



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Aroostook Valley Trail

Maine



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The Aroostook Valley Trail gets as much use from ATV riders and snowmobilers as it does from mountain bikers as it winds through the forests and potato farms of northeastern Maine. It's so far north that the United States and United Kingdom both laid claims to the area in the late 1830s in a dispute dubbed the Pork and Beans War, which ended without combat.

The rail-trail takes its name from the Aroostook Valley Railroad. (Local tribes translate Aroostook to "beautiful river.") A lumber baron built the railroad in 1910 to haul logs to his Presque Isle sawmill and used the river to generate electricity to power the railroad to Washburn. Over the years, it expanded to Caribou and New Sweden and provided full freight and passenger service, though it hauled more freshly picked potatoes than anything else.

Switching to diesel in the 1940s, the line struggled until it ended operations in 1996.

Today the 28.8-mile trail connects with the [Bangor & Aroostook Trail](#) in Washburn and is part of the Interconnected Trail System, which comprises thousands of miles of ATV and snowmobile track in the state. Although it passes through four towns with food and lodging, most of the trail is remote, and travelers need to pack for backcountry emergencies. Note that in addition to snowmobiling and snowshoeing, dogsledding is permitted.

Starting at a riverside park on US 1 in Presque Isle, the largest town along the route, the trail follows the south bank of the Aroostook River. (A private ATV and snowmobile route heads east for 23 miles toward the Canadian border along the Canadian Pacific Railroad right-of-way.) You'll head through second-growth forests of spruce, fir, beech, poplar, and birch and, in the clearings, see the vast potato farms for which Aroostook County is known. The trail crosses the river in 5 miles, then rolls along the north riverbank for nearly 5 miles to its junction with the Bangor & Aroostook Trail in Washburn.

Leaving the banks of the Aroostook River and following the trail through town for a mile, you'll take the right fork to remain on the Aroostook Valley Trail heading north. After passing through the Woodland Bog Preserve and arriving in Carson at 3.8 miles, the trail splits: the right branch goes east toward Caribou, and the left continues north to New Sweden.

Caribou is 6.7 miles down the right branch, and, like other towns along the route, many businesses there cater to trail users. You'll find restaurants, bakeries, coffee shops, and even bed-and-breakfasts less than 0.5 mile east from the trailhead on Washburn Street. A branch of the Bangor & Aroostook Trail also ends in town.

Heading north from the trail junction in Carson, a separate 7-



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States: Maine

Counties: Aroostook

Length: 28.8 miles

Trail end points: Main St. btwn Reach Rd & Parsons Rd Connector (Presque Isle) to Washburn St. to Westmanland Rd just east of Jepson Rd (New Sweden)

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone, Dirt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: ATV, Horseback Riding, Mountain

Parking & Trail Access

To reach the trailhead in Presque Isle from I-95, take Exit 302 north toward Presque Isle on US 1/North St. Go 26.4 miles north on US 1, and turn left to remain on US 1 in Mars Hill. Go another 15.8 miles, and turn right into the Star City ATV Club parking lot on the right, just before you cross the Aroostook River.

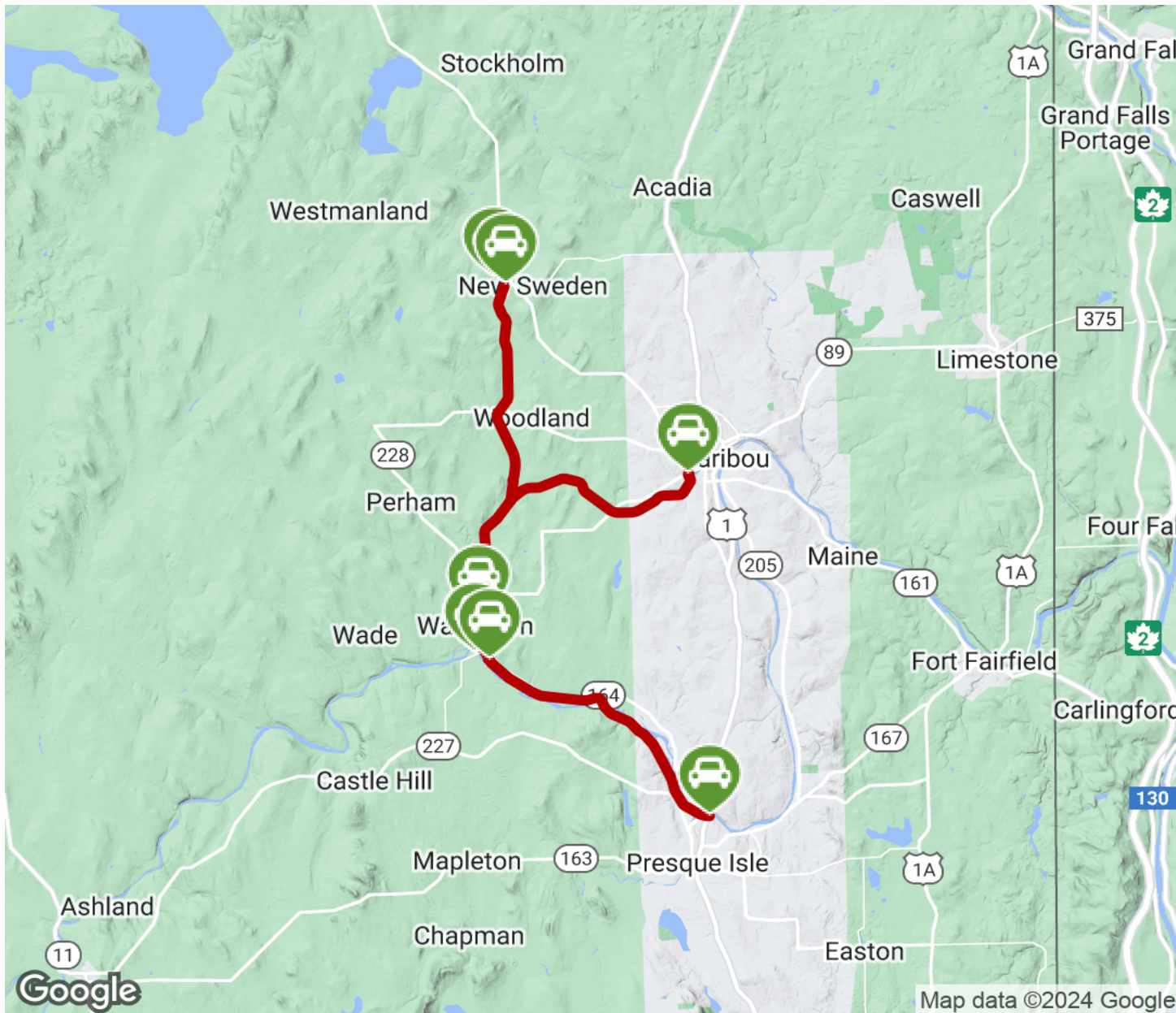
To reach the trailhead in Caribou from I-95, take Exit 302 north toward Presque Isle on US 1/North St. Go 26.4 miles north on US 1, and turn left to remain on US 1 in Mars Hill. Go another 26.8 miles, and turn left onto Lyndon St./Main St. in Caribou. Go 0.5 mile, and turn left onto Herschel St. Go 0.2 mile, turn left onto Prospect St., and then take your first right onto Sweden St. Go almost 0.1 mile, turn left onto Summer St. and then turn right onto ME 164/Washburn St. Go 0.1 mile, bear left to stay on ME 164/Washburn St., go 0.1 mile farther, and look for trailhead parking on the left. (This lot is not recommended for ATVs and snowmobiles. Instead, continue 2.6 miles past this parking lot to the trail crossing on ME 164/Washburn Road, where you'll see parking on the right.)

A parking lot dedicated to snowmobiles and ATVs is located at the northern endpoint in New Sweden and is accessible by crossing Westmanland Road (look for the path immediately to your right, which heads northeast a few hundred feet). However, there is no dedicated parking lot for automobiles during the week. On weekends, parking is permitted at the New Sweden Consolidated School parking lot, which can be accessed by heading west from the trailhead on Westmanland Road about 0.3 mile, and turning right into the parking lot. To reach the endpoint from I-95, take Exit 302 toward Presque Isle on US 1/North St. Go 26.4 miles north on US 1, and turn left to remain on US 1 in Mars Hill. Go another 27.7 miles, and turn left again in Caribou to remain on US 1. In 0.8 mile turn left onto US 1. In 7.2 miles turn left onto Emond Road/Townline Road. Go 1.7 miles, and Emond Road becomes Station Road. Go another 3.8 miles. The trailhead is 0.1 mile past the New Sweden Covenant Church.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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