



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Cross Vermont Trail (Montpelier & Wells River Trail)

Vermont



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Locals lovingly describe the [Cross Vermont Trail](#) as a patchwork quilt that will ultimately form a 90-mile trail from Lake Champlain in the west to the Connecticut River in the east. A component of the Cross Vermont Trail, the Montpelier & Wells River Rail Trail is named for a former railroad that followed the same route, but most residents know the pathway by the name Cross Vermont Trail.

Part of a larger system that includes segments in East Montpelier, Plainfield, and Wells River, among others, this 22.9-mile portion is the most scenic of the off-road paths, stretching past three state parks and through Groton State Forest.

Starting in Marshfield at US 2 and School Street (parking is available 0.1 mile south along School Street at the

Marshfield Town Office), you'll technically begin your journey on an uphill 1-mile on-road portion (School Street becomes Lower Depot Road) that heads southeast and then curves southwest to Railroad Bed East, just past the intersection of Bemis Farm Road (right) and Upper Depot Road (left). There is a parking area at the base of Railroad Bed East that marks the beginning of the off-road portion. Follow signs for the Cross Vermont Trail to find your way. After passing Bemis Farm Road and Upper Depot Road, immediately look for Railroad Bed East, a short road that veers right (Bailey Pond Road will continue to stretch southeast). After veering right, the route takes you almost immediately to the parking lot and onto the off-road portion of trail.

Heading southeast, the trail follows the Wells River, which flows east from the river's source in Groton State Forest, where three state parks provide numerous opportunities to camp and fish alongside impeccable views of the forest and mountains. In 4.4 miles, you'll reach Kettle Pond State Park, followed by Stillwater State Park by Lake Groton in another 2.4 miles, and then Ricker Pond State Park in 2.8 more miles; parking and trail access are available in each location, close to or adjacent to the trail.

As you journey out of Marshfield toward Groton State Forest, the trail is best described as rustic; it is well suited for hikes, mountain bikes, and snowmobiles but not road or hybrid bikes. Prepare for some steep climbs and majestic views as you pass lakes and ponds, with mountains as your backdrop. You'll even find a few picnic spots nestled among the trees. The trip is nothing short of gorgeous as you weave in and out of tunnels of trees, the canopy offering a visual cue for where the railroad once carved its path.

Along the way, you'll see relics from Vermont's logging history. Note specifically the remnants of Ricker Mills dam at the outlet of Ricker Pond along the southern edge of Groton State Forest. From the late 1700s through the 1960s, many mills could be seen along Lake Groton.



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Vermont

States: Vermont

Counties: Caledonia, Orange, Washington

Length: 22.9 miles

Trail end points: US 2 at School St. (Marshfield)
to US 302/Scott Hwy. between Wallace Hill
Road and Butson Trail (Wells River)

Trail surfaces: Ballast, Dirt, Gravel, Sand

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Fishing, Horseback

Riding, Mountain

Biking, Snowmobiling, Walking, Cross Country

Parking & Trail Access

Parking is available at numerous locations along the trail. Please view the map to see all the options and for detailed directions.

To reach the northern endpoint and parking at the Marshfield Town Office from I-91, take Exit 21 to merge onto US 2 W (toward SR 15). Head west on US 2 for 19 miles, and turn left onto School St. Go 0.1 mile, and turn right into the parking lot at Marshfield Town Office. The on-road portion of trail begins approximately 0.1 mile north at US 2, and the off-road trail begins about 0.9 mile south along the trail at Railroad Bed E.

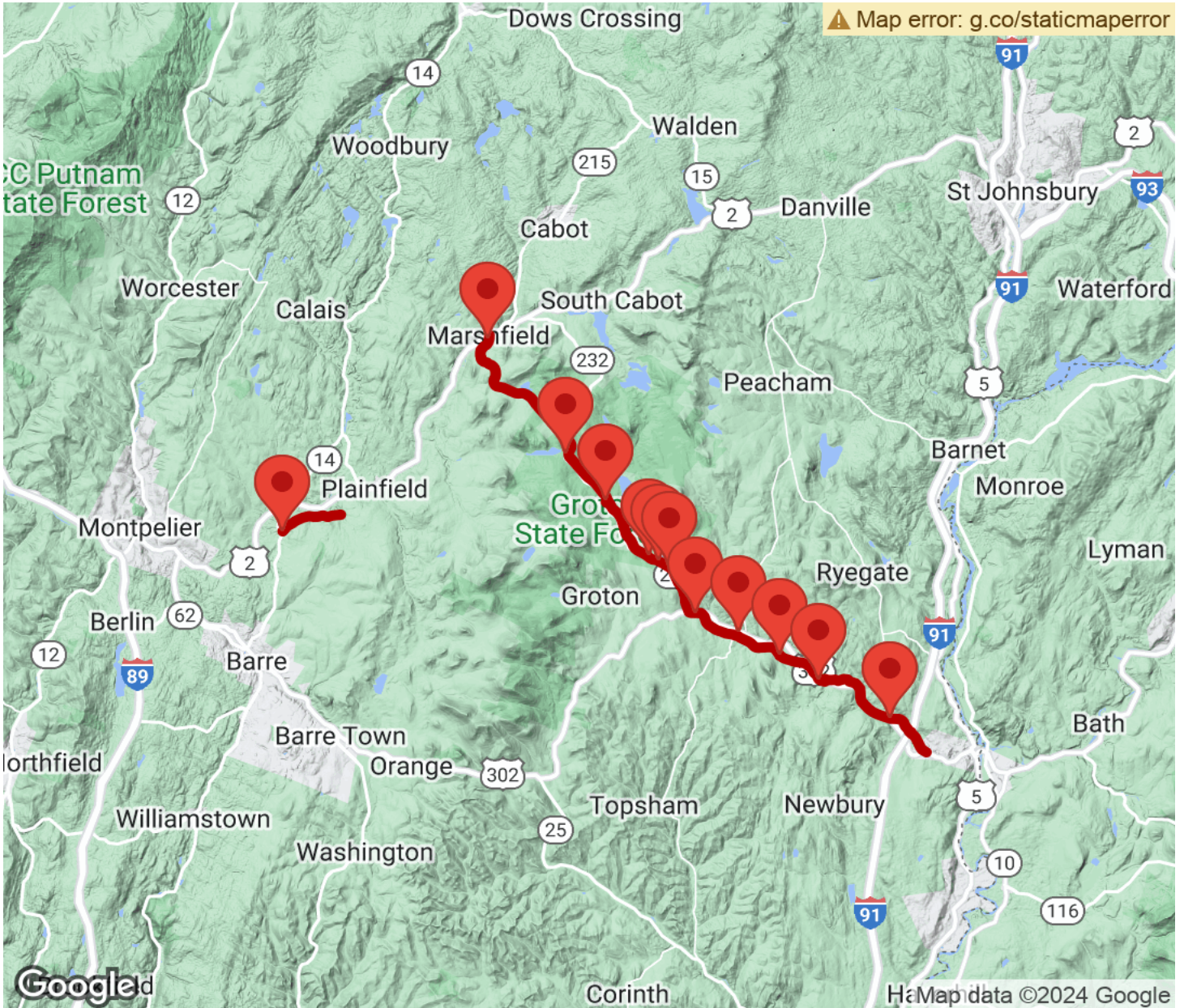
At the southern edge of Groton State Park, parking is available at the Ricker Mills trailhead located at 58 State Forest Road in Groton. From I-91, take Exit 17 toward US 302 W/Scott Hwy. Head west on US 302/Scott Hwy. (from I-91 N, you'll turn left; from I-91 S, you'll turn right), and go 8.7 miles. Turn right onto SR 232, and go 1.6 miles. Turn right into the parking lot adjacent to the south end of Ricker Pond.

To reach parking at Mills Memorial Field in Groton from I-91, take Exit 17 toward US 302 W/Scott Hwy. Head west on US 302/Scott Hwy. (from I-91 N, you'll turn left; from I-91 S, you'll turn right), and go 3.7 miles. Turn left into the Mills Memorial Field parking lot. The southern endpoint for the off-road section of trail is just 0.2 mile north along US 302/Scott Hwy., to your left at Brown Dr.



Cross Vermont Trail (Montpelier & Wells River Trail)

Vermont



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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