

Quinebaug River Water Trail PADDLER'S GUIDE

Draft as of May 6, 2009



Fabyan to West Thompson Lake Thompson CT

This segment is within the West Thompson Lake Project of the US Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps website includes an excellent guide and map: www.nae.usace.army.mil/recreati/wtl/wtlhome.htm
This outing is almost five miles long with some moving water (but no rapids), some flat water, extensive wildlife habitat, and no portages. It is an excellent three-hour outing for paddlers who are comfortable with moving water.

Put-in: Fabyan Canoe Launch

Lat/Long: N42.010009, W-71.941604

Insert photo

Launch is on Fabyan Road, .6 mile south of CT-131 on left at bridge. About six free parking spaces are available in a paved lot. There are about 10 free spaces across the street in an unpaved lot. The carry to the water's edge is less than 250 feet and gently downhill or you can back your vehicle down the paved ramp to the water's edge. The put-in is

gravelly with some rocks. There are no public restrooms.

Paddling Conditions

Currently there is no river gauge at the Fabyan Canoe Launch. Water levels fluctuate with rainfall and snow melt. Use caution when deciding whether or not to embark down the river. Under normal rainfall conditions, the river is easily passable from April to mid-July. It gets low in August and September and you may have to get out and walk your canoe/kayak through shallow spots. The banks range from steep and forested to flat, agricultural fields. Especially during the first three miles, you will feel isolated, except for two bridge crossings.

Take-out: West Thompson Lake Boat Ramp

Lat/Long: N41.953011, W-71.899380

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From CT-12, go west on West Thompson Road to Reardon Road, left on Campground Drive. There are about 25 free parking spaces at the West Thompson Lake Boat Ramp. The carry from the water's edge is less than 50 feet. Take-out area includes a large paved launch ramp and a grassy slope into the water. Public restrooms available from April to October.



Things to Watch For

Before you put in at Fabyan, notice the dam just upstream of the bridge. It was built in 1804 to power a carding and felting machine at the mill on site. Around 1831, woolen goods were produced here. From 1821 to 1870, the mill produced steel axes and tools. The 1938 hurricane severely damaged the Fabyan Mill. Less than a year later, fire destroyed the mill completely. Along the river, wildlife and beautiful scenery are plentiful. Watch for turtles, Great Blue Herons, Canada Geese, various ducks, red fox, hawks, turkeys, and many songbirds. Bald eagles may be spotted in this area during late winter and early spring.

Insert
wildlife
photo

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 improved 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.**