

HISTORY CORNER

DROWNED VILLAGES PART 2

Two of the largest man-made lakes in New York State are the Ashokan Reservoir (surface area approx. 13 square miles) and Great Sacandaga Lake (surface area almost 48 square miles). The Ashokan was created in the early 1900s as part of the expanding water supply system for New York City. Some communities were submerged when the reservoir was filled, including Olive City, Brown's Station, and Ashton; others (West Hurley, Shokan, and Boiceville) were relocated. Great Sacandaga Lake was created in the 1920s primarily to help control flooding of communities downstream of the Sacandaga River, which flowed into the Hudson thus threatening Glens Falls and Albany. All or parts of 10 communities were flooded by the lake (which was originally called Sacandaga Reservoir), among them Fish House, Osborne Bridge, Munsonville, and Vly. However, in spite of the disruption caused by the creation of these lakes, benefits for commerce and recreation were brought to the surrounding areas. The 11.5 mile Ashokan Rail Trail runs along the north shore of that reservoir from West Hurley to Boiceville, and the Ashokan Reservoir Trail follows the south shore from Olivebridge for 2.7 miles. At Great Sacandaga Lake, in addition to boating, swimming, fishing, lakeside camping and hiking, the Northville-Lake Placid Trail is available. It starts at Waterfront Park in Northville and runs 138 miles to Lake Placid.

By George Fogg

