
The VeloConnect
A vision for a dirt surface long distance biking and hiking route.

Paula Burton

ON A BIKE • ON A TRAIL • ALWAYS EXPLORING

- Biking
- Hiking
- Skiing
- Travel
- Community







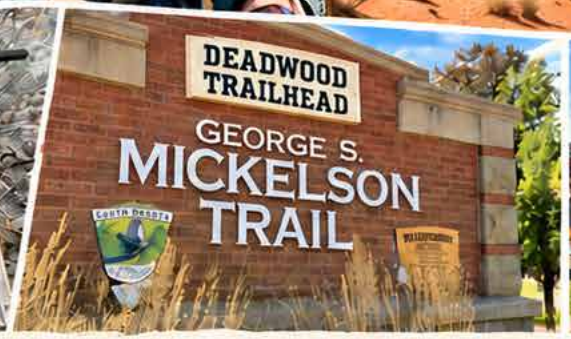
















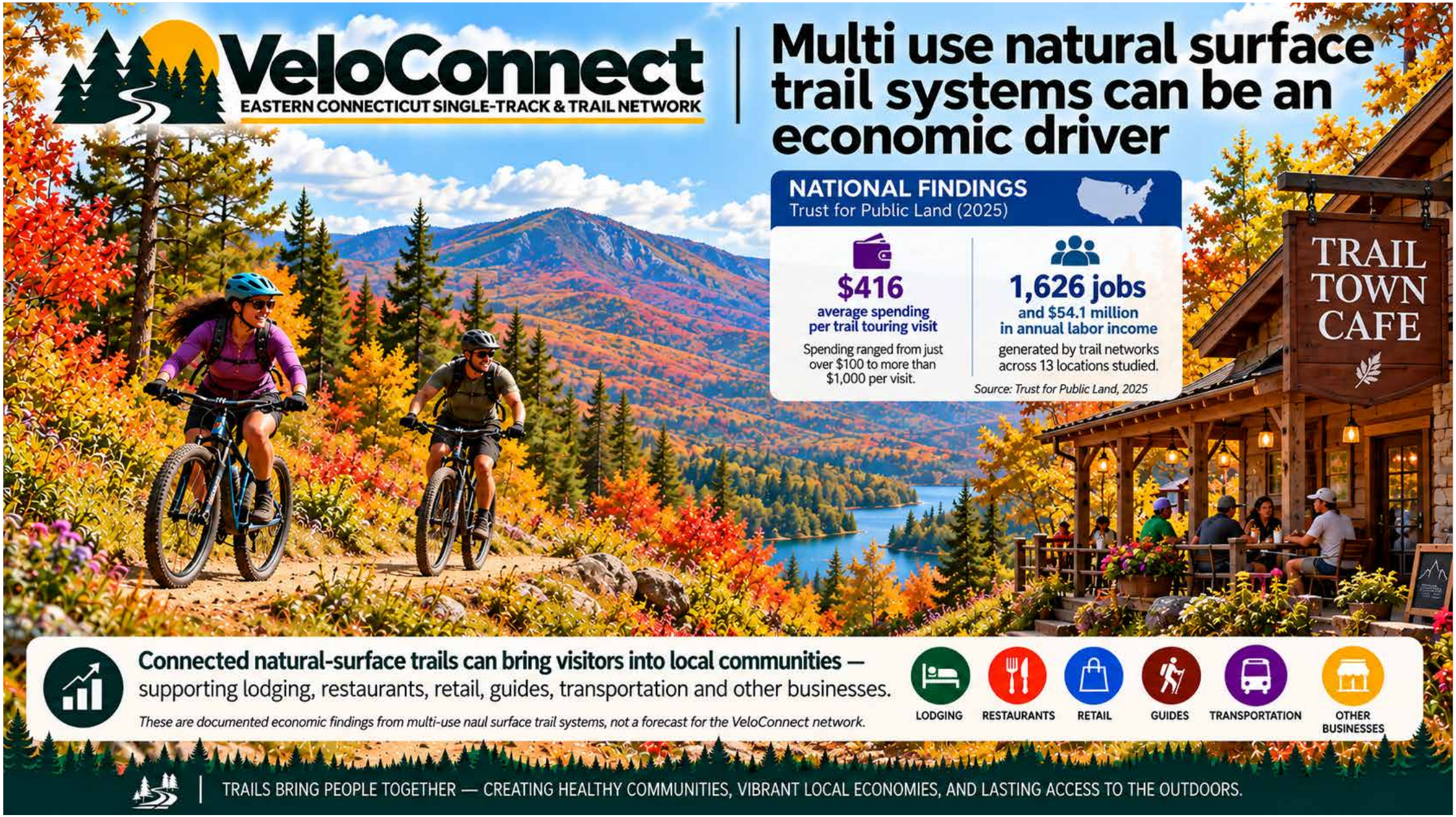
Author • Artist • Adventurer

Long distance off road bike/walk routes are gaining popularity.

Let's look beyond the rail trail.

- Models of long distance systems : Velomont in VT; Maine Huts and Trails, Carrabesset M E; Camino , Spain; Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail. These bike routes are primarily off paved road.
- A long distance mountain biking gravel route might have pods of single track connected by a rail trail or dirt roads.
- This type of experience can meet the needs of many riders.
- The rider can choose his or her own adventure. One day, multiple days, rustic camping, shelters , self serve huts, glamping, hostels, and motels.




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EASTERN CONNECTICUT SINGLE-TRACK & TRAIL NETWORK
Multi use natural surface trail systems can be an economic driver
NATIONAL FINDINGS
Trust for Public Land (2025)
$416
average spending per trail touring visit
Spending ranged from just over $100 to more than $1,000 per visit.
1,626 jobs
and $54.1 million in annual labor income
generated by trail networks across 13 locations studied.
Source: Trust for Public Land, 2025
TRAIL TOWN CAFE
Connected natural-surface trails can bring visitors into local communities — supporting lodging, restaurants, retail, guides, transportation and other businesses.
These are documented economic findings from multi-use naul surface trail systems, not a forecast for the VeloConnect network.
LODGING
RESTAURANTS
RETAIL
GUIDES
TRANSPORTATION
OTHER BUSINESSES
TRAILS BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER — CREATING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES, VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMIES, AND LASTING ACCESS TO THE OUTDOORS.

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EASTERN CONNECTICUT SINGLE-TRACK & TRAIL NETWORK

What is needed for a long distance route to become an economic driver?

- **Governmental input and financing**
  State, local and national
- **Enough routes for multiple days**
- **Local non-profits**
- **Volunteers**
- **Riding and hiking communities**
  invested in the trail
- **Established routes with amenities,**
  signage and services



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DISTANCE – 100 MILES

OR AT LEAST THREE DAYS/NIGHTS

- **Opportunities for overnight accommodation**
- **Will attract shuttle, outdoor guide, and rental services**
- **Can be promoted as an active vacation**
- **Long-distance bike and backpacking trails can serve as major economic drivers**
- **Reduced health care costs due to more opportunities for exercise.**



Research on long-distance cycling routes finds that **overnight visitors generally spend more than day visitors**, and that access to lodging, food, shops, transportation, guides and amenities **can increase local economic benefits.**

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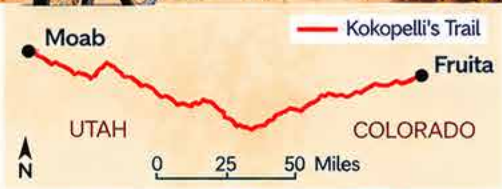
Models of Long-Distance Multi-Use Trails

Successful examples show how connected trails bring outdoor recreation, economic benefits, and healthier communities.

Kokopelli's Trail

Colorado & Utah | 140 miles





- 140 miles of multi-use trail
- World-class mountain biking
- Open to hiking, biking and equestrian use
- Combines singletrack, dirt roads and improved roads
- Draws visitors for multi-day trips
- Supports local communities through lodging, food and outdoor services

Vermont's Velomont Trail

Vermont | 72+ miles (phase 1, growing)





- 72+ miles with a long-term vision for a statewide network
- World-class mountain biking
- Multi-use for hiking, biking and equestrian use
- Connects rural communities and outdoor destinations
- Demonstrates how incremental buildout can create a major trail system

Maine Huts & Trails

Maine | 50+ miles (current system)





- 50+ miles of world-class, multi-use trails
- Renowned for mountain biking and backcountry recreation
- Network of trails and rustic huts for overnight stays
- Multi-use for hiking, biking and equestrian use
- Drives tourism and supports local businesses in western Maine

Crested Butte to Aspen Trail

Colorado | 50+ miles





- 50+ miles of scenic, multi-use trail
- World-renowned mountain biking
- Links towns and outdoor destinations
- Multi-use for hiking, biking and equestrian use
- Generates significant tourism revenue and supports local economies
- Model for connecting communities through outdoor recreation

TRAILS BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER — CREATING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES, VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMIES, AND LASTING ACCESS TO THE OUTDOORS.

Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail (xNHAT)

xNHAT
CROSS NEW HAMPSHIRE ADVENTURE TRAIL

An 83-mile connected adventure route across northern New Hampshire

xNHAT links rail trails, dirt roads, bike paths and quiet backroads through river valleys and the northern White Mountains.

83 MILES

A connected adventure route through scenic communities, forests and river valleys in northern New Hampshire.

A FOUR-SEASON DESTINATION

SPRING



SUMMER



FALL



WINTER



A TRAIL FOR MANY USERS

- Bikers (mountain, gravel and road cycling)
- Walkers and hikers
- Runners
- Equestrians
- Skiers
- Dog walkers and mushers

WHY xNHAT MATTERS FOR VELOCONNECT

Connects existing routes
Links different trail surfaces into one continuous adventure route.

Supports multi-day travel
with lodging, food, rentals and shuttles in local communities.

Provides maps and resources
Detailed maps, GPS routes and trip-planning tools at xnhat.org.

Built through partnerships,
A model of collaboration with grants, volunteers and local trail organizations.

A model for linking different trail surfaces into one recognizable long-distance route.

THE VELOMONT TRAIL

A statewide vision for connected, multi-use adventure in Vermont.



485 MILES
planned network of new and existing trails

27 COMMUNITIES
linking trail networks and village centers

30 HUTS +
5 DOWNTOWN HOSTELS
planned overnight options

Designed for bikes, skis and foot travel —
connecting recreation, rural communities and conservation.

Long-term project in development; figures describe the vision, not a completed continuous trail.

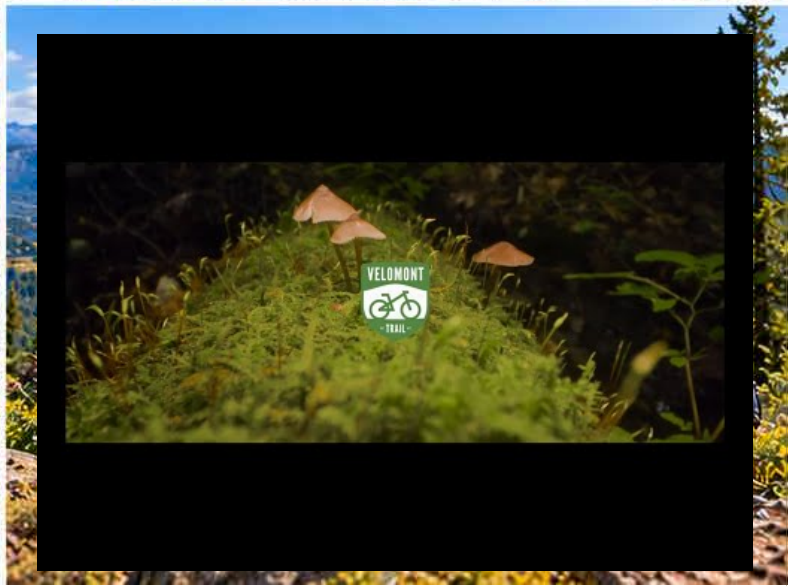







GOOD
TRAILS
GOOD
PEOPLE




VELOMONT
TRAIL

Connected Communities Project

Lost Sierras

- Northeastern Sierras - Lost Towns
- Mix of dirt roads and single track
- Economic development through recreation
- Bring business to rural areas and small towns.





Lost on Purpose

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EASTERN CONNECTICUT SINGLE-TRACK & TRAIL NETWORK

A Connected Trail Network Across Eastern Connecticut

Linking existing trails, parks and forests to create a 175-mile multi-use route for hiking, biking, equestrian use and outdoor adventure.

Air Line Trail
State Park Trail
50+ miles



Goodwin
State Forest Trails
40+ miles



Pomfret Town Forest
Trail System
20+ miles



West Thompson
Trail
30+ miles



Monopond
State Park Trails
30+ miles



POTENTIAL NETWORK

175 miles
of connected trails
(existing and proposed)

Multiple communities
across Eastern Connecticut

Connects state parks, town forests and natural areas

Multi-use
hiking, mountain biking, equestrian use and outdoor recreation

A NETWORK THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE AND PLACES

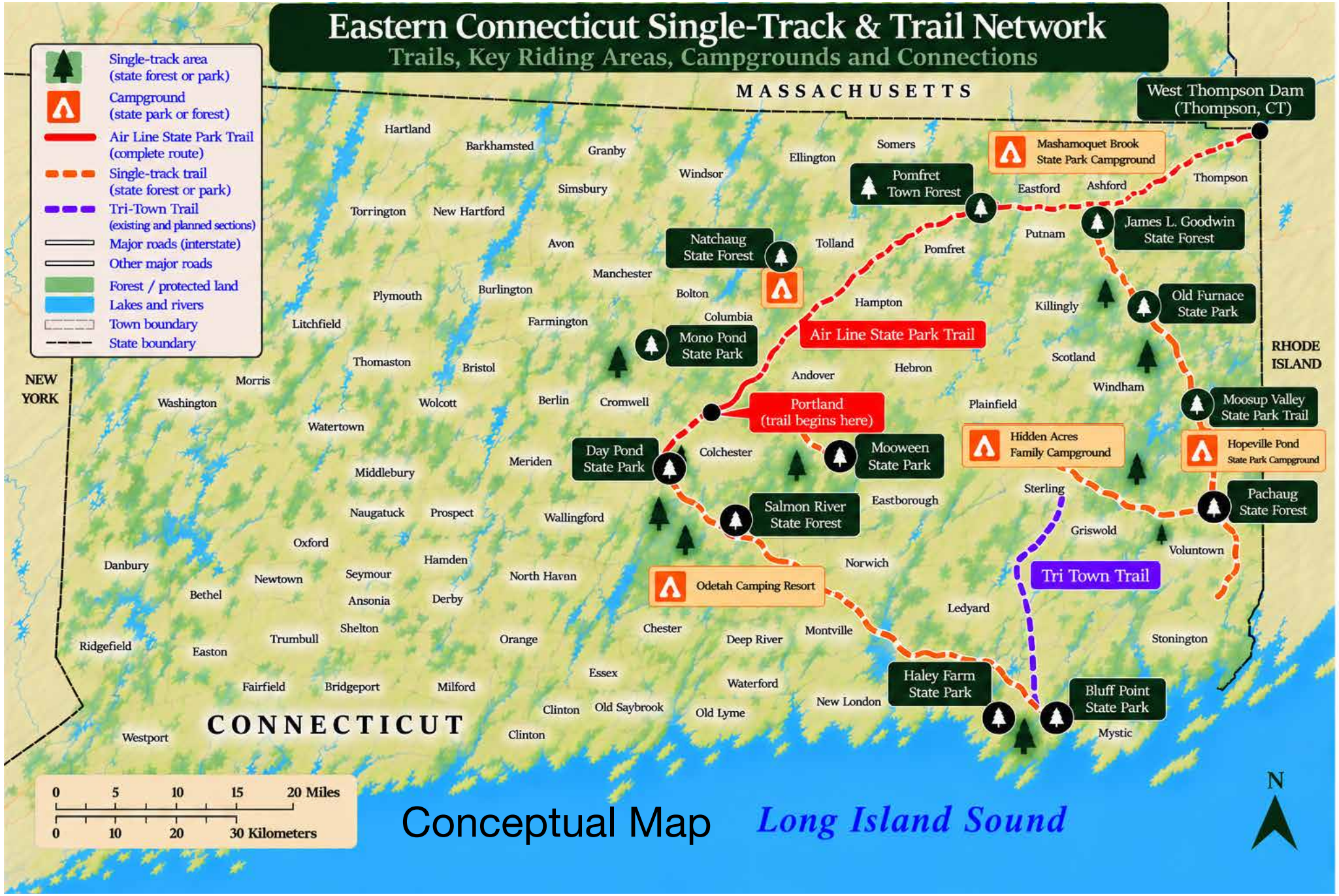
Access to forests, rivers and scenic landscapes

Links state parks, natural areas and local trails

Connects communities and supports local businesses

Creates opportunities for day trips and multi-day adventures

TRAILS BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER — CREATING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES, VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMIES, AND LASTING ACCESS TO THE OUTDOORS.


Eastern Connecticut Single-Track & Trail Network
Trails, Key Riding Areas, Campgrounds and Connections
Single-track area (state forest or park)
Campground (state park or forest)
Air Line State Park Trail (complete route)
Single-track trail (state forest or park)
Tri-Town Trail (existing and planned sections)
Major roads (interstate)
Other major roads
Forest / protected land
Lakes and rivers
Town boundary
State boundary
MASSACHUSETTS
RHODE ISLAND
NEW YORK
CONNECTICUT
West Thompson Dam (Thompson, CT)
Mashamoquet Brook State Park Campground
Pomfret Town Forest
James L. Goodwin State Forest
Natchaug State Forest
Old Furnace State Park
Air Line State Park Trail
Mono Pond State Park
Portland (trail begins here)
Moosup Valley State Park Trail
Hidden Acres Family Campground
Hopeville Pond State Park Campground
Day Pond State Park
Mooween State Park
Pachaug State Forest
Salmon River State Forest
Odetah Camping Resort
Tri Town Trail
Haley Farm State Park
Bluff Point State Park
Hartland
Barkhamsted
Granby
Windsor
Ellington
Somers
Eastford
Ashford
Thompson
Torrington
New Hartford
Simsbury
Avon
Tolland
Pomfret
Putnam
Manchester
Plymouth
Burlington
Bolton
Hampton
Killingly
Litchfield
Farmington
Columbia
Scotland
Thomaston
Bristol
Andover
Hebron
Windham
Morris
Washington
Wolcott
Berlin
Cromwell
Plainfield
Watertown
Meriden
Colchester
Sterling
Middlebury
Eastborough
Naugatuck
Prospect
Wallingford
Griswold
Voluntown
Oxford
Hamden
Norwich
Danbury
Newtown
Seymour
North Haven
Bethel
Ansonia
Derby
Ledyard
Shelton
Chester
Deep River
Montville
Ridgefield
Easton
Trumbull
Orange
Stonington
Essex
Waterford
Fairfield
Bridgeport
Milford
New London
Clinton
Old Saybrook
Old Lyme
Mystic
Westport
Clinton
0 5 10 15 20 Miles
0 10 20 30 Kilometers
N
Conceptual Map
Long Island Sound


VeloConnect
EASTERN CONNECTICUT SINGLE-TRACK & TRAIL NETWORK
175 MILES.
MULTIPLE COMMUNITIES.
ONE CONNECTED ADVENTURE.
A potential connected Eastern Connecticut off-road trail network
175 miles is a planning estimate for the potential connected network —
not 175 miles of currently continuous trail.

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EASTERN CONNECTICUT SINGLE-TRACK & TRAIL NETWORK

Sources

Maps, Trail Information & Planning Resources

1	CONNECTICUT DEEP	**Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP)** State parks, forests, trails, camping information, maps and GIS data (including Air Line State Park Trail)	**portal.ct.gov/deep**
2	CT Trail Finder	**CT Trail Finder** Interactive map of Connecticut's trails for hiking, biking, paddling and more	**cttrailfinder.com**
3	UCONN UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT	**UConn – Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR)** Trail maps, local land information, and planning resources	**clear.uconn.edu**
4	TRAILFORKS	**Trailforks** Detailed trail maps, singletrack information and user-created content	**trailforks.com**
5	US Army Corps of Engineers	**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District** West Thompson Lake recreation, trails and campground information	**nae.usace.army.mil**
6	NEMBA	**New England Mountain Bike Association, Southeast Connecticut Chapter** Grayville, Mooween and regional trail information and resources	**nemba.org**
7	xNHAT	**Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail (xNHAT)** 83-mile route linking rail trails, dirt roads, bike paths and quiet backroads	**xnhat.org**
8	SBTS	**Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship (SBTS)** Connected Communities — community-driven vision linking mountain towns with trail systems and outdoor recreation	**sierratrails.org**

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