



# Cohoes Falls

Second only to Niagara—Cohoes Falls, also known as the Great Falls of the Mohawk, is one of the largest waterfalls east of the Rocky Mountains. The Mohawk River plunges nearly a hundred feet here, a navigation obstacle to early explorers, before emptying into the Hudson River. The falls have been regarded as a landmark, a sacred site, a scenic wonder, and a source of power for generations.

## Visiting Falls View Park

Cross the bridge for views of Cohoes Falls and paths to the Mohawk River. Pathways are open during daylight hours from May through October. Stairways and paths to the river’s edge are steep. Paths in the floodplain are closed during high water.



Pools and shallows in the rapids above Cohoes Falls are favorite fishing spots for bald eagles.



## The Mohawk

Cohoes Falls is a pivotal landmark in the formation of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy—a union of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca Indian nations. Here, early European explorers and settlers encountered the eastern territory of the most influential American Indian alliance on the continent.



## Barrier to Navigation

Early travelers trekked overland to bypass Cohoes Falls. By 1823 a closely spaced series of locks on the Erie Canal lifted and lowered boats around the falls and rapids, and Cohoes became a gateway to the interior of North America.



## Water Power

Cohoes Falls was harnessed for waterpower. By the mid-1800s a multilevel network of canals powered dozens of Cohoes factories, including Harmony Mills, once the largest textile manufacturing complex in the nation. Since 1915 the water has been used to generate electricity.

