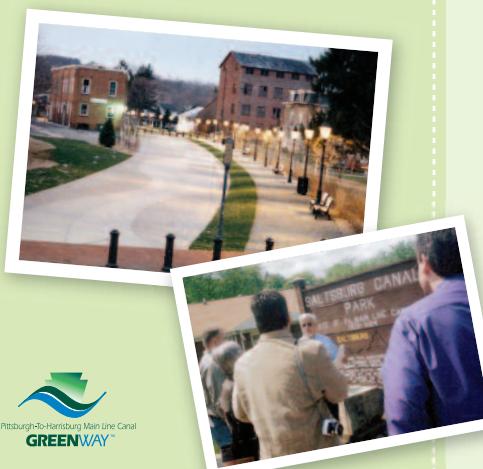


Saltsburg's Canal Park: A Profile *in* Community Redevelopment



Saltsburg has rapidly evolved as a prime outdoor recreation launching point over the last ten years. Pristine rivers, beautiful trails and compelling history come together to create an outdoor museum that people of all ages are enjoying. It's a great place to live or visit.



BACKGROUND

In the 19th Century, Saltsburg was one of the leading producers of salt in the nation. In recent years, the people of Saltsburg turned back to their heritage of salt and transportation to weave a tapestry of historic preservation, cultural interpretation, civic engagement and outdoor recreation. The result is a unique intermingling of concepts, preserving the past and well poised for the future, exemplified by the Saltsburg Canal Park.

The Canal Park traces the authentic route of the Main Line Canal in a graceful concrete path that curves through the town. Constructed in the mid-1990s by the National Park Services' America's Industrial Heritage Project, it includes several interpretive panels that speak to the function and design of the canal, the eventual transition to a rail system and the impact of both on the community and region. A representation of Canal Lock 8 at its actual location is a focal point of the park.

GOALS

The Canal Park was designed to attract tourists interested in industrial heritage and to preserve Saltsburg's sense of place. Its prominence was enhanced by development of the West Penn Trail, a 12 mile path following the route of the West Penn Rail Road from near Blairsville paralleling the Canal Park through Saltsburg.

SUCCESS

The Saltsburg Canal Park's connection to nearby outdoor recreation opportunities, including the rail-trail and the Kiski Conemaugh River Water Trail, makes the entire community a destination. A canoe and kayak livery service, the River's Edge Park, bed and breakfasts and a variety of restaurants complete the package. As a Preserve America Community, the small town hosts a National Register Historic District where the canal's importance is evidenced by the orientation of many of the historic buildings toward the long-gone waterway. Community pride in the town's history has led to the restoration of historic shops and houses as well as the 1860s railroad station that now hosts the Borough Hall.