

White Mountains National Forest

The 768,000-acre White Mountain National Forest (WMNF), the largest in the east, was created by the Weeks Act of 1911. Millions of board feet of timber were cut from these mountains in the nineteenth century, and a portion of the Kancamagus Scenic Byway and the Wilderness Trail were the routes of logging railroads, part of an extensive rail system built by the timber companies to harvest the dense stands of mountain trees. The clear-cutting techniques employed by the timber cutters left the steep mountain slopes denuded, leading to massive erosion and downstream flooding. The limbs and branches left behind in the woods quickly dried and fueled huge forest fires which threatened the uncut areas. It was to curtail the clear cutting, reduce the danger of forest fires, provide for reforestation of the mountains, and prevent erosion and flooding that the forest was created. A ride across the Kancamagus Scenic Byway provides clear evidence of the success of the forest plan. Despite heavy use by visitors, most of the WMNF is again a wilderness. Although the United States Forest Service continues to harvest timber in this huge woodland, the WMNF is also managed for multiple-use activities: hiking, camping, swimming, fishing, nature study, forest research, and scenic beauty. Protection of watersheds and endangered species of plants, insects, and animals also figure into the operation of this forest. So varied is the forest, from lowland bogs to high alpine mountains, so interesting is its history, from Indians to settlers, loggers to scientists, that a whole guide could be written about this wild country.

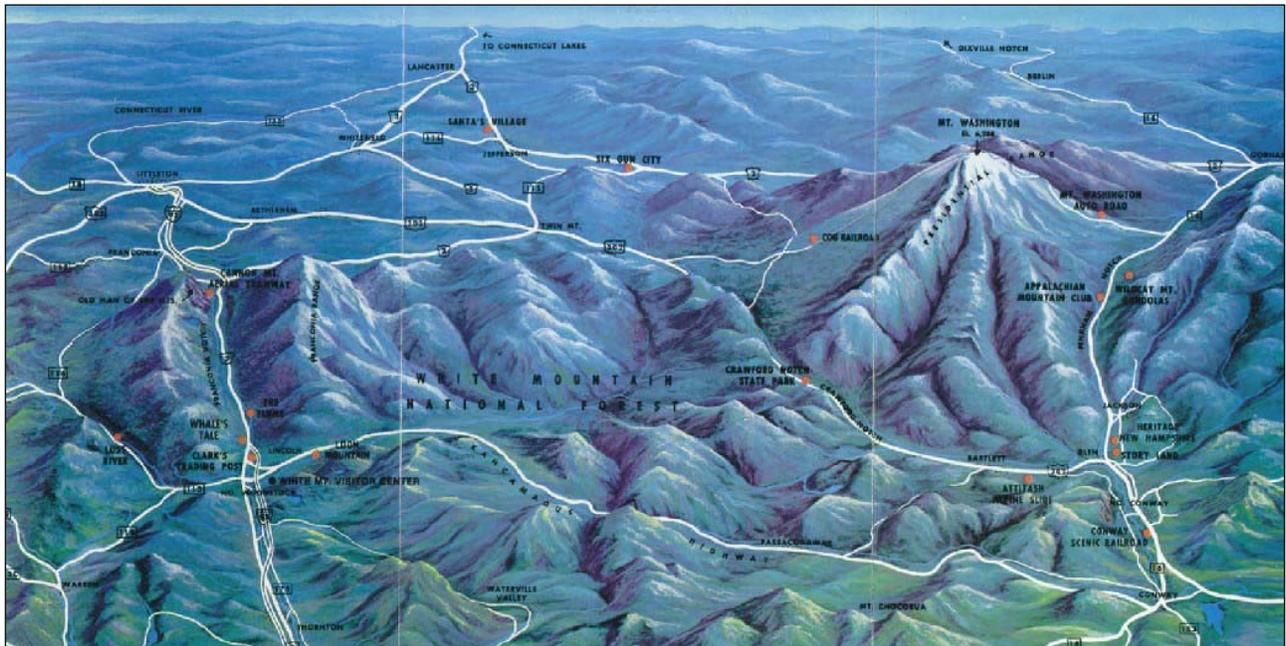
The WMNF has several self-guided nature trails, is responsible for many miles of backcountry trails, and operates a number of barrier-free day-use facilities and campgrounds. Four congressionally designated wilderness areas within the forest are managed to preserve a wilderness experience. Here no timber cutting is permitted; motorized vehicles (snowmobiles, trail bikes, or bicycles) are prohibited; and campsites are limited to 10 people or fewer. In addition to varied WMNF publications, the best guide to the area is the AMC White Mountain Guide, the hiker's 600-page handbook of trail details and also some human and natural history information.

WMNF Saco Ranger Station (447-5448), Kancamagus Highway, just off Route 16, Conway.

WMNF Androscoggin Ranger Station (466-2713), Route 16, Gorham.

WMNF Ammonoosuc Ranger Station (869-2626), Trudeau Road, off Route 302, Box 239, Bethlehem

AMC Pinkham Notch Camp (466-2725), Route 16, Pinkham Notch.



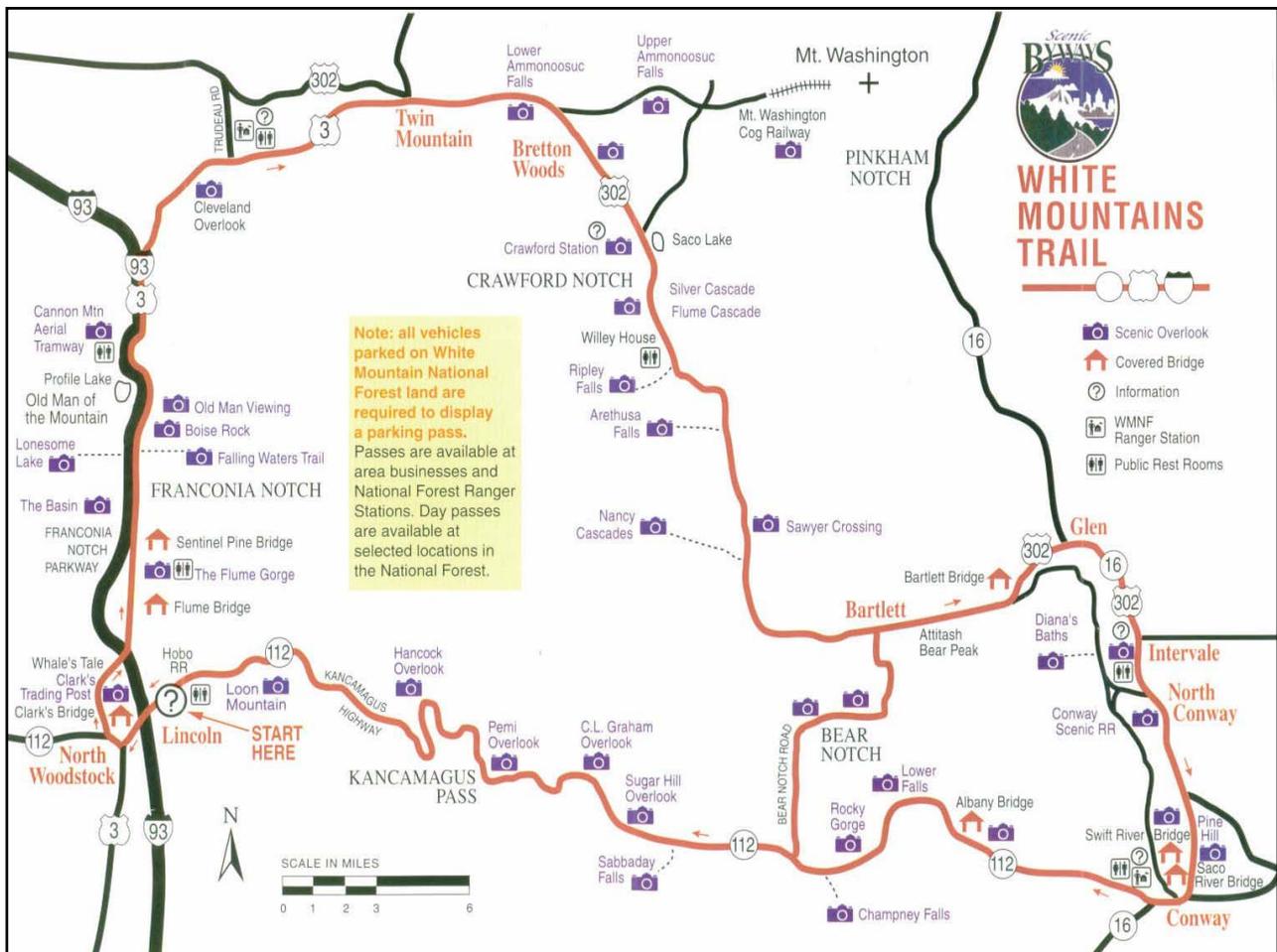
White Mountains Trail Driving Tour

The White Mountains Trail is a circular tour that incorporates varying topography, mountain and river views, a variety of vegetation areas from ledge to wetland and woodland, 18th and 19th century buildings and historic sites, and some of the grandest scenery in the eastern United States. Throughout its length, it is close to or passes through the 800,000 acre White Mountain National Forest.

Parts of the trail have been utilized by travelers for centuries. In the early 19th century, landscape painter Thomas Cole and writer Nathaniel Hawthorne drew attention to the White Mountains. Soon visitors seeking wilderness adventure and glorious scenery began to arrive in significant numbers. Many vistas we admire today long the White Mountains Trail are little changed since that then.

The Trail

Before starting, set your odometer to zero; mileage points of interest are shown in parentheses. The Trail is a loop, so you can start your tour anywhere along its length. The descriptions following are starting at the White Mountains visitors center in Lincoln, NH.



North Woodstock-Franconia Notch (Mile 1-10) :

Interpretative Sites: White Mountains Visitor Ctr - Rt 112, No. Woodstock, Flume Visitor Ctr - Rt 3, Lincoln.

Natural & Historic Points of Interest: Lost River Gorge, Mt Pemigewasset/Indian Head Profile, Boise Rock, Old Man of the Mountain Museum, Franconia Notch State Park, Flume Gorge, Echo Lake, Profile lake, New England Ski Museum, Mt Lafayette Scenic Vista.

The Trail begins at the **White Mountains Visitor Center** in North Woodstock. Turn left at the traffic light onto Route 112 (**0.1** miles), to North Woodstock. North Woodstock offers a good selection of tax-free shopping at dozens of unique shops, a large selection of lodging, superb dining and full calendar of special events. West of North Woodstock on Route 112 is Lost River Gorge, a natural wonder that has drawn visitors since the turn of the century. Lost River is a favorite with children and adults who love active exploration.

At the traffic light (**0.8**), turn left onto Route 3N. On this route you'll pass several of the White Mountains' most popular family attractions, including Clark's Trading Post (**2.0**) with its trained bears, antique Americana and steam trains; and Whale's Tale Water Park (**3.8**) the only complete water park in the region.

Farther north, you encounter the first of the natural stone profiles: the Indian Head Profile (**4.7**) on Mt. Pemigewasset is seen on the western side of Route 3. Route 3 soon joins I-93/Franconia Notch State Park a stretch that takes you through the 6440 acres between towering Franconia and Kinsman mountain ranges. Franconia Notch State Park includes many natural wonders, the Flume Gorge (**5.5**), a natural 800 foot chasm with waterfalls, covered bridges, a scenic pool and glacial boulders.

Up the road from the Fume Gorge is the Basin (**7.1**) a deep glacial pothole at the foot of a waterfall; Boise Rock (**9.5**), ideal for viewing Cannon Cliff; and the Old Man of the Mountain natural stone profile, best viewed from Profile Lake (**10.5**).

You can stop and hike a bit of the Appalachian Trail (**5.8**), or camp at Lafayette Place Campground (**8.8**). Hiking trails can be found all along the White Mountains Trail, from short, easy walks suitable for family groups to wilderness adventures. Trails to twenty 4000 foot summits are also accessed from various places along the route. Information about hiking is available at National Forest Ranger Stations and the White Mountains Visitor Center.

Old Man of the Mountain/Franconia Notch (Mile 10-12) :

Turn off at Exit 34B for a ride on Cannon Mountain Aerial Tramway (**10.8**), or a stunning view of the Old Man of the Mountain. Cannon's aerial tram serves skiers in winter and sightseers in spring, summer and fall. The New England Ski Museum, at Cannon Mountain's base, offers a look at our skiing heritage; while the Old Man of the Mountain Museum examines the famous natural stone profile. For a refreshing dip, turn off at Exit 34C (**11.5**) to Echo Lake beach. A half-mile walk takes you to Hugh J. Gallen scenic overlook bridge.

Route 3 between I-93 & Route 302 (Mile 12-23) :

Natural & Historic Points of Interest: Mt Cleveland Overlook.

At Exit 35 (**12.5**), bear right on Route 3N. If you've brought your bicycles, parking for the Franconia Notch bike path is on the right (**13.6**); the path runs 9 miles to the Flume and back. Just up the road is the Mt. Cleveland Overlook (**16.9**) and the turnoff onto Trudeau Road (**18.1**) where you can visit the Ammonoosuc Ranger Station, an excellent source of information about the 800,000 acre White Mountain National Forest. The entire loop of the White Mountains Trail runs through or close to the Forest. Continuing on Route 3, the Trail passes Beaver Brook Rest Area (**19.1**) and through the village of Twin Mountain (**22.0**) which, along with Bretton Woods, Fabyan and Marshfield, comprise the town of Carroll. At the traffic light (**23.4**), turn right onto Route 302E. The next few miles take you past trailheads and a legendary grand hotel.

Route 302 thru Bretton Woods(Mile 24-33) :

Natural & Historic Points of Interest: Mount Washington Hotel, Mt Washington Cog Railway.

You'll first encounter the entrance to the Zealand Campground and trailhead (**25.6**); the Lower Falls of the Ammonoosuc River (access parking, **25.8**); a major moose wallow (**26.6**, on the right; and the Cherry Mountain Road (**26.9**).

The Twin Mountain and Bretton Woods area was first settled by Abel Crawford in 1792. Abel and son Ethan built the Notch House, which signaled the beginning of the hotel era. Abel Crawford, "the father of White Mountains tourism," also was responsible for building the first path to the summit of Mt. Washington, which is still in use today.

Just off Route 302 in Bretton Woods is the Mt. Washington Cog Railway (base road entrance **27.8**), the world's first mountain climbing cog railway. When the Cog Railway was first proposed, the New Hampshire legislature was so doubtful that it could be completed that they gave the builder the right to build the "railway to the moon"! Today you can ride the Cog to the summit of 6288 foot Mt Washington, as well as see the Old Peppersass, the world's first mountain climbing locomotive which reached the summit on July 3, 1869.

What Abel Crawford began, the tradition of hospitality, culminated in the building of one of the grandest hotels of all, the Mount Washington Hotel (**28.6**), in 1902. It, too, has its place in history: 1944 the World Monetary Conference met there and the gold standard was established with the US dollar chosen as the backbone to international exchange.

Rt. 302 thru Crawford Notch to Bartlett (Mile 30-49) :

Interpretive Site: Crawford Notch Visitor Center & Willey House Site - Rt 302, Crawford Notch State Park.

Natural & Historic Points of Interest: Crawford Notch, Silver Cascade, Crawford Railroad Station, Saco Lake, Willey House, Frankenstein Cliff, Bartlett Covered Bridge.

From Bretton Woods, continue on Route 302 through Crawford Notch as it travels through Crawford Notch and Crawford Notch State Park. Along this stretch nature reasserts itself with several scenic overlooks and inviting places to stop: the Mt. Eisenhower Wayside Park (**30.2**); Mt. Clinton trailhead (**31.7**); the former site of the Crawford House hotel (**31.8**); and Crawford Depot (**31.9**).

The Depot is an Appalachian Mountain Club-run facility offering hiking information and a view across the road to Saco Lake, headwaters of the Saco River. You are now at the entrance to Crawford Notch State Park, 6 miles of rugged beauty in a mountain pass. Above the road is a natural rock formation known as Elephant Head (**32.1**). When you see Dismal Pool (**32.5**), slow down and pull off (**32.6**) into the viewpoint; it's well worth the stop. From the parking area you can see the Flume Cascade (**32.7**) and Silver Cascade (**32.8**), just two of the waterfalls along this stretch of the trail.

Two miles farther is the site of the historic Willey Slide (**34.6**), where the Willey Family of seven and two hired men died in an 1826 landslide. Information about the State Park, restrooms and picnic sites are available at the Visitor Center. You're likely to see lots of hikers: the Appalachian Trail is close by (**35.7**); as are Dry River Campground, with its views of Frankenstein Cliff (**37.5**); parking for Arethusa Falls trail (**38.0**) leading to one of the highest waterfalls in New Hampshire; Bemis Bridge trailhead (**40.2**); and Nancy Brook Bridge (**40.6**).

At the turn of the 20th century, logging threatened to decimate the White Mountains region. Lancaster resident Congressman John Wingate Weeks sponsored the Weeks Act, which resulted in the creation of the White Mountain National Forest. Today you can visit sites of now abandoned logging towns that flourished at the turn of the century, including Livermore on the Sawyer River Road (**42.4**).

The next section of the Trail takes you through the Mount Washington Valley, which begins in Bartlett Village (**46.1**). A summer resort since the early 1800's, the Mt Washington Valley became a winter resort in the 1930s. Today there are 5 downhill ski areas, miles of cross-country trails and so many things to see and do, that vacationers come year round. The Valley is also known all over the eastern US and into Canada for its wealth of outlet shopping, nearly 200 stores and counting.

In Bartlett Village, you can turn right onto **Bear Notch Road (46.4)**, which connects with the Kancamagus Highway at (**76.5**). There are several scenic turnoffs along the road (which is open spring to late fall), including one overlook that offers extraordinary views of Crawford Notch. To fully experience the White Mountains Trail, however, continue on Route 302 past Bear Notch Road east to Glen, where it joins Route 16 south through North Conway and Conway.

Route 302 Bartlett thru Glen (Mile 49-53) :

Before reaching Glen on your right is Attitash Bear Peak & Fields of Attitash (**49.0**), a ski resort and summer recreation attraction. Loaded with mountains of fun, Attitash offers an alpine slide, scenic chairlift ride, mountain biking, golf driving range, horseback riding and lots more. Just past Attitash, you can turn south on West Side Road (**50.4**) which takes you to the traffic lights in Conway (**63.6**); or you can continue on Route 302 past the Bartlett Covered Bridge (**50.8**) and through the junction with Route 16 (**52.6**).

Just north of the junction of Route 302 and 16 in Glen are Story Land and Heritage New Hampshire, two family favorites. At Heritage, giant whirligigs spin in the wind on the front lawn; inside you travel through time and experience 300 years of fascinating New Hampshire history. Next door at Story Land, you'll explore the wonderful world of childhood with all sorts of rides, activities and shows. It's a perennial favorite with something new every year.

North Conway and Conway (Mile 54-64) :

Interpretive Sites: Intervale Rest Area - Rt 16, Intervale, Mt Washington Chamber of Commerce - Rt 16, North Conway, Conway Visitor Center - Rt 16, Conway.

Natural & Historic Points of Interest: Saco & Swift River Covered Bridges, Eastman Lord House Museum, Conway Scenic Railroad Station, White Horse & Cathedral Ledges, Moat Mountain Range, Intervale Scenic Vista, Abenaki Indian Camp.

Route 16 and 302 then head south past Hartmann's Model RR Museum (**54.2**) to one of the most famous viewpoints in the state: the **Intervale Scenic Vista (56.2)**, a state Rest Area with a stunning scenic overlook of Mt. Washington that has changed little in the past 200 years. Since building on the Intervale (the flat, low-lying floodplain land along the Saco River) is prohibited. In fact, many of the views painted by Thomas Cole, Benjamin Champney, and other members of the 19th century White Mountain School of Art, are easily recognizable today. South of the Intervale Scenic Vista, Route 16 passes through the popular resort town and shopping mecca, North Conway: home of the historic Conway Scenic Railroad train station (**58.2**) and its beautifully restored Victorian station, which was built in 1874. You can choose from scenic round-trip train rides of varying duration to Conway, Bartlett, or north through the dramatic landscape of Crawford Notch.

The attractions in this area are many: an in town summer repertory theater, concerts in Schouler Park in the center of North Conway, terrific shopping along Route 16 and in the villages, and picture-perfect setting. To the west of these towns are White Horse and Cathedral Ledges, both favorites with rock climbers. A seasonal road goes to the top of Cathedral ledge where you can see the valley below. At the Ledge's base, Echo Lake State Park with its sandy beach and picnic area.

South of North Conway Village, Route 16 climbs Pine Hill. A pullout on the right (**61.4**) affords a wonderful view of the Saco River, Cathedral and White Horse Ledges (to the west of North Conway) and Mt. Washington. A bit farther on (**62.8**) is a side road to the Saco Covered Bridge; you can see the Bridge from Route 16 (**63.4**). At the junction of Routes 16 and 113 (**63.6**), bear right, and go through the lights south through Conway Village, past the Conway Village Information Center (**64.1**), and over the railroad tracks. Turn right at the light onto Route 112, the Kancamagus Highway (**64.4**).

Kancamagus Hwy from Conway to Lincoln (Mile 64-100) :

Interpretive Sites: Saco Ranger Station and Russell-Colbath House - near Conway on the Kancamagus Highway.

Natural & Historic Points of Interest: Watchable Wildlife, Swift River, Dugway Picnic Area, Albany Covered Bridge, Passaconway Historic Site, Hancock & Pemi Overlook, Sabbaday Falls, Rocky Gorge Scenic Area, Lower Falls Swimming Area and Picnic Area, Greeley Ponds Scenic Area.

Undoubtedly one of the most spectacular sections of the White Mountains Trail is the Kancamagus highway (a National Scenic Byway) runs for 34.5 miles from Conway in the east to Lincoln in the west. Known as "the Kanc" -what locals call the Kancamagus-traverses the White Mountain National Forest, it crosses the flank of Mt Kancamagus and climbs to nearly 3000 feet, providing dramatic views. Along its length are hiking trails, federally designated Scenic Areas, and stunning overlooks. For more information about the "Kanc" and the many pull-offs; parking areas; hiking and walking trails; scenic views and services along it, stop at the Saco Ranger Station (**64.5**).

The highway was named for an early Indian Chief of the Penacook Confederacy, Kancamagus, who tried to keep the peace between his people and the white settlers. Repeated harassment by the English ended his efforts, bringing war and bloodshed. In early 1690's the Confederacy tribes scattered, and Kancamagus and his followers moved on, either to northern New Hampshire or Canada.

Passaconaway, grandfather of Kancamagus, originally united over 17 Indian tribes of central New England into the Penacook Confederacy in 1627. The rich flat land 12 miles from Conway is named for him. This community was first settled about 1790. Today the Russell-Colbath House is the only remaining 19th century homestead in the area, and serves as an US Forest Service Information Center.

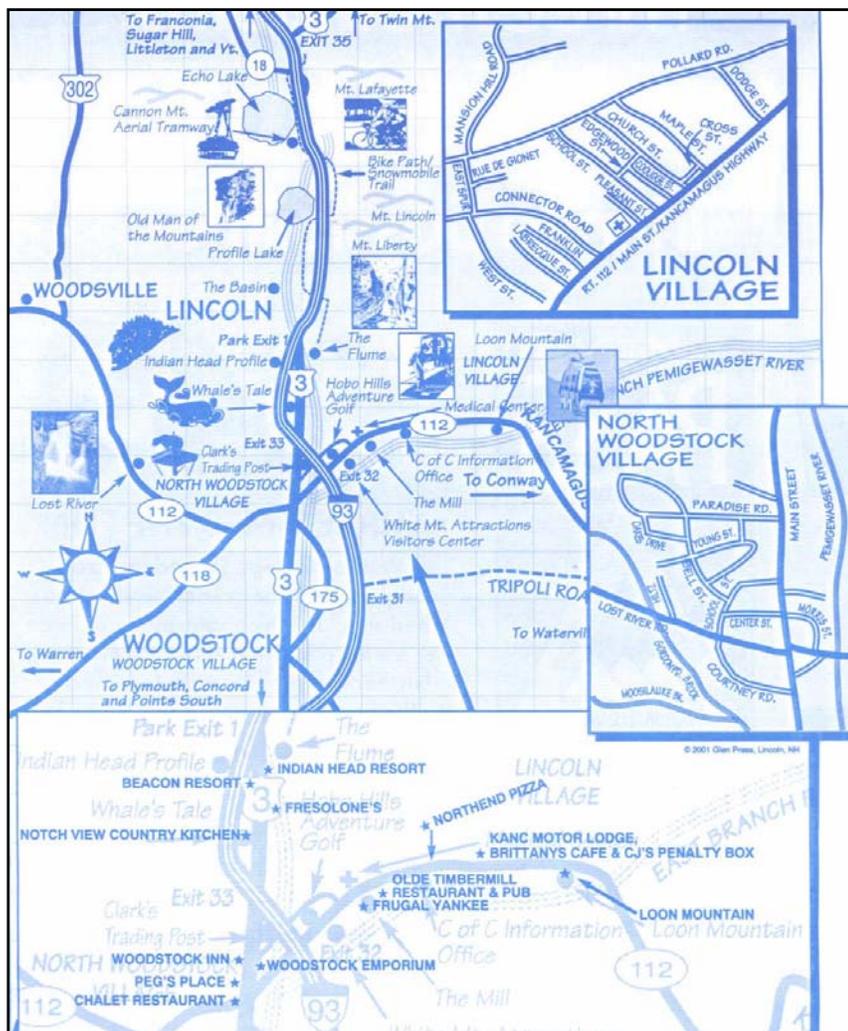
There are campgrounds along the Kancamagus, including one by the Albany Covered Bridge (**70.6**); wonderful places to swim and picnic, such as Frog Rock Swimming Hole (**66.6**), Lower Falls Scenic Area (**71.3**) and Rocky Gorge (**73.1**), Champney Falls (**75.0**), and **Sabbaday Falls** (**79.9**). At the Russell Colbath House Historic Site (**77.1**), see how 19th century settlers lived, and explore the Rail n' River nature trail. Just past the historic site is a major moose wallow (**77.7**); followed by Jigger Johnson Campground (**78.7**); Sabbaday Falls; the Sugar Hill scenic overlook (**81.9**); and Lily Pond (**83.8**).

For the next few miles there are numerous scenic overlooks (beginning at **85.1**), including the C.L. Graham Wangan Ground scenic overlook (**86.3**) and those with views of the Pemigewasset (**86.7**), the Osceola Range (**88.5**), and Mt. Hancock (**89.1**). The views are thanks, in part, to the fact that you've reached the crest of the Kancamagus Pass (**86.5**), with its 2855 foot elevation. From here, the road descends, past the Greeley Ponds trailhead (**90.0**); Otter Rocks rest area (**91.5**); and Lincoln Woods Trailhead (**94.6**), a rest area with information provided by the US Forest Service.

At the opposite end of the Kancamagus-near where this tour begins- is Lincoln-Woodstock, an area that was a major summer resort as early as 1870. Today it is a busy resort area your round whose appeal is easy to see. Golfers, tennis players, archery enthusiasts, horseback riders and rollerbladers will find ample opportunity to enjoy their favorite sports, as will anglers, hikers, cyclists, boaters and motorsports fans. The area is also known for its fine shopping and numerous restaurants.

Lincoln offers easy access to the National Forest, as well as the area's many quality family attractions, including Loon Mountain (**97.1**) with its skyride, glacial caves, horseback riding, mountain biking, hiking, skate park, climbing walls and more.

It's all aboard at the Hobo Railroad (**99.6**) on Main Street, Lincoln. The round trip



train excursions cross back and forth along the Pemigewasset River, offering a variety of open vistas along the way. Most trips are narrated by the conductor, and a car attendant serves Hobo Picnic Lunches and ice cream. The station Gift Shop offers a good selection of gifts for the whole family, especially for the railroad historian.

Lincoln's diverse past as both a vacation and manufacturing center is evident throughout the town: the former J.E. Henry paper mill today houses the North Country Center for the Arts, stores, restaurants and an inn. We hope you have enjoyed your tour.