

**Androscoggin River Trail
Access Sites**

North Woods

168 miles from its source at
Lake Umbagog to Merrymeeting Bay

**Trail Under Construction
More than 40 Public Access Sites Available**

Androscoggin River Watershed Council
August 2012



**Androscoggin
River Trail**

The text 'Androscoggin River Trail' is written in a blue, serif font. Below the text are three stylized, wavy lines in shades of blue, representing water or a trail.

Maps

Since sites are changing, a limited number of printed maps are available. Public information is being furnished by this web site, including maps and a description of access sites that follows. Maps are also located at kiosks at popular access points. Full color, paper maps may be obtained by contacting trek@androscogginwatershed.org at a cost of \$20 per set.

The Mahoosuc Land Trust has an excellent map of the Androscoggin Canoe Trail. It includes eight access sites from Shelburne, New Hampshire to Rumford, Maine, a beautiful section of river. Maps are available for \$7.50. The map may be obtained by calling (207-824-3806), e-mailing info@mahoosuclandtrust.org or writing to the Land Trust at PO Box 4400, Bethel, ME 04217

An older, water-resistant overview map of the trail published by the AMC contains the vast majority of access points, although a few are no longer available to the public. The map contains good descriptions of most sections. The map may be purchased from the Androscoggin River Watershed Council for \$7.50 by e-mailing trek@androscogginwatershed.org.

Wentworth Location, Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge

Location: Route 16 north of the Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters. (on Magalloway River)

Owner: US Fish and Wildlife Service **Manager:** Umbagog NWR

Launch facilities:

A new site; preferred for hand carry boats since Headquarters ramp can be quite busy at times.

Parking:

Parking for 12 vehicles, including several with trailers across from headquarters (note that the parking area is used by USFWS personnel as well)

Amenities:

Water Conditions:

General Comments:

There are excellent wildlife viewing opportunities along the river. Further downstream of site, there may be considerable large boat traffic in the summer, especially on weekends. Large boats tend to be courteous, especially on narrow waterways.

Local Attractions:

Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge (www.lakeumbagog.fws.gov)

Umbagog Lake State Park

Magalloway River Trail-Trailhead is 1.5 miles north of Refuge headquarters on Route 16.

Dixville Notch State Park

13 Mile Woods Community Forest

Headquarters, Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge (LUNWR)

Coordinates: 44 56' 10.2" 71 02' 05.0"

Location: Route 16 at the Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters, 6 miles north of Errol, NH.

Owner: US Fish and Wildlife Service **Manager:** Lake Umbagog NWR

Launch facilities:

- Gravel boat launch for trailered boats
- Grassy river bank for hand carry boats
- Floating dock for loading boats

Miles to downstream access: 10; Approximate paddle time: 2 hours roundtrip to Lake Umbagog and back

Parking:

Parking for 12 vehicles, including several with trailers across from headquarters (note that the parking area is used by USFWS personnel as well)

Amenities:

- Toilets (seasonal)
- Information kiosk
- Picnic tables
- UNWR information and resources

Water Conditions:

The water is deep close to shore and there is a slow current. The section of the river from the Route 16 bridge near the Maine/New Hampshire state line to the confluence with the Androscoggin River is flat water with a moderate current.

General Comments:

This site can be crowded with motorcraft and trailers. Hand-carry access at Wentworth location preferred. There are excellent wildlife viewing opportunities along the river, but there may be considerable large boat traffic in the summer, especially on weekends. Large boats tend to be courteous, especially on narrow waterways.

Local Attractions:

- Umbagog Lake State Park
- Magalloway River Trail-Trailhead is 1.5 miles north of Refuge headquarters on Route 16.
- Dixville Notch State Park
- 13 Mile Woods Community Forest

Errol Dam

Coordinates: 44; 47'; 14.9" 71; 07'; 17.0"

Location: Errol, NH. From Errol, NH, take Route 26 east, crossing the Androscoggin River. Take the first left onto Mountain Pond Road (gravel). Follow this road, bearing left at the fork.

Owner: NextEra Energy **Manager:** New Hampshire Fish and Game Department

Launch facilities:

- Good trailer access with concrete boat launch
- Hand carry access
- Floating dock for loading and boarding boats

Miles to Errol Dam Portage: 0.6 miles

Approximate Paddle Time: Very short paddle; requires portage around the Errol Dam. May also paddle upstream since current is minimal above dam.



Parking:

Large gravel lot for vehicles and trailers

Amenities:

- Toilet facilities (seasonal)
- Information kiosk
- Portage trail around dam
- Special Parking for anglers – about 5 vehicles
- Northern Forest Canoe Trail kiosk and blazes on portage trail

Water Conditions:

Calm water at launch site, but use **Caution:** There is a strong current in the river channel just beyond the launch and the Errol Dam is just downstream; use caution to avoid the dam. Easy paddling upstream once away from dam area.

General Comments:

Common trip is upstream to Lake Umbagog-see map. The downstream portion requires portage of Errol Dam with a stretch of rapids below dam. Most paddlers will put in below the dam if heading downstream in order to avoid portage. Basic Amenities including lodging and outfitter in Errol.



Portage stairs below dam

Bragg Bay

Coordinates: 44; 46'; 41.45" 71; 07'; 58.26"

Location: Errol, NH. Near Errol village. Heading east from Errol, NH, this site is at the edge of town where Route 26 crosses the river, on river right.

Owner: Brookfield & FPL **Manager:** Town of Errol.

Launch facilities:

Concrete launch ramp beside the parking area. Although access is tight, small boats, such as drift boats, can be launched off of trailers from this site.

There is also a sandy, probably informal launch area 150 yards down river at the bottom of the rapids. It is reached by a short carry trail heading downriver (river right).



Miles to downstream access: 3+

Parking:

Good gravel parking for approximately 15 vehicles.

Amenities:

Information kiosk for Lake Umbagog Chamber of Commerce
Northern Forest Canoe Trail two-sided kiosk
Portage trail around the rapids, on private lands and may be gated upstream in autumn

Water Conditions:

There is a fast current and Class I-II rapids at the launch site; Bragg's Bay begins just downstream from the launch. From there paddlers will find easy moving flat water from Bragg Bay to Mollidgewock State Park, three miles downstream. **Caution:** The ramp is in fast, rocky waters, use appropriate care in launching and boarding. One may portage downstream to calmer waters.

Mollidgewock State Park Campground (Check with NH Division of State Parks at (603) 271-3556 to ensure park is open and that day use from the road is permissible).

Coordinates: 44; 44'; 18.41" 71; 08'; 36.57"

Location: Errol, NH. From Errol, travel approximately 3 miles south on Route 16. The campground entrance is on the left and marked with a large sign.

Owner: State of New Hampshire **Manager:** NH Division of Parks and Recreation

Launch facilities: Ramp

Miles to downstream access: 5

Parking: Ample parking

Amenities:

- Toilets (seasonal)
- Information kiosk
- Picnic tables
- Camping
- Telephone

Water Conditions:

Moderate to fast current with several short sections of Class I and II rapids, that may require good boat handling skills depending on flows.

Seven Islands Bridge

Coordinates: 44; 42'; 52.09" 71; 10'; 26.58"

Location: Errol, NH. Route 16 south of Errol, NH. The site is on the left, just downstream of the bridge.

Owner: Located in NH Highway Department Right-of-Way **Manager:** Unmanaged

Launch facilities:

There is a rocky path down a 5 to 6 foot bank onto a large cobble beach suitable for hand-carry boats. (While not suitable for trailers at the bridge, drift boats and other small boats on trailers are often launched from the grass banks just south of this site. These areas can be muddy and slick).

Miles to downstream access: 4

Parking:

There is a good gravel parking area adjacent to the river with room for approximately 12 vehicles. There is additional parking along the highway, and in a snowmobile/ATV parking area across the road off of the Millsfield Pond Road (gravel).



Amenities: None

Water Conditions:

Caution: The main channel has a very fast current. There can be large standing waves down stream of the bridge. There are eddies just downstream of the launch area, especially on highway side – (river right).

Bog Brook (13 Mile Wood Scenic Area)

Coordinates: 44; 40'; 03.48" 71; 10'; 47.85"

Location: Cambridge/Dummer town line, New Hampshire. On Route 16 between between Errol and Milan, NH.

Owner: NH Highway Department Right-of-Way (to best of our knowledge) **Manager:** Unmanaged

Launch facilities:

There are several paths over the grass bank to the river; footing and room to load and board watercraft varies depending on the particular path chosen. Suitable for hand-carry boats.

Miles to downstream access: 5+

Parking:

There is fair parking along an abandoned stretch of old highway that makes a U with several pull off areas.

Amenities: None

Water Conditions:

There are class II rapids just down stream of the launch area

General Comments:

One can paddle off the main stem of the river for quite awhile up Bog Brook.

Pontook Dam (Up-Stream of Dam)

Coordinates: 44; 38'; 00.60" 71; 14'; 57.78"

Location: Dummer, New Hampshire. The site is directly off of Route 16, between Milan and Errol, NH.

Owner: Brookfield Power **Manager:** Brookfield Power

Launch facilities:

Upstream: Concrete ramp suitable for trailered boats and in good condition.

Downstream: Gravel slope to gravel beach.



Portage: Easy walk about 250 feet through park

Miles to downstream access: 2.5 miles

Parking:

There is excellent parking in two lots; one gravel and one asphalt

Amenities:

- Toilets (seasonal)
- Information kiosks
- Land trails

Water Conditions:

Upstream: River Bottom in immediate area is muddy with sunken logs, pulp wood and stumps. The calm water is moderately shallow. Paddling upstream on dam pond is possible but area general used as takeout.

Downstream: The River Bottom is gravel and rocks. There is fast current at launch site and rapids downstream. Can be half mile of Class II whitewater downstream during periods of high flow or during dam releases. (possibly Class III depending on base flow at time of release). Release times are posted at large kiosk at site.

General Comments:

A hiking path along the river leads downriver to Bofinger Conservation Area. This is currently the most southern site on the Androscoggin River of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail. The NFCT is improving hiking path from Pontook to the area near the intersection of Routes 16 and 110.

Large grass area for picnics and small group activities.

Bofinger Conservation Area

Coordinates: 44; 36'; 53.88" 71; 13'; 21.48"

Location: Dummer, New Hampshire. On Route 16 north of Milan, NH take the gravel road on the right along the north edge of the field.

Owner: State of New Hampshire
Department

Manager: NH Department of Environmental Services and NH Fish and Game

Launch facilities:

Gravel ramp

Miles to downstream access: 4

Parking:

Excellent parking in gravel parking lot

Amenities:

- Toilets (seasonal)
- Information kiosk
- Land trails upstream to Pontook

Water Conditions:

The water is shallow with a rocky bottom; trailer access may be difficult. Fast current with occasional ripples downstream, but generally suitable for most paddlers.

General Comments:

There is a river side hiking path going northerly to Pontook.
Grass area suitable for picnics and group activities.



Leavitt Stream

Coordinates: 44; 34'; 09.60" 71; 10'; 34.49"

Location: Milan, New Hampshire. In Milan Village, take Bridge Street east, across the river. At the stop sign, take a right and head south on East Side River Road for approximately 0.5 mile. The launch is on river left.

Owner: Town of Milan

Manager: Town of Milan

Launch facilities:

Newly improved stepped launch area with boat slide; suitable for hand carry, drift boats and other light craft. Recommend motor boats use Bofinger (upriver) or Nansen (downriver) sites.



Miles to downstream access: 3

Parking:

Parking is limited to the side of the road for 4 to 5 vehicles. Extremely limited roadside parking for trailers.

Amenities:

None

Water Conditions:

There is a slow current, and water depth is sufficient for small boats. Motor craft should watch for hidden rocks in this section. May paddle upriver from this site, but is generally used for boats heading downriver to Berlin.

General Comments:

Milan village has food service available. Note the boom piers in the river. While we have not done painstaking research, this stretch of river may have one of the longest stretches of visible boom piers in the northeast. When logs were brought to lumber and paper mills via the rivers, boom piers were used to separate the river into areas where different mills could drive and store their logs while awaiting processing. Timber was harvested in the upland areas of watersheds in the winter, and in the spring freshettes, the logs were floated down even small streams to the Androscoggin where they were "driven" downriver to the various mills.

Nansen Wayside Park

Coordinates: 44; 31'; 50.51" 71; 09'; 50.85"

Location: Milan, New Hampshire. Off Route 16, at the Berlin/Milan town line; take the gravel road off the east side of the highway and follow it down the hill and across the flats to the Wayside Area.

Owner: State of New Hampshire **Manager:** NH Division of Parks and Recreation

Launch facilities:

Gravel and mud launch; can be difficult and muddy in low water. May be difficult for trailers, especially during low water or in wet conditions.

Miles to downstream access: 4

Parking:

Good parking in gravel lots

Amenities:

Picnic tables
Kiosk

Water Conditions:

Slight current; calm water. During low water levels or wet conditions, launch can be muddy and vehicles with trailers may be susceptible to getting stuck or having difficulty retrieving loaded trailers.

General Comments:

Large grass area suitable for picnics and small group gatherings. On the opposite side of Route 16 is the old Nansen Ski Jump. At one time, there were a number of similar jumps in the North Country. Most have disappeared either due to deterioration of the wooden structures or development of the parcels on which they were located. Some residents of the region would like to preserve the Nansen jump.

Rotary Park

Coordinates: 44; 29'; 11.48" 71; 10'; 00.42"

Location: Berlin, New Hampshire. On Route 16, approximately 0.5 mile north of Brown Elementary School and approximately 0.5 mile south of 12th Street Bridge.

Owner: City of Berlin

Manager: City of Berlin

**Launch facilities:**

Path over low grass bank for hand-carry boats. Small motor boats can obtain access but trailers cannot be backed into water. There are plans to improve this site with a concrete ramp and an accessible dock.

Parking:

Fair parking on limited gravel and more parking on and on side of street

Amenities:

Benches

Water Conditions:

Flat water with dam approximately 1.0 mile downstream and low bridge that can limit some motor powered craft short distance upstream. Many people do a round trip, putting in and taking out at this site. Paddling upriver is easy.

General Comments:

Berlin offers a number of amenities including restaurant and shops. The former home of Brown Paper Company. Just downstream, the Northern Forest Heritage Park, offers a look at an earlier era in the North Woods – worth the visit. Check with the Chamber or Northern Forest Heritage Park web site for hours of operations. See next listing for NFHP for more information on the park.

Large grass area suitable for picnics and group gatherings. Boom piers are still present in this area.

Northern Forest Heritage Park (NFHP)

Coordinates:

Location: Berlin, New Hampshire. On Route 16, approximately 0.2 mile north of Brown Elementary School and approximately 0.7 mile south of 12th Street Bridge.

Additional Information: There is a nominal admission charge to NFHP. Worth a tour of park before or after any river outing.

Owner: Northern Forest Heritage Park

Manager: NFHP

Launch facilities:

Boat launch

Hand Carry Access

Docks

Parking:

Adequate parking including trailers

Amenities:

Toilets

Local Information

Historic Heritage Exhibits

Water Conditions:

See Rotary Park. Dam short distance downstream.

General Comments:

The Northern Forest Heritage Park is worth a visit. Join the Northern Forest Heritage Park for the fall Fire on the River celebration where fires are lit on the boom piers in the downtown Berlin area. Check the NFHP web site for many other activities throughout the spring and summer, including River Day/Wingzilla in June.

Unfortunately access in Gorham is very limited with several traditional areas now gated. Next public put in Shelburne. Motels, restaurants and amenities available in Berlin and Gorham.

Shelburne Bridge

Coordinates: 44; 24'; 18.78" 71; 04'; 05.69"

Location: Shelburne, New Hampshire. From Gorham, NH, go east on Route 2 then take a left onto Meadow Road going across the river. The launch site is on the left, down a short gravel road.

Owner: New Hampshire DOT right of way **Manager:** Town of Shelburne and Mahoosuc Land Trust

Launch facilities:

There is a rocky bank; canoes and kayaks are generally launched from the rocks under the bridge. Launching is difficult and into moderately fast current.

Parking:

There is limited parking for approximately 8 vehicles in a gravel lot. Drift boat access is possible but difficult.

Amenities:

None

Water Conditions:

Fast moving current with short sections of rips and Class I rapids at intervals downstream.



General comments:

Historic Shelburne Village is small but aesthetically enjoyable. Philbrook Farm Inn offers travelers an opportunity to stay at an historic property. Upstream, Gorham offers a variety of amenities, several motels, various eateries, shopping, and historic properties. Gorham is the northerly gateway to Mount Washington attractions such as the COG Railway and the White Mountain National Forest. The Appalachian Trail runs through the area with several access points nearby. Many private lands offer tremendous hiking opportunities. The Mahoosuc Map and Guide prepared by the Appalachian Mountain Club highlights a variety of hiking and many other outdoor recreation opportunities in the area including other paddling opportunities, bike rides and cross country skiing for your winter activity.

Upstream access to Reflection Pond (above Lead Mine Dam at North Road) is now gated. There are a few informal access points off Hogan Road, a dirt (not gravel) road that runs along the river from the westerly end of the North Rd in Shelburne (on river left) into Gorham. Access to Gorham village is not possible. People frequently bike on both North Road, paved but narrow with some dangerous curves, and Hogan Road. A mountain bike or rugged hybrid is recommended for the Hogan Road section as there are large potholes, some loose dirt and possibly other small obstacles. It is a generally family friendly, flat ride though.

Androscoggin Canoe Trail by Mahoosuc Land Trust (separate paper map available)

The Meadow Road access site is most up-river point of the Androscoggin Canoe Trail that was developed several years ago by the Mahoosuc Land Trust. The Trail consists of eight sites with the down-river most site being above the falls in Rumford. The trail starts in the small, historic village of Shelburne, New Hampshire and passes the picturesque town of Bethel, Maine, home to Gould Academy and a beautiful National Historic District. The Moses Mason historic house and museum is located in the District. The trail ends just above downtown Rumford that also contains a National Historic District.