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TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



Assabet River Rail Trail

Massachusetts



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The Assabet River Rail Trail connects five old mill towns that owe their revitalization to present-day high-tech industries. A midpoint gap splits the 10.4-mile trail. It offers a forested escape for recreation and a route for Boston-bound bike commuters to reach the train station in South Acton.

About the Route

The northernmost section of trail starts opposite the tracks of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) South Acton Station; passengers can take bicycles on the Fitchburg line on Saturdays, Sundays, and off-peak hours during the week. Dedicated trail parking is available on Maple Street.

Leaving off from Acton, the trail passes the only farm along the trail on the right, and then crosses Fort Pond Brook, which housed mills here beginning in the early 1700s. The trail enters wetlands before arriving in Maynard and traveling through its busy downtown. Here, the trail crosses the Assabet River on a bridge, which offers good views of renovated 19th-century mill buildings.

The paved rail-trail ends at White Pond Road at mile 3.2. For the next 1.9 miles the railroad corridor passes through the 2,230-acre Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge along a track road, a public access dirt road that's more suitable for mountain bikes. The next 2 miles of corridor, between Sudbury Road and the trailhead on MA 62/Wilkins Street in Hudson, is closed, as it crosses private land.

The northern trail of the older section of rail-trail is located at the MA 62 trailhead. The trail once again offers views of the Assabet River as it crosses a small bridge alongside MA 62/Main Street, where trail users may also see a restored 1921 Boston and Maine Railroad blue caboose before it enters Hudson's commercial district. Hudson was once known as Shoe Town for all the shoe-making factories along the river. The best view of the river comes about 0.6 mile past the caboose as the trail crosses a trestle 40 feet above the river.

Leaving Hudson, the trail again plunges into woods that offer a shady canopy as you begin a gentle climb to Marlborough. Passing beneath MA 85, the trail enters Marlborough and cross wetlands around Flagg Brook that serves as a wildlife corridor. Here, trail users can spot the Fort Meadow Reservoir from an overlook with benches. The path continues about another mile, reaching the trail high point at Hudson Street, before reaching its southern endpoint along Lincoln Street.

Trail History

Trail plans date to 1992, when local residents eyed the former railbed of the Marlborough Branch Railroad as a rail-trail



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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Assabet River Rail Trail

Massachusetts

States: Massachusetts

Counties: Middlesex

Length: 10.4 miles

Trail end points: 19 Maple St (Acton) to
Sudbury Rd. (Stow) to Wilkins St (Hudson) to
Highland St and Lincoln St (Marlborough)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline
Skating, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible, Cross
Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

The Assabet River Rail Trail runs between 19 Maple St (Acton) and Sudbury Rd. (Stow) and Wilkins St (Hudson) to Highland St and Lincoln St (Marlborough), with parking in Acton and Hudson.

Parking is also available at:

- 157 Washington St (Hudson)
- 56 Jefferson St (Marlborough)

See [TrailLink Map](#) for more options and detailed directions.

