

Lehtinen Park & Jim Hill River Walk Trails

Access to the trails:

From Penacook, take Washington Street and River Road. Cross the Horse Hill Bridge over the Contoocook River. The Horse Hill Grange is uphill from here. Take the next left onto Runnells Road. Just before the end of Runnells Road is a field on your right. There is a small clearing to park your car.

The second access is off Horse Hill Road. From Runnells Road, continue on Horse Hill Road for about a mile. At the top of a small hill is a sharp turn. The Lehtinen monument is on the left. Park in the small area near the monument.

The trails:

Hiking travel time: about 1.5 hours

Distance: about 3 miles total

Level of Difficulty: Easy, some changes in elevation

Some of these trails follow along the Contoocook River. The trails pass near areas where the Contoocook River floods during the spring. Parts of the trail follow old railroad. This area is full of wildlife; bears have been frequently seen in this area. The NH Heroes Recreational Crossing connects these trails with the Mast Yard State Forest (See Map 1).

History:

According to *Bouton's History of Concord*, in the early 1800's this area was famous for trees that supplied masts for "His Majesty's Royal Ships" and later masts for various other vessels built on the seacoast. The best masts were from the northwesterly side of Horsehill. The trees were "drawn" to the Contoocook River to an area now called the "Mast Yard", then floated down to the Merrimack River. Larger logs were drawn by 52 teams of oxen along Borough Road to the sandbanks below Sewalls Falls and there "thrown" into the Merrimack River and floated to the coast. The mast trees are described as being two to three feet in diameter. Most of this lot was once used for agriculture, including pasture and cornfields.

Lehtinen Park was named in honor of Gustaf Lehtinen, who was the City of Concord's first Planning Director, from 1936 to January 1976.

Examples of Gus Lehtinen's foresight can be seen throughout the city.

The Jim Hill River Walk is dedicated in recognition of James Clark Hill's passion for preserving our natural environment and scenic wild places for the enjoyment of future generations. Jim Hill was born in Concord and grew up just a few miles from the site.

Map 2

Concord Trail System

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Concord Conservation Commission
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