

ENGINEER CHALLENGES: TRACKS OVER TRICKY TERRAIN AND WATERS

After the American Revolution, populations along the eastern seaboard grew and spread, heading west. The challenge came in transporting people and products over a mountainous terrain. New roads and more efficient transportation was needed. Enter the canal builders and railroad men.

- Railroading became an important transportation system for the booming oil industry in northwestern PA. Visit [Corry](#) to learn about how this town grew at the junction of two railroads. View the large outdoor mural of the Climax engine and visit the display at the Corry Historical Society.
- The first oil well drilled in the world, the Drake Well in Titusville, is where you can experience the [Oil Creek and Titusville Railroad](#) where you can take a ride "through the valley that changed the world" in Pennsylvania Oil Country.
- The train trestle that once connected the railroad from Erie to the east, the Kinzua Viaduct, a National Civil Engineering Landmark, which was once the highest and longest railroad bridge in the world. In the early 1990's, a tornado destroyed half of the trestle leaving the gorge scattered with steel. The remaining half of the trestle was reinforced and is now known as the [Kinzua Sky Walk](#), where you can "Walk the Tracks Across the Sky".
- The steep mountains of northcentral Pennsylvania demanded a new type of rail to deliver the cut timber from where it was stored to the mill. Stop by the [Pennsylvania Lumber Museum](#) between Coudersport and Galeton, to see a Shay Locomotive, Barnhart Loader, and Brookville Engine and learn about the transportation needs of the logging industry.
- Building tracks through the mountains proved challenging. At one time a railroad traversed from Jersey Shore, PA to Corning, NY through the PA Grand Canyon, the tracks are long gone through the canyon but you can still travel the [Pine Creek Rail Trail](#) on foot, by bike, on horseback or by covered wagon.
- You can take an excursion of the portion of the rail that still exists. Leaving from Wellsboro Junction, the [Tioqa Central Railroad](#) is a trip back in time.
- The challenge of getting the railroad across Tunkhannock Creek resulted in the building of the largest reinforced concrete structure of its time. See the [Tunkhannock Viaduct](#) in Nicholson. The Viaduct celebrates its 100th anniversary in September of 2015.

- Relive the past era of steam engine locomotives at [Steamtown National Historic Site](#). Tour the roundhouse and exhibits. Maybe even take one of their excursion trains along the old Delaware and Hudson Railroad line to Carbondale.
- A different kind of track was laid down in cities throughout America to help move people from place to place. To learn more about the history of the electric trolley car, stop at [Electric City Trolley Station and Museum](#) in Scranton.
- To solve the need to transport coal to New York, a unique gravity railroad transported the coal to Honesdale where it was placed on boats and transported over the Delaware and Hudson Canal. View the display at [Wayne County Historical Museum](#) in Honesdale, which also houses a replica of the Stourbridge Lion, the first locomotive to run on a commercial track in the United States. Plan a couple of hours to take a train excursion from Honesdale to Hawley on the [Stourbridge Line](#).
- A disagreement between loggers using the Delaware to transport timber and the coal industry led to the construction of the [Roebling Aqueduct](#) in Lackawaxen. Designed by John A. Roebling, it is the oldest existing suspension bridge in the United States.