



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Cape Cod
Canal
Bikeway**
Massachusetts



Cape Cod Canal Bikeway

Massachusetts

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Though the idea for a Cape Cod Canal goes back to the settlers of Plymouth Colony, the waterway didn't begin construction until 1909. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers took over operation and maintenance of the canal in 1928. Originally dirt roads on either side of the canal, paved service roads now double as the Cape Cod Canal Bikeway. Although there is no easy off-road route to cross the canal, each side of the bikeway offers a unique experience for trail users.

Starting from the visitor center in Buzzards Bay on the north side of the canal, the trail passes by recreational areas, including access to a short stone-surface trail in an open space nature preserve. In 0.6 mile this figure eight trail also features playground equipment, including a zip line and parcourse. Located just before and just after the

Bourne Bridge, 1.3 miles into the trail, are RV camps with grills and recreational areas.

The trail offers scenic views of the canal and chances to watch native birds scouting for fish or spot rabbits hopping across the trail. After passing under the Sagamore Bridge, 4.7 miles into the trail, you will soon reach the northern trailhead at the Scusset Beach State Reservation (7.1 miles from the visitor center). Sand dunes and grasses waving in the breeze mark the way to the picnic area, swimming beach, and rocky peninsula for walking at the end of the trail. Starting from the Tidal Flats Recreation Area in Bourne on the south side, head north through a parking lot and pass the Cape Cod Canal Railroad Bridge on your left. Interpretive signage shares the story and purpose of the railroad bridge. Not much farther along (0.6 mile into the trail) is trailside access to the Aptucxet Trading Post Museum. Settlers founded the trading post in 1627 to trade with American Indians and the Dutch for essential goods such as salt, sugar, and furs to pay off the debt incurred to reach Massachusetts.

Past the museum, canalside residential houses offer local charm on the right, while open views of the canal and Bourne Bridge (1.5 miles into the trail) dominate to the left. After the bridge, the trail leaves the residential neighborhoods behind and becomes abundant with trees and wildlife. Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the path is its use as an access point for recreational fishing along the shore of the canal. Many bicyclists even have fishing pole carriers on their bicycles.

After passing under the Sagamore Bridge 4.7 miles into the trail, the trail parallels the Cape Cod Central Railroad; you can see the ties of the rail line to your right. Nearing the end of the trail (6.4 miles from the Tidal Flats Recreation Area in Bourne) is an industrial area with a power plant and pipelines on the right and industrial docks on the left. Not long after, you will reach Sandwich Marina Park, where the trail ends at 6.7 miles. Here, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintains the Cape Cod Canal Visitor Center, where you can learn more



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States: Massachusetts

Counties: Barnstable

Length: 13.9miles

Trail end points: (South of canal) Old Monument Neck Rd to Freezer Rd to (North of canal) Canal St to Scusset Beach Rd

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike,Inline

Skating,Fishing,Wheelchair

Accessible,Walking

Parking & Trail Access

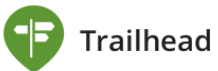
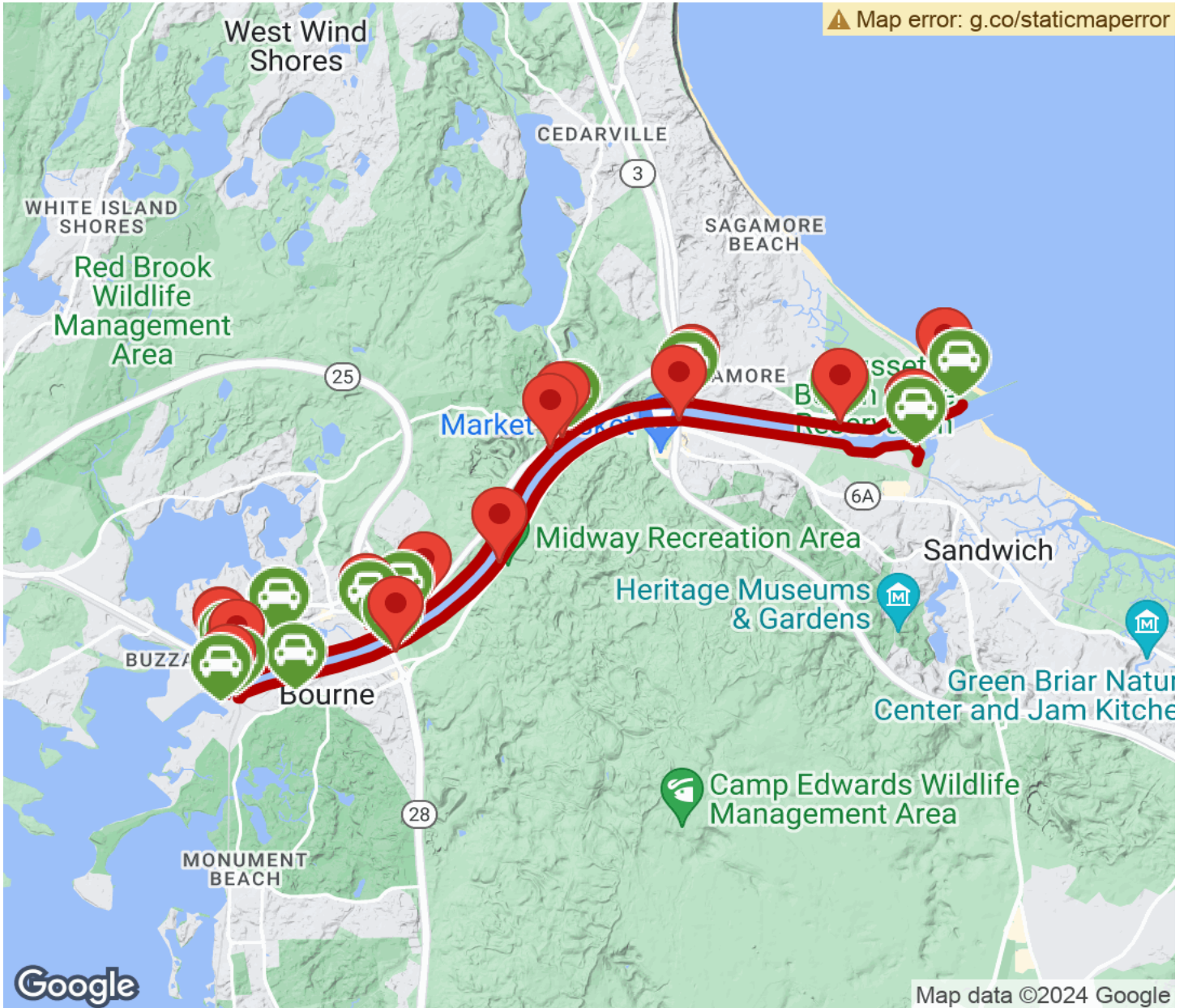
Parking is available at multiple locations along the trail. View the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.

Note that there is a daily fee for parking in the East Canal Lot at the Scusset Beach State Reservation. At the Sandwich Marina Park trailhead, do not turn right into the private marina area; instead, continue straight to reach the playground area with public parking.



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Massachusetts



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
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