



Wayne R. LaFreniere Canoe Launch to Robert Manship Park and Butts Bridge

Killingly CT to Canterbury CT

This is the longest and most challenging segment of water trail on the Quinebaug. You'll put in just below Route 6 in Killingly. The trip to Manship Park is about 10 miles with quick-water, rapids, some flat-water, wildlife habitat, and no portages. It is a challenging four-hour outing for experienced paddlers. Those who continue on to Butts Bridge will paddle an additional five miles, about two hours, with decreasing current, then the still water of Aspinook Pond.

Put-in: Wayne R LaFreniere Canoe Launch in Killingly

Lat/Long: N 41.793762, W -71.889110

Insert photo

Free parking spaces are available in unpaved lots at the Little League fields off Route 12 (look for the Canoe Launch signs). The carry to the water's edge is about 100 feet and flat. Watch out for walkers and cyclists as you carry your boat to the water as you'll be crossing the new Killingly River Walk. The put-in is an eroding bank held together with tree roots. As you launch, you'll quickly find yourself in the main current. There are portable toilets in the Little League complex.

Paddling Conditions

This stretch of the river moves swiftly with broad, powerful current. The banks are forested with residential neighborhoods at first, then they rise higher. About a quarter mile below the launch is a deteriorating, concrete low-head dam. Scout this before shooting it as the best path varies with water levels. The river descends steeply below this point. The section through Wauregan is tricky with the remains of a dam causing turbulence at the corner above the Route 205 bridge. Stay left to avoid underwater rebar. The gravel boat ramp at the state fish hatchery on river left provides a nice rest stop. It's a ten-minute walk uphill to the hatchery. Don't paddle this with a fiberglass (brittle) boat as you are likely to scrape some rocks. At low water, you'll walk certain sections, but it's well worth it for the beautiful scenery. After Manship Park, the current slows and the river makes meandering turns.

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Take-out: Robert Manship Park

Lat/Long: N 41.698503 W -71.962723

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Due to the broad current, approach the take-out at Manship Park carefully and close to the right bank. Have the first paddlers ashore *catch* subsequent boats as they pull in. There is free parking for about a dozen cars in an unpaved lot as you enter from Route 14. The carry from the water's edge is less than 50 feet. The take-out itself is a deeply eroded bank that can be slippery and tricky. This is a high priority of the town for bank stabilization to control the erosion and create safer footing for paddlers. There are public restrooms in the park.

Take-out: Butts Bridge Boat Ramp (Aspinook Pond)

Lat/Long: N 41.649903, W -71.970292

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The long access road off Butts Bridge Road and adjacent to the power lines has room for many cars. You can deliver your boat to the water's edge then park. The take-out itself is a gently sloping, gravel ramp. Anglers launch power boats here, so it can be busy during weekends. There are no public restrooms.

Things to Watch For

You may see everything from Bald Eagles and Osprey to Wood Ducks, Canada geese and Mergansers.

Have Fun Safely

Water levels vary not only with precipitation and snowmelt, but with dam releases. Please pay attention to changing conditions **before and during every trip**. Enjoy this beautiful river, but remember it can present hazards and challenges. Appalachian Mountain Club volunteers offer excellent paddling workshops; for information see www.outdoors.org.

Help to Complete the Trail

Volunteers are preparing finalized Paddler's Guides, signs and additional water trail segments. You can help by submitting photos, by paddling and by helping to create new public launches.

**A Steering Committee will convene for the first time on June 24, 2009
at 7pm in Danielson at the Last Green Valley office: 111 Main Street.
Call 860 774 3300 for more information.**

