



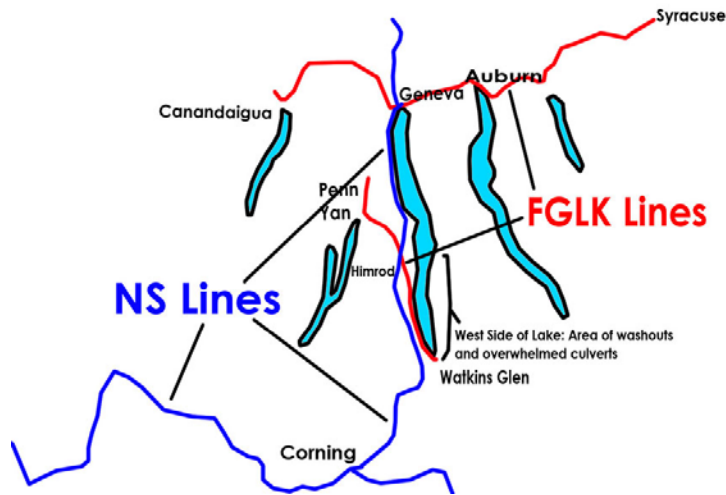
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## NEWS RELEASE

August 7, 2015

# Rain Damages Repaired Along Finger Lakes Railway \$200,000 spent on bigger culverts

July 20, 2015 – Watkins Glen, NY – Last month's rain storms took their toll on culverts, drains and ditches around the area. In addition to the flooded streets in the Village of Watkins Glen, millions of gallons of water rushed down the steep gorges and ravines along the lower west bank of Seneca Lake. Water increasingly aggregated from more construction, more roadways, and more run-off uphill, charges toward the deepest of the glacier-made lakes making its own path to the water's edge. For almost the entire 40 miles along the west side of Seneca Lake, perpendicular to these rushing waterways, run two major railroads, the Finger Lakes Railway (FGLK) from Watkins Glen to Himrod Junction and the Norfolk Southern (NS) from Himrod Junction to Geneva.



Similar to the railroad, there are lakeside roads that are affected by rain events, and those same roads are repaired and reopened by local highway departments without incident. Just like the highways, rail inspection and repair crews are dispatched immediately to assess damage and schedule needed repairs. And just like the highways, the repairs are made seamlessly, without delay, and always with public safety in mind.

Both railroads successfully deal with water diversion and track repairs, but it comes at a significant financial cost, especially after a major rain event. However, unlike the highways, the cost of rail line repairs is bore entirely by the rail companies. Finger Lakes Railway will spend \$75,000 to replace four 12- and 24-inch culvert pipes with 24- and 30-inch pipes plus another \$125,000 to replace culvert headwalls and expand ditches in order to direct water away from the tracks, away from the neighbors, and down to these culverts that pass under the tracks.

Along the FGLK line, in the steeper elevations along the west bank of Seneca Lake, property owners work with FGLK to maintain safe crossings and effective water control.



Work on the rail line has continued since the storms. Maintaining a solid road bed is the mainstay of the rail industry. “Our Maintenance of Way Department employees do their best to ensure the integrity of the system’s drainage facilities and are always vigilant when severe weather arises,” says Jon Gadsby, Manger of Track for FGLK. “If a severe weather event occurs, we send patrols ahead of any train to visually inspect the line.” As always, rain and other weather events can be very localized. Gadsby encourages neighbor’s who see an issue they feel concerned about should contact the main office to report the situation.



These railroads have been active since the late 1800’s and crews have worked diligently to maintain the right of way despite weather and geography, in order to accommodate important rail traffic. Finger Lakes Railway uses the tracks along the lake in Yates and Schuyler Counties to carry rail cars of salt out of the Cargill and US Salt plants in Watkins Glen. Both facilities collectively employ over 300 local people and depend on rail shipments to get their product to market.

“Our customers depend on Finger Lakes Railway to obtain products purchased from US Salt, as rail is typically more cost effective for bulk deliveries than over-the-road transportation alternatives,” said Mitchell Dascher, President of US Salt. “US Salt would not be what it is today without Finger Lakes Railway.”

FGLK operates twice a week to Watkins and a couple times a month to Penn Yan on this line. NS operates daily on the Corning Secondary carrying approximately 100 cars per week to Geneva for interchange with FGLK . The well-maintained NS route from Corning, operates over the Waktins Glen Gorge bridge, through Himrod Junction and along Seneca Lake to Geneva. Rail work crews are just as diligent in maintaining track integrity for the benefit of their customers as for the benefit to the towns through which they run. “A poorly maintained or underutilized rail line will create more problems for the towns where it runs than one with a healthy freight business and regular maintenance,” states FGLK President, Mike Smith. “The public may not see us as beneficial to their way of life, but our operations represent the life line of industry, the means by which to maintain and continuously upgrade the rail line, and thus, we are an unassuming life line to the local community.”