

- The Durham Valley has a number of designated historic sites. Most of these properties continue in their historic use or in an adaptive reuse that is compatible with their historical qualities. And, reuse of historic sites and buildings is recognized as a positive and sustainable approach in the community.
- There are potentially many more properties that may be historically significant, such as agricultural lands, structures on agricultural lands, and roads that may not have been considered significant in previous inventories.
- The Durham Valley has an excellent state-chartered museum with an emphasis on local interest. The research library, the mainstay of the facility, attracts users from well beyond the borders of Greene County.

Management Actions - Cultural and Historic

Assist with the county-wide process to document significant historic resources.

- Encourage the Greene County Historical Society to maintain the historic resource database. Update to include any historic resources identified by this Corridor Management Plan. Update the database on an annual basis, or more frequently if significant information becomes available.
- Coordinate with the Historic Preservation Commission and New York State Historic Preservation Office annually to obtain the most recent listing of inventoried properties.
- Work with the Historic Preservation Commission on a regular basis to obtain information on properties that it is inventorying, surveying, or designating.
- Collaborate with the Historic Preservation Commission to provide their most recent inventories for inclusion in the database.

- If requested, assist the Durham Center Museum with its depository of information on local historic resources (e.g., a catalog of photographs or copies of inventory forms).

Encourage local hamlets to recognize historic resources through historic designation (local, state, or national) or through other planning measures.

- If requested, work with the Oak Hill community to recognize a historic district.
- Support Cornwallville's historic designation through restoration awards.
- Support East Durham's Main Street Project.
- Work with the Town of Durham to ensure adherence to an implementation of Local Law No. 1 of 1989 for Historic Preservation.



Work with the Historic Preservation Commission to craft projects for additional or new inventory, evaluation or designation of historic resources.

- Work with partners and private property owners including farmers to secure funding and technical support for evaluation and inventory projects.

- Add List of Potential Historic Resources to Greene County Historical Society database as sites needing additional study.
- Assist with the preparation and submittal of grant applications to the New York State Historic Preservation Office to conduct additional survey work.

Explain the economic options and benefits of historic preservation, such as gaining eligibility for historic grants for public and community projects and obtaining tax credits for private properties that are designated and rehabilitated as historic properties.

- Assist partners by providing services such as presentations and participating in grant writing and providing letters of support.
- Work with partners to create publications, brochures and other media to promote the importance and benefits of historic preservation.

Recreational Qualities

Recreation has continued to grow to the extent that it is one of the most significant sectors of Greene County's economic base, and the pastoral setting of the Durham Valley provides the perfect setting for outdoor recreation and exploration in unparalleled scenery. The Durham Valley offers many outstanding active and passive recreational activities for youth, families, and senior citizens. Bicycling, farm stays, hiking, and landscape painting are increasingly popular activities in the Scenic Byway Corridor.

Fishing

The Catskill Mountains are considered to be the birthplace of fly-fishing. Theodore Gordon, the dean of American fly-fishermen, first recorded his experiences on Catskill waters in the early 1900s. Today the region continues to offer some of the best fishing opportunities in the United States. Rainbow,



brook and brown trout in Esopus Creek, Beaverkill, the Willowemoc, Schoharie Creek, Neversink River, Catskill Creek, Batavia Kill, and the Delaware River draw anglers from around the world.

Catskill Creek parallels Route 145 through the Durham Valley. Its waters run cold and nurture brown, rainbow, and brook trout. Four points allow public access to Catskill Creek, but public opportunities to use the creek are limited. Access to Catskill Creek adjacent to the Durham Town Hall is routinely used for fishing and swimming. Cars parked along County Route 27 to use this point can be a hazard during the summer; however, it is a well-known and popular spot with residents and tourists. There is also an access point in Oak Hill, one at the confluence with Ten Mile Creek, and one near East Durham. Catskill Creek is stocked annually with trout by the Department of Environmental Conservation.

The Long Path

The Long Path was the vision of Vincent J. Schaefer of Schenectady, who proposed that New York establish its own “Long Path” similar to the Long Trail in Vermont. Unlike the Long Trail, Schaefer saw the Long Path as an unmarked route meandering from the George Washington Bridge to Whiteface Mountain in the Adirondacks, connecting together a series of landmarks. The name of the trail came from Walt Whitman’s poem

Song of the Open Road – “There lies before me a long brown path, leading wherever I choose.”

Beginning in the 1960s, the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference took Schaefer’s vision a step further by creating a blazed hiking trail along Schaefer’s route. Today the Long Path is a 326-mile hiking trail that extends from the George Washington Bridge, passes through the Scenic Byway Corridor, and continues north to John Boyd Thacher Park near Albany. The Long Path is accessible from the west side of the Scenic Byway Corridor. Future plans are to extend the trail to the Mohawk River and eventually into the Adirondacks.



Issues and Opportunities - Recreational

The Durham Valley’s setting provides outstanding outdoor recreation opportunities coupled with unparalleled scenery.

- There is increasing demand for access to public lands by local residents and families, as well as by users from outside of Greene County. Maintenance of the Long Path by the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is a continuing challenge. There is a need to enhance the trail segment through the Scenic Byway Corridor to provide a safe, enjoyable hiking experience.
- Through private enterprise, new recreational opportunities may arise that include the addition

of hiking and biking trails on historic routes such as the Canajoharie and Catskill Railroad. Their impact or enhancement of heritage values should be considered. It will also be important to support the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic features such as railroad routes that may pass through private lands.

- Providing waysides or new trails in the Scenic Byway Corridor will require collaboration between potential users and private land owners. A balance between protecting resources and ensuring that the rights and opinions of private landowners are respected must be made when exploring potential waysides or trails.

Management Actions - Recreational

Support and advocate protection of public lands that contribute to the recreational values of the Scenic Byway Corridor.

- a. Work with Department of Environmental Conservation in reviewing proposed management plans for Mount Pisgah State Forest to ensure consistency with Corridor Management Plan to the extent allowed by Department of Environmental Conservation’s mandates.
- b. Support Town of Durham efforts via code procedures that discourage inappropriate development adjacent to public lands.
- c. Promote a partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation to influence future plans impacting state lands to preserve recreation resources.
- d. Support and advocate policies of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan that protect important recreation resources.
- e. Support efforts of public or private partners who may seek to acquire or otherwise protect land adjacent to existing public lands that are considered critical for recreation or other intrinsic qualities.