



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



Head's Pond Trail

New Hampshire



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The Head's Pond Trail (formerly known as Hooksett Rail Trail) is a 1.9-mile rail-trail that visits two scenic ponds, including the eponymous Head's Pond, in a woodsy area of Hooksett. The trail's smooth stone dust surface is well suited to bikes, but the short length and out-and-back configuration of the path isn't. As a result, you'll mostly find local joggers and walkers (often with a four-legged friend) using the trail. Fishermen also use the trail to catch largemouth bass or chain pickerel in the ponds. History and outdoors buffs will enjoy the interpretive signs that inform about Hooksett and the local flora and fauna.

A trailhead with ample parking on US 3 is the best place to begin. A steep and rocky access path leads downhill from the parking lot, but once you're on the trail, it's flat over

its entire length. The trail follows a former Portsmouth & Concord Railroad alignment that linked the two cities briefly in the 1850s before operations ceased on this section and the track was removed in 1861.

From the trailhead, the Head's Pond Trail goes northwest under US 3 and ends in 0.25 mile on Pleasant Street. Most visitors continue southeast on the trail to the ponds. Pines, maples, and birches envelop the trail and provide shade in summer months. In about 0.5 mile, you can relax on a bench and enjoy a view of Head's Pond.

A nearby path connects to an adjacent neighborhood. The remainder of the trail continues as before, although the canopy opens up a bit to allow more sun as you approach the southern endpoint.

The trail ends abruptly at a gated dirt road that leads to a sand and gravel pit. You'll want to stop here anyway, as you have reached the second pond, where yet another bench welcomes you to rest and enjoy the view. (A word of caution, though: heavy rains can overflow the pond and submerge the bench legs, leading to wet feet for those who insist on sitting regardless.) Head back the way you came for a double dose of scenery.

Although there aren't any services along the trail, you can find refreshments in historic Hooksett on the Merrimack River. One option is the café at Robie's Country Store, visited every four years by candidates vying for New Hampshire's presidential primary. The store, located at 9 Riverside Street, is a historic landmark that dates to 1822.



Head's Pond Trail

New Hampshire

States: New Hampshire

Counties: Merrimack

Length: 1.75miles

Trail end points: Heads Pond to Pleasant St.
(Hooksett)

Trail surfaces: Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Fishing, Mountain
Biking, Walking, Cross Country Skiing

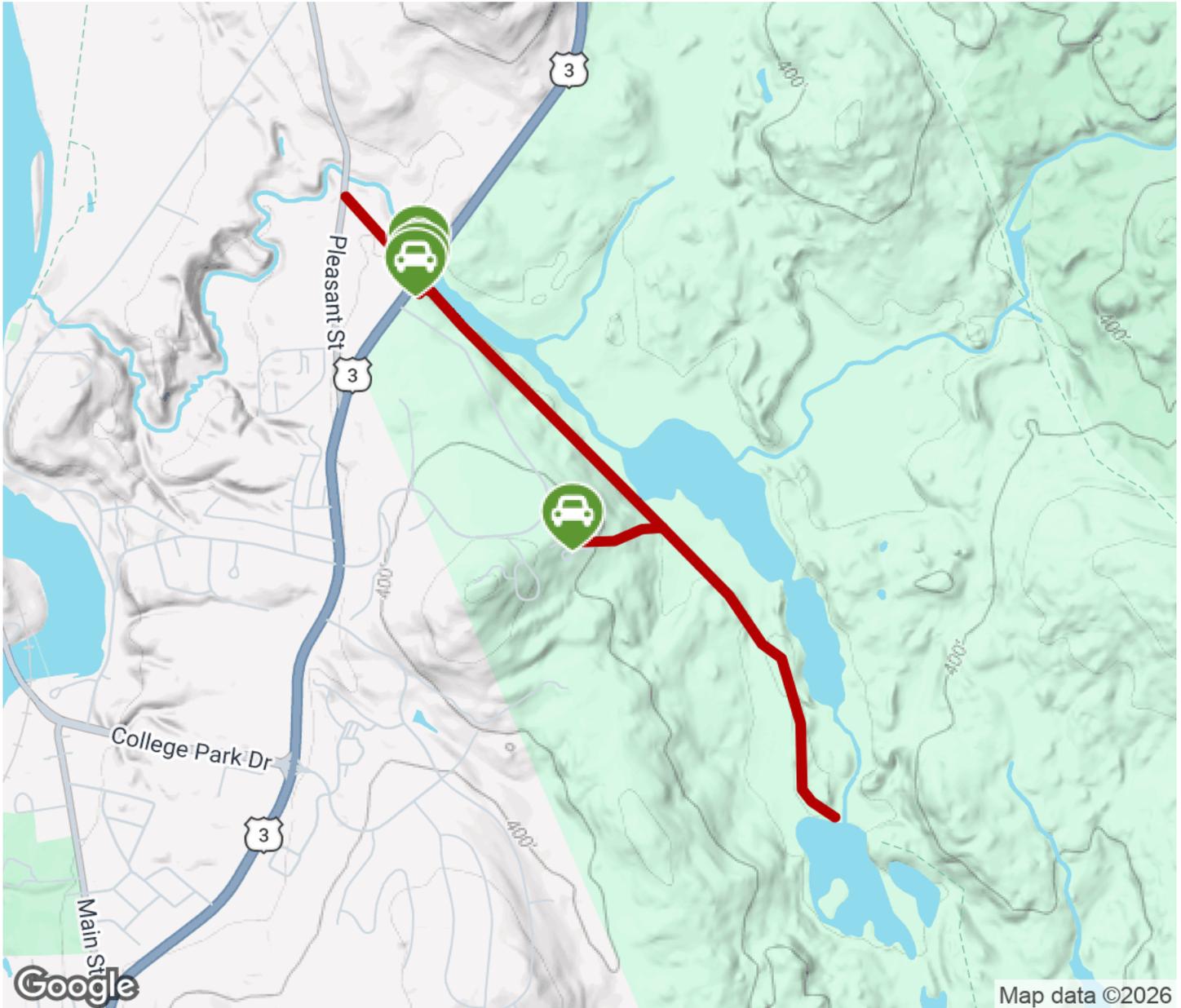
Parking & Trail Access

To reach the trailhead and parking in Hooksett from I-93, take Exit 11. From the toll plaza, turn left onto Hackett Hill Road, go 0.2 mile, and turn left onto W. River Road/SR 3A. Go 0.6 mile, and turn right onto Main St. In 0.4 mile stay straight onto College Park Dr. Go 0.5 mile, and turn left onto US 3/SR 28/ Hooksett Road. Go 1.1 miles, and look for parking on the right.



Head's Pond Trail

New Hampshire



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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