

ASSUNPINK CREEK TRAIL SECTION of the NJ STATE LONG TRAIL

The Assunpink Creek Trail is 29 miles long. Special highlights of this trail are numerous views of Assunpink Creek, dammed lakes along the creek, marshes near the creek, adjacent farmlands, historic sites, woodlands, and the hills in the Monmouth portion of the trail.

This trail is now divided into day hikes, because of the various places where private parcels prevent through-hiking. This description should be read in conjunction with the accompanying map. However, the map does not include the bypass routes, which are written into the description for any bold hikers who wish to through hike this route now. The existing trail on the map provides numerous opportunities for short pleasant hikes in the woods at this time. More of the Assunpink Creek Trail will be paint blazed blue in the future. The trail was first laid out in 2008.

MERCER COUNTY

Map 16 Mercer County Park



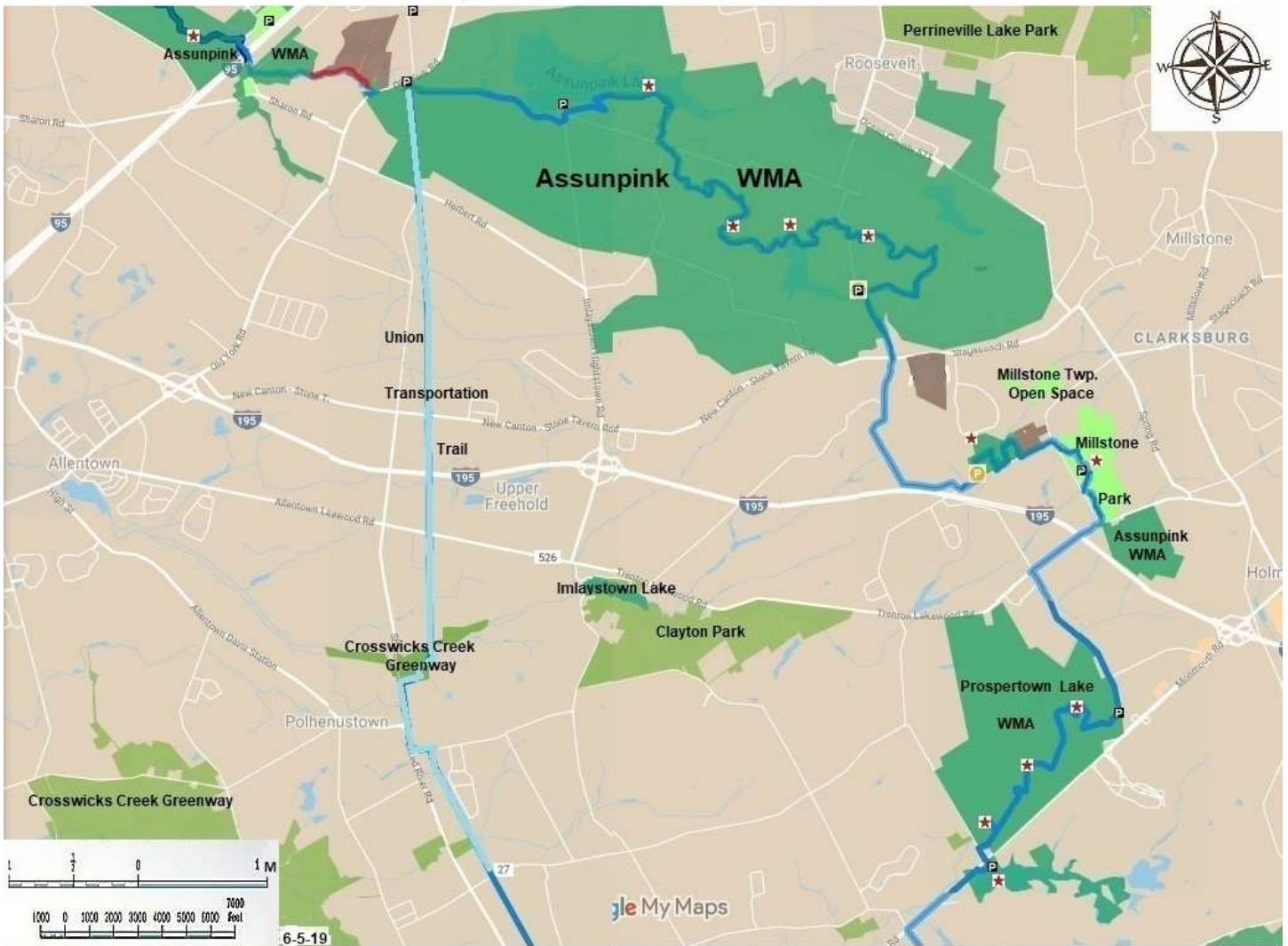
Miles	Detailed Trail Data from north to south
0.0	Trail begins 0.2 miles north of the Carnegie Road parking lot on the Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park next to US 1. <i>There is parking for ten cars there.</i>

	<p>Travel 0.2 miles north on the canal to where the trail will begin in the future. Bushwhack 0.1 miles east to the conjunction of the Assunpink Creek and Shipetaukin Creek. There is a great creek view here.</p> <p>The planned permanent route goes 0.2 miles east from here across private land, to the trail at Bear Swamp Park West. The State should purchase this 18 acre property as an addition to the State Park. It has a good view of the creek, two nice ponds and a good internal trail system.</p> <p>The temporary bypass route starts at the Carnegie Road parking lot; it goes 0.3 miles south on Carnegie Road; 0.2 miles east on Laura Avenue; 0.5 miles north on Basin Road. The beginning of the trail through Bear Swamp Park West is at the overhead transmission lines. <i>There is parking for five cars here.</i></p>
0.5	<p>The Bear Swamp trail described here is owned by Hamilton Township and paint blazed blue. Go east for 0.1 miles turn left at the loop intersection; go 0.3 miles to the trail continuing east; go 0.1 miles to the swamp crossing; this crossing is often wet; it is also a beautiful place; continue east another 0.1 miles to the bottom of the freeway; turn north for 0.2 miles to a great view of Assunpink Creek.</p> <p>Cross the Creek on the deer trail running outside the highway department fence; proceed 0.2 miles to Bakers Basin Road. Respect the private land to the west of that deer trail. <i>This 9 acre property should be purchased by the State or County. It has a good view of the creek.</i></p>
1.3	<p>Proceed 0.4 miles east on Bakers Basin Road-Youngs Road (CR 546); there are deer trails on the unclaimed private property on both sides of the road. <i>The ten acre property south of Bakers Basin Road should be foreclosed on by Lawrence Township, dedicated to the hiking trail and greenway and transferred to the State or County.</i> It has a good view of the creek. Go under the IS 295 Bridge and over the Amtrak viaduct; Bear Swamp Park East is to your right.</p>
1.7	<p>The planned route goes 0.4 miles north through private land to Van Nest Wildlife Refuge. <i>Part of this 38 acre property should be purchased by DEP for the trail and greenway.</i></p> <p><i>The bypass route goes 0.6 miles east on Youngs Road, a poor place to hike.</i> At Quakerbridge Road, turn left (north) and walk on sidewalks 0.4 miles.</p>
2.7	<p>The trail running west for 0.6 miles on Van Nest Wildlife Refuge from Quakerbridge Road is part of the permanent trail. It has two good views of the Creek and is paint blazed blue. <i>On the north east corner of Quakerbridge Road and Hughes Drive is a good Fish and Wildlife parking lot for twenty cars.</i></p> <p>From the parking lot go 0.6 miles east through the Van Nest Wildlife Refuge on the dryer southern trail to the dam on Mercer Lake in Mercer County Central Park. It is paint blazed blue.</p>
3.3	<p>Proceed generally east on excellent trails through Mercer County Central Park; there are numerous good views of the lake, fields, and woods. Follow the top of the dam and the bike path for <i>1.5 miles to the Marina parking area which has room for 20 cars.</i></p>

	Follow the bike path for another 1.2 miles, cross the bicycle bridge; travel another 0.2 miles to the <i>county parking lot on Edinburgh Road (CR 526)</i> . <i>There is parking here for 20 cars</i> . The planned permanent trail and the bypass route diverge here.
6.2	The planned permanent trail will veer to the east for 0.3 miles to Old Trenton Road (CR535); go south 0.1 miles to cross this busy road at the safest point at a stop light, immediately to the south of the "T" intersection with Robbinsville Road (CR 526).
6.6	Enter West Windsor owned Open Space at the northeast corner of the intersection. This land is leased to a farmer; remain on the woods-cropped field edge during the growing season. This is pleasant hiking. At 0.3 miles there is a low point with a dirt road crossing to the next field. In another 0.1 miles the trail cuts north into low woodland along Assunpink Creek. <i>Here hiking volunteers should recommend to West Windsor Township the driest route through the next 0.1 miles to the creek at a possible bridge site and then cut the route</i> . West Windsor owns both the higher northern side and the lower southern side of Assunpink Creek here. Hike east on West Windsor open space for 0.3 miles to county owned land.
6.9	The 2.0 miles north of the creek from here to Windsor Village, the planned route , cannot be through hiked at this time even though 1.9 miles of it is owned by the county which support the trail. Robbinsville Township's Tatum Park on the south side of the Creek and Fishing Park on US 130 are part of the Greenway. <i>A five acre property between Assunpink Creek and Windsor Road should be purchased by the county and dedicated to the Assunpink Creek Hiking Trail. There is parallel parking for five cars on Main Street in Windsor Village.</i>
9.2	The next 0.3 miles of the planned route are north on Main Street through historic Windsor Village on sidewalks. The bypass route joins the planned route here. The bypass route starts at the County Park parking lot on Edinburgh Road (CR526) and runs east for 0.4 miles on Edinburgh Road and further east for 2.0 miles on Windsor Road (CR641) to Windsor Village.
9.5	On the reunited route go another 0.2 miles east on Windsor Road to US 130; cross at the light; go south for 0.5 miles on the east side of US 130 to the large Fish and Wildlife parking lot.
10.2	The Assunpink Creek Wildlife Management Area is an incredibly rich biological area containing most species of wildlife native to central New Jersey. It is a very desirable place for hiking, bird watching, hunting, fishing, dog walking, and all forms of nature appreciation. Everyone should respect the rights of other users. <i>There is parking for 20 cars at the Fish and Wildlife parking lot, which can be reached by traveling north on US 130 0.2 miles north of the stop light at Meadowbrook Road-Gordon Road.</i> The next three miles of trail was cut in 2008 using old human trails and deer trails. It was recut and paint blazed blue in 2013. It is a great hiking experience. From the parking lot go 0.1 miles southeast to the top of the dam. Go 0.3 miles northeast along the top of the dam, enjoy the view of Robbinsville Lake; Turn right walk 0.1 miles along a channel to the lake, continue 40 yards through deep grass to the edge of a leased field; stay on the edge of the field during the growing season, travel 0.1 miles south, making a quick right and left turn, coming to the woods; go 0.2 miles east through the woods, cross the first side creek, and turn

	<p>south for 100 yards for a great reverse view of the lake and dam from a high bank; go another 0.2 mile east through the woods passing three more side creeks.</p> <p>Turn right follow a field edge 0.1 mile; turn left for 100 yards on field edge. Enter the woods go east 0.1 miles; continue east 0.1 miles on a field edge. Turn left or north continue on the same field edge for 0.2 miles to an intersecting tributary go west for twenty yards, cross the tributary; Travel northeast along the edge of a new field for 0.1 miles; just before the woods extends left, turn right or east pass an old building come to Beaver Creek, cross it on the large boulders that were previously part of a dam at that location or on downed trees.</p> <p>You are now at the center of the roadless portion of this trip. There are old foundations and machinery just to your east from here. Have lunch here.</p>
11.7	<p>From the broken dam site at the center, follow Beaver Creek southwest for 100 yards; continue southwest for 0.3 miles on the edge of a field, turn left or east on the same field edge for 0.2 miles. Watch for hunters and beaver sign in this area; go straight into the woods for 0.3 miles, crossing two more side creeks, continue east for 0.1 miles on a field edge take the side trail 100 yards south for a good view of the marsh; go straight into the woods, follow the blue paint blazes for 0.3 miles with several turns and crossings of three more side creeks. Just before the metal road barrier on Windsor Road turn left for 100 yards to reach the road. The trail goes east here.</p>
12.9	<p><i>0.2 miles to the west is good parking at the historic Windsor House parking lot for 20 cars. This parking lot is on Windsor Road 1.6 miles south east of the US 130 light. Continuing east on the trail, repeat the 0.2 miles from the parking lot to the Turnpike bridge. Go east over the Turnpike 0.3 miles to Allens Road. Here the permanent trail and bypass route diverge.</i></p>

Map 17 Assunpink Lake-Great View Hill



Miles	Detailed Trail Data from north to south
13.1	<p>The permanent route now runs one hundred yards north on Allens Road; turn east to Assunpink Creek and follows it 0.3 miles on a good deer path; the route then runs around an alternate creek channel which is dry most of the time; go another 0.2 miles along the creek. This creek walk is very enjoyable. The blue blazing ends here. The next 0.6 miles are on three private land parcels, which cannot be hiked now. <i>DEP should purchase a strip along the creek from these owners for the trail and greenway and to unite the two halves of the Assunpink Creek Wildlife Management Area.</i></p> <p>The bypass route from Allens Road continues east on Windsor Road for 0.2 miles; turns south east for 0.8 miles on Sharon Road; turns north for 0.6 miles on Old York Road (CR 539) to a <i>small parking area</i></p>
14.5	<p><i>This Fish and Wildlife Parking area has room for six cars.</i> It is 0.2 miles north of the Assunpink Creek Bridge on CR 539. County Route 539 divides the Assunpink Creek Trail and Greenway into a Mercer and a Monmouth portion. In Mercer County we have seen how eight private properties prevent through hiking.</p> <p>A series of bypass routes on paved roads has been added to this write up to allow committed through-hikers to use this route now. The bypass routes add six miles of paved roads to the</p>

Mercer County portion of the trail and do not include four and one half miles of good hiking on the permanent trail.

MONMOUTH COUNTY

14.5	<p>The trail runs through mostly rural areas in Western Monmouth County. There are two large Wildlife Management Areas in the northern and the southern portions of Western Monmouth County with excellent trails within them. They are the Assunpink Creek WMA and the Prospertown Lake WMA. There is a great municipal Park between them named Millstone Park. A temporary route has been developed to connect these three areas for those wishing to through hike this area. It is on paved roads.</p> <p>The hike begins at a <i>small Wildlife Management parking lot on CR 539, 0.2 miles north of Assunpink Creek. It has room for six cars.</i> The next four and one half miles are in the WMA and feature lakes, marshes, fields, woodlands, and hills; it is an incredibly rich and diverse area to hike through.</p> <p>From the small parking lot, take the trail northeast for 0.1 miles on CR 539. Turn right onto the nine mile long Union Transportation Trail recently constructed by Monmouth County. Proceed 0.2 miles turn left on an old road, continue 0.1 miles east on the old road, cross the Assunpink Creek on an old bridge, continue 0.3 further east to a left turn; the left turn is another side trail to an old bridge over the creek with good views of marshes and the creek. Continue east 0.3 mile on the old road to Assunpink Lake.</p> <p>From now on these dirt roads are open to vehicular traffic. From here bear left on the roads paralleling the lake for 0.6 miles for numerous good views of the lake. At Imlaystown-Hightstown Road and the lake, <i>there is a good parking lot for more than 20 cars.</i> This lot is 2.3 miles north of exit 11 on Interstate 195.</p>
15.9	<p>From the parking lot go back south 0.1 mile to the road intersection; turn left 135 degrees, not 90 degrees; continue along the lakeshore for another 1.0 miles on the winding road; turn right or south, pass the model airplane field, continue south for 0.3 miles to a major left turn within the Wildlife Management Area.</p>
17.2	<p>From here we go through a series of fields. During the December, January and February firearm season for deer hunting, all other users of the Area should wear hunter's orange and be very careful, if they choose to be in the woods at this time.</p> <p>Hike east for 0.1 mile cross a second paved road turn right into the first field follow it along the tree line east then south for 0.1 miles, continue south along the tree line in the next field for 0.1 miles. In the future the trail will be rerouted to the valley of the southern branch of the Assunpink to your immediate left. Now hike 0.3 miles through three more fields.</p> <p>At the northeast corner of the last field, turn left into the woods and drop down into the canyon of the southern Branch of the Assunpink Creek moving north east for 0.2 miles. Turn right, come out into another field. This field or the trails in it are cut annually.</p> <p>These trails are used heavily by equestrians from the Horse Park of New Jersey and by birders looking for field species and by hunters. Go straight up the 250 foot tall hill to the communications building. Stop. Enjoy the view. This is the best view on the NJ State Long Trail between Riegelsville and the Cape May Lighthouse. You can see distances in each direction, and you can see Pennsylvania from here.</p> <p>Go east downhill on a trail for 0.3 miles; proceed east for another 0.2 miles on the same trail</p>

	<p>through a narrow field with trees on each side. You must find a left turn into the woods. It may or may not be easy.</p> <p>Go 0.3 miles on this trail to the Stone Tavern Dam. Cross the dam. Enjoy the lake. Follow a lakeshore trail through the woods for 0.3 miles; turn sharply left to and through a field for 0.2 miles. Travel north east uphill through the woods for 0.3 miles to Roosevelt dirt road for vehicles within the Wildlife Area; turn right for 100 yards.</p>
18.0	<p>Take a non-drivable left turn up the hill for 0.1 mile; turn right for 100 yards to Hawk Hill. This is the highest point on the NJ State Long Trail between Riegelsville and the Cape May Lighthouse. It is 310 feet high. Retrace the 100 yards and proceed east along the high ridge line on a good trail for 1 mile. Turn right at a dirt road useable by vehicles, but usually gated closed.</p> <p>Go south down the road through the woods for 0.3 miles and continue on it adjacent to a field for another 0.1 miles to an intersection. Here the accompanying map shows a 0.5 mile side trip to a view of South Assunpink Creek. The trail turns back west and proceeds 0.5 miles through a series of fields and one line of trees back to dirt Roosevelt Road. <i>The parking area is across the road in a field.</i></p>
18.8	<p><i>This field or parking area has room for twenty cars. It is 0.6 miles north of CR 524. A side trail to the west leads to another nice lake in 0.1 miles. In the future purchase of parts of three private properties south of here could eliminate a portion of the route on paved roads.</i></p>
19.7	<p>From the parking lot continue south for 0.6 miles, hike out of the WMA; come to busy CR 524, Stagecoach Road; cross it. Continue south on paved Chambers Road for 1.0 miles, enjoy this fine hilly and wooded area. Before Interstate 195, turn left on Chambers Road for 0.5 miles, coming to the interstate crossing on Yellow Meeting House Road. <i>There is a possible shortcut from here to Prospertown Lake WMA; an equestrian group in Millstone Township is working on it.</i></p>
21.8	<p>We recommend continuing east for 0.2 miles on Yellow Meeting House Road and turning into a noncontiguous portion of Assunpink Creek Wildlife Management Area with a parking lot. The trail runs adjacent to woods on two fields. Each field is 0.1 miles north 0.2 miles east and 0.1 miles south, between the fields cross a branch of Doctors Creek, near a dam. From the first field you can bushwhack north up a hill and reach 230 feet of elevation near the private properties on Cheryl Lane. Travel east on Yellow Meeting House Road for another 0.2 miles.</p>
23.1	<p>At Red Valley Road, hike straight into the field ahead of you into Millstone Municipal Park. Much of this fine park has been developed by 2020. Hike 0.3 miles to the main activity center, <i>which has a parking area for twenty cars.</i></p> <p>Hike 0.1 miles east out onto the Doctors Creek dam for a great view. There are good lake views to be had by taking side trails both north and east from here. Travel 0.6 miles south west within the municipal park, crossing another dam. Both reservoirs often contain wild ducks and geese.</p> <p><i>It is hoped that the municipality, the County, the State and other organizations will devise an off-road route from Millstone Municipal Park to Prospertown Lake WMA alongside Ivanhoe Brook. For this to happen, a major developer will have to be convinced to sell a strip along one side of his property for the Assunpink Creek Hiking Trail and Greenway.</i></p>
24.1	<p>Turn right on busy CR 526, at 0.2 miles; cross IS 195 on a narrow sidewalk. At 0.6 more miles turn left on paved Old Noah Hunt Road. Go south for 1.2 miles on this road to the eastern parking lot for Prospertown Lake WMA.</p>
26.1	<p><i>This parking lot has parking for ten cars.</i> Go west over the parking barrier for vehicles, hike 0.3 miles; hike north 0.2 miles along the bottom of the high hill, hike 0.1 miles up and down the hill on the only route to the top; it is 216 feet high. Continue west for 0.1 miles turn left, continue 0.2 miles south on the bottom of the hill. Note the old foundations for buildings. Turn right or south west, go 0.4 miles; at an intersection turn right, go 0.1 miles, cross Ivanhoe Creek. Note the ponds here. The trail turns south for 0.2 miles and crosses Ivanhoe Creek again. Turn west for</p>

	0.4 miles; then hike north through a field and back for 0.1 mile to the bluff for a view of Ivanhoe Creek. In the future the one mile bluff should be cut, and paint blazed for a spectacular hike, overlooking the valley below. Then hike another 0.4 miles west. Turn left when you reach paved Millers Mill Road; go 0.2 miles south to the large parking lot at Prospertown Lake on CR 537 or Monmouth Road.
28.9	The view of Prospertown Lake and the distant view of the Great Adventure roller coasters is a great ending for the 29 mile long Assunpink Creek Trail and Greenway. This parking lot is also the beginning for the 34 mile long Northern Pinelands Trail running south from here. Both trails are part of the NJ State Long Trail. <i>This lot has parking for 20 cars and is three miles west of IS 195 and six miles east of CR 539.</i>

The Assunpink Creek Trail was designed and mapped in 2008 by David Mattek and Frank Pearce.

The NJ State Long Trail (NJSLT) is a 383-mile long hiking trail and greenway that will extend from the northern end of the state (High Point, the highest point in New Jersey), to the southern end (Cape May Point, at sea level).

The NJ State Long Trail is a project of the New Jersey Sierra Club <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey>, in cooperation with partners across the state working on trail development and maintenance.

For more information on the NJSLT, see <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/new-jersey-long-trail>