



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Kennebec
Valley Trail**
Maine



Kennebec Valley Trail

Maine

Keep your ears open for the haunting call of loons along the scenic Kennebec Valley Trail. They're just one example of the wildlife—



Keep your ears open for the haunting call of loons along the scenic Kennebec Valley Trail. They're just one example of the wildlife—another is the moose—that inhabits the river, woods, and fields surrounding this nearly 14.5-mile rail-trail from Bingham to North Anson. The trail traces part of the grueling river route that Benedict Arnold's troops took in their ill-fated Revolutionary War attack on British forces in Quebec in December 1775.

American Indians—and later settlers and railroad builders—considered the Kennebec Valley a natural corridor for traveling in the wilderness. In the 1870s, the Somerset Railroad eyed the route as it began pushing toward Quebec from southern Maine. Running out of money when it reached North Anson in 1877, the company

reorganized as the Somerset Railway and laid track to Solon by 1889 and Bingham by 1890. The Maine Central Railroad took over in 1911, hauling timber and agricultural products. Traffic declined with road improvements in the area, and the Maine Central discontinued using this section in 1976 after the last sawmill closed in Bingham.

Folks on ATVs and mountain bikes travel this remote rail-trail until the first snowfall, which brings out snowmobilers and cross-country skiers. Snowshoeing and dogsledding are also permitted. Mountain bikes are recommended for cycling, as parts of the trail suffer rough conditions. In Bingham, the trail links to more than a thousand miles of trail in Maine's Interconnected Trail System.

The Kennebec Valley Trail starts in Bingham, where sawmills used to process timber floated downriver from the north. Consider stopping in town for provisions, as there are few towns with services ahead. The trailhead is south of town on Goodrich Road.

Gazing at the river as you head south, you'll soon realize why it's named Kennebec: it translates to "large body of still water or large bay" in local tribal language. The Kennebec is so wide and calm in places that you have to remind yourself that it's a river and not one of Maine's lakes.

The riverbank is forested for most of the next 6.5 miles to just north of Solon, where the trail veers right and crosses the river on an old railroad bridge across rocky Caratunk Falls and a modern hydroelectric facility. On October 7, 1775, Arnold's force arrived at a point below the falls that's now called Arnolds Landing. His boats were leaking, and his men were wet, cold, and sick. After a good night's sleep, they carried the boats around the falls and continued their journey through the wilderness to Quebec. You can take a footpath to Arnolds Landing before crossing the river. Falls Road heads into Solon before you cross the bridges.



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States: Maine

Counties: Somerset

Length: 14.5miles

Trail end points: Goodrich Road between Somerset Lane and River Road (Bingham) to Fahi Pond Road just north of US 201A/N. Main St. (North Anson)

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone,Dirt,Sand

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: ATV,Horseback Riding,Mountain

Parking & Trail Access

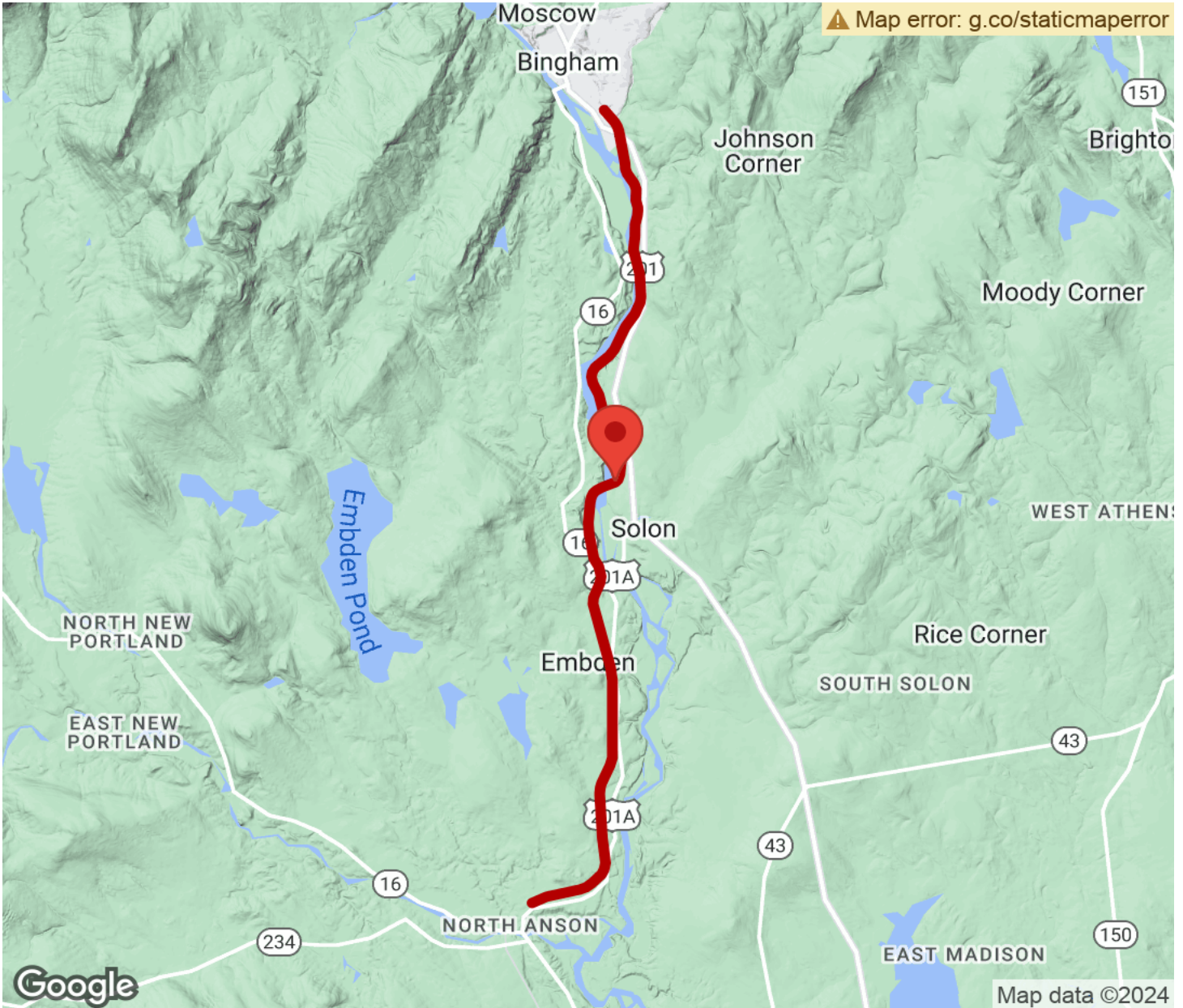
To reach official trail parking in Solon from I-95, take Exit 133 toward Skowhegan on US 201. Go 30.1 miles north on US 201 through Solon, and turn left onto Falls Road. Go 0.4 mile to a parking lot. From here, the Bingham trailhead is 6.7 miles north; the North Anson trailhead is 7.8 miles south.

There are no official trail parking areas near the endpoints in Bingham or North Anson.



Kennebec Valley Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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