



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Eastern Trail

Maine



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The Eastern Trail connects the historic towns along Maine's southern coast from the woods near Kennebunk to South Portland's harbor lighthouse; 24 miles of the route follows off-road rail-trail and greenway interrupted by two major on-road gaps in Saco/Biddeford and Scarborough. Plans are underway to close at least one of these gaps and extend the trail another 19 miles southwest to Kittery. The East Coast Greenway incorporates the Eastern Trail on its 3,000-mile-long trail project between Maine and Key West, Florida.

A significant distance uses the old Eastern Railroad route, chartered in the 1830s to run passenger and freight trains between Boston and Portland. Its rival, the Boston & Maine Railroad, leased the Eastern in 1884 and then bought it outright in 1900. Guilford Transportation, which

became Pan Am Railways, purchased the Boston & Maine in the 1980s, and later discontinued use on many underperforming routes.

In the southwest, the trail starts just north of the town center of Kennebunk, where quaint, old New England architecture draws tourists in the summer. The Kennebunk Plains blueberry barrens, where you can pick the berries after August 1, and the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge are nearby. The trail crosses small roads and streams for 6.2 miles to the first gap in Biddeford. Follow directional signs for 4.5 miles through Biddeford on streets and sidewalks and across the Saco River at Springs Island to regain the trail on Clark Street at Thornton Academy in Saco.

After about 2 miles, you'll cross US 1 on an overpass about 0.5 mile south of Funtown Splashtown USA, a Saco tourism destination. About 4 miles later, you'll arrive at Scarborough Marsh, a breathtaking expanse of saltwater wetlands that is Maine's largest at 3,100 acres. Keep an eye out for marine birds and enjoy the ride along nearly 2 miles of beautiful coastal trail. The trail ends after the marsh, and a 4-mile on-road section begins. It's well marked, but traffic is heavy and fast, so be cautious riding on the shoulder. The Eastern Trail Alliance has been raising funds to close this gap to the Wainwright Recreation Complex, where the trail starts again.

The final 5.6-mile leg soon becomes urbanized, traveling along a stretch known as the [South Portland Greenbelt Walkway](#). Meandering through South Portland, the Greenbelt Walkway connects the neighborhoods south of the Fore River. The trail ends at Bug Light Park, named for the smallish lighthouse that has stood here since 1875. Enjoy the views of tankers and sailboats in the harbor and the Portland skyline.



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States: Maine

Counties: Cumberland, York

Length: 24 miles

Trail end points: Warrens Way & SR 35
(Kennebunk) to W Cole Rd near SR 111
(Biddeford) to Gary L. Maietta Way to Bug
Light Park at Madison St (South Portland)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline
Skating, Fishing, Wheelchair

Parking & Trail Access

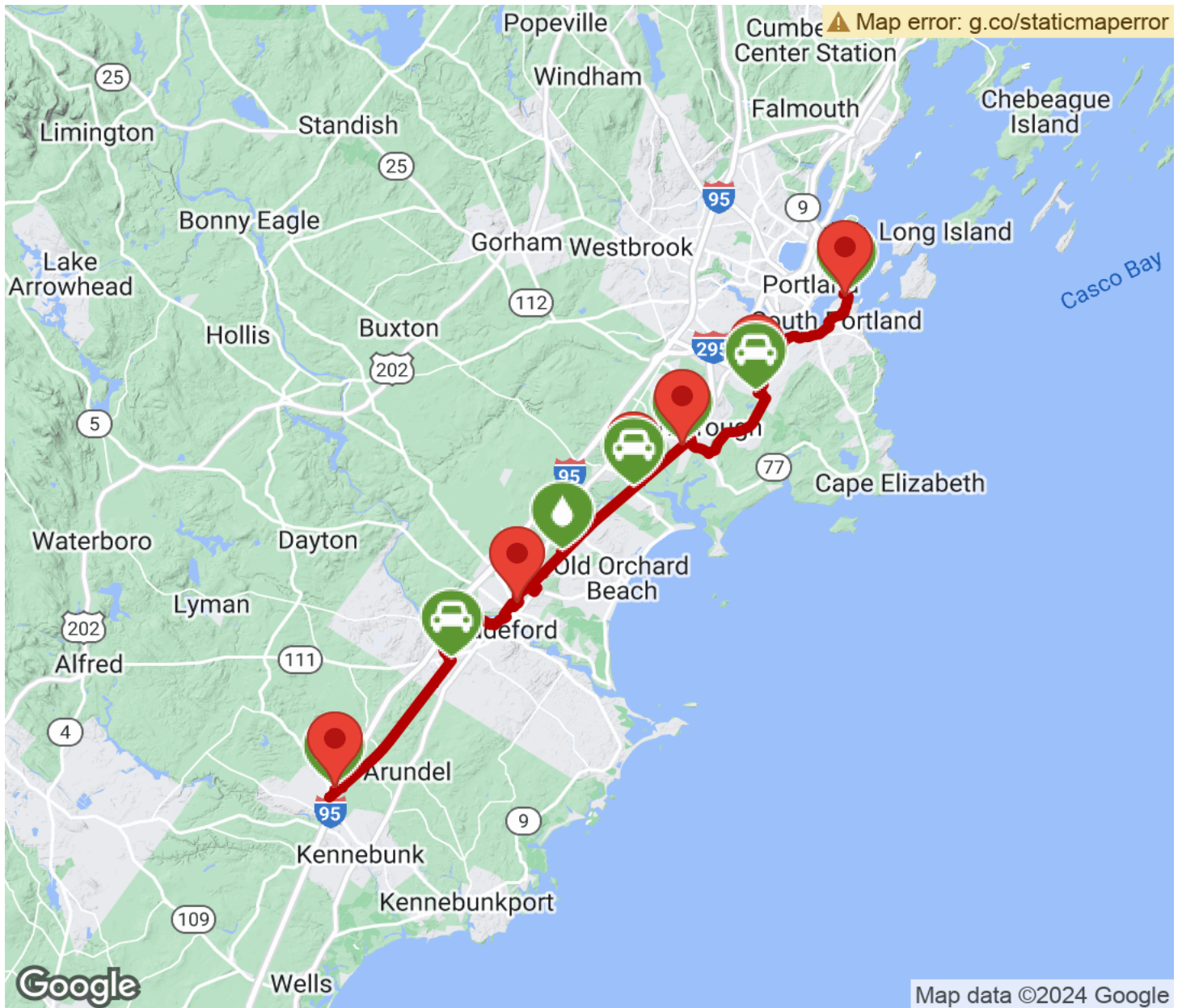
The public transit systems of the cities and towns along the route provides access to the trail. Check out the [TrailLink map](#) to see which transit systems are near you.

For those driving, parking is available at a number of locations along the trail. View the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.



Eastern Trail

Maine



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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