



PRESS RELEASE

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OCCA Partners with UC&CV Route LLC To Host Rail Trail Walk

RICHFIELD SPRINGS – Otsego County Conservation Association is pleased to announce an exciting new rail trail walk event in Richfield Springs on the weekend of November 6 and 7. A three-mile section of the privately owned former Lackawanna Railroad right-of-way will be open from 9 a.m. to dusk for exploration. The corridor is managed and operated by the Utica, Chenango & Susquehanna Valley Route LLC, which has ambitious plans to redevelop the corridor as a regional asset including the return a passenger rail service on the line.

The new South Columbia Station and Creamery exposition space will also be open for the weekend event and will serve as a hub where explorers can park and begin their journey on this never-before-seen historic trail. Descriptive route tour guide brochures will be available at the creamery to help explain the route and special highlights along the way. Visitors will be able to view a photographic retrospective of the UC&SV line while at the station.

Local artisans and craftspeople are being invited to display and sell their products from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days inside the historic Creamery exposition space. This will also be a first-time public opening for the landmark 1930 Newark Milk and Cream Company building which once served the area dairy farms with a big city outlet for their dairy products. The building is an excellent specimen of rural archeology, as most of the area's creameries have been lost. The Creamery features extensive areas of tile work in the various rooms used to process the milk, butter and cheese the facility once produced.

Explorers will have the opportunity to hike from South Columbia to Richfield Springs. The trail will be groomed for walking but is a somewhat rugged adventure for adults and children ages 12 and up. There are a few areas that are wet, so proper footwear is recommended. Tour highlights include the South Columbia yard area, where the "Frontier Town" train is on display, and the first of five bridges over the Mink Creek can be viewed. Heading southward toward Richfield, walkers will cross the Mink Creek four more times on three steel bridges and a cut stone viaduct. The complete journey spans 2.8 miles and traverses a variety of terrain including the Mink Creek Gorge at the southern end between Route 20 and Route 28.

Parking is available in South Columbia, located 2.1 miles north of the intersection of Route 20 and 28 in the Town of Richfield. Directions: Head north on Route 28 at the intersection for 2.1 miles and turn left onto McKoons Road ("Mr. Shake" is located on the corner). South Columbia Station is at 167 McKoons Road at the old Newark Milk and Cream Company creamery. Parking is also available at the southern terminus of the UC&SV Route property, on the north side of the NYSDOT facility at the intersection of Route 28 just south of Suburban Propane.

Those interested in more information on vendor opportunities for this event may call (315) 717-5969. To learn more about UC&SV Route LLC, visit www.ucsvroute.com.

OCCA is a private, non-profit environmental membership organization dedicated to promoting the enjoyment and sustainable use of Otsego County's natural resources through education, advocacy, resource management, research, and planning. For more information on OCCA, go to www.occainfo.org.