transportation Council and the Hudson River Valley Greenway, at three and two locations along the Erie and Champlain Canalway Trails respectively.

The counts analyzed in the Who's on the Trail report provide a snapshot of the immense popularity of the Canalway Trail. PTNY estimates that the Canalway Trail system receives roughly 3.55 million visits per year, based on longitudinal count data from electronic counters installed at 24 locations along the trail over the past five years. Use peaked during the shutdowns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, but has remained strong in the years since.

Supporting data also provides detail on when and how people use the trail, including a profile of those "End-to-Enders" who have ridden the entire 360-mile length of the trail. Data on "End-to-End" riders provides information about trip characteristics and demographic information, supplying new details and insights about trail users beyond count information collected by the electronic counters alone.

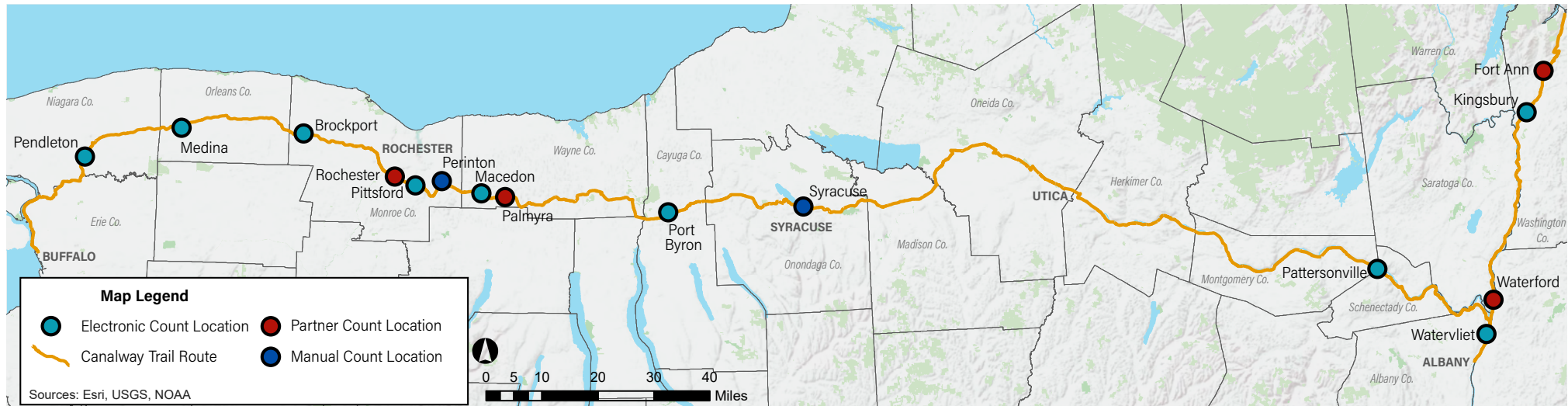
Data documenting the popularity of the Canalway Trail system has underscored the significant public value of millions of dollars in public investment for maintenance and construction across the state over the past two decades and is helping to guide future investments that will optimize utilization and impact.

Note: Additional information on the process used to gather data and standards used to estimate full-year trail use can be found in the companion to this report, "Who's on the Trail: Methodology", and full data recorded at count locations can be downloaded from PTNY's website at www.ptny.org/trailcounts.

2022 Counts Overview

Electronic counters recorded trail usage along the Erie Canalway Trail at nine locations during 2022. At four locations - Pendleton, Brockport (Corbett Park), Macedon and Watervliet - counters were installed at different times in 2021 and remained installed into 2022. The Pendleton, Brockport and Macedon counters were removed across the course of 2022, and the Watervliet counter was removed in the first week of 2023. Counters were installed at six additional locations in 2023 - Medina, Brockport (Park Avenue Bridge), Pittsford, Port Byron, Pattersonville, and Fort Edward. The Port Byron counter was removed late in 2022 due to equipment failure, and the Pattersonville counter was removed in early 2023 due to nearby construction.

2022 Trail Count Locations Map



Trail Count Profiles

Data on the following pages summarizes trail use recorded at each of the count sites for 2022, including data available from 2021 where appropriate. Each page provides information on the location the counter was installed and the dates the counter was installed for, and a location map showing where the counter was installed. The location maps show trail surface type (solid blue is paved, dashed blue is stone dust, and orange is on road), and provide the geographic context for the location at which the counter was installed.

The count profiles also show the estimated annual and monthly uses, as well as daily average use by month and daily average use during summer (June 21 through September 20). Estimated annual use was calculated using National Bicycle and Pedestrian Demonstration Project extrapolation criteria (see our accompanying Who's on the Trail: Methodology report for more information on how extrapolation calculations are conducted).

2022 Trail Use Summary at PTNY Electronic Trail Count Locations

PTNY Electronic Count Locations	Days Installed	Total Observed Use	Average Use by Day	Last 365 Days Observed Data	Estimated Annual Use	Summer			Fall/Winter/Spring		
						Daily average	Weekday average	Weekend average	Daily average	Weekday average	Weekend average
Pendleton (Jun 2021-Jul 2022)	399	84,902	213	73,093	77,853	359	289	501	137	124	167
Medina (Jul 2022-Dec 2022)	174	17,146	99	---	36,040	207	213	194	46	45	50
Brockport - Corbett Park (Apr 2021-May 2022)	419	61,098	146	48,928	51,244	218	205	245	123	120	132
Brockport - Park Avenue (May 2022-Dec 2022)	221	38,957	176	---	57,971	260	248	285	106	101	117
Pittsford (May 2022-Dec 2022)	221	127,848	578	---	194,229	831	724	1,042	366	330	448
Macedon (Apr 2021-May 2022)	419	41,034	98	34,934	34,330	181	155	236	71	64	93
Port Byron (May 2022-Nov 2022)	163	16,182	99	---	28,939	110	108	113	86	83	95
Pattersonville (Jul 2022-Dec 2022)	169	13,342	79	---	28,526	109	88	154	65	60	77
Watervliet (Sep 2021-Dec 2022)	478	39,772	83	30,003	32,616	125	107	160	72	61	98
Kingsbury (Jun 2022-Dec 2022)	211	14,206	67	---	22,225	93	82	114	47	43	59

Pendleton

Niagara County

Installed June 7, 2021 - July 10, 2022

The counter was installed near the trailhead at Robinson Road in Pendleton. This section of trail is part of a 7.3-mile paved, off-road stretch running from Orbit Drive in Amherst, crossing Tonawanda Creek into Niagara County at Pendleton, and continuing to Stevens Street in Lockport.

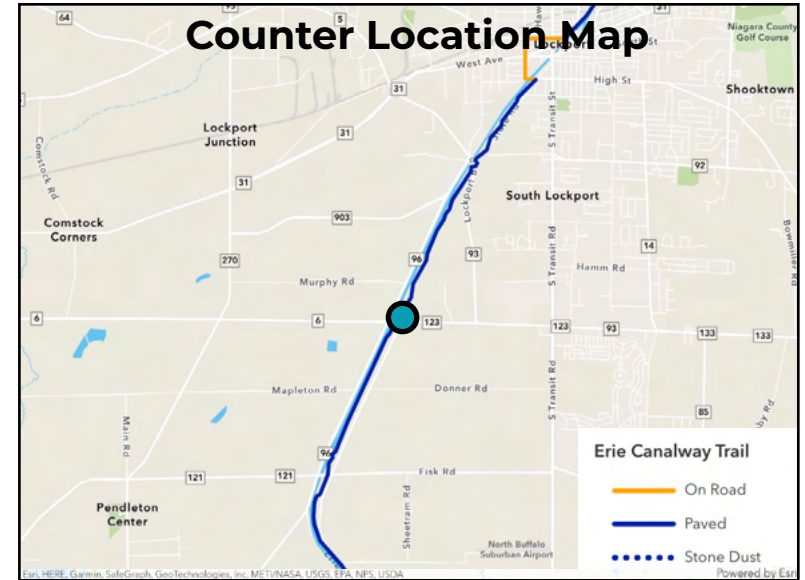
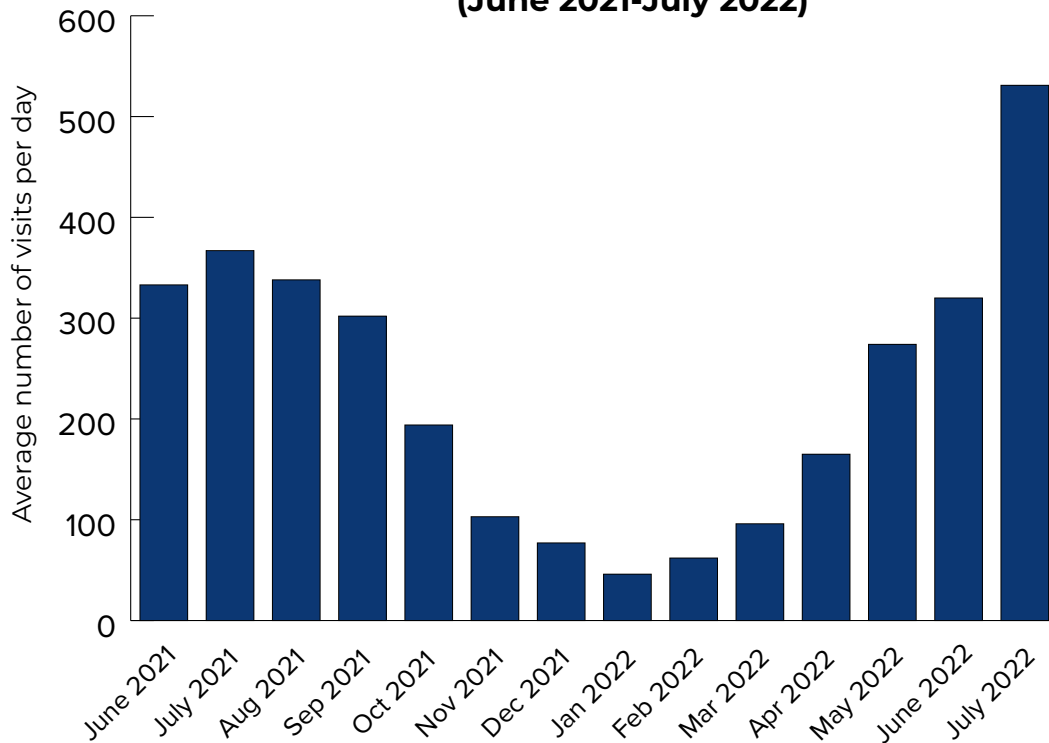
Estimated
Annual Use

77,853

Daily Average Use
during the Summer

359

Daily Average Use by Month (June 2021-July 2022)



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
June 2021 (part)	7,997	333
July 2021	11,367	367
August 2021	10,485	338
September 2021	9,049	302
October 2021	6,002	194
November 2021	3,101	103
December 2021	2,385	77
January 2022	1,432	46
February 2022	1,741	62
March 2022	2,985	96
April 2022	4,954	165
May 2022	8,492	274
June 2022	9,602	320
July 2022 (part)	5,310	531
Recorded	84,902	213
Last 365 Days	73,093	200
Estimated Annual Use	77,853	213

Medina

Orleans County

Installed July 10, 2022 - December 31, 2022

The counter was installed to the east of Medina's downtown and the Medina Aqueduct, directly to the west of Bates Road. The trail surface through this section is primarily stonedust. The surrounding area is rural, with the village located about halfway between the urban centers of Buffalo and Rochester.

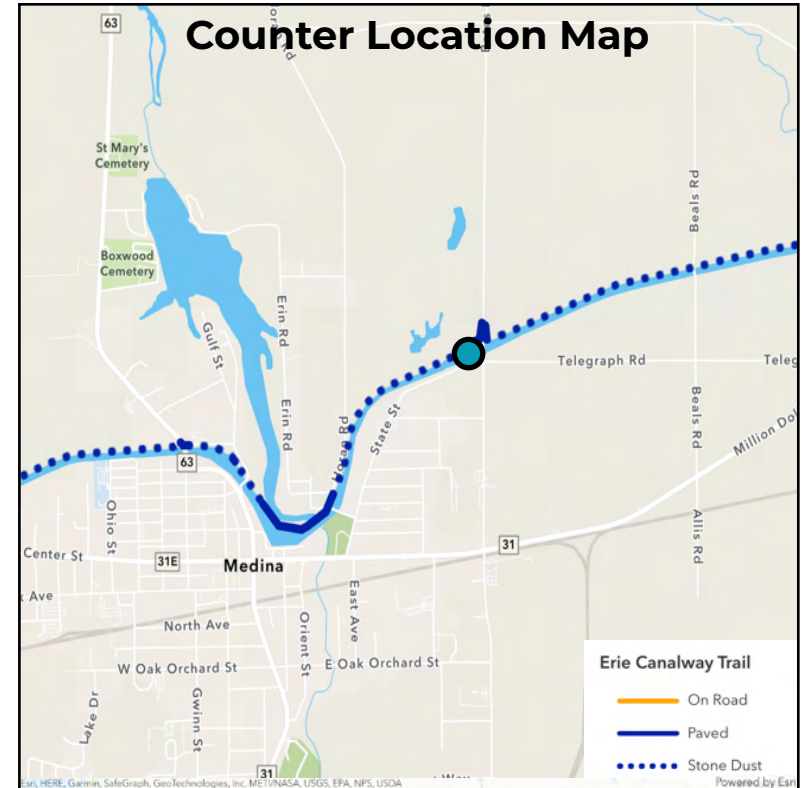
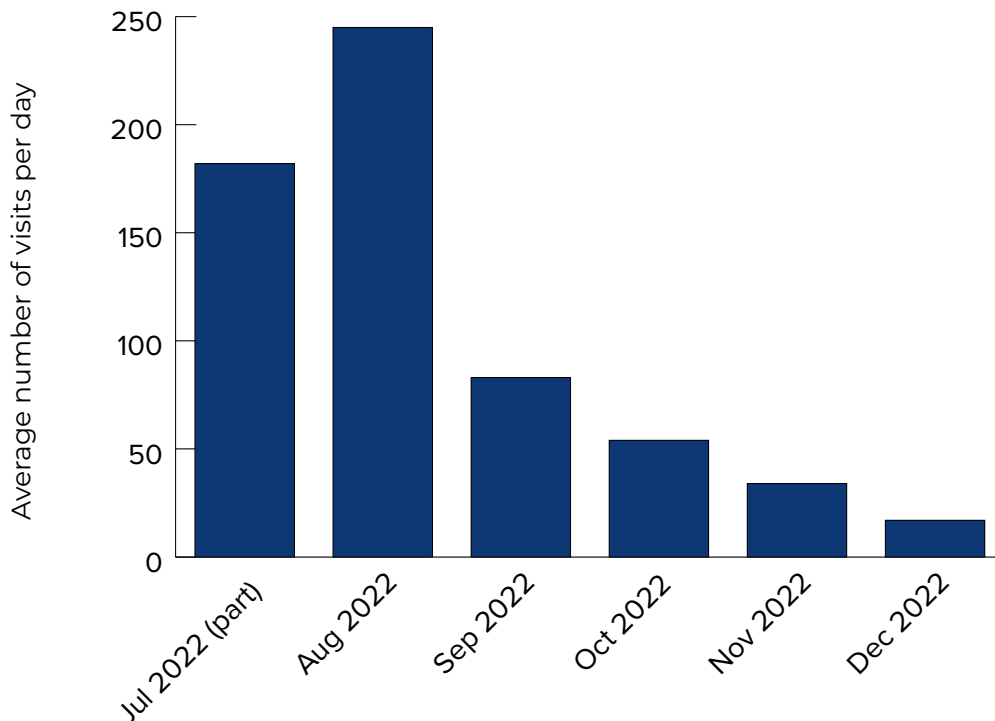
Estimated
Annual Use

36,040

Daily Average Use
during the Summer

99

**Daily Average Use by Month
(July 2022-December 2022)**



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
July 2022 (part)	3,821	182
August 2022	7,603	245
September 2022	2,504	83
October 2022	1,661	54
November 2022	1,019	34
December 2022	538	17
Recorded	17,146	99
Estimated Annual Use	36,040	99

Brockport

Monroe County

Installed at Corbett Park April 2, 2021 - May 25, 2022; Installed at Park Ave May 25, 2022 - December 31, 2022

The counter was first installed on the trail near Corbett Park, just west of the Smith Street Bridge. In May 2022, the counter was moved to just east of the Park Avenue Lift Bridge. The surface of the trail is mostly stonedust through this entire section, except for a short, paved segment between Main Street and Park Avenue.

Estimated Annual Use

Corbett Park

51,244

Park Ave

57,971

Daily Average Use during the Summer

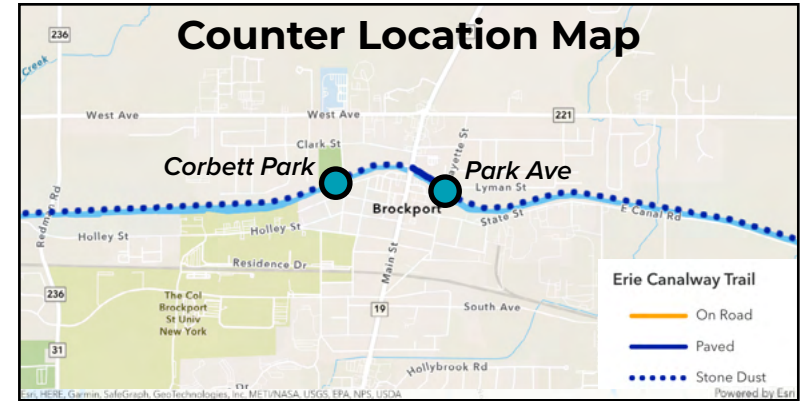
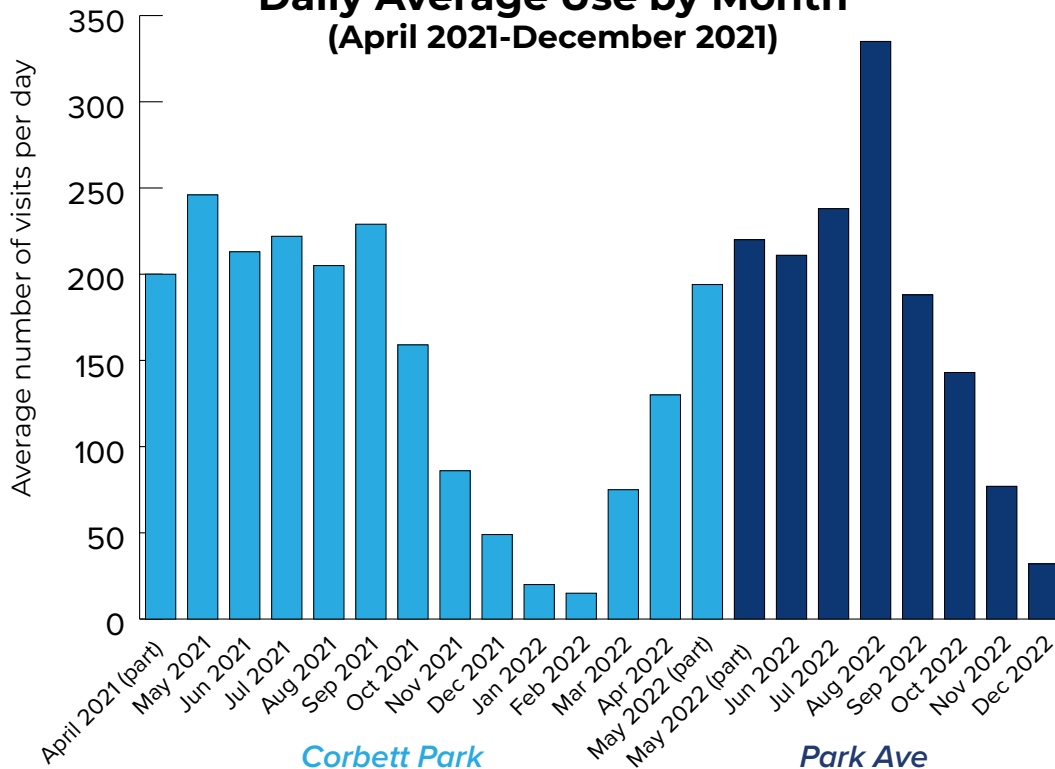
Corbett Park

218

Park Ave

260

Daily Average Use by Month (April 2021-December 2021)



	Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Corbett Park	April 2021 (part)	5,790	200
	May 2021	7,638	246
	June 2021	6,386	213
	July 2021	6,889	222
	August 2021	6,363	205
	September 2021	6,866	229
	October 2021	4,929	159
	November 2021	2,586	86
	December 2021	1,534	49
	January 2022	632	20
	February 2022	406	15
	March 2022	2,336	75
	April 2022	3,889	130
	May 2022 (part)	4,854	194
Park Ave	Recorded	61,098	146
	Last 365 days	48,928	134
	Estimated Annual use	51,244	140
	May 2022 (part)	1,539	220
	June 2022	6,320	211
	July 2022	7,363	238
	August 2022	10,389	335
	September 2022	5,632	188
	October 2022	4,426	143
	November 2022	2,308	77
Park Ave	December 2022	980	32
	Recorded	38,957	176
	Estimated Annual Use	57,971	159

Pittsford

Monroe County

Installed May 25, 2022 - December 31, 2022

The counter was installed at Lock 32, west of the village of Pittsford. The surface through this section is paved. The trail here is easily accessed by the large population of Rochester and its surrounding suburbs.

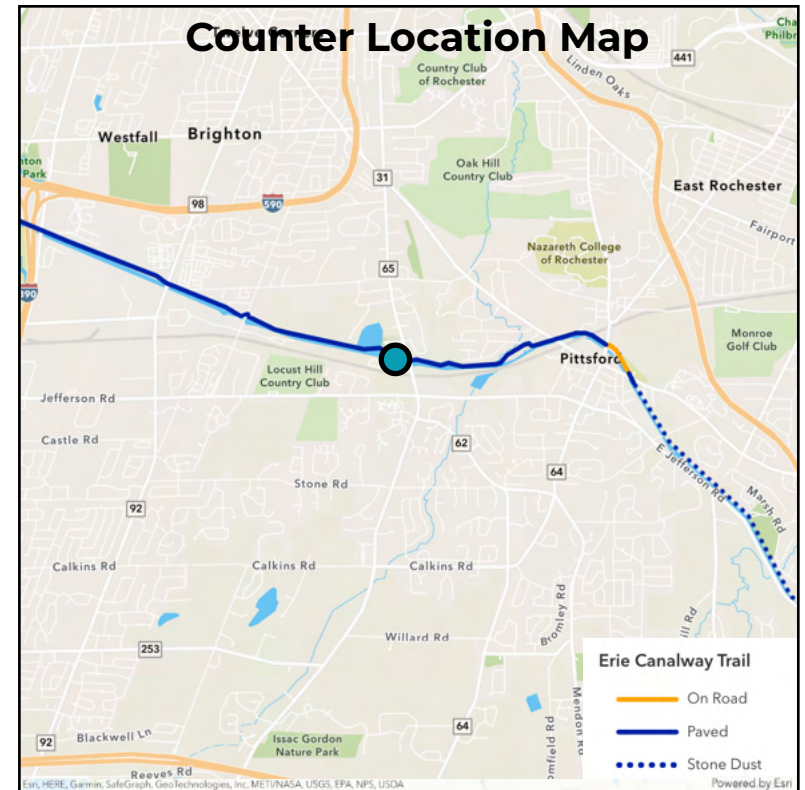
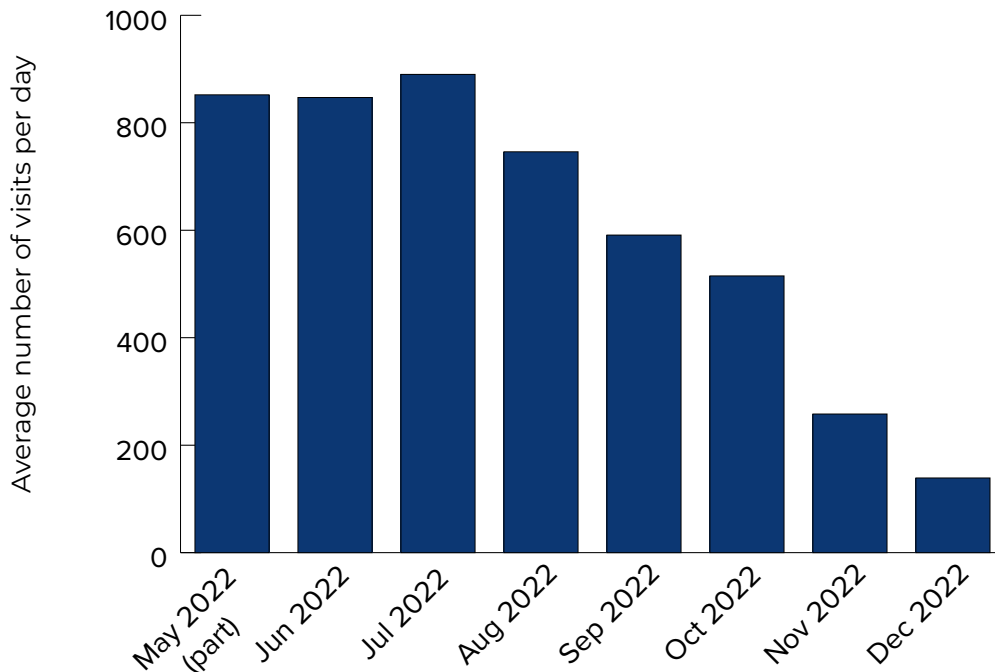
Estimated
Annual Use

194,229

Daily Average Use
during the Summer

831

**Daily Average Use by Month
(May 2022-December 2022)**



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2022 (part)	5,964	852
June 2022	25,412	847
July 2022	27,601	890
August 2022	23,134	746
September 2022	17,738	591
October 2022	15,959	515
November 2022	7,745	258
December 2022	4,295	139
Recorded	127,848	578
Estimated Annual Use	194,229	532

Port Byron

Cayuga County

Installed June 8, 2022 - November 18, 2022

The counter was installed at Schasel Park in Port Byron, at the point where the trail transitions from an on-road section on NYS Route 31 to a stonedust surface. The surrounding area is rural; the closest urban center is Syracuse - around 30 miles away.

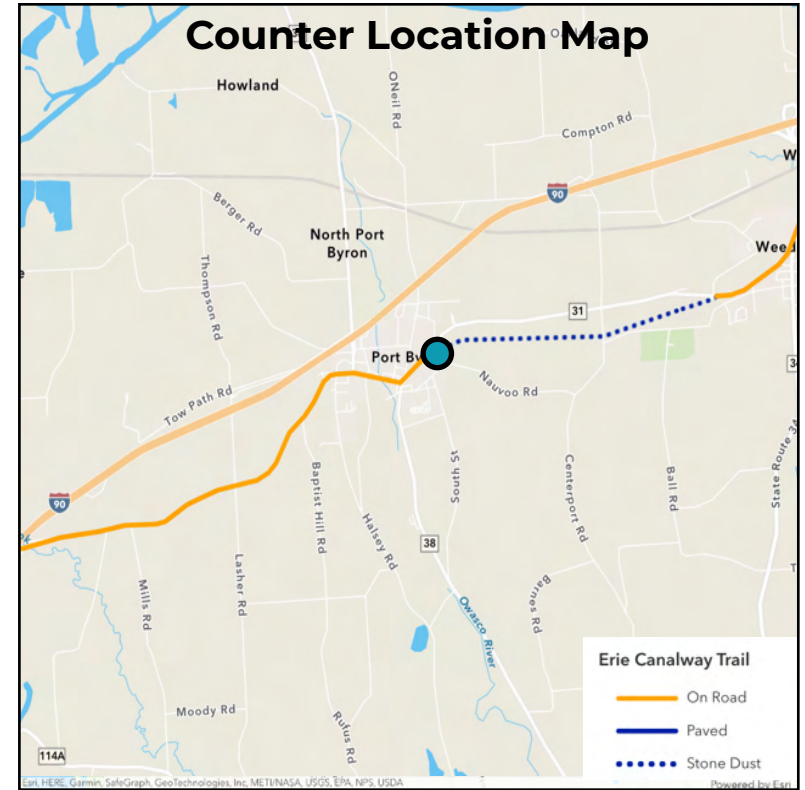
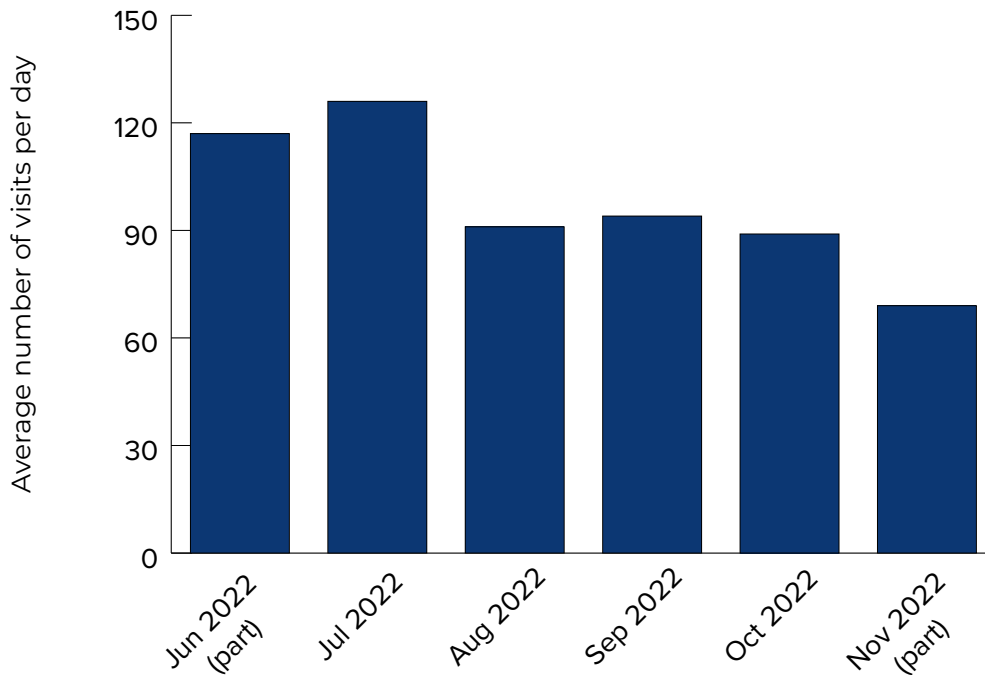
Estimated
Annual Use

28,939

Daily Average Use
during the Summer

110

**Daily Average Use by Month
(June 2022-November 2022)**



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
June 2022 (part)	2,688	117
July 2022	3,915	126
August 2022	2,816	91
September 2022	2,834	94
October 2022	2,763	89
November 2022 (part)	1,166	69
Recorded	16,182	73
Estimated Annual Use	28,939	79

Pattersonville

Schenectady County

Installed July 16, 2022 - December 31, 2022

This counter was installed near the newly installed trailhead in Pattersonville. The paved trail was constructed in 2020 as part of the Empire State Trail project. The trail directly east of the counter was closed in November 2022 for the installation of a concrete box tunnel under a CSX rail line.

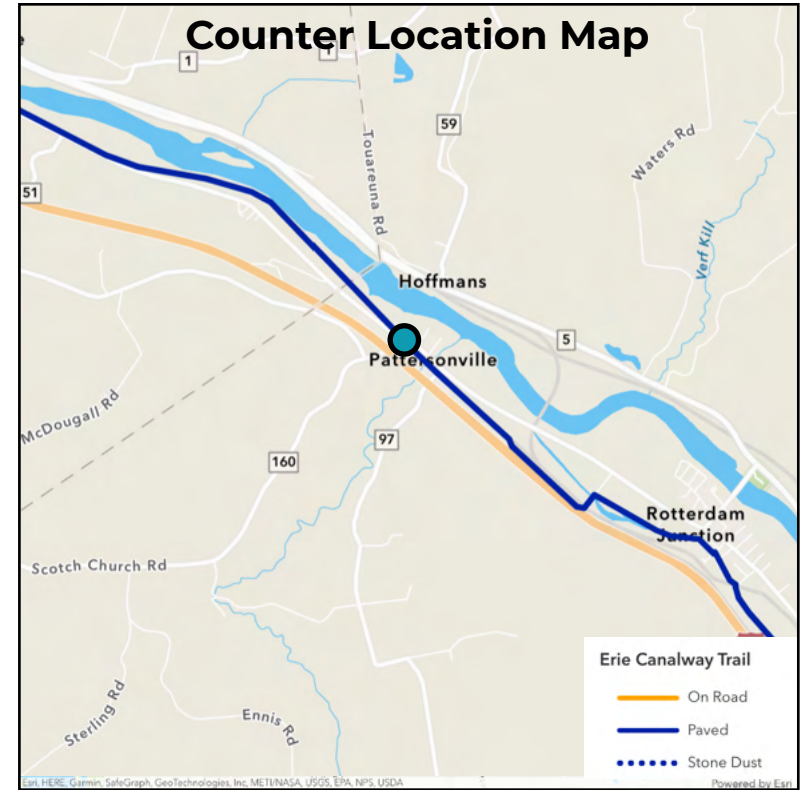
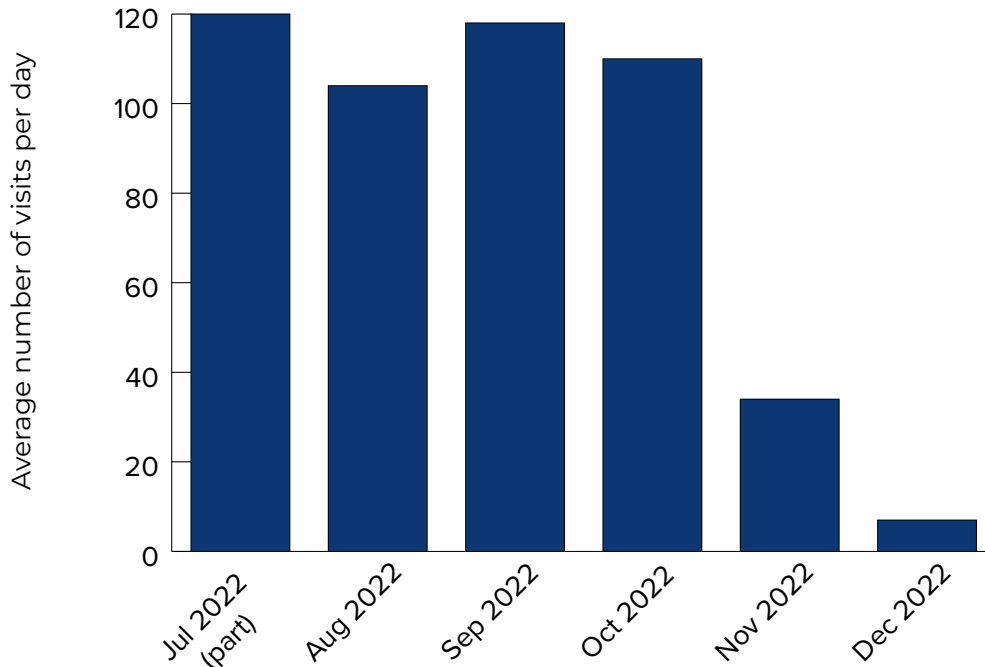
Estimated
Annual Use

28,526

Daily Average Use
during the Summer

109

Daily Average Use by Month
(July 2022-December 2022)



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
July 2022 (part)	1,922	120
August 2022	3,236	104
September 2022	3,525	118
October 2022	3,415	110
November 2022	1,021	34
December 2022	223	7
Recorded	13,342	77
Estimated Annual Use	28,526	78

Watervliet

Albany County

Installed September 10, 2021 - December 31, 2022

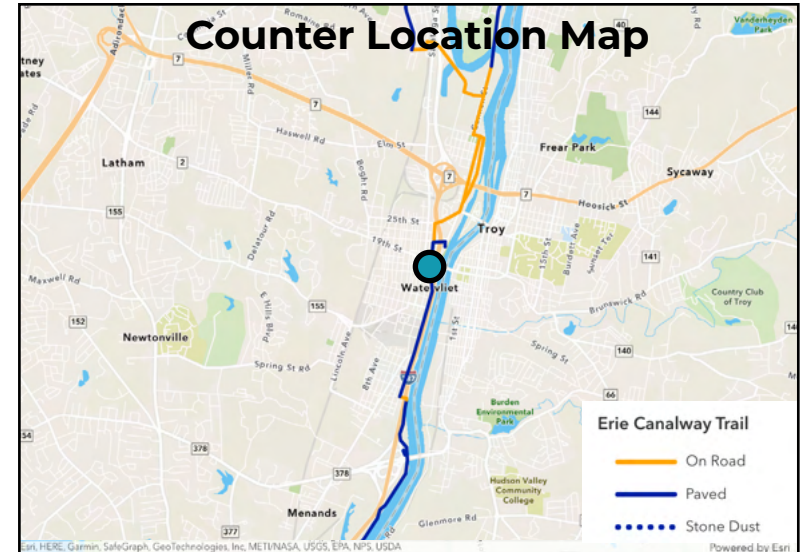
The counter was installed in the city of Watervliet on the Broadway Cycle Track across from 16th Street. This cycle track was constructed in 2020, closing a major gap in the system and connecting the cities of Troy and Albany. This section is located directly adjacent to Interstate 787. Pedestrian use in this location may be lessened by the presence of sidewalks on the opposite side of Broadway from the cycle track, alongside the commercial and residential areas of Watervliet.

Estimated Annual Use

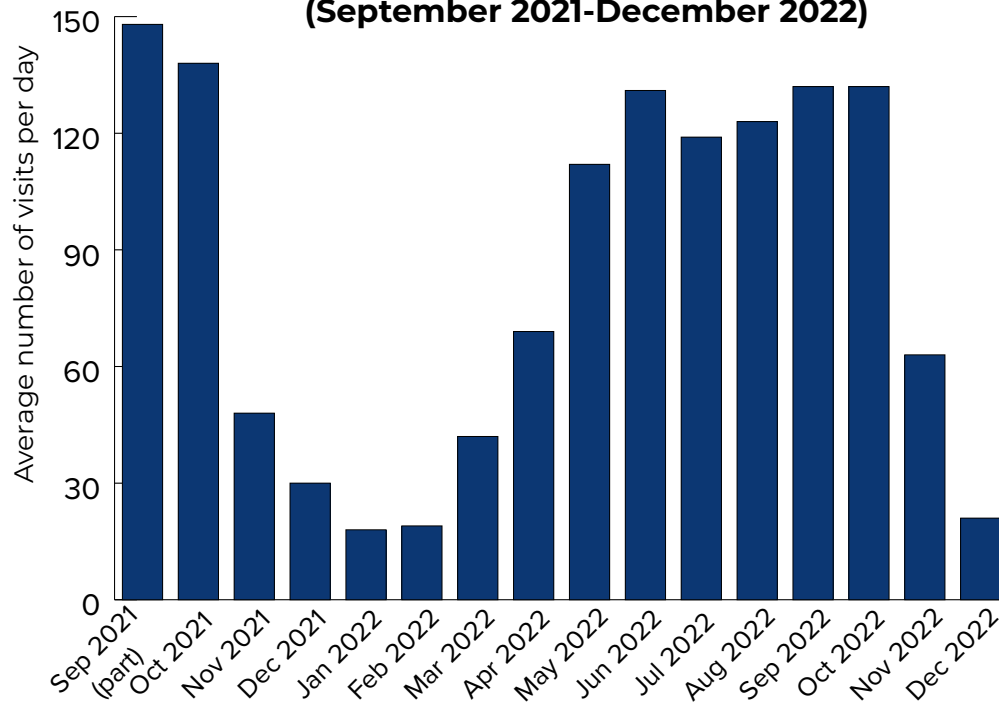
32,616

Daily Average Use during the Summer

125



Daily Average Use by Month (September 2021-December 2022)



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
September 2021 (part)	3,110	148
October 2021	4,280	138
November 2021	1,435	48
December 2021	944	30
January 2022	547	18
February 2022	524	19
March 2022	1,316	42
April 2022	2,083	69
May 2022	3,479	112
June 2022	3,925	131
July 2022	3,703	119
August 2022	3,825	123
September 2022	3,951	132
October 2022	4,107	132
November 2022	1,892	63
December 2022	651	21
Recorded	39,772	83
Last 365 Days	30,003	82
Estimated Annual Use	32,616	89

Kingsbury

Washington County

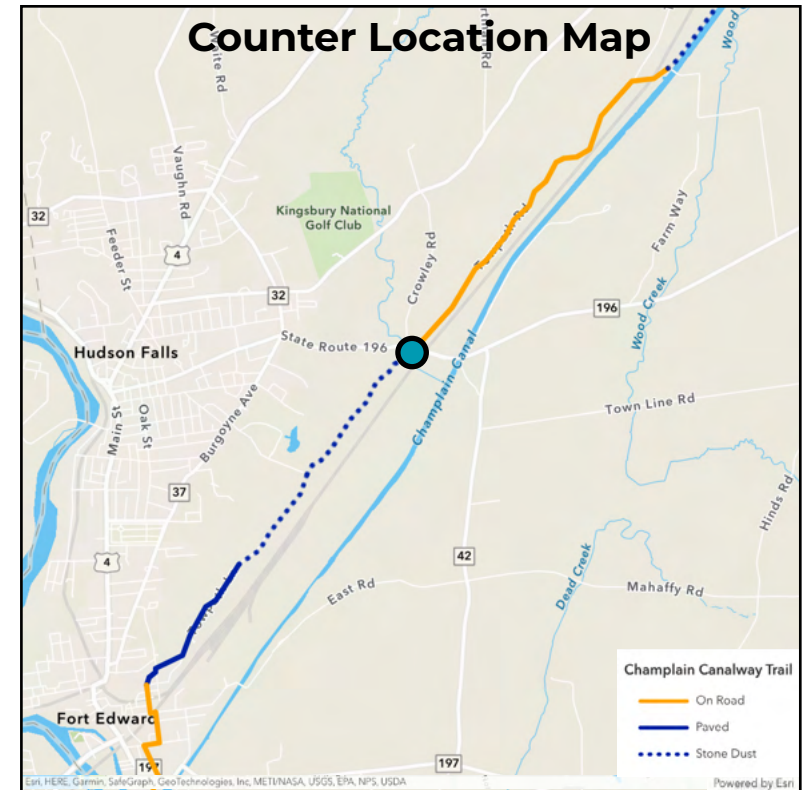
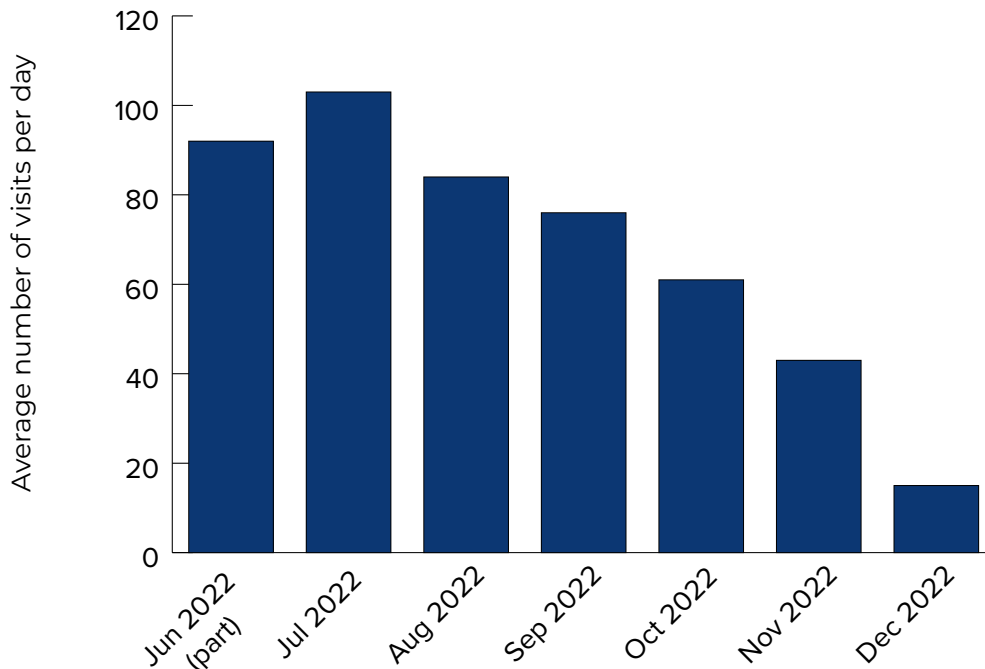
Installed June 4, 2022 - December 31, 2022

The counter was installed in Kingsbury on the Champlain Canalway Trail, just south of NYS Route 196. This section of trail was constructed in 2020 as part of the Empire State Trail project. The trail here is easily accessible from the small conurbation of Glens Falls, Fort Edward and Hudson Falls.

Estimated
Annual Use
22,225

Daily Average Use
during the Summer
93

**Daily Average Use by Month
(June 2022-December 2022)**



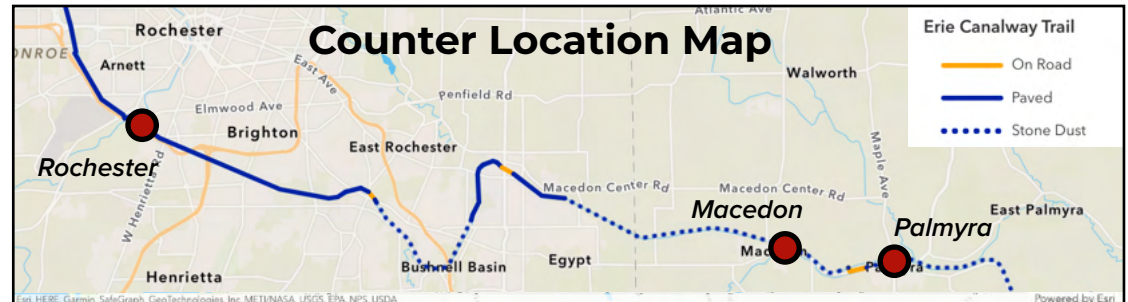
Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
June 2022 (part)	2,487	92
July 2022	3,188	103
August 2022	2,612	84
September 2022	2,275	76
October 2022	1,897	61
November 2022	1,287	43
December 2022	460	15
Recorded	14,206	64
Estimated Annual Use	22,225	61

Partner Counts

PTNY partner organizations conducted counts at five additional locations along the Canalway Trail in 2022. The Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) performed counts for roughly one month each at three locations - Palmyra, Macedon and Rochester, and the Hudson River Valley Greenway (HRVG) installed counters for one year in Waterford and Fort Ann along the Champlain Canalway Trail.

Genesee Transportation Council

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Rochester area, the Genesee Transportation Council performs short-term counts on trails and other bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout their service area. As part of this work, counters were installed along the trail in Macedon and Palmyra in Wayne County in April 2022, and in Rochester at the junction of the Erie Canalway Trail and the Lehigh Valley Trail in May 2022.



Rochester

Installed May 1 - June 5, 2022

Macedon

Installed April 1 - 29, 2022

Palmyra

Installed April 1 - 29, 2022

Estimated
Annual
Use

183,417

24,891

13,627

Daily
Recorded
Average

630

91

50

Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2022	18,665	622
June 2022 (part)	4,029	806
Recorded	22,694	630
Estimated Annual Use	183,417	502

Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
April 2022 (part)	2,625	91
Recorded	2,625	91
Estimated Annual Use	24,891	68

Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
April 2022 (part)	1,437	50
Recorded	1,437	50
Estimated Annual Use	24,891	68

Hudson River Valley Greenway

The Hudson River Valley Greenway, a NYS agency, directly supervised the completion of the Empire State Trail, and installed counters at locations along the north-south leg of the Empire State Trail, including two counters on the Champlain Canalway Trail for a full year - in Waterford starting in November 2021, and in Fort Ann starting in December 2021. These counters were installed along stone dust sections of trail, with the Waterford counter close to heavily populated areas near Albany and Troy, and the Fort Ann counter in a much more rural area northeast of Glens Falls.

Waterford

Installed Dec 1, 2021 - Nov 30, 2022

Fort Ann

Installed Nov 1, 2021 - Oct 31, 2022

Annual
Use

24,267

10,291

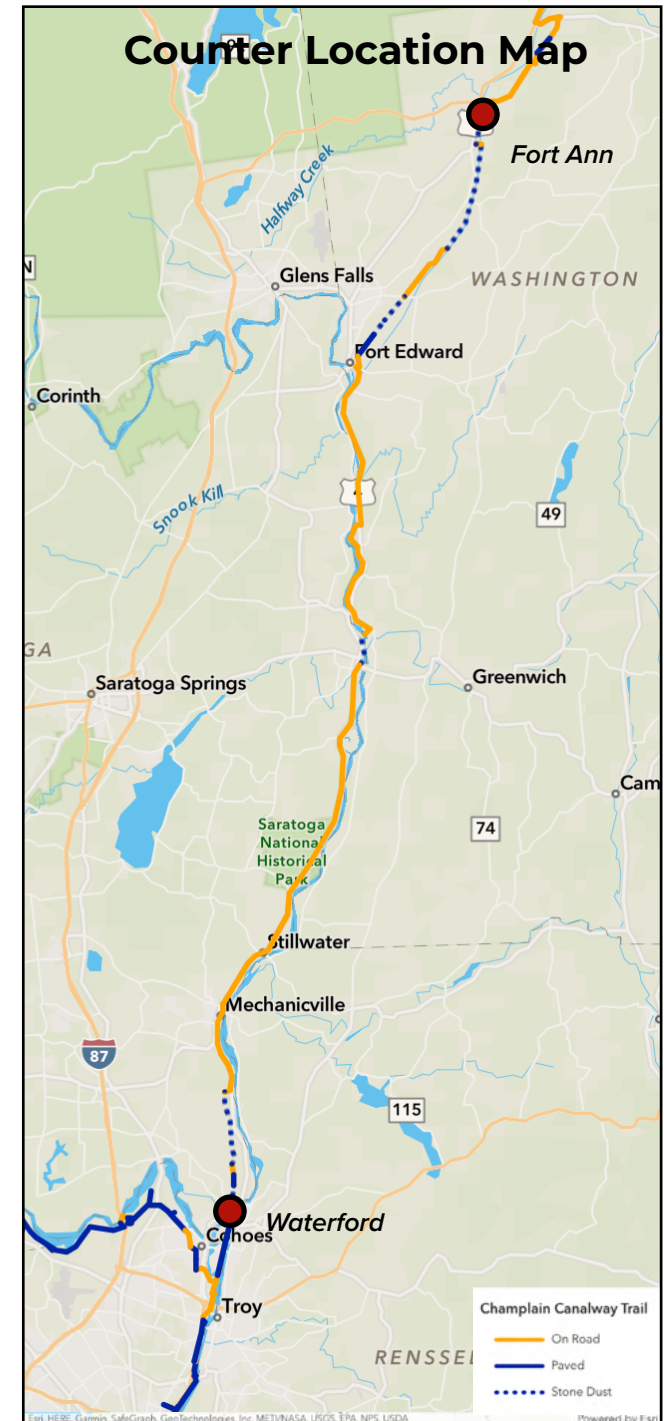
Daily
Summer
Average

88

41

Month	Monthly Use	Daily Avg
Dec 2021	1323	43
Jan 2022	720	23
Feb 2022	464	17
Mar 2022	1372	44
Apr 2022	2342	78
May 2022	3202	103
Jun 2022	2918	97
Jul 2022	2668	86
Aug 2022	2443	79
Sep 2022	2469	82
Oct 2022	2613	84
Nov 2022	1733	58
Recorded Annual Use	24,267	66

Month	Monthly Use	Daily Avg
Nov 2021	577	19
Dec 2021	230	7
Jan 2022	159	5
Feb 2022	493	18
Mar 2022	627	20
Apr 2022	1055	35
May 2022	1006	32
Jun 2022	1000	33
Jul 2022	1508	49
Aug 2022	1133	37
Sep 2022	1384	46
Oct 2022	1119	36
Recorded Annual Use	10,291	28



Manual Counts

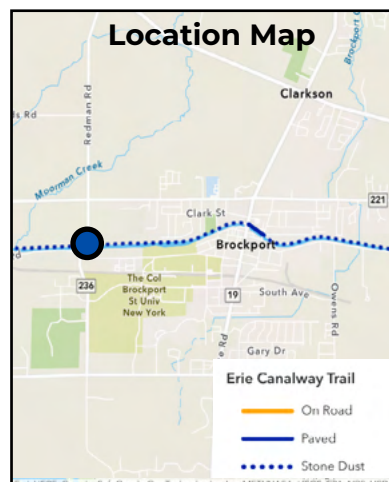
In addition to electronic counters, PTNY recruited volunteers to collect trail use data manually. Manual counts were conducted at six sites: one in Brockport, one in Rochester, three in Perinton, and one in Syracuse. These manual counts created the opportunity to better understand the types of visitors using the trail at each location.

Brockport

Redman Road

7/12/22, 7/16/22, 7/19/22, 7/23/22

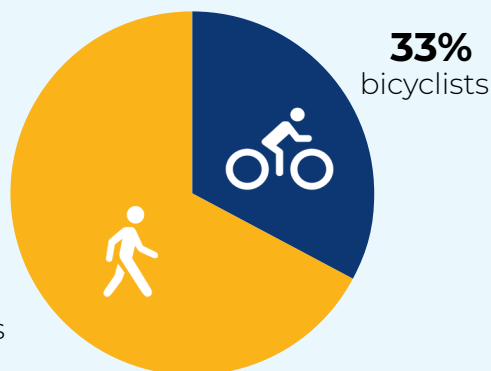
Volunteers counted trail use along the Erie Canalway Trail on the western border of the village of Brockport, where Redman Road passes over the canal and the trail. This location is farther outside the village than where the electronic counters were placed. A new trailhead and parking area was installed here in 2020 as part of the Empire State Trail upgrades. The trail surface through this section is stonedust.



Estimated Annual Use

66,467

67%
pedestrians

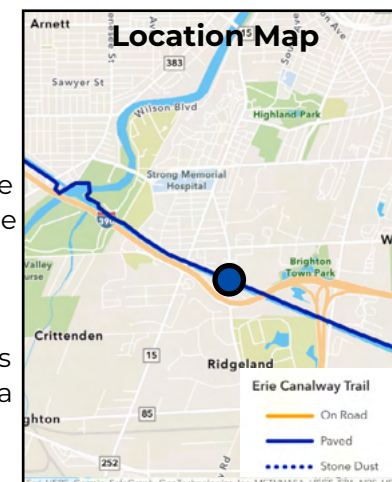


Rochester

East Henrietta Road

8/20/22, 8/25/22

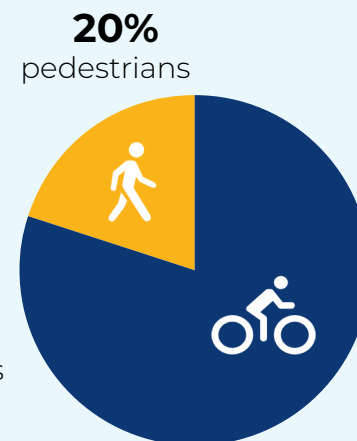
Volunteers counted trail use along the trail at East Henrietta Road in Rochester. This location is right on the edge of the city of Rochester, one of the largest cities along the trail. As such, the trail in this stretch is generally popular as a regional destination. At East Henrietta Road, the Rochester location of the REI Co-op sporting goods store is located adjacent to the trail and offers a number of amenities for trail users.



Estimated Annual Use

210,170

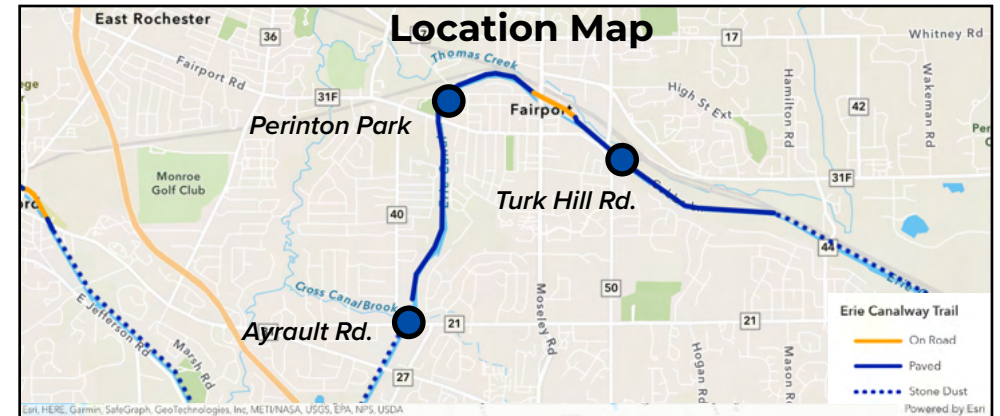
80%
bicyclists



Perinton

Ayrault Road, Perinton Park & Turk Hill Road

Manual counts were conducted at three locations in the town of Perinton, a suburban town located to the east of Rochester. Counts were centered around, although just outside the boundaries of, the village of Fairport. The trail through this area is paved and is a popular recreational resource for locals and visitors alike.



Ayrault Road

7/26/22, 7/30/22, 8/16/22, 8/20/22

Perinton Park

7/7/22, 7/9/22, 7/14/22, 7/16/22

Turk Hill Road

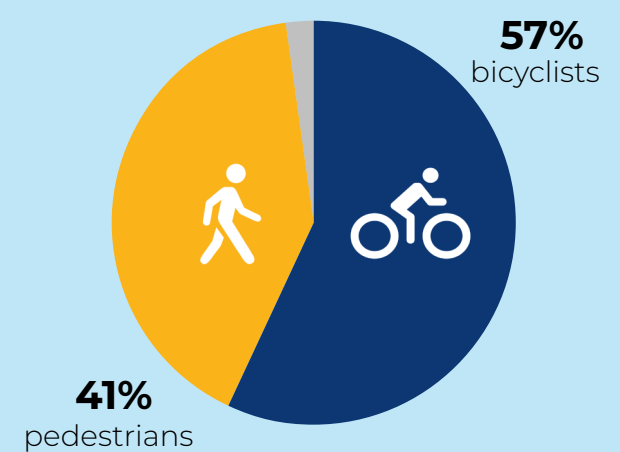
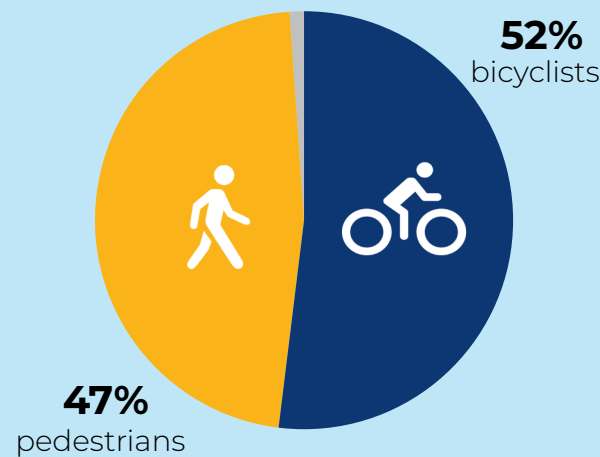
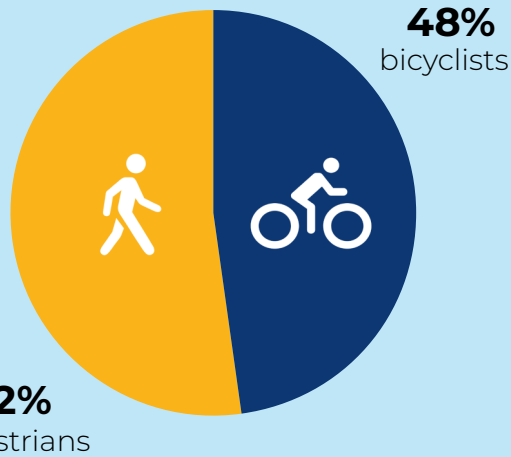
8/14/22, 8/17/22, 8/21/22, 8/24/22

Estimated
Annual
Use

169,371

397,852

157,746

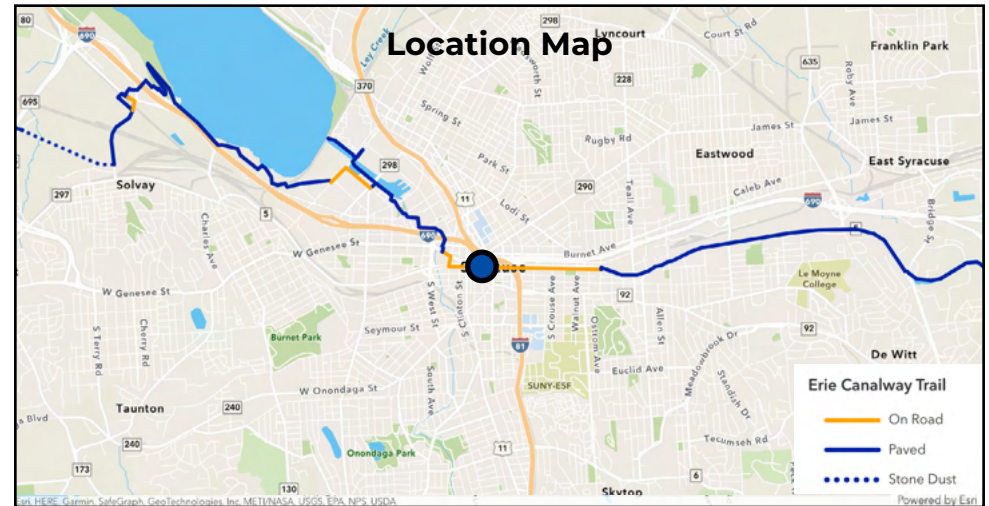


Syracuse

Erie Canal Museum

8/17/22, 8/20/22, 8/24/22, 8/27/22

Volunteers counted trail users in front of the Erie Canal Museum in downtown Syracuse, one of the larger urban centers along the canal. Through this section, a sidewalk serves as the Erie Canalway Trail for pedestrians, while cyclists must ride in the road. This likely accounts for the high ratio of pedestrians to cyclists.

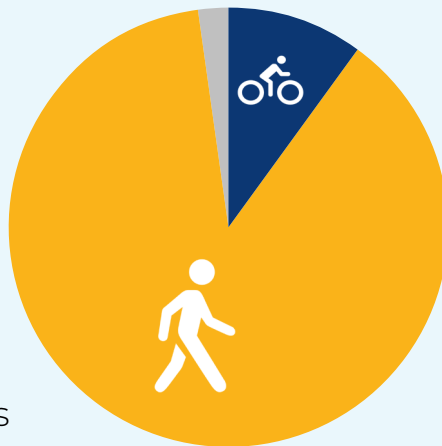


Estimated
Annual Use

165,256

10%
bicyclists

88%
pedestrians

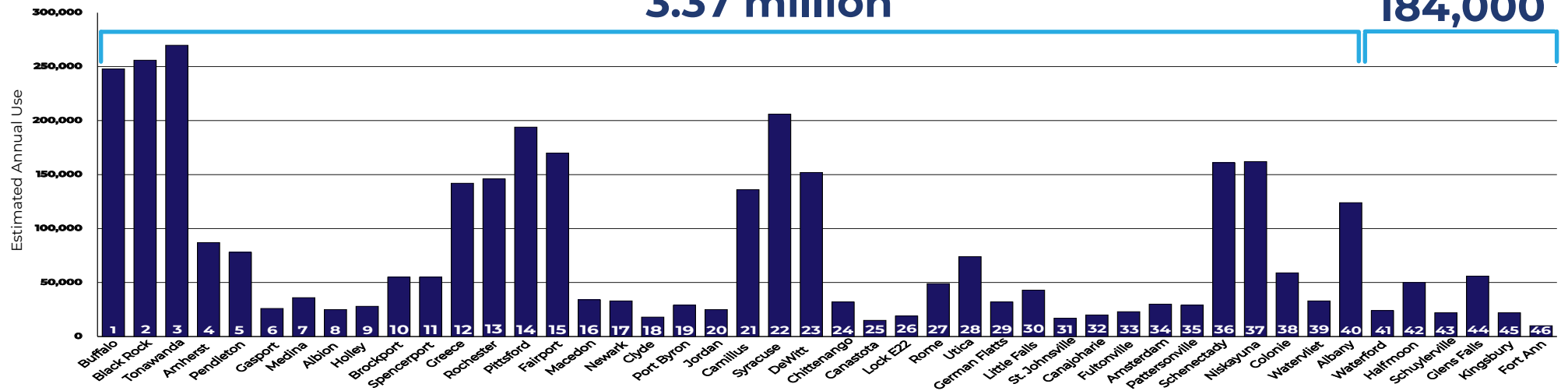


Annual Trail Use Estimate = 3.55 million

Since 2018, PTNY has conducted electronic trail counts at 21 locations along the Canalway Trail. Each of these count sites have produced an annual trail use estimate; taken together, the sites recorded a total of 1,791,545 visits per year across the state. The sites also reveal a correlation between trail use and the population density of the surrounding area, which can be used to estimate trail uses at locations where counts have not yet been performed. Using the estimates from these additional locations, an estimated annual trail visitation figure can be calculated. This figure is a rough estimate, and does not represent the use for any specific year. Rather, the figure is an estimated average annual use figure. Given variations in use due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, this figure will likely drop slightly in future years as additional data is collected.

Erie Canalway Trail
3.37 million

Champlain Canalway Trail
184,000



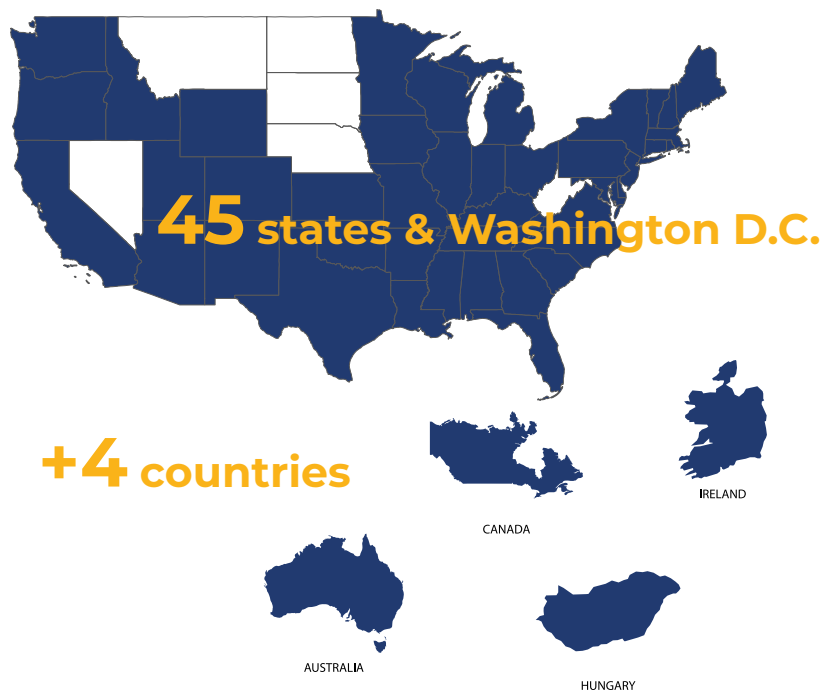
End-to-Enders on the Erie Canalway Trail

Since 2012, PTNY and the Canal Corporation have recognized individuals who complete the entire length of the Erie Canalway Trail. The End-to-End program features cyclists and hikers who have traveled the distance between Albany and Buffalo either in segments or in one multi-day journey. Since the start of the recognition program, over 5,000 travelers have registered. This recognition program has provided invaluable data about the people that travel across the state.

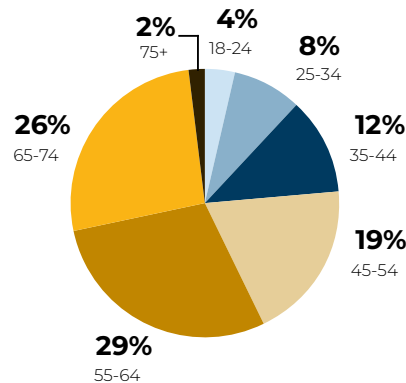
In 2022, over eight hundred people cycled the entire length of the Erie Canalway Trail between Buffalo and Albany. Over 650 completed the challenge with PTNY on the annual Cycle the Erie Canal bike tour, while an additional 162 chose to tackle the adventure on their own. The map reflects both those that joined the tour, and the self-supported travelers, while the other demographic and trip-related data reflect just those that completed the tour on their own and registered with PTNY as end-to-enders.

Demographics

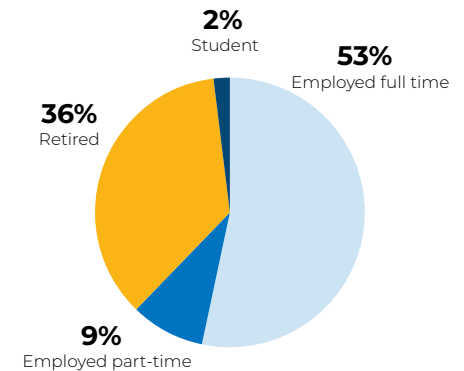
They came from...



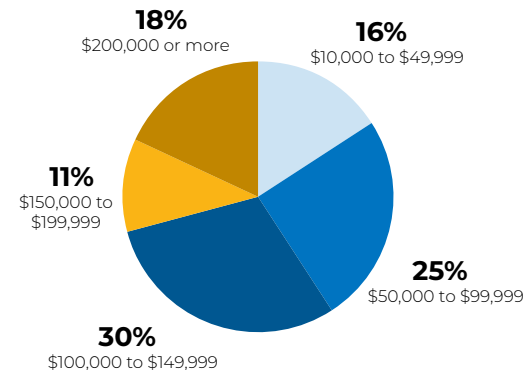
Age



Employment Status

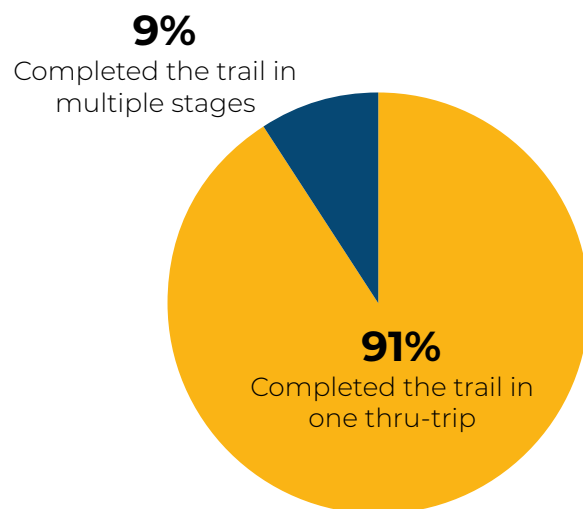


Household Income

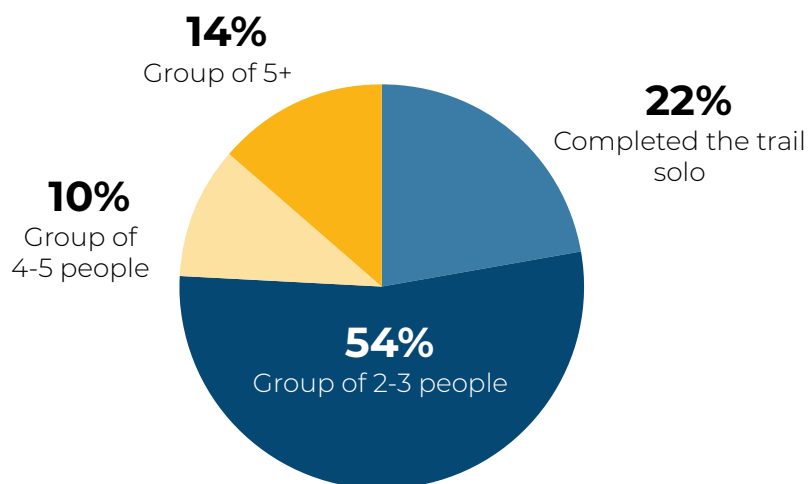


About their trips

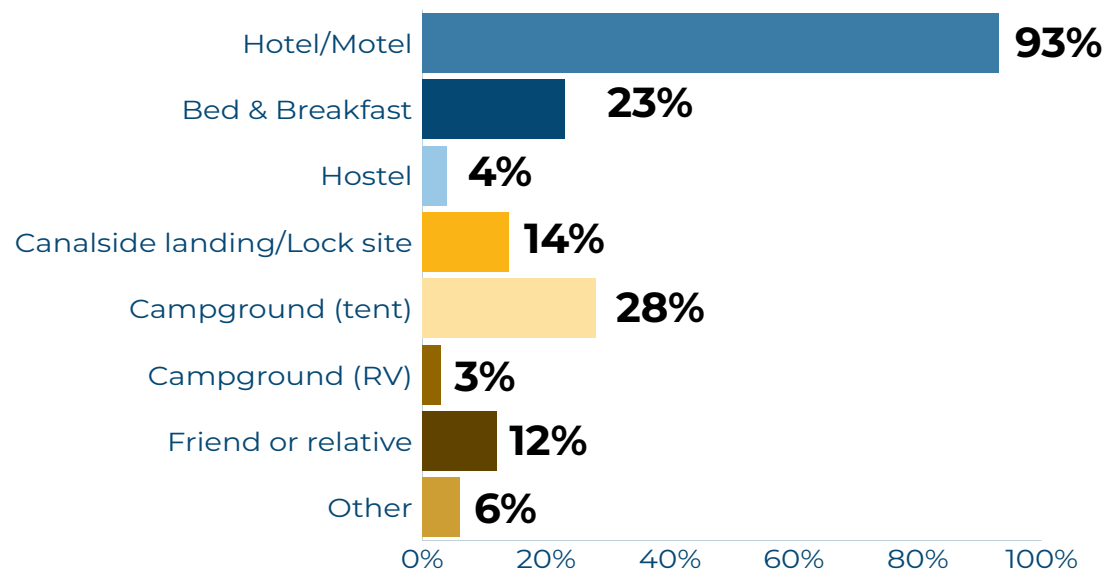
Type of Trip



Group Size



Type of Accommodations



End-to-enders spent an average of...

7 nights on the trail

\$244 per day

Conclusion

The 2022 Who's on the Trail report is the 17th edition of this report. Once again, the trail counts and subsequent analysis demonstrates the statewide popularity of the Canalway Trail system, seeing an estimated 3.3 million visits per year. Investments to the trail including gap closures and resurfacing projects continue to drive visitation. Used heavily by both walkers and bicyclists and enjoyed by locals and visitors alike, the trail system is clearly a major recreational asset for communities across the canal corridor, and it is essential to care for and highlight the ongoing value of these trails.

Looking forward, the 2023 Who's on the Trail report will include additional data from locations where counters are currently installed, plus additional data from new count locations. We hope to find new ways to engage with volunteers to complete in-person trail counts. While these rely more heavily on projections, in-person counts provide valuable data on the modes used by trail users, as well as confirm the accuracy of electronic counts. As we gain additional insight into the nature of trail use, we will be better able to estimate total trail utilization. Continuing to expand the availability of data for the Canalway Trail will provide trail managers with the information needed to spur continued growth in usage and provide a quality experience for all trail users.

Acknowledgements

Parks & Trails New York and the New York State Canal Corporation thank the volunteers who visited the trail on multiple occasions to conduct the user counts –

Kim O'Connell in Brockport

Walter and Mary Ellen Liss in Rochester

Eric Gavelis and Reinald Smith in Perinton

Derrick Pratt, Cynthia Fryer, Dudley Breed, Vicki Krisak, Carol Pratt, and Laurie Sanderson in Syracuse

A special thank you as well to Bob Williams of the Genesee Transportation Council, and to Andy Beers and Scott Keller of the Hudson River Valley Greenway for sharing the data collected in Rochester for use in this report.

