

5 km/6 km/10 km Killington Walk, Appalachian Trail – Thundering Falls – Gifford Woods

EVENT ID; 2018/Y2181

TRAIL DESCRIPTION:

This is an Appalachian Trail event. The walk offers several choices of length and terrain. The 10 km walk starts at Thundering Falls, a 140-foot cascade, accessed by a wheelchair-accessible boardwalk. It follows the A.T. uphill to Kent Pond, with its scenic mountain setting. After a walk along Kent Pond, it crosses VT 100 to Gifford Woods State Park, passing through some old-growth forest before looping back to the road on a nature trail. After retracing the walk along Kent Pond, it uses the option of walking a quiet dirt country road back to the start point. The 5 km walk begins by a visit to Thundering Falls for the first 1 km of walking. Then the 5 km walkers will drive to the Kent Pond boat launch for the scenic walk along the pond with a minimum of hills. An option of crossing the road to loop through Gifford Woods State Park will add another km.

TRAIL RATING:

The 10 km trail is rated 3C, with a long climb uphill from Thundering Falls and a shorter climb through Gifford Woods State Park. The 5 km trail is rated 2C, with only moderate elevation change, but some rough footing along the pond. Wet condition will make the walking more difficult here. A walking stick or trekking poles are advisable for both trails.

AWARDS & FEES:

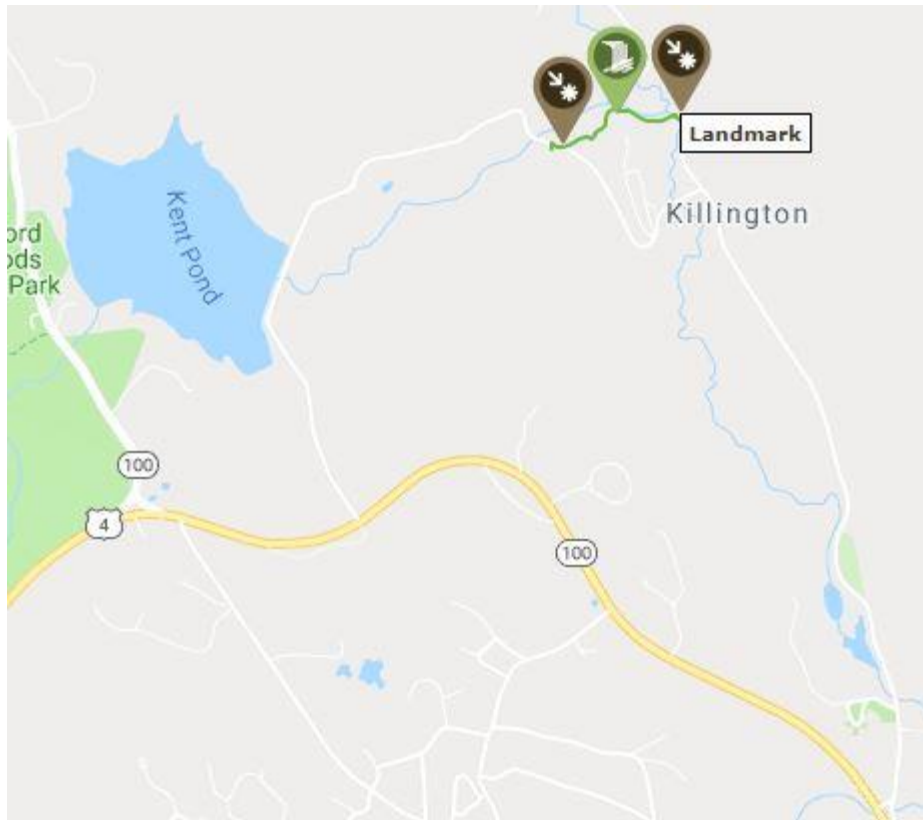
This is an IVV Credit Only event with online registration only (www.cva4u.org). The online system does not allow Free walkers, a minimal charge is incurred for directions.

AVA SPECIAL PROGRAMS:

- Appalachian Trail
- Vice Presidential Walks (Coolidge State Forest)
- Walking the USA A-Z (K for Killington)

DRIVING DIRECTIONS:

From the intersection of Vermont Route 100 and Route 4 in Killington, drive 2 miles east on Route 4 to an intersection with River Road on the left. From here, drive 1.5 miles to a wheelchair accessible parking lot on the left.



PETS:

Leashed pets are allowed on all the walks, and you must clean up after them. They must have proof of current rabies vaccination to enter Gifford Woods State Park.

AMENITIES:

Killington is a resort area and has a variety of lodging as well as a good choice of restaurants. The Killington Welcome Center (2319 US Rte. 4) at the junction of US 4 and VT 100 is a good place to get area information. Gifford Woods State Park, on the walk route, has a variety of camping options.

There is no food or water available along the trail, so you must carry your own. The Killington Market & Deli (2023 Killington Road) is not far from the start point and carries a variety of products for you to bring on the trail.

REMEMBER: You must log back into OLSB to finish online registration procedure after completing this event.

10 KM WALK ROUTE

1. At trailhead, head out on the long boardwalk across a meadow.
(The boardwalk was completed in 2007 as the first universally

accessible portion of the A.T. in Vermont. Severely damaged in 2011, large portions had to be rebuilt.)

2. After the boardwalk ends, the trail bears left briefly and comes to a junction. Take the spur trail to the right a short distance to the viewing platform for Thundering Falls, which makes a 140 foot drop into the Ottaquechee River floodplain.
3. Retrace your steps to the junction, then cross a tiny stream and head uphill. From here for the next 4.5 km, white blazes will be your friends. Follow them diligently to stay on the A.T. and avoid getting on a few herd paths which might be to your side.
4. Cross Thundering Brook Road. (1 KM shortly afterwards). Continue up a long, moderate grade uphill through mixed forest. When the grade levels off, notice a number of large glacial erratics along the trail.
5. Cross the road again (2.6 KM), then cross through the lawn and beach area of Mountain Meadows Lodge. (*The lodge was originally a farmhouse built in 1857. It now holds 17 rooms for guests. You're welcome to come in and say hello if they're not busy with an event.*)
6. Continue on easy grades (but watch for roots and a few rocks) along the wooded shore of Kent Pond. Cross a bridge over Kent Brook with some lovely cascades.
7. Enter a parking area for Kent Pond Access (3.8 km). Go directly across to a white blaze and into another wide pulloff along the road (VT 100).
8. Cross (Caution!) VT 100 diagonally towards a white blaze and sign "Entering Gifford Woods State Park." (*Construction of the park began in 1933, by the CCC. The area has grown a bit since then. The park contains a section of old-growth hardwood trees, as well as a variety of wildflowers.*)
9. LEFT on park road, then straight at fork, continuing gradually uphill, passing campsites.
10. After a small pool on your right and site 11 on your left, RIGHT on the A.T. at a sign "N A.T. S". Continue uphill gradually on the A.T., which is now a footpath.
11. Just after the trail steepens, you will see bright yellow blazes on both sides of you and a sign for the Kent Brook Trail. LEFT on the trail. You have completed about 3 miles of the A.T. at this point. Follow the trail on easy grades down through the woods. Take care to follow the yellow blazes. The trail goes downhill to Kent Brook, where it turns left and then goes uphill briefly to the camping area.
12. RIGHT on dirt road, then fork right when you reach the pavement. Pass a drinking water tap and a building with restrooms.
13. Watch for a loop road entering from your left and a large square stone structure on your right. RIGHT here into a parking area with a kiosk.
14. Continue through the parking area, cross VT100 (CAUTION) heading diagonally towards a white blaze. Enter the Kent Pond Access parking area, continuing straight across the lot to the next white blaze.
15. You are retracing your steps along the shore of Kent Pond again. After crossing through the

lawn of Mountain Meadows Lodge, come to a road crossing. *(You are welcome to stay on the A.T. here for the rest of the walk, as it will take you back to your car on River Road. The distance on the A.T. is about the same as the road walk.)*

16. LEFT on road towards the pond, leaving the white blazes. The road goes along a lovely section of the pond, passing a fishing platform and parking area.

5 and 6 KM Walk Route

1. At trailhead, head out on the long boardwalk across a meadow. *(The boardwalk was completed in 2007 as the first universally accessible portion of the A.T. in Vermont. Severely damaged in 2011, large portions had to be rebuilt.)*
2. After the boardwalk ends, the trail bears left briefly and comes to a junction. Take the spur trail to the right a short distance to the viewing platform for Thundering Falls, which makes a 140 foot drop into the Ottaquechee River floodplain.
3. Retrace your steps to the junction, then LEFT to return to parking. You have completed 1 km.

Now get in your car and drive to the starting point for the remaining walk. With the boardwalk and marsh on your right, SOUTH on River Road to the next RIGHT onto Thundering Brook Road. Follow this road up a long winding hill, pass Kent Pond, and continue it to US 4. Right on US 4 a very short distance

17. As a trail from left enters, continue up a short hill on the road. Then the road makes a long descent to River Road. You will cross the A.T. midway, which you were on earlier. Continue down the road which bears left. Ignore two private drives on your left and arrive at River Road.
18. LEFT on River Road, soon arriving at your car.

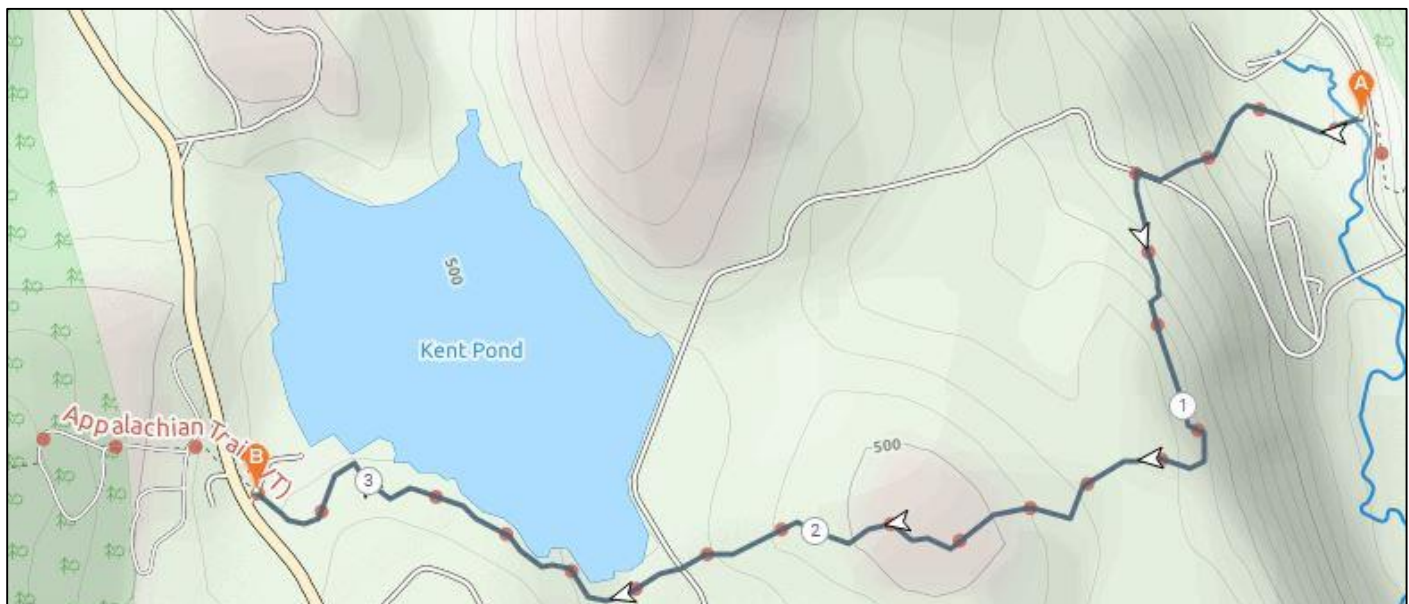
to the junction with VT 100. RIGHT on VT 100, and in just less than half a mile turn RIGHT into the boat launch parking. The entrance to Gifford Woods State Park is just across the street.

4. At parking area for Kent Pond, head towards VT100, then LEFT at white blaze near the road. You are on the A.T. Here, white blazes are your friends. Follow them diligently so you don't stray onto one of several herd paths which are out there. Cross a bridge over a cascade as Kent Brook flows into the pond. For the next kilometer, the trail follows the shoreline of the pond. Although the grade is almost level, Watch for roots and a few rocks. Pass the lawn and beach area for Mountain Meadows Lodge. *(The lodge was originally a farmhouse built in 1857. It now holds 17 rooms for guests. You're welcome to come in and say hello if they're not busy with an event.)*

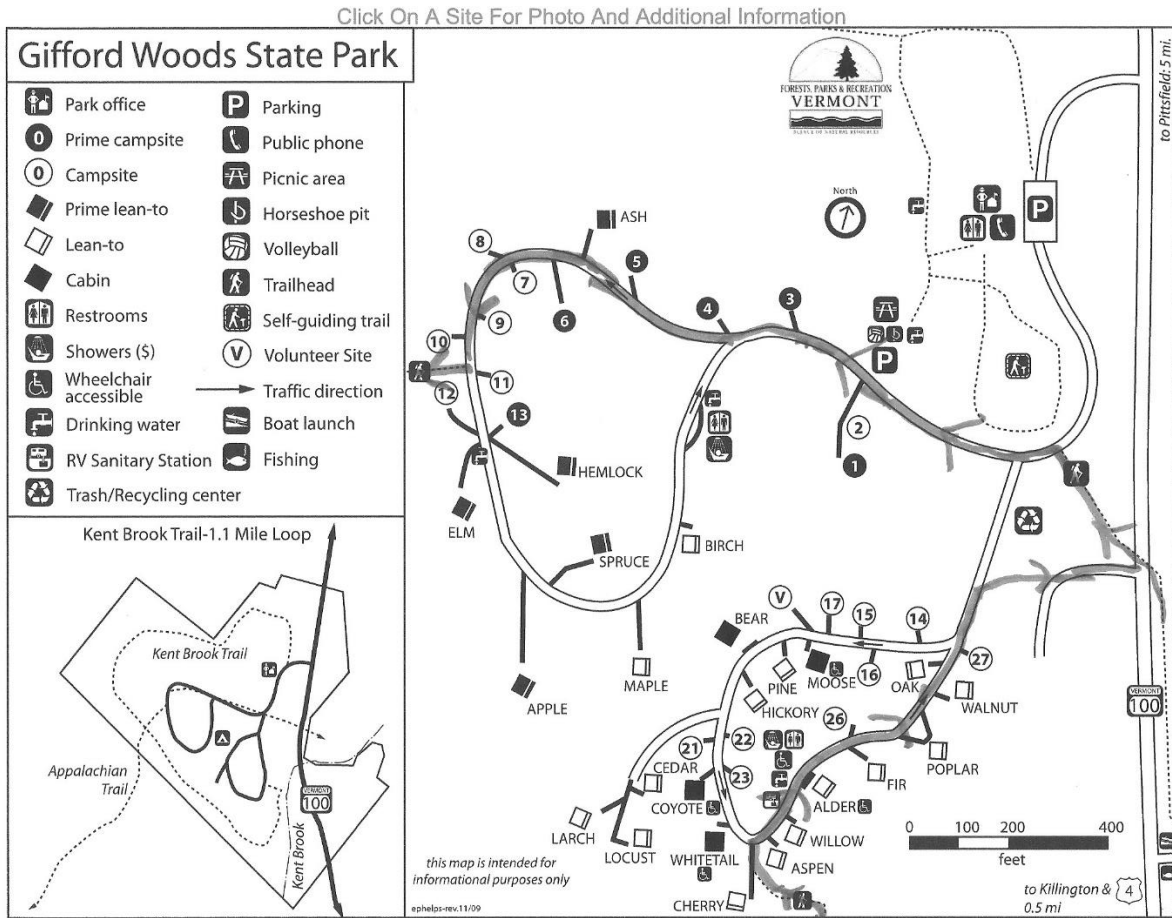
5. The trail crosses a wide graded dirt road, Thundering Brook road. LEFT along road towards pond. You will walk along a lovely section of the pond here. Pass a fishing platform and parking on your left. Continue to the end of the pond where a trail enters from the left and the road heads uphill.
6. TURN AROUND here, walking back along the pond. After the road swings back, watch for the white blaze on your right where you hiked earlier.
7. RIGHT on the A.T., retracing your steps along Kent Pond. Cross over the cascades and arrive at the parking area (5 km).
Optional loop for 6 km
8. (NOTE: The last km involves crossing busy VT 100. You are welcome to drive your car directly across the road to a parking area for Gifford Woods State Park.) IF not driving, cross the parking area towards a white blaze. Cross to another wide pulloff area. Cross VT 100 (CAUTION!) towards a white blaze and a sign "Entering Gifford Woods State Park".
9. LEFT on park road, forking right and continuing uphill following white blazes. After passing site 10 and a small pool, the A.T. heads uphill to your right. For your walk, though, continue on the park road, which will loop around passing numerous campsites and shelters.
10. RIGHT at junction where loop road enters from the left. Retrace your steps downhill. Pass a road entering from right.
11. RIGHT at white blaze, back on the A.T. Cross VT 100 (CAUTION!) back to Kent Pond Access and your car.

HIKING MAPS:

A.T. from Thundering Falls to VT 100. For the 5 km walk, you will do 1 km at starting point (A), then drive to B. You will walk the dirt road at the east end of the pond rather than take the A.T.



Gifford Woods State Park map. The A.T. loop goes off the campground map, using the Kent Brook Trail (small map on left), then returns to campground. The 6 km walk follows the campground loop and returns to VT 100.



In case of Emergency dial 911

Contact Cynthia Gray (802-498-8668, crwgray@comcast.net) for walk matters.

These walk directions and map may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.

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