
Crescent Trail

The Crescent Trail is a wide and nearly flat route along the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway that provides expansive views of the Mohawk River and surrounding lands.

Directions: From I-87, take Exit 8 and continue east on Vischer Ferry Road for 1.6 miles to the junction with Canal Road. Turn right onto Canal Road and into the Crescent Park parking lot on the west side of Route 9. For parking at the Terminal Road lot, continue on Vischer Ferry Road past Canal Road, across Route 9, and turn right on Terminal Road into the large parking lot.

Access Points: The Crescent Trail begins officially in the Crescent Park, located on the west side of Route 9 in Halfmoon, just north of the Crescent Bridge that crosses the Mohawk River. A parking lot in Crescent Park is reached from Canal Road. There is a second parking lot on Terminal Road located on the east side of the bridge on Route 9. A short sloped partially paved trail leads from the parking lot, down to the river, under the bridge and up to Crescent Park. Our accessibility assessment began at the Terminal Road parking lot, covered over 1,700 feet, and ended at the Crescent Park paved parking area just beyond the Erie Canal Stone historic marker.

Parking: The Terminal Road parking area has many paved parking spaces and two designated accessible parking spaces with a shared access aisle. The Crescent Park parking lot has seven paved parking spaces.



Distance: It's .3 miles from Terminal Road to Crescent Park. Crescent Trail from the park to its end at Canal and Beech Streets is 1.4 miles one way.

Trailhead: A path leads out of the Terminal Road parking lot, on the opposite side from the accessible parking.

Surface: The first 15 feet of route from the accessible parking is a mixture of large and small gravel and vegetation. At 100 feet, the trail has a washout with a nearly 8% slope. Approximately 670 feet of the beginning of the trail is paved and then the surface is crushed stone. There are areas of coarse stone, mostly at 1,000 feet in, near the Crescent Park.

Width: The majority of the trail is five or six feet wide.

Slope: About 110 feet of the trail is 5-8% in running slope. These steeper sections occur for short distances near the middle and end of the assessed portion of the trail near Crescent Park. The rest of the trail is under 5% in slope.

Cross slope: Most of the trail is under 2%. 127 feet is between 4 and 6%, occurring at about 300 feet in and 700 feet in.

Description, from Terminal Road parking: The hamlet of Crescent was an important commercial center during the Erie Canal era. Two historic buildings remain on the left side of the road as you drive to the parking area. The yellow house was built around 1840 and likely served as an inn or canal store that catered to travelers. The large red brick building was originally the Farmer's Bank. At the water's edge there is a long cement wharf with four large bollards that still serve as a mooring area for an occasional boat or barge.

On the right side of the parking lot is a sign and remnants of the north end of the old

Crescent Aqueduct, which carried the canal over the Mohawk River from 1825-1915. A paved trail leads down to the river and under the Route 9 bridge. At 616 feet, there is a bench beside the path and under the bridge, to relax and enjoy the view. This is also a popular fishing area. The trail continues under the bridge and briefly becomes uneven gravel as it leads up the bank before passing back to crushed packed stone. The trail continues and meets up with Crescent Park on the west side of Route 9.

The Crescent Park parking lot is located near the center of the park with a path leading to the main trail which runs between the river and Canal Road. Next to the parking lot is a granite monument to the Eire Canal, once considered the 8th Wonder of the World. A three-sided panel exhibit expands on this theme with photos of Crescent, Halfmoon, and the Mohawk Towpath Byway.

Crescent Park has a bicycle rack, tables, benches, and a cooking area for picnics. Wooden posts at the end of the park near the bridge, mark the beginning of the trail, which continues as a flat stone dust walkway for a mile along the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway. Along the trail there are several benches facing the river to relax and enjoy the view. Here there are contrasting views – the Mohawk River and the Town of Colonie Park across the water, and on this side, homes built into the hillside, each unique in style. Several homes maintain docks along the river shore during the warmer seasons. Accompanying the river

are water-loving trees including cottonwoods, willows, slippery elms, silver maples, boxelders, and alders. Shrubs include the invasive buckthorn, silky dogwood and sumac – the females holding their fruits through the winter providing food for early spring migrating birds.

At 0.6-miles along the trail you pass a painted brick house that is dwarfed by a weeping willow tree. At .7 miles the path moves closer to the river and a housing development across the river comes into view. There is also a bench at this area.

Just beyond the one-mile mark you will see a private home on the riverside. Here the trail crosses Canal Road. There is a small paved pull-off for pickup, but not for parking. The trail continues for approximately 0.4-miles before ending. If you choose to continue, after crossing the road and bending away from the river, the trail enters a small wooded area and continues parallel to Canal Road. The trail crosses a small bridge before reaching a parking area along Canal Road. Next to the parking area is a grassy space with a picnic table and large cottonwood trees providing shade for visitors. This open area is surrounded by shrubs, grasses and trees. Beyond this green space, the trail continues for a short distance between bushes and trees to the intersection of Beach and Canal Roads. You can walk back along Canal Road or return the way you came.

Owner: Town of Halfmoon

For more information: Contact Town of Halfmoon, (518) 371-7410, www.townof-halfmoon.org

TRAILS FOR ALL IN SARATOGA COUNTY

This trail report is part of a series of documents describing outdoor spaces with accessible features in Saratoga County. It was created by ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, a regional environmental organization. For more information, or to find more descriptions of trails for users of different ability levels, go to ecosny.org. ECOS also publishes a series of guides describing natural areas in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties.