



2025

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Ashuelot
Recreational
Rail Trail**
New Hampshire



Ashuelot Recreational Rail Trail

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Closure Notice: Due to flooding, the Ashuelot Recreational Rail Trail is closed from Pine Street to Sawyer's Crossing Road in Swanzey.



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The 21.4 mile Ashuelot Recreational Rail Trail passes such scenic and historical landmarks as covered bridges, abandoned mills, and postcard-perfect towns. Starting on asphalt in Keene, the rail trail can be marked by deep puddles and potholes as it follows the Ashuelot River south to Hinsdale in southern New Hampshire. Mountain bikes are recommended in warmer months, and in winter, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, and dogsledding are all permitted.

About the Route

Leaving from Keene at the northern end, the trail starts as an asphalt path that passes through the campus of Keene State College. It crosses a secluded trestle on the Ashuelot River and then takes a pedestrian bridge over busy NH 12/101. The packed gravel here becomes ballast, dirt, and sand a mile south of the bridge.

About 2.5 miles past the pedestrian bridge, the trail crosses the Sawyers Crossing Road, where the circa 1859 Cresson Covered Bridge sits about 500 feet to the left. The trail crosses the river in 0.3 miles near West Swanzey in an area considered moose territory. Passing on the east side of West Swanzey, a 0.3-mile detour right onto Railroad Street and then right onto Main Street which leads to the 1832 Thompson Covered Bridge.

Between West Swanzey and Winchester, the rail trail passes east of Pisgah State Park. At Holbrook Avenue, trail users can detour off the trail to the right for 0.7 miles to find the 1862 Slate Covered Bridge (from Holbrook Avenue, turn right onto Westport Village Road). The trail crosses the Ashuelot River on a trestle about halfway to Winchester, where trail users can find the old railroad depot on Elm Street put to use in a lumber yard.

About 2.2 miles past the old depot in Winchester, the trail arrives in the town of Ashuelot, where there's another restored railroad depot at the Gunn Mountain Road intersection. Next to the trail is the Ashuelot Covered Bridge, built in 1864 to bring wood across the Ashuelot River to fuel the burners of the railroad's steam engines. Considered one of New England's most sophisticated covered bridges, the span is 169 feet long and decorated with intricate latticework.

The slope drops over the next 3 miles to Hinsdale, where the route passes abandoned mills and rusting boxcars on a siding that marks another railroad depot—this one restored and converted into a residence. The trail sticks to a ridge above the town, which is festooned with a clock tower and church



Ashuelot Recreational Rail Trail

New Hampshire

States: New Hampshire

Counties: Cheshire

Length: 21.4 miles

Trail end points: Emerald St. (Keene) to
Northfield Rd. (Hinsdale)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Ballast, Cinder, Crushed
Stone, Dirt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Horseback

Riding, Mountain

Biking, Snowmobiling, Walking, Wheelchair

Parking & Trail Access

The Ashuelot Recreational Rail Trail runs between Emerald St. (Keene) and Northfield Rd. (Hinsdale), with parking available at both ends.

Parking is also available at:

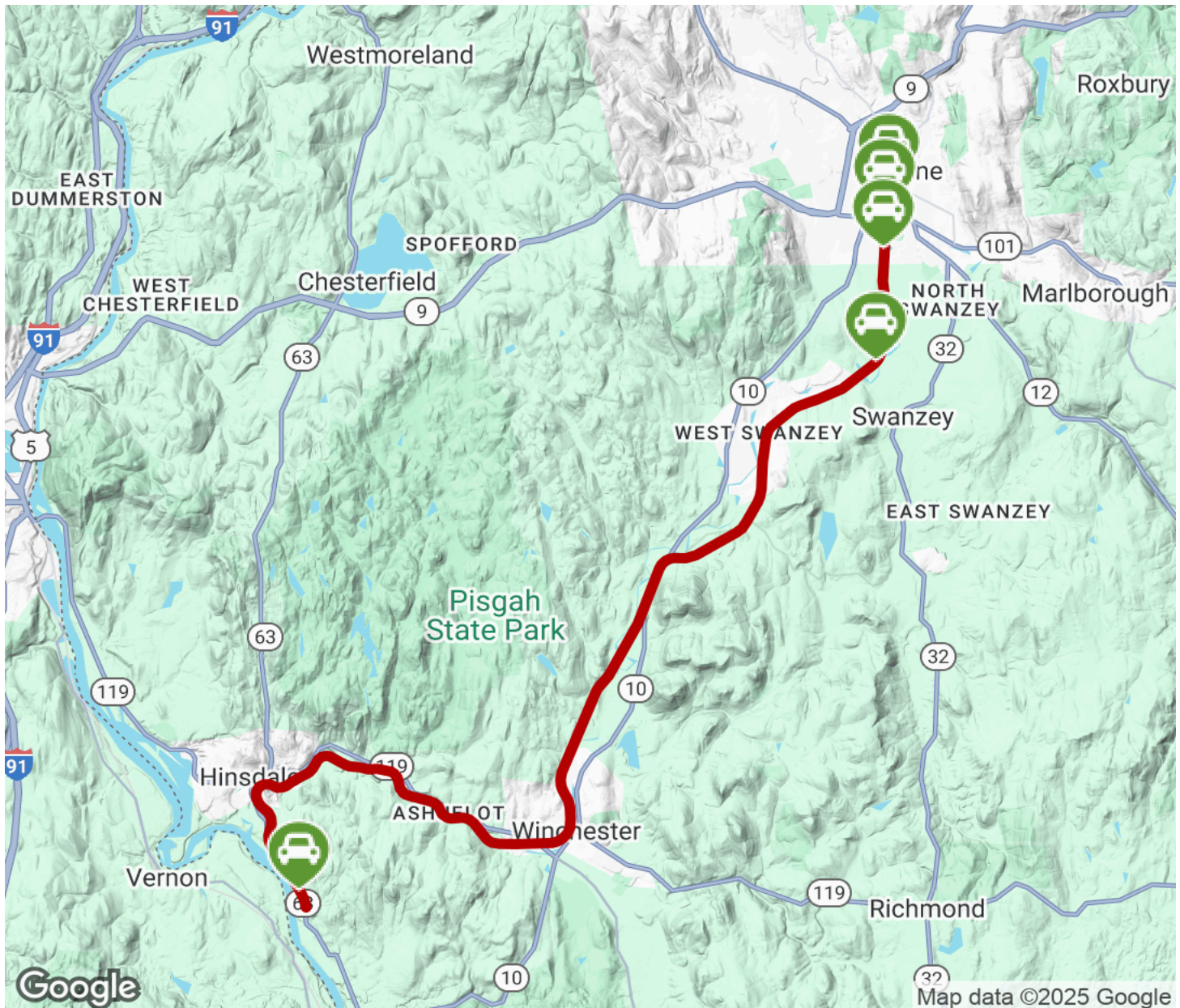
- 217 Sawyers Crossing Rd. (Swanzey)

Please see [TrailLink Map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



Ashuelot Recreational Rail Trail

New Hampshire



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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