

MILEAGE from Lebanon to:

Mascoma Lake	4
Enfield	6.5
Canaan	13.5
Grafton	19.7
Danbury	25

(in miles)



Getting on to the trail:

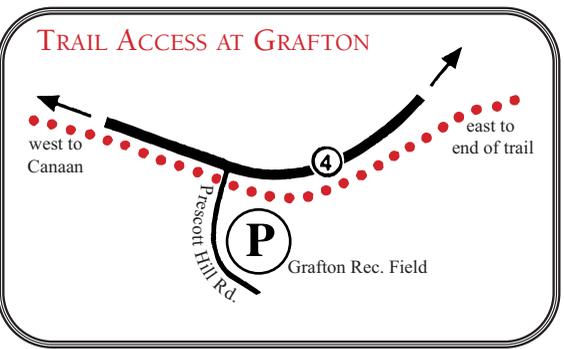
Along it's 23 mile length, the rail trail runs near route 4 which leads to all access and parking. Major access points are shown, but there are many others.

Large parking lots are marked, other access usually has suitable parking nearby.

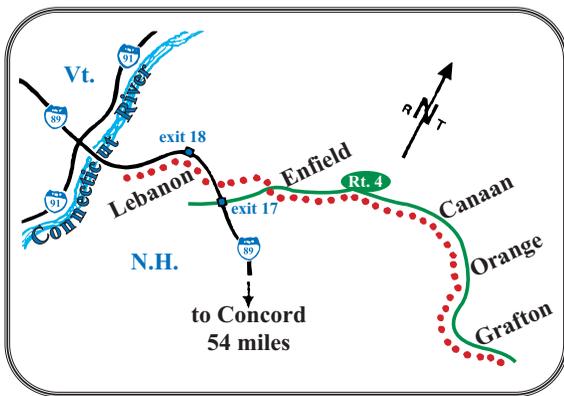
FOOT TRAFFIC **OPEN TO:** **SNOWMOBILES**

BICYCLES **SKIERS** **HORSES**

CLOSED TO: **ALL WHEELED MOTORIZED VEHICLES**



Credits: Maps by Frank Browning; Photos by Dick Mackay; Layout by Sue Crafts and K&L Color Graphics.



Along the Trail Eastbound from Lebanon

- ☞ First of seven crossings of Mascoma River in Lebanon.
- ☞ Pass under I-89, enter wooded valley of the Mascoma.
- ☞ Scenic Mill Road and kayak course at twin bridges.
- ☞ Dam at East Lebanon, a bustling sawmill village 1780-1840.
- ☞ Ice House Rd., site of B&M RR Mascoma Depot and sidings.
- ☞ Views down lake to Shaker Bridge, built 1849 to give Enfield colony access to the railroad, of which it was a stockholder.
- ☞ The Cut. Initials carved in stone date from widening in 1890s.
- ☞ Enfield town center. Freight shed now a laundromat. Depot ahead, with 1950s creamery opposite. Services.
- ☞ Baltic Mill and dam. Made woolen cloth for outerwear and blankets, 1890s-1970s.
- ☞ Blackwater Road. Mascoma River canoe access.
- ☞ South Road, Crystal Lake three miles south.
- ☞ Indian River high bridge.
- ☞ Canaan town center. Depot and freight house. Services.
- ☞ Mirror Lake, views of Cardigan Mountain.
- ☞ Orange Cut, high point on Northern Line, 968 feet.
- ☞ Trail tunnel under Route 4, opened 2001.
- ☞ Riddle Hill Rd. to Ruggles Mine. Mica and minerals.
- ☞ Grafton. Limited services.
- ☞ Merrimack Co. line, Danbury.

Northern Railroad:

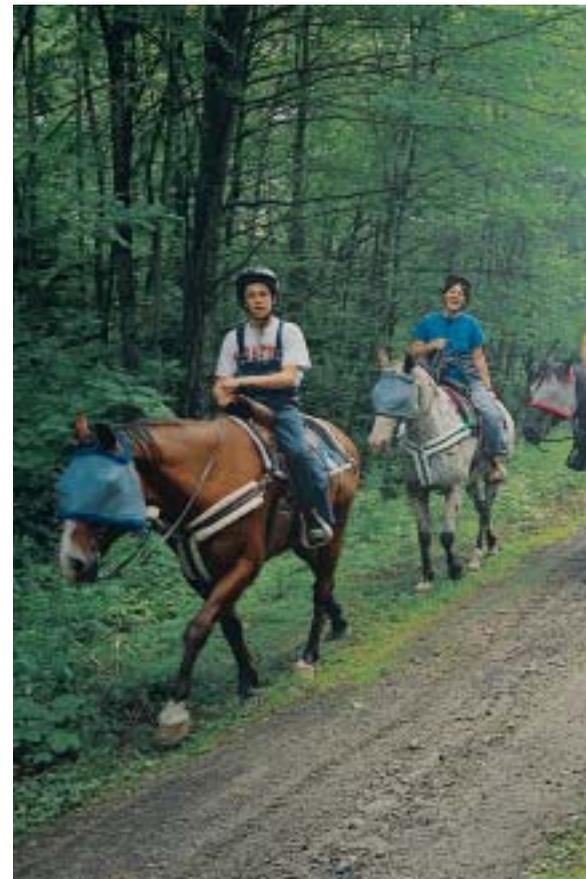
Of the three rail corridors laid out west and north from Concord in central NH to points on the Connecticut River, the Northern survived the longest. It was completed in 1847, with Daniel Webster giving the keynote address in downtown Lebanon, at a spot just a few yards from where the trail begins today. The fare to Boston via Lowell, Mass. was \$4. As with so many other early railroads, the Northern was plagued with financial difficulty though out its early history. Acquired by the Boston & Maine in 1887, the line flourished for about forty years, largely due to its terminus at White River Jct. Vt., the regional rail hub. With the Depression, the Northern Branch joined hundreds of other American railroads in a long decline toward oblivion.

Passenger service ended in 1965, with a few freight runs operating into the early 1970s. The B&M stopped maintaining the line and soon abandoned it. In 1996, sixty miles of the corridor were acquired by the State of New Hampshire for \$5 million in Federal transportation enhancement funds, to be converted to a recreation trail.

After local snowmobile clubs had decked bridges and removed obstacles, the entire length was opened to winter use. Luckily for the development of the trail for biking, the railroad had invested little in ballasting the Grafton County section of the line with heavy stone. The fine black cinders that cover most of the surface between Lebanon and Lake Mascoma date from before 1950, when the waste product from coal-fired steam engines was spread between the crossties to dampen vibration and soften the ride. Volunteers working with the local support group removed the ties and graded the cinders, making about half the twenty-five miles of corridor bikeable. The stone dust portions of the trail - along the Lake and east of Canaan - were applied more recently, using State grants, foundation gifts, and private fund raising. A similar stone dust surface will be required along the entire thirty miles of the trail between Danbury and the southern terminus in Boscawren.

The three miles of trail between downtown Lebanon and the historic Glen Road overpass in West Lebanon await redevelopment before an on-road or rail-with-trail connection to Vermont can be made. This portion of the Northern Rail Trail is proposed as a segment of the Upper Valley Loop Trail, uniting the Vermont towns of White River Jct., Wilder, and Norwich, with Hanover and Lebanon.

The Northern Rail Trail
is managed by:
NH Bureau of Trails
P.O. Box 856
Concord, N.H. 03302
603-271-3254



Friends of The Northern Rail Trail, Grafton County N.H., is a regional umbrella group working to improve and maintain the trail.

To join, please send \$15 to:

FNRT

P.O. Box 206

Enfield, NH 03748

Your comments are appreciated
visit us at: www.northernrailtrail.org



NORTHERN RAIL TRAIL
GRAFTON COUNTY N.H.

23 MILE RECREATIONAL TRAIL



A nearly flat trail beginning at Lebanon, New Hampshire, in the Mascoma River Valley, passing through historic villages and by scenic lakes, streams and hills along the old railroad bed of the Boston & Maine Railroad Northern Line.