



White Mountain National Forest Lincoln Woods Trail



The **Lincoln Woods Trail** is one of the easiest and most heavily used trails on the White Mountain National Forest. It is a main route into the headwaters of the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River and leads into one of the largest roadless areas in the eastern United States known as the Pemigewasset Wilderness.

Backpackers, day hikers, fishermen, and mountain bikers all share this very popular multiple use trail. Motorized vehicles are prohibited. Summer is the heaviest use season, but with increased popularity of cross country skiing, the trail is also extensively used in winter. The fall season provides an excellent opportunity to enjoy hiking trails with cooler temperatures, fewer bugs, and fall foliage colors.

Location

The Lincoln Woods Trail parking lot (170 vehicle capacity) and Lincoln Woods Visitor Center are off the Kancamagus Highway 5 miles east of I-93, Exit 32.

The 2.9 mile Lincoln Woods Trail begins at 1157 feet elevation and ends at the Wilderness boundary, 1450 feet elevation.

Leaving the parking lot on the north side of the Kancamagus Highway, the Lincoln Woods Trail immediately crosses the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River via a 160' long suspension bridge. The trail then makes a sharp turn to the right and for most of its length, follows the route of the old East Branch and Lincoln Railroad northerly to the boundary of the Pemigewasset Wilderness.

The Lincoln Woods Trail comes close to the river at 1.7 miles providing a nice view of Mt. Bond, and then crosses Birch Island Brook on a foot bridge at 1.8 miles.

The Black Pond Trail diverges to the left at 2.6 miles, skirts around the northern edge of the ice pond, and provides an easy hike of 0.7 mile to picturesque Black Pond.

At 2.8 miles, the former Franconia Brook Campsite, now a Forest Protection Area, remains closed for health and safety reasons. An interim camping area with 24 sites has been established across the river on the northern end of the East Side Trail (truck service road). **Camping in the Franconia Brook East** - no fee is charged.

Past the former campsite is a stone wall and a narrow 75 foot bridge that crosses Franconia Brook. At the stone wall, a path veers left, leaving the trail, to follow the brook upstream 0.4 mile to scenic Franconia Falls, a large rock outcrop about an acre in size with cascading water. Franconia Falls restrooms have been closed. Unacceptable sanitary conditions and improper human waste disposal have caused general deterioration of this area. A sanitation kit is available for a nominal fee at the Visitor Center.

After crossing the bridge over Franconia Falls, the Lincoln Woods Trail ends and becomes the Wilderness Trail as it enters the Pemigewasset Wilderness.

History: From Timber Barons to Multiple Use

Most clearings adjacent to the trails in this area are old logging camps. Camp 8 once existed in the clearing on the left side of the trail just beyond the Osseo Trail junction.

Remnants of the logging era can readily be seen in the vicinity of old campsites and along railroad grades. These include dugway roads (roads dug into a mountain), ice ponds, bridge abutments at stream crossings, old dumps, abandoned rails, railroad ties, and ironware.

Removing any artifact from the National Forest is strictly prohibited under the Antiquities Act!

The area surrounding the Lincoln Woods Trail, including the Pemigewasset Wilderness, was the scene of extensive logging by timber baron J.E. Henry in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Severe forest fires followed devastating clear-cut practices. In 1917 Parker-Young purchased all of Henry's land and continued railroad logging operations.

Early in the 1930's the company made a contract sale to the U.S. Government because of financial difficulties. This sale added about 100,000 acres to the White Mountain National Forest. Parker-Young was allowed certain cutting rights on this tract of land for 20 years. Logging operations in the Lincoln Woods area and Pemigewasset Wilderness ceased in 1946. Today, nature's recuperative powers can be

seen as an entirely new forest has replaced the once heavily logged and burned over area. Several isolated patches of the original forest remain, but are usually found near the higher ridgetops. To ensure a portion of the watershed was protected in its "natural" state, the U.S. Forest Service set aside the 18,560 acre Lincoln Woods Scenic Area in the heart of the Pemigewasset Wilderness. Then, in 1984 the Pemigewasset Wilderness was officially designated as wilderness to be managed under the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Forest Protection Area information:

For up-to-date regulations, please refer to a current copy of the *White Mountain National Forest Backcountry Rules*.

Special rules are in effect for this area to control resource damage and to enhance the recreational experience for all users. Lincoln Woods, Wilderness, and Franconia Brook Trails have a ¼ mile restriction on camping and fires. Franconia Brook and Franconia Falls are particularly vulnerable to overuse. By regulating visitor traffic to the area through a permit system, the U.S. Forest Service is better able to protect the environment and to reverse deterioration.

We need your help to protect fragile areas. Use care whenever you camp or hike. Learn to "Leave No Trace" wherever you go.

Visit our website: www.fs.fed.us/r9/white

USDA is an equal employment provider and employer.