

Trail Descriptions

1. OLD TOTE ROAD TRAIL – 3/4 mile (see note below)

This easy trail begins at the Parking Area and is the best access to the pond. It passes through mixed forest and crosses wetlands via narrow bog walkways. Along Thurlow Brook it skirts the base of a dense hemlock forest before reaching the ledges on the pond. Continuing southwards, it ends at a seasonally flooded marsh.

2. HEMLOCK RIDGE TRAIL – 1/2 mile

This moderately strenuous trail connects the end and middle of the Old Tote Road Trail to form a loop. It ascends to the highest elevation of the area. The ascent and descent are steep and rugged. A beautiful, mature hemlock forest exists on the north slope below the trail.

3. THURLOW BROOK LOOP TRAIL - 1 mile

This easy trail crosses the small stream draining the marsh at the end of the Old Tote Road Trail. A quick right turn will lead you through mixed forest to the top of a steep bank with lovely views of the pond. The trail then meanders past the turn to the Beaver Dam Spur and passes through mixed forest and back to the junction with the Old Tote Road Trail.

4. BEAVER DAM SPUR – 2/10 mile

This short, easy trail leads to Thurlow Brook and a large beaver dam, a good place to look for birds and other wildlife.

These trails are not recommended for cross-country skiing due to their narrow width and occasional steepness.

NOTE: The bog walkway closest to the inner parking lot is temporarily closed due to beaver activity. We recommend that day hikers use the temporary trail shown on the trail map to bypass the flooded walkway.

"What are the natural features which make a Township handsome? A river, with its waterfalls and meadows, a lake, a hill, a cliff or individual rocks, a forest, and ancient trees standing singly. Such things are beautiful: they have a high use which dollars and cents never represent. If the inhabitants of a town were wise, they would seek to preserve such things, though at a considerable expense."

Henry David Thoreau

NORTHERN POND NATURAL AREA

TRAIL MAP 2011



Aerial view of Northern Pond, looking west. Photograph provided courtesy of the Landmark Heritage Trust.



Trails were constructed and are maintained by the
Monroe Conservation Commission

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Natural Features

Northern Pond is a picturesque and pristine pond, 10 to 14 feet deep, with about eleven acres of open water. Thurlow Brook meanders through the pond from east to west. Two additional small, unnamed streams flow in from the north and south. The northern shore is largely forested wetland and bog—look for bog rosemary, leatherleaf, pitcher plant and sundew, all typical bog vegetation. Ledges on the southern shore, off the Old Tote Road Trail, provide for a lovely pond view, as well as a spot for lunch, bird watching and swimming.

Canoes and kayaks can be put in at a primitive launch site beyond a small parking area and at the end of the unmaintained Entrance Road. Beyond the parking area, the road is drivable only by high clearance vehicles.

Natural communities include hardwood and coniferous forests, marshes, meadows, and vernal pools. These communities provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. Wildflowers, including lady-slippers, twinflower, wintergreen and trailing arbutus, are abundant. House-sized boulders, ornamented by a lush growth of mosses and ferns, are a particularly inviting feature of the Old Tote Road Trail.



Northern Pond Natural Area is owned by the townspeople of Monroe and protected by a conservation easement held by the **Landmark Heritage Trust.**



DIRECTIONS: From the center of Monroe Village, drive east along Route 139 about a quarter mile to the Monroe Road; turn left and drive 1.2 miles to the Dahlia Farm Road; turn left and drive 1.3 miles to the NPNA. Look for the signpost on the left.

A color copy of this NPNA Trail Guide can be downloaded from the Landmark Heritage Trust website at: www.landmarkheritagetrust.com.

Please carry out what you carry in.

TEMPORARILY CLOSED
DUE TO HIGH WATER
CAUSED BY BEAVER
ACTIVITY

BYPASS TRAIL HEAD IS
ABOUT 0.25 MI
SOUTHEAST OF MAIN
PARKING AREA, AND
NORTHEAST OF
TOWN-OWNED
GRAVEL BORROW PIT

TEMPORARY BYPASS TRAIL

