

ON THE LEVEL



THE CANAL SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Happy New Year! There are several anniversaries to celebrate in 2009. The Canal Society of New Jersey is turning 40 years old! Watch for the spring and fall editions of *On the Level* for articles on the formation of the Society and some of our accomplishments over the years. We also plan to commemorate the anniversary with expanded events at the State History Fair in May, at Waterloo Canal Day and by another one or two events that are still in the planning stages. We are grateful to our members who have helped the Society reach this milestone!

There are two more anniversaries to celebrate this year. The Delaware & Raritan Canal opened to navigation 175 years ago and the canal became the Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park 35 years ago. A number of groups are



Canal Society's "founding" meeting on June 7, 1969. This was held in the tent at Waterloo that then was used for large events. John T. Cunningham (standing, left) was the keynote speaker.

joining together to implement a series of celebratory events on the canal over the coming year. There is an article in this edition of *On the Level* that describes some of the events and

guides readers to a website to find out more details.

We hope you will all join us this year as we celebrate our State's wonderful canal heritage! ■

MEETINGS

Friday – January 16, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. – Refreshments at 7:10

RAILS ALONG THE D&R

FORMATION OF THE JOINT COMPANIES – ESTABLISHING THE DELAWARE & RARITAN CANAL AND THE CAMDEN & AMBOY RAILROAD

Morris County Cultural Center – 300 Mendham Road, Morris Township

CAPTAIN WILLIAM J. MCKELVEY, JR.

For well over 100 years the concept of creating an inland transportation system across the narrow waist of New Jersey had been considered. By the early 19th century this dream was close to becoming a reality, but would this alignment be a canal or a railroad? Curiously the charters for the Delaware & Raritan Canal Company and the Camden & Amboy Railroad Company were granted by the State Legislature on the same day in 1830. Even stranger is the fact that by one year later these two companies united to become the Joint Companies. Together

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UPDATE ON WATERLOO

In September the State of New Jersey and the Waterloo Foundation for the Arts reached an agreement allowing the Foundation to remove nearly all of the contents of the historic buildings at Waterloo Village [the contents of the Society's New Jersey Canal Museum were always recognized as belonging to the Society and never were in dispute]. For some time the Foundation had been seeking approval to remove the site's collection, reportedly to auction it off to settle debts. Numerous historic preservation organizations,

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UPDATE ON WATERLOO

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including the Canal Society, opposed the removal of the collection, which had been maintained for the educational benefit of the public and contained many items that had been donated by individuals who intended them to remain in perpetuity at the village. Of greatest concern to the Society were objects relating to the Morris Canal heritage of the village, especially the contents of the Smith Store and the blacksmith shop. In

addition were various objects and documents – the Smith Family Bible, Smith Family photos, a ledger book enumerating sales at the Smith Store, items that had belonged to the Smith Family and other former residents of the village, original parts of the gristmill machinery, part of a piece of pig iron from the Andover Furnace, etc. – that were one of a kind, primary historic artifacts that were directly related to the village.

By the terms of the finalized settlement agreement the State was to retain the contents of the gristmill, sawmill, the blacksmith shop, the Indian Village and primary historical documents and items relating to the overall Waterloo Village. It was a start, but did not address the all-important contents of the Smith Store. The Canal Society had been collaborating with the State for a long time urging that the store's contents be retained. We had even made an inventory of the contents that were most crucial to remain on exhibit at the store. Fortunately, at the last minute the State was able to negotiate to have all of the contents on the main level of the Smith Store remain in its possession. This agreement has helped preserve one of the best-preserved Morris Canal stores left along the entire route of the Morris Canal!

During September through November the Foundation removed all of the contents of the remainder of the village buildings. To date, three major antique auctions of the collection have been held at an auction house in Pennsylvania. Representatives from the Canal Society have been present at these auctions to observe what is being sold, and have in a few cases been able to successfully bid on historic objects that are appropriate for exhibit in the Smith Store or the Rutan cabin, a structure that is in a sufficient state of repair that it could be reopened to the public relatively quickly if it had contents to interpret. More auctions will be oc-

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Blacksmith shop at Waterloo.

MEETINGS

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the Joint Companies collectively employed their resources to construct the Delaware & Raritan Canal and New Jersey's first railroad, the Camden & Amboy. The railroad was completed between Bordentown and Amboy two years before the opening of the Delaware & Raritan Canal in 1834. Another branch of the railroad was completed from Trenton to New Brunswick in 1839. For many years the Joint Companies conducted their canal and railroad as mutually beneficial operations, despite the fact that canals and railroads are frequently thought of as bitter rivals. Tonight's presentation illustrates the operation of the Joint Companies and the interrelationship of one of New Jersey's premier canals and the state's first railroad.

Captain Bill McKelvey is a past vice president of the Canal Society and has served on the Board for decades. He is a recognized authority on the Delaware & Raritan Canal and its users and their vessels, historic vessels used on the region's canals and the east coast's inland waterway system. He has authored books on these subjects, has provided countless lectures on these topics and for many years coordinated the Canal Society's European canal trips. In more recent years he has spearheaded the efforts to establish a New Jersey Transportation Heritage Center to showcase the remarkable transportation history of the Garden State.

Friday – March 20, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. – Refreshments at 7:10

CANALS, RIVERS AND TRENTON'S PARKS:

USING WATERWAYS TO ENHANCE HERITAGE TOURISM ASSETS

Morris County Cultural Center – 300 Mendham Road, Morris Township

RICHARD HUNTER

A new urban State Park, Capital State Park, is being created in Trenton, along the Delaware River and near the State Capitol. Part of this location is the site of very early industrial development that was constructed along a source of waterpower – Petty's Run.

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CANAL PROGRAMMING AT WATERLOO VILLAGE

CONTINUES TO SHOWCASE NEW JERSEY'S PREMIER MORRIS CANAL TOWN

This past summer and fall the Canal Society's Waterloo Canal Day and eight Canal Heritage Days were a great success! Like in 2007, the Canal Society presented this special programming in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the Division of Parks & Forestry at a time when Waterloo Village was otherwise closed to the public. We are very grateful to the State for this partnership!

A combined total of 2,200 members of the public attended last season's canal programming at Waterloo Village, a figure that is one-third to one-half greater than the attendance during our 2007 season! Throughout the 2008 canal programming the Society's pontoon boat was in operation and offered free rides on the section of the Morris Canal at Waterloo for 500 members of the public. On one of the Canal Heritage Days two bears joined us to watch the canal boat ride!

We are very grateful to Dick Draper and his boat crew and to all of the other Society members who pitched in to make the Waterloo canal programming possible! These Waterloo events are an excellent opportunity to showcase the village's canal heritage, to demonstrate the public's ongoing devotion to Waterloo, and to introduce the Canal Society to many people who may not have been aware of our existence (hopefully to attract new membership).

The State has expressed its great pleasure with the results of the Society's Waterloo canal programming and discussions have already begun regarding coordination of Waterloo Canal Day and Canal Heritage Days in 2009. The dates and details for these events will be announced in the spring edition of *On the Level*. As always, we rely heavily on our member volunteers to make these events



Above: Interior of part of the Smith Store at Waterloo. Right: Inside the Waterloo blacksmith shop.

possible. It is a great experience to interpret the Morris Canal's fascinating history to the public and to showcase our boat ride and our New Jersey Canal Museum. It is always an enjoyable day in a beautiful setting

along the Morris Canal! Please volunteer your services to help us with the 2009 programming by calling our Administrative Assistant, Phyllis Stanaback at 908-832-2888. Thank you for your support! ■

ANNUAL SPIRIT OF THE JERSEYS STATE HISTORY FAIR CELEBRATES NEW JERSEY'S HERITAGE

On Saturday, May 2, 2009 the New Jersey Division of Parks & Forestry will sponsor its annual Spirit of the Jerseys Fair at Washington Crossing State Park, in Titusville, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free, as is the parking. Approximately 100 historical groups and associations from all over the state will be participating. Exhibits will feature military reenactments, historical theatre, music, museum displays and a great variety of other entertaining booths. The Canal Society will have an informational/display table near the Route 29/ Delaware & Raritan Canal edge of the fair. We plan on having our pontoon boat

on the canal that day, offering rides to the public. It is also our intent to have special exhibits to commemorate both the Canal Society's 40th Anniversary and the 175th Anniversary of the opening of the Delaware & Raritan Canal. Typically thousands of people attend this popular event and it is a great opportunity to showcase both the Society and our state's canal heritage. The Fair will be held rain or shine. Society members are needed to help us coordinate our exhibit/sales table and to operate the pontoon boat ride. Please volunteer your services by calling Society Administrative Assistant Phyllis Stanaback at 908-832-2888. ■

CELEBRATING THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF THE D&R CANAL



Photograph courtesy of the D&R Canal Commission

In 1984 part of the original opening ceremony on the D&R Canal was re-enacted. Several Canal Society members participated in the event and are in this view. Included are Bill McKelvey (3rd from left); Nancy Vroom (to right of McKelvey); Peter Vroom, (to Nancy's right) portraying his relative Governor Peter Vroom; and Kay and Larry Pitt (to far right).

Throughout 2009, the D&R Canal Watch, the Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park, the Canal Society of New Jersey, the East Coast Greenway, the Delaware River Mill Society, and other organizations will sponsor and participate in events to commemorate this hallmark anniversary on the D&R!

"Hands Along the D&R" will be held on Saturday, May 9. Beginning at 10:00 a.m., over 18,000 friends

Please Remember to Renew Your Membership!

If you haven't renewed your membership yet this year please do so as soon as you can. Your support means a great deal to us and is vital to helping the Society continue its varied events and public programming. During this 40th Anniversary year of the Society we are planning extra events and activities, which we hope you will support! Thank you and we hope to see you throughout 2009! ■

will connect hands to show their support for the D&R Canal and the East Coast Greenway! For fifteen minutes, the joined hands will form a line stretching from Cadwalader Park in Trenton to Landing Lane Bridge, near New Brunswick. Participants are welcome! For information, contact Mike and Anne Kruimer at kliner54@optonline.net, 732-287-9447 or visit www.greenwaynj.org.

A **"Canal Authors Extravaganza"** will be held at the Mule Tenders Barracks in Griggstown, on May 16, between noon and 3 p.m. This event will feature nearly a dozen authors of books on canals and related themes. The authors will be available to sign books that visitors may bring or buy, speak to the public about their canal-related books, and read excerpts from their books. For more information, contact the Barths at barths@att.net or 908-722-7428.

On May 23 at 10 a.m., the public may participate in a **"Bike Ride Along the Canal"**, from Blackwells Mills to Griggstown lock and back.

The cyclists will visit many historic sites along the way and should bring their own bikes and helmets.

A full calendar of these and other anniversary events is posted on the website of the Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park, www.dandrcanal.com. For more information, call park historian Vicki Chirco at 609-924-5705.

The Delaware & Raritan Canal, a 44-mile, man-made waterway, made possible boat traffic across New Jersey for 98 years, providing a shortcut between Philadelphia and New York and forming an important link in the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway. Many types of vessels utilized the canal, avoiding the longer, more dangerous ocean voyage around Cape May.

From its opening in 1834, the D&R was a commercial success. Due to the Civil War and the economic boom that followed it, the 1860s and 1870s were the most profitable years for the waterway. In fact, in 1866, a record 2,990,000 tons of coal and other cargo were shipped through the waterway – more tonnage than was carried in any single year on the more famous and much longer Erie Canal!

The actual opening of the canal in 1834 was observed with a two-day boat trip through the waterway. On board were Governor Peter Vroom, canal company officials, and other dignitaries. In 1984, for the canal's sesquicentennial, this voyage was, in part, reenacted. Portraying Governor Vroom was his descendant, Peter Vroom, then a director of the Canal Society of New Jersey. A photograph of this 1984 event accompanies this article.

Help celebrate the rich canal heritage of New Jersey by joining in the many commemorative events on the D&R Canal throughout 2009! ■

UPDATE ON WATERLOO

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curing in 2009 and the Society plans to continue to monitor them.

Whereas some historic documents relating to the village have been found and retained by the State, as of this writing the Smith Family Bible and the Smith Store ledger are not among them. The Society had reached out to Smith Family descendant, Robert Smith, Kevin Wright and former village employees regarding their knowledge of original family or village items that the State should search for and retain if they were located. Through that process a blanket chest, once belonging to General John Smith, was found and retained by the State. It is tragic that the Smith Family Bible and the Smith Store ledger remain among the missing items. There appears to be little likelihood that they will be found and preserved at this point.

Meanwhile the historic preservation survey leading up to a master plan for the village has continued underway, analyzing the various buildings and part of the landscape. [The results of this in-progress survey were presented at the Society's November general membership meeting]. The Society has provided documentation and pertinent information to the consultant conducting the project. It appears now that the plan will be completed in January 2009. It should be noted that the survey does not address the Morris Canal sites in the village or the historic structures and remains on the Morris County side of the Musconetcong River. The State is indicating that further survey work will be conducted on these elements in the future.

The Society continues to be represented on the State's Waterloo Advisory Committee, although the State had not convened this body for a year and a half until this past November. At that time the State announced that it was seeking an operator to reopen the Indian village at Waterloo for school field trips and would allow the Indian Village operator to arrange for schoolchildren to visit other limited areas of

BUDGET AXE CONTINUES TO HANG ABOVE OUR PARKS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE!

As I'm sure you recall, last year the State's budget proposals threatened to close nine State Parks, substantially reduce services in four additional parks and close nearly half of our State-operated historic sites. These proposals would have had a substantial impact on our canal sites and associated interpretive and recreational programming. Only a huge public outcry, including 60 letters of protest to the Governor from Canal Society members, staved off what would have been a great travesty for our State Park system.

Unfortunately we cannot sit back and savor this victory! Every indication is that the upcoming State budget will propose even greater cuts within our State Parks and history-related programming. We understand that

even in this current year State Parks are suffering due to State revenue shortfalls. At this time the Division of Parks & Forestry is not permitted to buy any paper supplies for copy machines or correspondence and cannot spend any funds on postage! How can an agency operate in such a manner!

We all must remain vigilant and be ready once again to resoundingly let our legislators and the Governor know how important our parks and history-related programming are to the public. We will know more about specific budget proposals by the Society's May membership meeting and will once again be seeking your help to advocate for preservation of our parks and historic sites. ■



The 1820's Rutan Cabin at Waterloo.

the village. At the same time the State is inviting representatives from the hospitality industry to visit the village and indicate potential interest in operating catering, conference, and bed and breakfast facilities at Waterloo.

The Canal Society remains extremely concerned about the future of Waterloo. Its buildings require a massive amount of repair work and now they are empty, limiting options for future interpretation. No operator has come forth; any new operator would have to have an extensive amount of seed money to get the site up and running, even on a limited basis. To top it all off the current bleak picture for the State, national and

even international economies translates into bad timing for launching major new projects. Furthermore, the Society feels strongly that the village should be managed under one operating entity so that the revenue streams from the various components of the site are all poured back into the overall operation.

Perhaps a lesson can be taken from the past, when this country was in deep economic distress. The federal government supported extensive public works projects that undertook vast conservation projects, development of new parks, documented historic structures and sites and even commissioned works of art. Historic preservation and recreational interests have long marveled at and enjoyed the accomplishments of these public works. Could this model be an option for Waterloo? Could the village be the beneficiary of public works projects, engaging historic preservation specialists to document, restore and begin interpretation of the site? It is an interesting concept whose time might have arrived! ■

UPDATES ON THE MORRIS CANAL GREENWAY

The purpose of the Morris Canal Greenway is to preserve the surviving historic remains of the Morris Canal and its associated natural environment, to interpret canal sites to the public, and to

offer recreational opportunities. The Greenway is an ongoing project of the Canal Society and is being implemented under the guidance of the Society's Morris Canal Greenway Committee.

Mount Olive Township

A large tract of land adjacent to the site of Morris Canal Plane 3 West continues to be the Canal Society's focus for a potential land acquisition for the Morris Canal Greenway. Most recently the Society was the recipient of an \$82,500 grant from the Morris County Open Space Trust Fund. These funds were awarded to serve as a match for Green Acres monies that the Society has allocated to purchase this property. Part of the 30-acre tract contains a section of Plane 3 West's tailrace, in addition to the foundations of other buildings that were contemporary with the canal's operation. The Morris County Park Commission continues to attempt to negotiate a purchase deal with the property owner. The subject property is very important to the Greenway, to protect the plane site and also to provide public access to the canal features.

Mount Olive Township is currently compiling a Trails Master Plan. Society President Brian Morrell recently attended a public meeting to testify about the great amenity that the Morris Canal Greenway could be for the Township. The Trails/Open Space Committee has great interest in the canal as a trail system and it was agreed that the Morris Canal should be a priority in the municipality's Trails Master Plan.

Roxbury Township

Preservation work on the outstanding turbine chamber and tailrace of Plane 2 East in LedgeWood Canal Park is now substantially complete. This project rebuilt the collapsing stone archway at the junction of the tailrace tunnel and the turbine chamber and repointed all of the masonry joints in the turbine chamber itself. It also raised and leveled the top of the turbine chamber at the ground surface for public safety purposes and to prevent runoff from entering and damaging the subterranean chamber. Steel grating now seals off the ground level opening of the turbine chamber

MEETINGS

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Here, 18th- and 19th-century steel works and a paper mill were established and are the subject of a current extensive archeological project which is exploring these early industrial remains. Other waterways in Trenton include the Delaware & Raritan Canal Feeder, the Trenton Water Power, the Delaware River and Assunpink Creek. Within the city are various historic and newer parks, several with an interrelationship with the above-listed watercourses. The presentation tonight will describe how history and these water courses can be employed to promote heritage tourism within our State's capital.

Richard Hunter, Ph.D is the President/Principal Archeologist of Hunter Research, a highly respected, New Jersey-based consulting firm offering a full range of cultural resource services to public and private clients throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern US. Richard has specific expertise in historical and industrial archeology, historical geography and historic landscape analysis. His firm has conducted many projects along the D&R Canal and relating to Trenton's historic industries, including the city's famous potteries, its early steel works and now the future site of Trenton's new Urban State Park.

Directions to the Morris County Cultural Center

From the Morristown Green, turn right onto Washington St (County Route 510, formerly NJ Route 24). Travel 3.5 miles west toward Chester. Pass the roads to the Delbarton School and Lewis Morris County Park on the left. After the curve and long white picket fence, look for a sign for the MUA on the right, pointing toward the driveway, which is marked by a street light and lighted directional sign. Make a sharp left turn and drive uphill to a Spanish-style stucco building at the top. Parking is in the lot to the left at the top of the hill. Once inside the main entrance hall of the Cultural Center, the auditorium is to the left. Restrooms are upstairs, with elevator access.

From Route 287 South, take Exit 35, Madison Ave. Turn right at the top of the ramp onto Madison Ave (Route 124). Bear right at the next light onto South Street, continue straight through a series of traffic lights and around the Morristown Green. Turn right onto Washington St. (County Route 510, formerly Route 24). Continue as described above.

From Route 287 North, take Exit 35, South Street/Madison Ave. At the end of the ramp, turn left onto South St, continue straight through several lights and travel around the Morristown Green. Turn right onto Washington St, (County Route 510, formerly Route 24). Continue as described above.

and a steel frame pavilion protects the historic structure from the elements. This project cost approximately \$200,000 and was funded by the Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund, with a matching component from Roxbury Township. The Society worked closely with the Township to secure this funding and to ensure that the project would be completed. Plane 2 East is one of the four best-preserved inclined planes from the overall Morris Canal. Its site merits good interpretation and should be a great attraction within Roxbury Township.

The Society's Morris Canal Greenway Committee continues to pursue acquisition of the site of the large basin at the head of Plane 1 West in Port Morris. Funding for this acquisition has been secured from Green Acres and the Morris County Open Space Trust Fund. However, lately the property owner appears to be trying to back out of the purchase agreement.

In late November a work session was held at the Riggs-Morris Canal property in Ledgewood to perform maintenance on the trails at the site and along the canal towpath. Thanks to Richard Cramond, Judy Keith and Brian Morrell who worked on this day. We look forward to another work session or two in the spring to complete the site cleanup. More volunteers are always welcome.



Newly restored tailrace arch in turbine chamber of Plane 2 East. Prior to the project the arch was collapsing.



New pavilion that protects turbine chamber opening at Plane 2 East. Steel grating covers the chamber opening, but an access stairway allows public viewing down into the chamber.

Wharton Borough

The Borough is continuing with its plans to enhance Lock 2 East within Hugh Force Park, hopefully restoring it to be an operable lock. Funding has been secured to produce interpretive signage for the canal and lock site. Substantial funds have been attracted toward the next phase of engineering investigation of the lock site but more monies are required to be able to move forward.

Bloomfield Township

Berkeley Avenue bridge is the last remaining road bridge built to carry vehicular traffic over the Morris Canal when the canal was still in operation. Dating from the early 1920s, the bridge has been targeted by Essex County for replacement, accompanied by a substantial road realignment. For the past several years the Society has been advocating for the bridge's preservation in place and its refurbishment as part of the Morris Canal Greenway. The bridge is adjacent to the Second River and is within a green belt that provides access to an active municipal park. The placement and geometry of the bridge define the Morris Canal site. Its arch enabled sufficient clearance for canal boats to pass beneath it.

The Berkeley Avenue bridge is a very special resource since it is the last surviving Morris Canal road

bridge and is one of the primary canal features left within Bloomfield. At one time there were over 200 road bridges crossing the 102-mile-length of the Morris Canal. Almost all of these bridges were removed at the time of the canal's dismantling in the 1920s. One other bridge, the Landing Road bridge in Roxbury Township, survives over the Morris Canal site. Although built during the last decade of the canal's operation, it was not strictly a road bridge. It also carried the Morris County Traction Company's trolley line and spanned a deep cut that contained both the DL&WRR and the canal. The future of this bridge is also threatened.

At a recent meeting of the New Jersey Historic Sites Council the Berkeley Avenue bridge received a reprieve. Society Past President Bob Barth provided testimony before the Council, convincing them to deny authorization to demolish the bridge. Essex County has provided evidence that the bridge can be rehabilitated but claims that the curvature of the road and the bridge creates a traffic hazard. The Council charged the County with examining traffic calming alternatives. The Society is greatly encouraged that the Council recognizes the importance of the Berkeley Avenue bridge and will be continuing to closely monitor the situation. ■

SOCIETY RECEIVES GRANT FOR MAHLER HOUSE PROJECT

The Canal Society has recently received a \$2,500 grant from Conservation Resources, Inc. to be used toward the Mahler House project at 1260 Waterloo Road within

Allamuchy Mountain State Park. This house is owned by the Division of Parks & Forestry, is located on a nearly 2-acre property contiguous with an outstanding section of the

Morris Canal and is key to establishing through trails for the Morris Canal Greenway, the NJ Highlands Trail and the Liberty-Water Gap Trail. The Society continues to seek a lease of the house, or a comparable agreement, from the State. The Conservation Resources, Inc. grant provides seed money toward the architectural planning for the Mahler House project. Furthermore, Conservation Resources will promote the Mahler House project on its website to attract other sources of funding. ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friday	January 16 7:30 p.m.	Membership Meeting <i>Morris County Cultural Center</i>
Friday	March 20 7:30 p.m.	Membership Meeting <i>Morris County Cultural Center</i>
Saturday	March 14	28th Annual Canal History & Technology Symposium <i>Lafayette College, Easton. PA</i>
Saturday	May 2	NJ State History Fair <i>Washington Crossing State Park</i>
Saturday	May 16	Canal Authors Extravaganza <i>Mule Tenders Barracks, Griggstown</i>



The Mahler House, a proposed Morris Canal Greenway trailhead facility.

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