



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Fort Hill  
Recreational  
Rail Trail**  
*New Hampshire*



## Fort Hill Recreational Rail Trail

New Hampshire

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Built in the 1910s by the Boston and Maine Railroad (B&M) as part of the Connecticut River Division Main Line, the route introduced daily service to the B&M Fort Hill Branch in the early 1920s to meet growing competition from motor trucks that had begun courting small shippers from Boston to the Canadian border. This resulted in the line being known as a peddler route (now pedaler!). The competition eventually became too much, and by 1983, the route ceased service. Thankfully, this line—like many others in the area—has been converted to trails and we can still walk, bike, and ski in the shadows of the former B&M cars.

The Fort Hill Recreational Rail Trail begins at a spacious dirt parking lot at Dole Junction in Hinsdale, which also serves the southern end of the 21.5-mile [Ashuelot](#)

[Recreational Rail Trail](#). As you begin your journey north, the dirt and grass trail starts out fairly wide, though in summer, lush vegetation may creep in to grab the streams of sunlight along the rail.

In 1.3 miles, you will come to a wooden bridge over the Ashuelot River, complete with its original stone abutments. On your right, you will notice a concrete pillar marked wrjct 69, which once notified train crews that they had 69 miles until White River Junction, Vermont.

At 2.8 miles, you will come to a second large parking area off Prospect Street in Hinsdale. From there, it's a short ride into town, with convenient off-street paths most of the way. This parking lot marks the departure from the mainland for a bit, as you head out onto a sweeping causeway into a setback of the main channel of the Connecticut River. This spot is popular for fishing and finally allows some wide-open views of New England's longest river, including the former Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station, which was decommissioned in 2014 and sits across the river in Vernon, Vermont. At the other end of the causeway is yet another convenient parking lot off State Route 119 that is a popular access point for ice fishing, as well as north and southbound trail access.

In 0.8 mile, just before crossing a small bridge over Ash Swamp Brook, you will come to an access path on your right to the last (northernmost) parking area for the trail. The next 2.7 miles are set back from the river a bit, as the trail runs behind several businesses and residential yards. In summer, there will be enough beautiful green vegetation to give you some peace and quiet as you finish the northern end of the trail, where you will be rewarded. Built in 1912, the old truss bridge that once took B&M trains across the Connecticut River now sits silently and majestically. While the decking is decaying, preventing guaranteed passage, the crimson steel structure stands as an impressive relic of old railroad engineering and offers an opportunity to one day carry trail users into Brattleboro, Vermont, and beyond.



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**States:** New Hampshire

**Counties:** Cheshire

Length: 7 miles

**Trail end points:** Northfield Rd across from the southern end of the Ashuelot Recreational Rail Trail at Dole Junction to Old railroad bridge over the Connecticut River at the NH-VT state line at Brattleboro Rd

**Trail surfaces:** Ballast, Cinder, Dirt, Gravel, Sand

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike, Fishing, Horseback

## Parking & Trail Access

To reach the southern endpoint from I-91, take Exit 2 for VT 9/ Western Ave. Turn left (east) onto Western Ave./VT 9, and follow it 1.1 miles (it becomes High St.). Turn right onto Main St., and go 0.2 mile. Turn left onto Bridge St. to enter New Hampshire. Continue onto NH 119 E/Brattleboro Road 6.7 miles. Turn right onto NH 63 S/Northfield Road, and go 2.2 miles. Parking will be on the right.

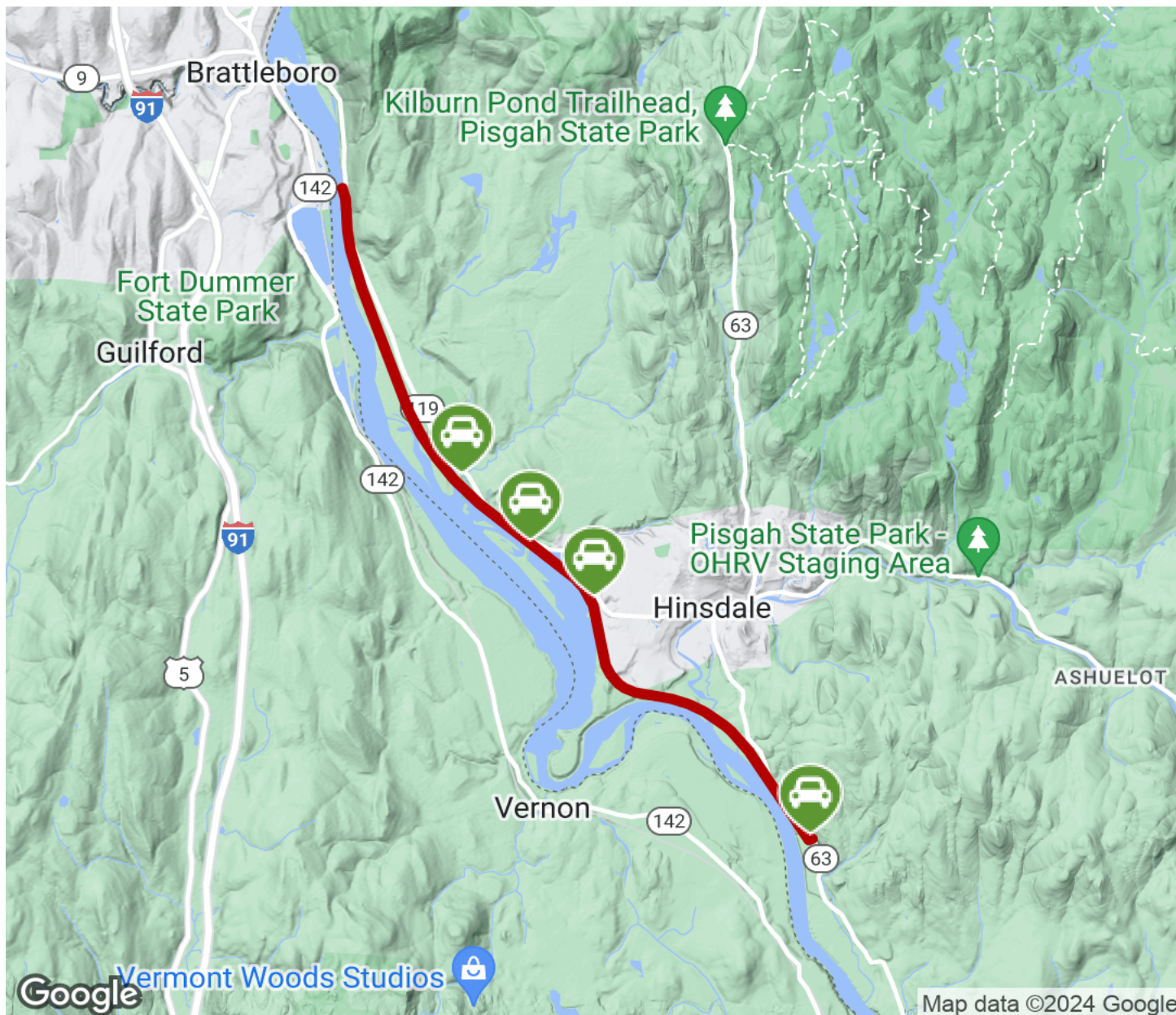
There is no parking or access at the northern endpoint. The last dedicated parking lot is at Hinsdale Town Park. To reach the park from I-91, follow the directions above to NH 119 E/- Brattleboro Road, and go 4 miles. Look for a small parking area on your right. Note that this parking area is small. Another lot is available 0.8 mile farther southeast along NH 119/-Brattleboro Road, directly adjacent to the trail and the Connecticut River Reservoir.





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- Trailhead
- Restroom
- Parking
- Water Fountain
- Tunnel