



## Fall in Love with the Falls: Salmon River Falls Unique Area

By Salmon River Steward Luke Connor

When visiting the Salmon River Falls Unique Area you may get to meet a Salmon River Steward. Salmon River Stewards serve as a friendly source of public information as they monitor "The Falls" and other public access sites along the Salmon River corridor. Stewards are knowledgeable of the area's plants, wildlife, history, trails, and are excited to share that information with visitors.

The Salmon River Falls Unique Area attracts tourists from both out of state and within New York. The Falls, located in Orwell, NY, is approximately 6 miles northeast of the Salmon River Fish Hatchery, and is on Falls Rd.

Recent changes at The Falls have made them even more inviting. In 2003 the Falls Trail became compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The hard gravel trail allows people with various levels of physical abilities to use its flat surface.

In 2008 the Riverbed Trail and the Gorge Trail each underwent enhancements by the Adirondack (ADK) Mountain Club, but are not ADA-compliant.

The first recorded people to use the Salmon River Falls Unique Area were three Native American tribes of the Iroquois Nation: the Cayuga, Onondaga, and Oneida. Because the 110-ft-high waterfall served as the natural barrier to Atlantic Salmon migration, the Native American tribes, and likely European settlers, congregated at the Falls to harvest fish.

In 1993 the Falls property was bought by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation with support from other organizations. Minimum baseflows were implemented in 1996 when Niagara Mohawk's operation license was renewed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. These baseflows help give The Falls their beautiful image.

While full of natural beauty, the Falls can be dangerous when misused. Visitors are encouraged to read all kiosks and signs posted at the entrance of the property and all trailheads.

Please avoid straying from paths and follow area regulations to guarantee a safe and enjoyable trip.

Don't forget to bring a camera to capture a special photographic memory of your visit!

*Salmon River Steward Luke Connor talks with a visitor along one of the trails that overlooks the Salmon River Falls. Photo: Mary Penney, New York Sea Grant*

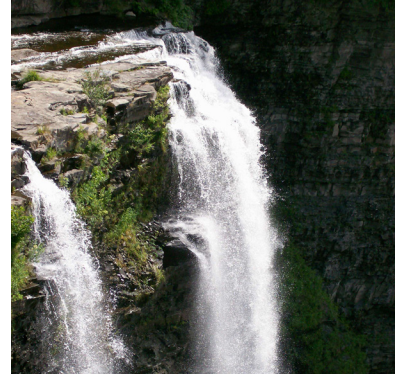


*The statements and views expressed in this publication are those of the Eastern Lake Ontario Dune and Salmon River Stewards who are student authors. 5/2009*

# A Primer on Salmon River Falls Unique Area

## General Information

- 110 feet high
- 40-foot-deep plunge pool
- Provides natural protection for bald eagles, osprey, and other birds of prey
- Home to 4 four distinctly different plant communities
- Formed from 2 two different types of bedrock: Oswego Sandstone and Pulaski Shale



*Salmon River Falls  
Photo: Luke Connor*

## Falls Trail

- Built in 2003
- .2 mile (1,100 ft.) long trail
- Overlooks for distant and close views
- High quality surface accessible by walker, wheelchair and stroller

## Gorge Trail

- Built by Adirondack Mountain Club in 2000; enhanced accessibility & drainage in 2008
- 600 feet long, elevation gain of more than 100 feet
- Large boulder steps and dirt/gravel switchbacks
- A strenuous climb; requires proper hiking footwear
- Stay on trail to avoid poison ivy: "Leaves of three; leave it be"
- No swimming in the plunge pool

## Riverbed Trail

- Built in 2008
- Made of gravel and large wooden boards
- Exercise caution at top of the falls; stay 15 feet from falls' edge at all times
- Diving and jumping at falls is not allowed

## Directions to Falls

- Follow State Route 13 east out of Pulaski to County Route 22. Take County Route 22 north to Altmar. Pass Salmon River Fish Hatchery on left. Continue approximately 4.6 miles north, turn right onto Falls Rd. The Salmon River Falls Unique Area is about .6 miles east on the right.

**For More Info: Eastern Lake Ontario Dune &  
Salmon River Steward Program, 315-312-3042**

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The Eastern Lake Ontario Dune Steward & Salmon River Steward Program is managed by New York Sea Grant in partnership with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Parks, and The Nature Conservancy

