

Sewalls Falls Park Trails

Access to the trails:

This trail system can be accessed from the bottom of the hill at the end of Second Street. In addition, it can be accessed from Sewalls Falls Road, west of the Sewalls Falls Bridge spanning the Merrimack River, by entering the NH Fish and Game Recreational Area.

The trails:

Hiking travel time: about 1 hour
Distance: about 3 miles round trip

The main trail, which is mostly flat, begins behind the restrooms building. Walk or ski along the river. An open grassy spot provides a good place to take in the view or have a snack. Next, cross a brook that feeds into the river and goes up a long hill that soon drops down and then levels out to lead you to the trail's end. A loop walk, for about ten more minutes, takes you past picnic tables, beyond the old dam. **OR** Drive down Second Street to the left parking lot. The picnic tables and a beach are just beyond. You can walk the aforementioned trail from here in reverse. At the NH Fish and Game parking lot, a trail leaves the northeast corner for a short additional walk.

Because of the interesting features along the trail, plan a longer stay. It is an easy trail for hiking and cross-country skiing. Fishing areas are available. See Map 11 to extend your walk to Morono Park.

History:

In 1657, this land of 500 acres was surveyed and laid out under a right granted to Massachusetts Governor John Endicott. In 1668, the land was conveyed to John Hull, a wealthy mintmaster from Massachusetts. Upon his death, the property was willed to his daughter Hanna, wife of Samuel Sewall, a judge in the days of witchcraft. Legend has it that this land was the favorite abode of Indian Chief Passaconaway. The area was also used to launch logs from the mast yard into the Merrimack River to float downstream to be used for the construction of Royal Navy vessels.

The Sewalls Falls site was also the site of the longest rock crib dam in the world. Constructed in 1894, the dam was 633 feet of timbers and hand packed stones. On April 7, 1984 pressure from spring floodwaters breached the dam. Much of the hydroelectric canal and gates still exist. It is planned that the site will be redeveloped with a historic museum giving the history of the dam and hydroelectric power in New Hampshire and further providing a wildlife area for all to enjoy. The State of New Hampshire Fish and Game Department is developing fishing piers and canoe access points near the hydroelectric plant.

The dam was constructed as part of a plan of the first in Concord major industrial and residential development; however it was never completed.



Concord Conservation Commission
225-8515

NH Fish & Game Department
271-3211



New Hampshire
Fish and Game Department

Map 10

Concord Trail System

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(Heritage Trail Segments)



Concord Conservation Commission
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