

Suggested Hikes, Rides and Paddles!

Tolland State Forest

410 Tolland Road, East Otis , MA 01029, (413) 269-6002

To help you plan your visit to DCR's Tolland 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/tolland-state-forest-trail-map/download>

Introductory Hike Gilmore Trail

Trailhead: Park at the parking lot at campground contact station. Beware, the parking here may be more limited during the boating season. The trailhead is at the far end of the lot, on the left. **Lat/Long:** 42.143680, -73.044589

Distance: 0.8 mile **Difficulty:** Easy

Brief Description: This short loop hike is great for birding and wildlife viewing, nature study, and views of the reservoir. From the parking lot trailhead, take the Gilmore Trail on the left. It starts off following the shore of Otis Reservoir. It intersects with the longer Gilmore Trail Loop (3.5 miles-long) on the left. Bear right for the short loop. Turning away from the water the trail begins to climb over a rocky section. In about 0.3 miles the trail intersects with the Gilmore Trail long loop, on the left. Keep right, descend a slope, cross a short section of snowmobile trail, and return to the parking area. This trail is accessible year-round. The trail does have some wet spots. Interpretive stops along the route correspond to a self-guided trail brochure.

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.**

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.*