

Suggested Hikes, Rides and Paddles!

Otter River State Forest

86 Winchendon Road, Baldwinville, MA 01436, (978) 939-8962

To help you plan your visit to DCR's Otter River State Forest, we offer the following suggested experiences that we think you might enjoy.

- **“Introductory”** are short and appropriate for most users, including families with children.
- **“Signature”** are recommended trail experiences. These may be longer or more difficult but highlight some of the best park features.

For a safe and enjoyable park experience please review the **Things to Know Before You Go** section at the end of this document. Download a map before you go:
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/otter-river-sf-trail-map/download>

Introductory Hike

Wilder-Mckenzie Nature Trail

Trailhead: Beaman Pond campgroud OR Lake Dennison (42.63909, -72.08413)

Lat/Long: 42.62152, -72.07550

Distance: 2.5 miles RT **Difficulty:** Easy

Brief Description: Park at the main entrance and follow the nature trail from the back of Beaman Pond Campground and return. Or begin near the entrance of the parking area at the Lake Dennison day use area. Either way, it's back and forth over a distinct habitat "sandwich" trail! The two ends are moist forest with wetlands whereas the larger middle section is a dry upland area, warm and interesting.

Signature Paddle

Otter River Paddle

Trailhead: Maple St ballfields, Baldwinville **Lat/Long:** 42.60669, -72.08344

Distance: 5.5 mi **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: The launch is across from the ball fields down Maple St, in Baldwinville, follow the path. The Otter River winds through a marsh area full of wildlife and quiet. Another wilderness paddle for the rugged paddler. When you reach the Millers River, head down to the Birch Hill Dam take out.



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Signature Hike

King Phillip Rock hike

Trailhead: Middle/Goodnow Rd off New Boston Rd **Lat/Long:** 42.63913, -72.09392

Distance: 2 miles **Difficulty:** Easy

Brief Description: Enter the park at the Lake Denison day use area and proceed past the lake, bear left on New Boston Rd. Park near Goodnow/Middle Rd intersection. Walk down Middle Rd, turn left onto River Rd, King Phillip's Rock is a large glacial erratic along the Millers River and is believed to be the site of a meeting place for regional Native Americans in the 17th century.

Signature Hike

Alger/Wetmore/Royalston loop

Trailhead: Middle/Goodnow Rd off New Boston Rd **Lat/Long:** 42.63913, -72.09392

Distance: 5 mi **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: From parking, walk a short distance up New Boston Rd to Alger Rd, these are old roads. Follow to Wetmore Rd and arch through an area near the Millers River and some wetlands, be on the lookout for wildlife. Follow down New Boston Rd, then right onto Burgess Rd to Royalston Rd and return to parking on Goodnow Rd.

Signature Hike

Take the road up to King Phillip Rock.

Trailhead: **Lat/Long:** 42.63913, -72.09392

Distance: 2 miles **Difficulty:** Easy

Brief Description: Off Middle Rd/River Rd at bend in Millers River (Birch Hill)

Signature Paddle

Millers River Paddle

Trailhead: New Boston Rd **Lat/Long:** 42.64552, -72.09904

Distance: 3 mi **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: A rustic launch is located on New Boston Rd just over the bridge on the left after crossing over the Millers River. The take out is down the end of Goodnow Rd above Birch Hill Dam. For the rugged paddler, this trip offers a wilderness feel.

Signature Bike Ride

Forest Loop Ride

Trailhead: lake Dennison parking **Lat/Long:** 42.63965, -72.08623

Distance: 9.5 mi **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: From Lake Dennison day use parking, head down New Boston Rd, turn right after crossing over the Millers River and ride to Wetmore Rd. This will be a mix of woods and wetland. Next ride down New Boston Rd to Burgess Rd to Royalston Rd to Goodnow Rd. Ride down to River Rd and ride along the Millers River. Proceed to Middle Rd and return via New Boston Rd to parking. A good ride on old dirt roads and trails.

Things to Know Before You Go

- **Time, distance, difficulty.** The average hiker pace is estimated at 1.5 miles per hour. Most distances are round-trip. Plan conservatively, start early. Be aware of weather and sunset. Trail difficulty ratings based on ruggedness and gradient are *easy*, *moderate*, or *difficult*.
- **Wear weather appropriate clothing**, layer for temperature changes. Bring sunblock. Wear appropriate and sturdy footwear.
- **Parking at trailheads.** [Parking fees](#) may apply. Space may be limited. Be courteous to avoid blocking in others. Do not leave valuables in your car.
- **Bring a map and share your plans with someone.**
- **Drinking water** may not be available on site. Bring plenty!
- **Stay on designated trails.** Follow painted blazes and signs if available. Generally, double blazes indicate an intersection or direction change.
- **Pace & group size.** Keep your group together; hike only as fast as your group's slowest hiker or rider. Limit your group size to 12 people or fewer to lessen impacts.
- **Carry-in, carry-out all trash and personal belongings.** Follow the Leave No Trace outdoor ethics. [More information here.](#)
- **Know which parks are pet friendly.** Dogs are not permitted in DCR Water Supply Protection areas (such as Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs) and certain state parks. Always keep your dog leashed, 10-foot maximum. Always pick up after your dog and dispose of waste properly. [Complete guidelines here.](#)
- **Be aware of hunting seasons.** Wear blaze orange when appropriate. [More information here.](#)
- **Wear a bicycle helmet** while biking. Riders age 16 and under must wear a helmet. It is the law. [More information here.](#)

- **Wear your PFD** while boating. A Personal Flotation Device (PFD), or life preserver, must be worn by boaters age 12 and under; and canoeists/kayakers from Sept. 15-May 15. [More information here.](#)
 - **Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers.** Prevent the transport of nuisance species. Clean all recreational equipment. It is the law. [More information here.](#)
 - **Be aware some trails may not be well marked, and some may not be identified on a trail map.**
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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) oversees over 450,000 acres of state parks, forests, beaches, bike trails, parkways, watershed lands, and dams across the Commonwealth. DCR's mission is to: *Protect, promote and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources for the well-being of all.*