

2024 Who's on the Trail

Erie & Champlain Canalway Trails



Trail Use Count Report

Published May 2025





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.

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
2024 Counts Overview	4
Trail Count Summary & Profiles	5
Amherst	6
Lockport	7
Medina	8
Albion	9
Greece	10
Newark	11
Camillus	12
Dewitt	13
Rome (West)	14
Rome (East)	15
Utica	16
Illion	17
Little Falls	18
Fort Plain	19
Amsterdam	20
Schenectady	21
Albany	22
Peebles Island	23
Schuylerville	24
Trend Analysis	25
Total Trail Use Estimate	28
Canalway Challenge Finisher Statistics	29
Conclusion	31



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 draws visitors from around the world. In 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 by conducting annual Canalway Trail counts. The count process utilizes electronic trail counters installed at selected locations. The counters use infrared pyroelectric technology to count people passing within range of the sensor by detecting body temperature.

In 2024, PTNY counted trail use at seventeen locations along the Erie and Champlain Canalway Trails. These counts were augmented by additional electronic counts performed by two partners. The City of Rome counted visitation at one location along the Erie Canalway Trail and the Hudson River Valley Greenway counted trail use at one location on the Champlain Canalway Trail. This report also provides a snapshot of broad trends observed across 2024. The Canalway Trail is primarily a warm weather resource, with average daily summer use more than doubling use during other seasons at most counter locations. Weekends saw higher use than weekdays, consistent with recreational use commonly seen on the trail.

The counts analyzed in this 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 3.979 million visits per year, including 3.840 million visits to the Erie Canalway Trail and 139,000 visits to the Champlain Canalway Trail. These numbers do not claim to represent the volume of use the trail saw in 2024 alone; rather the numbers represent an annual use estimate for the 2020 to 2024 period based on data collected over the past five years. These estimates are based on longitudinal count data (data collected over time) from electronic counters installed at 39 locations along the trail over the past five years. However, this figure is likely to drop in years to come, as the "bubble" of trail use in 2020 and 2021 associated with the COVID pandemic will no longer be a part of a 5-year calculation period.

Thanks to the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, supporting data collected from 2024's Canalway Challenge finishers is also included to provide additional context to the numerical count data. Challenge finishers include those that complete mileage goals ranging from 1 mile to the full 360-mile trail. Data on Canalway Challenge participants provides information about the demographic composition of trail users as well as trip characteristics. The 2024 data shows that Canalway Challenge finishers traveled from at least 36 different states to visit the trail and spent an average of \$359 across the corridor while working toward their mileage goals.

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

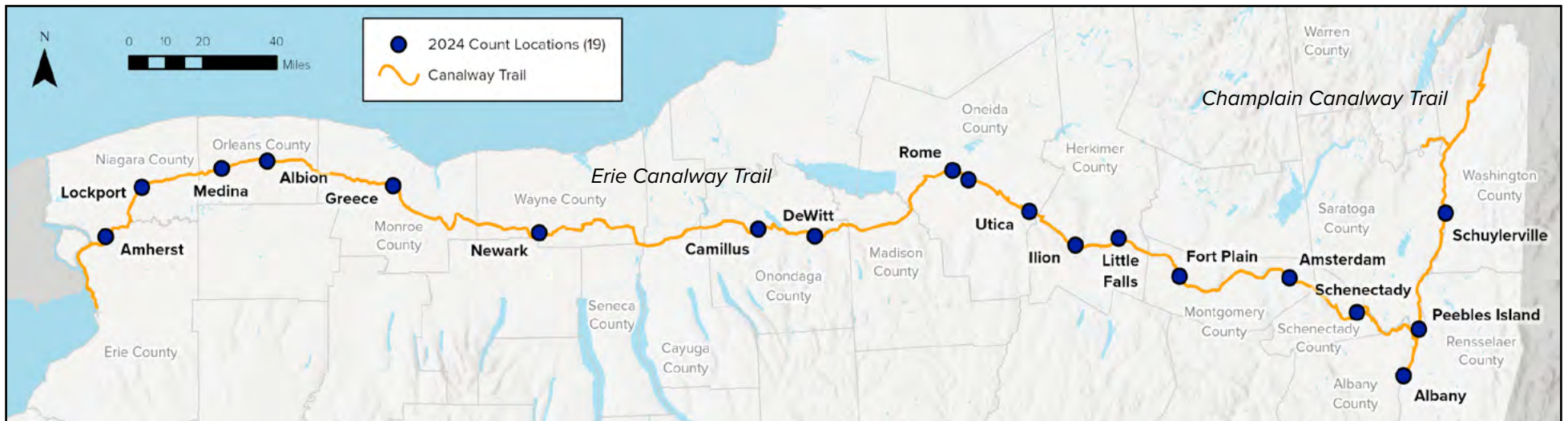
*Note: Additional information on the process used to gather data and standards used to estimate full-year trail use can be found in the companion to this report, *Who's on the Trail: Methodology*, and full data recorded at count locations can be downloaded from PTNY's website at www.ptny.org/trailcounts.*

2024 Counts Overview

Electronic counters recorded trail usage at seventeen locations along the Erie Canalway Trail and at two locations along the Champlain Canalway Trail during 2024. Five counters were installed in May 2023 and removed in April or May 2024, having collected roughly one year's worth of data: Lockport, Newark, Rome, Utica and Fort Plain. One additional counter, in Albany, was installed in August 2023, four (Medina, Albion, Greece and Ilion) in October 2023, and one (Schuylerville) in November 2023—these remained installed throughout the entirety of 2024 and into 2025. Counters were installed in five new locations in April and May 2024: Amherst, Camillus, DeWitt, Little Falls and Amsterdam. Finally, a counter was installed in Schenectady in August 2024. All counters installed in 2024 remained installed into 2025.

In addition to the above counters installed by PTNY, this report includes data from two partner-owned and -managed counters. The City of Rome installed a counter in July 2023 which remained in place through the end of 2024. Hudson River Valley Greenway installed a counter at Peebles Island State Park in Cohoes in November 2023 that collected data through the end of November 2024.

2024 Trail Count Locations Map



Trail Count Summary & Profiles

Data on the following pages summarizes trail use recorded at each of the count sites for 2024, including data available from 2023 where appropriate. Each page provides contextual information on timeframe, duration, and location of counter installation. The location maps show trail surface type (solid blue is paved, dashed blue is stone dust, and orange is on road), and provide additional geographic context for each location.

Count profiles show estimated annual and monthly uses, as well as daily average use by month and daily average use during summer (the months of May, June, July, August, and September). 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).

2024 Trail Use Summary

Electronic Count Locations	Days Installed	Total Observed Use	Average Use by Day (based on annual use)	Estimated Annual Use	Summer			Fall/Winter/Spring		
					Daily average	Weekday average	Weekend average	Daily average	Weekday average	Weekend average
Erie Canalway Trail										
Amherst (April-December 2024)	257	38,362	131	47,672	196	176	238	81	77	89
Lockport (May 2023-April 2024)	339	31,588	96	35,025	165	136	229	44	43	46
Medina (October 2023-December 2024)	435	21,186	52	19,156	82	81	83	31	29	34
Albion (October 2023-December 2024)*	386	9,604	29	10,674	59	55	67	12	11	15
Greece (October 2023-December 2024)	435	20,729	51	18,720	103	90	131	18	18	17
Newark (May 2023-May 2024)	375	38,869	103	37,529	152	144	170	67	67	66
Camillus (May-December 2024)	225	68,873	273	99,854	384	371	412	193	186	208
DeWitt (May-December 2024)	225	99,259	395	144,139	548	524	601	287	275	311
Rome (West) - Old Erie Canal SHP (May 2023-May 2024)	376	13,078	35	12,610	58	58	59	17	17	17
Rome (East) - Martin Street (July 2023-December 2024)	540	24,603	45	16,540	63	66	58	32	34	28
Utica (May 2023-May 2024)	378	35,138	92	33,663	129	134	117	65	75	44
Ilion (October 2023-December 2024)	436	31,006	77	28,009	138	135	146	35	34	36
Little Falls (May-December 2024)*	176	14,882	85	31,090	126	117	147	46	42	55
Fort Plain (May 2023-May 2024)	377	28,314	75	27,217	116	113	123	43	46	39
Amsterdam (May-December 2024)	225	22,357	89	32,461	134	129	146	49	51	44
Schenectady (August-December 2024)	134	16,851	147	53,844	223	207	258	81	84	77
Albany (August 2023-December 2024)	511	189,145	379	138,578	554	502	669	246	223	295
Champlain Canalway Trail										
Peebles Island (November 2023-November 2024)	386	70,272	185	67,518	255	243	281	134	128	148
Schuylerville (November 2023-December 2024)	426	33,649	85	30,910	113	118	100	60	55	72

*Data excluded due to data errors for Albion June 17, 2024 to August 4, 2024 and for Little Falls June 28, 2024 to August 15, 2024

Amherst

Erie County

Installed April 19, 2024 - December 31, 2024

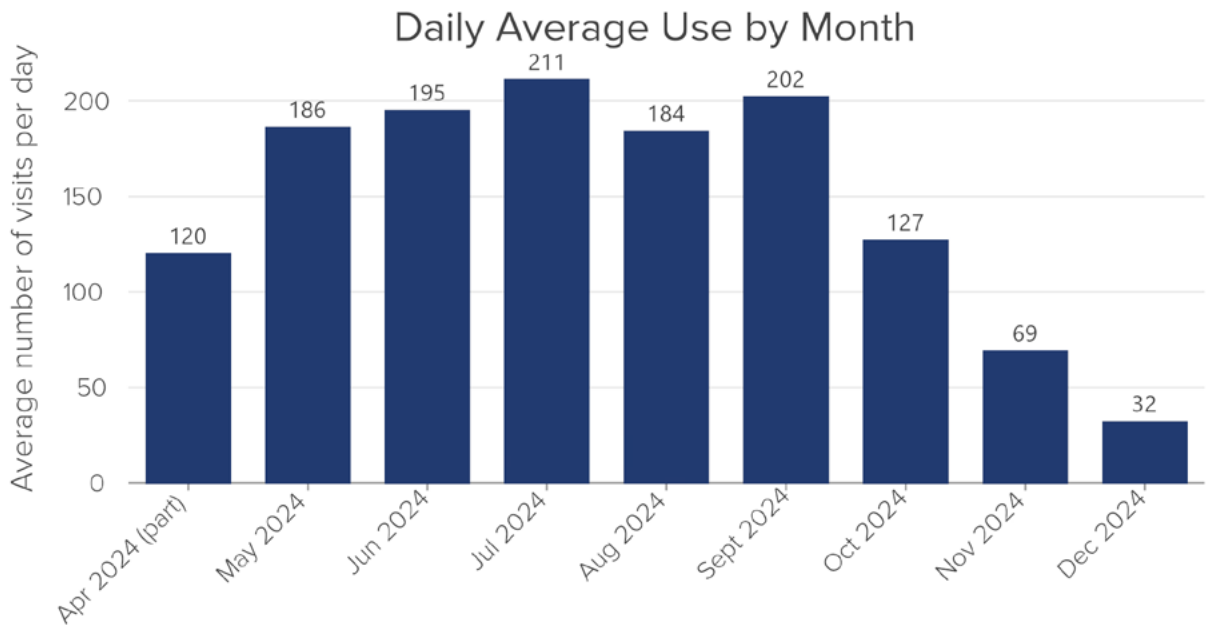
The counter was installed just west of where the trail crosses Tonawanda Creek Road west of the intersection with Niagara Falls Boulevard in the town of Amherst. The trail in this stretch is paved and largely off-road, with a few short stretches of on-road riding interspersed. The counter is located roughly 17 miles by trail from the western end of the Erie Canalway Trail in Buffalo and is close to the cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda.



Estimated
Annual Use
47,672



Average Daily Use
during the Summer
196



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Apr 2024 (part)	1,440	120
May 2024	5,763	186
Jun 2024	5,858	195
Jul 2024	6,537	211
Aug 2024	5,703	184
Sept 2024	6,065	202
Oct 2024	3,925	127
Nov 2024	2,067	69
Dec 2024	1,004	32

Lockport

Niagara County

Installed May 16, 2023 - April 18, 2024

The counter was installed just east of the Mill Street trail crossing on the east side of Lockport as part of the 2023 Empire State Trail Town program. This stone dust surface section of trail, is proximate to the west end of a 90-mile continuous stretch of off-road trail running from Lockport east past Rochester to Buffalo which features few, minor on-road segments.

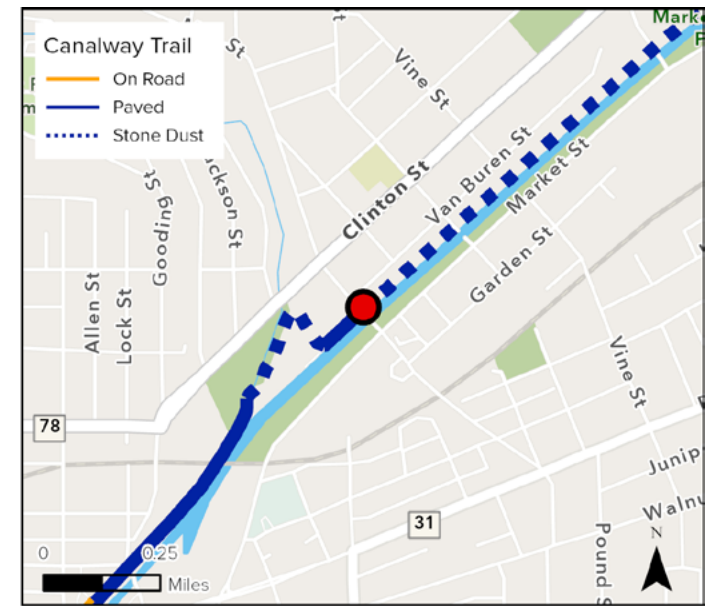
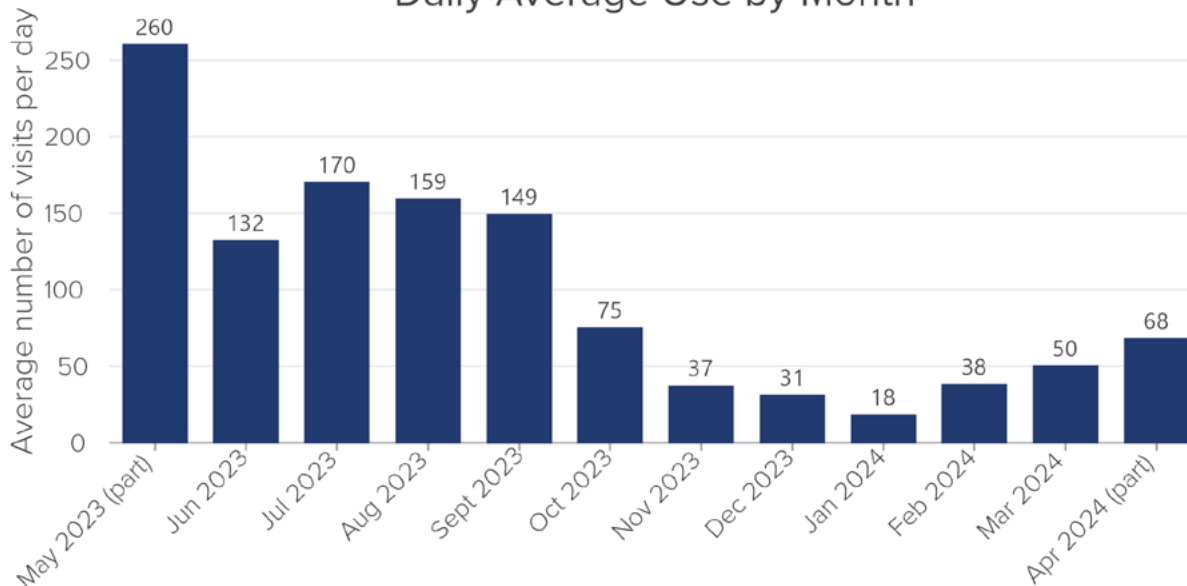


Estimated
Annual Use
35,025

Average Daily Use
during the Summer

165

Daily Average Use by Month



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2023 (part)	4,158	260
Jun 2023	3,962	132
Jul 2023	5,277	170
Aug 2023	4,928	159
Sept 2023	4,466	149
Oct 2023	2,312	75
Nov 2023	1,102	37
Dec 2023	952	31
Jan 2024	552	18
Feb 2024	1,108	38
Mar 2024	1,552	50
Apr 2024 (part)	1,219	68

Medina

Orleans County

Installed October 24, 2023 - December 31, 2024

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

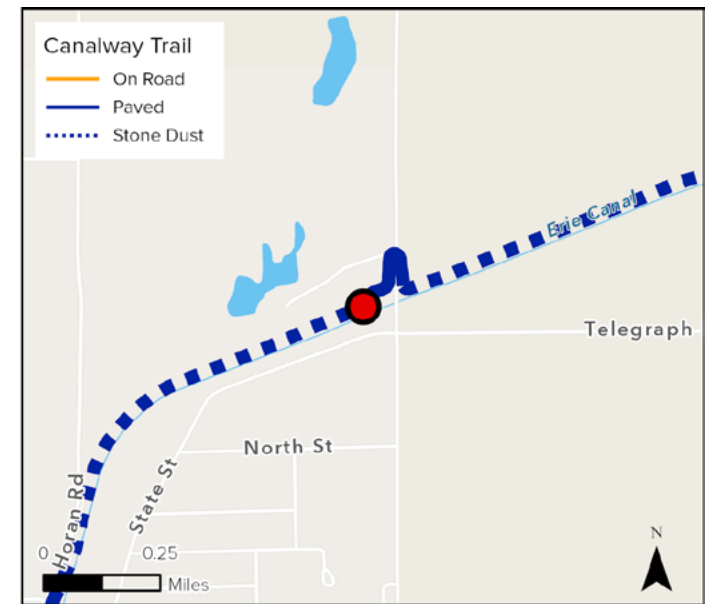
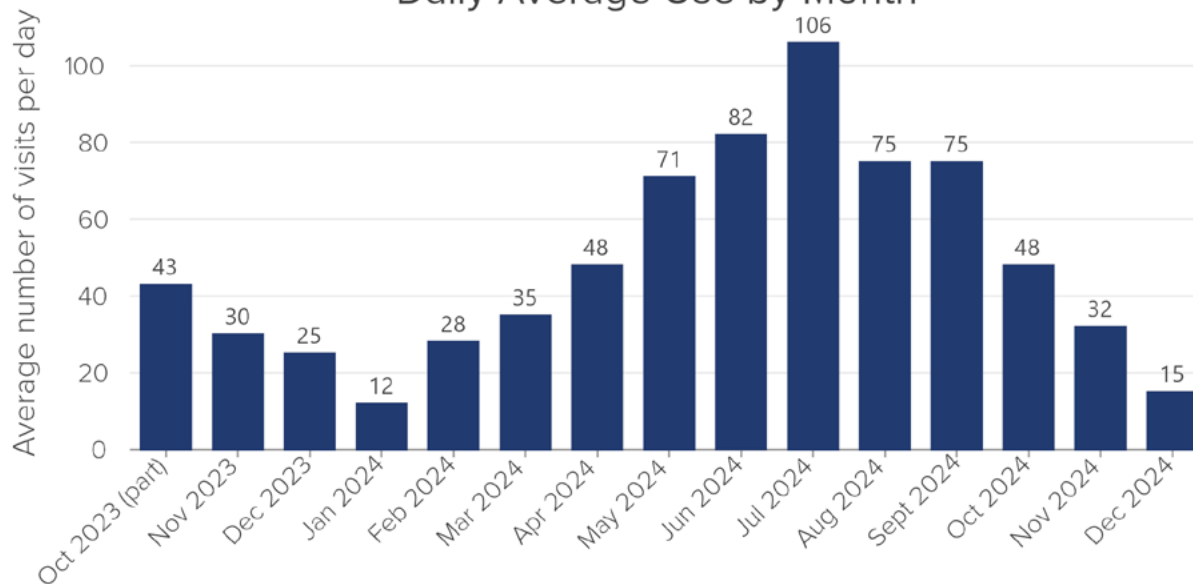


Estimated
Annual Use
19,156

Average Daily Use
during the Summer

82

Daily Average Use by Month



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Oct 2023 (part)	347	43
Nov 2023	905	30
Dec 2023	770	25
Jan 2024	369	12
Feb 2024	816	28
Mar 2024	1,092	35
Apr 2024	1,447	48
May 2024	2,196	71
Jun 2024	2,450	82
Jul 2024	3,273	106
Aug 2024	2,330	75
Sept 2024	2,245	75
Oct 2024	1,501	48
Nov 2024	973	32
Dec 2024	472	15

Albion

Orleans County

Installed October 24, 2023 - December 31, 2024

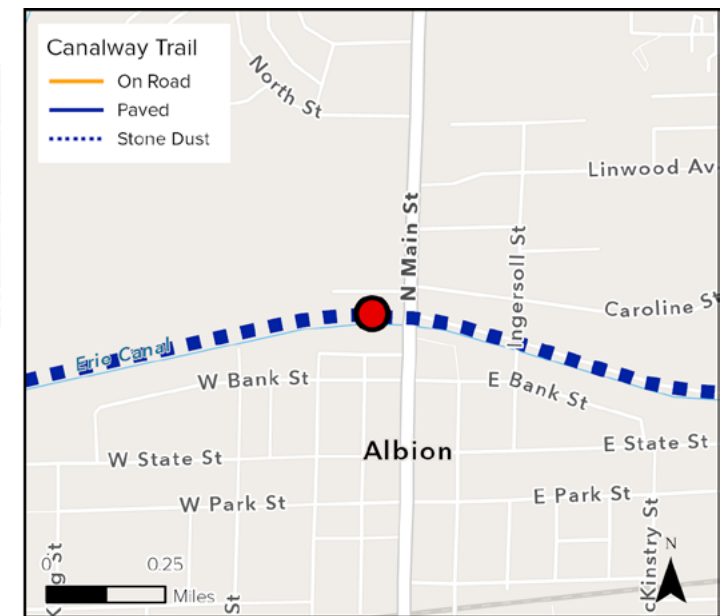
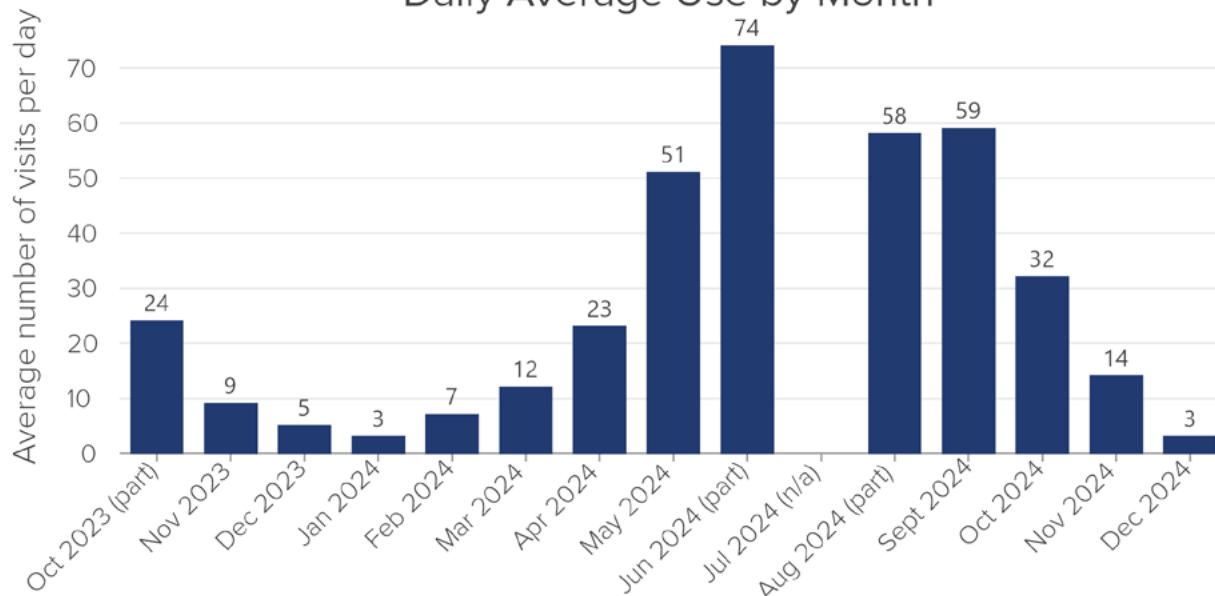
The counter was installed just west of Main Street. East of this point, the Main Street Lift Bridge (closed for reconstruction from 2023 into 2024) crosses the canal. The trail surface through this section is primarily stone dust. The surrounding area is rural, with the village located about halfway between the urban centers of Buffalo and Rochester. Likely due to impacts from construction, data at this location was unreliable between June 17 and August 4, 2024, and has been excluded from analysis. Construction near this site may also have resulted in trail use being lower than might otherwise be expected.



Estimated
Annual Use
10,674

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
59

Daily Average Use by Month



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Oct 2023 (part)	194	24
Nov 2023	274	9
Dec 2023	168	5
Jan 2024	94	3
Feb 2024	214	7
Mar 2024	367	12
Apr 2024	677	23
May 2024	1,591	51
Jun 2024 (part)	1,186	74
Jul 2024 (n/a)		
Aug 2024 (part)	1,561	58
Sept 2024	1,773	59
Oct 2024	1,002	32
Nov 2024	409	14
Dec 2024	94	3

Greece

Monroe County

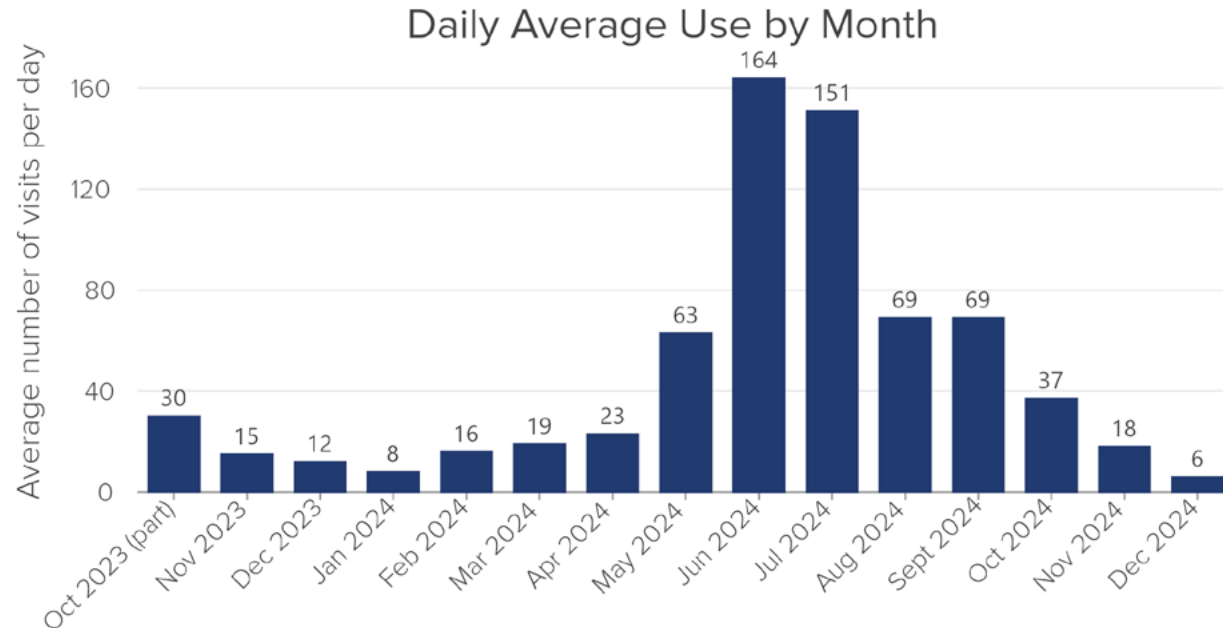
Installed October 24, 2023 - December 31, 2024

The counter was installed on one of the approach ramps leading from the trail on the canal's south side to Long Pond Road, which carries the trail over the canal to the north side where it continues to the west. The trail in this section is paved from Long Pond Road east into the city of Rochester. As there are two usable approaches from the trail to Long Pond Road, the counter is likely only capturing a portion of total trail users at this location.



Estimated
Annual Use
18,720

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
103



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Oct 2023 (part)	242	30
Nov 2023	456	15
Dec 2023	380	12
Jan 2024	259	8
Feb 2024	468	16
Mar 2024	587	19
Apr 2024	691	23
May 2024	1,967	63
Jun 2024	4,922	164
Jul 2024	4,693	151
Aug 2024	2,134	69
Sept 2024	2,078	69
Oct 2024	1,136	37
Nov 2024	534	18
Dec 2024	182	6

Newark

Wayne County

Installed May 11, 2023 - May 19, 2024

The counter was installed west of Newark in Harder Canal Park as part of the 2023 Empire State Trail Town program. The specific location is under the bridge carrying Whitbeck Road over the Canal. The trail section is paved from Harder Canal Park east into Newark, and is stone dust west to Palmyra towards Rochester.

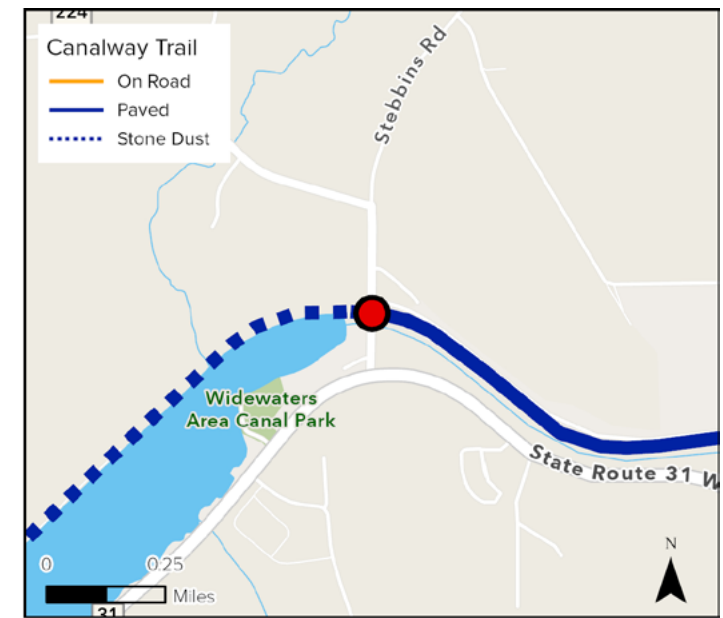
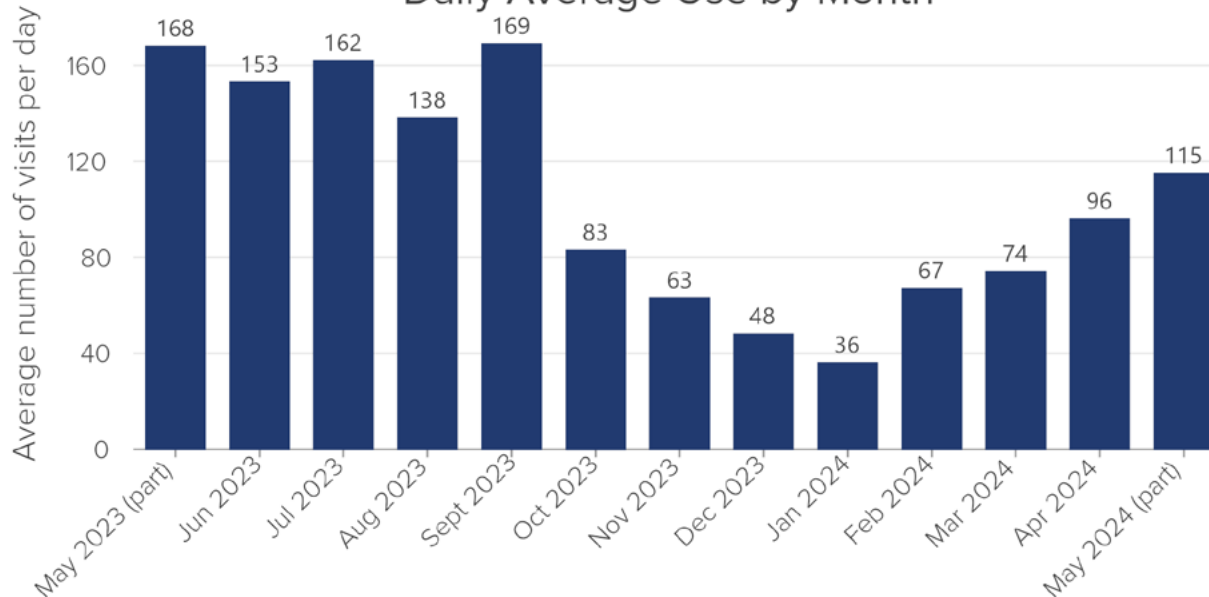


Estimated
Annual Use
37,529

Average Daily Use
during the Summer

152

Daily Average Use by Month



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2023 (part)	3,522	168
Jun 2023	4,591	153
Jul 2023	5,037	162
Aug 2023	4,272	138
Sept 2023	5,071	169
Oct 2023	2,572	83
Nov 2023	1,883	63
Dec 2023	1,479	48
Jan 2024	1,128	36
Feb 2024	1,932	67
Mar 2024	2,307	74
Apr 2024	2,889	96
May 2024 (part)	2,186	115

Camillus

Onondaga County

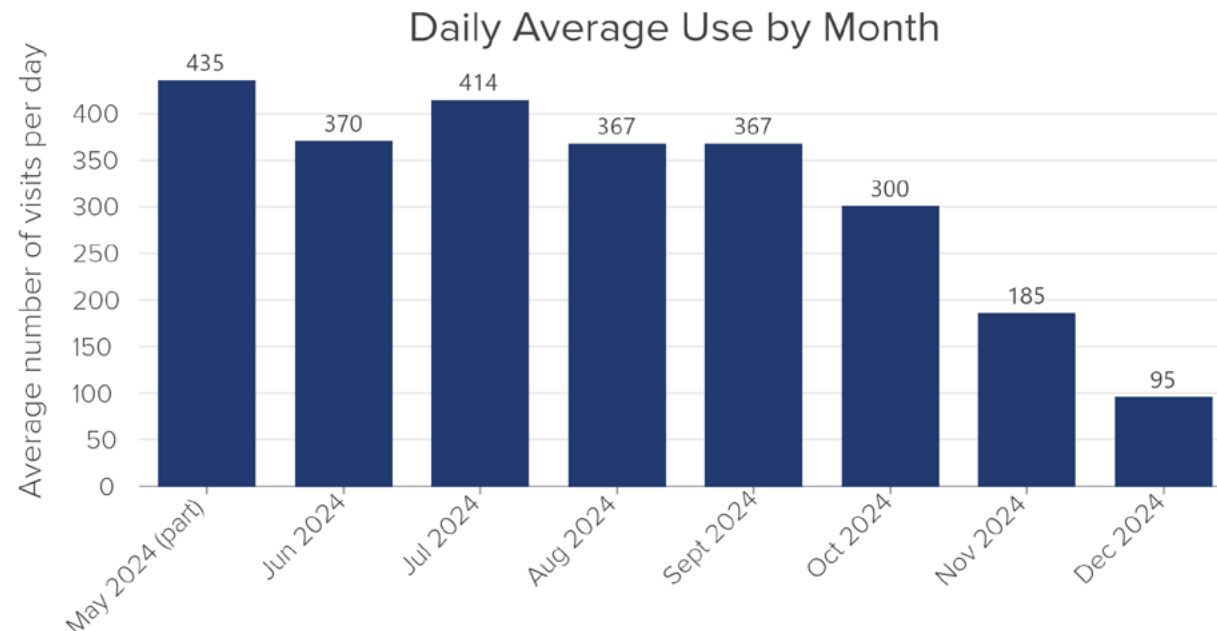
Installed May 21, 2024 - December 31, 2024

The counter was installed just west of the crossing of Warners Road/NYS Route 173 in the town of Camillus. A counter was previously installed roughly two miles west of this location at Erie Canal Park from June 2016 to June 2017 and again from June 2019 to December 2020. There is a significant parking area used by trail users in Reed Webster Park on the east side of NYS Route 173. This section of trail is just west of Syracuse, and is connected to a stretch of trail built as part of the Empire State Trail project completed in 2020 that largely removed any need for on-road riding for trail users through Syracuse.



Estimated
Annual Use
99,854

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
384



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2024 (part)	4,782	435
Jun 2024	11,096	370
Jul 2024	12,826	414
Aug 2024	11,372	367
Sept 2024	11,013	367
Oct 2024	9,289	300
Nov 2024	5,542	185
Dec 2024	2,953	95

DeWitt

Onondaga County

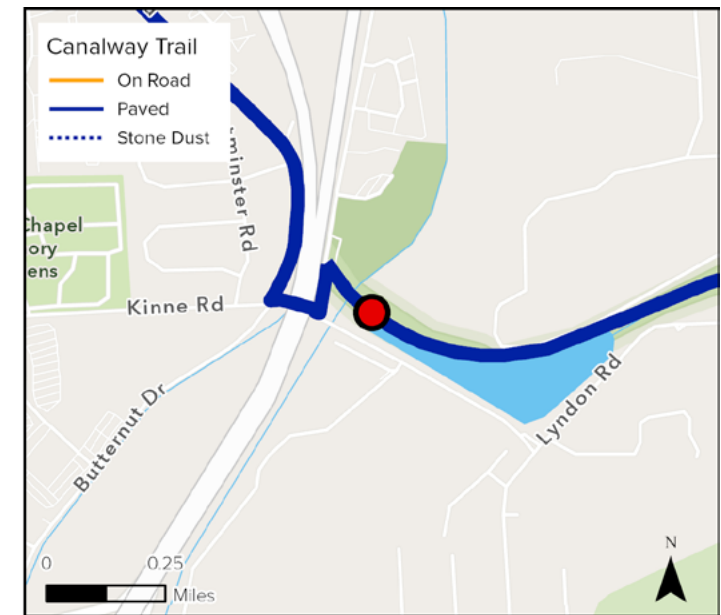
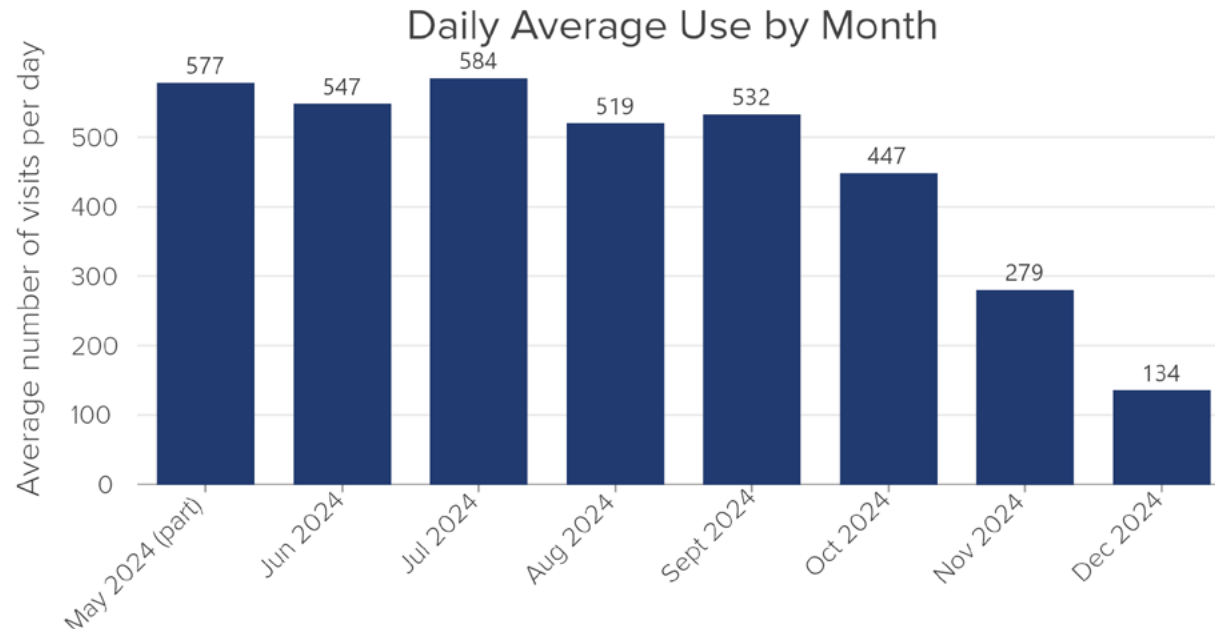
Installed May 21, 2024 - December 31, 2024

The counter was installed just in Old Erie Canal State Historic Park, east of Butternut Drive in the town of DeWitt. A counter was previously installed at this location from June 2016 to June 2017 and again from June 2019 to December 2020. This section of trail is just east of Syracuse, and is connected to a stretch of trail built as part of the Empire State Trail project completed in 2020 that largely removed any need for on-road riding for trail users through Syracuse.



Estimated
Annual Use
144,139

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
548



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2024 (part)	6,346	577
Jun 2024	16,414	547
Jul 2024	18,096	584
Aug 2024	16,076	519
Sept 2024	15,951	532
Oct 2024	13,867	447
Nov 2024	8,355	279
Dec 2024	4,154	134

Rome (West)

Oneida County

Installed May 11, 2023 - May 19, 2024

Two counters were installed in Rome as part of the Empire State Trail Town program in 2023. The first counter was installed at the eastern end of Old Erie Canal State Historic Park, on the west side of Rome. Old Erie Canal State Historic Park features a stone dust surface for most of its 32 miles between Syracuse and Rome. The trail from the counter's location east into the city of Rome was in poor condition throughout 2023, but was resurfaced and reopened in early 2024.

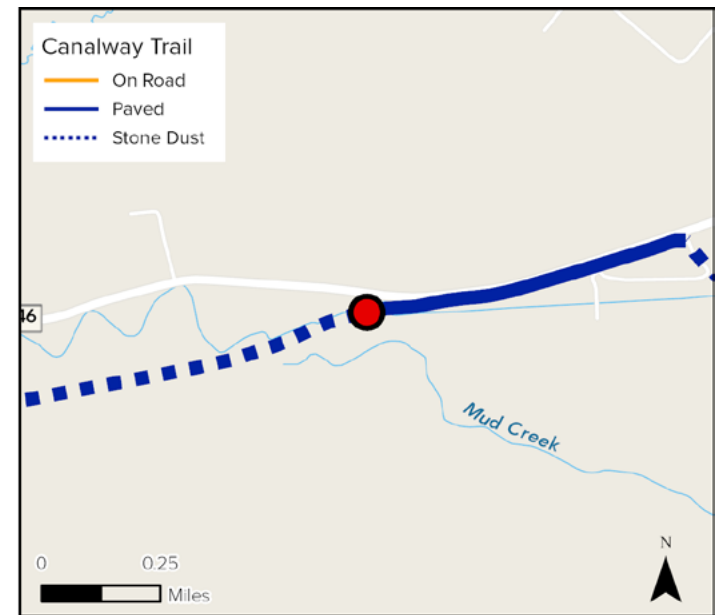
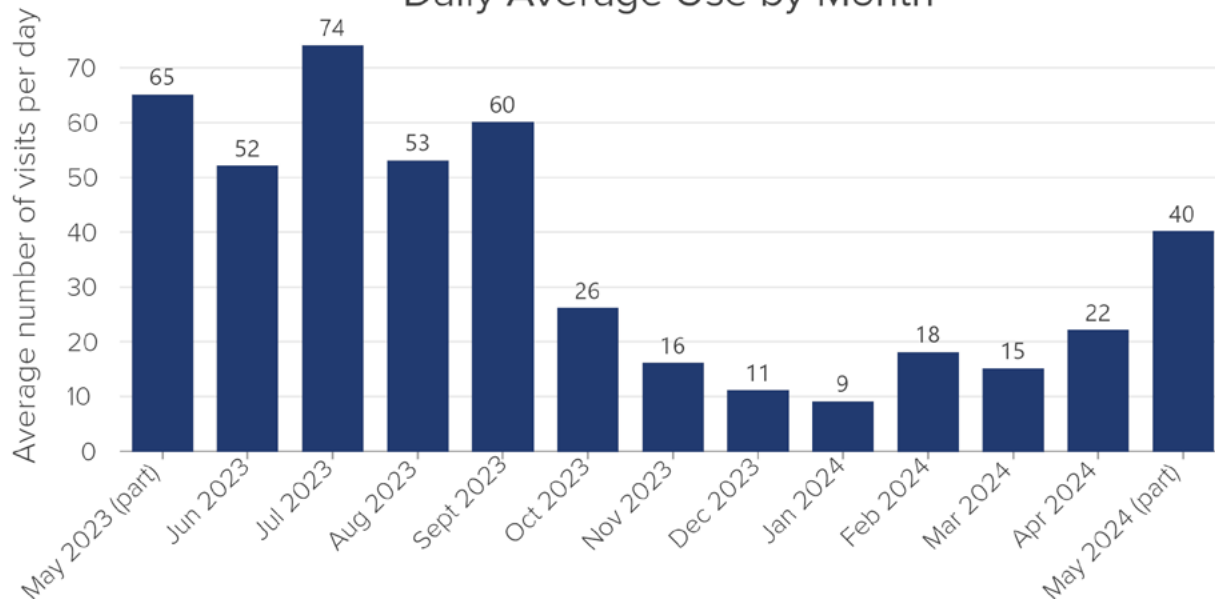


Estimated
Annual Use
12,610

Average Daily Use
during the Summer

58

Daily Average Use by Month



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2023 (part)	1,439	65
Jun 2023	1,550	52
Jul 2023	2,286	74
Aug 2023	1,657	53
Sept 2023	1,800	60
Oct 2023	810	26
Nov 2023	482	16
Dec 2023	344	11
Jan 2024	290	9
Feb 2024	516	18
Mar 2024	475	15
Apr 2024	674	22
May 2024 (part)	755	40

Rome (East)

Oneida County

Installed July 11, 2023 - December 31, 2024

Two counters were installed in Rome as part of the Empire State Trail Town program in 2023. The second counter was purchased and installed by the city of Rome in July 2023 along Martin Street on the east side of the city. The trail in this section is paved and connects to a mostly continuous, off-road, stone dust stretch between Rome's south side and the City of Utica.

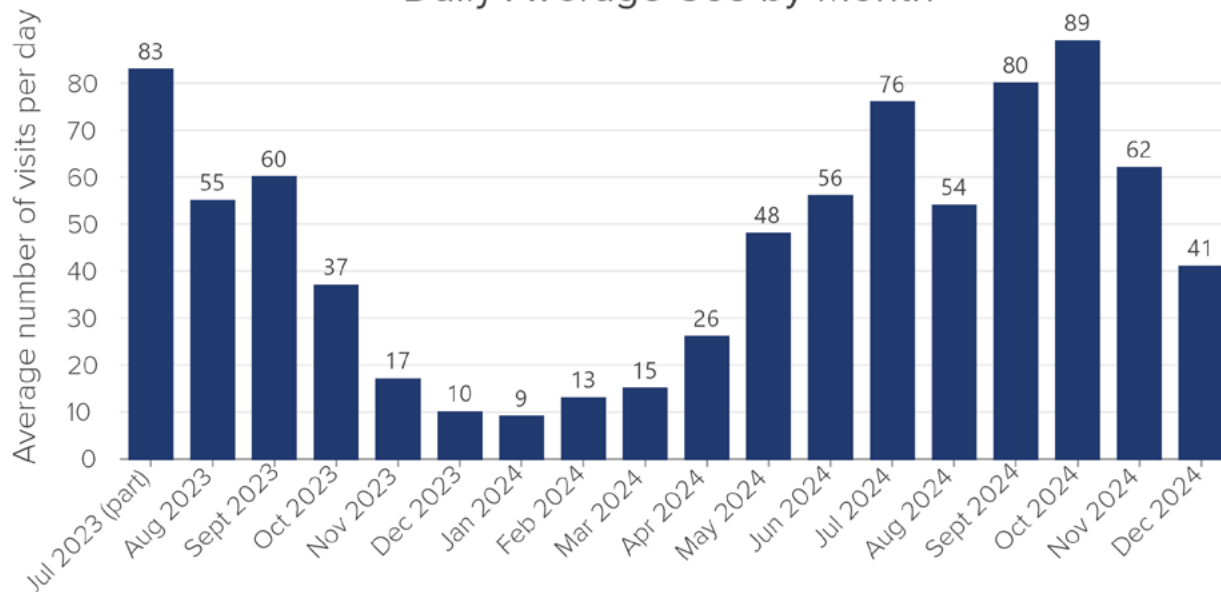


Estimated
Annual Use
16,540

Average Daily Use
during the Summer

63

Daily Average Use by Month



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Jul 2023 (part)	1,750	83
Aug 2023	1,708	55
Sept 2023	1,794	60
Oct 2023	1,146	37
Nov 2023	515	17
Dec 2023	299	10
Jan 2024	275	9
Feb 2024	379	13
Mar 2024	450	15
Apr 2024	782	26
May 2024	1,476	48
Jun 2024	1,687	56
Jul 2024	2,361	76
Aug 2024	1,660	54
Sept 2024	2,412	80
Oct 2024	2,767	89
Nov 2024	1,864	62
Dec 2024	1,278	41

Utica

Oneida County

Installed May 10, 2023 - May 21, 2024

The counter was installed east of Leland Avenue in Utica on the paved section of trail on the north side of the canal. The trail route is on-road on Leland Avenue between the south side of the Canal, where it heads west, and the north side, where it proceeds east. The paved trail on the north side of the canal was constructed in 2020 as part of the Empire State Trail project.

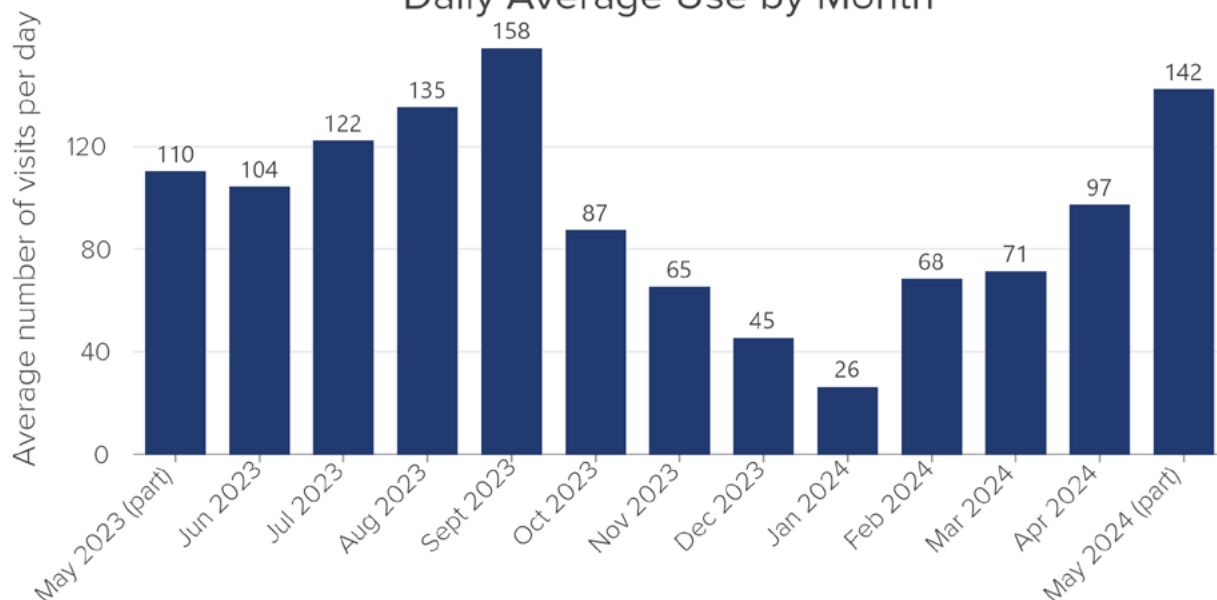


Estimated
Annual Use
33,663

Average Daily Use
during the Summer

129

Daily Average Use by Month



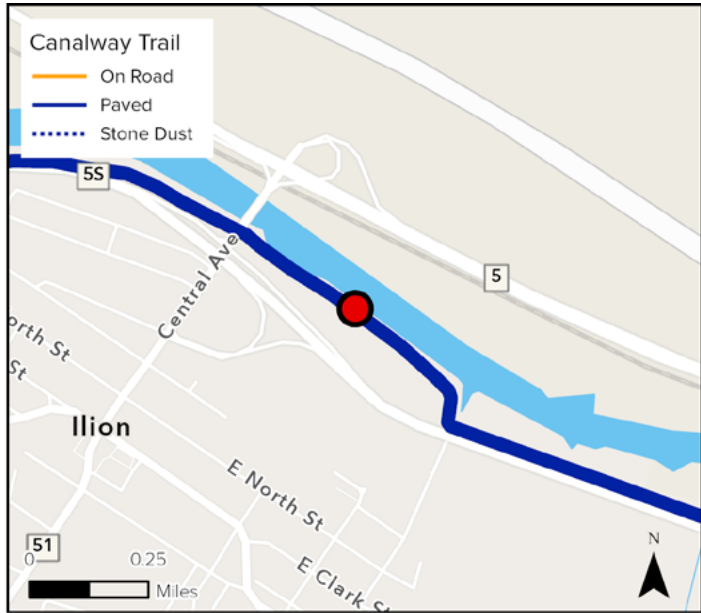
Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2023 (part)	2,425	110
Jun 2023	3,117	104
Jul 2023	3,776	122
Aug 2023	4,188	135
Sept 2023	4,734	158
Oct 2023	2,711	87
Nov 2023	1,940	65
Dec 2023	1,385	45
Jan 2024	803	26
Feb 2024	1,973	68
Mar 2024	2,208	71
Apr 2024	2,896	97
May 2024 (part)	2,982	142

Ilion

Herkimer County

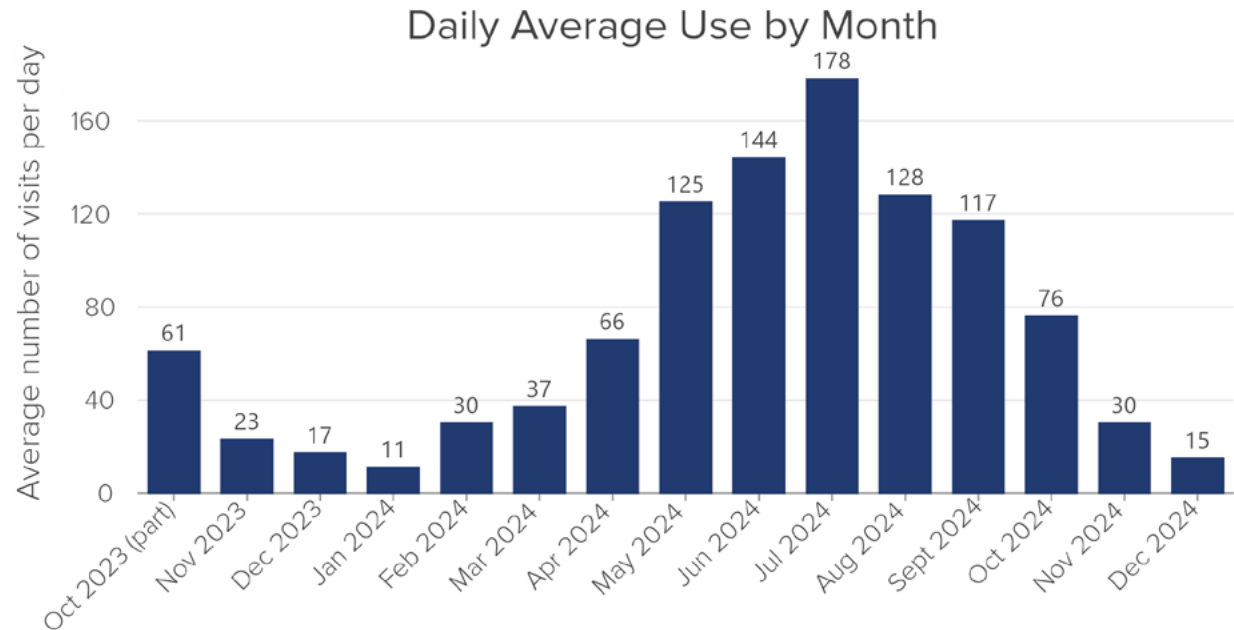
Installed **October 23, 2023 - December 31, 2024**

The counter was installed just east of Ilion Marina, located off Central Avenue/NYS Route 51 in the Village of Ilion. The paved trail in this location was constructed in 2020 as part of the Empire State Trail project, and is approximately one mile from the western end of a 70-mile continuous stretch of off-road trail with only a few minor on-road segments that runs from Frankfort east to Schenectady.



Estimated
Annual Use
28,009

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
138



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Oct 2023 (part)	553	61
Nov 2023	696	23
Dec 2023	530	17
Jan 2024	342	11
Feb 2024	858	30
Mar 2024	1,160	37
Apr 2024	1,990	66
May 2024	3,880	125
Jun 2024	4,323	144
Jul 2024	5,519	178
Aug 2024	3,956	128
Sept 2024	3,501	117
Oct 2024	2,350	76
Nov 2024	896	30
Dec 2024	452	15

Little Falls

Herkimer County

Installed May 21, 2024 - December 31, 2024

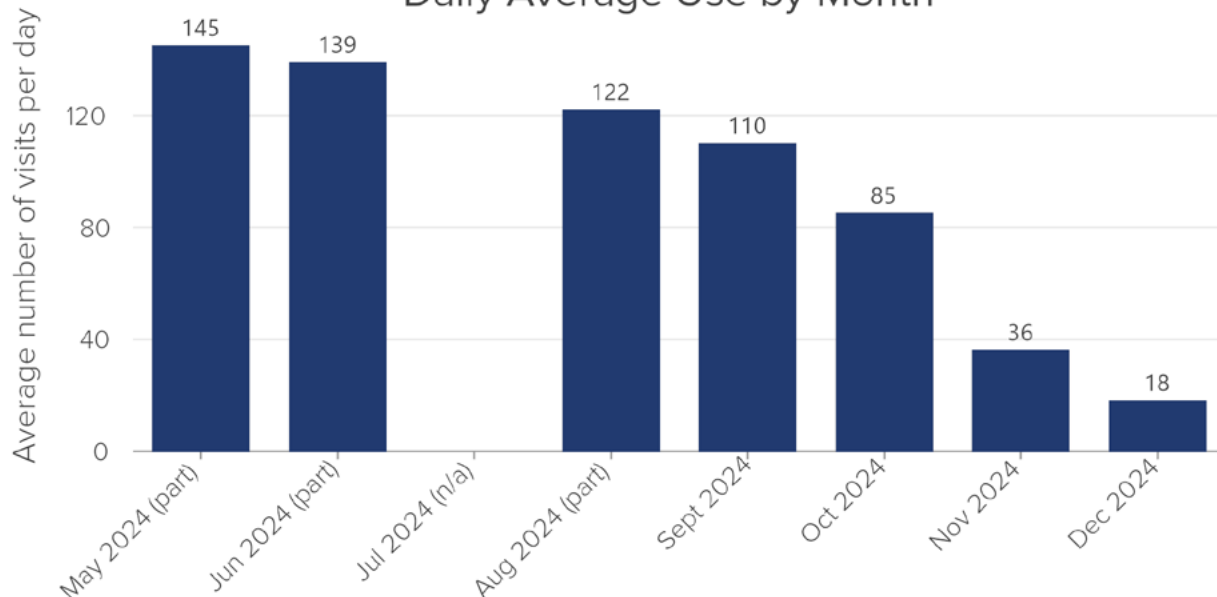
The counter was installed on the Erie Canalway Trail/ Empire State Trail just east of the Miracle Mile-and-a-Half Trailhead on the south side of the city of Little Falls. The trail in this location is paved, and was upgraded with a widened surface in 2021-2022. The trail in this location is part of a 70-mile continuous stretch of off-road trail with only a few minor on-road segments that runs from Frankfort east to Schenectady. A counter had previously been installed in Little Falls 0.6 miles east of this location, at the access point from Lock 17.



Estimated
Annual Use
31,090

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
126

Daily Average Use by Month



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2024 (part)	1,597	145
Jun 2024 (part)	3,760	139
Jul 2024 (n/a)		
Aug 2024 (part)	1,956	122
Sept 2024	3,308	110
Oct 2024	2,644	85
Nov 2024	1,073	36
Dec 2024	544	18

Fort Plain

Montgomery County

Installed May 10, 2023 - May 20, 2024

The counter was installed at the trail bridge that travels over Otsquago Creek in the village of Fort Plain, just east of the crossing of River Street/NYS Route 80. The paved trail in this location is part of the 70-mile continuous stretch from Frankfort to Schenectady.

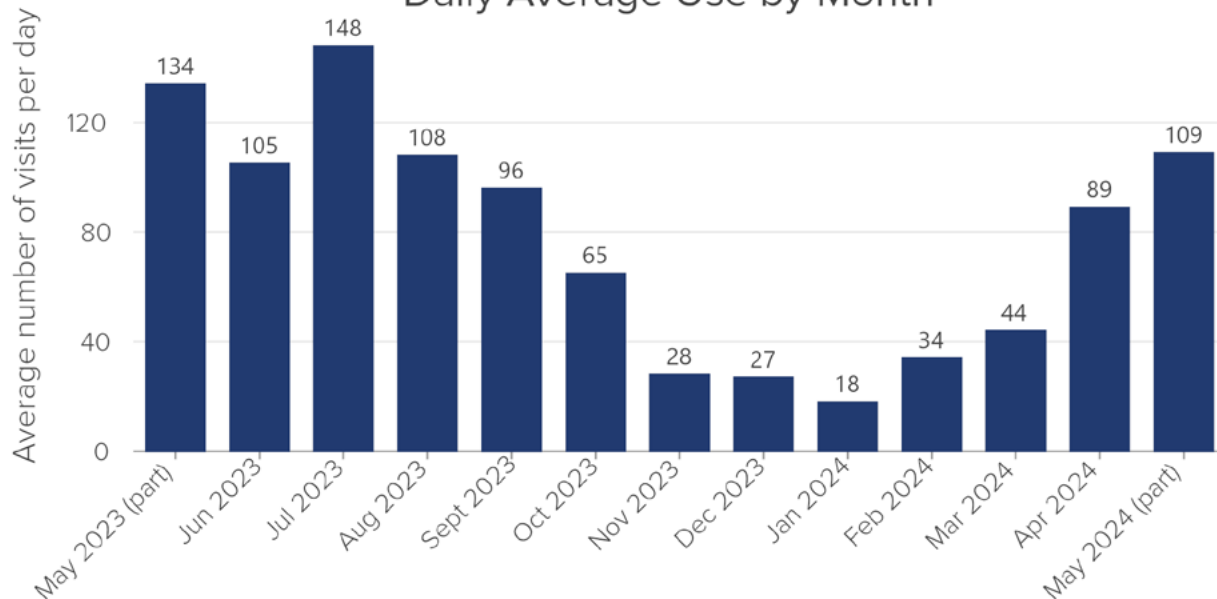


Estimated
Annual Use
27,217

Average Daily Use
during the Summer

116

Daily Average Use by Month



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2023 (part)	2,941	134
Jun 2023	3,141	105
Jul 2023	4,579	148
Aug 2023	3,333	108
Sept 2023	2,866	96
Oct 2023	2,004	65
Nov 2023	845	28
Dec 2023	823	27
Jan 2024	567	18
Feb 2024	996	34
Mar 2024	1,352	44
Apr 2024	2,678	89
May 2024 (part)	2,189	109

Amsterdam

Montgomery County

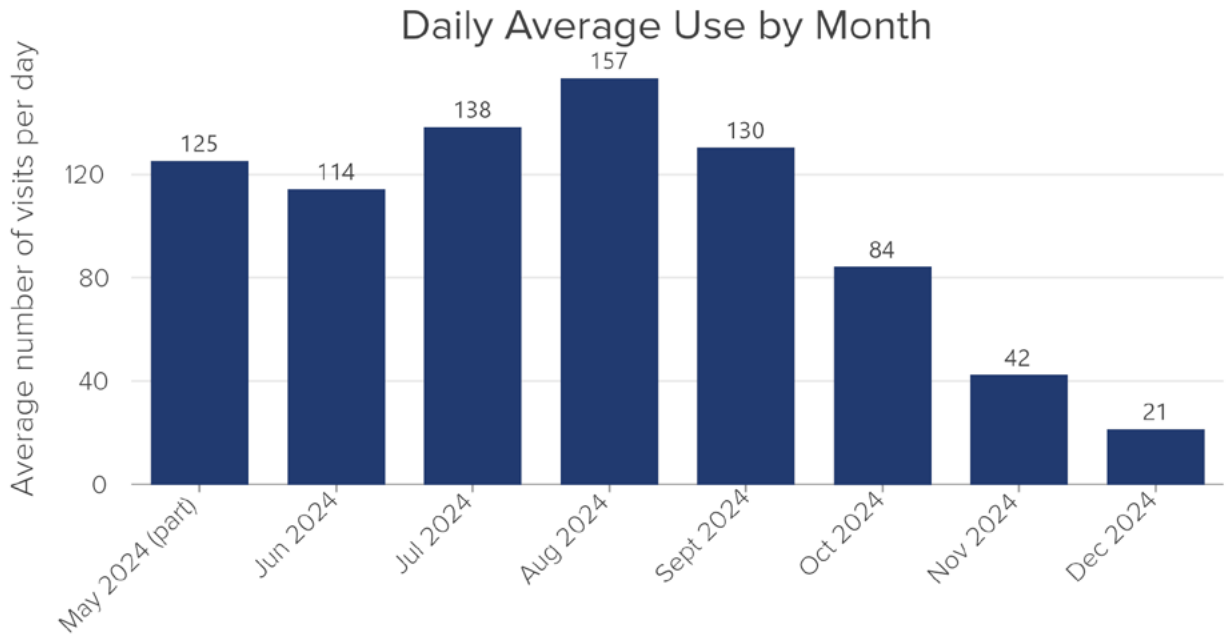
Installed May 21, 2024 - December 31, 2024

The counter was installed east of the city of Amsterdam off of Cleveland Avenue. There is no trailhead at this location; instead, any users would likely have come east to this location from Amsterdam. The trail in this location is paved, however, the surface is several years old and portions are negatively impacted by the presence of tree roots along the trail. The paved trail in this location is part of the 70-mile continuous stretch from Frankfort to Schenectady.



Estimated
Annual Use
32,461

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
134



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May 2024 (part)	1,375	125
Jun 2024	3,433	114
Jul 2024	4,284	138
Aug 2024	4,856	157
Sept 2024	3,912	130
Oct 2024	2,606	84
Nov 2024	1,246	42
Dec 2024	645	21

Schenectady

Schenectady County

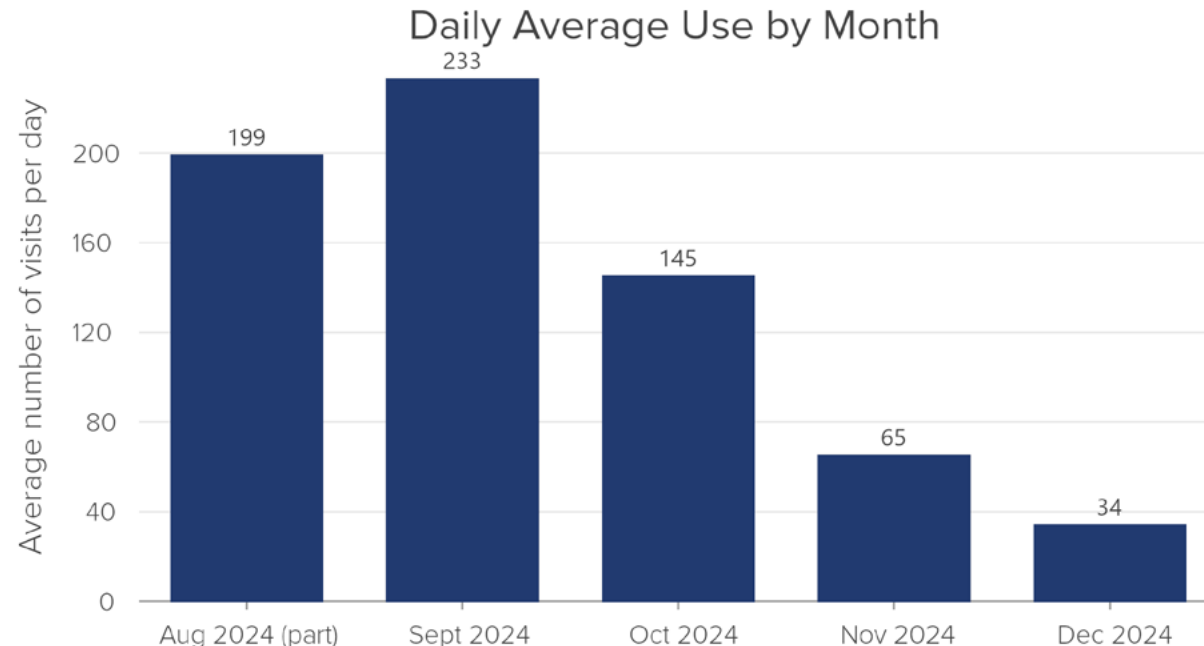
Installed August 20, 2024 - December 31, 2024

The counter was installed just east of the crossing of Maxon Road in the city of Schenectady. The trail in this location is east of the spot where the ALCO Heritage Trail intersects the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail (the local name for the Erie Canalway/Empire State Trail). The trail in this location is paved and runs east from Schenectady continuously off-road to the town of Colonie.



Estimated
Annual Use
53,844

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
223



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Aug 2024 (part)	2,387	199
Sept 2024	6,980	233
Oct 2024	4,490	145
Nov 2024	1,952	65
Dec 2024	1,042	34

Albany

Albany County

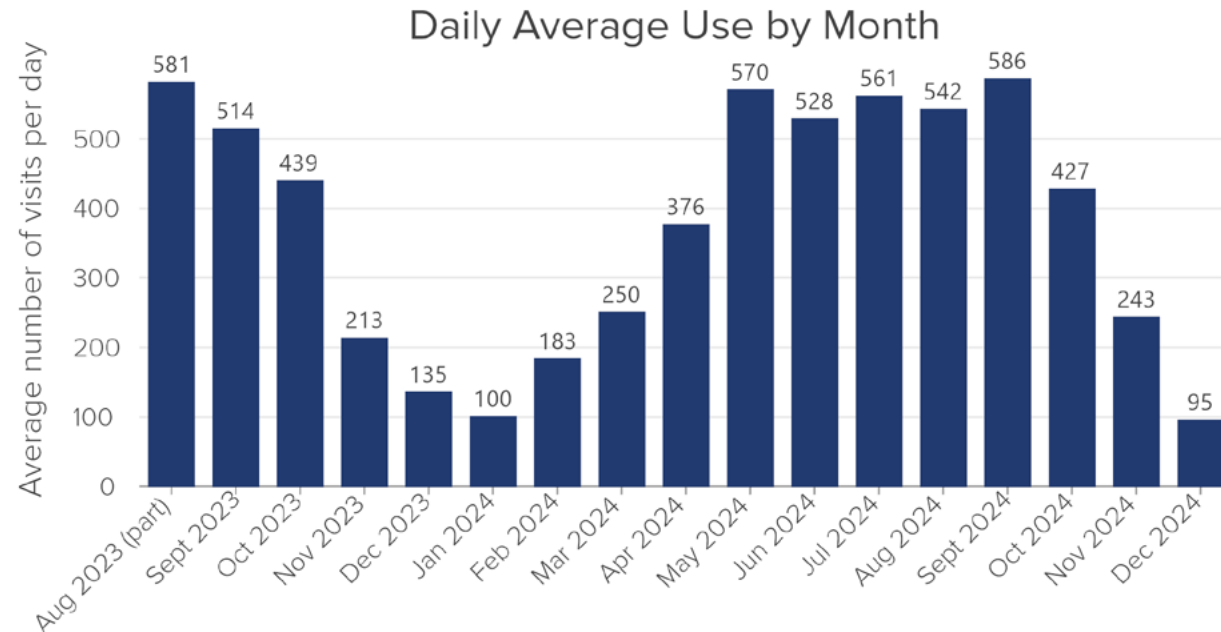
Installed August 9, 2023 - December 31, 2024

The counter was installed just north of Corning Preserve in the city of Albany, near the eastern terminus of the Erie Canalway Trail. The trail in this location is paved and runs north along the Hudson River to 4th Avenue in Watervliet. The trail was resurfaced with asphalt in 2021. Traveling south, the trail runs through Albany's waterfront park—Corning Preserve—and continues as part of the Empire State Trail across the river to Rensselaer and the Albany-Hudson Electric Trail, leading south to New York City.



Estimated
Annual Use
138,578

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
554



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Aug 2023 (part)	13,352	581
Sept 2023	15,417	514
Oct 2023	13,610	439
Nov 2023	6,392	213
Dec 2023	4,177	135
Jan 2024	3,104	100
Feb 2024	5,300	183
Mar 2024	7,737	250
Apr 2024	11,273	376
May 2024	17,673	570
Jun 2024	15,853	528
Jul 2024	17,404	561
Aug 2024	16,816	542
Sept 2024	17,570	586
Oct 2024	13,238	427
Nov 2024	7,291	243
Dec 2024	2,938	95

Peebles Island

Albany County

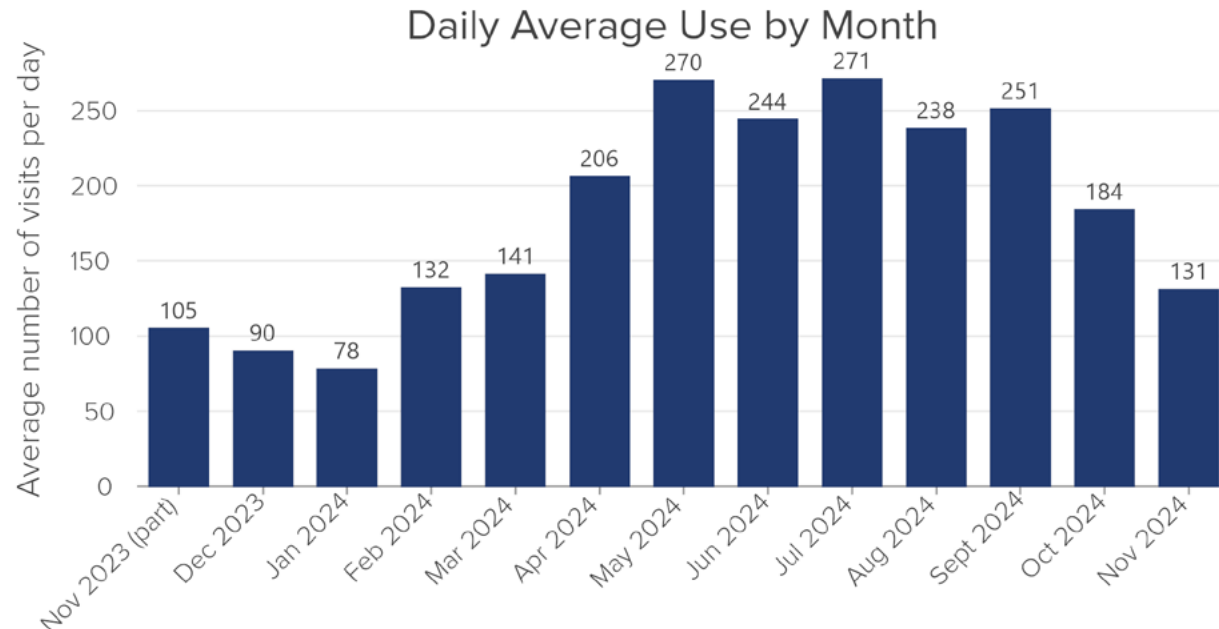
Installed November 11, 2023 - November 30, 2024

The counter was installed by the Hudson River Valley Greenway along a stretch of trail known as the Black Bridge Trail or Delaware Avenue Trail. This trail runs north from Green Island, through Cohoes, into Peebles Island State Park, and across the Mohawk River into Waterford. The trail is technically the southernmost stretch of the Champlain Valley leg of the Empire State Trail, running north from this area to the Canadian border at Rouses Point. For purposes of this analysis, the trail is considered part of the Champlain Canalway Trail leg of the EST; however, the trail is not considered to be part of the “official” route of the Champlain Canalway Trail, which has its southern terminus in Waterford.



Estimated
Annual Use
67,518

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
255



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Nov 2023 (part)	2,109	105
Dec 2023	2,791	90
Jan 2024	2,432	78
Feb 2024	3,819	132
Mar 2024	4,372	141
Apr 2024	6,171	206
May 2024	8,361	270
Jun 2024	7,308	244
Jul 2024	8,401	271
Aug 2024	7,371	238
Sept 2024	7,521	251
Oct 2024	5,697	184
Nov 2024	3,919	131

Schuylerville

Saratoga County

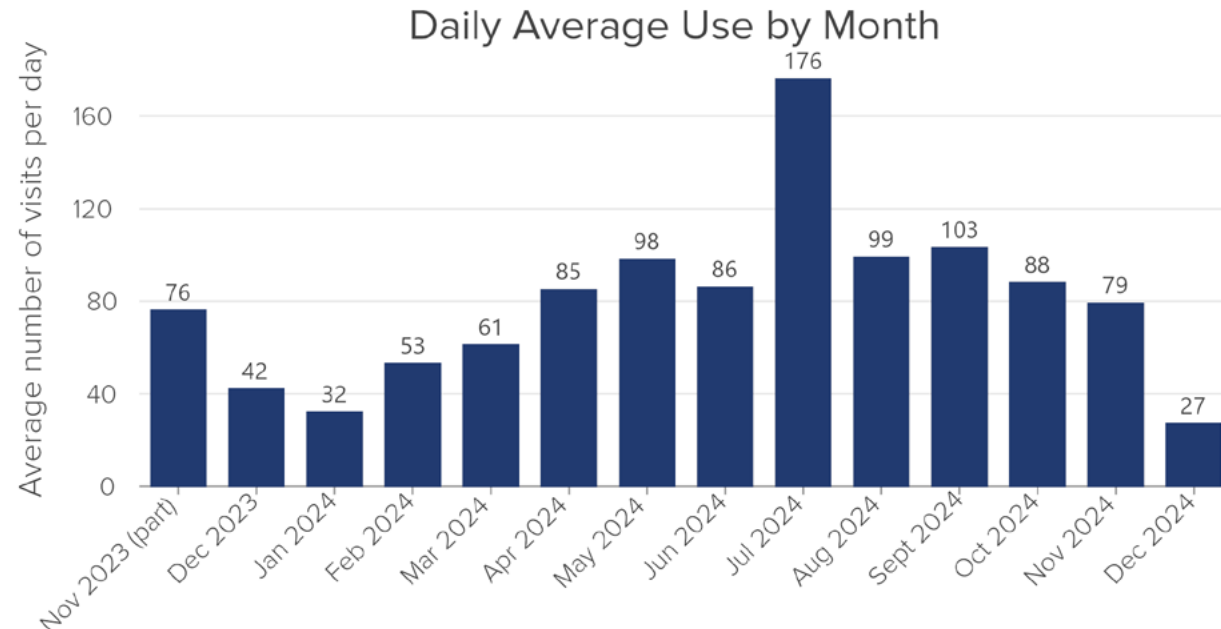
Installed November 2, 2023 - December 31, 2024

The counter was installed along the Champlain Canalway Trail between Fort Hardy Park and Hudson Crossing Park in Schuylerville. The trail in this location has a stone dust surface, and is part of a roughly one-mile-long stretch of off-road trail bounded on either end by lengthy on-road segments. Subsequent to installation, Schuylerville was named an Empire State Trail Town for 2024.



Estimated
Annual Use
30,910

Average Daily Use
during the Summer
113

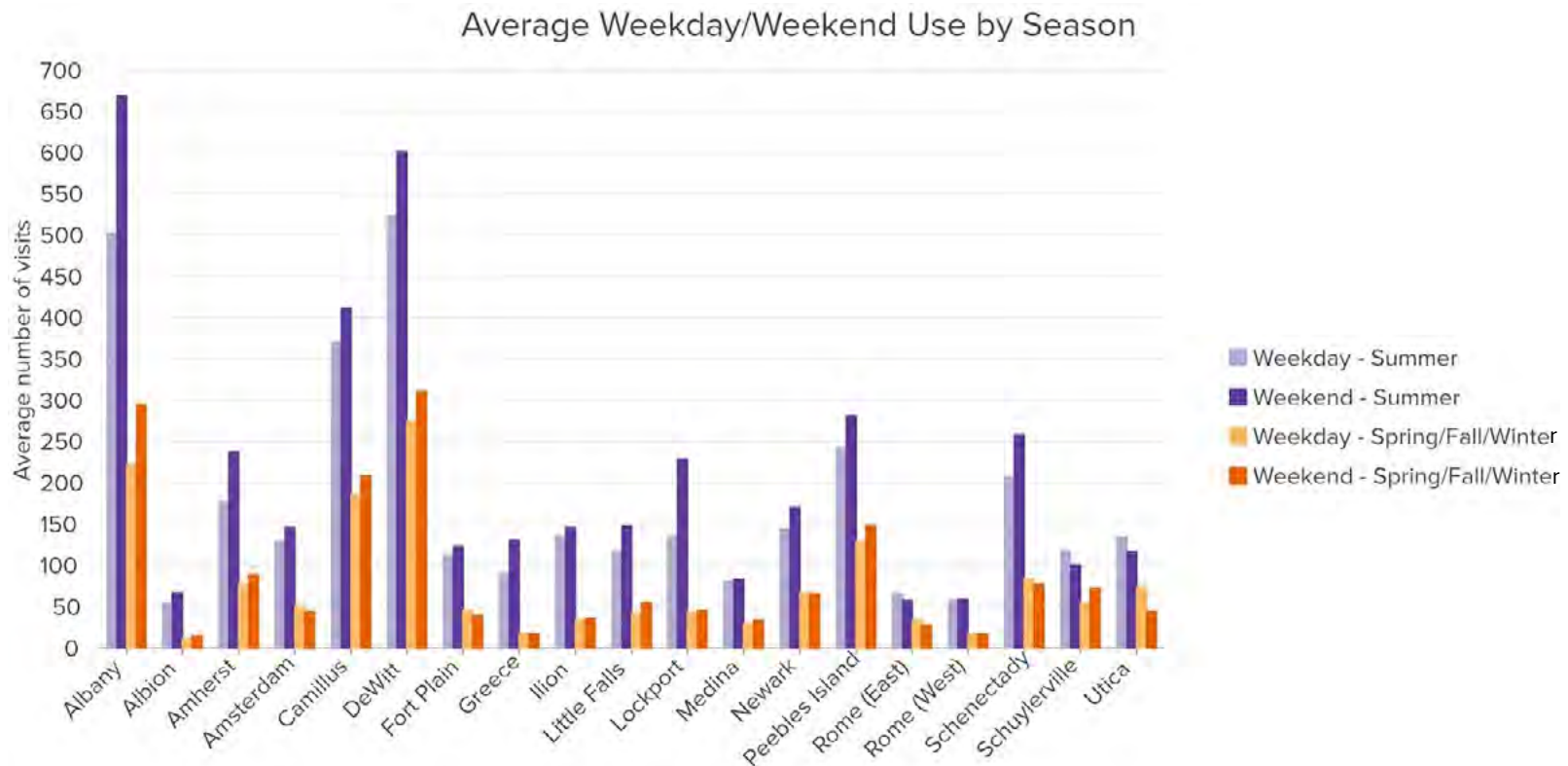


Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
Nov 2023 (part)	2,190	76
Dec 2023	1,298	42
Jan 2024	999	32
Feb 2024	1,543	53
Mar 2024	1,896	61
Apr 2024	2,559	85
May 2024	3,033	98
Jun 2024	2,586	86
Jul 2024	5,451	176
Aug 2024	3,056	99
Sept 2024	3,100	103
Oct 2024	2,720	88
Nov 2024	2,378	79
Dec 2024	840	27

Trend Analysis

Seasonal Use

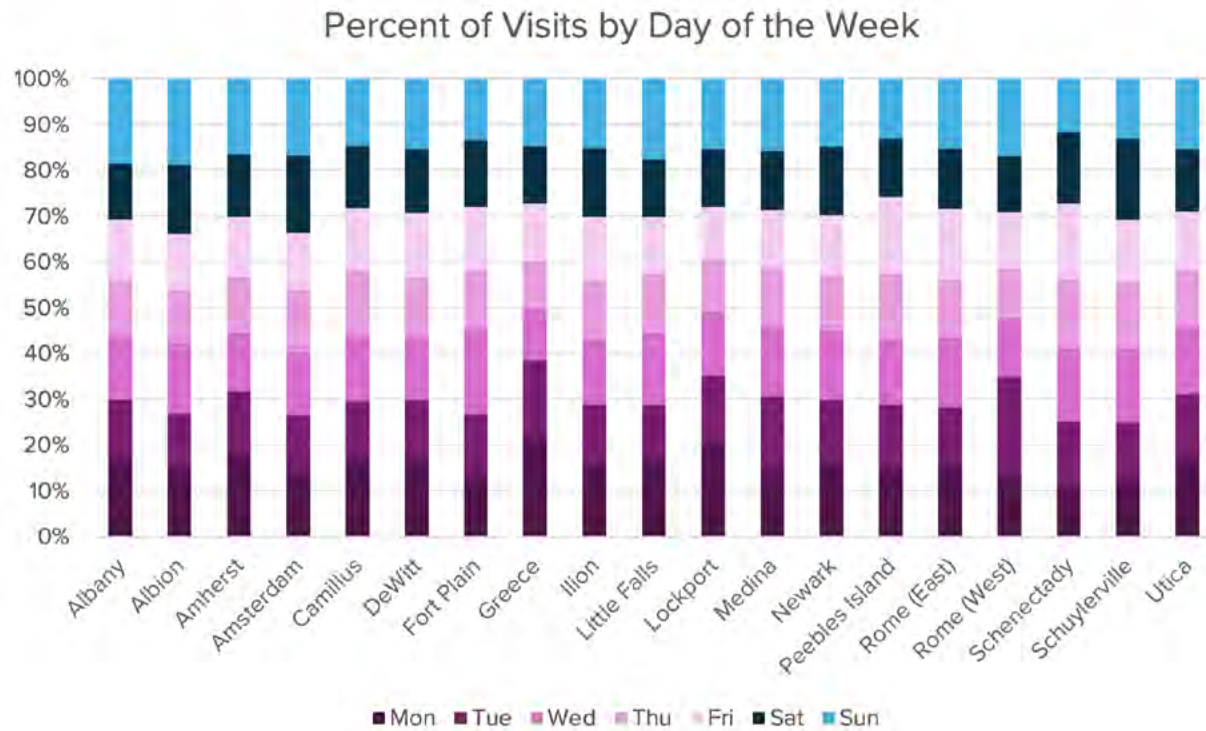
All 19 counters recorded similar seasonal trail use patterns, with use during the summer months being much higher than use during the spring, fall, and winter. This pattern is to be expected with the cold and snowy winters in New York State. In most count locations, the average daily use in the summer was more than twice that during other seasons. In the majority of locations, average daily weekend use was higher than average daily weekday use, with the only exceptions being Rome (East), Schuylerville, and Utica, which each saw more use on weekdays than weekends in the summer. Conversely, seven of the 19 locations saw equal or greater use on weekdays compared to weekends during the winter.



Daily Use

Across all counter locations, 71% of total visits occurred on weekdays (Monday through Friday), while 29% of total visits occurred on weekends (Saturday and Sunday). Amsterdam and Albion received the highest percentage of weekend visits, with 34% of total visits occurring on the weekend, while Peebles Island received the highest percentage of weekday visits, with 74% of visits occurring on weekdays. The graph below shows the full breakdown of visits by day of the week for all counter locations. One factor that may influence the daily usage patterns is the trail's accessibility and proximity to workplaces and residences. A more easily accessible trail segment may allow for increased usage during the weekday, whereas a less accessible trail segment may see primarily weekend usage when visitors may be willing to travel further for recreation. Events that draw people to the trail, such as a weekly concert series or run club, may also affect the daily use patterns. Other factors unique to each count location may also influence these patterns.

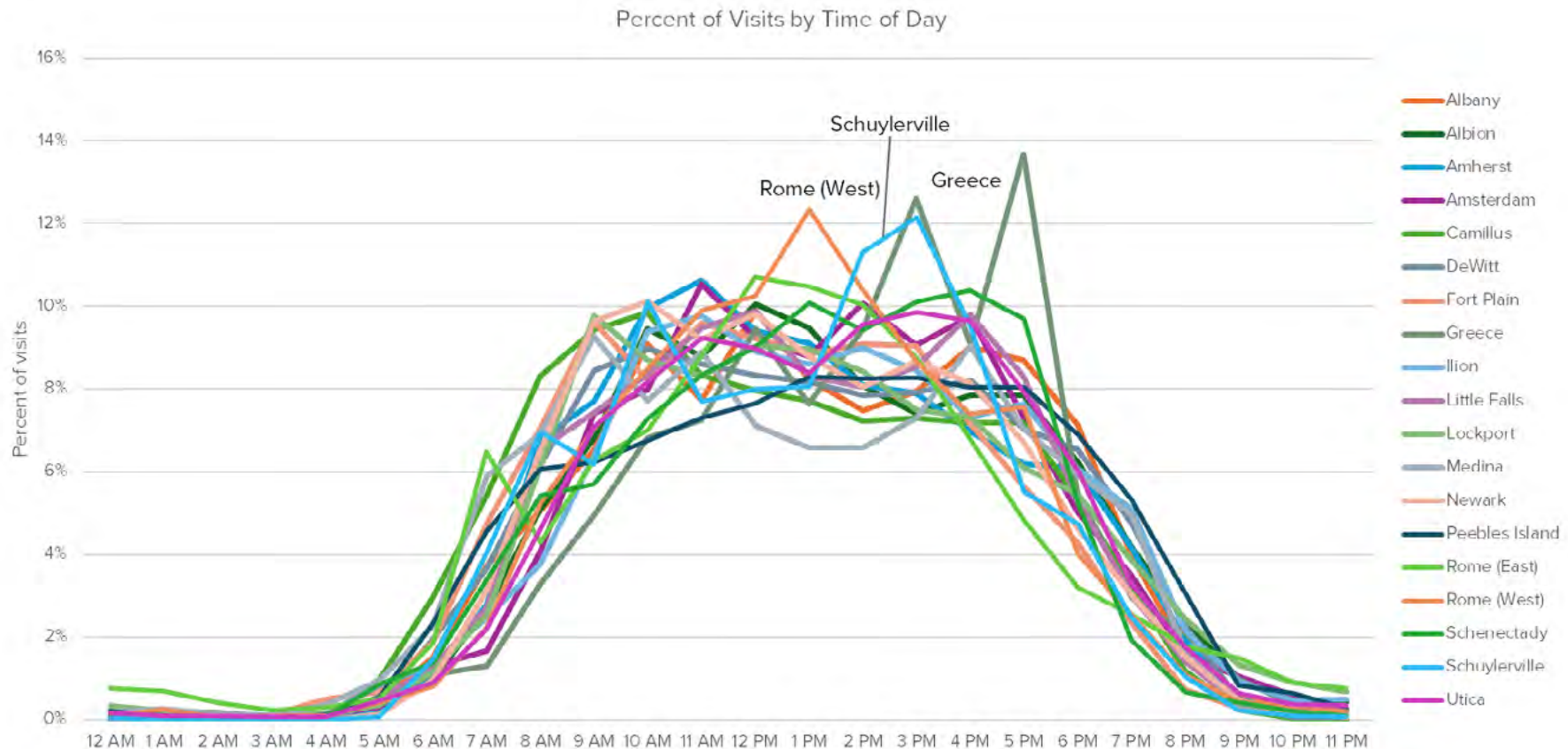
Location	Mon-Fri	Sat-Sun
Albany	69%	31%
Albion	66%	34%
Amherst	70%	30%
Amsterdam	66%	34%
Camillus	72%	28%
DeWitt	71%	29%
Fort Plain	72%	28%
Greece	73%	27%
Ilion	70%	30%
Little Falls	70%	30%
Lockport	72%	28%
Medina	71%	29%
Newark	70%	30%
Peebles Island	74%	26%
Rome (East)	72%	28%
Rome (West)	71%	29%
Schenectady	73%	27%
Schuylerville	69%	31%
Utica	71%	29%
Average	71%	29%



Hourly Use

Most of the count locations followed a similar general pattern throughout the day, with visitation ramping up between 5 AM and 7 AM, peaking sometime between 9 AM and 5 PM, with a small drop in the early afternoon, before rising again in the late afternoon and tapering off by around 9 PM. There are a few notable outliers with sharp peak hours. Rome (West) peaked at 1 PM, with 12% of visits; Schuylerville peaked at 3 PM, with 12% of visits; and Greece saw two peaks at 3 PM and 5 PM, with 13% and 15% of visits, respectively.

Visitation over the course of the day may be influenced by factors such as a lack of lighting on the trail, which may discourage nighttime usage, and the proximity of the trail to workplaces and residences, which may influence commuting patterns using the trail and recreational usage during workers' lunch hours. The demographics of the area could also influence what time of day people are able to use the trail for recreation. For example, an area with more older, retired residents may see more trail usage during the day, while an area with a lot of families and children may see more trail usage after school and work hours. Data about visitation hours may be helpful for trail towns for planning amenities, business hours, and events along the trail.

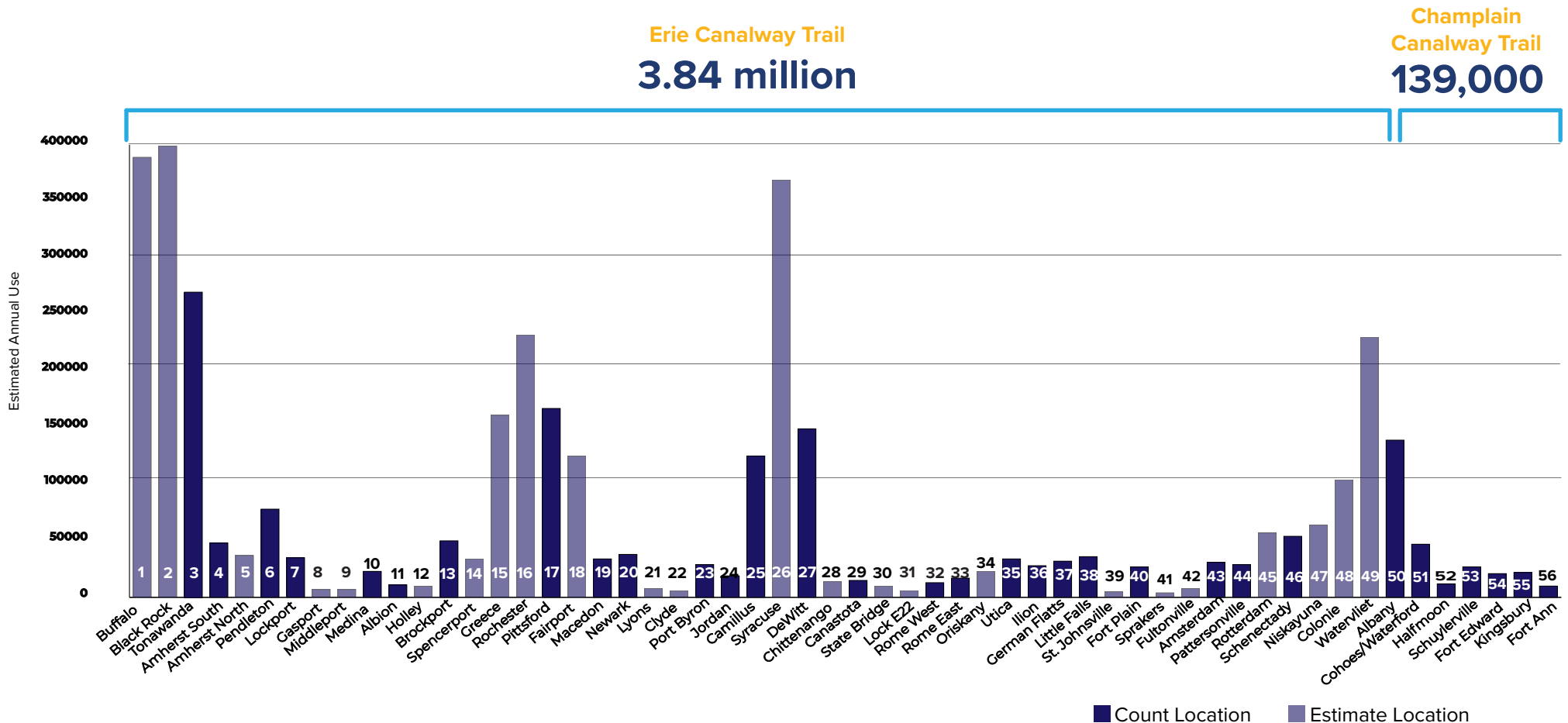


Annual Trail Use Estimate: 3.98M

Since 2020, PTNY or its partners have conducted long-term electronic trail counts at 39 locations along the Canalway Trail. Each of these count sites has produced an annual trail use estimate; taken together, the sites recorded a total of 2,120,121 visits across 14,381 count days across the state. The site data affirm 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 figures from these additional locations, an estimated annual Canalway Trail visitation figure of 3,979,000 can be calculated, including 3,840,000 visits along the Erie Canalway Trail and 139,000 along the Champlain Canalway Trail. This figure is a rough estimate, and does not represent the use for any specific year. Rather, the figure is an estimated average use figure for annual visitation based on the last five years of data.

For more information on the methodology used to calculate this annual trail use estimate, please see the accompanying Who's on the Trail 2024: Methodology document available at www.ptny.org/trailcounts.



Canalway Challenge Finisher Statistics

Since 2019, the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor has encouraged New Yorkers and visitors to explore the Canalway Trail and state Canal Waterways through the Canalway Challenge. Challenge options include 1, 15, 90, 180, and 360-mile goals. To complete the 360 mile “end-to-end” challenge, the participant must walk, ride, or paddle their miles in each region. Since 2019, it is estimated that finishers have walked, ran, cycled, and paddled over 10,000 miles along the Canalway land and water trail system, with an economic impact of over \$5 million on canalside communities ([Canalway Challenge 2024 Report](#)).

In 2023, over 500 challenges were completed, with nearly 50% of finishers submitting a “finisher survey.” This survey—which gathered information on where finishers are from, what types of destinations they visited, if they stayed overnight and where, and how much they spent while completing their challenge—augments the numerical data included in the rest of this report, providing a more comprehensive picture of who is using the trail and how.

Origins

Canalway Challenge finishers hailed from 36 U.S. states, with 23% of finishers coming from outside of New York State.

36

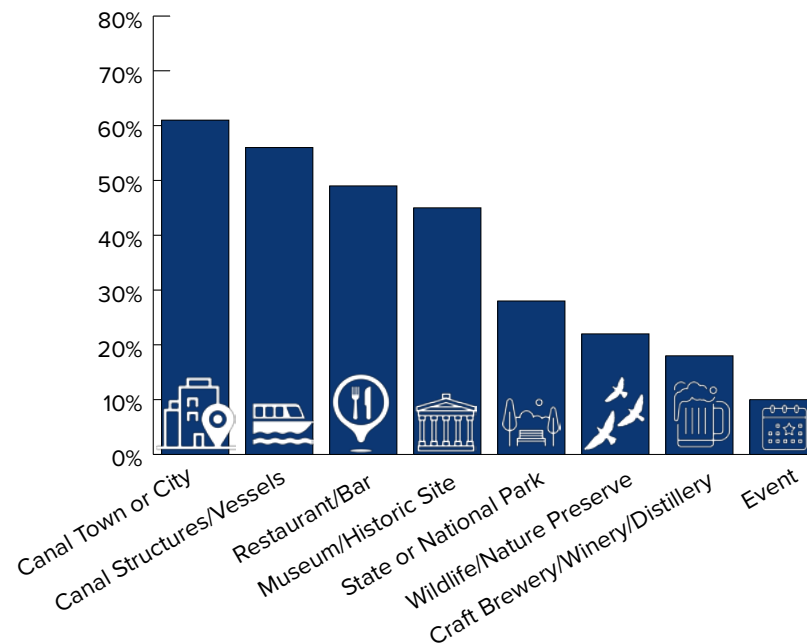
US STATES REPRESENTED
BY FINISHERS

23%

OF FINISHERS FROM
OUTSIDE NYS

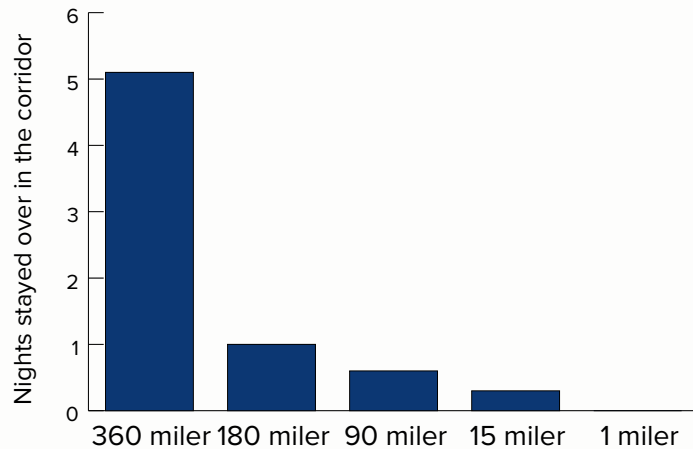
Attractions & Sites Visited

Canal Towns and Cities were cited as the most visited destinations, followed by canal structures and vessels like locks and historic canal boats. Next were restaurants and bars. Visiting local eateries is a very popular way to add a destination to an out-and-back trip on the trail, and for long-distance travelers these establishments are essential places to refuel during and after a long day out on the trail. Museums and historic sites were also popular attractions, demonstrating that trail travelers place importance on learning about the history and heritage of the waterway and region.



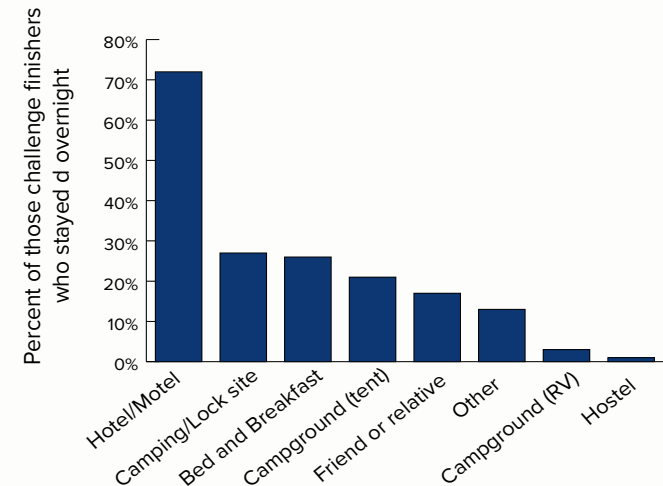
Nights Stayed Over

Those completing longer mileage challenges stayed overnight more evenings while working toward their goal. End-to-enders spent the greatest number of nights on the trail, averaging just over five overnight stays. Other challenges did not require cross-region exploration, and thus reflected fewer overnight stays. On average, Canalway Challengers stayed overnight two times while working toward their mileage goal.



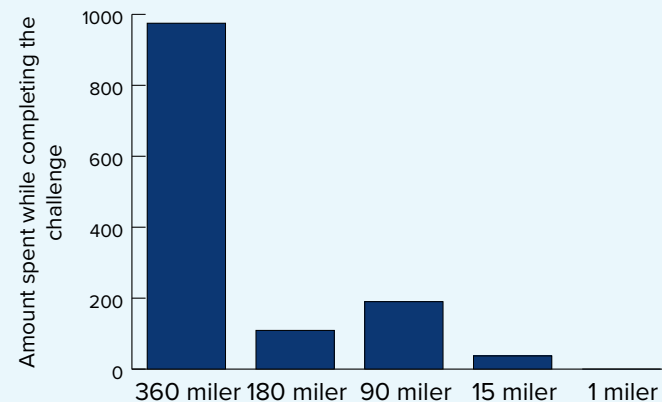
Accommodations

Of the finishers who completed the survey, 36% indicated they stayed over at least one night while completing their challenge. Of those who stayed overnight, 72% chose to stay in a hotel or motel for at least one of their nights. Camping at a lock site and staying at Bed & Breakfasts were the next most popular ways to spend the night, showcasing the diverse needs of trail travelers.



Average Spending

On average, challenge finishers spent \$359 while completing their challenge. As might be expected, challengers who took on the most miles spent the most money, with 360-mile end-to-enders spending nearly \$1,000 across the corridor during the course of completing their challenge.



Conclusion

The 2024 Who's on the Trail report is the 20th edition of this report. Once again, trail counts and analysis reveal the statewide popularity of the Canalway Trail System, totaling an estimated 3.98 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. The strong causal relationship between trail improvement and resultant economic value underscore the need to continue promotion, investment and maintenance.

2025 represents a major milestone in Erie Canal history as the bicentennial of the opening of the canal in 1825. The additional attention this anniversary will bring to the corridor - punctuated by the World Canals Conference which will be hosted in Buffalo in September 2025, and the launching of a replica of the boat "Seneca Chief" that will sail from Buffalo to New York City between September and October. These events, and other events to highlight the bicentennial, can be expected to increase visitation to the Canalway Trail throughout the year.

However, as noted above, the estimate of total annual trail visitation is expected to be lower when calculated in the subsequent five-year time frame. Trail use in 2020, as a result of the COVID pandemic, was significantly higher than was seen the year before, and that "bump" in trail use has tapered off over the past four years. While trail use remains strong across the corridor, the COVID "bump" was an aberration.

Acknowledgements

A special thank you to Matt Andrews and Danielle Salisbury of the City of Rome and to Cody Arana, Andy Beers, and Andy Kitzmann of the Hudson River Valley Greenway for sharing the data collected for use in this report. A sincere thank you to Jean Mackay and Ashley Quimby-Simoni of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor for sharing data collected as part of the Canalway Challenge program.