



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Black River  
Trail**  
*New York*



## Black River Trail

New York

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This paved scenic trail, converted from the New York Central Railroad, follows a small portion of the Black River's 114-plus miles. Originating in the Adirondack foothills, the Black River flows west to empty into Lake Ontario, near the Thousand Islands region between northern New York State and southeastern Ontario.

If you are starting your trip at Watertown and heading east to the village of Black River, consider exploring the downtown area before you set out. Watertown reached its peak during the Gilded Age, when it was rumored to have a higher percentage of millionaires than any other city in the United States thanks to its status as a manufacturing center. Nature lovers can explore the urban Thompson Park, designed by Frederick L. Olmsted and donated to the city by industrialist John C. Thompson in 1889. The park

includes walking trails and houses the New York State Zoo.

Near the heart of downtown Watertown, the western endpoint of the Black River Trail can be found behind an apartment complex at the dead end of Walker Avenue. The western trailhead includes a small parking lot with an information panel and a map.

The Black River Trail is smooth, flat, and well maintained, making it ideal for a relaxing stroll or bike ride following the river east. It has numerous scenic views and overlooks, as well as several drop-in points for canoe and kayak portage or fishing. In winter, the path is also suitable for snowshoeing.

After 4.5 miles, your journey ends at the eastern endpoint in the village of Black River. The small community began in the early 1800s with the erection of a mill on the south side of the river. Today, it includes two small river islands and a park that overlooks the town and river. Just before NY 3/East Rutland Street meets the river, the trail ends at the Black River Trailhead, where parking can be found.

As you approach Black River, you'll be greeted by a picturesque view of the Brookfield Power dam, nearby rapids, and the Poors Island Recreation Area. Poors Island is located 1 mile northeast of the eastern trailhead, heading toward the village of Black River, and boasts the best views of the river and dam. To top it off, an area complete with grill, picnic tables, and additional parking makes Poors Island the perfect spot for a picnic lunch.



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**States:** New York

**Counties:** Jefferson

Length: 4.5miles

**Trail end points:** Dead end of Walker Ave., just east of NY 3/Eastern Blvd. (Watertown) to State Route 3/Rutland St. (Village of Black River)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike,Inline

Skating,Fishing,Wheelchair

Accessible,Walking,Cross Country Skiing

## Parking & Trail Access

Parking is available at either end of the trail. An additional trailhead with parking is located 0.5 mile east of the western endpoint, where the trail intersects Ridge Road.

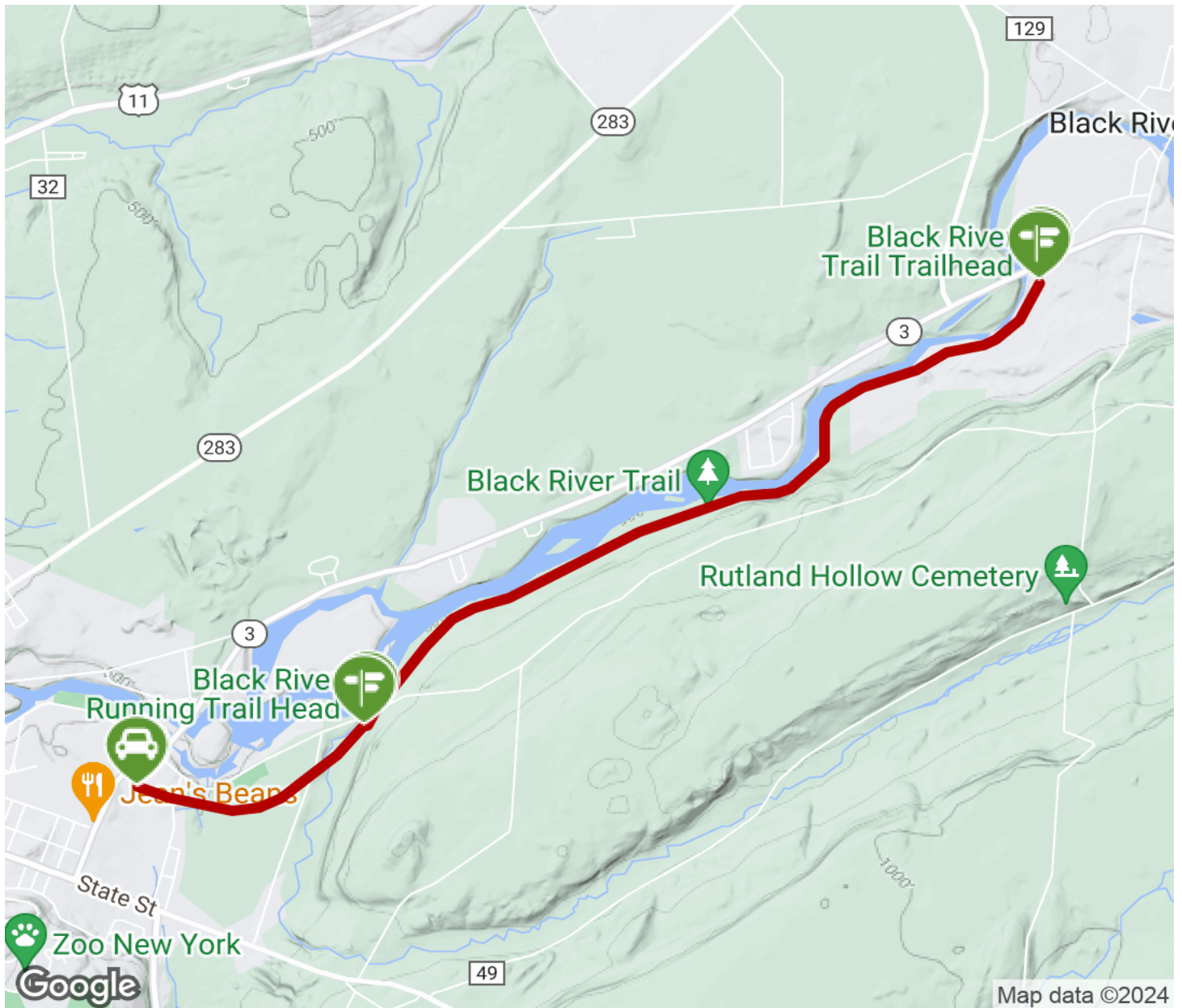
To access the western endpoint in Watertown from I-81, take Exit 45 toward Arsenal St./Watertown/NY 3. If heading northbound, turn right onto Arsenal St.; if southbound, turn left onto NY 3 E/Arsenal St. In 1.8 miles, continue onto Public Square, which turns into NY 12/State St. in 0.2 mile. In 1.4 miles, turn left onto NY 3 E/Eastern Blvd., heading toward the river. In 0.2 mile, turn right onto Ohio St., then take an immediate left onto Walker Ave. Follow Walker Ave. through the apartment complex until it dead-ends at the parking lot for the trail.

To access the eastern endpoint from I-81, follow the above directions to the intersection of NY 12/State St. and NY 3 E/Eastern Blvd. Turn left and follow NY 3 E/Eastern Blvd. 4.8 miles (during which Eastern Blvd. becomes Rutland St. and Rutland St. crosses the Black River into the village of Black River). Parking at the eastern trailhead is on the right immediately after crossing the bridge.



# Black River Trail

New York



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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