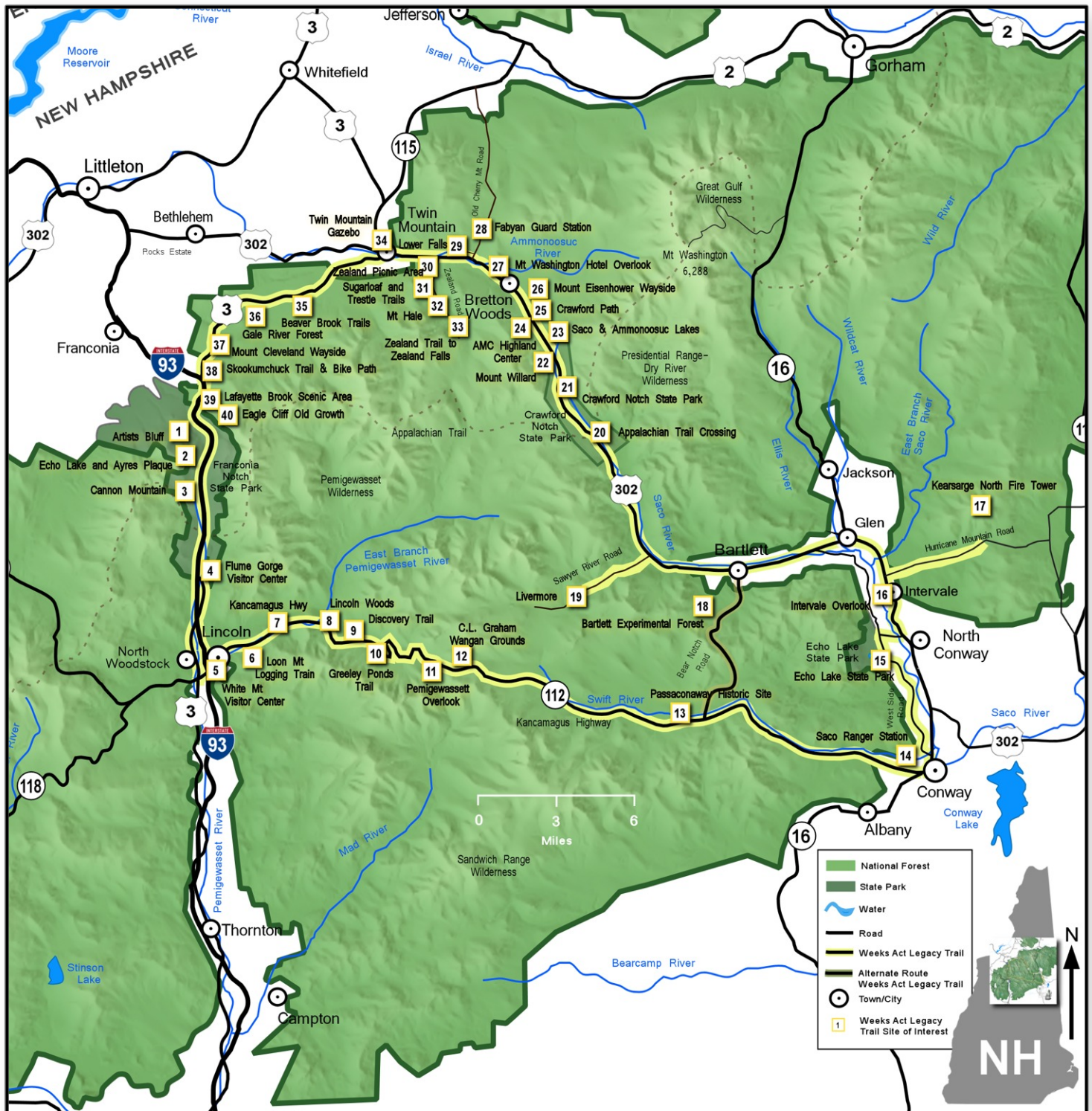


# THE WEEKS ACT LEGACY TRAIL

## A Driving Tour of the White Mountain National Forest



- Art & Literature
- Conservation
- Nature & Ecology
- History & Cultural Heritage
- Kids & Families
- Recreational Opportunities
- Scenery & Photo Opportunities
- Water

Get online/mobile/audio versions of this tour at [www.weeksactlegacytrail.org](http://www.weeksactlegacytrail.org)



### [1] Artists Bluff

GPS @44.180499,-71.695333



This half-mile hike to an open ledge provides a dramatic view of Franconia Notch framed by the ski slopes of Cannon Mountain on the right, Eagle Cliff, Mount Lafayette and the other peaks of The Franconia Ridge on the left and Echo Lake below. As its name suggests, Artists Bluff was a favorite spot among several influential painters in the late 1800s, including Edward Hill, artist-in-residence at the Profile House in Franconia Notch. The scene was a little different back then — the ski trails of Cannon Mountain had yet to be cut, the only buildings were those of the The Profile House, one of the earliest and most distinguished White Mountain resorts, and there was no Franconia Notch Parkway, only a carriage road and later The Profile and Franconia Notch Railroad which entered the Notch from the north to shuttle tourists to and from the resort. The forests of Franconia Notch, however, have not changed dramatically. Eighteenth century art from this vantage point brought the rugged beauty of Franconia Notch to a widespread and influential audience, helping to popularize the region and save its forests from sale to lumber companies in the 1920s.

To hike Artists Bluff, take exit 34C off I-93/US 3, a road known throughout the park as The Franconia Notch Parkway. The east trail head provides the most direct access to Artists Bluff and is located across the street from the Echo Lake Beach parking lot (fee may apply to park there in season). The path travels somewhat steeply over rock steps for a half mile to the lookout point. The west trail head is found on the edge of Cannon Mountain's Peabody Slopes parking lot, just a little north on Rte 18. From either trail head you can complete a hiking loop that includes the summits of Bald Mountain and Artists Bluff, both with excellent views. (Photo Credit: Greg Keeler)

#### Directions to Next Site:

If you're parked at Echo Lake Beach, you're already at the next stop on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail. Take in the views of the Franconia Notch forests from Artists Bluff, then travel shore-side to discover the hero who lead the charge to save them.



### [2] Echo Lake and Ayres Plaque

GPS @44.178046,-71.694766



Echo Lake has been the centerpiece of tourism to Franconia Notch since the 1850s. The Profile House, a grand resort that once stood just south of the lake, operated a steam-powered paddle boat on its waters. Today, people explore the 38 acre lake in canoes and kayaks and still enjoy swimming and trout fishing just as visitors have for over a century-and-a-half. The beach on the north shore is operated by the NH State Park System and is a convenient place to enjoy these activities.

Adjacent to the beach you will find a plaque honoring Philip Wheelock Ayres, the first Forester of the Society for the Protection of NH Forests. Ayres was a leading voice in the conservation movement; the plaque recognizes him for his role in the creation of both The White Mountain National Forsest and Franconia Notch State Park. Ayres publicized the deforestation of the White Mountains and organized influential groups to lobby congress for their protection. He also orchestrated a grass roots fundraising campaign to purchase Franconia Notch for the state in the 1920s, saving it from the lumber companies who were poised to buy it. The movement to save the Notch included US Veterans lobbying to preserve it as a war memorial, school children selling adoption certificates for trees in the forest, and The NH General Federation of Women's Clubs adopting the cause as a civic duty. The result of Ayres' efforts are visible today from this spot – Franconia Notch preserved as a State Park and hundreds of thousands of acres outside it federally managed as a National Forest. (Photo Credit: Greg Keeler)

#### Directions to Next Site:

At the next stop on the Week's Act Legacy Trail, Cannon Mountain, you'll have further opportunity to enjoy the beauty and recreation of Franconia Notch. Return to the Franconia Notch Parkway and head south, taking Exit 34B to arrive at the base of Cannon's Aerial Tramway.



### [3] Cannon Mountain

GPS @44.177838,-71.701351



There is a rich legacy of tourism and recreation on the site of what is today the base of the Cannon Mountain Aerial Tramway. From 1853 to 1923, this was the location of The Profile House, a luxury resort named after a rock outcropping known as "The Profile," "The Great Stone Face" and "The Old Man of the Mountain." The Profile House was destroyed by fire in 1923 and the resort's 6,000 acres were eventually sold to the state.

In 1938, the state completed construction of the nation's first aerial tramway here, a concept borrowed from Europe to fan the growth of skiing as an industry and draw additional tourism to the region in the summer. Today, the tramway runs in its second generation with two cars each capable of carrying 80 passengers to the summit. As you ride up, keep your eyes open for peregrine falcons that nest on the mountain's cliffs. The New England Ski Museum is fittingly located at the base of Cannon Mountain. There is also an Old Man of the Mountain Museum dedicated to the famous state icon that fell from Cannon Mountain in 2003. (Photo Credit: Greg Keeler)

continued...



#### Directions to Next Site:

From the height of Cannon Mountain, The Weeks Act Legacy Trail follows the headwaters of the Pemigewasset River south to another of Franconia Notch's spectacular natural wonders. Drive the Franconia Notch Parkway south to exit 34A to find The Flume Gorge Visitor Center.



#### [4] Flume Visitor Center

GPS @44.097097,-71.680312



A good stop for food, restrooms and detailed information on Franconia Notch, the Flume Gorge Visitor Center is best known as the gateway to an amazing 800-foot long chasm with granite walls rising as high as 90 feet. For a fee, you can travel a two mile path from the Flume Visitor Center that takes you on boardwalks into the gorge and up close with waterfalls, flowers, ferns and mosses. Other attractions along the path include Sentinel Pool and Sentinel Pine Bridge, one of the oldest covered bridges in the state and built over the fallen Sentinel Pine, one of the largest trees in the state before falling across the Pemigewasset River in 1938. Shorter walking routes are available for those who don't want to do the full loop. After the Society for the Protection of NH Forests helped the state purchase Franconia Notch in 1927, it maintained ownership of The Flume Gorge Reservation for 20 years, running it as a park. In 1947, the Flume Gorge became part of Franconia Notch State Park.

Interested in exploring the notch on bicycle? The Flume Gorge Visitor Center is the southern terminus of the Franconia Notch Bike Path, a paved recreation trail connecting most of the notch's attractions.

#### Directions to Next Site:

The next leg of the Week's Act Legacy Trail takes us south to the entrance of the famed Kancamagus Scenic Byway. Travel south on Route 3 for 2.5 miles, then merge right onto I-93 south. Take exit 32 for the town of Lincoln. At the bottom of the off ramp, turn left onto Route 112. The next stop, The White Mountain Visitor Center, is on the right.



#### [5] White Mountain Visitor Center in Lincoln

GPS @44.035421,-71.677036



The White Mountains Visitor Center in Lincoln is staffed by two organizations, White Mountains Attractions and the USDA Forest Service. The highlight of this stop is a superb walk-through, interactive exhibit created by the Forest Service on the history and use of the White Mountain National Forest, including exhibits on the Weeks Act. Forest Service staff can give recommendations on hiking trails, campgrounds and programs. This is a great chance to orient yourself with the White Mountains before continuing on your adventure.

#### Directions to Next Site:

To reach the next site along the trail, take a right out of the White Mountain Visitor Center onto Rte 112 and travel 2.7 miles. Loon Mountain will be on your right.



#### [6] Loon Ski Area Logging Train

GPS @44.05743,-71.634722



Loon Mountain is an example of past and present use of what is now the White Mountain National Forest. On display at the resort's entrance is a Porter 50-ton saddle tank engine used on the East Branch & Lincoln Railroad, the largest of the White Mountain logging railroads that criss-crossed these mountains at the turn of the 20th Century. Timber baron James E. Henry used the EB&L railroad to extract 600 million board feet of timber from the surrounding land, feeding the forest to his saw, pulp and paper mills that gave rise to the town of Lincoln. With the passing of The Weeks Act and the decline of logging, towns like Lincoln have re-invented themselves by developing recreation-based tourism. Today, several four-season resorts, including Loon, operate on the White Mountain National Forest under special use permit from the USDA Forest Service.

#### Directions to Next Site:

Now is a good time to check your vehicle's fuel gauge. If you're low, take a left out of Loon Mountain to return to Lincoln. Otherwise, turn right to head east on Rte 112. You're about to embark on a 34-mile drive across the undeveloped Kancamagus Scenic Byway.



## [7] Kancamagus Highway



The Kancamagus Highway, often called “The Kanc” by locals, is a National Scenic Byway connecting the town of Lincoln in the west with Conway in the east. Pronounced “Kanc’-ah-MAW’-gus” (rhymes with Saugus), it is named after the last Sagamon of the Penacook Confederacy. Kancamagus was known for his attempts at keeping the peace between the natives and white settlers before violence ultimately drove him into Canada in the late 1600s. The Kancamagus Highway follows many of the railroad beds and skidding roads of the defunct EB&L and Swift River logging companies, as well as carriage roads developed by early settlers of the White Mountains’ interior. The routes were eventually connected, then paved and opened in 1959 as the highway you find today. The Kancamagus Highway provides an exclusive look at the inner-most sections of the White Mountain National Forest, sections that could only have been seen by hikers just a few decades ago.

Out of Lincoln, you’ll drive alongside The East Branch of the Pemigewasset River to a peak elevation of 2,855 feet above sea level, then drop down along the Swift River on your way to Conway. As you travel through the heart of the White Mountain National Forest, stop and explore the wonderful scenic areas, rivers, waterfalls, hiking trails, campgrounds and historic places that dot the Kancamagus roadside. Be on the lookout for moose and other wildlife — sightings are a common occurrence along this road. (Photo Credit: ScenicNH.com Photography)

### Directions to Next Site:

The next seven stops on our journey will be on the Kancamagus Highway. The first is The Lincoln Woods Visitor Center and Trail located on the left side of the road, 2.5 miles east of Loon Mountain.



## [8] Lincoln Woods Visitor Center and Trail

GPS @44.063537,-71.588073



Lincoln Woods was the site where timber baron James E. Henry’s East Branch & Lincoln logging railroad branched deep into the forest, following the tributaries of the Pemigewasset River and stripping the land of its resources. By the time The Weeks Act was passed, little was left of the forest in this area. Today, the rails have been replaced by recreation paths taking you into the regrown forest.

The Lincoln Woods Visitor Center marks the beginning of the Lincoln Woods trail. Here you’ll find several interpretive displays on the land and its history before coming to a 180-foot suspension bridge spanning the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River. The trail follows the old railroad grade for 2.8 miles and is very popular with families for hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing because of its straight, flat stretches. There are also several challenging hiking trails that branch off the Lincoln Woods Trail and venture into the Pemigewasset Wilderness. Remnants of the old railroad include railroad ties along the Lincoln Woods trail and trestle abutments along the banks of several brooks and rivers.

### Directions to Next Site:

At Lincoln Woods, forests have returned in full where they had previously been eradicated. The slash and burn philosophy of timber baron James E. Henry has been replaced by the heavily considered management of The USDA Forest Service. To learn more about modern forestry practices in the National Forest, continue to The Discovery Trail. Take a left out of Lincoln Woods. The Discovery Trail parking lot is on the left 2.2 miles east on the Kancamagus Highway.



## [9] Discovery Trail

GPS @44.045833,-71.556659



The White Mountain National Forest is a working forest; it continues to provide jobs and forest products like timber. The Discovery Trail is a 1.5 mile walking loop that shows you how the forest is managed for these uses responsibly. Along the Discovery Trail you will see how, unlike slash-and-burn techniques of old, modern forest practices are patterned after natural disturbances to maintain a healthy, renewable forest, habitat for fish and wildlife and opportunities for recreation. The Discovery Trail is an easy walk for all ages and is universally accessible. Along the way are 10 interpretive displays explaining the scenes before you. In addition, a Discovery Trail Curriculum can be downloaded from the White Mountain National Forest website. The website also has contact information for planning group visits.

### Directions to Next Site:

The next stop on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail takes us a little deeper into the forest. Continue traveling east on the Kancamagus Highway 2.2 miles. The head of the Greeley Ponds Trail will be on the right at a sharp bend in the road.



**[10] Greeley Ponds Scenic Area**  
GPS @44.029536,-71.520728



The Greeley Ponds are a pair of remote mountain ponds surrounded by old growth forest that survived the logging onslaught of over a century ago. Nestled between the steep slopes of Mounts Kancamagus and Osceola, the ponds themselves are an easy, level hike from the Kancamagus Highway. The trail starts from a small parking lot just south of a hairpin turn in the Highway. It traverses several split log bridges over small brooks and muddy sections before reaching Upper Greeley Pond at 1.6 miles and Lower Greeley Pond at 2.1 miles. The trail is popular in winter with snowshoers and cross country skiers. This pond is the headwaters of the Mad River, a tributary of the Pemigewasset. The Greeley Pond area was protected in 1920. In 1968 it was designated a White Mountain National Forest Scenic Area — camping and campfires are prohibited year round to maintain the unspoiled beauty. (Photo Credit: ScenicNH.com Photography)

**Directions to Next Site:**

Next on The Weeks Act Legacy Trail, the view from the top of the Kancamagus Highway at the Pemigewasset Overlook. Travel 3.5 miles east to an elevation of over 2800 feet and you'll find the Pemigewasset Overlook on the right.



**[11] Pemigewasset Overlook**  
GPS @44.026366,-71.494946



The Pemigewasset Overlook features a stunning western view from just below the height of land on the Kancamagus Highway. The effects of The Weeks Act and nature's recuperative powers are on full display in the forests that drape the mountains from here to the horizon, mountains that only a century ago were heavily logged and even burned.

The word Pemigewasset is Abenaki and refers the swift current of the Pemigewasset River. This parking area is on the western edge of the Pemigewasset watershed; rain that falls along the highway from this point west will eventually make its way into the Pemigewasset River, then into the Merrimack River. This site features a sheltered picnic area, an interpretive geology display, toilets and a short universal access trail. For an especially breath-taking view, stop at this west-facing overlook at sunset. (Photo Credit: Jim Salge)

**Directions to Next Site:**

Just east of this point, the highway travels over Kancamagus Pass. Next, we will descend the Kancamagus Highway and follow the Swift River towards Conway. Our first stop, however, is just beyond the height of land. Turn right out of the parking lot and travel .2 miles for a view from the eastern side of the pass at the CL Graham – Wangan Ground Overlook.



**[12] C.L. Graham Wangan Grounds Scenic Overlook**  
GPS @44.023573,-71.492243



The CL Graham – Wangan Grounds Overlook offers panoramic views east into the Sawyer Pond watershed. Rain that falls here on the east side of Kancamagus Pass will eventually make its way into the Saco River. A covered viewing pavilion contains interpretive panels on the path of water in the mountains and on forest life zones.

The site is named after Clifford Graham, the longest serving forest supervisor of the White Mountain National Forest. Among Graham's accomplishments was the establishment of a citizen's advisory committee to help steer management of the White Mountain National Forest. The term "Wangan" refers to this site's previous use as a storage ground for logging camps. Buildings for storage or crude shelter were called wangans.

**Directions to Next Site:**

Next on The Weeks Act Legacy Trail: a White Mountain historical gem. Travel just over 9 miles east on the Kancamagus to the Russel Colbath Historic Site.



### [13] Passaconaway Historic Site

GPS: @ 43.995717, -71.338005



The Russell Colbath Homestead is the last significant remnant of the town of Passaconaway. Named after Kancamagus' grandfather, the larger-than-life Native American chief who founded the Pennacook Confederacy, the town of Passaconaway was at its peak in the 1850s when its population supported seven one-room school buildings. The first pioneers arrived on foot, hunted, trapped and cleared land for farms. Wagon road and then railroad increased access to Passaconaway, and the town grew to support the industries of logging and tourism. The Russel Colbath Homestead was built between 1831 and 1832, and purchased by the US Forest Service in 1969. Visitors today can tour the restored and authentically-furnished building and learn about the characters and way-of-life of the Passaconaway era.

Interpretive panels surrounding the homestead reveal fascinating glimpses into pioneer life, from what the pioneers were able to grow in their gardens for food to the natural remedies they used to fight illness and injury. The timber frame barn was built in 2004 and is used primarily to host Forest Service programs. There is also an easy nature path leading to the Swift River.

How does the land around Passaconaway today compare to the 1800s? What effect might The Weeks Act have had on this difference?

#### Directions to Next Site:

The next stop on The Weeks Act Legacy Trail takes us back to the present day use of the forest. Travel 12.6 miles east on the Kancamagus Highway to reach the White Mountain National Forest Saco Ranger Station on the right.



### [14] Saco Ranger Station

GPS @43.979877,-71.132998



The White Mountain National Forest is divided into three administrative districts: Pemigewasset, Androscoggin and Saco. One of the main purposes of The Weeks Act was to protect the headwaters of navigable waterways, and these districts are named after the great rivers fed by their headwaters. Each district operates an administrative office known as a ranger station. Of the three, The Saco Ranger Station is the most visited. In addition to offices, The Saco Ranger Station houses a staffed information center, indoor nature exhibit, book store and outdoor native plant pollinator garden with interpretive signs. This is an excellent source for information on campgrounds, programs, wildlife, hiking and other recreation in the National Forest.

#### Directions to Next Site:

The Weeks Act Legacy Trail leads us now to one of North Conway's famed icons of beauty and recreation. Take a left out of the Saco Ranger Station parking lot, then go left at the traffic light onto Rte 16. Follow Rte 16 for .8 miles through Conway Village, then take a left at the traffic lights onto Washington Street. Stay left at a fork marked by a water fountain and the Conway Covered Bridge – you are now on West Side Road. Travel 5.7 miles then turn left at a sign for Echo Lake State Park onto Echo Lake Road. The road ends in .2 miles at Echo Lake State Park.



### [15] Cathedral & White Horse Ledge and Echo Lake State Park

GPS @44.053113,-71.15819



Echo Lake State Park is famous for its small turquoise lake and two sheer cliffs, White Horse Ledge and Cathedral Ledge, that tower several hundred feet over it. The beach is a popular spot for families with young children because of its sandy beach and shallow water depths. There is also a mile-long hiking trail around the lake. Both ledges are popular with rock and ice climbers and are home to peregrine falcons. There are hiking trails to the top of both ledges and a paved road to the top of Cathedral Ledge that allows even non-hikers to take-in its stunning view of the Mount Washington Valley. North Conway icons, these cliffs were purchased by private citizens and deeded to the state in the early 1900s. The Society for the Protection of NH Forests helped save Echo Lake from development in 1943 by working with the state to purchase the land around it. (Photo Credit: Jim Salge)

#### Directions to Next Site:

Another of this region's iconic views is the next stop on our journey. Leave Echo Lake Road and take a left onto West Side Road. After .4 miles, take a right at the intersection onto River Road. Travel 1 mile to the traffic light in North Conway, then take a left to



**[16] Route 302 Visitor Center at Intervale Overlook**  
GPS @44.075732,-71.13979



An “intervale” is a New England term meaning a lowland along a river. Intervale, NH, a village of Bartlett, is just that. The view from this point is a stark contrast — the flat fields along the Saco River give rise (on a clear day) to the highest mountain in the northeast United States, Mount Washington. It’s a scene that attracted famed 19th Century artist Benjamin Champney whose painted landscapes drew attention to the area as an artist destination. The area grew so popular among artists that it became known as one of the nation’s first artist colonies, “The White Mountain School of Art.” Today, the Intervale is home to a modern visitor center with a large viewing deck for taking in the scenery just as Benjamin Champney once did. (Photo Credit: Chris Proulx)

**Directions to Next Site:**

To visit the next stop on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail, take a left out of the Intervale Visitor Center then an immediate right onto Hurricane Mountain Road. About 1.6 miles up this road on the right is the head of the hiking trail for Kearsarge North.



**[17] Kearsarge North Fire Tower**  
GPS @44.075302,-71.106392



The early 1900s saw an epidemic of forest fires across the White Mountains. In 1903, 10% of the forests in the White Mountains burned. At that time, there were no fire lookout towers, communication systems or even an organization to fight forest fires. The Weeks Act of 1911 authorized the Federal Government to partner with the State of NH and NH Timberland Owners Association to cooperate in controlling the menace of forest fires. The unified effort trained and equipped firefighters and established fire tool caches around the state. Fire lookout stations were constructed to detect fires early and phone lines were built for communication. This all contributed to preventing the small fires from growing into large conflagrations.

The fire look-out towers kept an eye on the forests with overlapping coverage across the mountains. After World War II, airplanes became the preferred tool in fire detection, and towers were gradually phased out. Today, the summit of Kearsarge North which is also called Pequawket, is home to one of the few remaining federal fire towers in the White Mountains. The original tower was built in 1909 and was replaced by the current structure in the 1951. It operated until 1968, and was placed on the National Historic Fire Lookout Register in 1991. Today, the tower is open to hikers for 360 degree views, some of the most spectacular in the White Mountains. The trail spans 3.1 miles from trail head to the 3,251 foot summit and is a moderate to strenuous hike. (Photo Credit: Jim Salge)

**Directions to Next Site:**

The next stop on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail brings us to a testing ground for forest management. Return to Route 16/302 and follow it north/west 3.5 miles to where the roads separate at an intersection in Glen. Continue straight at the traffic light, staying on Rte 302 west for 6.2 miles. The Bartlett Experimental Forest will be on your left.



**[18] Bartlett Experimental Forest**  
GPS @44.07582,-71.29369



What is the best way to regrow and maintain a healthy forest? What effects do different management techniques have on wildlife habitat? Prior to the clear cutting of the White Mountains at the turn of the 20th Century, little data was available to answer these questions.

The Bartlett Experimental Forest was established in 1931 to help gather the information needed to answer them. Here the USDA Forest Service can literally experiment with forest management techniques in order to bring the best in silviculture and ecological practices to the rest of the White Mountain National Forest and beyond. Research here on the northern hardwood forest has been very influential on management practices throughout the northeast. You can explore the forest by travelling south on Bear Notch Road (closed in winter). Bear Notch is a winding road that connects to the Kancamagus highway, and several gravel service roads lead into the Experimental Forest from its west side.

**Directions to Next Site:**

From planning for the future, the Weeks Act Legacy Trail takes us to a spot where we uncover the past. From the northern end of Bear Notch Road, travel about 4 miles west on Rte 302 and turn left onto Sawyer River Road. Follow this dirt road up about 2 miles (closed in winter), to the ghost town of Livermore.





### [19] Livermore

GPS @44.07321878381143,-71.37774467468262



Hard to believe, but at the turn of the 20th Century, this stretch of dense interior forest along an inconspicuous mountain stream was a fully functioning town with a schoolhouse, store, homes, a power plant and more. It was here that the Saunders family of Lawrence, MA built a sawmill in 1875, helped incorporate the town of Livermore in 1876, and began construction of the Sawyer River Railroad in 1877. The town population swelled to a peak of 190 residents in support of the lumber operation, but fires, floods, timber-damaging storms and other hardships led to the decline and eventual dissolving of the town, a lifecycle shared by many logging villages in the White Mountains. The land was sold to the federal government for inclusion in the White Mountain National Forest in 1937. Today, a walk just off the Sawyer River road, parts of which were once railroad bed, reveals all that is left of the town. New forest, mosses and generations of fallen leaves have not totally hidden the remains of the sawmill, powerhouse, and other structures.

#### Directions to Next Site:

Our next stop on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail is a trail itself. Return to Rte 302 and continue west about 6.8 miles to the Webster Cliff Trail on the right, part of the famous Appalachian Trail.



### [20] Appalachian Trail Crossing

GPS @44.170985,-71.387916



The Appalachian Trail, or “AT,” runs approximately 2,175 miles from Springer Mountain, Georgia to Mount Katahdin, Maine. Included in those are 161 miles in New Hampshire, considered by many to be the most spectacular and challenging of the entire trail, traversing rare alpine zones, four wilderness areas and seventeen peaks above 4,000 feet.

The idea of the AT was first promoted in 1921 by the Harvard-educated forester Benton MacKaye. MacKaye knew the value of these forests as headwaters, having personally collected much of the scientific data linking the health of White Mountain forests to the health of stream flow. He also knew their value as a refuge from urban sprawl and a source of recreation. In 1925, MacKaye organized a conference in Washington, D.C. to initiate the creation of the Appalachian Trail. The trail was completed in 1937 and is today known as one of the world’s premier hiking paths, famous for the natural beauty surrounding it up and down the Appalachian Mountain Range. Consider, though, what the reputation of the trail might be without the lands protected by the Weeks Act. How many National Forests does the AT pass through from Georgia to Maine?

Our current location on the tour is the head of the Webster Cliff Trail, part of the AT. The trail begins with an easy nature walk over a flat, gravel path to a foot bridge over the Saco River. Beyond that, however, the trail is challenging, rising steeply over two miles to the top of Mount Webster.

#### Directions to Next Site:

To return to The Week’s Act Legacy Trail, follow Rte 302 west for 1 mile to the Willey House in Crawford Notch State Park.



### [21] Crawford Notch State Park

GPS @44.182634,-71.398857



Crawford Notch State Park consists of about 6,000 acres purchased by the state of New Hampshire in 1912 and 1913 to protect it from over-harvest of timber. This is where you will find some of the most dramatic scenery in the White Mountains, including towering cliff walls, looming mountain tops, waterfalls and rivers.

It’s also home to some of the most dramatic stories, one of which is commemorated at The Willey House Historical Site. In 1825, Samuel Willey, Jr. of Bartlett moved his family to the floor of the wild and inhospitable notch to operate an inn for travelers. In the overnight of August 28th, 1826, one of the most notorious rain storms in White Mountain history caused a land slide on the mountain above the Willey House. While the building itself was spared of damage, all family members and hired workers were killed in what is believed to have been an attempt at fleeing the impending disaster. News of the tragedy spread and contributed to a growing fascination with the White Mountains, particularly among artists and writers. Today the site of the Willey House is home to a State Park information center and gift shop, interpretive nature trails and a dammed section of the Saco River open to trout fishing for children 12 and under.

#### Directions to Next Site:

For a bird’s eye view of Crawford Notch, continue west on Route 302 for about 2.7 miles to the Crawford Notch Train Depot on the left. This is the start of the hiking trail up Mount Willard.





### [22] Mount Willard

GPS @44.218108,-71.411358



The view of Crawford Notch from the top of Mount Willard has been an attraction throughout most of the Notch's great history. Over a century ago, visitors could take a horse-drawn carriage ride to the overlook at the top. Today, that carriage road is a hiking trail that climbs 900 feet in elevation over 1.7 miles to the breathtaking vista. The open ledge at the top of the trail looks down on the dramatic U-shape of Crawford Notch carved by the last continental glacier. Two eras of transportation stretch side-by-side through the Notch, Route 302 on the left, and on the right the rails laid by the Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad Company in the 1870s. The railroad sparked a surge in White Mountain tourism and at the same time provided a main line for logging railroads to get their product to the coast, accelerating two ideologically opposed industries toward a head-on collision. Today, the land in front of you is a NH State Park and the rails are operated for sight seeing excursions out of North Conway. Frankenstein Trestle (named after artist Godfrey Frankenstein) is an awe- inspiring work of human ingenuity, spanning more than 500 feet across and 80 feet above Frankenstein Gulf.

To hike Mount Willard, take the Avalon Trail behind the Crawford Notch Train Depot. The trail for Mount Willard forks to the left shortly.

#### Directions to Next Site:

Beyond the mouth of this great notch lie several other sites of great beauty, historical significance and recreational interest. They await on The Weeks Act Legacy Trail.



### [23] Saco and Ammonoosuc Lakes

GPS @44.220123,-71.411991



Saco Lake at the top of Crawford Notch is the headwaters of the Saco River. This small, shallow lake is often photographed and painted with Elephant's Head, a rock formation at the entrance to the Notch, in the background. You can explore different views around the lake via a foot path around it. One point of interest is a pet cemetery from the days of the Crawford House, a grand hotel that once existed at the top of the Notch.

Ammonoosuc Lake is on the other side of Rte 302. Starting behind the AMC Highland Center, the Around-The-Lake Trail takes you for an easy walk (you guessed it) around the lake. You'll stroll through shady evergreen forests, perhaps see a beaver, wood duck or even a moose, and discover an esker, a sand and gravel ridge formed by glacial action. A side trail takes you to a red bench for views of the Presidential Range. The total trip around the lake with the offshoot to the red bench and back is 1.8 miles. (Photo Credit: ScenicNH.com Photography)

#### Directions to Next Site:

When you get back from your walk around Ammonoosuc Lake, you'll be at the site on our tour: a dream realized by one of the leading supporters of The Weeks Act, the Appalachian Mountain Club.



### [24] AMC Highland Center

GPS @44.220123,-71.411991



The AMC was on the forefront of conservation in the White Mountains, helping to draft a bill for the creation of a forest reserve as early as 1903. It was with the support of the AMC and its members' influence on Congress that The Weeks Act of 1911 was finally passed. Today, the AMC operates a string of backcountry huts along the Appalachian Trail under special use permit from the US Forest Service. It also operates two overnight lodges in the White Mountains including The Highland Center. The Highland Center in many ways the fulfillment of a vision formed years prior to the Weeks Act. This is a center for outdoor recreation and education surrounded by protected forests and open to the public. It's a great spot to get information on recreational activities, conditions and forecasts, trail information and even take overnight lodging. In 2011 the Highland Center added a natural "playscape" playground for children. Prior to the Highland Center, this was the site of The Crawford House, a grand hotel that survived for over a century. The studio of Frank Shapleigh, artist-in-residence at the Crawford House from 1877 to 1893, has been preserved by the AMC as a bunkhouse. (Photo Credit: Robert Kozlow, Courtesy of AMC)

#### Directions to Next Site:

We venture now across the street from the AMC Highland Center to one of the White Mountains most historic hiking trail



### [25] Crawford Path

GPS @44.220523,-71.410296



The Crawford Path is the oldest continuously-used mountain trail in America. It was cleared by Abel Crawford and his son Ethan Allen Crawford beginning in 1819. The Crawfords were pioneers in many aspects, building roads and trails and becoming the first lodging magnates of “The Great Notch” which would later be known by their name. The Crawford Path was cleared in 1819 as a tourist attraction for guided treks into the alpine zone of the Presidential Range, first as a foot path, then later as a bridle path for horseback ascents. The trail follows Gibbs Brook which cascades through rugged terrain and some rare old growth forest.

Today, the Crawford Path is a popular hiking route and becomes part of the Appalachian Trail above treeline. Best access is via a dedicated parking lot off Rte 302 just west of the Highland Center. Hike the Crawford Connector Trail .5 miles to the Crawford Path. The Crawford Path continues to the summit of Mount Washington but should only be attempted by fit hikers properly equipped – it is a full day’s hike 8 miles long and the ridge line is fully exposed to the elements. (Photo Credit: Jim Salge)

#### Directions to Next Site:

The Crawford Path traverses the ridge of the Southern Presidential Mountains. For a view of this ridge from a breathtaking standpoint, head to the next site on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail, 1.5 miles west on Rte 302. The Mount Eisenhower Wayside is on the right.



### [26] Mount Eisenhower Wayside

GPS @44.239292,-71.425263



The Mount Eisenhower Wayside, operated by the NH State Parks System, is a small hill with a tremendous view. Park on the north side of Rte 302 in the gravel parking lot and walk the short footpath to the hilltop for a panorama of the southern Presidential Range, including the peaks of Mounts Pierce, Eisenhower, Monroe and Washington. In the foreground is a 20,000 acre bowl with noticeable signs of forest fire history. To the right, on the backs of Mounts Webster and Jackson, you may notice fir waves, alternating patterns of live and dead fir trees on wind-exposed slopes. Over the years, these waves appear to move across the slope as trees on the more exposed edge of the wave die, and trees on the more protected edge of the wave regenerate.

When the Presidentials were first named, there weren’t enough presidents for all the peaks in the range. Mount Eisenhower, 4,780 feet above sea level, was first known as Mount Pleasant or Pleasant Dome. Sherman Adams, whose resume included NH Governor, White House Chief of Staff and founder of Loon Mountain ski resort, led the movement to rename the mountain after the 34th President of the United States. A dedication was held at this wayside in 1972 to celebrated the official name change to Mount Eisenhower. standpoint, head to the next site on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail, 1.5 miles west on Rte 302. The Mount Eisenhower Wayside is on the right. (Photo Credit: ScenicNH.com Photography)

#### Directions to Next Site:

Another site rich in history is next on our tour. Travel 1.6 miles west on Rte 302 to the Mount Washington Hotel Overlook on the right.



### [27] Mount Washington Hotel

GPS @44.253699,-71.448587



The Mount Washington Hotel is in the National Registry of Historic Places. Joseph Stickney, a NH native, Pennsylvania coal and railroad magnate and already the owner of the area’s premier resort at the time, The Mt. Pleasant House, started construction of The Mount Washington in 1900. This was the golden age of White Mountain tourism by railroad, and Stickney imported 250 Italian craftsmen to make this his masterpiece, the first hotel of its kind to be built from scratch as a grand hotel. The Weeks Act was strongly supported by the tourism industry in the White Mountains to keep the surroundings clean and natural and to prevent guests from straying to other destinations like the Adirondacks

In 1944, the Mount Washington received world-wide attention when delegates from 44 countries met at The Bretton Woods International Monetary Conference to establish the modern day rules of international commerce and finance. The Stickney Chapel, just east of the hotel on Rte 302, was built in dedication to Josephy Stickney by his wife Carolyn in 1906, 3 years after his death. It is believed to have been built by many of the same craftsmen as The Mount Washington Hotel.

Across the street from the chapel, a plaque honors John Anderson whose family helped bring the Portland Ogdensburg Railroad to Crawford Notch and who supported the Weeks Act in an effort to keep tourism alive in the White Mountains.

#### Directions to Next Site:

The next stop on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail is 1.6 miles west on Route 302. Turn right onto Old Cherry Mountain Road. The Fabyan Guard Station is just up the dirt road on the left before the road gate.



**[28] Fabyan Guard Station**  
GPS @44.27893,-71.471182



The Fabyan Guard Station was the first permanent structure built on the national forest by the Forest Service, and is today the only remaining Guard Station. Managing the vast White Mountain National Forest before modern notch roads, automobiles and other technology required great resourcefulness. This cabin was built with hand tools by eventual forest supervisor C.L. Graham using spruce logs cut on site. Guard stations like this one provided field quarters for forest officials watching over 40 to 50,000 acres of forest. These stations became obsolete as transportation technology advanced, and today, this lone example remains.

Another interesting attraction here is the road, Old Cherry Mountain Road. To create some of the original throughways of the White Mountains without incurring state or town expense, NH allowed private companies to build roads and charge tolls for their use. This road was built as the Jefferson Turnpike in 1811. At its southern end, near modern day Route 302, the 10th NH Turnpike headed east and the Littleton Turnpike headed west. Together, these turnpikes provided the first real corridor of travel between Vermont and the seacoast, encouraging inland commerce and tourism. Today, the road is maintained by the Forest Service as a seasonal road. One of the fascinating natural features here is the Deception Esker, a sand and gravel deposit left by retreating glaciers. Much of the road is built along this esker.

**Directions to Next Site:**

Return to the beginning of Old Cherry Mountain Road and take a right onto Lower Falls Road just before reaching Route 302. Park at the gate and take a 5-minute walk to discover Lower Falls on the Ammonoosuc River.



**[29] Lower Falls of the Ammonoosuc**  
@44.26988,-71.483274



Lower Falls on the Ammonoosuc River is an easily-accessed waterfall cascading 30 to 40 feet over granite steps naturally carved out by the water. The graded trail leading up to the falls is suitable for all ages and abilities. At the bottom of the falls, the water forms a wide pool deep enough for swimming. This is also a good spot for trout fishing when not crowded.

In the late 1800s Lower Falls was the site of one of James E. Henry's first sawmills and the pool at the bottom of the falls was clogged with bi-product from the mill. How does this image compare with the image before you today? The Ammonoosuc River is a major tributary of the Connecticut River, New England's longest and one of its most important for industry.

How might have changes to the Ammonoosuc River affected people and businesses along the Connecticut River prior to the Weeks Act? How does the health of this spot today contribute to local industry?

**Directions to Next Site:**

Up ahead on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail, more recreation on a site once dominated by the logging industry. Travel west on Rte 302 for 1.4 miles, then turn left into the Zealand Picnic Area.



**[30] Zealand Picnic Area**  
GPS @44.265109,-71.499335



Zealand was a logging town started by James E. Henry in the late 1800s. Henry first started logging east of here around the current day Mount Washington Hotel, but in 1884 Henry started the Zealand Valley Railroad and switched his focus to this spot. Buildings in Zealand included a mill, store, post office, charcoal kilns and lodging for workers. As was his trademark, Henry made quick work of the forest. By 1892, there was little left to log, and Henry moved his operation to Lincoln. The Zealand Valley, clear-cut, eroded and covered in slash, burned in the devastating fire of 1903.

Today, the forest has returned and recreation has replaced logging as the principle activity. The Zealand Road (closed in winter) runs 3.5 miles into the Valley along much of the old railroad bed and provides access to numerous popular hiking trails. The picnic area and campground here at the base of the road are idyllic resting spots where J.E. Henry's town once stood. Across the bridge on the right side is the start of The Flat Iron Trail, an easy walk in summer and popular cross-country ski trail in winter. It follows the Zealand and Ammonoosuc Rivers along an old road once known as Glacial Ridge Road, so named because it was built on a gravel ridge or "esker" left by a glacier.

**Directions to Next Site:**

Next, the Weeks Act Legacy Trail explores further into the Zealand Valley. From the Zealand Picnic Area, travel 1 mile up the Zealand Road. The trail head of the Sugarloaf Trail is on the right just across a bridge.





### [31] Sugarloaf and Trestle Trails

GPS @44.253883,-71.504238



The Sugarloaf Trail is a relatively short mountain hike with nice views, a great choice for families and less experienced hikers. At its beginning, the trail coincides with the Trestle Trail, a pleasant 1-mile loop over railroad grades along the Zealand River with little elevation change. The Sugarloaf trail diverges from the Trestle Trail early and climbs gradually among huge boulders left by retreating glaciers. Eventually the trail presents the choice of turning left to summit Middle Sugarloaf or right to summit North Sugarloaf. Middle Sugarloaf has a steep climb with a ladder right at the end, making North Sugarloaf the better choice for less able hikers. The hike from Zealand Road to the summit of North Sugarloaf is 1.2 miles. The hike to Middle Sugarloaf is just a little longer at 1.4 miles. Although modest in height at around 2,500 feet above sea level, well below tree line, both summits remain bare from the forest fire of 1903 and offer fine views. There is an abandoned smokey quartz mine at the top of North Sugarloaf, and amateur collectors can still find crystals there. (Photo Credit: ScenicNH.com Photography)

#### Directions to Next Site:

The next two stops on our tour are also hikes off the Zealand Road. Continue about 1.6 miles on Zealand Road (2.5 miles from Rte 302). The Hale Brook Trail to the summit of Mount Hale is on the right (west) side of the road.



### [32] Mount Hale

GPS @44.236283,-71.486921



Mount Hale is named after Reverend Edward Everett Hale of Boston, a well-known 19th Century writer and philanthropist. Early in his life, Hale helped with some of the original surveying of the White Mountains, then helped popularize the mountains through his writing. Hale was a passionate member of the Society for the Protection of NH Forests. At the American Forest Congress of 1905 he gave voice to the troubling story of White Mountain forests and endorsed the idea of forest reserves.

The Hale Brook Trail is a moderate to strenuous climb over 2.3 miles. Mount Hale's summit, 4,054 feet above sea level, is bare but surrounded by trees, making views a little difficult. Look for the remnants of a steel fire tower constructed in 1929 to monitor the Zealand Valley. A unique natural feature of Mount Hale is the presence of magnetic rocks which spin the needle of a compass when near. The Lend-A-Hand Trail which connects the summits of Mounts Hale and Zealand is named after the magazine and charitable society Edward Hale founded, both of which focused on volunteerism. The Hale Brook Trail to the summit of Mount Hale is on the right (west) side of the road. (Photo Credit: Jim Salge)

#### Directions to Next Site:

Our tour's third hike in the Zealand Valley is next. From the head of the Hale Brook Trail, travel Zealand Road 1-mile to its end (3.5



### [33] Zealand Trail to Zealand Notch and Zealand Falls Hut

GPS @44.224844,-71.478381



The Zealand Road mostly follows the grade of J.E. Henry's old Zealand Valley Railroad. Where the road ends, the Zealand Trail begins, allowing continued travel on foot where rails once lay. The path follows the general course of the Zealand River past beaver ponds and through restored forest in what was a clear-cut, burned-over wasteland in the early 1900s. At 2.5 miles, the trail reaches an intersection where you can follow the Ethan Pond Trail (part of the Appalachian Trail) or take the Twinway Trail for .3 miles to Zealand Falls, the AMC's Zealand Falls Hut and a view of Zealand Notch. (Photo Credit: ScenicNH.com Photography)

#### Directions to Next Site:

The Weeks Act Legacy Trail now returns to town. Follow the Zealand Road back to Rte 302, then turn left and travel 2.2 miles to the intersection of Rte 302 and Rte 3. Turn right at the lights to visit the Twin Mountain Gazebo.



**[34] Twin Mountain Gazebo**  
GPS @44.271232,-71.539621



This bright yellow Gazebo and Carrol Memorial Band Stand is operated by the Twin Mountain-Bretton Woods Chamber of Commerce as a visitor information center. With the decline of the logging industry, White Mountain communities have embraced recreation-based tourism. This booth is open and staffed in summer months with information on surrounding activities and attractions. On select summer nights you might find the community gathered here at the Carrol Memorial Bandstand bandstand for live music in front of fine views of the Twin Mountain Range. The bandstand was dedicated during the nation's 1976 bicentennial year to "those who gave their lives the service of our country." Outside the gazebo is a war memorial honoring local soldiers. The town of Twin Mountain is a good place to get fuel and food as we begin the last leg of The Weeks Act Legacy Trail.

**Directions to Next Site:**

From the Gazebo parking lot, head back to the intersection of Rte 302 and Rte 3. At the lights, go straight onto Rte 3 South and travel roughly 4.3 miles. The parking lot for Beaver Brook Wayside and Trails will be on the left.



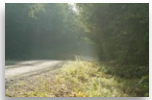
**[35] Beaver Brook Wayside and Trails**  
@44.246951,-71.615067



The Beaver Brook Wayside and Trails is a great example of a forest actively managed by the USDA Forest Service for multiple uses. There are three hiking/cross-country ski trails that wind through the forest. As you travel, you'll come across small, carefully selected areas of clear-cut forest where mature, damaged or diseased trees were harvested. These clear cuts promote the growth of valuable tree species like birch that don't thrive in crowded forests that block out the sun. These and several other maintained openings in the forest also provide prime wildlife habitat. On The Moose Watch Trail you might see a moose feeding on twigs growing on young trees on the edge of an opening. As you explore the forest and observe wildlife, consider how these small, purposeful clear-cuts differ from the 10,000 acre clear cuts common before The Weeks Act. How does their impact on the future of the forest compare?

**Directions to Next Site:**

The Weeks Act Legacy Trail leads now to a logging ghost town reclaimed by nature. Follow Rte 3 South 1.3 miles to the Gale River Road on the left.



**[36] Gale River Forest**  
GPS @44.243723,-71.639228



The Gale River Forest was the site of a short lived logging town from 1874 to 1878 of which little remains today. The operation here appears to have been modest by 19th century standards. The Gale River Logging Railroad was used to harvest tall straight spruce trees for the masts of ships and deliver them to the nearby (but not connected) Boston, Concord & Montreal Railroad. When the select trees were gone and the operation ceased, its rail system was incorporated into the Profile & Franconia Notch Railroad, a line built by the owners of the Profile House to shuttle tourists from Bethlehem south into Franconia Notch. Early in its life as part of the White Mountain National Forest, The Gale River Forest was an experimental forest, but the great hurricane of 1938 destroyed the experiments in place. Today, the gravel Gale River Road loops through restored forest and is a popular spot for mountain biking, walking and birding.

**Directions to Next Site:**

Even before The Weeks Act, the federal government had begun creating a forest reserve from land in the public domain. The next site on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail pays tribute to a US President with NH ties and a legacy in conservation. Continue south on Rte 3 for 8.6 miles to the Mount Cleveland Wayside on the left.



**[37] Mount Cleveland Wayside**  
GPS @44.216294,-71.674805



The Mount Cleveland Wayside is named for Grover Cleveland, the 22nd and 24th President of the United States. He was a hunter and fisherman and summered in Tamworth, NH. Cleveland used the power bestowed upon him by the Forest Reserve Act of 1891 to place 26 million acres of public land into the forest reserves in the western states, later to become National Forests. Advised by conservationists Gifford Pinchot and John Muir, President Cleveland created these forest reserves during his last days of office with the debate about who would manage them and how not yet resolved. If Cleveland was the 22nd and 24th President who was the 23rd and what did that president do for forest conservation?

**Directions to Next Site:**

The Weeks Act Legacy Trail continues south along Rte 3 towards Franconia Notch. The next site is 1.2 miles on the left side of the road: The Skookumchuck Trail Head and Bike Path.



### [38] Skookumchuck Trailhead and Bike Path

GPS @44.203235,-71.681027



The Skookumchuck site lies just north of Franconia Notch State Park and is the head of two distinct paths. One is the Skookumchuck Trail, a hiking trail that scales the north ridge of Mt Lafayette. The lower part of the trail winds among forest actively managed for logging, resulting in better wildlife habitat (and thus viewing) than on Lafayette's more popular foot paths.

The other path beginning at this site is the paved Franconia Notch Recreation Path, often referred to as the Bike Path, running the length of the notch parallel to the Parkway for almost 9 miles to the Flume Gorge Visitor Center. The Bike Path drops 800 feet in elevation from north to south and is very winding. Riders are cautioned to watch for pedestrians, check their speed and obey bike-walk areas and other posted warnings.

#### Directions to Next Site:

The next stop on the tour is south along the bike path. To reach it by automobile, travel south on Rte 3. After it merges with I-93 S to become the Franconia Notch Parkway, travel 1.5 miles to exit 34C. Turn left off the exit onto NH-18 S/Profile Rd. The Hugh Gallen Wayside is a half mile ahead.



### [39] Lafayette Brook Scenic Area

GPS @44.18315,-71.685426



The Lafayette Brook Scenic Area is viewable from The Hugh Gallen Wayside, an overlook named after the US Congressman and two term NH Governor. As you look east from the viewing area, the Lafayette Brook Scenic Area spreads before you, rising upward to the impressive summit of Mount Lafayette 5,249 feet above sea level. This is one of six Scenic Areas established during the 50th Anniversary of the Weeks Act in 1961.

If you were standing at this spot at the turn of the 20th Century, you might see The Profile & Franconia Notch Railroad rumble across a trestle over Lafayette Brook to deliver guests to The Profile House, a secluded resort that existed at the present site of the Cannon Aerial Tramway. If you look down at the brook from the Hugh Gallen Wayside, you can still see the trestle's abutments. During the height of the logging era, most of Franconia Notch remained under the ownership of the Profile House, which is likely part of the reason some of the woods in the Lafayette Brook Scenic Area were never cut. (Photo Credit: Greg Keeler)

#### Directions to Next Site:

The final stop on the Weeks Act Legacy Trail is the oldgrowth forest of The Lafayette Brook Scenic Area located on the back slope of Eagle Cliff. Access to the old growth trees requires a bushwhack from the Hugh Gallen Wayside along Lafayette Brook. Eagle Cliff shields the forest from view along the Franconia Notch Parkway.



### [40] Eagle Cliff Old Growth Area



The Lafayette Brook Scenic Area on the west northeast slope of Eagle Cliff is one of New Hampshire's best examples of old growth forest. As you walk into the forest, Lafayette brook separates restored forest on the left from old growth on the right. The old growth begins first as a northern hardwood forest where yellow birch, maple and beech are the dominant species. As the forest ascends the difficult terrain of Eagle Cliff it becomes Red Spruce. Difficult logging terrain and long-time ownership by a tourism-minded company (The Profile House) might at least partially explain why these woods were never logged. Eagle Cliff, a spur of Mount Lafayette and visible from much of the northern section of the Franconia Notch Parkway, is named for the golden eagles that nested there in the 1800s. Today, the cliff is nesting ground for peregrine falcons.

#### Directions to Next Site:

To continue to site #1 of the Weeks Act Legacy Trail, Artists Bluff, take NH-18 N/Profile Rd for .7 miles, passing under I-93/Route 3.