

April 2005

Map 4 - Andover, Tewksbury, Lowell – BAY CIRCUIT TRAIL route

Trail marking:

Andover: the BCT is marked with standard white dollar bill-sized blazes, oriented vertically, painted or nailed on trees or poles. Along part of High Plain Rd blazes may be painted on curbs or sidewalks. On some AVIS properties other trails are also marked with white blazes, so look for the Bay Circuit logo at trail intersections.

Parking along the street is possible at some trailheads.

Parking lots are indicated in trail description. No parking allowed along Central St, Reservation Rd, Rte 133, High Plain Rd

Tewksbury: BCT is unmarked

Lowell: Downtown the trail coincides with the Merrimack River Trail. Follow those logos, similar in size and shape to the Bay Circuit logos

GPS coordinates are listed for lettered trail junctions

Shawsheen River, Andover, to National Park Visitors Center, Lowell

Andover BCT route, north to south (actually, east to west here)

A 42°38'52" 71°9'4"

0.0 Proceed uphill along Reservation Rd. from the jct of Central St, Reservation Rd, Andover St, and Red Spring Rd northeast of Shawsheen River and railroad bridge (P=3 near RR bridge on Red Spring Rd side)

Indian Ridge Reservation, AVIS.

0.1 Right onto woods trail. Follow blazes up the esker to Alice Buck memorial stone. Continue following blazes

0.5 Sharp left, then immediate right to ascend second esker, which passes behind Andover High School (Parking allowed in lot at h.s. during non-school hours)

1.0 Leave esker on trail left to reach boardwalk

West Parish Meadow Reservation, AVIS

1.05 Follow well-worn path across meadow

1.2 Reenter woods, reach boardwalk shortly

1.3 Right on Reservation Rd

West Parish Cemetery

B 42°39'20" 71°9'49"

1.4 Cross intersection, enter cemetery (thru gate or over low spot in wall to right of gate)

1.8 Leave cemetery thru opening in stone wall at corner of Cutler Rd and Rte 133 (P=2), then immediate right on Rte 133 (Lowell St)

Doyle Link, Andover Conservation Commission

C 42°39'17" 71°10'20"

1.9 Cross Rte 133 (use caution) to enter Doyle Link

1.95 At first trail jct, take right fork. Follow blazes to High Plain Rd

D 42°39'47" 71°10'55"

2.9 Left onto High Plain Rd for 1.4 miles, over Rte 93 and Rte 495.

E 42°39'30" 71°11'54"

3.6 note: possible BCT route "eastern leg" into Tewksbury would begin at woods road on left leading to Haggetts Pond. Tr currently can be followed to Rte. 133, where it is interrupted by private property)

F 42°39'35" 71°12'18"

4.3 Right into woods, just before large field. Compost site and parking lot across the street (P=15)

Harold Rafton Reservation, AVIS (AVIS uses white blazes for all trails here. Look for Bay Circuit logo markers at trail jcts)

4.61 Right at trail jct

4.82 Left at trail jct and cross under power line

4.94 Left at trail jct Straight to brook

Fish Brook, Andover Conservation Commission

5.3 Cross brook on bridge, 40 feet left of trail. Right to resume trail

6.2 Enter field, cross to corner of River Rd and Chandler Rd (P=4)

G 42°40'47" 71°13'4"

6.3 Left briefly on River Rd, right onto Launching Rd
Deer Jump Reservation, AVIS (AVIS uses white blazes for all trails here. Look for Bay Circuit logo markers at trail jcts. Follow tr parallel to the river)

6.65 Right into woods, left at first jct. Head toward Merrimack River (South to North: to leave the river trail bear right uphill at small bridge)

6.73 Left at trail jct, downhill toward Merrimack River. Continue following river trail for 2.5 miles to the Tewksbury pumping station. Ignore white blazes to mark egress trails to the left

H 42°39'40" 71°14'29" (Tr passes under power lines. P=4 on River Rd at power lines)

K 42°39'22" 71°15'18"

9.2 Two routes are possible at this point, depending on the season. In winter, skiers and walkers are allowed to continue parallel to the river on the golf course property and behind St. Mary's Cemetery, to the public river trail thru Tewksbury and Lowell. In other seasons the golf course is closed to non-golf use. Then hikers should leave the river trail at the Tewksbury pumping station (parking allowed along driveway). Take driveway to River Rd, turn right, pass St. Mary's cemetery, and continue to the Tewksbury/Lowell town line at the junction with Rte 133 (gas station). Bear right, then turn hard right onto Burnham Rd toward the river. At the river turn left (southwest) to resume the public river trail thru Lowell

Tewksbury & Lowell BCT route along the Merrimack River, northeast to southwest

L 42°39'18" 71°16'31"

0.0 Follow the trail constructed on large boulders southwest along the Merrimack River. From here to downtown Lowell hikers are on both the BCT and the Merrimack River Trail. This stretch has not been uniformly maintained and some abutters have encroached on the right of way with gardens, patios, and building debris. It is, however, passable and public. The rip-rap construction covers a sewer interceptor. Trail passes sewage treatment plant. Follow sidewalks around the plant to resume the public river trail

M 42°38'46" 71°18'7"

2.0 (approximate mileage) At confluence of Merrimack and Concord Rivers, leave the sewer interceptor public trail. Follow sidewalks around Lowell Memorial Auditorium to Merrimack St

2.1 Right on Merrimack St. Follow Merrimack River Trail logos to Kerouac Park, Boott Cotton Mill Museum, other historic mill sites, to Lowell National/State Historic Park visitors center at Market St and Shattuck St (parking lot)

2.5 end of marked trail at present

Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust are working to create the Concord River greenway that may be the eventual BCT route linking to Bruce Freeman Bikeway. When completed BCT will leave the Merrimack River Trail near Middlesex Community College to access the greenway

Map 4 -Andover, Tewksbury, Lowell - THE JEWELS

Indian Ridge Reservation (Andover Village Improvement Society; 23 acres) - Woodland trails along Indian Ridge, a glacial esker 50 feet high. A plaque on a boulder memorializes Alice Buck, one of Andover's first conservationists. Parking lot at Andover High School

Bakers Meadow Reservation (AVIS; 59 acres) - Woodland trail circles a created pond and wetlands. Many species of birds, including herons, ducks, and rare snowy owls, have been sighted. Vital habitat for muskrat, mink and beaver

West Parish Meadow Reservation (AVIS; 28 acres)
One of the few true meadows remaining in town. Several small ponds, wildflowers, and many birds. A beautifully illustrated self-guiding nature trail booklet is available for \$4 from AVIS and at Moor and Mountain outfitters in Dundee Park. Parking lot at Andover High School

Doyle Link (Andover Conservation Commission; 75 acres) - Pleasant woodlands, two ponds, several streams. Red maple swamp on the Greenwood Rd end. Beautiful autumn foliage

Haggett's Pond (Andover Water Dept) - Wide unpaved level path from High Plain Rd. to Haggett's Pond Rd near jct with Rte 133. Possible future BCT route. Picnic spots, views of pond. Fishing allowed. No swimming. Limited parking on Haggetts Pond Rd and on High Plain Rd

Harold R. Rafton Reservation (AVIS; 226 acres) and **Fish Brook Wetlands** (Andover Conservation Commission; 235 acres) - Once farmland and woodlot. Many old stone walls remain. The ski loop trail passes through lovely hemlock groves. Trails pass beaver-dammed swamps and other wetlands. Fish Brook watershed is part of Andover's public water supply. Parking lot across rd at leaf compost site on High Plain Rd.; P=4 at jct. of Chandler Rd. and River Rd.

Shawsheen River and Vale Reservations (AVIS; 75 acres) - **Pomps Pond and Recreation Park** (Andover Conservation Commission; 101 acres) - Pleasant riverside hiking, ski touring, and canoeing. Canoe launch sites for Shawsheen River at end of Dale St and at Central St Bridge.

At Recreation Park also tennis, softball, picnicking, swimming and canoeing. Parking lots at Recreation Park, end of Dale St, and near Ballardvale dam; small lot on Red Spring Rd near RR bridge; along Abbot Bridge Dr.

Wood Hill and Bald Hill (Andover Conservation Commission; 203 acres) - Woodland hiking, partly along old farm roads. Views east from Bald Hill. Parking lot at leaf composting area on High Plain Rd

Nat Smith Reservation (AVIS; 67 acres) - Bailey trail was the first trail constructed by Andover Youth Services, in 2000. Also a loop trail. Mountain laurel display in May.
Access from Berkeley Lane, off Wellington Circle

Deer Jump Reservation and Spaulding Reservation (AVIS; 163 acres)

Merrimack River Reservation (Andover Conservation Commission; 76 acres) - Several trails coincide here. The Penacook Trail from Lawrence to Lowell Heritage State Park is part of the larger Merrimack River Trail. The BCT joins these trails near Launching Rd and continues south and west to the Tewksbury line. North and east of Launching Rd, the wide smooth Merrimack River Trail extends to the end of the Hewlett-Packard complex, offering good views of the river. Popular for hiking and jogging. The Merrimack River Trail then narrows and continues under Rte 93 and to the Lawrence line. The trail will eventually lead to Heritage State Park in Lawrence and beyond.
Parking: Along Launching Rd., Brundrett Ave., River Rd.; parking lots at New England Business Park, the Wyndham Hotel, and the Greater Lawrence Vocational School

Sewer interceptor trail, Tewksbury & Lowell - Don't let the name fool you. This public path constructed of large boulders and gravel is a scenic 2-mile walk along the south side of the Merrimack River. It serves as the BCT route and the Merrimack River Trail route. Though not uniformly maintained and in places suffering encroachment from

neighbors, it is an interesting walk from which to observe the river.

Kerouac Park (off Merrimack St., Lowell) - Small plaza with excerpts of locally born poet Jack Kerouac's work on polished granite monuments. On BCT route. Parking in nearby lots or on street

Lowell National Historic Park and **Lowell Heritage State Park** - These urban historic parks recount the glory days of the cotton and woolen mills that made Lowell America's first great industrial city and celebrate the present ethnic diversity of the city. Tours of the mills, the mill-girls' housing, and the canals that powered the mills are free. Call 978-459-1000 (LNHP) for information and tour registration.
www.nps.gov/lowe/

For info on riverfront recreation programs and events call 978-453-0592 (LHSP) or email lowell.heritage@state.ma.us
Free parking at Shattuck St. lot. Follow signs from Rte. 495

Livingston Park (Tewksbury Recreation) - Originally part of the Tewksbury Hospital land. Includes playing fields and playgrounds. Parking and access from East St

Tewksbury Hospital land - Prolonged negotiations with the state have resulted in permanent protection of some open space portions of this property, while other portions are put to agricultural and other uses. The proposed BCT "eastern leg" will pass through this property when completed

Rogers Fort Hill Park (Lowell Recreation) - Walking paths, hilly site. Access, parking off Rte. 38 near Shedd Playground

Lowell Cemetery (near Rogers Fort Hill Park and Shedd Playground) - Gravesite of Senator Paul Tsongas. Views of Concord River. In the cemetery on the west side of the river is the gravesite of poet Jack Kerouac

Great Swamp - A patchwork of public and private wetlands with trails for the adventurous. Can be accessed from the proposed BCT by old railroad beds

Concord River Greenway - A work in progress by the Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust. Summer raft trips.
www.Lowelllandtrust.org

Map 4 - Andover, Tewksbury, Lowell - FOR MORE INFORMATION

Maps and trailguides:

- Relevant USGS **topo maps** 7.5 x 15 are Lawrence, Lowell, Reading, Billerica
- **Andover Trail Guide** (2003) is available for \$10.95 at Moor and Mountain in Andover (3 Railroad St), and the Andover Bookstore (93 Main St). This book includes maps and descriptions of 41 properties, with history and natural features as well as suggested trail routes
- The **AVIS map of Andover** is available for \$5 at Moor and Mountain and the Andover Bookstore. It is free to new members of AVIS (see below)
- Tewksbury Conservation Commission, corner of Whipple and Pine, has an updated open space map

Local trail and land/water protection organizations

Merrimack River Watershed Council works for protection of the Merrimack River and watershed in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. They lead canoe trips and have an active volunteer stream monitoring program. 600 Suffolk St, Lowell 01854 978-275-0120 www.merrimack.org

Shawsheen River Watershed Association. Active volunteers work to protect and improve water quality and public access. New members welcome. Excellent website www.shawsheen.org Meet 2nd Wed., 7 pm, Tewksbury Library

SWEAT (Shawsheen Watershed Environmental Action Team) is now part of SRWA. The group organizes frequent river clean-ups. Volunteers welcome.

The **Andover Trails Committee** is an informal group of people who support Bay Circuit Alliance

projects, improve and maintain existing trails on conservation land, and work on the Shawsheen River Greenway initiative. The public is invited to attend meetings and to volunteer for trails projects. Membership is informal. Call the Bay Circuit Alliance headquarters in Andover at 978-470-1982 for meeting schedule and trail workdays open to people with all skill levels.

Members of the **Appalachian Mountain Club** Andover Committee lead guided walks of the properties in Andover and other interesting sites most weekends from Sept. through June. Free to the public.

For details look in the "Events" column of local newspapers or join the AMC to receive a monthly magazine, listing many walks and events throughout New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Contact AMC, 5 Joy St., Boston MA 02108 617-523-0655 x 303 www.amcboston.org

AVIS (Andover Village Improvement Society) owns over 1100 acres in Andover on 25 reservations that are open to the public for walking, skiing, and enjoyment of nature. Membership is open to everyone who cares about land preservation: \$15 per year individual, \$30 family and \$100 sustaining. New members receive an excellent map of the entire town, with major reservations mapped in detail. POBox 5097, Andover MA 01810. www.avisandover.org

Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust is a non-profit group "working to protect Lowell's green space." Contributions welcome. POBox 7162, Lowell 01852. Newsletter available. 978-934-0030 www.lowelllandtrust.org

Lowell National Historic Park - This urban historic park recounts the glory days of the cotton and woolen mills that made Lowell America's first great industrial city. Tours of the mills, the mill-girls' housing, and the canals that powered the mills are free. Bookstore and gift shop. Follow brown signs from Rte 495. Call 978-459-1000 for information and tour registration. www.nps.gov/lowe/

Lowell Heritage State Park celebrates the ethnic diversity of the city. For info on riverfront recreation, programs and events, call 978-453-0592 or email <lowell.heritage@state.ma.us> Free parking at Shattuck St. lot. Follow signs from Rte 495

Closing the Tewksbury gap: various groups have been working to protect the BC route between High Plain Rd and Bedford via Tewksbury's old Native American path called the Wamesit loop. To volunteer contact BCA headquarters

Charles River Wheelmen - very active group of bicyclists that lead rides of varying lengths throughout BC area. Excellent website lists rides, membership & other info www.crw.org

Bay Circuit Alliance headquarters is in the Moor and Mountain store at 3 Railroad St., Andover, across the tracks from the converted old RR station 978-470-1982 <baycircuit@juno.com> www.baycircuit.org