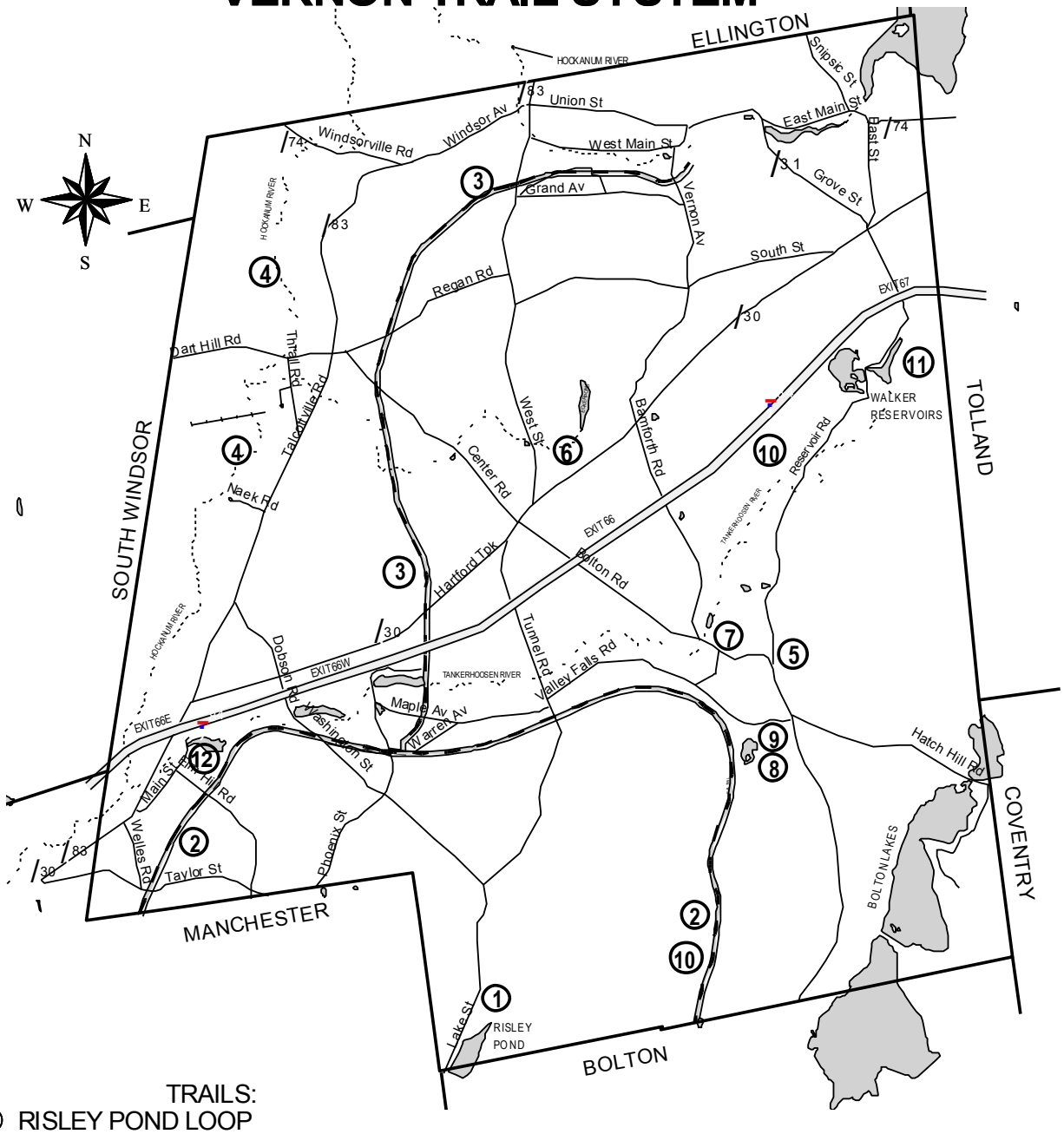
VERNON
TRAIL SYSTEM

Revision 3
April, 2011

Prepared for Vernon Parks and Recreation
By the Vernon Greenways Volunteers

VERNON TRAIL SYSTEM



TRAILS:

1. RISLEY POND LOOP
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LEGEND

ROADS
RIVERS & STREAMS
RAILS-TO-TRAILS

Revision 3, April 2011

TYPE AND VARIETY OF TRAILS IN VERNON, CT

This document provides historical and practical information to complement the enclosed maps. All trails in this publication are open to the public. Copies are available at the office of Vernon Parks and Recreation at Henry Park, 120 South St., Vernon, Ct. 06066. Phone (860) 870-3520. In 1998, Vernon received the Connecticut Trail Town Award from the Connecticut Forest and Park Association (CFPA).

1. RISLEY POND LOOP TRAIL

This trail consists of 3.7 miles of blazed loop trails and a trek up to the ridge of Box Mountain in Vernon. The feature option is a scenic walk through mixed growth forest to a vista overlooking historic Railroad Valley. Shorter, less aggressive options are indicated on the map. Swimming and boating are not allowed in the pond which is a water source; however, ice skating is allowed in the winter and fishing year round. The trail is permitted on properties both privately owned and deeded to the Manchester Conservation Land Trust. Trail construction and maintenance is provided entirely by volunteers from the Connecticut Forest and Park Association (CFPA now manages over 800 miles of trails). Parking (ample) is available just off Lake Street near Amy Drive.

2. RAILS-TO-TRAILS: HOP RIVER LINEAR PARK TRAIL

This multi-use greenway consists of 5.1 miles of trail along an abandoned railway (Hartford, Providence and Fishkill RR) from the Vernon/Manchester town line east, then south to the Vernon/Bolton town line. This is the Vernon segment of the HOP RIVER LINEAR PARK Trail that runs 21 miles from Manchester to Willimantic* where you can make connection with the 40 mile AIRLINE LINEAR PARK Trail. These trails are permitted on Connecticut DOT property that is used by the Connecticut DEP and managed by the DEP or the town within which they are situated (Vernon manages its segment). This Vernon section was re-graded by the Connecticut National Guard - Bravo Company of the 242nd Engineer Battalion and was then covered with stone dust by the town of Vernon. The funding was obtained by the Vernon Hockanum River Linear Park Committee from the State via ISTEA funding and grants. This popular trail is used for biking, hiking, jogging, walking, cross--country skiing, and horseback riding. Handicap usage is encouraged. The trail is maintained by the Vernon Parks and Recreation Department and the Vernon Greenways Volunteers. The trail is included in the Hockanum River Master Plan of Development which is approved by the Town of Vernon; hereafter, indicated as the 'Master Plan'. Parking is available at Church Street (ample), Tunnel Road (5 cars) and Valley Falls Park (ample). On-Site trail maps are available at the Church Street and Tunnel Road parking lots. Portable bathroom facilities are available year-round at the Church Street parking lot.

**Please note: Twelve miles into the trail from the trail-head in Manchester, the Route 316 bridge (near the intersection with Route 6 in Andover) is not yet installed. To continue towards Willimantic go down the hill and crossover Route 316. Go up Monument Lane, a paved road. Turn right at the end of the lane to return to the Hop River Linear Park Trail.*

3. RAILS-TO-TRAILS: ROCKVILLE SPUR

This multi-use greenway consists of 4.1 miles of trail along an abandoned railway that was originally constructed in 1862 to supply an already industrialized Rockville, Ct. It splits from the HOP RIVER LINEAR PARK Trail and heads north into the town's historic center. The trail includes a foot bridge across the Tankerhoosen River. The foot bridge funding was obtained by the Vernon Hockanum River Linear Park Committee from the State via ISTEA funding and grants. This popular trail is used for biking, hiking, jogging, walking, cross-country skiing, and horseback riding. Handicap usage is encouraged. The trail is located on State DOT property for use by the State DEP. The trail is maintained by the Vernon Parks and Recreation Department and the Vernon Greenways Volunteers. The trail is included in the Master Plan. Parking is available at Sacred Heart Church (ample), Church Street (ample), and Rau Street (4 cars). Portable bathroom facilities and trail maps are available year-round at the Church Street parking lot.

4. HOCKANUM RIVER LINEAR PARK (Hockanum River and Dart Hill Park Trails)
These trails include 2.3 miles of orange blazed trails that begin at the Water Treatment Plant on Windsorville Road (Rte 74) and parallels the Hockanum River in Vernon. The trail is as close to the river bank as possible and provides a means of accessing the river for clean-up purposes. This trail, also, provides a beautiful scenic hike with mixed forest, water wildlife and river views. Alternate routes are provided where access is limited in the early spring and very wet weather periods. The trail is permitted on properties which are owned by the town and private land owners. Fishing is popular. There are, also, 3.5 more miles of stone dust, alternate and loop trails. Trail construction and maintenance is provided by the Vernon Parks and Recreation Department and the Vernon Greenways Volunteers. These trails are included in the Master Plan.

Vernon is part of a larger plan to create a continuous river walk along the Hockanum River in Ellington, Vernon, Manchester and East Hartford. See the Hockanum River Watershed Association web page for specifics at www.hockanumriverwa.org

4. A & B HOCKANUM RIVER TRAILS (A is North and B South of Dart Hill Road)
There are two types of trails: (1) a riverside hiking trail and (2) a wide, flat walking trail. The trails can be accessed from several parking sites and are intersected by several alternate trails at various points. The riverside hiking trail is 2.3 miles long and blazed with orange markers. It begins at the Water Treatment Plant on Windsorville Road (Rt. 74) and runs south 1.4 miles to Dart Hill Road. A 0.3 mile walk west along Dart Hill Road connects to a continuation of the trail south of Dart Hill Road. In 0.6 miles it joins the walking trail. The walking trail, a.k.a. the Stone Dust Trail, is 1.0 miles long. It begins at the Dart Hill South parking lot and is ideal for easy walking in a natural environment while perpetuating a feeling of safety. This trail features three historic markers with seating to view the river landscape and picnic. Parking is available at the Water Treatment Plant (5 cars), Dart Hill North Park (ample), Dart Hill South Park (ample) and Naek Road cul-de-sac (8 cars). On-Site trail maps are available at the Water Treatment Plant and Dart Hill South Park parking lots.

4C. DART HILL PARK TRAILS (No separate map)
This park contains 1.1 miles of loop trails, as well as, playground and picnic facilities. The park is entirely on Vernon town property and was dedicated on July 21, 1997. The funding was obtained by the Hockanum River Linear Park Committee from the State via recreational funding and grants. The construction of this trail was included in the contract and the maintenance is provided by the Vernon Parks and Recreation Department and the Vernon Greenways Volunteers. This park is included in the Master Plan. Parking and On-Site Trail maps are available at the Dart Hill South Park parking lot.

5. INDIAN TRAILS, NORTHERN CONNECTICUT LAND TRUST (NCLT)
There are 1.4 miles of blazed loop trails on two adjoining parcels of land that were deeded to the NCLT. The trails are accessed at the corner of Bolton Rd and Indian Trail. Although the lower trail is wet in the spring, the trail provides opportunities for viewing wildlife and birds. The trails are constructed and maintained by NCLT volunteers. Other NCLT trails include two loop trails (Trail 8) located around the Boulder Crest Soccer Field which are partially on NCLT property, as is the Blue/red bike access trail on Valley Falls Road. See Talcott Ravine (Trail 12) for the remaining NCLT trail.

6. VERNON CENTER MIDDLE SCHOOL TRAILS
This school trail on town property contains 1.9 miles of blazed trails. The trails are used by the students going to and from school and by the public for hiking or cross-country skiing through woods, on hills and around a pond. The pond trail facilitates clean-up along the shoreline and provides an opportunity for the study of pond environments. The school track athletes also train on the trails. The construction and maintenance are provided by the Vernon Parks and Recreation Department and the Vernon Greenways Volunteers. Ample parking is available in the extreme northeast corner of the parking lot.

7. BELDING WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA TRAILS

This 282 acre Belding Wildlife Management Area was deeded to the Connecticut DEP by Maxwell Belding in the 1980s. In 2002 the Belding family established a trust to manage the property. In accordance with that trust the property is used for conservation educational programs and an untold number of local children have benefited from its existence. The formal dedication was on August 24, 2005. The property is managed as a 'catch and release' fishing area for trout and is located along the Tankerhoosen River. There are 1.64 miles of blue blazed Shenipsit Trail in a beautiful mixed growth woods, along the river and a scenic pond. An alternate trail, yellow blazed Belding Path, could be used by those who wish to return to Valley Falls. There are also several miles of woods roads. Fishing, picnicking, hiking, cross-country skiing and wildlife observation are popular. The river and pond trails facilitate water clean-up activities. These trails are managed by a DEP wildlife biologist and maintained by DEP employees and volunteers from the Connecticut Forest and Park Association. Parking is available on Bread and Milk Road (ample) and Reservoir Road (4 cars).

8. VALLEY FALLS PARK TRAILS

There are several miles of overlapping blazed trails in Valley Falls Park, as well as, picnic facilities, a pond, a pavilion, bathroom facilities and a swimming beach. The park is located on town property. Portions of the park contain ruins of textile mills and an early trout hatchery. A section of the park has been declared a National Historic Site. The Vernon Parks and Recreation Department conducts programs including swimming lessons, a nature camp and educational programs at this site. The park is heavily used for swimming, picnicking, hiking, x-ctry skiing, fishing, wild flower and wildlife observation and scenic vistas. The park is a favorite place for activities with mentally and physically challenged groups. The park is located only 2.5 miles from a commuter parking lot at exit 67 on I-84. No bicycles are allowed in this park because of past trail damage caused by heavy bike usage (rallies). Trail construction and maintenance is done by the Vernon Parks and Recreation Department, Boy Scouts and volunteers (The Friends of Valley Falls, Vernon Greenways Volunteers and Connecticut Forest and Park Association). Parking is available in a large formal lot just off Valley Falls Road. On-Site trail maps are available near the beginning of the Main Road Trail (red blazed) just before the pavilion. There are permanent bathroom facilities available in the summer and portable facilities year-round. Admission is charged in the summer.

9. BRAILLE TRAIL, VALLEY FALLS PARK

The Braille Trail was constructed on Valley Falls Park town property. The original trail loop construction was by Boy Scouts of Vernon Troop 223 under the direction of an Eagle Scout. It was later extended to connect with Valley Falls Park trails. A complete renovation was accomplished in 2009 and 2010 through a DEP grant awarded to The Friends of Valley Falls. To complement the renovation the Vernon Greenways Volunteers obtained a grant from Pratt and Whitney, removed all invasive plants from this 1 ½ acre site and planted 105 native plants in this natural setting. There is a guide rope to follow to the 17 braille signs that contain both Braille and English explanations of historic and natural interest. The trail is located on the National Historic Site described in the Valley Falls Park description. The trail is maintained by the Vernon Parks and Recreation Department and the Vernon Greenways Volunteers. Parking (ample) is at the Valley Falls parking lot.

10. SHENIPSIT TRAIL

The Vernon portion of the Shenipsit Trail contains 4.8 miles of blue blazed trails and is in the central portion of this 44 mile trail. It is a very popular for hiking and x-ctry skiing since it encompasses Rails-To-Trails, Valley Falls Park, vistas, ponds, rivers, wild flowers, wildlife and many tree species. The trail is permitted on state, town and private property. This trail is part of the Connecticut Greenway System. The trail construction and maintenance is done by volunteers from the Connecticut Forest and Park Association (a non-profit organization which manages 800 miles of Connecticut trails).

11. WALKER'S RESERVOIR TRAIL

This blazed trail is a short (0.8 mile) scenic loop around the shores of Walker East Reservoir. Ducks and geese are commonly seen. The trail is located on town property. Fishing is popular. Curling, hockey and skating are possible in winter. Across the street is a commuter parking lot at exit 67 for I-84. There is access to the blue blazed Shenipsit Trail directly across the street from the Walker's Reservoir parking lot. Trail maintenance is done by Vernon Parks and Recreation and the Vernon Greenways Volunteers. Parking (ample) is in a formal On-Site lot.

12. TALCOTT RAVINE, NORTHERN CONNECTICUT LAND TRUST (NCLT)

Talcott Ravine was a generous gift by the Talcott family to the NCLT. Dedication was on Valentine's Day 2011. Points of interest include glacial geologic features, the Tankerhoosen River, Dobsonville Dam, mill ruins and flora including Umbrella Magnolia. A 1.83 mile loop trail. There is a historic marker located at the cul-de-sac trailhead. Parking (ample) is at the Main Street cul-de-sac.

SUMMARY:

The Vernon trail system contains nodes which are widely dispersed throughout the town, providing convenient access for all of its citizens. Vernon's central location with easy access from I-84 makes these trails convenient for most of Connecticut's citizenry, as well. Many of the trails are scenic with rivers, ponds, mixed growth forests, wild flowers, wildlife and vistas. The enclosed maps with their descriptions and mileage indications make all trails user friendly. For these reasons, these trails are popular for hikes led by the CT chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club. They are, also, popular for wellness walks sponsored by local health organizations and community walks sponsored by the Northern Connecticut Land Trust and the Vernon Parks and Recreation Department.

Where the trails parallel the two town rivers (Hockanum and Tankerhoosen), clean-up efforts are facilitated and citizen awareness increased, contributing to an improvement in water quality. They, also, provide access for non-motorized use by kayaks, rafts and canoes, where authorized.

The Rails-To-Trails divides the town into four approximately equal quadrants and access is easy from most of the major town roads. It abuts the high school property and is within minutes of several other schools. It connects with the CT Greenway System and the National East Coast Greenway System. Therefore, these trails provide for non-motorized use by hikers, bicyclists, walkers, joggers, x-ctry skiers and equestrians.

The following private, non-profit citizen organizations coordinate with the Vernon Parks and Recreation Department in the construction of new trails, the maintenance of existing trails and the proper usage of the trails.

Appalachian Mountain Club, Connecticut Chapter
Connecticut Forest and Park Association
Friends of Hockanum River Linear Park
Friends of Valley Falls
Northern Connecticut Land Trust
Vernon Greenways Volunteers

Revision 3, April 2011

1 RISLEY POND LOOP TRAIL

Revision 3, April 2011

RISLEY POND LOOP TRAIL TO BOX MOUNTAIN CREST . Blue markers; 2.6 mile loop with about 400 ft total climb.

Miles Description

Roadside parking on Lake St, go east toward the North end of Risley Pond.

0.1 Pond edge, go left on trail.

0.2 Cross stream to East shore of pond; go South along shore.

0.4 Stream crossing.

0.6 South end of pond; dam at R, trail turns L. For pond loop walk only, cross dam overflow outlet and dam, go along West pond shore back to entry way and car.

1.0 Trail through woods to a stone wall; do not cross wall.

1.1 Jct. unpaved road.

1.2 Turn L off road.

1.4 Arrive at crest of Box Mt.. Trail turns L (North) along ridge. Straight at ridge jct. is trail to lookout. See map.

1.5 Cross unpaved road and a trail.

1.7 Begin down; West direction.

1.9 Flat area, often wet in rainy season.

2.4 Cross stream to West side of Risley Pond.

2.6 Arrive at parking lot.

SIDE TRAIL FROM BOX MOUNTAIN RIDGE TO RAILROAD VALLEY LOOKOUT. Not well marked, 0.6 miles

Miles Description

0.0 From Box Mtn. ridge (point 1.4 on trail above), go East on blazed trail.

0.1 Jct. with unpaved road, turn L. At fork in 10 yards, bear R to lookout. L branch to Box Mountain Dr. is not open to public.

0.3 South end of lookout ridge. Turn back to return to Loop Trail.

0.5 Road jct and fork; take blazed trail at R to Loop Trail.

0.6 Loop Trail jct. Turn R to continue loop, North portion

COMBINED LOOP AND LOOKOUT WALK

Mostly blue markers; 3.2 miles; 400 ft climb.

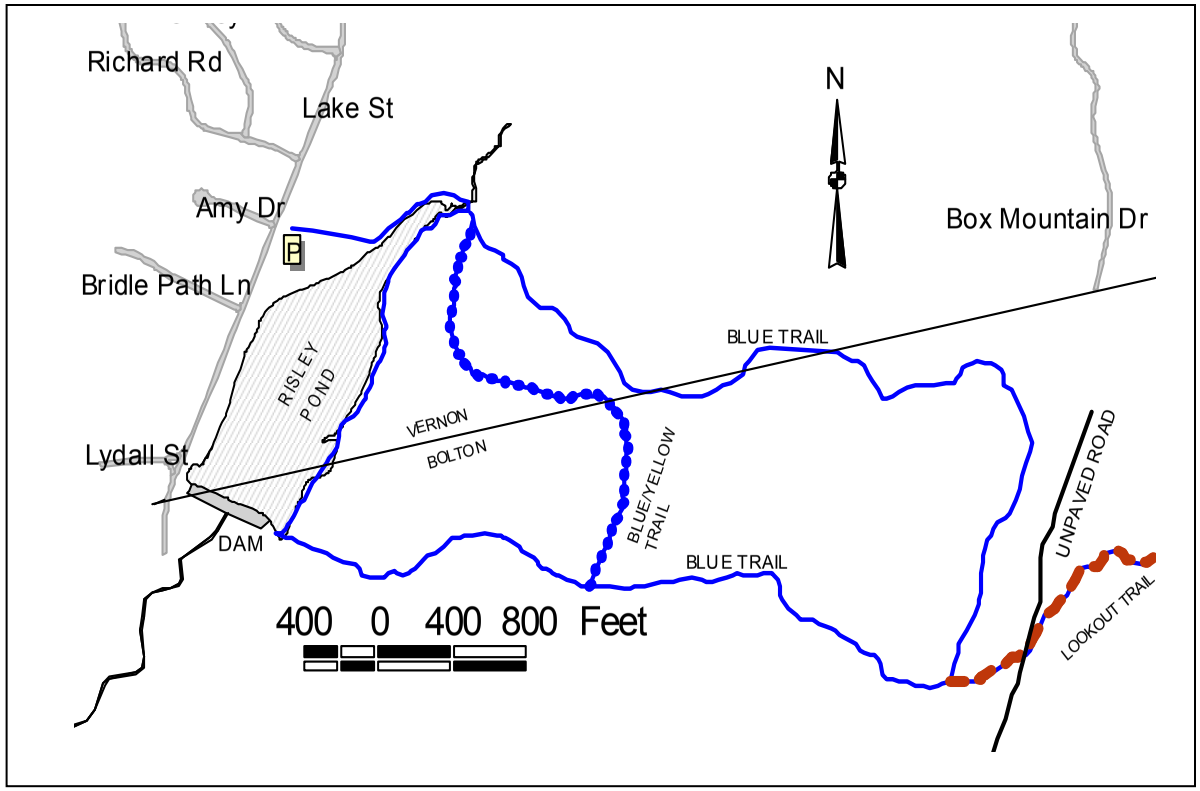
Miles Description

3.2 Total walk from car to North end of pond, along East shore to dam, up Box Mtn to Lookout Trail, along Lookout Trail to the lookout, return to Box Mtn ridge, along ridge, then down North end slope and return to car.

ADDITIONAL TRAIL

Blue/yellow markers

A ½ mile cross trail which shortens the blue trail by about half and eliminates the steep climb. Excellent for x-ctry ski-



2. RAILS-TO-TRAILS: HOP RIVER LINEAR PARK
3. RAILS-TO-TRAILS: ROCKVILLE SPUR

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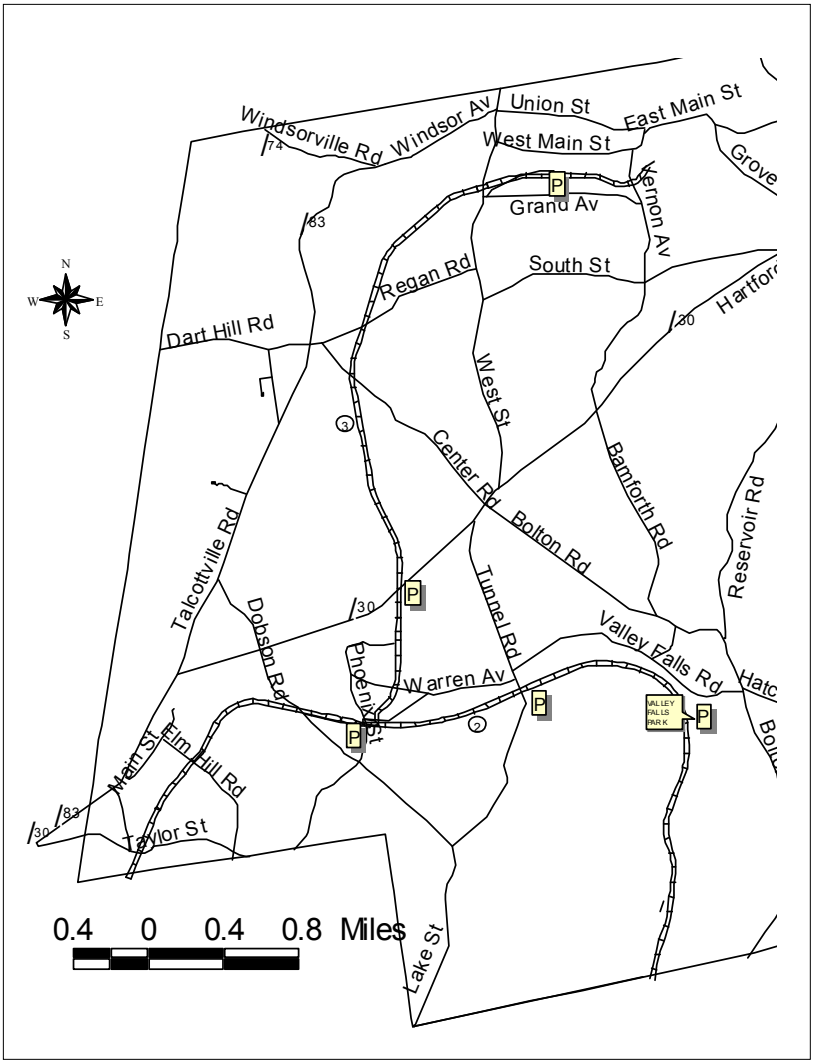
HOP RIVER LINEAR PARK
Unblazed, 5.1 miles;
Direction of travel - clockwise

Miles
0.0 Manchester Town Line
0.1 Taylor St.
0.7 Elm Hill Rd.
1.4 Dobson Rd.
1.8 Phoenix St.
2.7 Tunnel Rd.
3.7 Valley Falls Loop Trail B/y
5.1 Vernon Town Line
(Pavilion on left is private please do not trespass)

RAILS-TO-TRAILS; ROCKVILLE SPUR
Unblazed; 4.1 miles;
Direction of travel - S to N

Miles
0.0 Phoenix St.
0.30 Maple Ave.
0.45 Tankerhoosen River Bridge
0.65 I-84 Underpass
0.80 Rt. 30, Hartford Turnpike
2.00 Center Rd.
2.25 Regan Rd.
3.30 West St.
3.70 Rau St.
4.10 Vernon Ave.

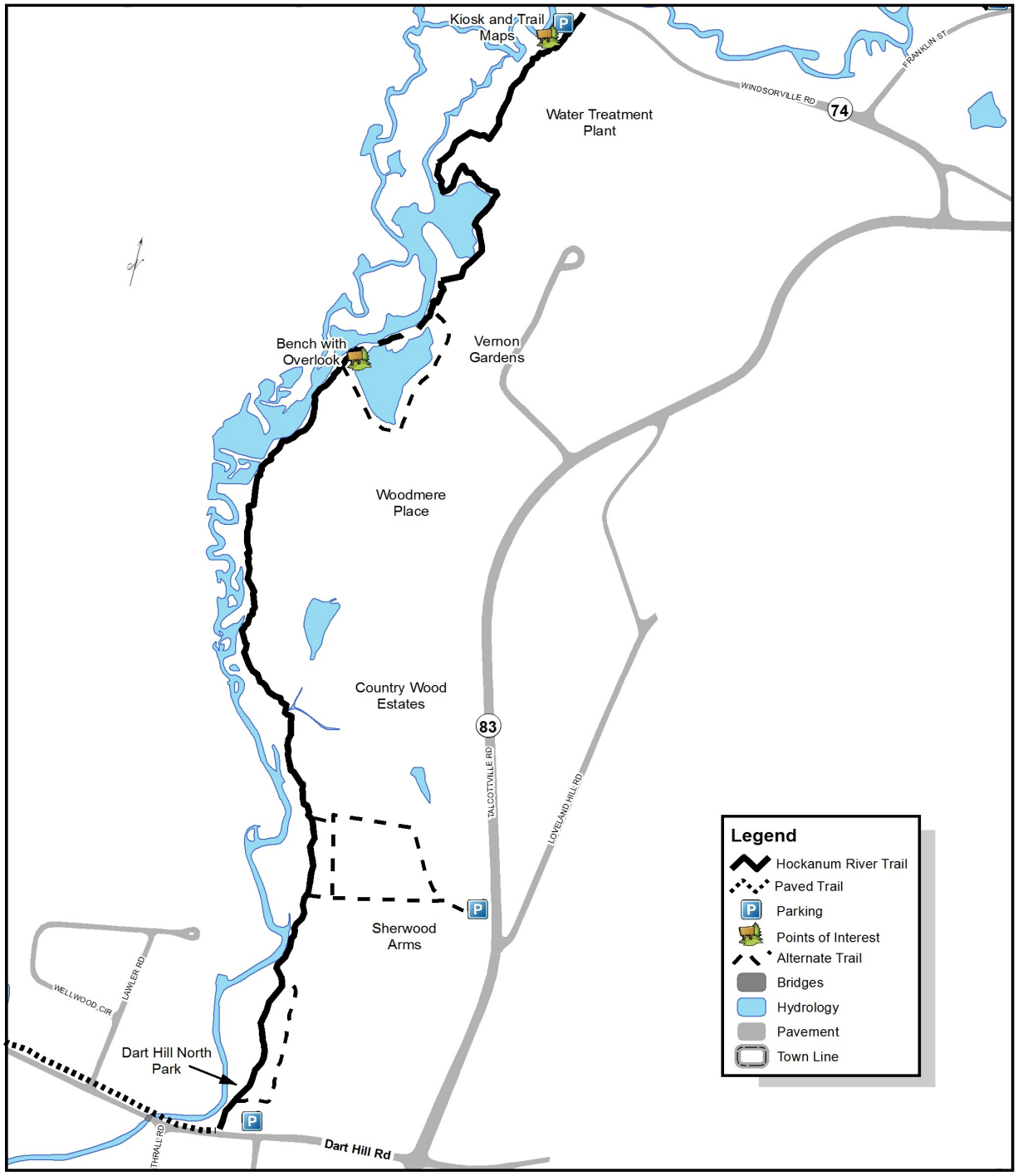


PARKING P

Church St (W off Phoenix St) , Sacred Heart Church on Hartford Tpke (Rt 30) & Rau St (N off Grand Ave) – All On-Grade parking. Trail Maps and year round portable bathroom facilities at Church St.

Tunnel Road – Uphill path to trail from road side parking on the south side of the tunnel. Trail Maps.

Valley Falls Parking Lot (No bikes in park)
Hiking Access – Blue blazed Shenipsit Trail to the south.
Bicycles Access– Red/blue Jeep Trail on Valley



4A VERNON HOCKANUM RIVER TRAIL

(North of Dart Hill Road)

Type: Hiking

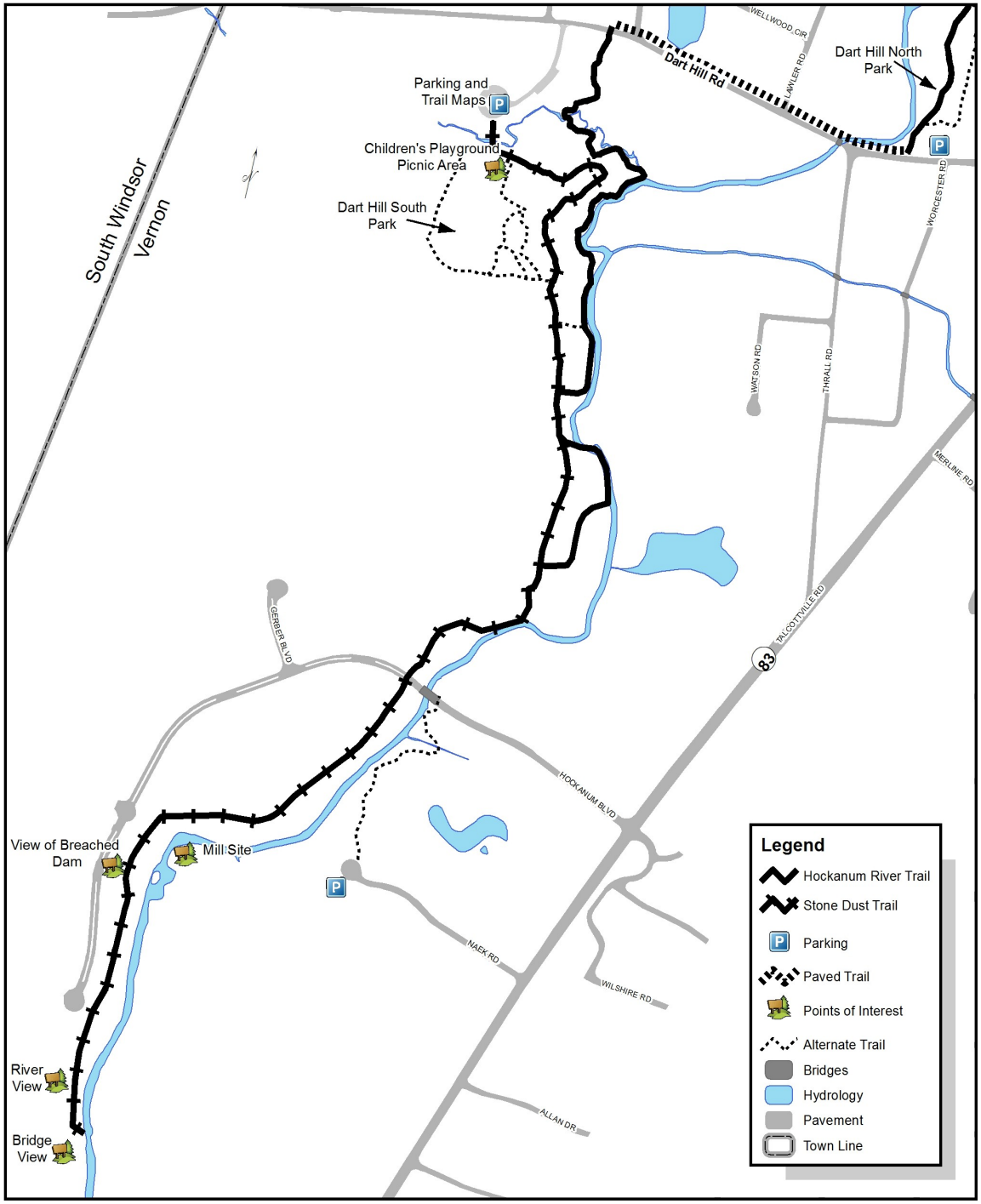
Orange Markers; 1.4 Miles

Note: One section impassible in wet weather.
Divert to Alternate Trail at 0.3 Miles.

Miles	Description
0.0	From Windsorville Road (Rt. 74) enter Water Treatment Plant driveway. Park in dirt lot on right next to kiosk (w trail maps). Start hike on outside of WTP fence in wooded area.
0.1	Pass through an open field and go down stairs on the right.
0.3	Enter Vernon Gardens property. Stay on the right around the swimming pool.
0.5	Cross narrow water stream on wooden bridge and enter Woodmere property.
0.7	Pass behind the Woodmere units.
0.8	Enter Country Wood property. Pass the tennis courts and swimming pool.
1.0	On south end of Country Wood two side trails on the left lead to a 0.4 mile alternate trail loop (loop also accessible from a dirt parking lot by Paul's Pizza).
1.2	Enter the north end of Dart Hill North Park on a hill top. Alternate trail to the left goes directly to the Dart Hill North parking lot.
1.4	Arrive at the picnic area by Dart Hill Road. Access the parking area to your left.

Complete the remainder of the Vernon Hockanum River Trail System by using **Vernon Hockanum River Trail (South of Dart Hill Road)** map.

There is an orange marker connector trail to Ellington in place that starts at the Water Treatment Plant, goes to Franklin Street and turns L into a wooded parking lot.



4B VERNON
HOCKANUM RIVER TRAIL
(South of Dart Hill Road)

Type: Hiking

Orange Markers; 0.9 Miles

Note: Impassible at 0.4 miles in very wet weather. Divert to Stone Dust Trail.

Miles Description

0.0 Trail starts at Dart Hill North Park and goes W on Dart Hill Road. Cross the Hockanum River. Pass Skinner Road.

0.3 Shortly after Skinner Rd turn L, cross Dart Hill Road, enter Dart Hill South Park property. Follow blazes through wooded area, field and wooded area.

0.4 Cross wooden bridge, go R then L.

0.5 Turn R then L (keep Hockanum River on L).

0.6 Pass southern boundary of Dart Hill South Park. Continue straight (trail on R is alternate To Stone Dust Trail).

0.7 Turn R to Stone Dust Trail, turn L, pass under power lines. Turn L and follow blazes back into woods.

0.9 Trail rejoins Stone Dust Trail.

Stone Dust Trail

Type: Walking

Unmarked; 1.0 Miles

Miles Description

0.0 From Dart Hill South parking lot, cross bridge and turn L on Stone Dust Trail.

0.1 Trail turns R then continues straight toward open field (Ignore several side trails coming from the right).

0.2 Leave park boundary into field, continue along edge of woods with housing units on your right.

0.6 Cross Hockanum Blvd. Keep woods on left.

1.0 Bridge is end of trail. Do not cross.

(Between 0.8 and 1.0 miles are three overlooks with plaques containing site historical info. One has a bench and two have picnic tables.)

5 INDIAN TRAILS, NCLT

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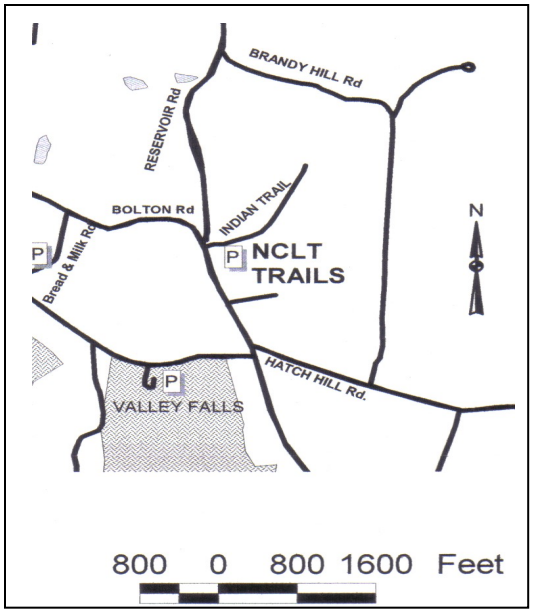

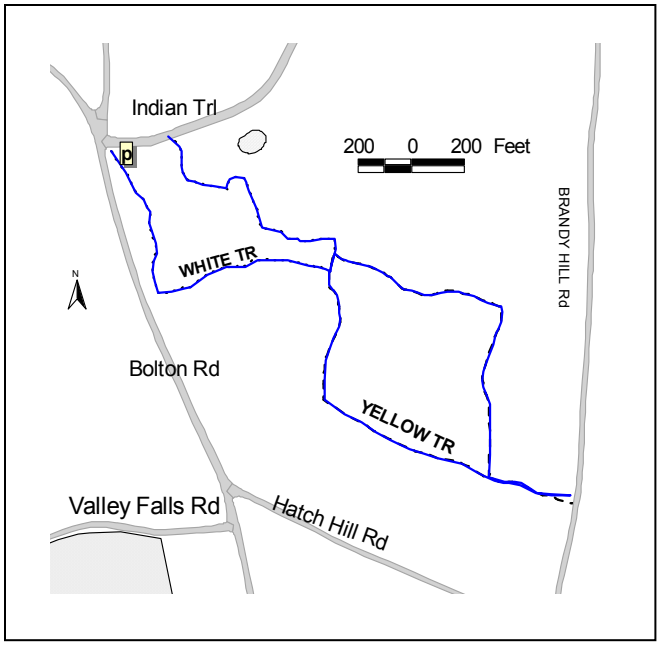

INDIAN TRAIL LONGER LOOP
White then Yellow markers; 0.96 miles. **White trail is wet**. Direction of travel: see below

Miles
0.00 Park on R side of Indian Trail Rd approx 50 ft from Bolton Rd. Enter woods by stone with plaque onto white trail S along Bolton Rd
0.10 Turn L (E) on trail.
0.20 Note house and property on R.
0.22 Cross stone wall, turn L (N) on trail approx 100 ft, then turn R (E) and go uphill with stream on L.
0.28 Stream turns to L, continue straight uphill to *E* with smaller gully on L.
0.36 Near top with houses ahead, turn R on trail.
0.45 Cross a stream gully and continue S.
0.51 Turn R (W) and go downhill. Note: An alternate turn to the L (E) goes 300 ft. out to Brandy Hill Rd on a right-of-way. There is no room to park on Rd.
0.64 Before a steeper downhill with house in sight in front of you, turn R (N)on trail.
0.72 Cross deep gully and rejoin white trail. Yellow trail ends. Continue N on white trail with stone wall on L. (L across stone wall on white returns as you started).
0.75 Turn L (W) along stream bed. Note house and property on R.
0.81 Turn R, cross stream, go N on top of dirt bank.
0.92 Turn R (N).
0.96 Arrive back at Indian Trail Rd. approx l00 ft E of start.

INDIAN TRAIL SHORT LOOP
White markers; 0.4 miles; Direction of travel: counterclockwise. **Trail is wet.**

Miles
0.00 Park on R side of Indian Trail Rd approx 50 ft from Bolton Rd. Enter woods on white trail S along Bolton Rd.
0.10 Turn L (E) on trail.
0.20 Note house and property on R.
0.22 Cross stone wall, turn L (N) on trail approx 100 ft, then turn L and follow stream W. Note house and property on R.
0.28 Turn R, cross stream, go N on top of dirt bank.
0.36 Turn R (N).
0.40 Arrive back at Indian Trail Rd approx 100 ft E of start.

ADDITIONAL NCLT TRAILS:

See 12. Talcott Ravine Trail Map.

See 8. Valley Falls Trail Map.
Two loop trails near Boulder Crest Soccer Fields are partially on NCLT property.

See 8. Valley Falls Trail Map.
Blue/red Jeep Trail provides access to Rail Trail from Valley Falls Rd. near Railroad Brook.

6 VERNON CENTER MIDDLE SCHOOL TRAILS

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Enter Vernon Center Middle School parking lot from either Hartford Turnpike (Route 30) or West Street. Park in the extreme northeast corner of the parking lot. Start from the blue blazed Hilltop Loop Trail.

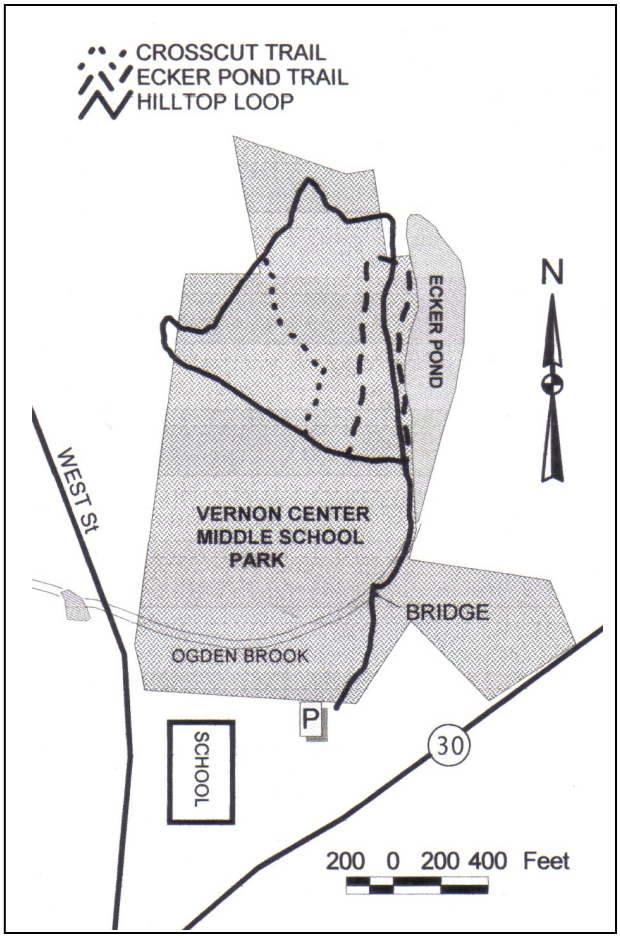
HILLTOP LOOP TRAIL.
Blue markers; 1.2 miles
Direction of travel is South to North
Note :Moderately steep from 0.45 to 0.7 Mi

Miles	Description
0.00	Go North from the Northeast corner of the school parking lot.
0.10	Cross wooden bridge and turn R (East) on woods road.
0.20	Follow U shaped woods road until you reach Ecker Pond. (Yellow marked trail goes R.) (Blue trail that goes L is your return trail).
0.45	Turn L uphill on foot trail.
0.60	Continue uphill past red trail on L.
0.70	Turn L downhill. Continue down on woods road past Red and Yellow trails.
0.95	Turn R (South) on woods road. (Ecker Pond now on L).
1.10	Turn L (South) and cross bridge. Reenter parking lot.

ECKER POND VIEW TRAIL

Yellow markers; 0.5 miles; round trip distance from parking lot is 0.9 miles. Direction of travel is South to North.

Miles	Description
0.00	Go North from the Northeast corner of the school parking lot on the blue Hillside Loop Trail.
0.10	Cross wooden bridge and turn R (East) on woods road.
0.20	Follow U shaped woods road until you reach Ecker Pond. Go R on yellow Ecker Pond View Trail and North along shore.
0.30	Go L, crossing blue trail, on woods road which soon turns L (South).
0.60	Turn L on woods road, joining the blue Hilltop Loop Trail.
0.65	Turn R (South) on woods road and go South on blue Hilltop Loop Trail to return to parking lot.



CROSSCUT TRAIL
Red markers; this trail is 0.15 miles long, and provides a shortened loop walk when used in conjunction with the blue Hilltop Loop Trail.

7 BELDING WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA TRAILS

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SHENIPSIT TRAIL, BELDING TROUT MANAGEMENT AREA

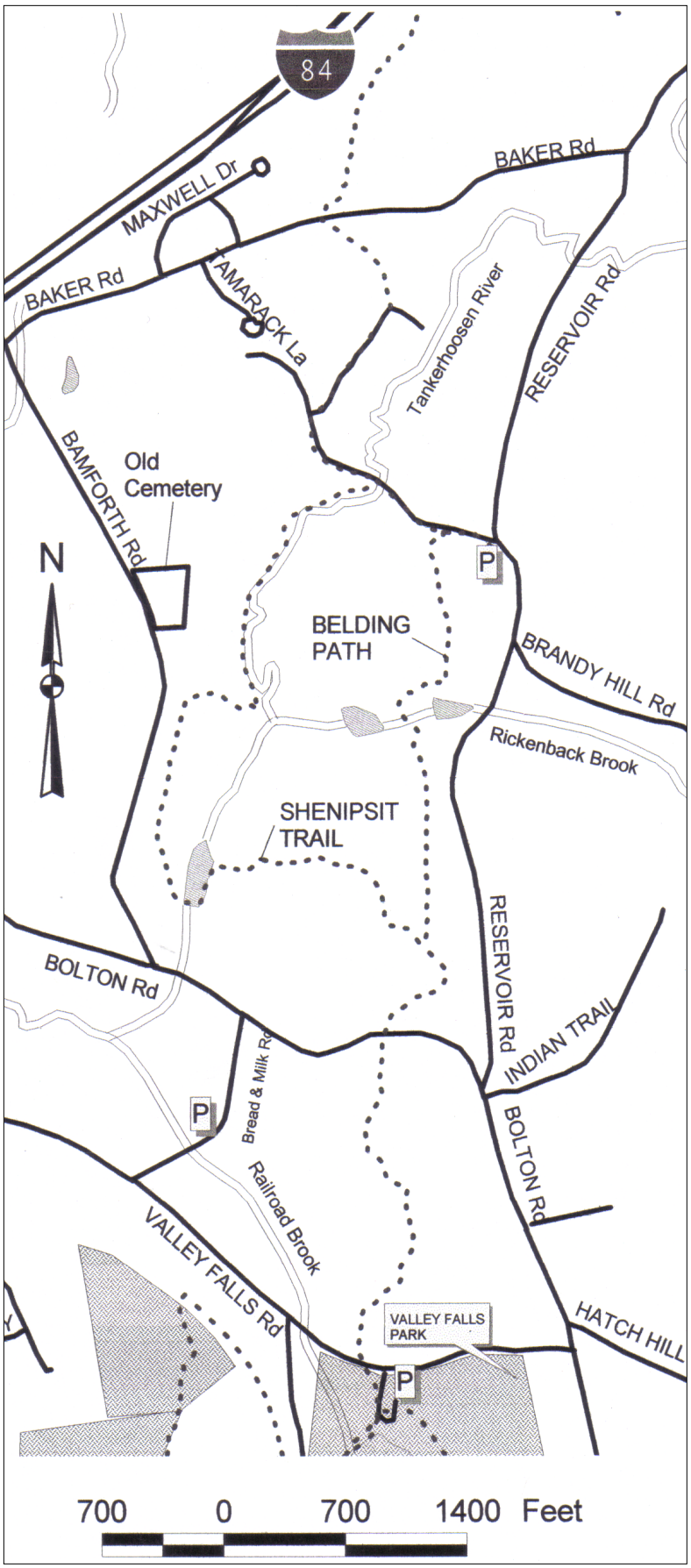
Blue markers; 2.00 miles; Direction of travel - South to North.

Miles	Description
0.00	Leave Valley Falls parking area and enter woods on N side of Valley Falls Rd. Trail climbs to NE.
0.42	Pass thru stone wall, cross Bolton Rd. Trail swings to E on other side.
0.50	Descend into rocky ravine, cross small brook. Turn N along wall.
0.57	Pass S end of yellow Belding Path on R. Belding Path rejoins the Shenipsit via a blue/yellow blazed connecting trail near Reservoir Rd.
0.77	Cross woods road then turning W.
0.84	Descend and cross woods road.
0.86	Go L, follow shore of small pond.
0.94	Cross dam on bridge, turn R.
1.00	Join woods road and follow to N.
1.20	Leave woods road and turn E.
1.28	At Tankerhoosen River, go L.
1.64	Reach abandoned Snake Hill Rd. and turn L. (Blue/Yellow Connecting Trail crosses river on old bridge to R, intersects yellow Belding Path in 0.1 mi, then ends at small parking area on Reservoir Rd.)
2.00	Cross Baker Rd, trail continues 1.4 mi to I-84 Exit 67 commuter lot.

BELDING PATH

Yellow markers; 0.51 miles;
Direction: N to S.

Miles	Description
0.00	Trail leaves blue/yellow Connecting Trail and Snake Hill Rd. and goes S.
0.22	Turn L from woods road.
0.27	Cross bridge over small brook. Water cascades over small dam to L. Join woods road to L (S).
0.41	Leave woods road at bend, and go straight ahead in open woods.
0.51	Jct. with blue Shenipsit Trail. Turn L to return to Valley Falls.



8 VALLEY FALLS PARK TRAILS

NO BICYCLES ALLOWED ON TRAILS WITHIN VALLEY FALLS PARK
There is an admission charge in the summer

RAILROAD BROOK TRAIL
Yellow markers; minimum 2 miles for complete loop. Travel: North to South.

Miles
0.0 Parking lot. Face pond; go R to exit road from lot; go thru gateway; cross pond dam. Cross 2 bridges over spillways. Note waterfalls.
0.1 Climb stairs. Continue straight (Trail at R is blue Shenipsit Trail and goes up to rail bed).
0.2 Cross bridge over Railroad Brook. Immediately trail turns R and follows brook south. (The trail L near bridge is Pond Loop Trail - orange markers).
0.4 Continue south along brook. Cross 3 more bridges over small feeder streams.
0.5 Cross bridge over stream. (Unmarked trails to L lead to Main Road Trail).
0.8 Cross bridge over Railroad Brook, continue south along brook.
1.0 Jct with blue/yellow (B/Y) marked trail.
Options:
A Straight ahead on B/Y trail to RR Brook crossing (0.2 miles), then follow B/Y to red Main Road Trail (0.5 miles). Straight ahead on Main Road Trail to parking lot (1.4 miles). Total loop 2.4 miles.
B R on B/Y trail uphill to rail bed, then R again on blue marked Shenipsit Trail to parking lot. Total loop 2.0 miles.
C Return to parking lot on same trail; or take unmarked cutoff trail R to red Main Road Trail then L; or at pond take orange Pond Loop Trail to R. Total loop 2.0 miles.

BOULDER CREST SOCCER FIELD TRAILS
(Partially on NCLT property)
There are two loop trails up near the soccer field. The outer loop (0.9 miles) is marked orange and crosses the Valley Falls Loop Trail (B/Y) twice. The inner loop trail (0.4 miles) is marked yellow. See map.

MAIN ROAD TRAIL
Red markers, minimum 1.6 mile for complete loop. Direction of travel: North to South.

Miles
0.0 Parking lot. Face pond, go L and pass with pavilion on R to unpaved road into wooded area.
0.2 Cross bridge between de-forested fields.
0.3 Follow road into woods. Blue/yellow trail at L. At fork in trail, go L (Trail to R rejoins in 100 ft).
0.5 Cross bridge, continue on road, past side trail at R which goes to Railroad Brook.
0.5+At fork in trail, go L (unmarked trail to R goes to Railroad Brook Trail).
0.6 Cross stream
0.8 Junction with Blue/yellow trail. L on B/Y goes up hill and then back to parking lot. Straight ahead on B/Y goes to yellow Railroad Brook Trail or to Rail Trail then back to parking lot. This is the end of the red trail, to return to parking lot on the red trail is 0.8 miles.

VALLEY FALLS LOOP TRAIL
Blue/yellow markers. 3.8 mile loop. Direction of travel: ccw.

Miles
0.0 Exit parking lot to S on blue trail. Pass pond on L, waterfall on R, cross 2 bridges over spillways.
0.3 Climb and descend stairs, turn R up to railbed. Go R (S) following Blue/yellow markers on rail bed.
0.5 Turn L off rail bed and climb to S up the hill.
0.7 Pass soccer field on R. and enter Boulder Ridge Town Park. Cross jct with orange Boulder Crest Outer Loop Trail.
1.0 Cross brook in valley.
1.1 Cross Jeep Trail. Jct with white Lookout Trail (go right to view lookouts in 0.3 miles – 0.6 round trip.) Go L on B/Y down to rail bed.
1.2 Turn R (S) on rail bed
1.9 Turn L off rail bed going down, turn R at base of hill. Yellow Railroad Brook Trail goes L. (Blue Shenipsit Trail on railbed continues south to Bolton Notch).

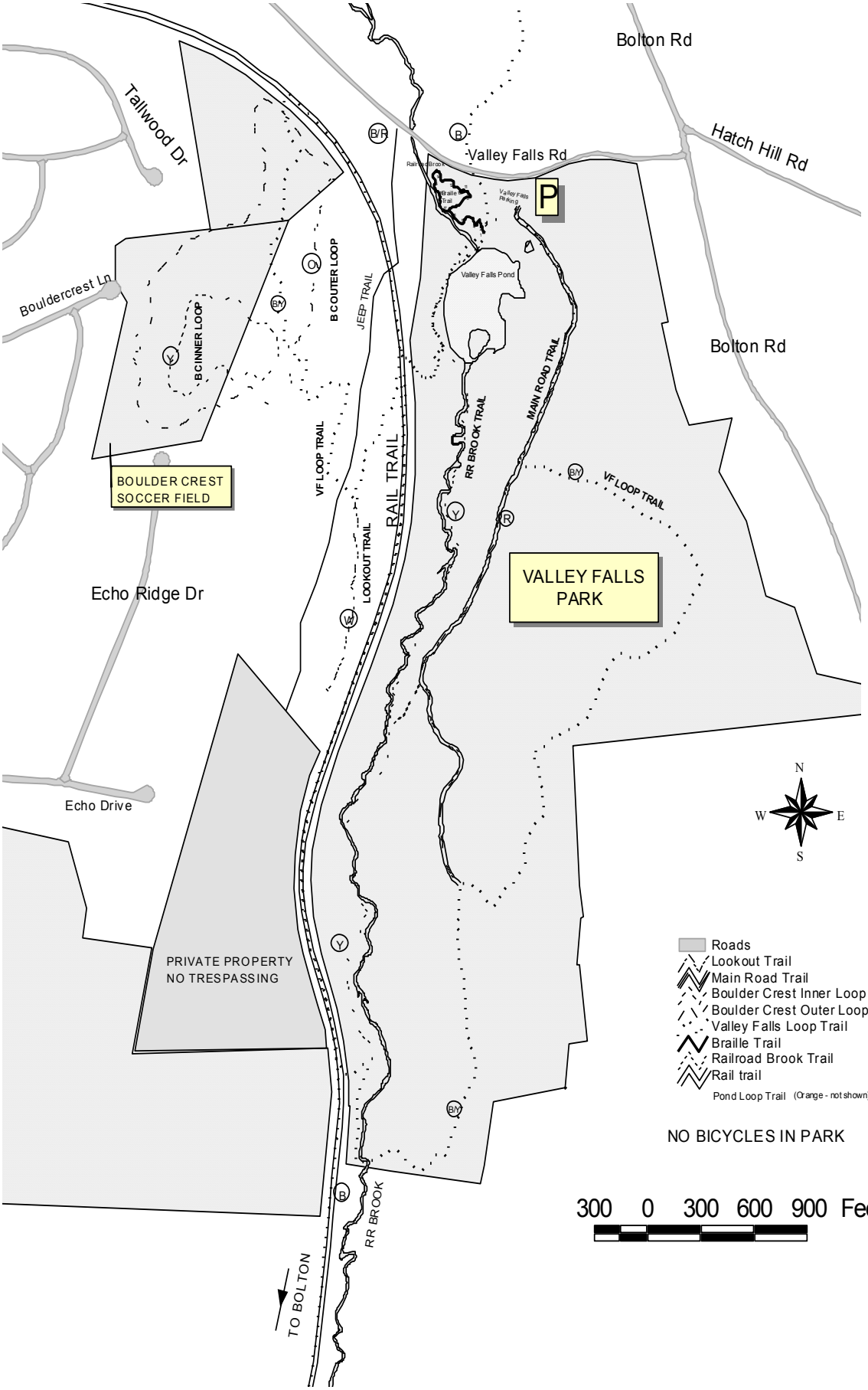
VALLEY FALLS LOOP TRAIL (Cont)

2.2 Turn L and cross brook on bridge. This is the southern-most point on the trail.
2.3 Jct with trail, turn L (North) (Trail to the R leaves the park on private property.). Don't trespass!
2.6 Turn R off jeep trail and start hill climb. (Jeep Trail continues North to parking lot as red Main Road Trail)
3.1 Pass hill top on L, field on R, and start down along ravine.
3.5 Turn R (N) on red Main Road Trail into field.
3.8 Valley Falls parking lot.

POND LOOP TRAIL (Not on map)
Orange markers; 0.6 mile loop. Travel: ccw.

Miles
0.0 Parking lot. Face pond; go R to exit road from lo; go thru gateway; cross pond dam. Cross 2 bridges over spillways. Note waterfalls.
0.1 Climb stairs. Continue straight (Trail at R is blue Shenipsit Trail and goes up to rail bed).
0.2 Cross bridge over Railroad Brook. After bridge, Pond Loop Trail then turns L. (Railroad Brook Trail continues along brook).
0.3 Go straight at intersection (L goes to Valley Falls Pond.
0.4 At jct with Main Road Trail (unpaved) turn L. Enter wooded area.
0.6 Continue past pavilion on L to parking lot.

JEEP TRAIL (Rail Trail bicycle entry from Valley Falls parking lot)
Blue/red markers.
To accommodate bike entry to the Rail Trail for those who park at the Valley Falls parking lot (No bicycles allowed in Valley Falls Park). Exit the parking lot and go W on Valley Falls Road. Shortly after crossing the bridge over Railroad Brook turn L onto the uphill Blue/red trail (B/R designation ceases at Rail Trail).

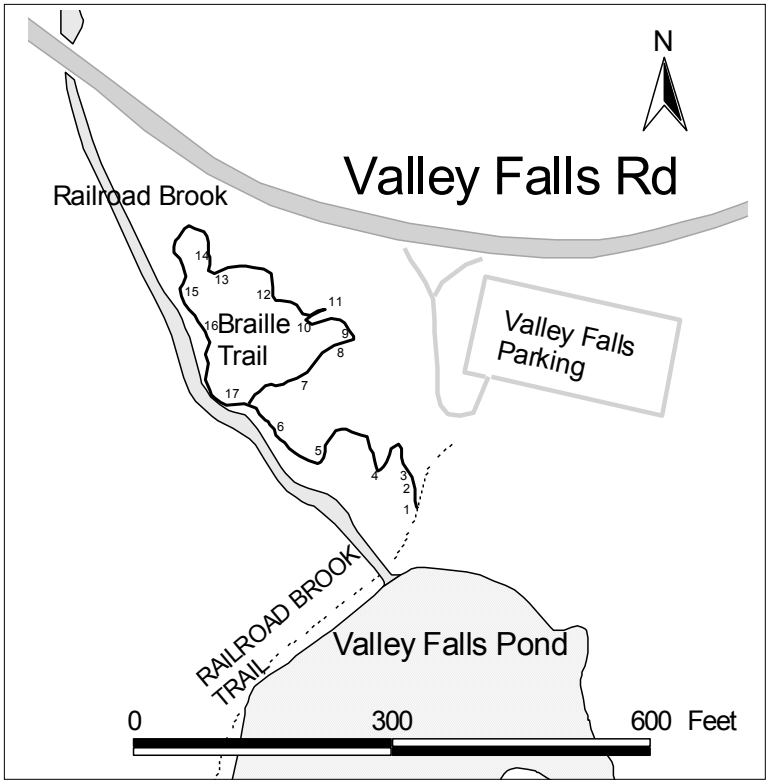


8. VALLEY FALLS TRAILS

Revision 3, April 2011

9. BRAILLE TRAIL, VALLEY FALLS PARK

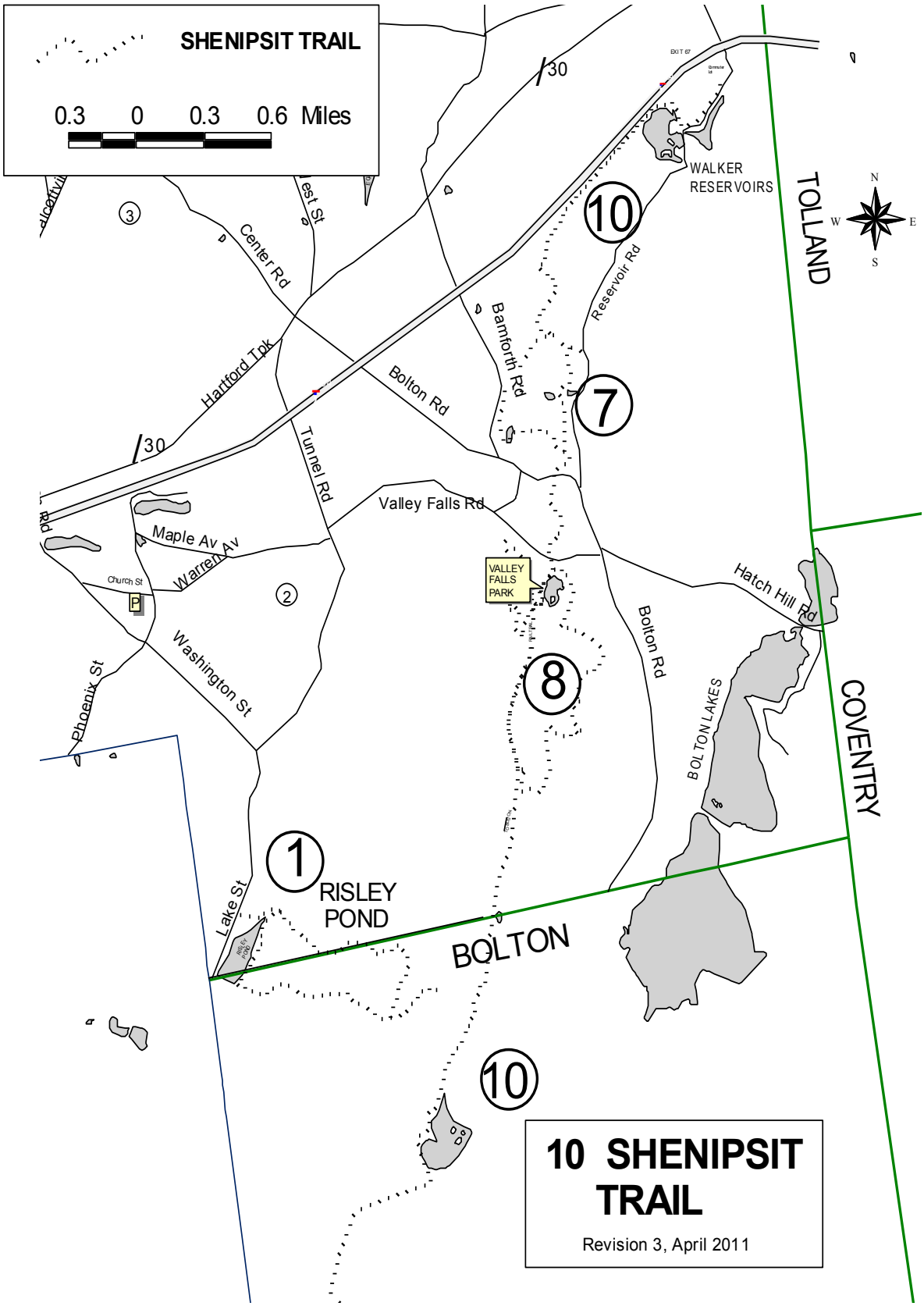
Revision 3, April 2011



BRAILLE TRAIL

Marked with guide rope; 1,100 ft.; Direction of travel: West from Railroad Brook Trail (yellow markers) to counter clockwise loop section and east back to Railroad Brook Trail.

Station	
0	Start from Valley Falls parking lot.
1	Welcome and explanation of trail.
2	History of Valley Falls Farm and Industry.
3	Dr. Charles Beach family and the swimming pool.
4	Pool filtering system and the pool.
5	Railroad Brook and its journey to Long Island Sound.
6	Ramp over gully and a sketch of Belding Wildlife Management Area.
7	The old mill foundations and the National Register of Historic Places.
8	Tree types in the areas and old guide rope damage.
9	Mill stone wall and the 18th and 19th century industrial era.
10	Directions to the mill center hole for the water wheel.
11	Mill site description and history.
12	The boarding house.
13	Lightning damaged tree.
14	Eleven foot diameter sugar maple and burls.
15	Railroad Brook and a feast for the senses.
16	A spring, Box Mountain property and the Rails-To-Trails.
17	Directions to return to the trail beginning.


SHENIPSIT TRAIL
0.3 0 0.3 0.6 Miles
30
EXIT 67
WALKER RESERVOIRS
TOLLAND
N
W
E
S
10
Reservoir Rd
Center Rd
Bamforth Rd
Hartford Tpk
Bolton Rd
7
30
Tunnel Rd
Valley Falls Rd
Maple Av
Warren Av
Church St
P
3
2
VALLEY FALLS PARK
Hatch Hill Rd
Bolton Rd
8
Washington St
Phoenix St
BOLTON LAKES
COVENTRY
1
RISLEY POND
Lake St
BOLTON
10
10 SHENIPSIT TRAIL
Revision 3, April 2011

1O SHENIPSIT TRAIL (Revision 3, April 2011)
BOLTON NOTCH TO VALLEY FALLS PARK
(Blazes: Blue - Direction of Travel. S to N*)*

This segment traverses the undeveloped Railroad Brook Valley between Bolton Notch and Valley Falls Park in Vernon. It features rugged high ledges with views, ponds, streams, and mature hemlock and laurel growth. The trail will parallel or be coincident with the Hop River State Park Trail.

Leave N side of Rt. 6/44A exit ramp off 1-384 (0.0) just to the E of commuter parking lot (*ample parking*). Follow entrance road of the closed drive-in theater. Bolton Notch Pond on right. Turn R (0.2) and descend on dirt access road to Freja Park (undeveloped). Cross brook and turn R on foot path into woods on W side of pond. Cross small parking area (0.3) and pond access point and continue along W shore of pond. Turning more to the E , cross brook and climb ledge with overlooks on N side of pond. Trail follows ridge to N (0.5) through overarching laurel, passes above pond outlet and Railroad Brook. Descend to and cross old woods road. (Follow woods road to R, cross wooden bridge to Hop River State Park Rail Trail, not marked or blazed). Continue N from woods road (0.6) and with short steep climb reach top of ridge. On top turn R and then to L, through heavy laurel. Trail comes out to edge of high ledge (0.8) with views to E and of Railroad Brook and the rail bed below. Skirt large upturned ledge (1.0) and descend steeply to rail bed. Junction with Hop River Trail. Shenipsit Trail turns to the L and runs N on rail bed. (For loop walk turn to the R on the rail bed, passing beneath the high ledges that were just crossed. In 0.4 m. turn R, cross wooden bridge, rejoin Shenipsit.) Follow rail bed with private land on either side (1.3). Small brook down on the L. Pavilion on the right is private (Please do not trespass). The S boundary of Valley Falls Park is passed on the R (1.6). Shortly, join the blue/yellow blazed Valley Falls Loop Trail. (R descends from rail trail and makes a CCW loop around E side of the park, rejoining the main trail @ 2.6, or go straight ahead to 2.6.) High ledges on the L and Railroad Brook is now below on R. Trail passes base of steep cliff on the L (2.3). Turn R into Valley Falls Park (2.6) at junction with blue/yellow blazed Valley Falls Loop Trail. Jct. with yellow blazed Valley Falls park Trail (2.7) on W shore of Valley Falls Pond). Shenipsit Trail turns L with the pond on the R and ledges covered with moss and ferns on the L. Continue to the N end of the pond and the *parking area, 50 cars,* on Valley Fails Rd. (2.9). Admission to park is charged in summer. Park is popular for picnicking, hiking, swimming, nature study, ice skating and cross-country skiing.

SEE "7 BELDING MANAGEMENT AREA TRAILS"
for a description of this next section of the Shenipsit Trail that extends from Valley Falls Park to Baker Rd.

This segment, established in 1995, proceeds N from Valley Falls Park through the Belding Wildlife Management Area. The WMA was donated to DEP by Maxwell Belding and he established a trust for maintenance. It is rich in laurel and old-growth trees and features a cascade, pond, and a walk on the banks of the Tankerhoosen River. A loop walk of 2.8 m. from Valley Falls Park is possible utilizing the yellow blazed Belding Path.

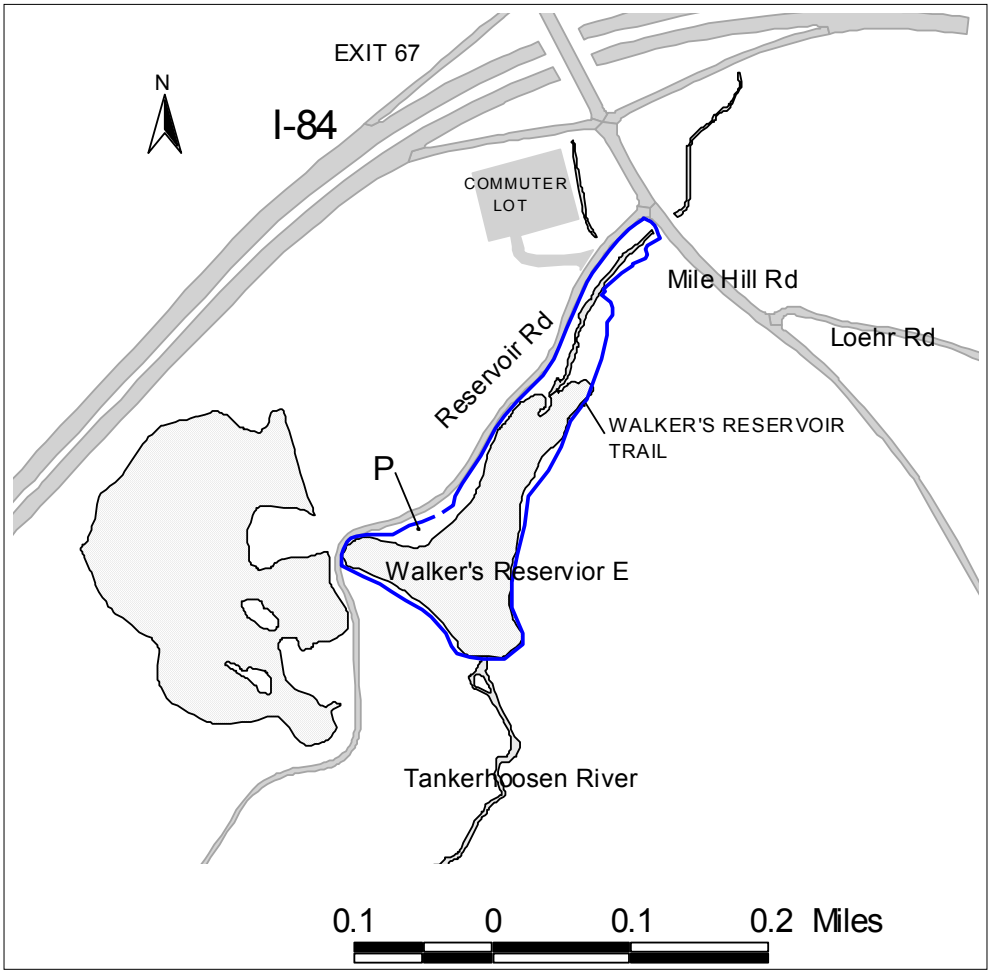
BELDING WMA TO I-84 EXIT 67
(Blazes: Blue - Direction of Travel. S to N)

This segment was completed in 2003. It connects from the Belding WMA, across Baker Rd. in Vernon, along the south side of I-84, around scenic Walker Reservoir West to the commuter lot at Exit 67.

Main trail goes on dirt Snake Hill Rd. from jct. with blue/yellow connecting trail at iron bridge (0.0) L off woods rd. (0.3) along small brook. Cross Baker Rd. (0.4) and slab R up small hill. Cross small brook (0.5). Proceed uphill with I-84 fence on L (0.7). Height of land (0.8), view of Box Mtn. on R. Cross a wet highway drainage area (1.1), views of Walker Reservoir West on R. L at jct. with Reservoir Rd. (1.5), views of Vernon recreational park, Walker Reservoir East straight ahead. The park is popular for hiking, picnicking, bird watching, and ice skating. There is a yellow blazed trail which skirts the L side of the reservoir. *Parking for 25 cars at the park.* Reach end of this section (1.8) at entrance drive for I-84 interchange #67 commuter *parking lot with ample parking*.

11. WALKER'S RESERVOIR TRAIL

Revision 3, April 2011



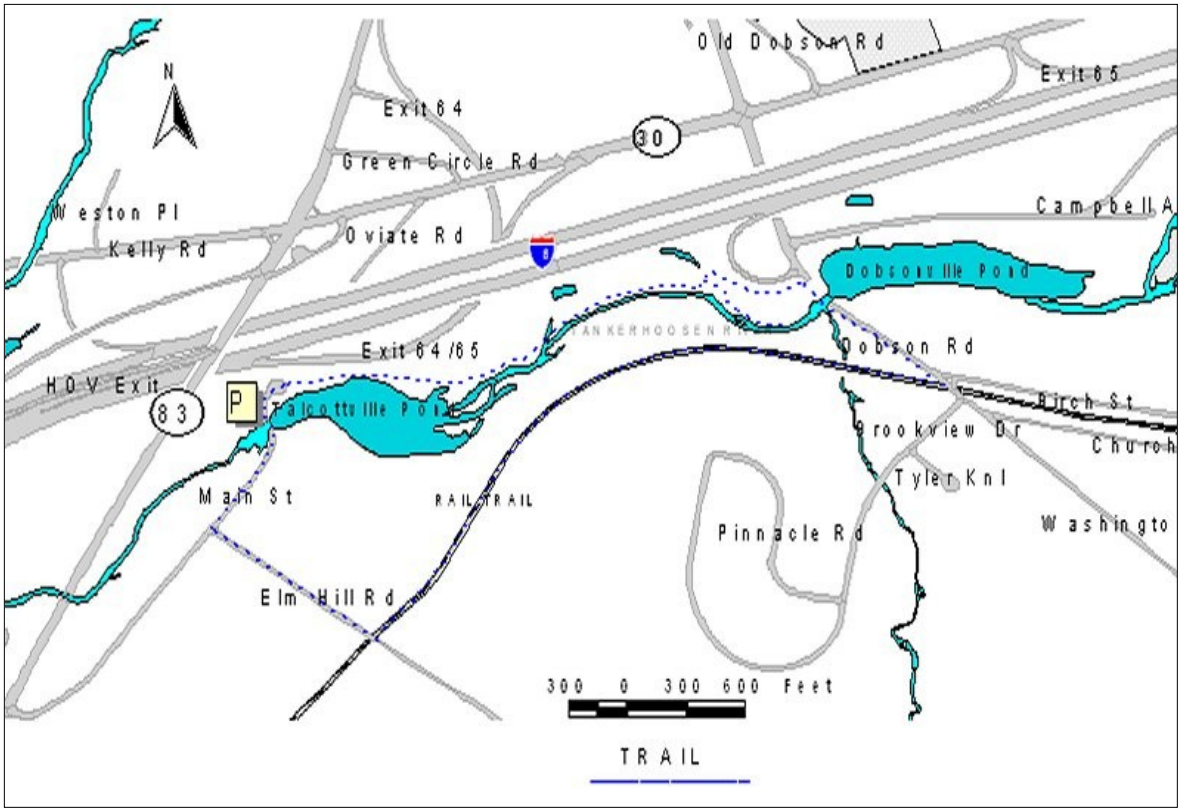
WALKER'S RESERVOIR TRAIL

Yellow markers; 0.8 miles; Direction of travel: counterclockwise.
(Easy access to blue blazed Shenipsit Trail, directly across the street from the parking lot.)

Miles

0.00 From Walker's Reservoir parking lot on Reservoir Rd, go S along road with pond on L.
0.10 Turn L from road along pond shore with pond on L.
0.24 Cross dam at S end of pond and turn N with pond on L.
0.50 Reach N end of pond.
0.60 Reach Mile Hill Rd.
0.70 Go N (Mile Hill Road on R) then S (Reservoir Road on R). Reach N end of pond.
0.80 Arrive back at starting point in parking lot.

12. TALCOTT RAVINE TRAIL - NCLT



This trail passes through a scenic and historic ravine that was donated to the Northern Connecticut Land Trust by the Talcott family in 2011. Some of the points of interest include glacial geologic features, the Tankerhoosen River, the Dobsonville dam, mill ruins, flora features including Umbrella Magnolia.

The Talcott Ravine loop trail starts at the parking area at the Main St cul-de-sac. Walk east along Talcottville Pond and pass around the trail gate. Continue past the pond, along the Tankerhoosen River and at 0.25 miles, cross a wooden bridge. At 0.43 miles, the trail turns north and away from the river and there is a trail juncture. Continue on the trail straight ahead. (The trail to the right follows the river to a large rock outcrop and a partial view of the dam.) The trail turns east and gradually climbs to Dobson Rd at 0.56 miles. Turn right on the sidewalk, cross the dam and continue to the junction with the Rail Trail at 0.73 miles. Turn right on the Rail Trail. (Left goes to parking at Church St in 0.25 mile.) Continue west on Rail Trail to Elm Hill Rd at 1.44 miles. Turn right on Elm Hill Rd and follow to Main St at 1.64 miles. Turn right on Main St and follow to the cul-de-sac at 1.83 miles.