OSWEGO CANAL

The Oswego Canal connects the Erie Canal at Three Rivers to Oswego Harbor at Lake Ontario. Though the Oswego Canal is fairly short, only 23 miles, it drops 188 feet and has long provided a critical connection to Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. The Oswego River's bays and back channels are well suited for boating, fishing, birdwatching, canoeing, and kayaking. Visitors from around the world are drawn to Oswego's active port, renowned for its festivals and exceptional sport fishing.

The Oswego Canal originally started at its confluence with the Erie Canal in downtown Syracuse, across from the weigh lock building, now home to the Erie Canal Museum. From there it ran along the east shore of Onondaga Lake. From Phoenix down to the Lake Ontario, the canal used a succession of constructed channels with locks and river segments with towing paths along the east side of the Oswego River. Remnants of these 19th-century structures are common along the modern canal and are easily explored by paddlers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
More information about things to do in the Oswego Canal area is available from **visitoswegocounty.com.**

Map Symbol Key

- Water Trail Site
- Lock
- Navigation Hazard!
- Hand Launch
- Ramp Launch
- Dock Launch
- Interstate or Limited Access Highway
- US Highway
- State Highway
- County Road
- Major Local Road
- Minor Local Road
- Railroad
- County Boundary
- Stream
- River or Canal
- Park or Recreation/ Wilderness Area

To enter the Oswego Canal from the western junction with the Erie Canal, paddle straight ahead, keeping the double bridges for CR 57 and the CSX railroad on the right (east). The Oswego Canal channel entrance is marked by buoys G219 and R220 on the Erie Canal and buoy G1 on the Oswego Canal.

PADDLING NOTE: Red buoys on the Oswego River are on the east side of the channel, green buoys on the west.

O Mile 0.56, west side 43.20359 -76.28256

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 2-1 dock

O Mile 0.63, west side 43.21143 -76.28881

NYS Canal Maintenance Shops, Lysander
The Lysander Shops are responsible for maintenance of canal channels and structures on the Oswego Canal and the Erie Canal from Montezuma to Oneida Lake.

PADDLING NOTE: This is an active working dock during the canal season. Watch out for workboats.

O Mile 1.30, east side 43.22236 -76.29377

Stowell Island (also known as Treasure Island)
As the story goes, French missionaries in the area fled in the summer of 1658 and spent the night on the island. They left behind a cannon and a sack of gold. Neither has ever been found.

O Mile 1.80, west side 43.22448 -76.29895

The four concrete abutments that go halfway across the canal are the remains of a trolley bridge that once spanned the river.

PHOENIX

The Village of Phoenix dates back to the 1750s. Industry and commerce expanded when the Oswego Canal opened in 1828. In 1916, a massive fire destroyed 80 buildings along the waterfront. Most of the remaining buildings, now part of the Canal Waterfront District, date from 1917-1929.

PADDLING NOTE: Lock Island Park at mile 2.33 is the best place to launch in Phoenix.

O Mile 1.96, east side 43.22810 -76.29911

Henley Park
Lock Street and State Street
Phoenix, NY 13135
(315) 695-1308
villageofphoenix-ny.gov

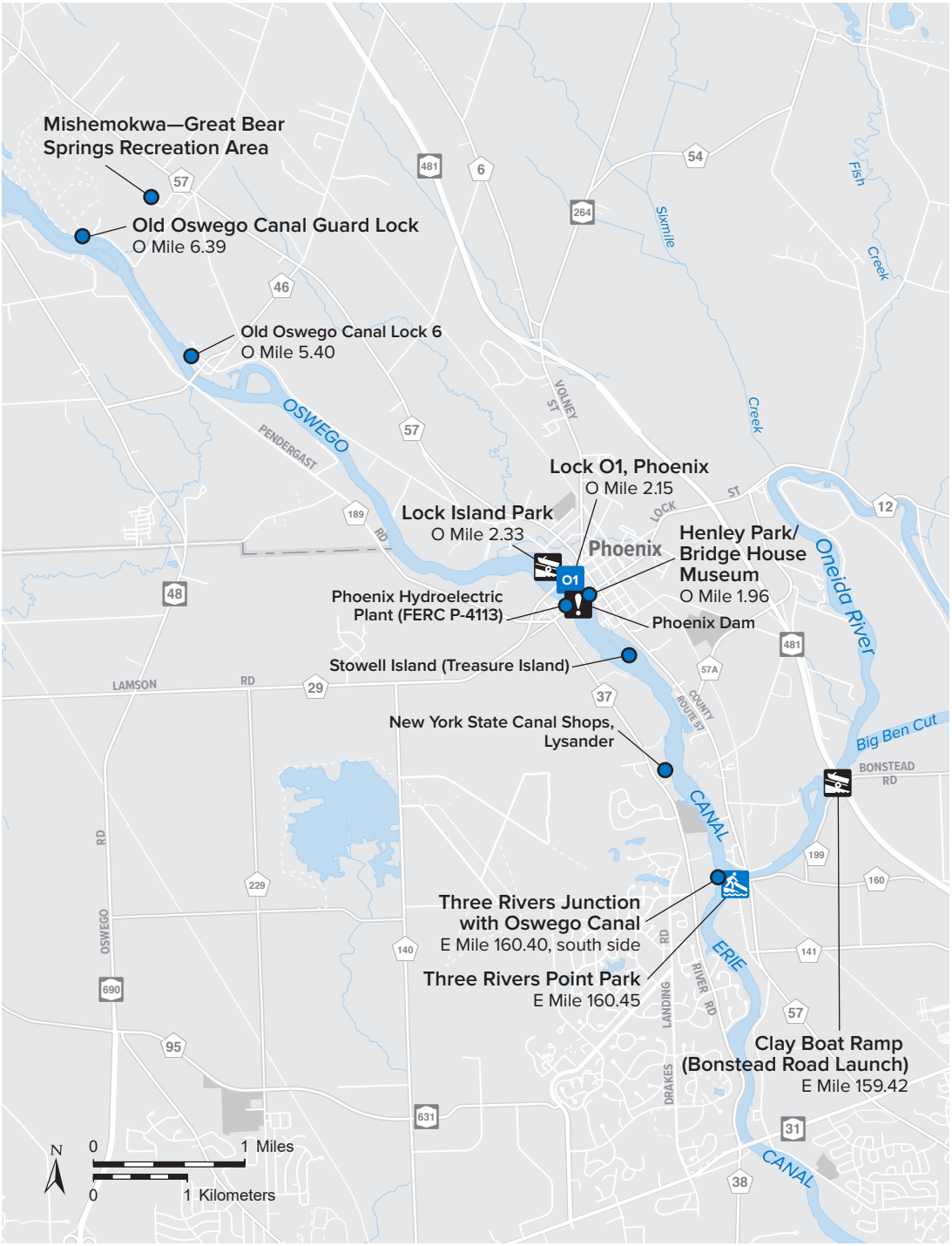
FACILITIES: Electric, wi-fi, water, restrooms, showers, pavilion. Facilities are difficult for paddlers to access at this location due to vertical canal walls. Shops and restaurants are a short walk away.

The Bridge House Brats at the park are local teens who volunteer to assist boaters and tourists with errands and chores; bridgehousebrats.com.

O Mile 1.96, east side 43.22778 -76.29885

Bridge House Museum
55 State Street (at corner of Lock Street)
Phoenix, NY 13135
(315) 695-1308

The white, three-story bridge house was built in 1917 to contain the controls for a drawbridge over the Oswego River. The old bridge was removed in the 1980s and the control building became a small museum and visitor center. It contains a collection of artifacts relating to the history of the Village of Phoenix and the Barge Canal.


Mishemokwa—Great Bear Springs Recreation Area
Old Oswego Canal Guard Lock
O Mile 6.39
Old Oswego Canal Lock 6
O Mile 5.40
Lock O1, Phoenix
O Mile 2.15
Lock Island Park
O Mile 2.33
Phoenix
Henley Park/ Bridge House Museum
O Mile 1.96
Phoenix Hydroelectric Plant (FERC P-4113)
Phoenix Dam
Stowell Island (Treasure Island)
New York State Canal Shops, Lysander
Three Rivers Junction with Oswego Canal
E Mile 160.40, south side
Three Rivers Point Park
E Mile 160.45
Clay Boat Ramp (Bonstead Road Launch)
E Mile 159.42
OSWEGO
CANAL
ERIE
CANAL
Oneida River
Big Ben Cut
Sixmile
Creek
Fish
Creek
PENDERGAST
RD
VOLNEY
ST
LOCK
ST
LAMSON
RD
COUNTY ROUTE 57
BONSTEAD
RD
OSWEGO
RD
DRAKES
LANDING
RD
RIVER
RD
O1
N
0
1 Miles
0
1 Kilometers

ADMISSION: Free.

HOURS: July 1 through September 1: Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Friday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

O Mile 2.15 43.22939 -76.30120

Lock O1, Phoenix
87 State Street
Phoenix, NY 13135
(315) 695-2281

LIFT: 10.2 feet.

FACILITIES: At Henley Park.

PADDLING NOTE: The lock has a movable crest dam and a hydroelectric station on the west side. Exercise caution and stay to the east of the channel markers for the lock.

O Mile 2.19 43.22987 -76.30210

Bridge O4, Culvert Street Lift Bridge
This movable bridge is controlled by the lock operator.

O Mile 2.33 43.23067 -76.30458

Lock Island Park
Off Culvert Street/Lamson Road
Phoenix, NY 13135

FACILITIES: A boat ramp and floating dock are at the northern (downstream) tip of the island. Picnic tables. Portable toilets are nearby. Parking for 20 cars. Overnight parking allowed. Distance from parking about 20 feet.

O Mile 4.89 43.24714 -76.34159

Walter Island

O Mile 5.27 43.24845 -76.35122

Bridge O5, Hinmansville Road (CR 46)

O Mile 5.40, east side 43.15005 -76.21077

Old Oswego Canal Lock 6
Remains of Enlarged Oswego Canal Lock 6 (Hinmansville Lock) can be found at the head of a side channel on the east side of the river, just downstream of the bridge opposite buoy G41.

O Mile 6.39, east side 43.26115 -76.36279

Old Oswego Canal Guard Lock/ Mishemokwa—Great Bear Springs Recreation Area
Great Bear Road
Fulton, NY 13069
(315) 343-4565

Remains of Old Oswego Canal and old Guard Lock 2 can be glimpsed at Mishemokwa—Great Bear Springs Recreation Area (original source of the bottled water of the same name). Paddlers can explore the section of the old canal and lock. The recreation area closes after dark. Visit friendsofgreatbear.org for more information.

O Mile 7.43, west side 43.26951 -76.38181

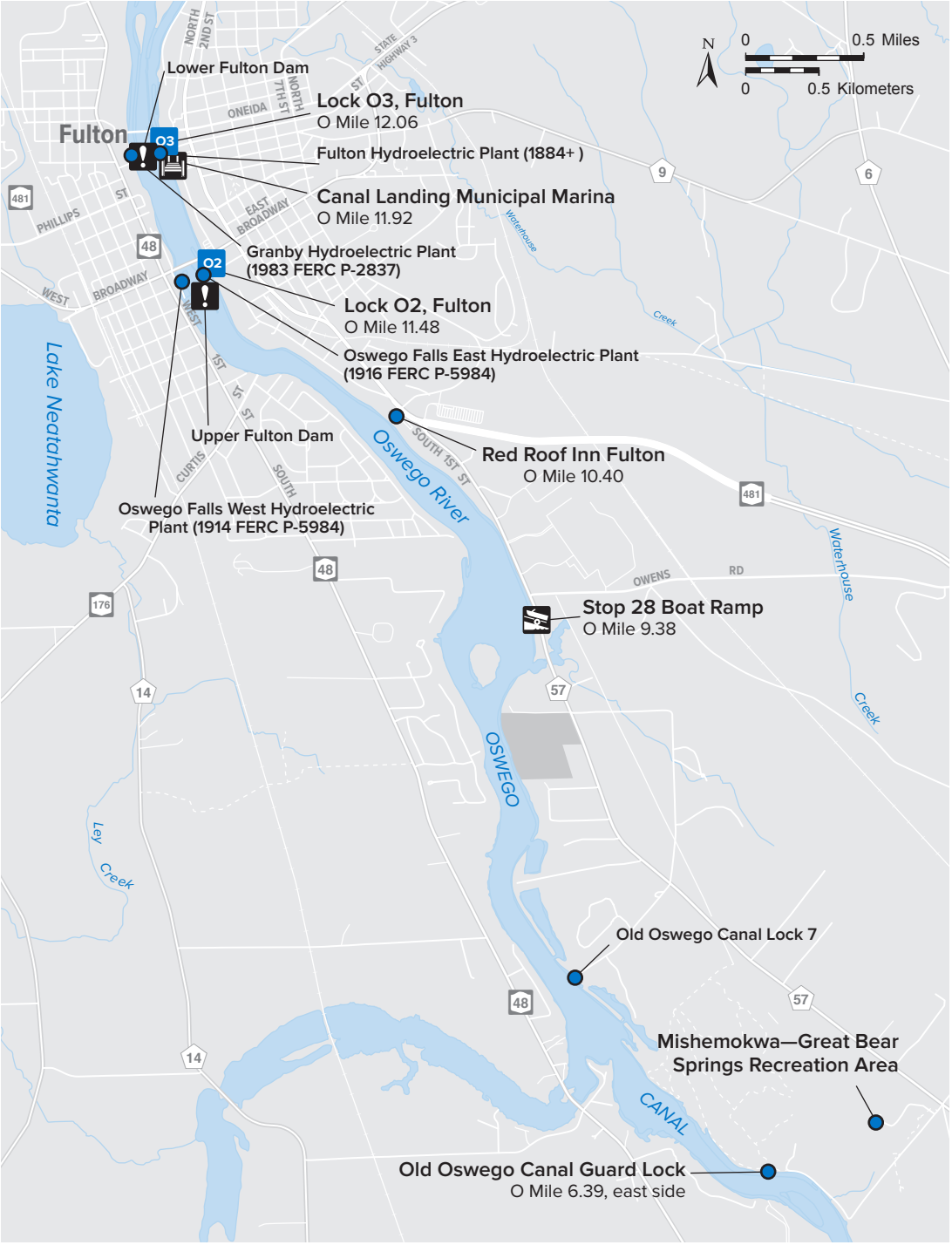
Ox Creek enters the canal from the west side.

O Mile 7.45, east side 43.27335 -76.38272

Old Oswego Canal Lock 7
Remains of Enlarged Oswego Canal Lift Lock 7 (Morseman's Lock), near Fulton, NY, are visible in a side channel on the east side near buoy R58.

O Mile 7.95 43.28048 -76.38349

The roar on Saturday evenings between buoys R54 and R64 comes from dirt track racers at Fulton Speedway on the east bank.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0
0.5 Miles
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0.5 Kilometers
Lower Fulton Dam
Lock O3, Fulton
O Mile 12.06
Fulton
O3
Fulton Hydroelectric Plant (1884+)
Canal Landing Municipal Marina
O Mile 11.92
Granby Hydroelectric Plant
(1983 FERC P-2837)
O2
Lock O2, Fulton
O Mile 11.48
Oswego Falls East Hydroelectric Plant
(1916 FERC P-5984)
Upper Fulton Dam
Red Roof Inn Fulton
O Mile 10.40
Oswego Falls West Hydroelectric
Plant (1914 FERC P-5984)
Stop 28 Boat Ramp
O Mile 9.38
Old Oswego Canal Lock 7
Mishemokwa—Great Bear
Springs Recreation Area
Old Oswego Canal Guard Lock
O Mile 6.39, east side
Lake Neatahwanta
Oswego River
OSWEGO
CANAL
Ley Creek
Waterhouse Creek
NORTH 2ND ST
STATE HIGHWAY 3
NORTH 7TH ST
ONEIDA ST
PHILLIPS ST
EAST BROADWAY
WEST BROADWAY
WEST 1ST ST
CURTIS
SOUTH 1ST ST
OWENS RD
481
48
176
14
9
6
57

O Mile 9.38 43.29146 -76.39068

Big Island is on the west side. Paddle to the east to stay in the channel and avoid shallow water and snags.

O Mile 9.38, east side 43.29530 -76.38645

Stop 28 Boat Ramp
Volney, NY 13069

FACILITIES: Gravel ramp and beach landing. Parking for 10 cars. Distance from parking about 20 feet.

O Mile 10.40, east side 43.30764 -76.39851

Red Roof Inn
930 South 1st Street
Fulton, NY 13069
(315) 593-2444
redroof.com

O Mile 11.48 43.31664 -76.41469

Lock O2, Fulton
304 South 1st Street
Fulton, NY 13069
(315) 592-4155

LIFT: 17.8 feet.

FACILITIES: Use facilities at Canal Landing Marina.

PADDLING NOTE: Hug the east (right) bank through Fulton. While there is a long approach wall above the lock, segments of it are open at and below the water's surface. Be aware of cross-currents toward the Oswego Falls dam with hydroelectric plants at either end. Steer clear of the safety cable with orange buoys. Stay to the east side of the channel after leaving Lock O2 to stay on track for Lock O3.

Lock O2, the dam, and its two hydroelectric plants mark the site of Oswego Falls, a source of waterpower starting in the 1800s. They were all built around 1914 as part of Barge Canal construction.

O Mile 11.49 43.31682 -76.41477

Bridge O7B, swing bridge
This bridge spans the lock chamber and is operated by the lock tender.

O Mile 11.52 43.31722 -76.41499

Bridge O8, Broadway (NY 3)
Locally known as the "Upper Bridge."

O Mile 11.92, east side 43.32315 -76.41774

Canal Landing Municipal Marina
22 South 1st Street
Fulton, NY 13069
(315) 598-4399
fulton.ny.gov

FACILITIES: Electric, water, restrooms, showers. Floating dock. Ample parking. Shops and restaurants are nearby. Call ahead for restrooms and showers.

O Mile 12.06 43.32422 -76.41865

Lock O3, Fulton
22 South 1st Street
Fulton, NY 13069
(315) 592-5349

LIFT: 27.0 feet.

FACILITIES: Use Canal Landing Marina.

PADDLING NOTE: Hug the wall along the east (right) bank between Lock O2 and Lock O3. The upstream bullnose on the west side of Lock O3 is unusually short, leaving little room to correct between the dam spillway and intake for the Fulton hydroelectric plant. A safety cable with buoys marks this area, but it can be uncomfortably close to the dam when the river is running fast and the wind is out of the south. Do not paddle into this area.

Walls and artificial islands divide the river into three channels below the lock and dam. About 0.25 mile below the lock is a spillway that allows excess water from the center channel to spill into the navigation channel. The volume of water varies with operation of the lock, the hydro plants, and flow in the river itself and can sometimes change quite rapidly. Be aware and be prepared to make corrective strokes if the cross current pushes you toward the right bank.

There are hydroelectric plants at either end of the dam—Fulton on the east side, next to Lock O3, and Granby on the far bank. The Granby plant started operation in 1983 on the site of an earlier hydro plant. The area now occupied by the marina was the intake for a power canal that drove paper mills, machine works, and a huge flour mill along the east side of the river.

O Mile 12.10	43.32494 -76.41898

Bridge O9, Oneida Street
Locally known as the "Lower Bridge."

O Mile 12.90, east side	43.33592 -76.41548

Indian Point Landing
446 North 1st Street
Fulton, NY 13069

FACILITIES: Picnic tables, gazebo, grills. Ramp, floating dock, rocky beach landing. Parking for 20 cars and 10 vehicles with trailers; overnight parking permitted. Distance from parking about 20 feet.

O Mile 13.40	43.34229 -76.42355

Pathfinder Island
The island is named for the title character in the James Fenimore Cooper 1840 novel *The Pathfinder*. Much of the book takes place during a trip down the Oswego River. Paddle to the west of the island to stay in the channel.

O Mile 14.80, east side	43.36435 -76.42981

Paddle under NY 481 opposite buoy G105 to enter an old Enlarged Oswego Canal lock.

O Mile 15.60

Battle Island
The island was the site of a 1756 battle between French and British forces. It was reshaped by Barge Canal construction and now supports large old-growth oak and hickory trees.

Paddlers can enter a segment of the old Oswego Canal along the east shore, just above Battle Island, and pass through the stone chamber of Guard Lock 4 before rejoining the main channel.

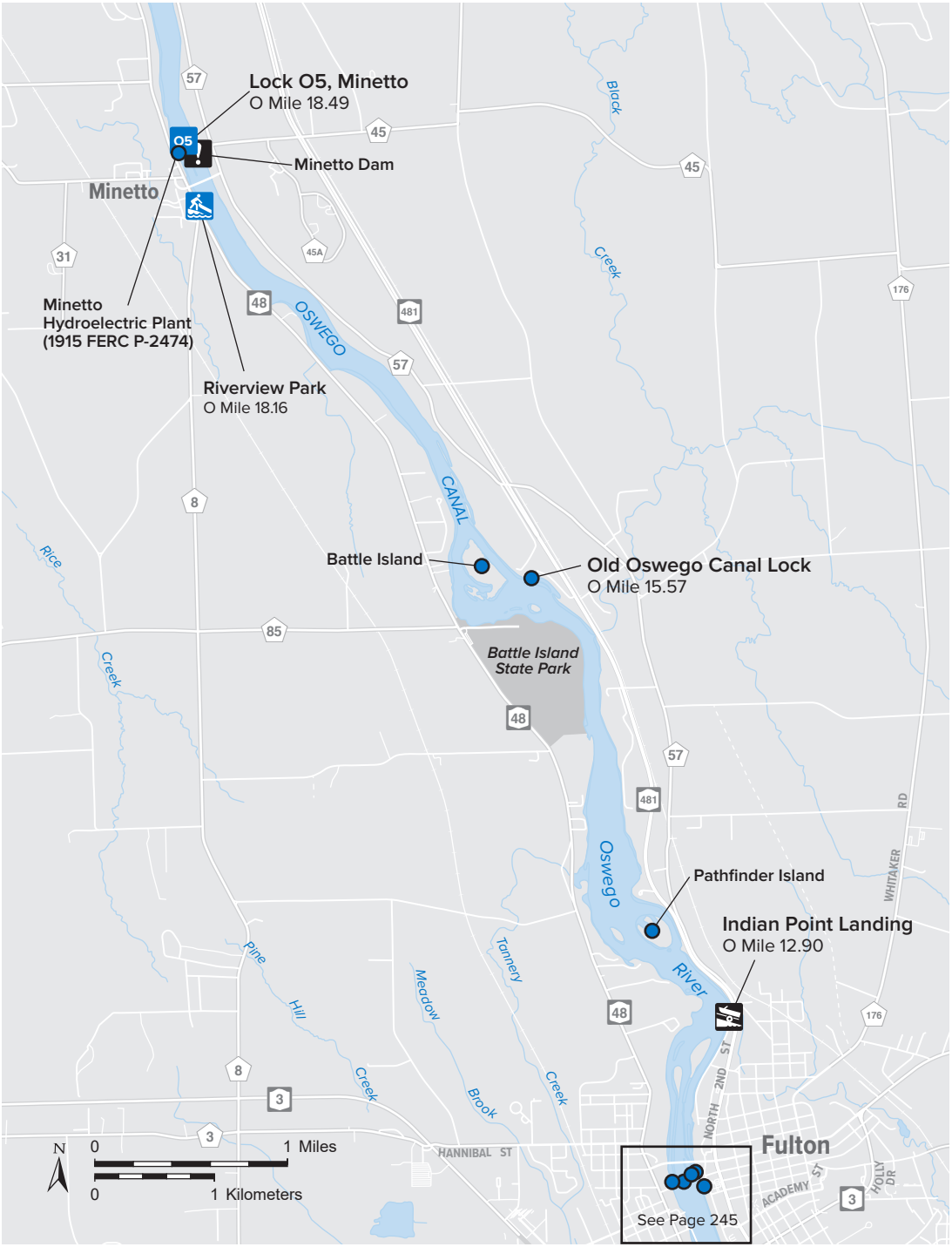
O Mile 18.16, west side	43.39618 -76.47150

Riverview Park
6 Community Drive and NY 48
Minetto, NY 13126
(315) 598-4399
townofminetto.net

FACILITIES: Water, restrooms, showers, picnic tables. Floating docks. A concrete ramp for emergency vehicles is about 300 feet downstream. Paddlers may hand-launch from the ramp. Parking for five cars. Distance from parking about 20 feet. Follow the canalside path north under the Minetto Bridge to reach nearby shops and restaurants.

Mile 18.27	43.39800 -76.47127

Bridge O10, Minetto Bridge Road (CR 57)
The eastern section of this bridge has three open spandrel concrete arches spanning the Oswego River. This bridge and others on the Oswego were originally designed to be operable, but the drawbridge machinery was never installed.


Lock O5, Minetto
O Mile 18.49
O5
Minetto Dam
Minetto
Minetto
Hydroelectric Plant
(1915 FERC P-2474)
Riverview Park
O Mile 18.16
OSWEGO
CANAL
Battle Island
Old Oswego Canal Lock
O Mile 15.57
Battle Island
State Park
Pathfinder Island
Indian Point Landing
O Mile 12.90
Oswego
River
Fulton
NORTH 2ND ST
ACADEMY ST
HOLLY DR
WHITAKER RD
HANNIBAL ST
Black
Creek
Rice
Creek
Pine
Hill
Creek
Meadow
Brook
Tannery
Creek
N
0
1 Miles
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1 Kilometers
See Page 245

Minetto

Pete Pinkerton

O Mile 18.49 43.40054 -76.47327

Lock O5, Minetto
2790 NY 48
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-5232

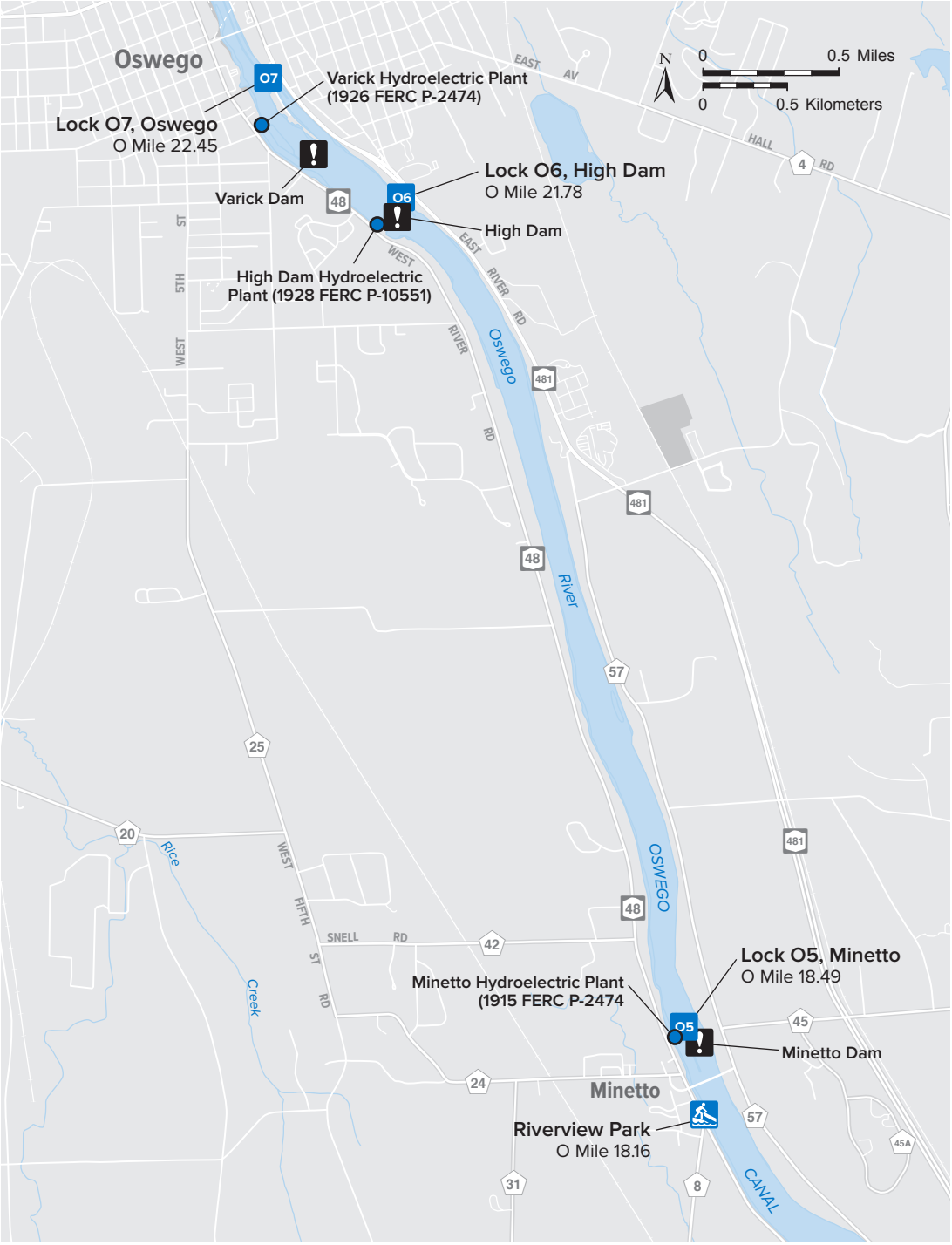
LIFT: 18.0 feet.

FACILITIES: Use the Riverview Park dock.

PADDLING NOTE: The lock is on the west side of the river between the hydroelectric plant and the dam. Follow the marked channel to stay on track for Lock O5 and to avoid the Minetto Dam. Buoys support a safety cable in front of the dam. The approach structures on either side above the lock are piers with timbers in between. Be very careful here—paddlers have found themselves pinned under these structures. Downstream of the lock, be prepared for turbulence from the hydroelectric plant tailrace on the left and the dam spillway on the right.

The Oswego Canal has no Lock 4. The original plans for the Barge Canal expansion called for a lock, but as the work progressed the engineers realized it wasn't needed. Rather than renumber all the plans, they simply left it out.

The Minetto lock, dam, and hydroelectric power plant were constructed in 1915.


Oswego
O7
Varick Hydroelectric Plant
(1926 FERC P-2474)
Lock O7, Oswego
O Mile 22.45
Varick Dam
48
O6
Lock O6, High Dam
O Mile 21.78
High Dam
High Dam Hydroelectric
Plant (1928 FERC P-10551)
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EAST
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RIVER
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RD
Oswego
481
481
48
River
57
25
20
Rice
Creek
WEST
FIFTH
ST
RD
SNELL
RD
42
481
48
OSWEGO
Lock O5, Minetto
O Mile 18.49
Minetto Hydroelectric Plant
(1915 FERC P-2474
O5
45
Minetto Dam
24
Minetto
Riverview Park
O Mile 18.16
57
45A
31
8
CANAL

OSWEGO

The City of Oswego has a long maritime history, from native peoples through some of the earliest European explorers and traders, colonial armies, and canallers to today's international commerce by way of the Saint Lawrence Seaway. In 1828 the Oswego Canal established an all-water link between the Port of Oswego and the Erie Canal, allowing people and goods to travel between Lake Ontario and the Atlantic Ocean without having to carry goods past waterfalls.

The city is home to the State University of New York at Oswego, a campus with about 8,000 students. Oswego has an active arts scene, a wide range of bars, restaurants, and shops, and a long Lake Ontario shoreline ideal for boating and fishing.

In late July, Oswego sponsors the annual Harborfest, a four-day event featuring fireworks, food, rides, living history, and fun.

Paddlers can enjoy the unique beauty of the historic Oswego River as they pass through four canal locks during Oswego County's annual Paddlefest. The recreational event offers three routes ranging from five to 13 miles. Paddlefest is sponsored by the H. Lee White Maritime Museum.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, go to **visitoswegony.com**.

LODGING

43.45947 -76.50909

Best Western Oswego Hotel and Conference Center
26 East 1st Street
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 342-4040
bestwestern.com

43.45827 -76.50860

Quality Inn and Suites Riverfront
70 East 1st Street
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-1600

PADDLECRAFT RENTALS

43.46340 -76.51531

Oswego Expeditions
3 Basin Street
Oswego Marina East
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 312-0034
oswegoexpeditions.org

Kayak and bike rentals; guided paddling, biking, and walking tours. Restrooms, kayak storage.

PLACES OF INTEREST OFF THE WATER

43.46588 -76.50814

Fort Ontario State Historic Site
1 East 4th Street
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-4711
parks.ny.gov

43.45551 -76.50373

Richardson-Bates House Museum/ Oswego County Historical Society
135 East 3rd Street
Oswego, NY, 13126
(315) 343-1342
rbhousemuseum.org

Located in Oswego's Washington Square Historic District, the house is on the National Register of Historic Places.

43.46366 -76.50437

Safe Haven Holocaust Refugee Shelter Museum
Fort Ontario State Historic Site
2 East 7th Street
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 342-3003
safehavenmuseum.com

43.47320 -76.51673

West Pierhead Lighthouse
facebook.com/OswegoLH/

This lighthouse stands at the entrance to Lake Ontario. Do not attempt to traverse the breakwater or access the lighthouse from the water. The best view of the lighthouse is from Lake Street.

43.47320 -76.51673

H. Lee White Maritime Museum
1 West 1st Street (on the pier)
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 342-0480
hlwmm.org

MORE INFORMATION about the area including brochures are available that map out self-guided walking tours of Oswego's Washington Square, downtown area, and Franklin Square Historic District is available from the Heritage Foundation of Oswego. Visit **facebook.com/pg/oswego heritagefoundation**.

Pete Pinkerton

Lock O7, Oswego

O Mile 21.78 43.44468 -76.49494

Lock O6, High Dam
300 East River Road
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-9001

LIFT: 20.0 feet.

FACILITIES: Tie up at the north or south lock walls on the east side. Facilities are difficult for paddlers to access at this location due to vertical canal walls.

PADDLING NOTE: Buoys support a safety cable in front of the dam. Do not paddle into this area. When leaving the lock, be prepared to encounter cross-currents and turbulence from the dam spillway. From the north end of Lock O6, stay to the east within the channel to avoid the Varick Dam and to stay on track for Lock O7 (0.56 miles north).

The High Dam Hydro Station on the west side was built in 1926 and is owned by the City of Oswego.

O Mile 22.45 43.45099 -76.50471

Lock O7, Oswego
3 Leto Island
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-6304

LIFT: 14.5 feet.

FACILITIES: Tie up at the south wall inside the inlet or at the north wall. Facilities are difficult for paddlers to access at this location due to vertical canal walls. Lock O8 is 0.38 miles north.

PADDLING NOTE: The canal channel between Locks O7 and O8 runs behind a concrete wall that keeps it at a higher elevation than the river. It makes for an interesting view, but be aware of the open spillway sections about 600 feet below Lock O7 and just above Lock O8. The east bank between the locks is a park with pavilions, grills, and picnic tables.

Leto Island is on the west side of the lock. The Varick hydropower plant is on the far side of the river.

West Pierhead Lighthouse (1934)
Lake Ontario
Wright's Landing/ Oswego International Marina
H. Lee White Maritime Museum
Fort Ontario State Historic Site
Safe Haven Holocaust Refugee Shelter Museum
Oswego Expeditions
Oswego Marina
O Mile 23.19
Oswego Railroad Museum
Best Western Oswego Hotel and Conference Center
Kevin Davis Memorial Drift/ Lock O8 Boat Ramp
O Mile 22.93
Quality Inn and Suites Riverfront
King Arthur's Suites
Lock O8, Oswego
O Mile 22.89
Richardson-Bates House Museum/ Oswego County Historical Society
Oswego
Oswego River
Lock O7, Oswego
O Mile 22.45
Varick Hydroelectric Plant (1926 FERC P-2474)
Varick Dam
Lock O6, High Dam
O Mile 21.78
High Dam
High Dam Hydroelectric Plant (1928 FERC P-10551)
OSWEGO CANAL
O8
O7
O6
104
48
481
MITCHELL ST
EAST SENECA ST
EAST ONEIDA ST
BRIDGE ST
10TH
WEST SENECA ST
WEST BRIDGE ST
WEST 5TH ST
EAST 1ST ST
WEST 1ST ST
EAST AV
EAST RIVER RD
WEST RIVER RD
N
0
0.5 Miles
0
0.5 Kilometers

O Mile 22.64 43.45336 -76.50696

Bridge O12, Utica Street

O Mile 22.73 43.45447 -76.50760

Bridge O13, pedestrian
This former railroad bridge is now part of the Harbor Trail Walk. It connects to the Oswego River Walk on the west bank, which begins near the Varick hydropower plant and ends at the Oswego lakefront. The walkways on both sides are heavily used by anglers during salmon and steelhead runs.

O Mile 22.89 43.45659 -76.50878

Lock O8, Oswego
2 Canal View Drive
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-0280

LIFT: 11.1 feet.

FACILITIES: Picnic tables, shelter, grills.

O Mile 22.92 43.45719 -76.50906

Bridge O14, Bridge Street (NY 104)

O Mile 22.93, east side 43.45730 -76.50892

Kevin Davis Memorial Drift/Lock O8 Boat Ramp
2 Canal View Drive
Oswego, NY 13126

Located at the northern end of the lock under the supports for the Bridge Street bridge. Access by car from Canal View Drive.

FACILITIES: Ramp. Parking for five cars with street parking nearby. Distance from parking about 20 feet.

PADDLING NOTE: The shore area around the ramp is rocky. This ramp is heavily used during the salmon run by drift boats fishing the rapids between Varick Dam and the lake. Be aware of traffic and that anglers/guides are often in a rush to get on or off the water.

O Mile 23.19, east side 43.46138 -76.51044

Oswego Marina
3 Basin Street
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 342-0436
portoswego.com/marina

FACILITIES: Electric, water, restrooms, showers. Ramp, low dock. Ample parking. Large marina operated by the Port of Oswego Authority. The marina is a U.S. Customs entry location. Kayak rentals available at Oswego Expeditions.

Lake Ontario, west side 43.46260 -76.52148

Wright's Landing/Oswego International Marina
29 Lake Street
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 342-8186
oswegony.org/government/waterfront

FACILITIES: Electric, water, restrooms, showers, picnic tables, pavilion, grills. Car top launch, ramp, low docks. Ample parking. Distance from parking about 20 feet. Kayak rentals available.