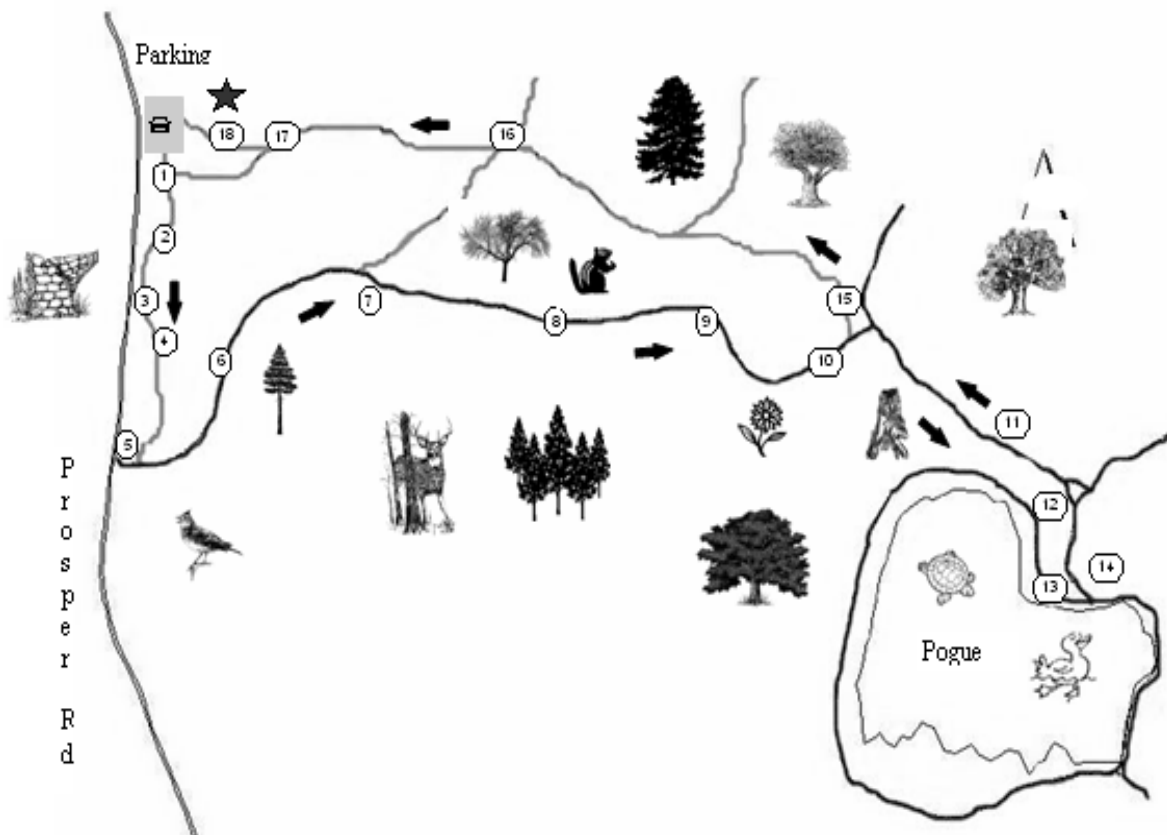


MARSH BILLINGS ROCKEFELLER NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Forest Quest



Directions to Prosper Road Trailhead:

Travel north on Route 12. It is 2.7 miles (4.3 km) from Billings Farm & Museum parking area to Prosper Road. Turn left onto Prosper Road and it is 0.7 miles (1.1 km) to the trailhead parking area on the left.

Instructions:

- You will need a pencil
- Take turns reading clues aloud
- Read the clue in bold first, then go to the site and continue reading
- As you go, check off some of the things that you see
- Unveil the final clue and discover the "mystery bag". Happy Questing!

The clues:

1 **Make your way up the path to where a map stands.**

Here are a number of names that we want you to see.
After reading the "Mt. Tom" section of the exhibit,
Proceed to the next chapter of your forest mystery.



2 **Go right after the gate, off the path in the woods: stone walls.**

But why these stone walls, inside some trees to keep?
STONE WALLS are your clue to a time long passed,
When fences enclosed pastures for all the grazing sheep.

3 **Over a bridge and 80 steps to where the pines stretch tall.**

Long cones and bundles of 5 needles the forest floor betrays.
These clues confirm that our canopy is WHITE PINE.
Below the plants of the understory await sun's rays.

4 **Growing in dappled light, SUGAR MAPLES make their way.**

Pine on the other hand, requires a full day's sun.
These white pine trees were planted in the 1930s,
By the Billings family, once the farming was done.

5 **Ahead looking right, hidden in the shrubs... an old rusted car,**

Further up the path, concrete, piled rocks, a retaining wall.
These things are all remnants of an old Vermont Farm.
Before the forest rose? A working farm, barns standing tall.

Westward Ho! Farmers go, leaving behind exhausted land
Axes and sheep erode the land leaving poor soil to plant
By the 1860, fish, wildlife, trees, and the watershed are in trouble.

Check the box when you've found the...

trail head

stone wall

bundles of 5 needles

long cones

sugar maple

old rusted car

wall



Marsh's book, "Man and Nature", was published in _____

"The earth is becoming an unfit home for its inhabitants"*



*Wrote George Perkins Marsh in 1864

6 Left turn on carriage road and into a unique forest.

Fredrick Billings and his family led the way on this land,
Teaching farmers to replant the trees their fathers cut.
On we go to where a tree with four white trunks stands.

white birch

7 To the next fork with a rock: here you'll make a transition,

From natural succession into forest plantation.
Stretching up high, tufted tops, growing in straight lines,
Two different kinds of pine in left and right direction.

white pine
 red pine



Now white pine you have seen before...so which are these?
The second pine by three clues can be identified:
Peeling plates of reddish bark, egg-shaped cones, paired needles.
Know these and you'll discover where RED PINE hides.

egg-shaped cones
 paired needles

**8 Keep right! In a while, a big tree on your left you will pass.
Does its bark remind you of cantaloupe skin?**

It is a white Ash, find its small seeds ahead if you can!
Then count 5 ash trees before the next clue comes in?

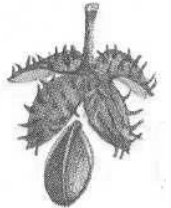
white ash
 ash seed



9 Patience... find smooth gray-barked trees covered with sores.

Beech scale disease, fungus follow insects, an unwanted guest.
Sick beech trees, circled by young, show their hope.
Beeches sprout new trees from their roots-they do their best.

beech tree
 beech seed



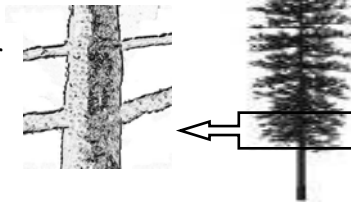
10 On you go! To where large white quartz shines.

At the second curve, a rock outcrop and red pines in rows.
Make a stop and find a young pine tree, can you tell its age?
Each year pines send forth a new "limb whorl" ring to grow....

age of your tree _____

2nd year

1st year



11 At the "T", downhill you will go quite a while.

**Then, pass a small trail on the right,
Look for large holes on a dead tree full of bugs**
Great place for Woodpeckers who come for a bite.

woodpecker holes

12 Onward, to the next fork and the giant hemlock.

Over 200 years old and still growing tall.
Hold a tiny cone, lean on the trunk and look up.
Amazing that something so big started so small?



hemlock cone

13 Stay right, curving around until water is found.

You've made it to the Pogue, the farthest point on this Quest.
Sit, reflect ... and say a small thanks to Billings' granddaughter,
Mary Rockefeller, and husband Lawrence, this park made at their behest

Pogue

14 What's a Pogue? This fourteen-acre pond was a wetland,
Until its waters were dammed to make this special place.
Quietly walk along the pond and you might see,
Painted turtles, sunbathing... then OOPS, gone without a trace.



painted turtles or
other pond creatures

15 Now turn around and head back from whence you came.
LONG reverse: back to **hemlock**; Up hill searching for a sign.
This one has eleven letters. Turning left is right.
Soon find a small trail to the right. Take it, you'll do fine.

sign

16 Downhill, at intersection keep the middle way.
A small bridge - Listen and look closely to observe who lives here:
Birdsong, chatter, rustling, color, leaves stir.
Quiet stillness reveals what in movement disappears.



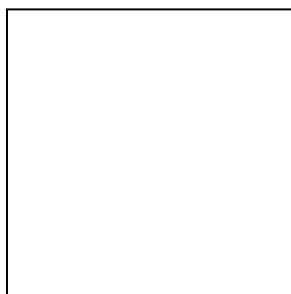
bird songs

17 On you go! staying to the right path if you will.
Looking for an ancient sugar maple, an old pasture tree.
One of its branches has broken off and left a hole.
Hidden there? The end to your mystery!

treasure box

18 Congratulations on completing your Quest!
Please write where you are from and your name,
The date and some comments if you wish.
Return the mystery bag so others may do the same.

Take an
impression of the
stamp below:



VITAL COMMUNITIES

This is one of 125 Valley Quest treasure hunts across the region.

Valley Quest is a project of: **Vital Communities**
Phone: (802) 291 – 9100
website: www.vitalcommunities.org