

EIGHTEENMILE CREEK WATERSHED

LITERATURE SEARCH

Compiled by

Niagara County

Environmental Management Council

Water Resources Committee

1988

Michael Hopkins, Chairman
Water Resources Committee

Walter Savichky, Chairman
Environmental Management Council

EIGHTEENMILE CREEK WATERSHED

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Eighteenmile Creek Watershed Basin is centrally located within the bounds of Niagara County. It is the largest drainage basin found in Niagara County, covering an area of 58,056 acres within the towns of Newfane, Hartland, Royalton, Lockport, Cambria and Wilson.

The mainstream originates southeast of the City of Lockport in the vicinity of Keck and Chestnut Ridge Roads, and travels westerly and northwesterly through the city. Over the years the creek has become "tunnelled" and is completely underground from Vine Street (near Remick Parkway) to north of the canal (near Clinton Street). From its resurfacing north of the canal to its junction with "The Gulf" tributary (approximately one and one-half miles), Eighteenmile Creek cascades the Niagara Escarpment descending approximately 240 feet. It continues in a northerly direction through the Town of Newfane to its mouth at Olcott on Lake Ontario.

The Gulf tributary originates southwest of the City of Lockport in the vicinity of Hinman and Lockport Junction Roads. It travels in a northeasterly direction over the Niagara escarpment (a descent of approximately 60 feet) to its junction with Eighteenmile Creek near the City of Lockport's Waste Water Treatment Plant. This tributary flows through the skeletal remains of glacial Lake Tonawanda to glacial Lake Iroquois. A small waterfall is still visible east of Upper Mountain Road and the Harrison Radiator Plant.

The east branch of Eighteenmile Creek, also known as Red Creek, originates in the Town of Royalton near Lincoln Avenue and Gasport Road, travels northeasterly through Royalton Ravine Park (another ancient spillway) then under the canal at Telegraph and Bolton Roads to a point just east of Quaker Road and south of Ridge Road where it turns sharply and travels westerly, southwesterly and northwesterly through the towns of Hartland and Newfane to its junction with Eighteenmile Creek north of Route 104. It is joined by numerous sub-tributaries along its way.

Two other tributaries join Eighteenmile Creek from the west. (However, no accounting of these was found in our research.). One tributary, once known as Sherman Creek, originates in the Town of Cambria near Blackman and Upper Mountain Roads and travels in a northerly and easterly direction to its junction with Eighteenmile Creek near Purdy Road in the Town of Lockport. Numerous sub-tributaries are also evident. The other tributary originates in the southeast corner of the Town of Wilson and travels in an easterly and northerly direction to its junction with Eighteenmile Creek at Ide Road in the Town of Newfane. Numerous sub-tributaries are found along its way.

Waste Disposal Sites

Numerous inactive waste disposal sites are identified within the Eighteenmile Creek Watershed Basin. There is also one permitted active site and one site recently identified, which was operating without a permit. Niagara County operates the active, permitted sanitary landfill and the Town of Lockport has been operating the newly discovered, unpermitted site. Operations have ceased at this site and the Town of Lockport has consented to clean it up. The inactive waste disposal sites and their current status are listed below.

- * Wilson, Cambria and Newfane Sanitary Landfill (NYSDEC No. 932069): contained, groundwater monitoring maintained
- * Harrison Radiator (NYSDEC No. 932017): sludge removed to SCA Chemical Waste Management, groundwater monitoring maintained
- * City of Lockport (NYSDEC No. 932010): currently under evaluation for clean-up procedures
- * Niagara County Refuse Disposal District (NYSDEC No. 932024):
- * Niagara Materials Company (NYSDEC No. 932073)
- * Guterl Specialty Steel Corporation (NYSDEC No. 932032)
- * Diamond Shamrock (NYSDEC No. 932071)
- * Diversified Manufacturing (NYSDEC No. 932011)
- * Dussault Foundary (NYSDEC No. 932012)
- * Flintkote (NYSDEC No. 932072): barrels labeled PCB's removed; site no longer listed
- * Van de Mark Chemical Co. (NYSDEC No. 932039)
- * Town of Lockport (NYSDEC No. 932077)
- * Noury Chemicals (NYSDEC No. 932030 and 932030c)
- * Norton Labs (NYSDEC No. 932029)
- * Lockport NYSEG Substation (NYSDEC No. 932098)

A few miles upstream from the Burt Dam, the remains of a dam exist near Ide Road in the Hamlet of Newfane. This was built in the 1850's by D. VanHorn to operate a saw mill and generate electricity for Newfane Electric Company. The dam may be viewed from the site of the Lockport Felt Company.

A dam located near the end of McKee Street and Ewings Road was built in the 1830's to create a millrace to power various mills in the "Mill District" of Newfane.

There was also a dam site at Condren Road in Newfane, circa 1875, built for another saw and grist mill area.

Two dams were built in the 1850's to operate numerous mills in the mill district of Royalton. Millponds and ruins are still visible in the area north of Slayton-Settlement Road. One dam continued to be utilized for power to operate a grist mill until the late 1960's. This wooden dam is visible today from Slayton-Settlement Road at the southern terminus of Quaker Road.

Numerous millponds and millraces are evident on maps of the City of Lockport, dated 1875. These are located in the mill district located along the Erie Canal, Market, Mill and Exchange Streets.

- Report No. 8 - Combined Sewer Overflow Problems/Analysis; 208 Water Quality Management Program; Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board; 1979.
- Report No. 9 - Urban Storm Runoff Problems/Analysis; 208 Water Quality Management Program; Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board; 1979.
- Report No. 10 - Rural Non-Point Runoff Problems/Analysis; 208 Water Quality Management Program; Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board; 1979.
- Report No. 11 - Municipal Point Wastewater Source Problems/Analysis; 208 Water Quality Management Program; Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board; 1979.
- Report No. 12 - Industrial Point Wastewater Source Problems/Analysis; 208 Water Quality Management Program; Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board; 1979.
- Report No. 13 - Ground Water Problems/Analysis; 208 Water Quality Management Program; Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board; 1978.
- Report No. 14 - Residential Waste Problems/Analysis; 208 Water Quality Management Program; Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board; 1978.
- Report No. 15 - Pollutant Accumulation and Sedimentation Problems/Analysis; 208 Water Quality Management Program; Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board; 1979.
- Report No. 16 - Management and Implementation Analysis; 208 Water Quality Management Program; Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board; 1979.
- Report No. 18 - Environmental Assessment; 208 Water Quality Management Program; Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board; 1979.
- Lake Ontario Drainage Basin Survey Series Report No. 3 - Eighteenmile Creek Drainage Basin; NYS Department of Health, Water Pollution Control Board; 1957.
- "Fee System, Listing of Permits in Niagara County, SPDES"; NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Region 9; 6/12/87.
- Computer printout; NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, State Pollution Discharge Elimination System; 12/17/80
- "Lockport Subscriber's Business Directory"; Atlas of Orleans and Niagara Counties; Beers and Upton Co.; 1875.
- Industrial Resources Survey of Niagara County; NYS Department of Commerce; Bureau of Industrial Development; 1966.