



MAINE’S LAKES & MOUNTAINS

DIRECTIONS

The primary trailhead in the Park is located near the New Hampshire border along Route 26, approximately 14 miles north of Bethel. Access is also available along the Sunday River Road (west off Routes 2/26 about 2 miles north of Bethel); the Success Pond Road (northeast out of Berlin, NH and is occasionally closed for private logging operations.); the Bull Branch Road (east off Sunday River Road in North Newry); and the East B. Hill Road (west out of Andover).

To reach Frenchman's Hole, take the Sunday River Road north of Bethel for 7 miles to the twin bridges in Ketchum. Turn right and proceed north 1 mile.

Lat 44.572106 / Lon -70.902701 (Screw Auger Falls parking)

FEES

Park fees are payable at self-service fee stations located at these trailhead parking lots: Appalachian Trail, Screw Auger Falls, Moose Cave, and Spruce Meadow Picnic Area.

View online information for all Parks and Lands sites:

- www.parksandlands.com
- [Camping: www.campwithme.com](http://www.campwithme.com)

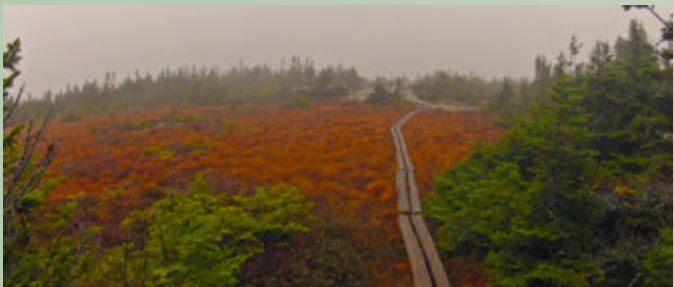
SERVICES & FACILITIES

- 9 remote, primitive campsites and 5 Appalachian Trail lean-tos are available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Picnic areas at Screw Auger Falls and Spruce Meadow.



SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The region's abundant large animals can create hazards: drive slowly on area roads (particularly in low light) and make sure that tents and their contents are free of food and food odors.
- Don't count on your cell phone in an emergency as coverage is spotty to non-existent.
- Potable water is not available at the Park so bring your own. Purify water from brooks or ponds.
- Winter users can park in the lot off Route 26 or the twin bridges on the Sunday River Road.
- Expect fast-changing weather, especially at higher elevations. Snow comes early and stays later in the mountains.
- Rock outcroppings and rugged terrain are special features of this park and add challenge to hikes. Use extra caution during wet conditions. Wear appropriate footwear and clothing. Supervise children closely and know your limits. You can always turn back.
- There may be private holdings within and adjoining the boundaries of public lands. Please respect all landowner restrictions. Public use of these areas is a privilege, not a right.



VISITOR RULES

Beverages	Park rules prohibit use of intoxicating beverages.
Take Only Photos	Do not pick or remove anything natural or historical: please leave it for others to enjoy.
Wildlife	Enjoy wildlife from a distance: do not feed or disturb animals or birds. (See hunting below)
Fires	Where grills are provided, build charcoal fires only. Kindle fires only in authorized campsites with fire rings. (See Camping below) Do not cut live vegetation. Do not transport firewood. www.maine.gov/firewood
Pets	Pets in the park must be leashed and attended; their waste must be cleaned up immediately.
Trash	Carry out all trash.
Firearms	Do not discharge weapons within 300 feet of any picnic area, camping area, parking area, marked hiking trail or other developed area. Loaded firearms are not permitted at campsites or on hiking trails.
Hunting	Hunting is not permitted between June 1 and Labor Day at Grafton Notch State Park. Hunting on the Public Lands follows State hunting seasons. For Maine fishing and hunting laws, and license information, visit the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife website, www.maine.gov/ifw
Camping	Camping is not permitted at Grafton Notch State Park. Low-impact camping is permitted only on the Public Lands. Fires are permitted only at designated sites (fires are not permitted at campsites located on private lands along the Grafton Loop Trail).
Abandoned Property	Bureau of Parks and Lands staff may take custody of any personal property left unattended for more than 3 days (unless advance written permission is given).
Limit of Stay	Campers on Mahoosuc Public Lands may not exceed a 14-day stay in a 45-day period.

TRAVEL & CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

Many mountainous areas are particularly sensitive to erosion and disturbance: please help sustain the spectacular beauty of this setting.

- Remain on trails at all times;
- Camp only at authorized sites and keep campsites as small as possible; and
- Walk on bare rock rather than on plants (when on ledges and summits).



PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

This land was conserved with support from the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, the Trust for Public Land, Open Space Institute, U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Program, Land for Maine's Future Program, Mahoosuc Land Trust, and many other contributors.

Through a cooperative agreement with the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands, the Appalachian Mountain Club maintains the AT south of Route 26 and the Maine Appalachian Trail Club maintains the stretch north of Route 26.

The original version of this brochure was made possible in part by funding assistance through the Federal Highway Administration's Recreational Trails Program, administered by the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands.

GEOLOGIC HISTORY

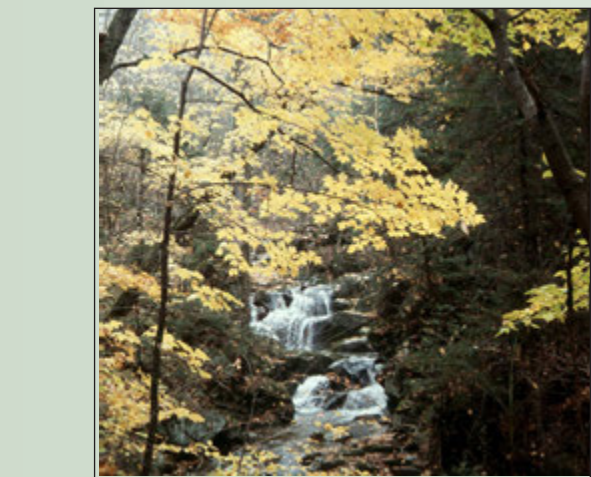
Grafton Notch State Park and the Mahoosuc Public Lands offer a fascinating glimpse into Maine's geologic history and provide an ongoing demonstration of the power water has to shape the landscape. Metamorphic bedrock dating back roughly 420 million years is evident in some settings (like the summit of Old Speck).

Grafton Notch itself is a classic example of a U-shaped valley carved out by glacial action during the last ice age. Some higher mountain ledges still carry striations (grooves) left by the glacier, and many places have accumulations of sand and gravel outwash left by glacial meltwater.

The glaciers retreated from this area roughly 12,000 years ago. Today erosion still continues—as water moves stones that scour out potholes and weak spots in the underlying rock. For a guided tour of the region's geologic highlights, see https://www.maine.gov/dact/mgs/explore/explore_map.shtml



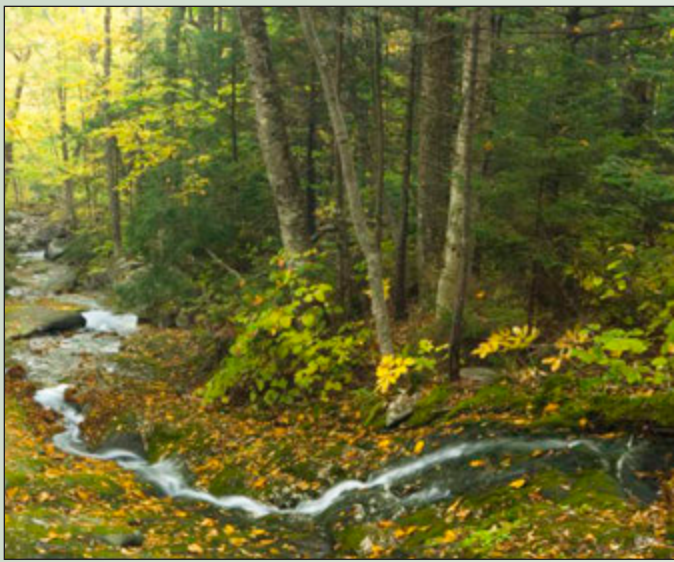
Ken Lamb



TIMBER MANAGEMENT ON MAINE’S PUBLIC LANDS

Sustainable forest management is one of the many principal land management activities that take place on Maine's Public Reserved Lands. Scientifically-based timber harvests are planned in coordination with recreation, wildlife, forest health, and scenic considerations. Revenues from sustainable forestry management activities support the management and maintenance of trails, campsites, roads, and other infrastructure and wildlife management projects.

All forest management activities are comprehensively planned and closely supervised by Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL) Foresters. Harvesting activities are carefully carried out by local logging contractors.



CONTACTS

Grafton Notch State Park
1941 Bear River Road
Newry, ME 04938
In season: 207-824-2912
Off season: 207-624-6080
www.maine.gov/grafftonnotch

Mahoosuc Public Lands
Maine Parks of Parks and Lands
P.O. Box 327
Farmington, ME 04938
207-778-8231
www.maine.gov/mahoosuc

Bethel Area Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 1247
Bethel, ME 04217
207-824-2282
www.bethelmaine.com



NEARBY DESTINATIONS

The Grafton-Mahoosuc lands lie in the Maine's Lakes and Region, which encompasses Franklin and Oxford Counties, near the following destinations:

- **Mt. Blue State Park** draw visitors to camp, swim in Webb Lake, hike, mountain bike, and ride ATVs and horses.
- **Richardson Lakes Public Lands** provide a tranquil backcountry setting for paddlers and primitive campsites (managed by South Arm Campground) along 22,000 conserved acres in the legendary Rangeley Lakes region.
- **Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge** provides backcountry campsites and spectacular wildlife watching on a 7,850-acre water body lying along the New Hampshire border.
- **Little Concord Pond State Park** provides a 1.2 mile trail to Little Concord Pond and a short loop around the summit of Bald Mountain. Managed for BPL by the town of Greenwood.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

- **Frenchman's Hole** draws people in hot weather to enjoy swimming and picnicking by the clear waters and interesting rock formations of Bull Branch Stream.
- **Step Falls Preserve**, owned and managed by the Maine Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, offers a pleasant one-hour roundtrip walk alongside a series of cascading pools on Wight Brook with a total drop of 250 feet. The Preserve is a half-mile southeast of Grafton Notch State Park along Route 26.
- **State Route 26** is a State-designated scenic byway from Newry north to the New Hampshire border due to its impressive mountains, gorges and waterfalls along the Bear River valley.



OVERVIEW

Grafton Notch State Park and the Mahoosuc Public Lands are a premier recreational destination lying amidst some of Maine's most spectacular mountains—the Mahoosuc Range. These lands offer rugged terrain for backcountry hikers and include 12 of the most challenging miles along the entire Appalachian Trail. Hikers who negotiate the steep summit trails are rewarded with spectacular views, particularly on Old Speck (4,180 feet).

Those who seek tamer adventures can find short walks leading to impressive waterfalls and gorges. The renowned Grafton Notch Scenic Byway bisects the Park and several pull-offs highlight interesting natural features. In Grafton Notch State Park, part of the Maine Birding Trail, birdwatchers can observe peregrine falcons, a wide variety of songbirds, and—at higher elevations—northern forest species. At lower elevations, visitors commonly observe large mammals, even in the vicinity of Route 26. Hunters come in search of deer, bear and grouse, while fishermen try their luck for brook trout in many area streams.

In winter, snowshoers, cross-country skiers and snowmobilers enjoy exploring the lands. The popular snowmobile route ITS 82 runs across this region from Andover to New Hampshire's Trail 18.

The Mahoosuc Public Lands contain a 9,993-acre Ecological Reserve designated by the State to sustain sensitive ecosystems in their natural condition and provide for monitoring of ecological changes over time. The Reserve includes a sub-alpine tarn, Speck Pond, and several rare plant and animal species. The Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands manages portions of the Mahoosuc Public Land Unit for timber production (in addition to other benefits). The timber management practices are certified sustainable and help support the costs of maintaining Public Lands.



WHEN TO VISIT

The waterfalls and gorges are often most impressive in late spring, when snowmelt adds to the river volume. Take extra care around cold, fast-moving waters at this time. Hikers enjoy the area through warm-weather months, and many visitors come in fall for the spectacular foliage. During winter, hardy cross-country skiers and snowshoers explore ungrounded trails and snowmobilers enjoy lower elevation trails.

POPULAR STOPS

Screw Auger Falls: A walking path from Route 26 leads to this 23-foot waterfall lying in a narrow gorge along the Bear River. Many visitors enjoy wading in the shallow pools, but supervise children closely and avoid the lip of the falls.

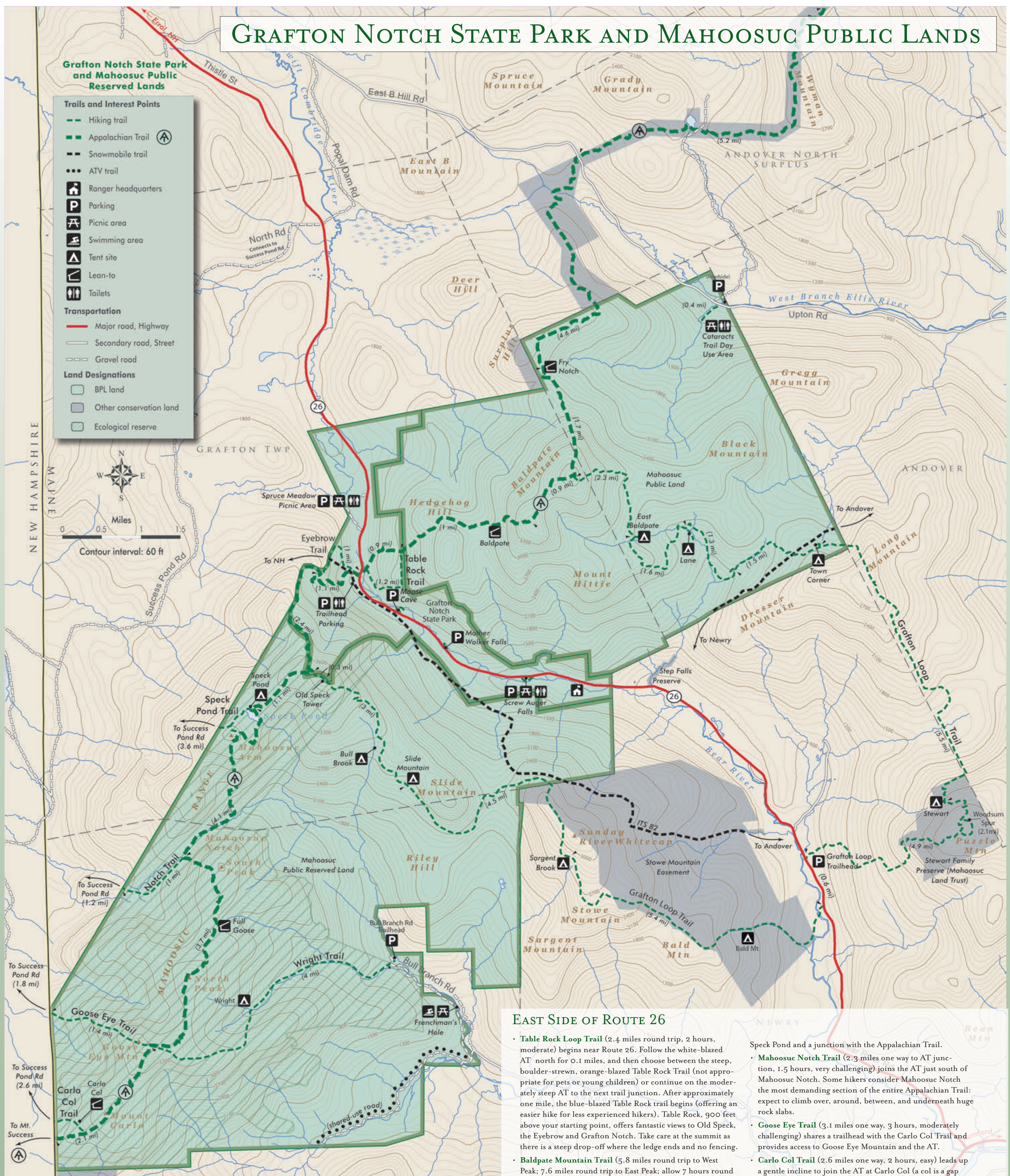
Mother Walker Falls: This V-shaped gorge, named for a long-time local resident, is more than 40 feet deep and 980 feet long. It's a short walk from Route 26. Supervise children.

Moose Cave: In this 200-foot-long gorge, lying within a 45-foot-deep canyon in the bedrock, water skirts boulders and disappears temporarily into a cave beneath a huge granite slab. The loop trail to Moose Cave, off Route 26, is a quarter-mile long with some narrow spots and steep slopes.

Spruce Meadow Picnic Area: Lying in the park's northern portion, this picturesque setting offers tables (with grills) overlooking a wildlife-rich marsh and Old Speck Mountain.



GRAFTON NOTCH STATE PARK AND MAHOOSUC PUBLIC LANDS



TRAILS

ROUTE 26 (APPALACHIAN TRAIL) TRAILHEAD

The parking area along Route 26 (with pit toilet, trail register and brochures) provides access to day hiking and overnight backpacking. Both the Appalachian Trail (AT) and the Grafton Loop Trail (which spurs off the AT both north and south of the Rt. 26 trailhead) provide backpacking opportunities. Popular day hikes include the Table Rock Trail and the AT (to the summit of Old Speck).

- **Grafton Loop Trail** (38 miles, 3 or more days, challenging), a high-elevation, backcountry trail with seven primitive campsites, connects a series of nine scenic peaks, including Old Speck, Sunday River Whitecap, Puzzle Mountain, and East and West Baldpate. The route in the northern sections of the loop follows the AT, though the majority of trail is relatively new construction made possible by hundreds of volunteers, numerous partners, and the gracious support of private landowners (significant sections of the trail cross private land).

Note: the Grafton Loop Trail also intersects Rt. 26 further south near the Eddy Rd. in North Newry (designated parking lies on the eastern side of Rt. 26 by the trailhead for Puzzle Mountain). You can reach the trailhead for the southwestern portion of the Grafton Loop Trail by walking approximately 0.75 miles south on Rt. 26 from the parking area.

WEST SIDE OF ROUTE 26

- **Old Speck Trail** (7.6 miles, 7 hours, challenging) affords spectacular views from an open observation tower at the summit. Follow the white-blazed Appalachian Trail south along Cascade Brook. The trail crosses many streams then ascends the north shoulder, rising out of the woods and offering frequent views of the Notch. The summit and tower are reached via a 0.3-mile spur reached approximately 3.5 miles from the trailhead. The Grafton Loop Trail continues on from the summit, descending southeastward.
- **Eyebrow Loop Trail** (2.2 miles round trip, 2-3 hours, challenging) rises steeply to an "eyebrow" shelf/overlook on Old Speck Mountain at 2,900 feet. Follow the white-blazed Appalachian Trail south for 0.1 miles to the start of the orange-blazed Eyebrow Trail. Passing through magnificent hardwoods, the trail rises gently until it reaches the steeper precipice section. Portions of the orange-blazed ascent involve ladders/steel rungs: the descent following the Appalachian Trail is steep but involves no climbing. Those wishing to avoid rungs and ladders can go up and back the AT portion for a 2.6-mile roundtrip. The Eyebrow may not be suited for small children, especially in wet conditions.

EAST SIDE OF ROUTE 26

- **Table Rock Loop Trail** (2.4 miles round trip, 2 hours, moderate) begins near Route 26. Follow the white-blazed AT north for 0.1 miles, and then choose between the steep, boulder-strewn, orange-blazed Table Rock Trail (not appropriate for pets or young children) or continue on the moderately steep AT to the next trail junction. After approximately one mile, the blue-blazed Table Rock trail begins (offering an easier hike for less experienced hikers). Table Rock, 900 feet above your starting point, offers fantastic views to Old Speck, the Eyebrow and Grafton Notch. Take care at the summit as there is a steep drop-off where the ledge ends and no fencing.
- **Baldpate Mountain Trail** (5.8 miles round trip to West Peak; 7.6 miles round trip to East Peak; allow 7 hours round trip; challenging) is reached by following the white-blazed Appalachian Trail north from Route 26. Entering the Mahoosuc Public Lands, the trail ascends steadily across the north slope to the open summit of West Baldpate (elevation 3,680 feet). Turning north, the trail loses only 240 feet in altitude before climbing nearly a mile to East Peak (elevation 3,812 feet), which offers outstanding views in all directions.
- **Appalachian Trail** (20+ miles, 4 days, challenging) tends to be steep and boulder-strewn as it follows ridgelines through the Mahoosuc Range, providing some of its most challenging sections within Grafton Notch State Park and the Mahoosuc Public Lands. The most difficult stretch lies between Full Goose Lean-to and Speck Pond Lean-to. Hikers who attempt this stretch should be well conditioned and equipped. Refer to the AMC Maine Mountain Guide and/or the Maine Appalachian Trail Club's Guide to the Appalachian Trail in Maine for more details on hiking routes and the five lean-tos along the AT (Carlo Col, Full Goose, Speck Pond, Baldpate, and Frye Notch).

SUCCESS POND ROAD TRAILHEADS

Success Pond Road, which can be reached from Berlin, New Hampshire, has three trailheads with a total of four trails leading into the Grafton Notch State Park—Mahoosuc Public Lands area (see trail notes below). Access to these trailheads is by unmarked logging roads. For more information, consider resources such as the AMC Maine Mountain Guide.

Speck Pond Trail (3.2 miles one way, 3 hours, joins the AT near Speck Pond, challenging) follows a small stream and then winds its way east up and across Mahoosuc Arm enroute to

Speck Pond and a junction with the Appalachian Trail.

- **Mahoosuc Notch Trail** (2.3 miles one way to AT junction, 1.5 hours, very challenging) joins the AT just south of Mahoosuc Notch. Some hikers consider Mahoosuc Notch the most demanding section of the entire Appalachian Trail: expect to climb over, around, between, and underneath huge rock slabs.
- **Goose Eye Trail** (3.1 miles one way, 3 hours, moderately challenging) shares a trailhead with the Carlo Col Trail and provides access to Goose Eye Mountain and the AT.
- **Carlo Col Trail** (2.6 miles one way, 2 hours, easy) leads up a gentle incline to join the AT at Carlo Col (a col is a gap between two mountain peaks).

BULL BRANCH ROAD TRAILHEAD

- **Wright Trail** (8.5 miles round trip, 8 hours, challenging) leads hikers through mature forests to the bald east peak of Goose Eye Mountain, where stunning views unfold in all directions. Expect a rigorous hike on this rugged trail leading first along Goose Eye Brook then up to the AT and open summit area.

EAST B HILL ROAD TRAILHEADS

- **Catacrafts Trail** (0.4 miles, 0.5 hours, easy) leads up to where the waters of Frye Brook cascade over several falls in the gorge between Baldpate and Surplus mountains. A day-use area adjoining the falls makes for a pleasant lunch stop. Note: the Catacrafts Trail does not provide official, maintained access to the AT/Baldpate Mt. The AT does intersect the East B Hill Rd., approximately 2.5 miles north of the Catacrafts trailhead.

MOTORIZED TRAILS

The ITS 82 snowmobile trail runs through the western half of the property. ATV riders can use a section of shared-use road off the Sunday River Road in the Riley TWP portion of the Mahoosuc Unit. For more information:

Parks and Lands Off Road Vehicle Office, 287-4957

Local clubs and www.mesnow.com