



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Bangor and  
Aroostook  
Trail**  
*Maine*



## Bangor and Aroostook Trail

Maine

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If you're looking for moose, the Bangor & Aroostook Trail (or BAT) is just the place. Moose watchers take to the 62.3-mile rail-trail on ATVs, snowmobiles, and mountain bikes to spot these large creatures that appear ungainly but can be unpredictably dangerous. The crushed-rock trail is part of the state's Interconnected Trail System that links more than a thousand miles of ATV and snowmobile trails around the state. (Snowshoeing and dogsledding are also permitted.)

The trail follows the former corridor of the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad (BAR) through northern Maine's bogs and forests. Founded in 1891 to combine two railroads, the rail line extended to Caribou in 1895 and Van Buren in 1899. The railroad stayed profitable by hauling the state's two big exports: potatoes and wood products. When

farmers stopped shipping spuds by rail in the 1970s, the company discontinued using some Aroostook County branch lines and eventually declared bankruptcy in 2002.

The trail runs south from Van Buren toward Stockholm, where it splits into branches to Caribou and Mapleton. It briefly joins the [Aroostook Valley Trail](#) in Washburn. Although the trail visits towns where lodging and restaurants are available, most of the trail is remote. Travelers should carry emergency gear along with extra food and water. Another leg of the old BAR from Phair to Houlton has been converted into the 38.8-mile [Southern Bangor and Aroostook Trail](#).

Starting at the north end of the trail in Van Buren, you're just across the Saint John River from the province of New Brunswick, Canada. If you hear French spoken here, don't be surprised. French settlers of Canadian Acadia who refused to swear allegiance to the British crown in the 1700s were deported or escaped—some to Maine. Many of those Acadians keep their culture alive in their language. Historic buildings from that era are collected at Acadian Village, 4.6 miles north of town on US 1/Main Street.

As you head out of Van Buren, you enter a forested wilderness where logging occurs. This is prime moose country, as the woods provide cover, but the open boggy areas provide food and allow the moose to move about with wide antlers. The trail splits in Stockholm, which was settled by Swedish immigrants in the 1870s.

The longest branch takes a sharp turn right, curves left, and then heads south for 30 miles to the small town of Mapleton. Along the way it passes through Washburn, where you can grab some food and perhaps hook up with the Aroostook Valley Trail. The country landscape transitions from forest to agriculture, primarily potato farming, which is still a major crop in Maine.



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**States:** Maine

**Counties:** Aroostook

Length: 62.3miles

**Trail end points:** Main St. & State St. (Van Buren) to Morrison St. btwn Station St. & Hughes Rd (Mapleton) to Limestone St. and Broadway (Caribou)

**Trail surfaces:** Gravel

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** ATV, Horseback Riding, Mountain

## Parking & Trail Access

To reach the trailhead in Caribou from I-95, take Exit 302 toward Presque Isle on US 1. Go 26.4 miles north on US 1, and turn left to remain on US 1 in Mars Hill. Go another 27.7 miles, turn left to stay on US 1, and then bear right onto SR 89/Access Hwy. Go 0.4 mile, and turn left onto Otter St. Look for trailhead parking on the right in 0.3 mile at the street end. To reach the endpoint in Caribou, turn right from the north side of the parking lot, and use the underpass to reach the trail. Turn right, and go 1.5 miles to the endpoint.

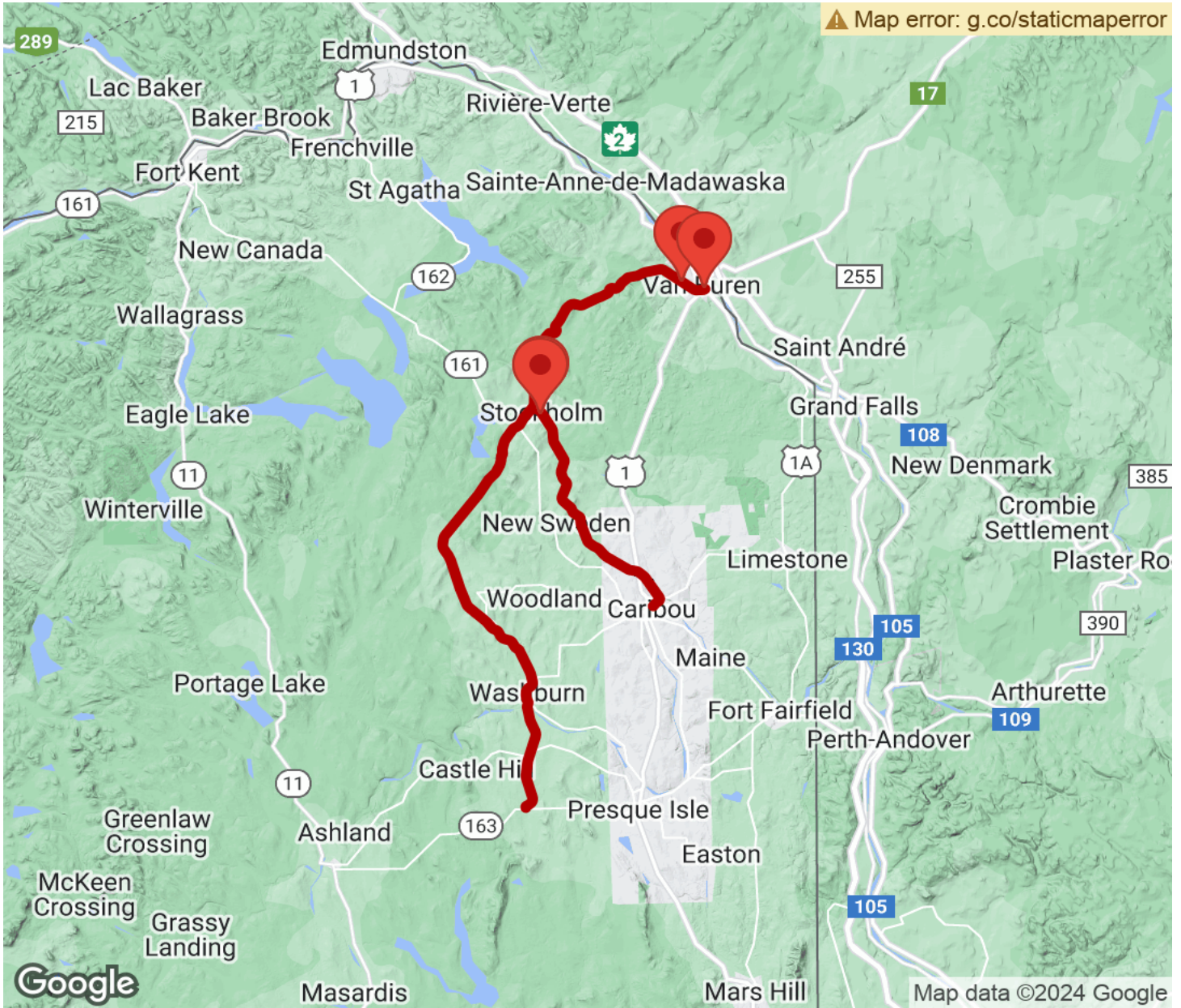
To reach the trailhead in Van Buren from I-95, take Exit 302 toward Presque Isle on US 1. Go 26.3 miles north on US 1, and in Mars Hill take the right fork onto US 1A. Go 49.9 miles, and look for the trail and parking on the left just past the intersection with US 1/Main St.

To reach the trailhead in Washburn from I-95, take Exit 264 toward Patten on ME 158. Head northwest on SR 158, go 0.4 mile, and bear right onto SR 11/Station Road. Go 56.5 miles, and turn right onto SR 227/Station St. Go 14.6 miles, and turn left onto Castle Hill Road. Go 3.7 miles, and turn left onto SR 164/Washburn Road. Go 1.4 miles, turn left onto Station Road, and look for parking on the left.



# Bangor and Aroostook Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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