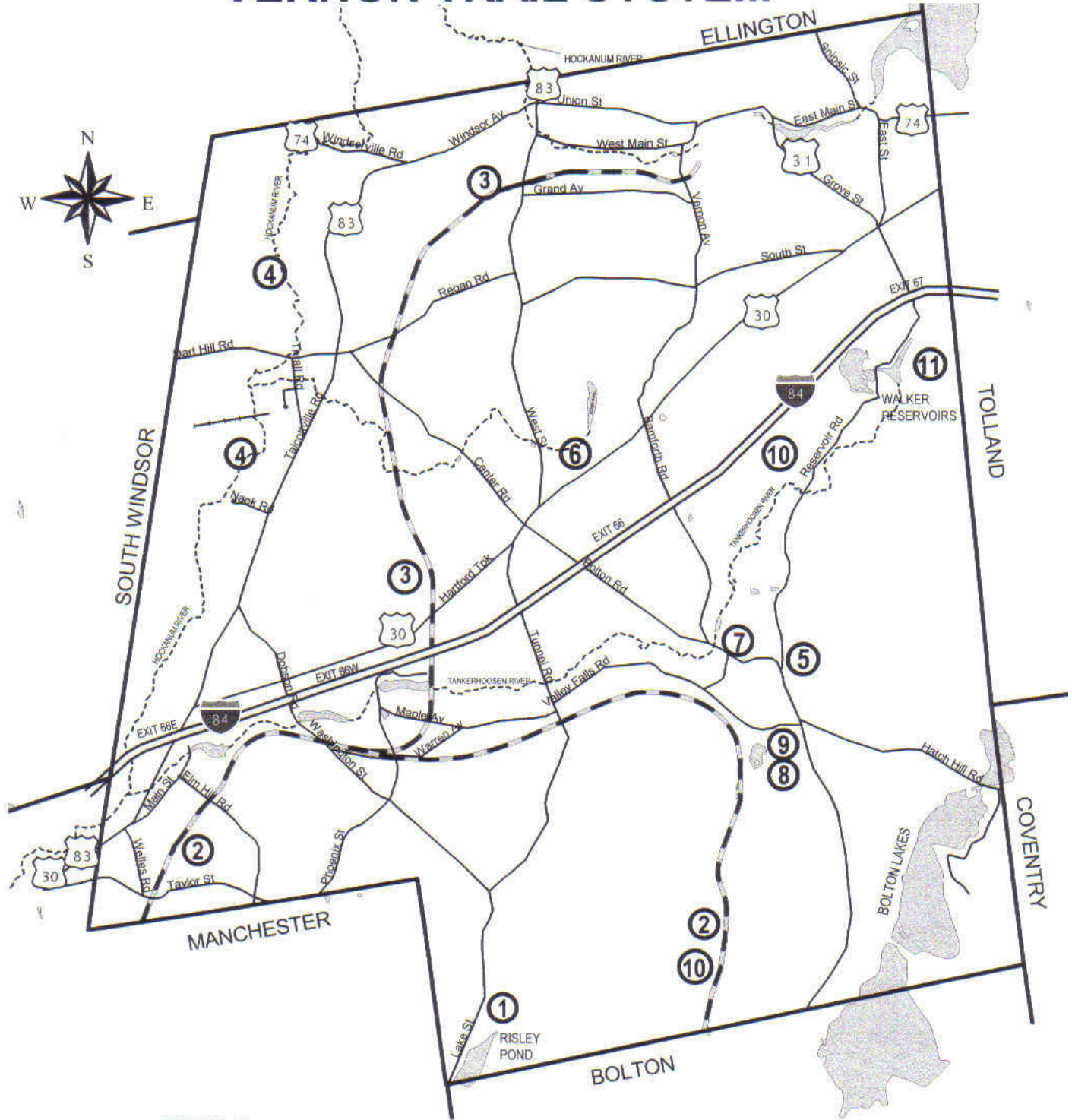


# **VERNON PARKS AND RECREATION TRAIL SYSTEM**



Prepared for Vernon Parks and Recreation  
By the Vernon Conservation Commission

# VERNON TRAIL SYSTEM



## TRAILS:

- ① RISLEY POND LOOP
- ② RAILS-TO-TRAILS; HOP RIVER LINEAR PARK
- ③ RAILS-TO-TRAILS; ROCKVILLE SPUR
- ④ HOCKANUM RIVER LINEAR PARK
- ⑤ NORTHERN CONNECTICUT LAND TRUST
- ⑥ VERNON CENTER MIDDLE SCHOOL
- ⑦ BELDING WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
- ⑧ VALLEY FALLS
- ⑨ BRAILLE TRAIL, VALLEY FALLS
- ⑩ SHENIPSIT TRAIL
- ⑪ WALKERS RESERVOIR

0.2 0 0.2 0.4 0.6 Miles

## LEGEND

- ROADS
- RIVERS & STREAMS
- RAILS-TO-TRAILS

## **TYPE AND VARIETY OF TRAILS IN VERNON, CT**

All of the following trails are open to the public. Trail maps and descriptions are available for each trail at the office of Vernon Parks and Recreation at Henry Park, 120 South St., Vernon, Ct. 06066. Phone (860) 870-3520. In 1998, Vernon received the Connecticut Trail Town Award from Connecticut Forest and Park Association.

### **RISLEY POND LOOP TRAIL**

This trail consists 3.3 miles of blazed loop trails around Risley Pond and up to the ridge of Box Mountain in Vernon. The trail provides for the public a scenic walk around the pond, through mixed growth forest, and a vista overlooking historic Railroad Valley. Swimming and boating are not allowed in the pond which is a water source, however, ice skating is allowed in the winter and fishing year around. The trail is permitted on properties which were deeded to the Manchester Conservation Land Trust and, also, on properties privately owned. Trail construction and maintenance is provided entirely by volunteers for Connecticut Forest and Park Association (a non-profit organization which manages 700 miles of Connecticut trails).

### **HOCKANUM RIVER LINEAR PARK TRAIL**

This hiking trail currently consists of 3.3 miles of blazed trail along the Hockanum River in Vernon. The trail is as close to the river bank as possible and provides a means of accessing the river for clean-up purposes. The trail also provides to the public a beautiful, scenic walk with mixed forest, water wildlife and river views. Fishing is also popular. The trail is permitted on properties which are owned by the town and private land owners. There are also, 1.3 more miles of stone dust and loop trails. An additional mile of stone dust trail may be completed in 2005. Trail construction and maintenance is provided by volunteers from the Hockanum River Linear Park Committee and by Vernon Parks and Recreation. The trail is included in the Hockanum River Master Plan of Development which is approved by the Town of Vernon, hereafter listed as the 'Master Plan'.

### **RAILS-TO-TRAILS; HOP RIVER LINEAR PARK EXTENSION**

This multi-use 'greenway' consists of 5.9 miles of trail along an abandoned railway (Hartford, Providence and Fishkill RR) from the Vernon / Manchester town line easterly, then southerly to the Vernon / Bolton town line, then to Bolton Notch. From Bolton, the railway has been re-graded 15 more miles to Willimantic and is identified as a Connecticut State trail named the "Hop River Linear Park Trail". In Willimantic, it joins the Airline Linear Park Trail which is approx 40 miles long. These trails are permitted on Connecticut DEP property. The section in Vernon was re-graded by the Connecticut National Guard - Bravo Company of the 242nd Engineer Battalion and was then covered with stone dust by the town of Vernon. The funding was obtained by the Vernon Hockanum River Linear Park Committee from the State via ISTEAF funding and grants. The trail provides a route for the public for biking, hiking, cross-country skiing, and horseback. Handicap usage is encouraged. The trail is maintained by Vernon Parks and Recreation and by volunteers. The trail is included in the Master Plan.

### **RAILS-TO-TRAILS; ROCKVILLE SPUR**

This multi-use 'greenway' consists of 4.2 miles of trail along an abandoned railway which splits from the HOP RIVER LINEAR PARK Trail and heads northerly into the historic center of Rockville, Ct. The trail includes a foot bridge across the Tankerhoosen River. The funding was obtained by the Vernon Hockanum River Linear Park Committee from the State via ISTEPA funding and grants. The trail provides a route for the public for biking, hiking, cross-country skiing, and horseback. Handicap usage is encouraged. The trail is located on State DEP property. The trail is maintained by Vernon Parks and Recreation and by volunteers. The trail is included in the Master Plan.

### **DART HILL PARK, HOCKANUM RIVER**

This park contains 1.1 miles of loop trails, as well as, playground and picnic facilities. The park is entirely on Vernon town property and was dedicated on July 21, 1997. The funding was obtained by the Hockanum River Linear Park Committee from the State via recreational funding and grants. The nature trail is as close to the river bank as possible and provides a means of accessing the river for clean-up purposes. The blazed trail provides for the public a beautiful, scenic 0.7 mile walk with mixed forest, wildlife and river views. The construction and maintenance of the nature trail was done by volunteers of the Committee. The stone dust trail provides multi-use for the public including: biking, hiking, cross-country skiing and handicap usage. The construction of this trail was included in the contract and the maintenance is provided by Vernon Parks and Recreation and volunteers. This park is included in the Master Plan.

### **VERNON CENTER MIDDLE SCHOOL TRAILS**

This school (town) property contains 1.9 miles of blazed trails. The trails are used by the students going to and from school and by the public for hiking or cross-country skiing through woods, on hills and around a pond. The pond trail facilitates clean-up along the shore line and provides an opportunity for study of pond environments. The school track athletes also train on the trails. The construction and maintenance are provided by Vernon Parks and Recreation and volunteers.

### **BELDING TROUT MANAGEMENT TRAILS**

The Belding Trout Management Area was deeded to the Connecticut DEP. The property is managed as a 'catch and release' fishing area for trout and is located along the Tankerhoosen River. There are 2 miles of blazed trails in a beautiful mixed growth woods and along the river and a scenic pond. There are also several miles of wood roads. Fishing, picnicking, hiking, cross-country skiing, wild life observation and limited biking are popular. The river and pond trails also facilitate water clean-up activities. Trails are maintained by volunteers for Connecticut Forest and Park Association (a non-profit organization which manages 700 miles of Connecticut trails).

### **NORTHERN CONNECTICUT LAND TRUST TRAILS**

There are 1.4 miles of blazed loop trails on two adjoining parcels of land which were deeded to the Land Trust. The trails can be accessed at the corner of Bolton Rd and Indian Trail. Although the lower trail is wet in the spring, the trail provides opportunities for viewing wildlife and birds. The trails are constructed and maintained by Land Trust volunteers. There are also two loop trails which are shown on the trail map for Valley Falls Park. They are located around the Boulder Crest Soccer Field and add another 1.4 miles of Land Trust trails.

## **VALLEY FALLS PARK TRAILS**

There are 8.5 miles of blazed trails in Valley Falls Park, as well as a playground, picnic pavilion, toilet facilities and a swimming beach. The park is located on town property. Portions of the park contain ruins of textile mills and a early trout hatchery and have been declared a national historic site. The park is heavily used for swimming, picnicking, hiking, x-ctry skiing, fishing, wild flower and wildlife observation and a scenic vista. The park is a favorite place for activities with mentally and physically challenged groups. The park is located only 2.5 miles from a commuter parking lot at exit 67 on I-84. No bicycles are allowed in this park because of past trail damage caused by heavy bike usage (rallies). Trail construction and maintenance is done by Vernon Parks and Recreation, Boy Scouts and volunteers from the Vernon Land Trust and The Friends of Valley Falls.

## **BRAILLE TRAIL, VALLEY FALLS PARK**

The Braille loop trail was constructed on Valley Falls Park town property. The trail was constructed by Boy Scouts of Vernon Troop 223 under the direction of an Eagle Scout. It is the Town's first trail designed for use by the blind. There is a rope-way to follow which has knots that locate signposts containing both Braille and English explanations of historical or natural interests. The trail is located on the national historic site which is described in the Valley Falls Park description. The trail is maintained by the Boy Scouts and Vernon Parks and Recreation.

## **SHENIPSIT TRAIL**

The Vernon portion of the Shenipsit Trail contains 5 miles of blazed trail and forms a central portion of this 34 mile trail. It is a very popular for hiking and x-ctry skiing since it encompasses Rails-To-Trails, Valley Falls Park, vistas, ponds, rivers, wild d flowers, wild life and many tree species. The trail is permitted on State, Town and private property. The trail construction and maintenance is done by volunteers from Connecticut Forest and Park Association (a non-profit organization which manages 700 miles of Connecticut trails).

## **WALKER RESERVOIR TRAIL**

This blazed trail is a short (0.8 mile), but, scenic path around the shore of Walker Reservoir. Ducks and geese are commonly seen. The trail is located on town property. Fishing is popular and access is provided for physically challenged fishermen. Curling, hockey and skating are very popular in winter. Across the street is a large sports-plex and a commuter parking lot at exit 67 for I-84. The trail construction and maintenance is done by Vernon Parks and Recreation and volunteers.

## **SUMMARY:**

The Vernon trail system provides nodes which are dispersed throughout the town, providing convenient access for all of it's citizens. Since Vernon is centrally located on I-84 which divides Connecticut in half, the trails are also convenient for most CT. citizens. Many of the trails are scenic with rivers, ponds, mixed growth forests, wildflowers, wildlife and vistas. All trails are user-friendly since each one is depicted on a map with an accompanying description containing mile markers. In addition, all trails are either marked or clearly defined. For these reasons, these trails are popular for hikes led by the CT chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club. They are also popular for wellness walks sponsored by the local health organizations and community walks sponsored by the Vernon Land Trust.

The linear trails along the two town rivers facilitate clean-up efforts and increase citizen awareness. Thus, they have contributed to the remarkable improvement in water quality. They also provide access for non-motorized use by kayaks, rafts and canoes.

The Rails-To-Trails divide the town into four approximately equal quadrants and access is easy from most of the major town roads. They are within minutes of the High School and several of the other schools. They connect with the CT Greenway system and the National East Coast Greenway system. Therefore, these trails provide for non-motorized use by hikers, bicyclists, x-ctry skiers and equestrians.

Through the efforts of Vernon citizen volunteers, the construction of new trails, the maintenance of existing trails and the proper usage of the trails is coordinated with the following organizations:

- Vernon Parks and Recreation Dept. (local government)
- Appalachian Mountain Club, Connecticut Chapter (private, non-profit)
- Connecticut Forest and Park Association (private, non-profit)
- Friends of Hockanum River Linear Park (private, non-profit)
- Friends of Valley Falls (private, non-profit)
- Northern Connecticut Land Trust (private, non-profit)

# 1 RISLEY POND LOOP TRAIL

Revision 2, January 2005

**RISLEY POND AREA LOOP TRAIL TO BOX MOUNTAIN CREST . Blue markers;**  
2.6 mile

loop with about 400 ft total climb.

Miles Description

- 0 Roadside parking on Lake St, go east toward the North end of Risley Pond.
- 0.1 Pond edge, go left on trail.
- 0.2 Cross stream to East shore of pond; go South along pond shore.
- 0.4 Stream crossing.
- 0.6 South end of pond; dam at R, trail turns L.  
For pond loop walk only, cross dam overflow outlet and dam, go along West pond shore back to entry way and car.
- 1.0 Trail through woods to a stone wall; do not cross wall.
- 1.1 Jct. unpaved road.
- 1.2 Turn L off road.
- 1.4 Arrive at crest of Box Mt.. Trail turns L (North) along ridge. Straight at ridge jct is trail to lookout. See map.
- 1.5 Cross unpaved road and a trail.
- 1.7 Begin down; West direction.
- 1.9 Flat area, often wet in rainy season.
- 2.4 Cross stream to West side of Risley Pond.
- 2.6 Arrive at parking lot.

**SIDE TRAIL FROM BOX MOUNTAIN RIDGE TO RAILROAD VALLEY LOOKOUT. Not well marked,**  
0.7 miles

Miles Description

- 0 From Box Mtn ridge ( point 1.4 on trail above), go East on blazed trail.
- 0.1 Jct with unpaved road, turn L. At fork in 10 yards bear R to lookout I. branch to

**COMBINED LOOP AND LOOKOUT WALK**  
Mostly blue markers; 3.3 miles; 400 ft climb.

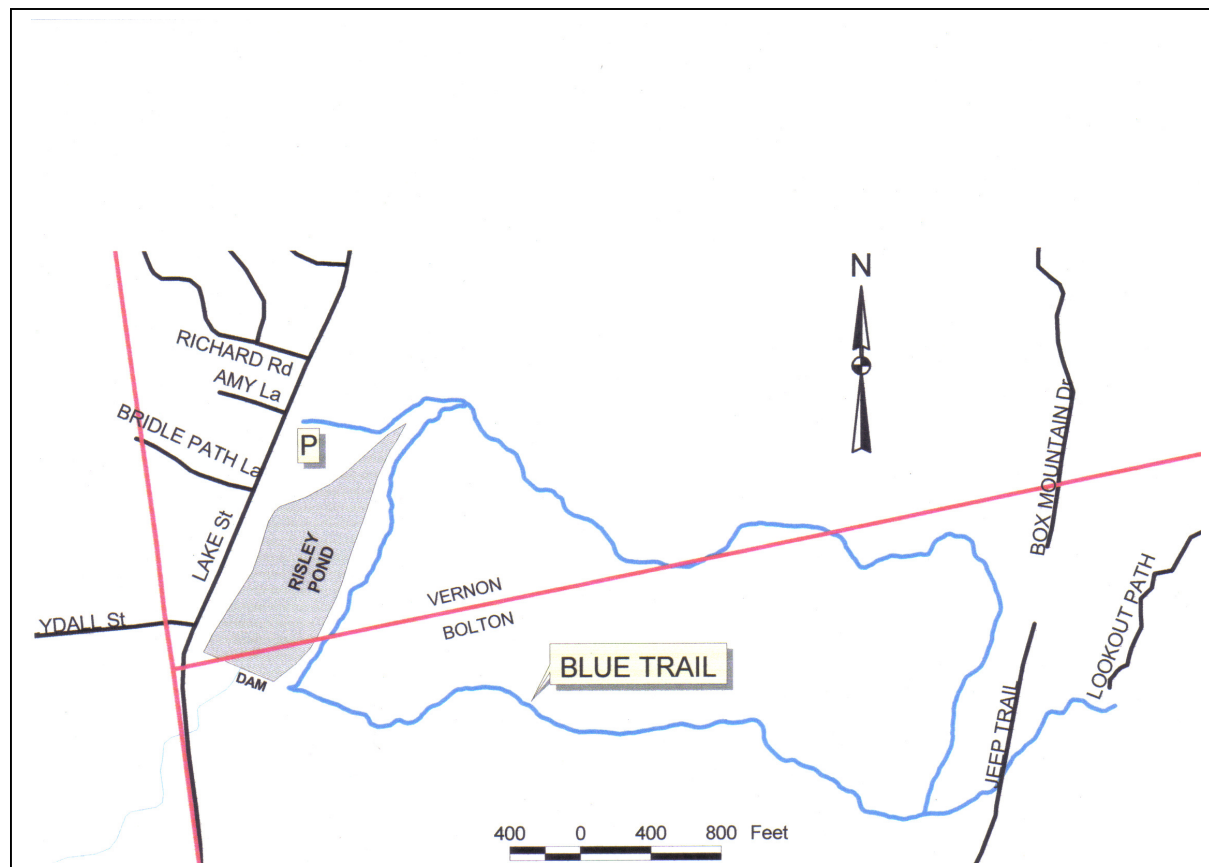
Miles Description

- 3.3 Total walk from car to North end of pond, along East shore to dam, up Box Mtn to Lookout Trail, along Lookout Trail to the lookout, return to Box Mtn ridge, along ridge, then down North end slope and return to car.

**ADDITIONAL TRAILS**  
Yellow markers

Trail along the west shore of pond and across dam

A ½ mile cross trail which shortens the blue trail by about half and eliminates the steep climb. Excellent for x-ctry skiing.





## 2 RAILS-TO-TRAILS; HOP RIVER LINEAR PARK EXTENSION

# RAILS-TO-TRAILS; ROCKVILLE SPUR

Revision 2, January 2005

On grade parking is available from Church St. There is an uphill path to the trail from roadside parking on the south side of the tunnel on Tunnel Rd. There is access from Valley Falls Park by following the blue blazed Shenipsit Trail toward the south.

### HOP RIVER LINEAR PARK EXTENSION

Unblazed, 5.7 miles;

Direction of travel - clockwise

Miles

0.0	Taylor St.
0.6	Elm Hill Rd.
1.3	Dobson Rd.
1.7	Phoenix St.
2.6	Tunnel Rd.
2.6	Valley Falls Rd.
5.0	Vernon Town Line (Pavilion on left is private please do not trespass)
5.7	North end of Bolton Notch Pond

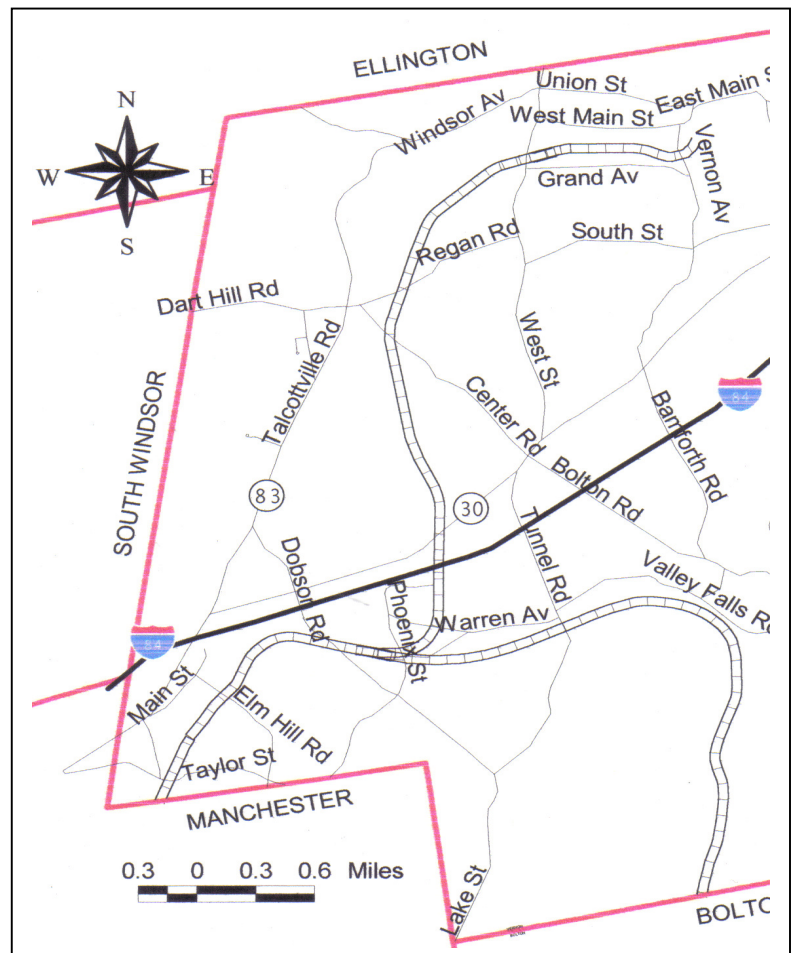
### RAILS-TO-TRAILS; ROCKVILLE SPUR

Unblazed; 3.8 miles;

Direction of travel - S to N

Miles

0.0	Phoenix St.
0.25	Maple Ave.
0.45	Tankerhoosen River bridge
0.65	I-84 underpass
0.85	Rt. 30, Hartford Turnpike
1.75	Center Rd.
2.0	Regan Rd.
3.0	West St.
3.4	Rau St.
3.8	Vernon Ave.





**DART HILL RD, SOUTH ON  
WEST BANK TRAIL. SEE  
EAST BANK TRAIL MAP**

**Orange markers; 0.8 miles**

Miles      Description

Trail starts at Dart Hill North Park

and goes W on Dart Hill Rd, across  
Hockanum River. Pass Lawler Rd  
and Skinner Rd.

0.2    Turn L, cross Dart Hill Rd,  
sidewalk, and enter Dart Hill South  
Park property. Follow blazes  
through small wooded area, through  
field, into another wooded area.

0.3    Cross wooden bridge, turn L and follow  
blazes.

0.4    Turn R along Hockanum River.

0.5    Pass southern boundary of Dart Hill  
South Park. Shortly, pass connecting  
trail on R (that goes to stone dust  
trail.)

0.6    Turn R to stone dust trail, turn L,  
pass under power lines. Turn L and  
follow blazes back into wooded  
area.

0.7    Trail currently ends on stone dust trail. L on  
stone dust goes to Hockanum Blvd, R  
returns to Dart Hill South Park.

**DART HILL SOUTH PARK STONE DUST  
TRAIL, SOUTH ON WEST BANK**

Unmarked, 1.1 miles

Miles      Description

0      From parking lot, cross bridge and turn L  
on stone dust trail. (R is a stone dust loop  
within the Park.)

0.1    Trail turns R, orange blaze trail joins from  
L for a short distance and then turns L to  
follow Hockanum River. Continue straight  
ahead on stone dust trail.

0.2    Leave Park boundary, continue along edge  
of woods with housing units on R.

0.6    Cross Hockanum Boulevard.

1.0    End of trail. Do not cross bridge.

**HOCKANUM PARK LOOP TRAILS.  
SEE EAST BANK TRAIL MAP**

Unmarked; various lengths, listed from north to  
south.

**DART HILL NORTH EXTENSION PARK**

This stone dust loop trail can be accessed from  
Rt. 83, Talcottville Rd just north of the  
intersection with Loveland Hill Rd.. From the  
south end of the parking strip by Paul's Pizza,  
the trail makes a rectangular loop of 0.4 miles.  
At both of the western corners, there are short  
connecting trails to the East Bank River trail.  
There are several picnic tables on the loop.

**DART HILL NORTH PARK**

This unpaved trail can be accessed from the  
parking lot for the park on Dart Hill Rd., 0.1  
miles west of Rt. 83 on the N side of the road.  
Pass around the gate, follow the stone dust path  
to the R. Shortly, the loop trail goes R on an old  
asphalt rd. It makes a rectangular CCW loop, is  
unpaved, and in 0.3 miles comes back to the  
starting point. The west side of the loop is  
coincident with the orange blazed river trail.  
There are picnic tables near the parking lot and a  
boardwalk and observation deck lead to river  
views.

**DART HILL SOUTH PARK**

**A stone dust loop trail can be accessed  
from the parking lot for the park on  
the south side of Dart Hill Rd, 0.5 miles  
west of Rt. 83. Cross the bridge, and  
take the stone dust trail to either the  
left or right for a 0.5 mile loop. There**

## 6 VERNON CENTER MIDDLE SCHOOL TRAILS

Parking is available for these trails at the extreme northeast corner of the school parking lot off Rt 30, Hartford Turnpike. Look for the blue blazes toward the north.

### HILLSIDE LOOP TRAIL.

Blue markers; 1.2 miles

Direction of travel is South to North

Miles Description

0.0 Go North from the Northeast corner of the school parking lot.

0.1 Cross wooden bridge and turn R (East) on woods road.

0.2 Go North along Ecker Pond. (Yellow marked trail goes R.)

0.4 Go North onto foot trail. (Woods road and yellow trail go L)

Turn L uphill on another foot trail.

Continue uphill past red trail on L.

0.7 Turn L (South) and start downhill.

Continue downhill on woods road past red trail on R, past red trail on L, past yellow trail on L.

0.95 Turn R (South) on woods road. (Ecker Pond now on L).

1.1 Turn L (South) and cross bridge. Reenter parking lot.

### ECKER POND VIEW TRAIL

Yellow markers; 0.5 miles; round trip distance from parking lot is 0.9 miles. Direction of travel is South to North.

Miles Description

0.0 Go North from the Northeast corner of the school parking lot on the blue Hillside Loop Trail.

0.1 Cross wooden bridge and turn R (East) on woods road.

Go R on yellow Ecker Pond View Trail and North along shore.

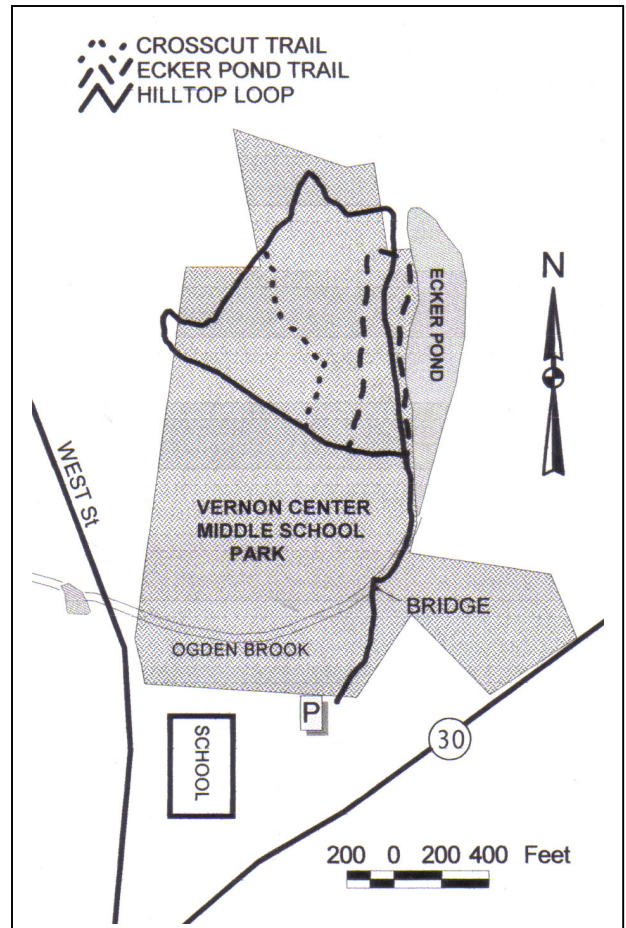
Go L, crossing blue trail, on woods road which soon turns L (South).

Turn L on woods road, joining the blue Hillside Loop Trail.

Turn R on woods road and go South on blue Hillside Loop Trail to return to parking..

### CROSSCUT TRAIL

Red markers; this trail is 0.15 miles long, and provides a loop walk when used in conjunction with the blue Hillside Loop Trail.



## 7 BELDING MANAGEMENT AREA TRAILS

### **SHENIPSIT TRAIL, BELDING TROUT MANAGEMENT AREA**

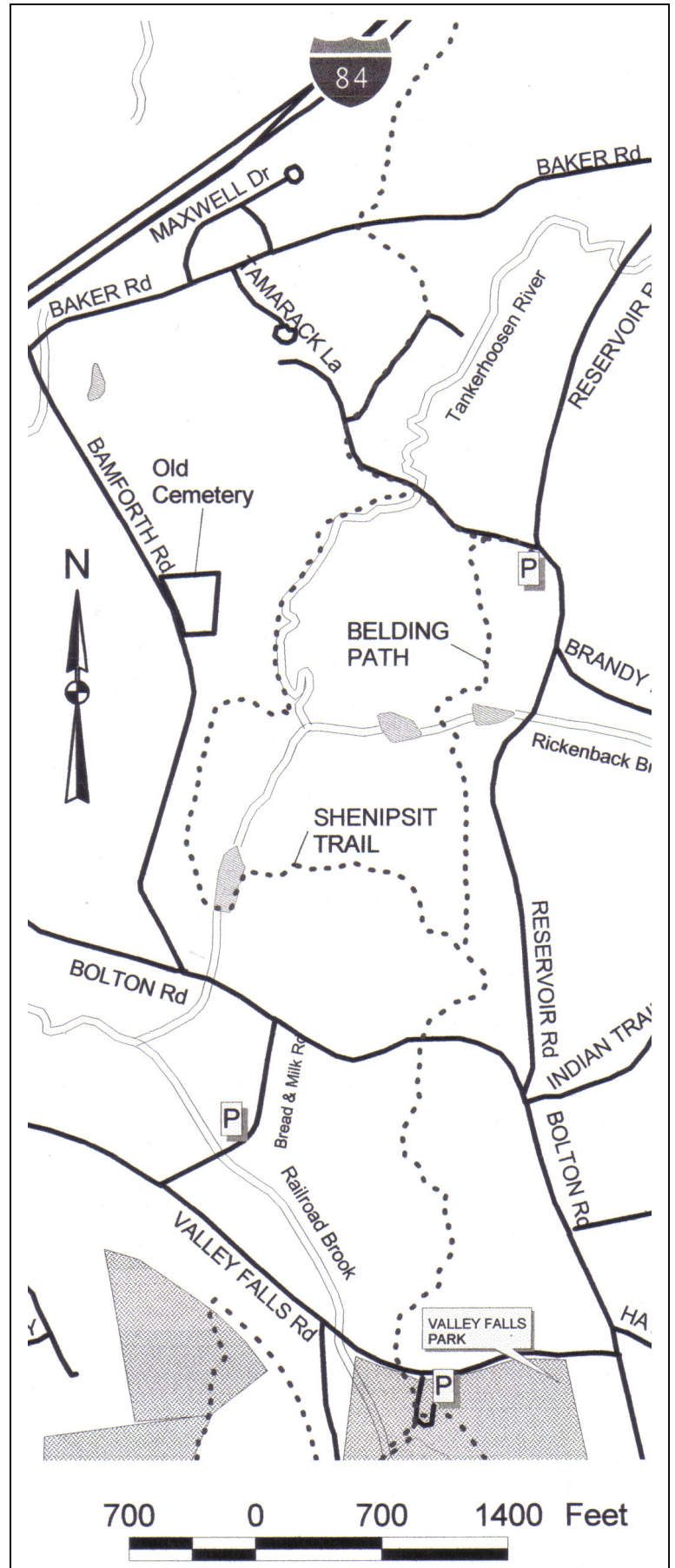
Blue markers; 1.78 miles; Direction of travel - South to North.

Miles	Description
0.0	Leave Valley Falls parking area and enter woods on N side of Valley Falls Rd. Trail climbs to NE.
0.42	Pass thru stone wall, cross Bolton Rd. Trail swings to E on other side.
0.50	Descend into rocky ravine, cross small brook. Turn N along wall.
0.57	Pass S end of yellow Belding Path on R. Belding Path rejoins the Shenipsit via a blue/yellow blazed connecting trail near Reservoir Rd.
0.77	Cross woods road then turning W.
0.84	Descend and cross woods road.
0.86	Go L, follow shore of small pond.
0.94	Cross dam on bridge, turn R.
1.00	Join woods road and follow to N.
1.20	Leave woods road and turn E.
1.28	At Tankerhoosen River, go L.
1.64	Reach abandoned Snake Hill Rd. and turn L. (Blue/Yellow Connecting Trail crosses river on old bridge to R, intersects yellow Belding Path in 0.1 mi, then ends at small parking area on Reservoir Rd.)
2.0	Cross Baker Rd, trail continues 1.4 mi to I-84 Exit 67 commuter lot.

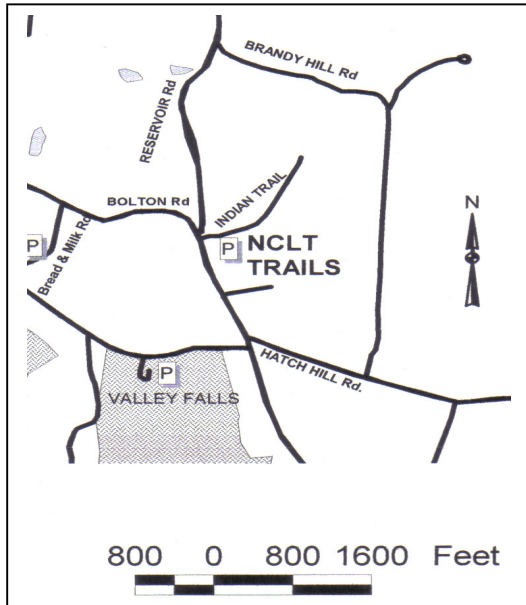
### **BELDING PATH**

Yellow markers; 0.51 miles;  
Direction: N to S.

Miles	Description
0.0	Trail leaves blue/yellow Connecting Trail and Snake Hill Rd. and goes S.
0.22	Turn L from woods road.
0.27	Cross bridge over small brook. Water cascades over small dam to L. Join woods road to L (S).
0.41	Leave woods road at bend, and go straight ahead in open woods.
0.51	Jct. with blue Shenipsit Trail. Turn L to return to Valley Falls.



## 5 NORTHERN CONNECTICUT LAND TRUST

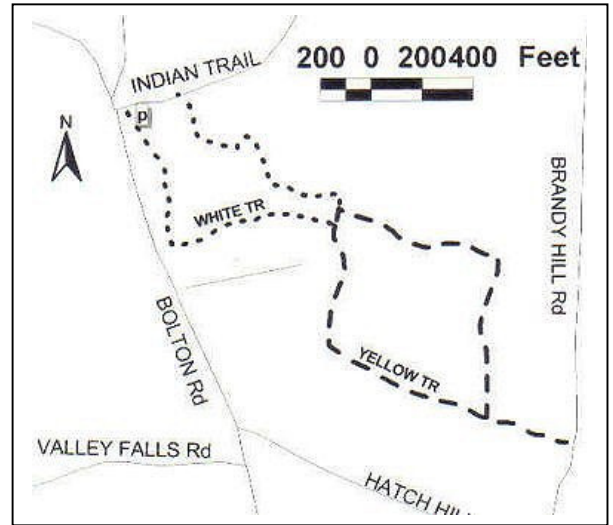


### INDIAN TRAIL LONGER LOOP

Yellow markers; 1.0 miles; Direction of travel: clockwise.

#### Miles

- 0.0 Park on R side of Indian Trail Rd approx 50 ft from Bolton Rd. Enter woods on white trail S along Bolton Rd
- 0.1 Turn L (E) on trail.
- 0.2 Note house and property on R.
- 0.22 Cross stone wall, turn L (N) on trail approx 100 ft, then turn R (E) and go uphill with stream on L.
- 0.28 Stream turns to L, continue straight uphill to E with smaller gully on L.
- 0.36 Near top with houses ahead, turn R.
- 0.45 Cross stream gully and continue S.
- 0.51 Turn R (W) and go downhill. Note: An alternate turn to the L (E) goes 300 ft. out to Brandy Hill Rd on a right-of-way. There is no room to park.
- 0.64 Before a steeper downhill with house in sight in front of you, turn R.
- 0.72 Cross deep gully and rejoin white trail. End of yellow trail.
- 0.75 Turn L (W) along stream bed. Note house and property on R.
- 0.81 Turn R, cross stream, go N on top of dirt bank.
- 0.85 Turn L with stream on the L.
- 0.92 Turn R (N).
- 0.96 Arrive back at Indian Trail Rd. approx 100 ft E of start.



### INDIAN TRAIL SHORT LOOP

White markers; 0.4 miles; Direction of travel: counterclockwise.

#### Miles

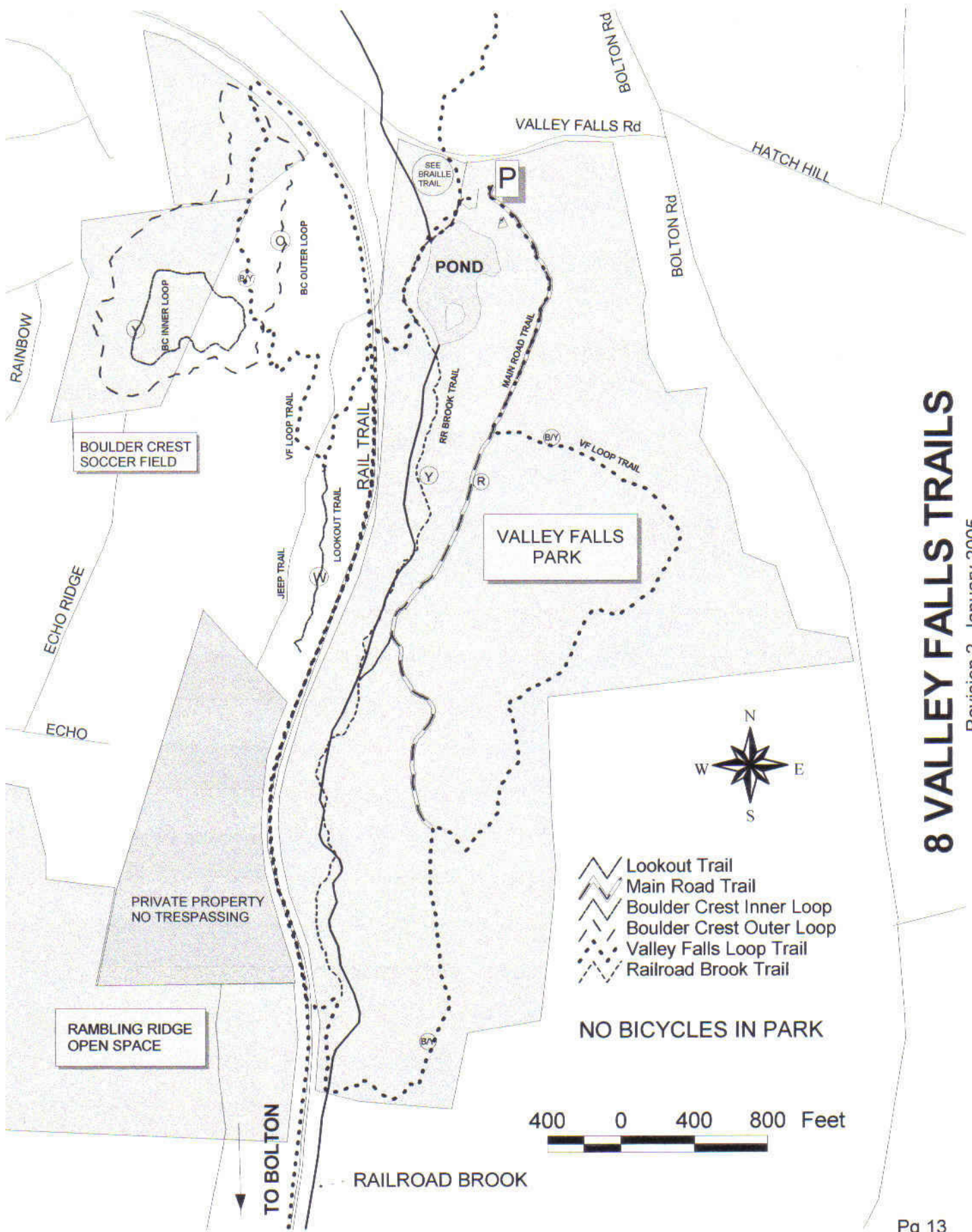
- 0.0 Park on R side of Indian Trail Rd approx 50 ft from Bolton Rd. Enter woods on white trail S along Bolton Rd.
- 0.1 Turn L (E) on trail.
- 0.2 Note house and property on R.
- 0.22 Cross stone wall, turn L (N) on trail approx 100 ft, then turn L and follow stream W. Note house and property on R.
- 0.28 Turn R, cross stream, go N on top of dirt bank.
- 0.32 Turn L with stream on the L.
- 0.36 Turn R (N).
- 0.4 Arrive back at Indian Trail Rd approx 100 ft E of start.

### ADDITIONAL NCLT TRAILS:

**There are two additional loop trails near the Boulder Crest Soccer Fields – see #8 Valley Falls map.**

**There is an old jeep road that goes south from Valley Falls Rd. near Railroad Brook and climbs to the**





- Lookout Trail
- Main Road Trail
- Boulder Crest Inner Loop
- Boulder Crest Outer Loop
- Valley Falls Loop Trail
- Railroad Brook Trail

**NO BICYCLES IN PARK**



# 8 VALLEY FALLS TRAILS

Revision 2, January 2005

## **NO BICYCLES ALLOWED ON TRAILS WITHIN VALLEY FALLS PARK**

### **RAILROAD BROOK TRAIL**

Yellow markers; minimum 2 miles for complete loop. Travel: North to South.

Miles

- 0 Parking lot. Face pond; go R to exit road from lot ; cross chain; cross pond dam. Cross 2 bridges over spillways. Note waterfalls.
- 0.1 Climb stairs. Continue straight. Trail at R is blue Shenipsit Trail and goes up to rail bed.
- 0.2 Cross bridge over Railroad Brook. Immediately trail turns R and follows brook South. (The trail L near bridge is Pond Loop Trail - orange markers).
- 0.4 Continue South along brook. Cross 3 more bridges over small feeder streams.
- 0.5 Cross bridge over stream. (Unmarked trails to L lead to Main Road Trail).
- 0.8 Cross bridge over Railroad Brook , continue South along brook.
- 1.0 Jct with blue/yellow (B/Y) marked trail.

Options:

- A Straight ahead on B/Y trail to RR Brook crossing (0.2 miles), then follow B/Y to red Main Road Trail (0.5 miles). Straight ahead on Main Road Trail to parking lot (1.4 miles). Total loop 2.4 miles.
- B R on B/Y trail uphill to rail bed, then R again on blue marked Shenipsit trail to parking lot. Total loop 2.0 miles.
- C Return to parking lot on same trail; or take unmarked cutoff trail R to red Main Road Trail then L; or at pond take orange Pond Loop Trail to R. Total loop 2.0 miles.

### **NORTHERN CONNECTICUT TRAILS**

There are two loop trails up near the soccer field. The outer loop (0.9 miles) is marked orange and crosses the Valley Falls Loop Trail (B/Y) twice. The inner loop trail (0.4 miles) is marked yellow. See map.

## **8 VALLEY FALLS PARK TRAILS**

### **MAIN ROAD TRAIL**

Red markers, minimum 1.6 mile for complete loop. Direction of travel: North to South.

Miles

- 0.0 Parking lot. Face pond, go L and pass with pavilion on R to unpaved road into wooded area.
- 0.2 Cross bridge between de-forested fields.
- 0.3 Follow road into woods. Blue/yellow trail at L. At fork in trail, go L. Trail to R rejoins in 100 ft.
- 0.5 Cross bridge, continue on road, past side trail at R which goes to Railroad Brook.
- 0.5+At fork in trail, go L (unmarked trail to R goes to Railroad Brook Trail).
- 0.6 Cross stream
- 0.8 Junction with blue/yellow trail. L on B/Y goes up hill and then back to parking lot. Straight ahead on B/Y goes to yellow RR brook Trail or to Rail Trail then back to parking lot. This is the end of the red trail, to return to parking lot on the red trail is 0.8 miles.

### **VALLEY FALLS LOOP TRAIL**

Blue/yellow markers. 3.8 mile loop. Direction of travel: ccw.

Miles

- 0.0 Exit parking lot to S on blue trail. Pass pond on L, waterfall on R, cross 2 bridges over spillways.
- 0.3 Climb and descend stairs, turn R up to railbed. Go R (S) following blue/yellow markers on rail bed.
- 0.5 Turn L off rail bed and climb to S up the hill.
- 0.7 Pass soccer field on R. Boulder Ridge town park. Cross jct with orange Land Trust loop trail.
- 1.0 Cross brook in valley.
- 1.1 Cross jeep road. Jct with white Lookout trail (go right to view lookouts in 0.3 miles – 0.6 round trip.) Go L on B/Y down to rail bed.
- 1.2 Turn R (S) on rail bed
- 1.9 Turn L off rail bed going down, turn R at base of hill. Yellow Railroad Brook Trail goes L. (Blue Shenipsit Trail on rail bed continues South to Bolton Notch).

### **VALLEY FALLS LOOP TRAIL (Cont)**

- 2.2 Turn L and cross brook on bridge. This is the southern-most point on the trail.
- 2.3 Jct with trail, turn L (North). Trail to the R leaves the park on private property. Don't trespass.
- 2.6 Turn R off jeep road and start hill climb. (Jeep rd continues North to parking lot as red Main Road Trail).
- 3.1 Pass hill top on L, field on R, and start down along ravine.
- 3.5 Turn R (N) on red Main Road Trail into field.
- 3.8 Valley Falls parking lot.

### **POND LOOP TRAIL**

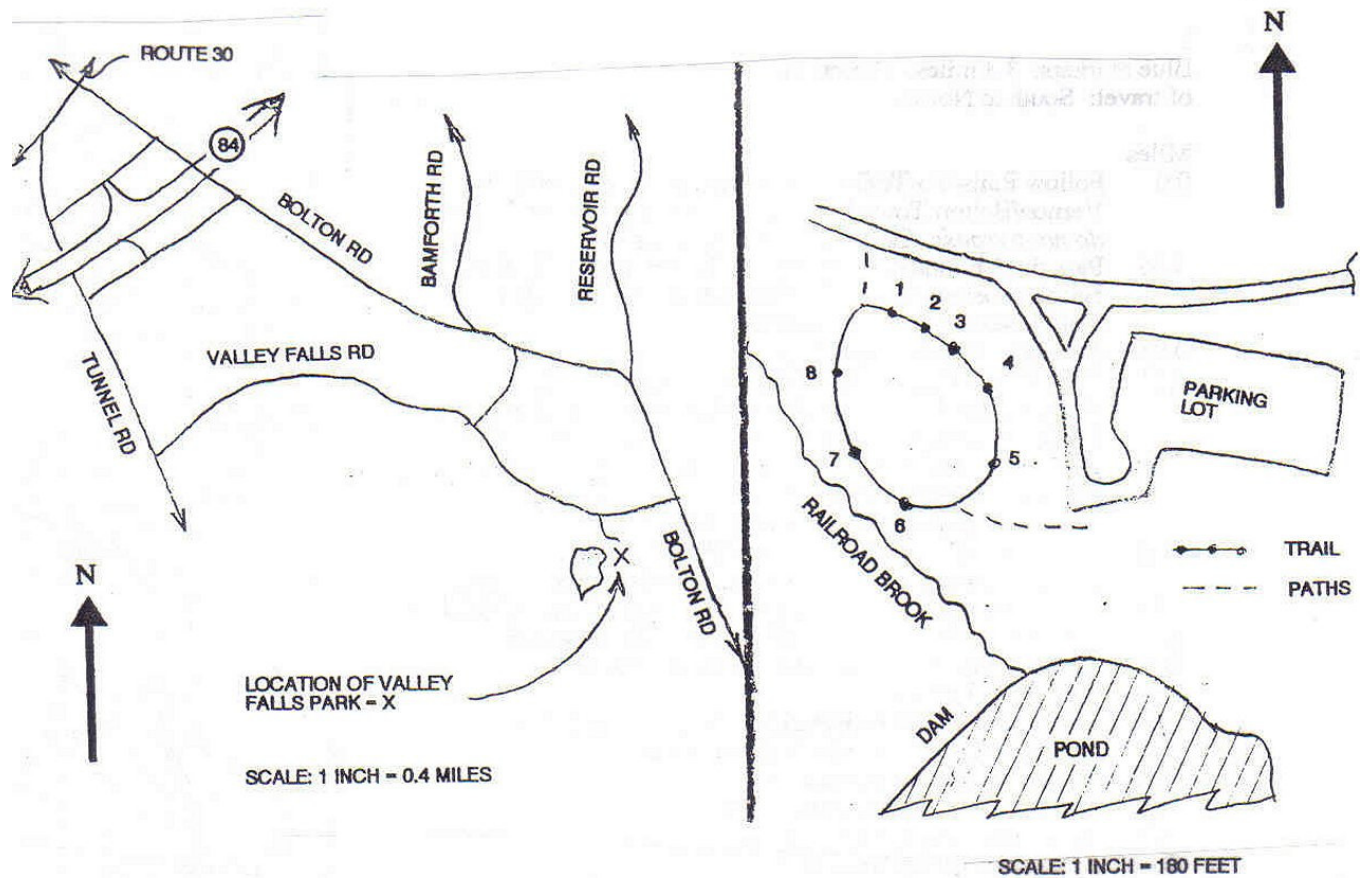
Orange markers; 0.6 mile loop. Travel: ccw.

Miles

- 0.0 Parking lot. Face pond; go R to exit road from lot ; cross chain; cross pond dam. Cross 2 bridges over spillways. Note waterfalls.
- 0.1 Climb stairs. Continue straight. Trail at R is blue Shenipsit Trail and goes up to railbed.
- 0.2 Cross bridge over Railroad Brook. Immediately after bridge, trail turns R. Pond Loop Trail then turns L. (Railroad Brook Trail continues along brook).
- 0.3 After crossing another bridge, trail turns L into clearing. Follow treeline gradually turning R.
- 0.4 At jct with Main Road Trail (unpaved) turn L and re-enter wooded area.
- 0.6 Continue past pavilion on L to parking lot.



## 9 BRAILLE TRAIL, VALLEY FALLS PARK



### BRAILLE TRAIL

Marked with rope; 800 ft.; Direction of travel: clockwise

#### Station

- 0 Start from Valley Falls Rd.
- 1 Explanation of trail.
- 2 Remains of Briggs' home.
- 3 Remains and explanation of mill history.
- 4 Mill foundation wall and verbage about Christian Sharps.
- 5 Identification of trees near trail .
- 6 Explanation of Valley Falls Co. and mills.
- 7 Explanation of Hartford, Providence and Fishkill Railroad.
- 8 Verbage about Railroad Brook.

**10 SHENIPSIT TRAIL** (Revision 2, January 2005)  
**BOLTON NOTCH TO VALLEY FALLS PARK**  
(Blazes: Blue - Direction of Travel. S to N)

This segment traverses the undeveloped Railroad Brook Valley between Bolton Notch and Valley Falls Park in Vernon. It features rugged high ledges with views, ponds, streams, and mature hemlock and laurel growth. The trail will parallel or be coincident with the Hop River State Park Trail.

Leave N side of Rt. 6/44A exit ramp off I-384 (0.0) just to the E of commuter parking lot (*ample parking*). Follow entrance road of the closed drive-in theater. Bolton Notch Pond on right. Turn R (0.2) and descend on dirt access road to Freja Park (undeveloped). Cross brook and turn R on foot path into woods on W side of pond. Cross small parking area (0.3) and pond access point and continue along W shore of pond. Turning more to the E, cross brook and climb ledge with overlooks on N side of pond. Trail follows ridge to N (0.5) through overarching laurel, passes above pond outlet and Railroad Brook. Descend to and cross old woods road. (Follow woods road to R, cross wooden bridge to Hop River State Park Rail Trail, not marked or blazed). Continue N from woods road (0.6) and with short steep climb reach top of ridge. On top turn R and then to L, through heavy laurel. Trail comes out to edge of high ledge (0.8) with views to E and of Railroad Brook and the rail bed below. Skirt large upturned ledge (1.0) and descend steeply to rail bed. Junction with Hop River Trail. Shenipsit Trail turns to the L and runs N on rail bed. (For loop walk turn to the R on the rail bed, passing beneath the high ledges that were just crossed. In 0.4 m. turn R, cross wooden bridge, rejoin Shenipsit.) Follow rail bed with private land on either side (1.3). Small brook down on the L. Pavilion on the right is private (Please do not trespass). The S boundary of Valley Falls Park is passed on the R (1.6). Shortly, join the blue/yellow blazed Valley Falls Loop Trail. (R descends from rail trail and makes a CCW loop around E side of the park, rejoining the main trail @ 2.6, or go straight ahead to 2.6.) High ledges on the L and Railroad Brook is now below on R. Trail passes base of steep cliff on the L (2.3). Turn R into Valley Falls Park (2.6) at junction with blue/yellow blazed Valley Falls Loop Trail. Jct. with yellow blazed Valley Falls park Trail (2.7) on W shore of Valley Falls Pond. Shenipsit Trail turns L with the pond on the R and ledges covered with moss and ferns on the L. Continue to the N end of the pond and the *parking area, 50 cars*, on Valley Falls Rd. (2.9). Admission to park is charged in summer. Park is popular for picnicking, hiking, swimming, nature study, ice skating and cross-country skiing.

SEE "7 BELDING MANAGEMENT AREA TRAILS"

for a description of this next section of the Shenipsit Trail that extends from Valley Falls Park to Baker Rd.

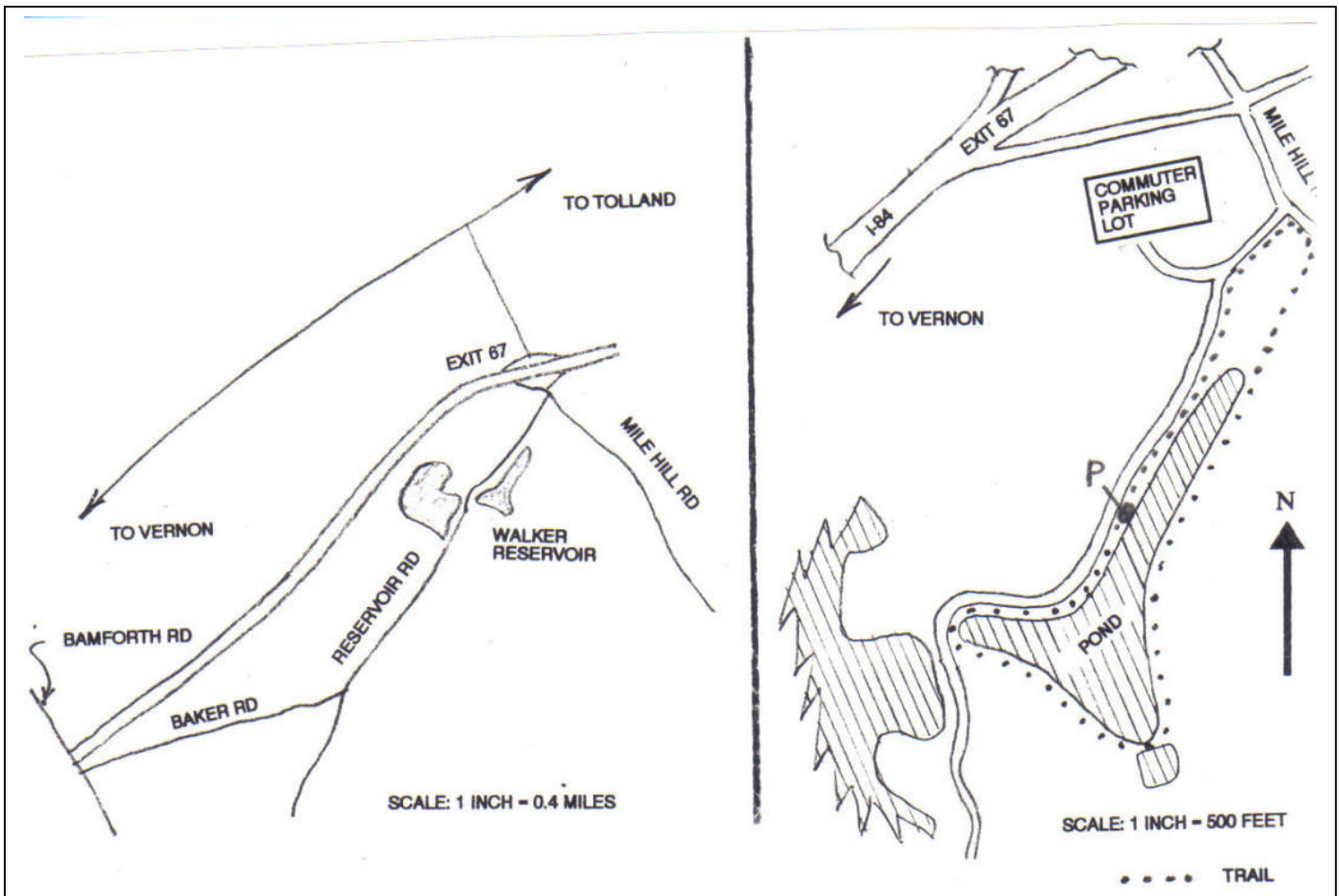
This segment, established in 1995, proceeds N from Valley Falls Park through the Belding Wildlife Management Area. The WMA was donated to DEP by Maxwell Belding and he established a trust for maintenance. It is rich in laurel and old-growth trees and features a cascade, pond, and a walk on the banks of the Tankerhoosen River. A loop walk of 2.8 m. from Valley Falls Park is possible utilizing the yellow blazed Belding Path.

**BELDING WMA TO I-84 EXIT 67**  
(Blazes: Blue - Direction of Travel. S to N)

This segment was completed in 2003. It connects from the Belding WMA, across Baker Rd. in Vernon, along the south side of I-84, around scenic Walker Reservoir West to the commuter lot at Exit 67.

Main trail goes on dirt Snake Hill Rd. from jct. with blue/yellow connecting trail at iron bridge (0.0) L off woods rd. (0.3) along small brook. Cross Baker Rd. (0.4) and slab R up small hill. Cross small brook (0.5). Proceed uphill with I-84 fence on L (0.7). Height of land (0.8), view of Box Mtn. on R. Cross a wet highway drainage area (1.1), views of Walker Reservoir West on R. L at jct. with Reservoir Rd. (1.5), views of Vernon recreational park, Walker Reservoir East straight ahead. The park is popular for hiking, picnicking, bird watching, and ice skating. There is a yellow blazed trail which skirts the L side of the reservoir. *Parking for 25 cars at the park*. Reach end of this section (1.8) at entrance drive for I-84 interchange #67 commuter *parking lot with ample parking*

## WALKER RESERVOIR TRAIL



### WALKER RESERVOIR TRAIL

Yellow markers; 0.8 miles; Direction of travel: counterclockwise.

#### Miles

- 0.0 From Walker Reservoir parking lot on Reservoir Rd, go S along road with pond on L.
- 0.1 Turn L from road along pond shore with pond on L.
- 0.24 Cross dam at S end of pond and turn N with pond on L.
- 0.5 Reach N end of pond.
- 0.6 Reach Mile Hill Rd.
- 0.7 Reach N end of pond.
- 0.8 Arrive back at starting point in parking lot.