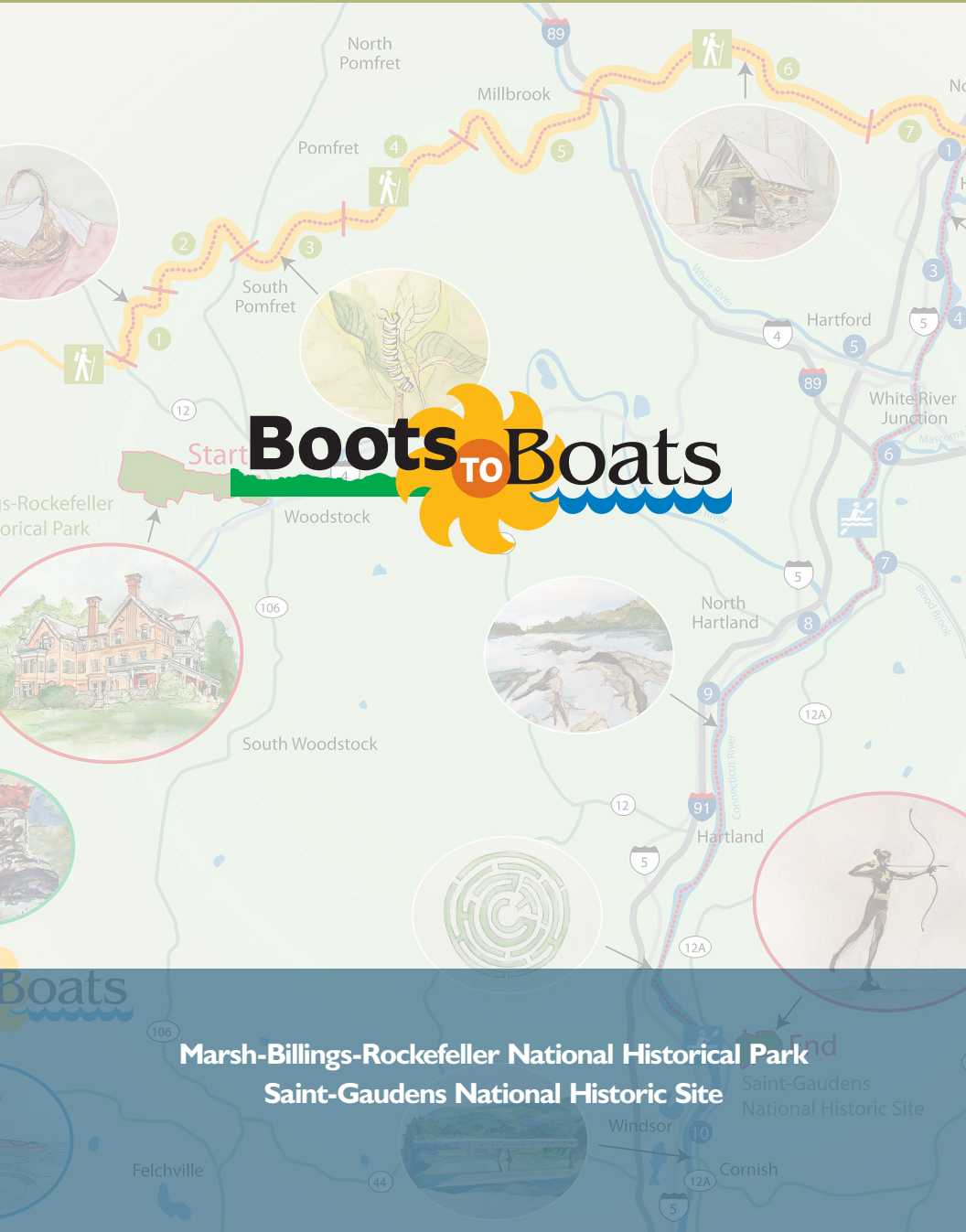


2016

National Park Service.
CENTENNIAL

FIND YOUR PARK



Boots TO Boats

Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park
Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site

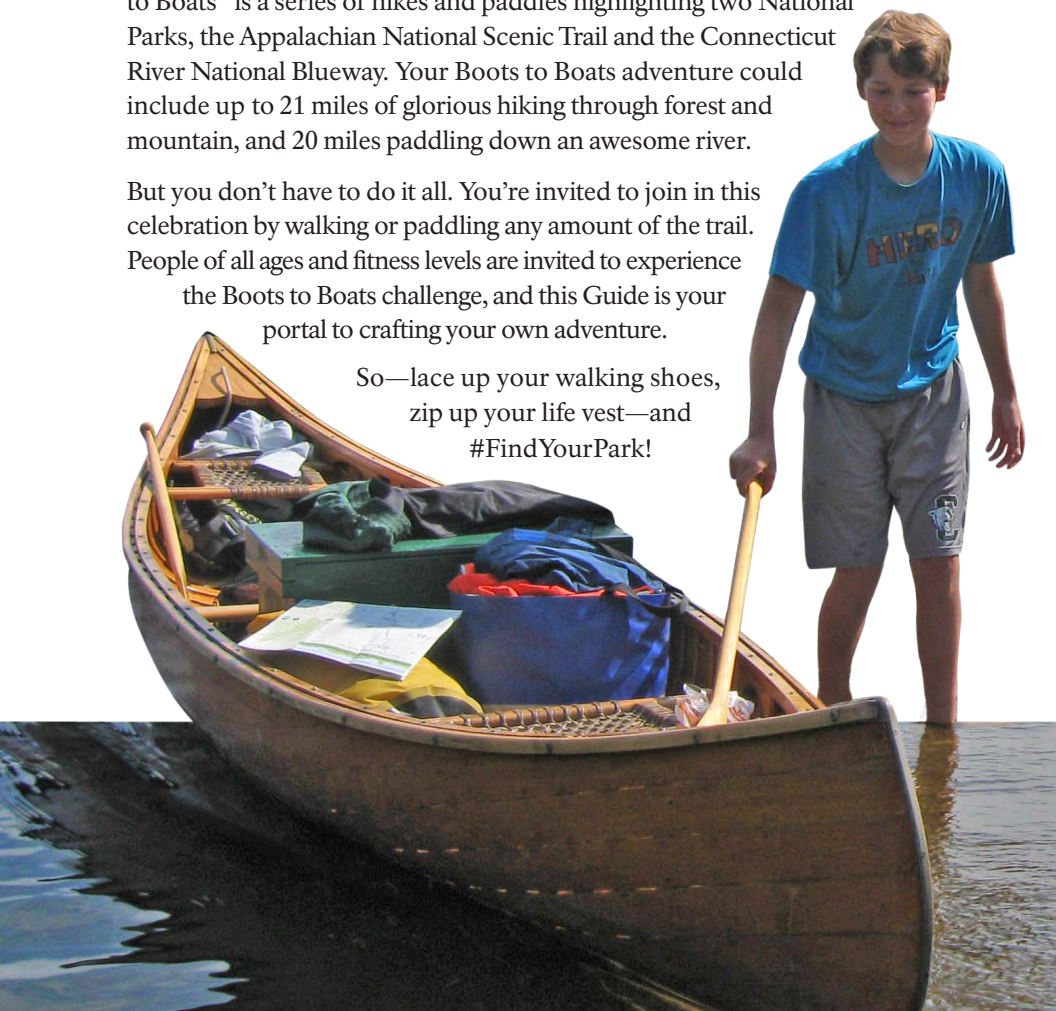


WELCOME TO THE BOOTS TO BOATS GUIDE

To celebrate its centennial in 2016, the National Park Service imagined a link between Vermont’s Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park and New Hampshire’s Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site. “Boots to Boats” is a series of hikes and paddles highlighting two National Parks, the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Connecticut River National Blueway. Your Boots to Boats adventure could include up to 21 miles of glorious hiking through forest and mountain, and 20 miles paddling down an awesome river.

But you don’t have to do it all. You’re invited to join in this celebration by walking or paddling any amount of the trail. People of all ages and fitness levels are invited to experience the Boots to Boats challenge, and this Guide is your portal to crafting your own adventure.

So—lace up your walking shoes,
zip up your life vest—and
#FindYourPark!



2 **BOOTS: Take a Hike!**

Hiking YOUR parks:

Begin your Boots to Boats journey by hitting the trail in either Vermont or New Hampshire's only national park sites.

Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park in Woodstock, Vermont offers more than 20 miles of walking trails, including seven miles of wide carriage roads—no motor vehicles or bicycles allowed—through historic forests on Mount Tom. Find a map at: www.nps.gov/mabi.

Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish, New Hampshire offers a self-guided nature trail and a scenic hiking trail through 80 acres of forest, as well as the chance to stroll in gardens featuring inspirational sculptures. Find a map at: www.nps.gov/saga.

Hiking on the Appalachian Trail between the two parks

Seven short sections of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (also known as the AT), from one and a half to five miles one-way, connect Woodstock and Norwich, Vermont. Challenge yourself to hike one section, or all seven!

NOBO!

The hike descriptions that follow on pages 3-6 are all written in the “Northbound” (or “NOBO,” in trail parlance) direction of the AT, from Woodstock toward Norwich, VT, though you will not often be walking directly north. You can hike each section in the other direction if you wish. *All distances are one-way.* The “elevation change” figures show you the total climb and descent encountered in each hike.

Parking is very limited at many of these trailheads. If you're hiking in a group, please carpool. When parking, don't block field access, driveways or roadways.

Leave No Trace

When hiking the AT, or any trail, follow Leave No Trace principles to ensure your own safety, support a positive trail experience for others, and provide for the long-term protection of the environment.

Seven Simple Principles

- *Plan Ahead and Prepare*
- *Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces*
- *Dispose of Waste Properly*
- *Leave What You Find*
- *Minimize Campfire Impacts*
- *Respect Wildlife*
- *Be Considerate of Other Visitors*

3 The Seven Hikes

Hike 1. Dana Hill

1.5 miles. Elevation change: 700ft up, 700ft down
Vermont Route 12, Woodstock (paved) to Stage Road, South Pomfret (unpaved).

Find this trailhead: It's on the south side of VT Route 12, 3.25 miles north of the Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock. GPS coordinates 43.6552,-72.5662. Parking for five cars.

This steep up and over hike takes you through historic farmland now largely re-forested. From open land at the top of Dana Hill (1550 ft)—a great spot for a picnic—see Mount Ascutney to the south. Continuing on, you'll descend more gradually through dense woodland, to reach Stage Road.

Hike 2. Totman Hill

2.2 miles. Elevation change: 300 ft up, 200 ft down
Stage Rd, South Pomfret (unpaved) to Pomfret Rd, Pomfret (paved)

Find this trailhead: 0.25 miles north of the Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, on VT Rte 12, bear right on Pomfret Rd. Drive 2.6 miles. At Teago Store bear left on Stage Road. After 1 mile, the trailhead pullout is on the right. GPS coordinates 43.6719,-72.5539. Parking here for two or three cars.

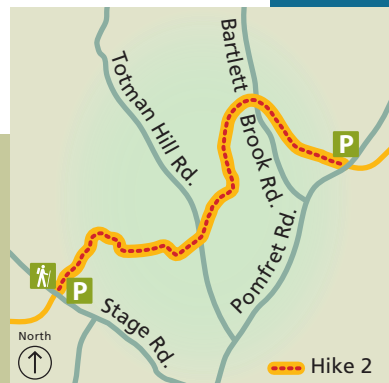
This is the gentlest “Boots to Boats” hike, winding through forest, meadow and wetland with views of the pastoral Pomfret Valley and no very steep sections. Across the footbridge over Barnard Brook the trail leads through a meadow and a shady red pine plantation, then down into a wetland area. Crossing two unpaved roads, it continues to Pomfret Brook, a sizeable stream crossable on rocks and with the help of a cable. Be very careful on Pomfret Road: traffic moves fast!

What the blazes?

“Blazes” 6 inches by 2 inches are painted on trees, rocks and posts to mark the trail. The AT is blazed in white. Blue blazes denote side trails. A double white blaze says “pay attention”: it usually indicates a sharp change of direction in the trail.

Stay healthy!

Bring plenty of water and nutritious snacks with you. Take sanitizer for cleaning hands whenever necessary and wash hands well with soap and water after your hike. Never drink untreated water from streams, rivers or ponds.



4 **Hike 3. Cloudland**

1.8 miles. Elevation change: 700 ft up, 400 ft down
Pomfret Rd, Pomfret (paved) to Cloudland Road, Pomfret (unpaved)

Find this trailhead: 0.25 miles north of the Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, on VT Rte 12, bear right on Pomfret Rd. Drive 2.6 miles. At Teago Store bear right to stay on Pomfret Road. Trailhead is 1.0 miles on the left, after Bartlett Brook Road. Parking here for four cars. Beware of fast traffic on Pomfret Road.

Ladder-like wooden steps lead you up into a brooding red pine plantation. A steep switchback climb leads to an open hillside where plentiful milkweed might harbor monarch butterfly caterpillars in late summer. The viewpoint here gives a dramatic vista of the Green Mountains. The trail leads down to an historic farm road bordered by stone walls and ancient sugar maples. This hike peaks at a cairn and signpost at 1713 feet. Re-entering the woods, you'll pass through a gap in a stone wall, down and up through young trees, ancient white pines and the remnants of former apple orchards, to Cloudland Road.

Hike 4. Joe Ranger Road

3.6 miles. Elevation change: 600 ft up, 600 ft down
Cloudland Rd, Pomfret (unpaved) to Joe Ranger Rd, Pomfret (unpaved)

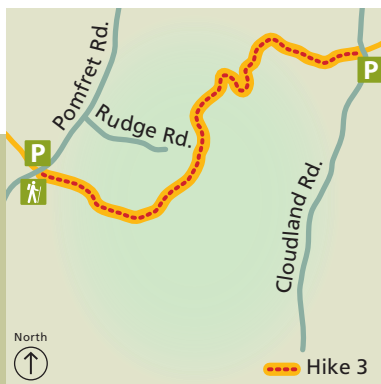
Find this trailhead: From the Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, take Old River Road east for 0.9 miles. Turn left on Cloudland Road. The AT crosses this road after 3.5 miles. GPS coordinates 43.6867,-72.5002. Parking here for three cars.

This hike climbs along the edge then enters the woods to reach its high point at Thistle Hill (1946 ft). After 2.3 miles you'll pass the junction for Thistle Hill Shelter which lies 0.2 miles from the trail and has a privy with a view. Continuing gently up and down through forest, you descend along a hayfield where bobolinks may nest in summer, then down to reach Joe Ranger Road.

Ticks Deer ticks live in forest and meadow and can transmit disease. Always do a whole-body check after hiking.

People Power The 2,189.2 (2015) mile AT was mostly constructed by volunteers and is maintained by volunteers. In 2015, a record-breaking 6,827 volunteers spent roughly 272,477 hours maintaining and protecting the AT for hikers to use. Volunteers have donated more than five million hours to the AT since records began in 1983.

Trail Angels Kind people leave gifts or offer food and lodging for passing long distance hikers. Could you be angelic?



5 Hike 5. Valley Views

Down to the White River 3.3 miles. Elevation change: 300 ft up, 1200 ft down. Joe Ranger Road, Pomfret (unpaved) to the White River in West Hartford, VT.

Find this trailhead: From Patriots Bridge in West Hartford, VT, head west on Quechee/West Hartford Road for 1.5 miles. Turn right on Joe Ranger Road. The AT crosses Joe Ranger Road after 1.8 miles. GPS coordinates 43.7054,-72.4627. Limited parking along the road.

Heading up the side of Bunker Hill, carefully traverse a short section of ledge that may be slippery. The trail by-passes the summit, then reaches two excellent viewpoints. At the second, after 2.3 miles, a bench invites you to rest and survey the White River Valley below. Continuing down into a wetland area, crossed on wooden walkways called “puncheon,” you come out onto the Quechee/West Hartford Road, leading right down to Patriots Bridge across the White River. Just before the bridge, to your right along a short footpath, is Clifford Park, with restrooms, picnic tables, a children’s playground and recreation facilities.

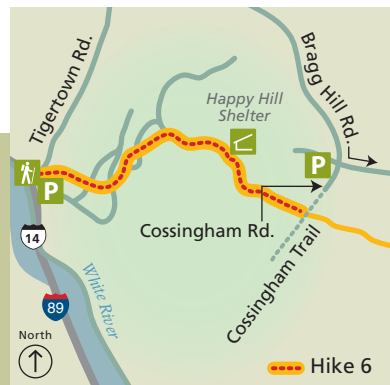
Between hike 5 and hike 6 lies nearly one mile of road, mostly VT Route 14. This is the official route of the AT at this location.

Hike 6. Happy Hill Shelter

5 miles. Elevation change: 1400 ft up, 700 ft down. Tigertown/Podunk Road West Hartford (paved), to Cossingham Road, Norwich (unpaved) Try this hike “southbound” to avoid the uphill elevation gain!

Find this trailhead: Starting at West Hartford Public Library, go west on VT Rte 14 for 0.4 miles; turn right on Tigertown Road; continue 0.3 miles on Tigertown Road, passing under Interstate 89. The trailhead is at a road junction on your right just after the underpass. GPS coordinates 43.7168 -72.4002. Very limited trailhead parking. To walk along VT route 14 to the trailhead, park at West Hartford Town Library or Clifford Park (0.7 and 1.0 miles from trailhead).

From the trailhead, the AT heads upward out of the White River Valley, through trees and over some rocky terrain. It crosses Podunk Road and a stream, then follows old woods roads. After 3.6 miles you’ll find the Happy Hill Shelter just off to the right. The original shelter was built in 1918, pre-dating the AT itself. The new one, with a privy, was built in 1998. 0.2 miles further on, a sharp right turn (look out for the double blaze) leads down to the Cossingham Trail, an old woods road.



6 **Hike 7. To the end of Vermont**

2.1 miles. Elevation change: 200 ft up, 500 ft down. Cossingham Road, Norwich (unpaved) to Elm Street, Norwich (paved)

Finding this trailhead: Just north of Dan and Whits Store, 319 Main St, Norwich, VT, turn left on Beaver Meadow Road. After 0.4 miles turn left on Bragg Hill Road. After 2.4 miles, turn left onto Cossingham Road (dead end). Trailhead parking for six cars is 0.2 miles along on the right. GPS coordinates 43.7185,-72.3412.

To find the AT, about 0.5 miles: Continue on foot along Cossingham Road, bear left onto Cossingham Trail, then through a gate on your left, then right along the side of a field with a view east to the White Mountains. Bear right through a gate, then immediately left to continue to the AT trail junction—watch carefully for the blazes—at GPS coordinates 43.4270,-72.9750.

These woodlands harbor white and red trillium and lady’s slipper orchids in spring. The trail winds gently up and down, passing under a power line, then descends steeply to reach an AT information kiosk on Elm Street, one mile from the center of Norwich, Vermont. GPS coordinates for Elm Street kiosk 43.7116,-72.3238. There’s parking near the Elm Street kiosk for just two cars.

Norwich, VT

From the trailhead, Elm Street descends for one mile to reach Main Street, (VT Route 5) Norwich. Turning left here takes you to the shops and services of Norwich. Turning right, the road crosses the Ledyard Bridge over the Connecticut River into Hanover, New Hampshire, a distance of just over a mile along a busy road with a sidewalk.

Norwich, VT and Hanover, NH are official AT communities, part of an elite group of towns along the trail recognized for promoting and protecting the AT. To learn more, check out atcommunities.wordpress.com

This is where boots become boats!

You can reach the beginning of the waterborne section of the “Boots to Boats” trail on foot at this point. Just west of the Ledyard Bridge, still in Vermont, turn left onto River Road to walk half a mile to the Norwich Boat Landing. Or walk over the Ledyard Bridge, into Hanover, New Hampshire, and turn left into the Ledyard Boatyard. Driving directions to these landings are in the “Boats” section of this brochure, which begins on page 7.



7 **BOATS: Paddle the River!**

Boats

The Boots to Boats Connecticut River section runs from Norwich Vermont to Cornish New Hampshire, home of Saint-Gaudens NHS.

The Connecticut River is the country's only designated National Blueway, a recognition of the vibrant community-based watershed partnerships that flourish in the area. Boots to Boats is an example of such partnerships, designed to encourage informed stewardship of our waterways and watersheds.

Information about the river may be found here
<http://www.connecticutriverpaddlerstrail.org/>

Safety First!

For your own safety, be sure to check river conditions and the weather forecast before you set out. For flowcast at Wilder Dam go to www.uppervalleyrowing.org, or call waterline at 1-800-452-1737 and input code 505121 for flow levels.

When leaving your boat for any length of time, always tie it securely!
River levels can change unexpectedly.

The US Coast Guard is a good source for boating safety information.
www.uscgboating.org

River users should always wear a life vest, regardless of age or swimming ability.

Life Vest Fitting

1. Check the manufacturer's label to ensure that the life jacket is a proper fit for your size and weight.
2. Make sure the jacket is properly fastened.
3. Hold your arms straight up over your head.
4. Ask a friend to grasp the tops of the arm openings and gently pull up.
5. Make sure there is no excess room above the openings and that the jacket does not ride up over your chin or face.

In Case of Lightning

If thunder or lightning occur while boating, get onto dry land as quickly as possible and squat on your life vest (a good insulator) at least 30 feet away from any other person until the danger has passed.



Appalachian National Scenic Trail

Norwich

Hanover

Gilman Island Campsite



Wilder Dam

Hartford

White River Junction

Lebanon

Otauquechee River

Blood Brook

Boots to Boats

North Hartland

Summer Falls

Plainfield

Hartland

Burnham Meadow Campsite

End

Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site

Windsor

Cornish

Legend

Boots to Boats Route



Canoeing/Kayaking Section along the Connecticut River



Campsites along the Connecticut River



Portages



Landings along the Connecticut River

North



Here are ten possible places to enter or exit the river along the Boots to Boats water path in Vermont and New Hampshire

Getting There: Finding the Boat Launches by Road

1. **Norwich Boat Landing:** In Norwich, VT, take route 10A toward New Hampshire. At the traffic light just before the river, turn left onto River Road. The Norwich Boat Landing is about half a mile along on the right. Parking is just before the landing.
2. **Ledyard Canoe Club:** This club, in Hanover, NH, allows public use. Crossing the river from Norwich on Rte 10A, take the first left between two brick pillars. Veer left and park in the parking lot. The Canoe Club is at the far end of this lot. Do not try to drive down the narrow path just before the second building on the left!
3. **Wilder Picnic Area (Kilowatt Park) Wilder, VT.** Take VT Rte 5 north from the junction with VT Rte 14 in Hartford, VT, for two miles and turn right on Gillette Road. Drive 0.4 miles to the public launch in Kilowatt Park.
4. **Wilder Dam Boat Launch.** The dam is on NH Rte 10 between West Lebanon and Hanover. Parking is on the north (non-river) side of the road, so you will have to carry your boat across a busy road. This tricky launching point is not good for novice boaters.
5. **Watson Park** is on VT Rte 14 in Hartford, VT, 0.8 miles east of the intersection of VT Rte 14 and VT Rte 5, just after the Interstate overpass. From Kilowatt Park, take Gillette Street to VT Rte 5 and turn left to reach the Rte14/Rte 5 junction.
6. **Lebanon Boat Launch:** This undeveloped boat launch in West Lebanon gives easy access to the river. Turn into the Hannaford supermarket parking lot, bear left then left again down a rutted dirt track. High-clearance vehicle recommended. Some parking available.
7. **Bloods Brook Boat Launch:** Undeveloped, rather steep and rocky. Approaching from the north on NH Rte 12A, 1.7 miles south of Walmart, turn right into the Lebanon Wildlife Management Area.
8. **Ottawaquechee Boat Launch** is off Mill Street in North Hartland, VT, north of the covered bridges.
9. **Sumner Falls Boat Launch:** in Hartland, VT, take VT Rte 5 north to cross over Interstate 91. Take the second right on a dirt road to a picnic area and the launch point. Watch out for poison ivy along the trail.
10. **Cornish, NH Boat Launch** is on NH Rte 12A just across the river from Windsor, VT.

10 **Getting In: On the River**

Section 1:

Norwich, VT or Hanover, NH to Gilman Island Boat Landing and Camping Area. 1.5 miles

Put in at Boat Launches 1 or 2 to paddle under the impressive Ledyard Bridge and explore Mink Brook to your left, on the NH side of the river, before reaching Gilman Island. Stop at the southern tip of Gilman Island to find free camping and an outhouse. There's also Titcomb Cabin which can be reserved for the night through the Dartmouth Outing Club (603-643-6709).

Section 2:

Gilman Island to Wilder Picnic Area (Kilowatt Park) VT, 1 mile, or Wilder Dam, NH, 2 miles. This section ends just before Wilder Dam, which is not navigable.

After Gilman Island, you'll see a tiny island on the NH side with a beach which makes a good stopping place.

Paddle south, and decide if you wish to pull out on the Vermont side, where a three-mile drive offers an easy re-entry, or the New Hampshire side, where re-entry to the river is within walking distance, but a little tricky. Begin paddling over towards your chosen side of the river at least half a mile before the dam.

If you pull out on the Vermont side at Wilder Picnic Area (Kilowatt Park), the next recommended launching place is Boat Launch 5, Watson Park, Hartford, VT. This is on the White River, which joins the Connecticut at White River Junction.

If you pull out on the New Hampshire side at the small beach above Wilder Dam you have a 400 yard portage (carry) across a driveway, down 20 steps and over cobbles to a small sandy area. Re-entry below the dam is difficult because of obstructions in the water.

The river below Wilder Dam may sometimes be very low, so check conditions ahead of time.



II **Section 3:**

*Watson Park, Hartford, VT, to Lebanon Boat Launch, 3.5 miles
or Wilder Dam, Lebanon, NH, to Lebanon Boat Launch, 4 miles*

At Watson Park (Boat Launch 5) you are on the White River. Put in here and, keeping in the central channel to avoid grounding, paddle one mile to join the Connecticut River, at White River Junction, then continue downstream.

If you put in below Wilder Dam (Boat Launch 4), on the NH side, and paddle downriver, you'll pass the confluence of the White River and the Connecticut 1.5 miles downstream.

The next good landing place is Lebanon Boat Launch, (Boat Launch 6) on the NH (left) side of the river, 2.5 miles downstream from the White River confluence, near a wastewater treatment plant. This is an undeveloped but not difficult landing.

Section 4:

*Lebanon Boat Launch to Burnaps Island and the Ottauquechee River,
passing Bloods Brook Boat Launch. Total distance: 3.5 miles.*

Please do not land on the two small islands you pass between Lebanon and Bloods Brook Boat Launches, they are home to rare plants and the endangered cobble tiger beetle.

1.5 miles downstream of Lebanon Boat Launch is another undeveloped launch area, at Bloods Brook (Boat Launch 7). Continue downstream to Burnaps Island which has a free primitive campsite on its Vermont-facing side.

Just past Burnaps Island, the Ottauquechee River runs down from Woodstock, VT to join the Connecticut River. Take a side trip up this scenic river, paddling half a mile up to the twin covered bridges in North Hartland. (Boat Launch 8) Water may be low in summer.



12 **Section 5:**

Burnaps Island/Ottaquechee River to Sumner Falls

Setting out from Burnaps Island, or putting in at the Ottaquechee Boat Launch and paddling down to the Connecticut, stay well away from large rocks in the Connecticut River here - locals call them “Hen and Chicks” - and watch out for shallow spots and rapids.

As you near Sumner Falls (Boat Launch 9), pull over to the Vermont side (right) well above the Falls and pull out for a roughly 15-minute portage, returning to the water just past the Falls. There’s a pleasant picnic area and an outhouse here.

Section 6:

Sumner Falls to Cornish Boat Landing, 5 miles

Continue down a delightful stretch of the River with four small rapids. Three miles below Sumner Falls find the Path of Life Garden, where you can moor to visit a meditative 14-acre garden (admission charged), then the free, primitive Burnham Meadow Campsite, both on the VT (right) side of the river.

Just past the Path of Life Garden, on the other (NH) side of the river, you’ll pass Blow Me Down Farm, part of Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site. Your destination, the Cornish, NH, Boat Launch (10), is 1.5 miles downstream on the NH (left) side, just north of the longest covered bridge in New England, connecting Windsor, VT to Cornish, NH.

Congratulations! You’ve reached the end of the Boots to Boats adventure. To keep track of your progress using our Boots to Boats Challenge form, or print out a completion certificate, visit [go.nps.gov/b2bcertificates](https://www.nps.gov/b2bcertificates)





Boots to Boats Youth Adventurers

Boots to Boats is sponsored by a grant from the National Park Foundation to promote healthy recreation on America's public lands. Part of this grant supports opportunities for young people to hit the trail or get on the water.

During the NPS Centennial year of 2016, the Upper Valley Trails Alliance (UVTA) High School Summer Trail Corps members and families are planning to combine a Boots to Boats hike with a river trip from Norwich to Titcomb Island as celebration of the kids' achievement in building a new AT information kiosk.

The UVTA High School Summer Trail Corps program is designed to create the trail stewards of tomorrow. The participants learn trail building and outdoor leadership skills while working on trails in the Upper Valley. For more information visit uvtrails.org

Alumni of Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Park's annual Mountains & Rivers Forever Camp anticipate celebrating the NPS Centennial by adding a third "B" into their adventure: bicycles. These high school and college students are planning to spend eight days, camping out along the way, hiking the entire 21 miles on the AT, paddling the 20 miles on the Connecticut River to Saint Gaudens National Historical Site and then completing the circle with a 30 mile bicycle ride back to Woodstock.

The Boots to Boats program, in partnership with Bold Paths Adventures, is offering hundreds of school kids from Hartford, VT, as well as Lebanon and Claremont, NH, a raft of special opportunities to enjoy the Connecticut River between the two parks during summer camps in the NPS Centennial year. Instructor Bonna Wieler said; "Although the river runs right through their towns, a lot of kids never really experience being out on the water, so this will be a great adventure for them."

You can join these young people in celebrating our public lands and waters by embarking on your own Boots to Boats adventure!



Our Partners

Green Mountain Club

Upper Valley Trails Alliance

L.L. Bean

Bold Paths Adventures

National Park Service

National Park Foundation

For other partners, and to learn more about guided activities along the Boots to Boats trail, visit www.nps.gov/mabi/boots-to-boats-adventures.htm