



2026

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



## Keuka Outlet Trail

*New York*



# Keuka Outlet Trail

New York

*The Keuka Outlet Trail offers a winding route of 6.7 miles between Penn Yan and Dresden in New York's Finger Lakes region. The rail*



The Keuka Outlet Trail offers a winding route of 6.7 miles between Penn Yan and Dresden in New York's Finger Lakes region. The rail trail follows a railroad corridor that traces a former canal dug along the natural drainage of Keuka (KYO-ka) Lake Outlet from Seneca Lake to Keuka Lake. Today, the mill site runs along the watercourse adding another dimension to the natural beauty of cascading waterfalls and rocky ravines.

## About the Route

The western Keuka Outlet trailhead is in Penn Yan, just west of the village boat launch and playground. From Penn Yan, the trail descends at an easy grade to Dresden. Both towns are tourist destinations with plenty of services. The first 1.3 miles in Penn Yan is paved, and the remainder

of the Keuka Outlet Trail is gravel, ballast, and dirt. The Friends of the Outlet have installed numerous interpretive signs along the route. Snowmobiling is allowed east of Penn Yan.

Penn Yan is named for its early transplants from Pennsylvania (PENN) and New England (YAN-kees). The trail leaves off from a sports complex at Keuka Lake's northern tip and joins the Keuka Outlet in 0.4 miles. Crossing under Main Street at 0.7 miles, one of the area's first mills—Birkett Mills—still operates across the stream. After Cherry Street, trail users will soon be on the unpaved portion of the trail.

Trail users will pass nearly a dozen old lock sites along the canal, as well as seven former mill sites, some deteriorated to crumbling brick walls or a set of rusty gears. At 3.5 miles, the roar of Seneca Mills Falls will be heard before the falls are seen, as it drops more than 40 feet in three cascades at the former paper mill site, now a popular picnic area. This is the only spot where trail users will leave the old towpath and drop into the former canal channel as they pass through Lock 17.

The trail follows the creek through a narrow glacier-cut gorge for the next 3 miles. Cascade Mill Falls appears 1.3 miles past Seneca Mills Falls and is one of the few mill sites on the eastern half of the trail. A covered picnic pavilion here features interpretive displays.

At 3.1 miles past Seneca Mills Falls, trail users will cross under the NY 14 overpass on the way to the Dresden trailhead in another 0.2 miles. Seneca Lake is 0.5 mile east.

## Trail History

Settlers moved into the area in the late 1780s, and by 1790 the first mill began operation on Crooked Lake Outlet, as it was then called, based on the "crooked" shape of Keuka Lake. By 1820 more than 20 mills operated along the stream. New York's canal-building boom led to construction in 1833 of the



# Keuka Outlet Trail

*New York*

**States:** New York

**Counties:** Yates

Length: 6.7miles

**Trail end points:** Elm St. (Penn Yan) to Seneca St. (Dresden)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt,Ballast,Dirt,Gravel

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike,Fishing,Horseback

Riding,Mountain Biking,Inline

Skating,Snowmobiling,Walking,Wheelchair

Accessible,Cross Country Skiing

## Parking & Trail Access

The Keuka Outlet Trail runs between Elm St. (Penn Yan) and Seneca St. (Dresden).

Parking is available at:

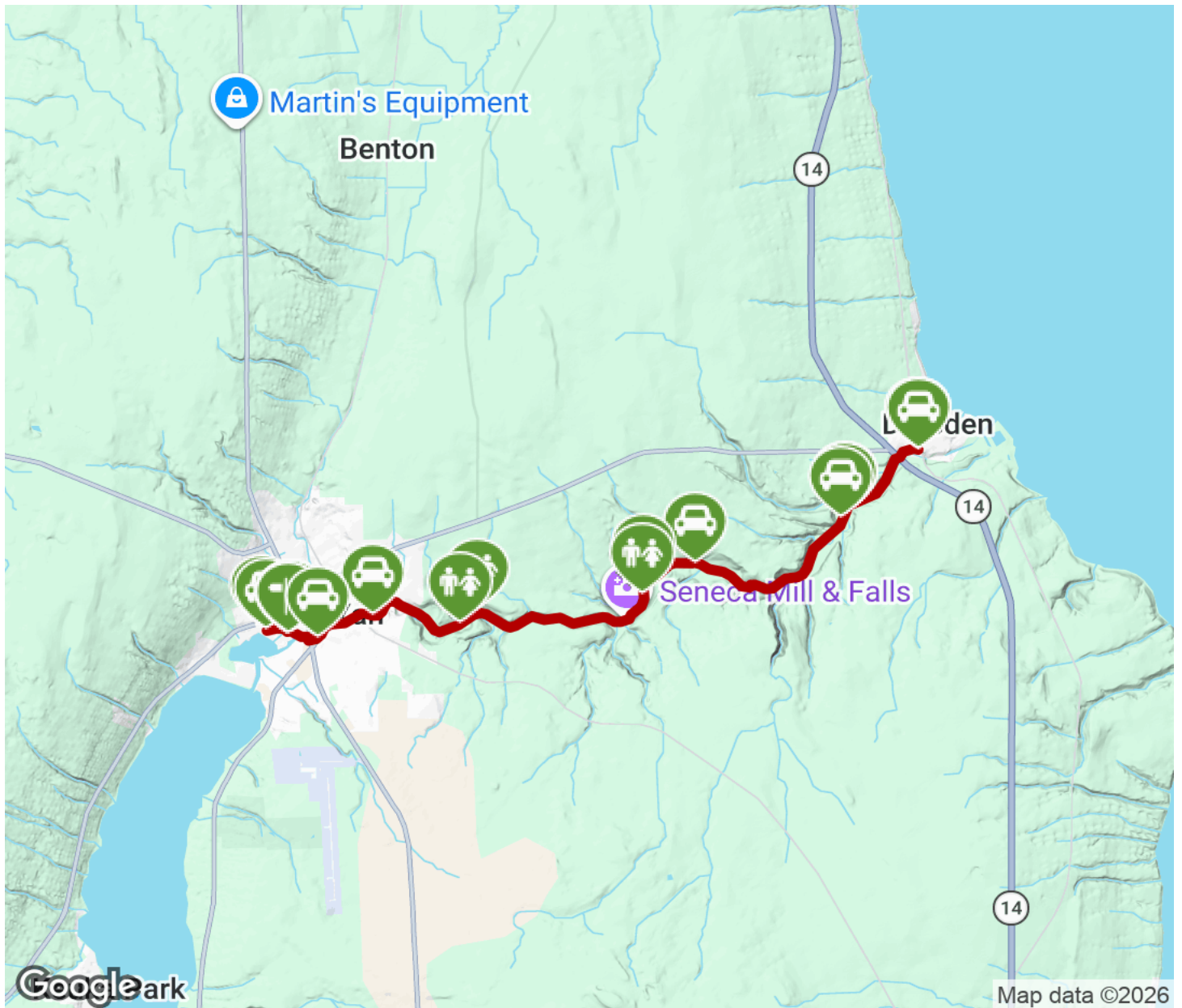
- 100 Seneca St. (Dresden)

Please see [TrailLink Map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



# Keuka Outlet Trail

New York



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



**TrailLink**  
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

**TrailLink.com**