



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Sussex Branch Trail

New Jersey



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The corridor now home to the Sussex Branch Trail was originally the narrow-gauge, mule-drawn Sussex Mine Railroad, which opened in 1851 to haul iron ore from mines in Andover to the Morris Canal. After several upgrades and expansions, the line eventually merged with the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad. That railroad's merger with the Erie Railroad to form the Erie Lackawanna Railroad in 1960 marked the beginning of the end of the Sussex Branch, and the final train ran on the line in 1966. Fortunately, the State of New Jersey subsequently purchased the right-of-way for trail use and now administers the Sussex Branch Trail as part of Kittatinny Valley State Park.

Begin your trip in Branchville, where the trail starts just south of downtown due to a couple of missing railroad

bridges. The rustic trail moves southeast, paralleling Dry Brook before emerging into classic Garden State farmland. This stretch is sometimes overgrown with weeds—and bears have been spotted in the adjacent woods—so trail users should exercise caution. Just before Augusta Hill Road, the trail crosses the [Great Valley Trail](#), an unpaved 3.5-mile route that heads southwest.

Bridges provide dry passage as you approach Lafayette, which offers several food, drink, and antiques shopping options not far from the trail. South of Lafayette, the path travels through dense and quiet woodlands, so you may be surprised when you reach an intersection with the [Paulinskill Valley Trail](#) and a subsequent road crossing. The peaceful wooded route soon resumes, though, traveling to the outskirts of Newton. The town of Newton completed an extension of the trail in the fall of 2021, allowing trail users to continue along the corridor into the charming town. This helps to replace a previous on-road detour along Hicks Avenue that was not very hospitable to cyclists and pedestrians - while there is still a gap in the trail within Newton, local officials are working on extending the trail to fill in the gap. In the interim, trail users can utilize Diller Avenue and Sparta Avenue to head south for about two-thirds of a mile, where a grassy section of the trail picks up again at Hicks Avenue.

Back on the former rail corridor, you'll again be enveloped by trees, and a cut through bedrock is spectacular. Soon you'll reach access to campgrounds and Lake Aeroflex in Kittatinny Valley State Park.

As you enter Andover, another short on-road detour on low-stress Railroad Avenue is required. Where the trail resumes adjacent to Main Street, low-hanging branches, tree roots, and a narrowed width may prove to be a challenge. At Whitehall Hill Road, trail users may find that vegetation has completely consumed the trail, so another short on-road detour may be desired. (Note that while Whitehall Hill Road is not a busy road, it is hilly.)



Sussex Branch Trail

New Jersey

States: New Jersey

Counties: Sussex

Length: 18miles

Trail end points: 27 Mill Ln (Branchville) to
Waterloo Rd & Continental Dr (Byram
Township)

Trail surfaces: Cinder,Dirt,Grass

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike,Horseback
Riding,Walking,Cross Country Skiing

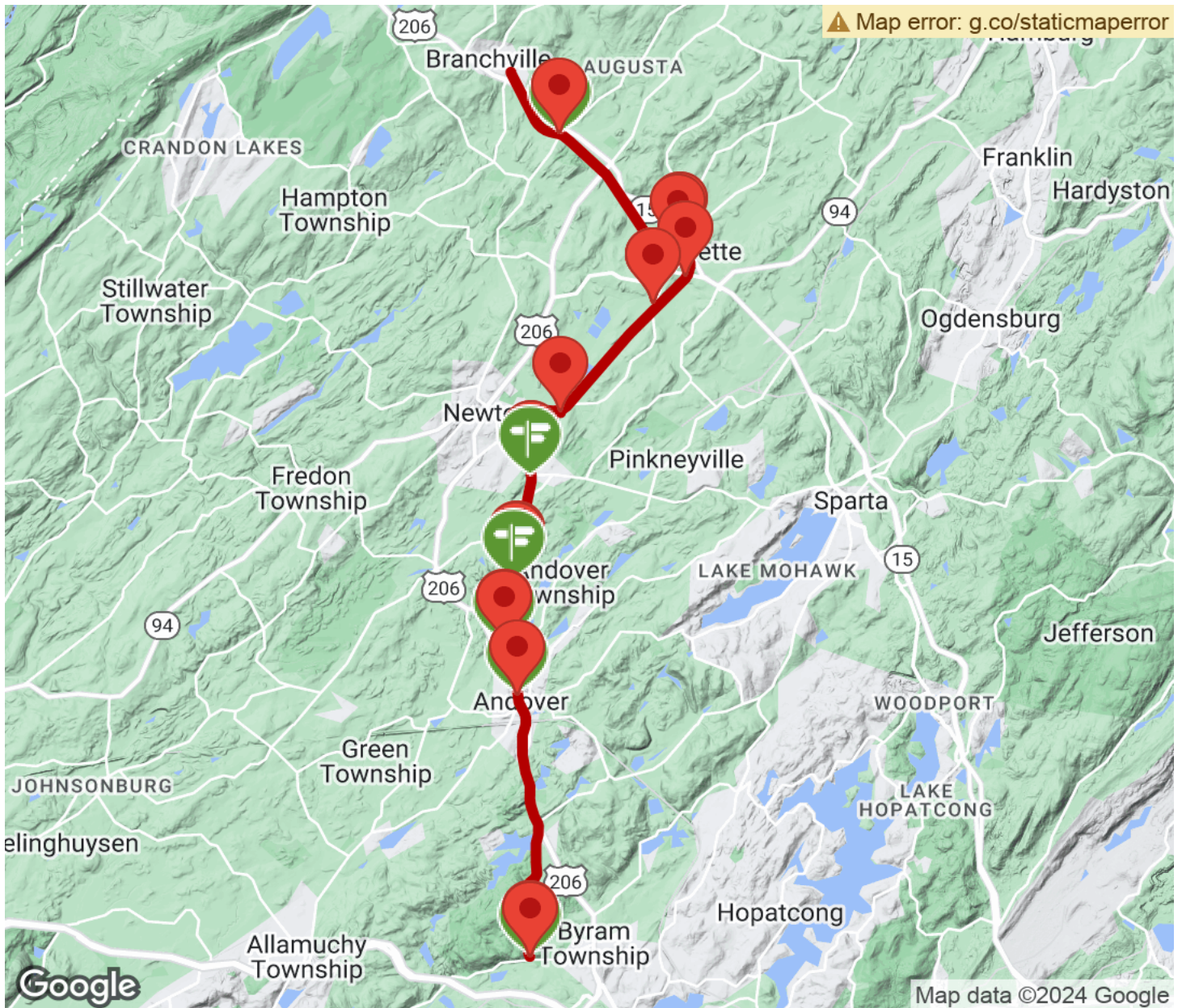
Parking & Trail Access

Access the northern end of the trail at 27 Mill Lane in Branchville, but the trailhead parking is slightly further down the trail (206 US-206, Branchville). The southern trailhead is located by the intersection of Waterloo Road & Continental Drive in Byram Township. Additional parking is available at a number of locations along the trail. Visit the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.



Sussex Branch Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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