



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



Northern Rail Trail

New Hampshire



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The Northern Rail Trail is New Hampshire's longest rail-trail conversion, spanning 59 meticulously maintained miles, weaving along corn and hay fields, lakes, wetlands, and numerous historic sites, from Boscawen, NH (less than a two-hour drive from Boston, MA, and Portland, ME), and stretching northwest to Lebanon, NH, on the edge of the Vermont border. Recognized as one of five top trails to have benefited from America's Recreational Trails Program, the Northern Rail Trail provides an easily accessed venue for permitted outdoor activities all four seasons of the year, including walking, running, biking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, and dogsledding. Clearly marked parking areas and access points, as well as numerous well-appointed information kiosks, make exploring the trail easy and fun, whether in long stretches or shorter

sections.

About the Route

When starting from Lebanon, NH (at the trail's northern end), users travel slightly uphill, crossing nine short bridges over the Mascoma River in the first four miles and skirting the northern shore of the 1,100-acre Mascoma Lake. The trail passes through the lakeside community of Enfield and then Canaan before reaching the trail's highest elevation in Orange. (From there the scenic journey is slightly downhill all the way to the Hannah Duston Memorial in Boscawen.) From Grafton Villages, the trail heads towards Danbury (home of the iconic Danbury Country Store, with excellent sandwiches and house-made soda), and on to Andover's Potter Place Railroad Station, restored to look as it did in 1874. (The depot's museum, caboose, and nearby freight house are operated by the Andover Historical Society and open weekends through the summer.)

Trail users cross the Blackwater River at the 1882 Keniston Covered Bridge, and in another mile, find signs that direct them to the restaurants on Andover's main street. East of Andover the trail is more heavily used, particularly near the Highland and Webster Lake swimming areas. Continuing south, trail users may also come across the stone remains of a turntable that once assisted in changing the direction of locomotives. (Interpretive signs appear all along the trail to inform trail users of the Northern Rail Trail's incredible railroad history, as well as that of its neighboring towns.) For the remaining 11 miles south, the trail closely follows US 3 and the Merrimack River to Hannah Duston Memorial Park in the southern reaches of Boscawen.

Connections

At the trail's northwestern end (near Lebanon), the Northern Rail Trail becomes the [Mascoma River Greenway](#).



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

TrailLink.com



Northern Rail Trail

New Hampshire

States: New Hampshire

Counties: Grafton, Merrimack

Length: 59 miles

Trail end points: Spencer St. near Parkhurst St. (Lebanon) to Commercial St. (Boscawen)

Trail surfaces: Cinder, Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Horseback

Riding, Mountain

Biking, Snowmobiling, Walking, Wheelchair

Accessible, Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

The Northern Rail Trail runs between Spencer St. near Parkhurst St. (Lebanon) and Commercial St. (Boscawen), with parking available at both ends.

Additional parking can be found at:

- 194 Main St. (Enfield)
- 15 High St. (Danbury)

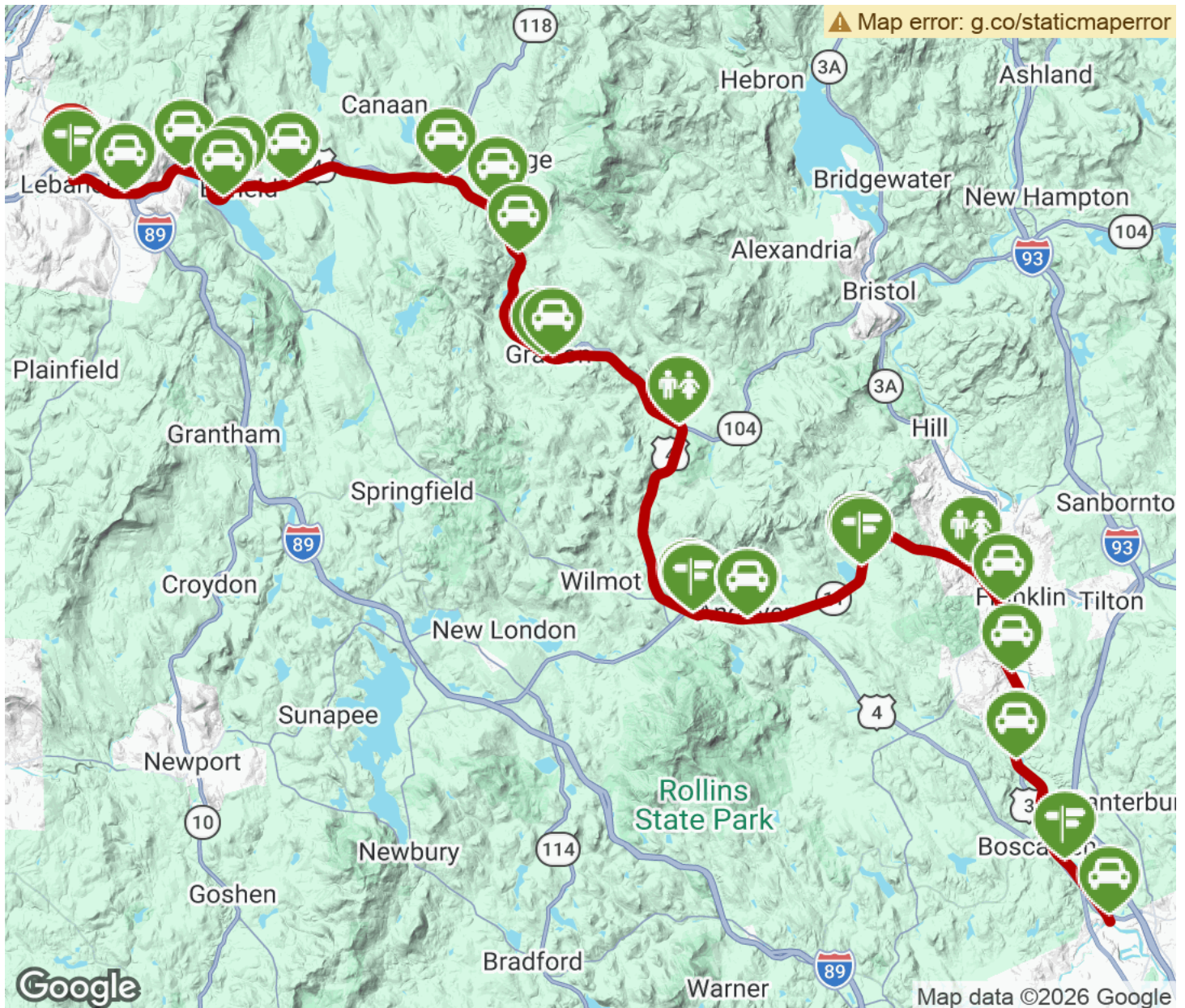
There are numerous parking options along this route, please see [TrailLink Map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.

Public transit provides access to the trail in several communities along the trail including Concord Area Transit (CAT) and Advance Transit.



Northern Rail Trail

New Hampshire



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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