



2025

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



Cheshire Rail Trail (Cheshire Branch Rail Trail)

New Hampshire



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The Cheshire Rail Trail connects Fitzwilliam, Troy, Keene, Westmoreland and Walpole. The 42.4-mile trail has a mostly gravel and dirt surface.

The rail-trail plays host to a variety of uses, including mountain biking and horseback riding, and in winter, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are permitted. Note that the entire route may also be used by snowmobilers, who help maintain the trail.

About the Route

At its northern end, the trail begins by the intersection of Main St/State Route 12 and Whitcomb Rd in Walpole.

Most of the trail between Walpole and Keene is surfaced with hard-packed gravel. Cyclists should use a mountain bike; however, a small stretch between SR 9 and the center of Keene is paved and can accommodate wheelchairs.

Those who persevere along this part of the trail will be rewarded with abundant scenery, including wooded landscapes and natural rock walls; however, trail use is sparse until Keene, and there is little to draw users off the trail. Note also the challenging terrain prior to Keene, including large rocks, flooding, and erosion; turns in the trail that can be challenging to spot; and several steep inclines. After crossing SR 9, a short paved segment goes into Keene, host to Keene State College and Antioch University.

The town is also the meeting point for three other trails, including the [Jonathan Daniels Trail](#), located one block north along Island Street; the [Appel Way Trail](#), which meets up with the Jonathan Daniels Trail and begins just east of Keene High School; and the [Ashuelot Recreational Rail Trail](#), which connects to the Cheshire Rail Trail at Emerald and Ralston Streets and stretches southwest to Hinsdale.

Heading south, the trail offers a much smoother and less-challenging experience for trail users than the northern portion as it continues just under 19 miles to Fitzwilliam. This portion of the trail feels more removed from town, and the mostly gravel surface is suitable for hybrid bikes.

Passing the Marlboro Street trailhead in Keene (there is a small parking area there), the trail heads up a short, steep dirt hill and crosses a quaint stone arch bridge before crossing the Ashuelot River. In about 9 miles, it reaches Troy, where there are a few restaurants, some railroad relics, and an old train depot that has been refurbished into a museum.

Continuing southeast, the trail passes through the town of Fitzwilliam, where an old railroad depot is undergoing renovation. The route then becomes relatively remote,



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States: New Hampshire

Counties: Cheshire

Length: 42.4miles

Trail end points: Main St/SR 12 (Walpole) to
NH/MA state line (Fitzwilliam)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt,Ballast,Cinder,Dirt,
Gravel,Sand

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Fishing,Horseback
Riding,Mountain

Biking,Snowmobiling,Walking,Cross Country

Parking & Trail Access

The Cheshire Rail Trail runs between Main St/SR 12 (Walpole) and the NH-MA state line (Fitzwilliam).

Parking is available at:

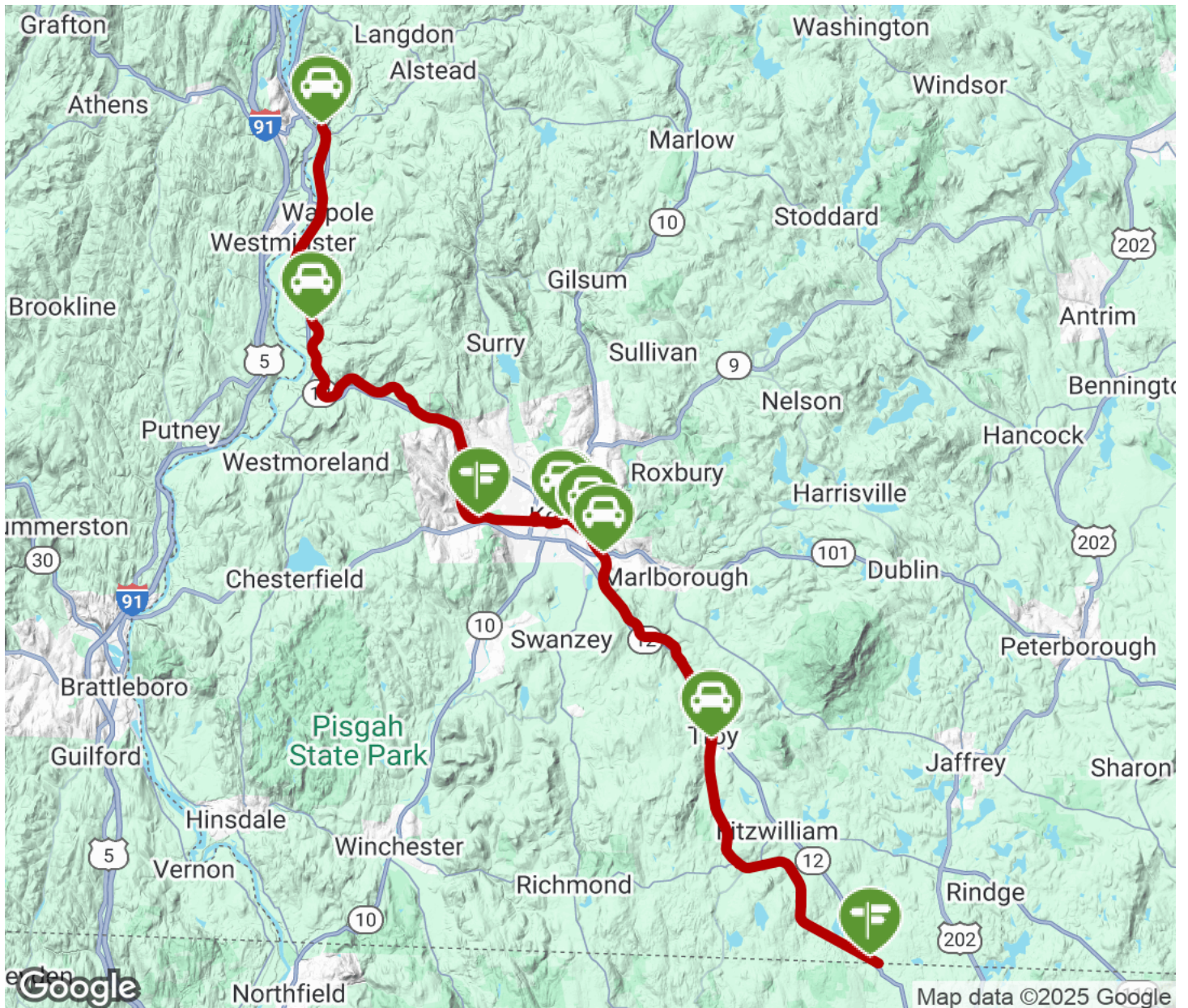
- Blackjack Crossing Rd (Walpole)
- Whitcombs Mill Rd (Keene)

These are not official addresses, please visit the [TrailLink map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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