The goal of the Morris Canal Greenway project is to promote public education and open space recreation by working with communities across New Jersey to create a statewide Morris Canal Greenway corridor. Its route will stretch for 102 miles across New Jersey from New York Harbor at Jersey City to Phillipsburg on the Delaware River, passing through six counties and 43 municipalities. To date 44 miles of the route of the canal has been made accessible to the public. The work is a partnership between the Canal Society of New Jersey, the North Jersey Transportation and Planning Authority and dozens of communities and organizations. Among them is the Town of Boonton.

There are many places to visit along the Morris Canal Greenway. However, the Greenway is a work in progress and not all locations are as ready for visitors as others. Here in Boonton a kiosk will be installed this year at the trailhead in Grace Lord Park, followed by interpretive panels at each of the tour locations. The Arch Bridge will eventually be restored and spur trails added. In the meantime enjoy your walk through Boonton Green past the remains of the canal and ironworks. Come back often and watch as the story of Boonton’s historic past comes back to life as a more complete story is told.

When completed in 1831, the canal extended 102 miles across the rugged Highlands of New Jersey, from Phillipsburg on the Delaware River, up to its summit level at Lake Hopatcong, and then down to New York Harbor at Jersey City. To accomplish this, a system of 23 locks and 23 inclined planes was an engineering marvel that enabled canal boats to be raised or lowered up to 100 feet at a time. Several of these inclined sites can be visited today.

Morris Canal Story 1831 –1924

Chartered in 1824, the Morris Canal & Banking Company built a canal that would carry coal, mined in Pennsylvania, to developing markets along the Eastern seaboard. The canal would also pass through the heart of New Jersey’s iron district and provide the long-needed transportation system that would create new commercial activity and enable rustic settlements along its route to grow into thriving industrial towns.

The Morris Canal passes through six North Jersey counties on its 102-mile-long route from the Delaware River to New York Harbor. Listed below are a few of the many other Greenway locations that you can visit.

BERGEN COUNTY
JERSEY CITY
– Hackensack River Canal Basin
– Berry Lane Park

ESSEX COUNTY
Passaic River Greenway trail with wayfinder signs, interpretive panels and Greenway trail app.
– Bloomfield
– Wiggins Field Canal Park
– Oak Tree Lane Canal Park

PASSAIC COUNTY
– Haledon
– Little Falls Morris Canal Park
– Paterson
– Patterson Morris Canal Park
– Wayne
– Parsippany Pompton Aquatic Park

WOOLAND PARK
– Woodland Park Morris Canal Park

SUSSEX COUNTY
Waterloo Valley Greenway Trail with connections to hiking trail in Allamuchy Mountain State Park offers walkers a wide variety of adventures.
– Waterloo Village
– Restored canal town with intact streetscape and canal features. Canal Museum, walking tour and exhibit on Saturdays during the summer.

WARREN COUNTY
– Over ten miles trails, six county Greenway parks as well as many other Greenway locations.

GREENWAY PARKS
– BREAD LOCK PARK
– Site of Lock 7 West, Canal Museum and full size canal boat replica.
– LOCK STREET PARK
– Greenway walking trail.
– MOUNT RASCAL PARK
– Greenway walking trail.

PORT MURRAY PRESERVE
– Site of Plane 5 West and Greenway walking trail.

PORT WARE WARREN HERITAGE AREA
– Plane 5 West, one of the best preserved plane sites. Jim & Mary Lee Museum, restored section of canal prism and Greenway walking trail all centered around the tiny village of Port Warren.

OTHER GREENWAY LOCATIONS
– James Campbell
– The home of African American canal boat captain James Campbell.

PORT COLDEN
– Village walking tour.

PORT DELAWARE ARCH
– Massive stone arch at the Delaware River entrance to the Morris Canal
– Plane 10 West
– Site of Plane 10 West

For additional Greenway information
Canal Society of New Jersey
PO Box 737, Morristown, NJ 07963
web site: www.canalsocietynj.org
e-mail: joe.macasek@canalsocietynj.org
Passaic County: passaiccountrypark/passaic county park system/parks/morris canal greenway.php
Warren County: warrenparks.com/morris-canal-greenway/
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Exploring the Morris Canal Greenway

The route of the Morris Canal stretches for 30 miles across the heart of Morris County with many Greenway sites for you to visit. In addition, the map below includes a few nearby locations in Sussex and Warren Counties that shouldn’t be missed. Many Morris County towns like Boonton, Rockaway and Wharton are also linked to the story of the canal as well as mining districts and iron mine railroads that reached up into hilly areas where the canal couldn’t go. Each of these locations has something interesting to offer.

However, please remember that the greenway is a work in progress and many locations are not as ready for visitors as we would like them to be. In the meantime we have listed, in the box below, a few destinations we know you will enjoy. Boonton, Ledgewood and Wharton are drive-to destinations that are easy to find and have lots of great things to see. Waterloo Village, a restored canal town, can be a whole day activity with historic buildings, Canal Museum, Boat Exhibit and Canal Boat Rides provided by the Canal Society of New Jersey. For hikers looking for adventure there are trails, with Greenway stories to tell, that offer combinations of long and short walks.

Please visit our website for brochures, maps, walking tours and activities. You will also find links to Passaic and Warren County Greenway websites. Stay in touch as we add more locations to our “most-see” list.

Inclined Planes

ABOVE: The Morris Canal’s inclined planes were huge water powered machines that could raise and lower canal boats with 70 tons of cargo as much 70 feet at a time. LEFT: Historic view of Rockaway Borough’s Plane 6 East.

For additional information, brochures, walking maps, a schedule of events and Greenway news visit us on line at: canalsocietynj.org

Some of the best places to visit

Boonton Follow the Greenway loop trail through the Rockaway River Gorge past the remains of the canal and the Boonton Ironworks.

Ledgewood Walk from King’s Canal Store past the site of Inclined Plane 3 East to Canal Park for a tour of Plane 2 East. One of the best preserved of all the canals famous inclined planes.

Wharton Walk the towpath along a water-filled section of canal to the site of Lock 2 East. The lock and lock tender’s house are now being restored. Along the way interpretive panels will tell about life on the canal and canal engineering.

Waterloo Visit a restored canal town with a water-filled section of canal and the preserved homes and businesses of the Smith family. The grounds are open every day and on Saturdays during the summer. The Canal Society of New Jersey’s Canal Museum, Canal Boat Exhibit and canal boat ride are open to the public. Check the CSNJ website for a schedule of events.

AVERAGE: Route of the Morris Canal Greenway across the State of New Jersey. LEFT: A historic view of Lock 1 West at Stanhope. The remains of this lock are now in Lake Musconetcong State Park.