

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When can I visit the trail?

The trail is open daily, year-round, from sunrise to sunset.

Can I camp along the trail?

Overnight camping is prohibited on project lands.

Can I have a campfire if I stop to rest?

No, open fires are not allowed.

Are there trash barrels at the launch and take-out areas?

No, please carry out all litter when you leave.

Can we fish along the trail?

Yes! The French River is open for fishing. An MA fishing license is required.

Is hunting allowed near the trail?

Hunting is allowed on project lands during the proper season. An MA hunting license is required.

OTHER RULES APPLICABLE TO THE USE OF THE AREA ARE CONTAINED IN TITLE 36, U.S. CODE, COPIES OF WHICH ARE POSTED. EXTRA COPIES ARE AVAILABLE. PLEASE OBSERVE ALL POSTED SIGNS.

For assistance or information, write or call the Buffumville Dam office.
P.O. Box 155, Oxford, MA 01540
Tel: (508) 248-5697

Or you can visit our websites:
www.nae.usace.army.mil/recreati/bvl/bvlhome.htm
www.nae.usace.army.mil/recreati/hvd/hvdhome.htm

FRENCH RIVER CANOE TRAIL



*Watchable
Wildlife Area*



HODGES VILLAGE DAM North Oxford



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
New England District

This stretch of the French River has only one established kayak/canoe launch and the trip down to the Bailey Bridge take-out area is not an easy paddle. Boaters must portage around at least two formidable beaver dams and can count on tree snags occurring here and there along the way. What makes it worth the effort is the abundance of wildlife seen, particularly in the open marsh areas. Since public access is limited and paddlers few, wildlife viewing is great.

Often viewed are wood ducks, teal, mergansers and green and blue herons. Other wading birds regularly seen are bitterns, egrets and sandpipers. Occasionally seen are loons, rails, redhead ducks and other passers-through. Mink, beavers, otters, and muskrats are common sights, as are flycatchers, kingfishers, osprey, hawks, red-winged black birds, water snakes and turtles of the area.

Like most waterways in New England, the French River was home to Native Americans who lived by, and took fish and game from its riverine system. Later, the river was used as an engine by colonists and early Americans to produce everything from lumber to cloth, shingles, shoes, nails, rope, etc., in large and small mills. Consequently, waste and manufacturing by-products were dumped into its waters. With the demise of mills, the passage of time and a new ethic about the environment, the French River at Hodges Village Dam is healthy and alive with fish, amphibians, reptiles and the creatures that seek them. Enjoy our canoe trail!

Be safe! Wear your life vest!
Don't dive into the stream: stumps and shallow waters are the norm. River flows and heights differ depending on weather and time of year.

The trail is 3.4 miles long. Travel time along the river should take around 2.5 hours. There are ample opportunities to stop and pull out for rest and exploration. No camping or fires are allowed, so please leave only "paddle prints" along the trail.

Watch for obstructions and floating debris as you go. Please do not "collect" items of our wild inventory.

To get to the Canoe Launch take I-395 to Exit 4b in Oxford, MA. At the center of town turn right and go north on Rt. 12. In 2.6 miles you will see a yellow blinking light and the entrance sign to Greenbrier Park on the left. Turn in and drive approximately 500 feet. You will see a sign for kayak access. Drive left down the dirt road to a yellow gate. Unload and drive back up to park. If you call ahead to the Ranger Office, 508-248-5697, you can request that a gate be unlocked near the canoe trail pullout so that you may drive a vehicle down close to the river. It is best to call a day ahead and leave a message. Please tell us, roughly, when you expect to arrive at the pullout. Otherwise, park your pick-up vehicle at the in the Hodges Village Dam parking lot. It is a .01 mile portage from the pullout to the lot. And yes, you can also paddle back UP the fairly lazy French River instead.