

Thompson and Putnam TRAIL –4K/5K and 5K (possible total 10K)
Y3261-2023 Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club

“PRE-AMBLE”:

City/State	Thompson and Putnam, CT
Event Name	Thompson and Putnam in Windham County These two walks in “The Quiet Corner” of Connecticut provide a woodland rail trail with unique features in East Thompson: interpretive signs of The Great Train Wreck of 1891, a 19 th C. cattle bridge, and a chance to cross into three states (CT, MA, RI). The Putnam walk offers you both scenic beauty on a greenway along the Quinebaug River and a hint of the power of that river and six prosperous textile mills over two centuries ago. These small towns that were once connected by rail, are now easily accessible by a 15-minute car drive.
Event Type	OSB Seasonal Walk (2023/Y3261) 4/1 – 12/31/2023
Award	IVV Credit Only
Rating	Thompson 4K: 2B, Thompson Tri-State Marker 5K option: 3C; Putnam 5K: 1A
Distance	10K possible: two non-contiguous walks: 4K/5K (Thompson) and 5K (Putnam)
Strollers	Medium – Putnam walk only (not Thompson rail-trail)
Wheelchairs	Medium – Putnam walk only (not Thompson rail-trail)
Pets	Yes
Restrooms and Water	Yes. In restaurants in center of Putnam and along the Putnam River Trail. Possibly porta-potties near kiosk along rail trail in Thompson and along Putnam River Trail in Putnam
Sponsoring Club	Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club
POC	Lee West, LFWest@sbcglobal.net , 860-721-1185. P.O. Box 251, Glastonbury, CT 06033
Start Point/Driving Directions	<p>WEB REGISTRATION ONLY, using the AVA Online Start Box.</p> <p>THOMPSON WALK: Thompson Air Line State Park Trail Parking Lot – East Thompson Rd. at New Rd.: <u>From I-84E:</u> Take exit 73 off I-84E to Rt. 190E in Union. Take Rt. 171E to West Thompson Rd. and Rt. 193 to East Thompson Rd. You will pass through Thompson, crossing over I-395, proceeding to East Thompson. Pass by the Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park on your right. Pass New Rd. on your right and turn left into parking lot with kiosk. GPS Coordinates: 42.00896, -71.820926</p> <p>PUTNAM WALK: Putnam Lions Memorial Dog Park Parking Lot, 16 Kennedy Dr.: <u>From I—84E:</u> Take I-84E from Hartford toward Boston. Take exit 69 for Rt. 74 toward U.S. 44/Willington/Putnam. Turn right onto Rt. 74E, then left onto Rt. 44E. Turn left onto Rt. 198N, then right onto Rt. 244E. merge onto Rt. 97N. Continue straight onto Rt. 44E. Turn right onto Kennedy Dr. Turn right into Putnam Lions Memorial Dog Park parking lot. If this lot is full (possible on Saturdays June-Oct., when the Farmers’ Market is running), drive a short distance north and park in the lot on your left (Simonzi Park and canoe launch point). GPS Coordinates: 41.90561, -71.90452</p> <p><u>From Thompson Walk Start Point at Air Line State Park Trail Parking Lot – East Thompson Rd.:</u> Turn right onto E. Thompson Rd., bear left at first fork, then bear left onto Rt. 193. Go straight at stop sign on 193 to center of Thompson. Cross over I-395 and turn left onto Rt. 12S, which becomes Mechanics St. Take right onto Rt. 44 (School St.). At fork, bear right off School St. to Front St. Turn left onto Rt. 12S (S. Main St.). Turn right onto Arch St. Turn left onto Kennedy Dr. and continue south to Putnam Lions Memorial Dog Park on right (on Saturdays June-October, there is a Farmers’ Market in the Riverview Marketplace Pavilion, 10 am – 1 pm, just north of the Dog Park).</p>

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Event Information	Trail Highlights: Two distinctive non-contiguous walks, separated by a 15-minute drive. Thompson is a rail-trail that features signage regarding a unique four-train wreck (1891), plus a 1K loop to a tristate (CT/RI/MA) border crossing. Putnam, 11 miles southwest of Thompson, offers a scenic walkway along the Quinebaug River, with views of the old textile mills powered by the river’s waterfalls. Considered a “restaurant haven,” with many lunch spots for hungry volkssporters, including the old train depot, a pub and a brewery.
Hours	Dawn to dusk
Special Programs	Walk the USA A-Z; Rails-to-Trails and Border Crossings (Thompson only); America’s Veterans (Putnam only), Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail
Comments	

“POST-AMBLE”:

Be sure to log back into the OSB system to “finish/complete” your online registration after doing the walk. The OSB system does not deduct any walking fee from a walker’s Event Bank until they have submitted walk completion info., including the date the event was walked, the distance walked, and the selection of applicable special programs that walker is participating in. (Nevertheless, a fee of \$2 for a downloaded PDF is deducted from the user’s Event Bank when the PDF is downloaded. Later, any PDF fees are credited back to a walker’s Event Bank when he/she submits the walk completion info as a paying for credit walker. Note, however, the \$2 coupon for the downloaded PDF will expire in 60 days.)

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AVA Special Programs: *Walk the USA A-Z; Rails-to-Trails and Border Crossings (Thompson only); America’s Veterans (Putnam only)*

FOR IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE, CALL 911. LOCAL CLUB POINT OF CONTACT: Lee West, 860-721-1185. **AVA NORTHEAST REGIONAL DIRECTOR:** Wayne Knapp, 518-469-7298.

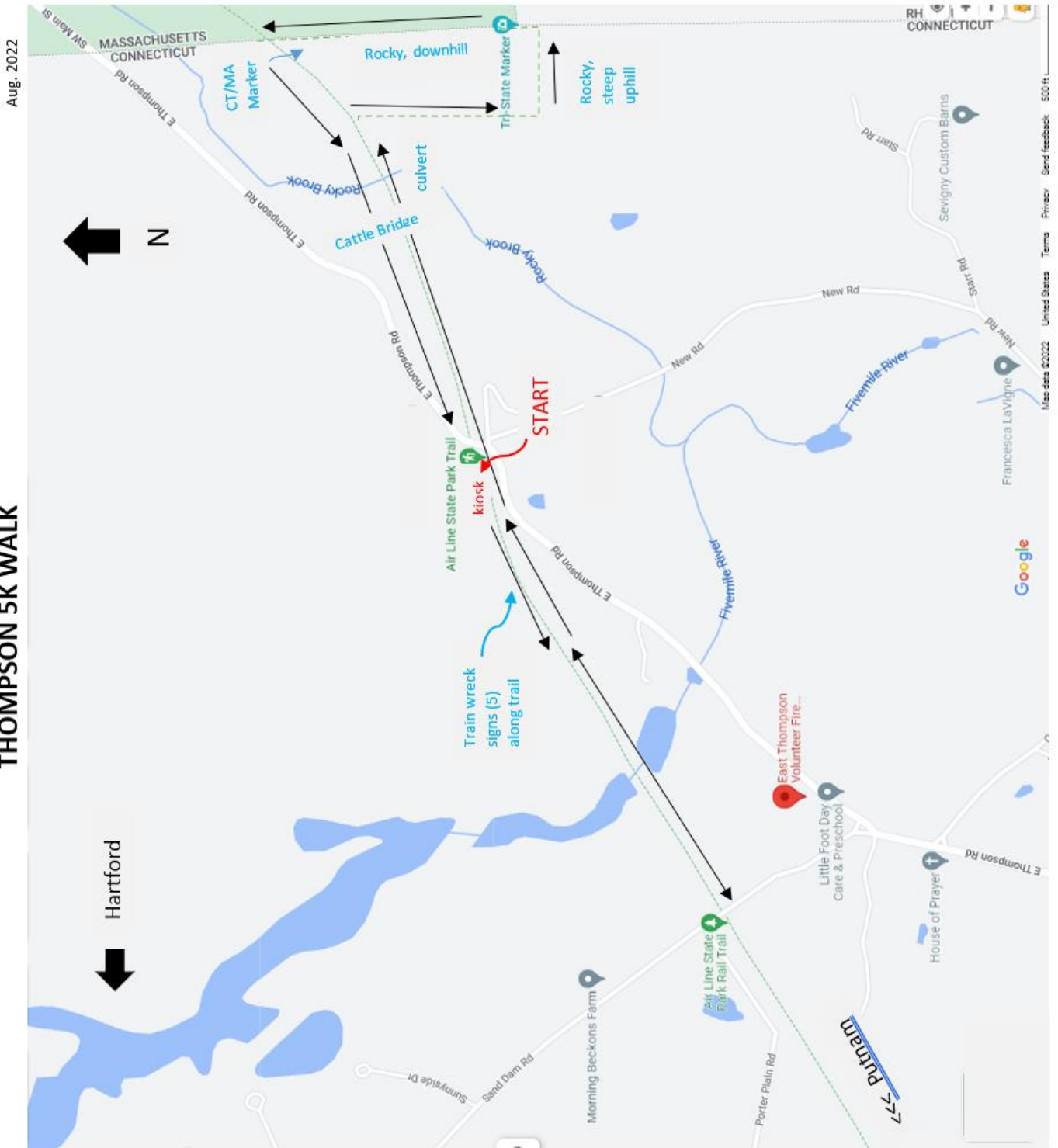
<i>Thompson 4K/5K Directions</i>	
DIRECTIONS	COMMENTARY
<p><i>The Thompson-Putnam event consists of two non-contiguous walks, separated by approx. 11 miles. Walkers can do either or both walks:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>4K in Thompson (with optional 1K loop to Tristate Marker, for a total of 5K), and/or</i> • <i>5K in the town of Putnam</i> <p><i>for a possible total distance of 10K.</i></p> <p><i>We suggest doing the Thompson walk (a woodland multi-purpose rail-trail that is the easternmost section of Connecticut’s Air Line State Park Trail) first, and then driving 15 minutes southwest to Putnam for the second walk in town and along the Quinebaug River Trail. Putnam has a number of pleasant restaurants for lunch, a snack or dinner.</i></p>	
<p>Thompson 4K/5K Directions</p>	
<p>1. Park in dirt parking lot on west side of E. Thompson Rd. (The Air Line trail crosses the road here). .</p>	<p>The Air Line Trail was a rail link from New York City via New Haven, Willimantic and Putnam to Boston, built in the 1860s and 1870s. It shaved an hour off the 6-hour coastal journey between New York and Boston.</p> <p>Now, it is a nearly 50-mile long rail trail, with the popular 22-mi. Southern section from East Hampton to Windham, CT and a 21-mi. Northern section from Windham to Pomfret, with an additional 6.6. mi. in Thompson.</p>
<p>2. At the kiosk, take a few minutes to read background information on the Airline Trail and the Great Train Wreck (1891), before heading west on the Airline Trail to the site of this 4-train collision. You will pass by 5 interpretive signs along the way.</p>	<p>On the morning of Dec. 4, 1891, four trains were scheduled to pass through East Thompson: <i>the Long Island & Eastern States Express</i> (eastbound from NYC via a ferry across Long Island Sound to Boston), <i>The Norwich Steamboat Express</i> (eastbound from New London to Boston), the <i>Southbridge Local</i> freight train (westbound to Southbridge, MA), and the slow <i>No. 212</i> freight train (eastbound). Read about the fateful decision of a dispatcher to allow the <i>No. 212</i> freight train to ride on the left-hand track ahead of the <i>Eastern States Express</i>. Two head-on crashes and one rear-end crash resulted. Remarkably, only two men, the engineer Harry Taber and fireman Gerry Fitzgerald of the <i>Eastern States Express</i> train, were killed, with crew sustaining only cuts and scrapes, and a home destroyed.</p>
<p>3. Continue walking west on the trail after passing the signs. You will cross over a small brook (part of the Fivemile River), with Mavis Pond No. 1 on your left and Mavis Pond No. 2 on your right. Continue until you come to a road (Sand Dam Rd.). This is your turn-around point (though the Airline Trail continues west on the other side of the road.). You have walked 1.1K (0.7 mi.).</p>	<p>This 4-train disaster was long considered to be the only one of its kind in American history, but apparently two other wrecks involving 4 different trains have been identified in recent years. As you walk along the Airline Train, imagine this train route a century and a half ago when rail transportation was a key component of America’s Industrial Revolution.</p>
<p>4. Retrace your steps to the kiosk and parking lot.</p>	
<p>5. Cross E. Thompson Rd. (the road you came in on) and walk almost 1K east on the Airline Trail. You will pass under a “cattle bridge” overhead.</p>	<p>The cattle bridge was built here to move cows from the farmland to the left over the railway in the late 1800s, when agriculture was a major part of the economy in northeast Connecticut. NOTE: the bridge is not safe to walk, so don’t be tempted to go up there!</p>
<p>6. Continue walking. Watch for a small wooden white sign on a tree on the right indicating the Culvert Trail.</p>	

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<i>Thompson 4K/5K Directions</i>	
DIRECTIONS	COMMENTARY
7. If you do NOT wish to take the 1K Tri-State Marker Loop Trail, do not turn at the white sign, but continue walking east on the Airline Trail less than 0.5 K until you reach another sign on the right indicating an alternate route to the Tri-State Marker. Stop. Skip to Step 8.	The Tri-State marker Loop Trail requires a steep, though short, rocky climb as you approach the marker from the west, with a more gradual downhill rocky trail north back to the Airline Trail.
7a. If you DO wish to take the 1K Tri-State Marker Loop Trail, take the right at the white sign on the Airline Trail (mentioned in Step 6), but immediately keep left at the sign to the Culvert. (You will NOT be going to the Culvert (white blazes), which goes under the Airline Trail you just traversed, but rather will head straight south on the Tri-State Marker Loop Trail (blue blazes). So, again, do NOT follow the white signs off to the right through the woods to the Culvert. Keep left at all subsequent junctions as you head south.	The Tri-State Marker is a 4-foot pyramidal-topped granite pillar, where the corners of Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts meet.
7b. The eastward section at the southern end of this (counter-clockwise) rectangular-shaped loop, though short, is a rather steep, rocky uphill climb to the LEFT (do NOT fork right at the foot of the hill toward the blue blazes). You will soon reach the Tri-State Marker.	The north face of the Tri-State Marker shows MASS 1883, and the south face R.I.1883. CONN is written on the west face without a date (apparently Connecticut didn't agree with the placement of the marker by a Massachusetts/Rhode Island commission).
7c. At the Tri-State Marker, take the northern route (blue-blazed trail leading down from "MASS" side of marker) along the CT/MA border. This is a gradual but rocky trail, bringing you back down to the Air Line Trail, slightly east of the white sign you turned off at to walk the Tri-State Marker loop.	
8. At this slightly more eastern junction of the Airline Trail with the Tri-State Marker Loop Trail, you will see another granite post (1906) showing the boundary between two states: Massachusetts and Connecticut.	Some people choose to reach the Tri-State Marker by taking this trail up and back,
9. Whether or not you walked the additional 1K loop trail to the Tri-State Marker, you will now return to the Start Point by retracing your steps back west on the Air Line Trail to where you left your car.	If you were to continue on the Air Line Trail eastward, you would enter the Douglas State Forest in Massachusetts. The trail name changes to Southern New England Trunkline Trail, which proceeds another 21 miles to Franklin, MA.
10. We recommend, after you complete the Thompson walk, that you follow our driving directions to PUTNAM (through the quaint center of Thompson), where our 5K scenic volkswalk will take you along the Quinebaug River and around the town on both sides of the river. Start Point parking is at the Putnam Lion's Memorial Dog Park, 16 Kennedy Dr.	Hope you enjoyed the Thompson rail trail walk! If you are ready for a bite to eat in Putnam, we have enjoyed meals on Main St., south of Front St., at <i>The Hare & The Hound, The Crossings Restaurant & Brew Pub, and Jessica Tuesday's</i> . There's also <i>85 Main</i> restaurant and a brewpub next door. North of Front St. is <i>The Stomping Ground</i> and <i>Courthouse Bar & Grille</i> . On Canal St. are <i>Elizabeth's Farmhouse</i> and <i>Riverview Ice Cream</i> .

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Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club
Thompson-Putnam Volkswalk:
THOMPSON 5K WALK



Aug. 2022

8/25/2022

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AVA Special Programs: *Walk the USA A-Z; Rails-to-Trails and Border Crossings (Thompson only); America's Veterans (Putnam only)*

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Thompson 4K/5K Directions

DIRECTIONS	COMMENTARY
Putnam 5K Directions	
1, From the Putnam Lions Memorial Dog Park parking lot, walk north on the Putnam River Trail, an asphalt greenway path, with the Quinebaug River on your left.	Putnam was named for Revolutionary War General Israel Putnam. Its population is under 10,000 people, and according to U.S. Census data, the population increased by only about 100 between 1950 and 2000, and has since declined. On Saturdays between June and October, you might enjoy Putnam's Farmer's Market next to (north of) the Start Point, 10 am – 1 pm.
2. Shortly, across from Arch St., you will note a small bridge on your left. Take a quick walk onto the bridge to view the river, and return to the greenway.	The undeveloped Air Line Trail is up a hill on the other side of the Quinebaug River, coming in from Pomfret (and points west). (The old train would have crossed here.) Currently the Air Line Trail continues through Putnam along the greenway you are walking on. At Providence St., the trail follows the road right (east), continuing to School St. (Rt. 44), then north on Mechanics St. (Rt. 12), where the wooded rail-trail picks up again (just before Acme Pond) and continues on to Thompson, where our Thompson volkswalk begins. This walk takes you by six important former textile (cotton, silk thread, wool) mills in Putnam, part of the Putnam's River Mills Heritage Trail. #1: the Monohansett Mill ruins (1872-1912) to your right, just past the parking lot, between Kennedy Dr. and Canal St. to the east, and before the Pomfret St. bridge. The adjacent Riverview Homemade Ice Cream may beckon!
3. Continue walking north along Kennedy Dr., passing over Pomfret St. (Front St.). Follow the path around the cardinal garden near the river. Note the Cargill Falls, north of the Pomfret St. bridge, one of several falls which powered the mills along the Quinebaug.	#2: Cargill Falls Mill (1835-1875), across the river just north of the Pomfret Bridge, which is one of the oldest cotton mill sites in the U.S. (1807). Many of the mills have been creatively re-purposed as condos, small businesses, etc.
4. Continue walking on greenway through Rotary Park up to Bridge St..	Rotary Park was one of the redevelopment projects in Putnam after the disastrous 1955 Flood and Hurricane Diana destroyed bridges, dams, mills, houses, etc., causing approx. \$6 million in damages. The bandstand was built in 2004. Residents and visitors picnic here and can enjoy the "Riverfire" events in the summer, featuring glowing, floating fire pots in the Quinebaug River and live music (smaller version of the lighting and music of Providence's annual WaterFire events). On left: #3: Nightingale Mill (1846-1900), 360 Kennedy Dr. #4: Rhodes Mill, 328 Kennedy Dr.
5. Continue over Bridge St. up to Providence St.	On right: #5: Belding/Powhatan Mill (1918-1980/1872-1918), near waterfall, just before crossing Providence St. Bridge Note interpretive signs in Miller Park, just before turning to cross Providence Bridge
6. Turn left to cross the river and continue to Church St.	Note the plaque on the bridge commemorating WWII soldiers.

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7. Take first left (at light) onto Church St., crossing to sidewalk on far side. (Putnam Super Market)	On left side of Church St.: #6: Morse Mill (1846-c.1907). The 1868 Victorian Italianate mansion of this textile magnate (George Morse) is located south of Bridge St. at 42 Church St., where it has been incorporated into the provincial house of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit. Morse would have had a good view of three of his mills from his home's square tower and elaborate windows. On the right side of the street, in contrast to the mansions farther down Church St., is housing for the mill workers.
8. Turn left on Green St. Putnam Police & Fire Dept. will be on your left, and courts for tennis, pickleball, basketball, and skateboard will be on right. Follow River Mills Heritage Trail, proceeding toward small path that runs along the river. Turn right at this path and walk south along river.	Enjoy the views of the river and waterfalls.
9. Turn left at Bridge St. and cross back over river.	Before turning onto to the bridge, you can see the Veterans Park on the south side of Bridge St. (ahead and to your right). In the distance on Church St., you will see the former Municipal Building (an excellent example of High Victorian Gothic architecture) that was built in 1874 and served as Putnam's first high school until 1911. Putnam's Town Hall was housed here until it moved a couple years ago to the corner of Providence and School St.
10. Cross street at light and turn right to proceed down Kennedy Dr. going past Walgreen's on your left.	
11. Turn left on Bundy St.	
12. Turn right on Main St., passing Complex Performing and Creative Arts Centre and Antiques Marketplace on your left.	
13. At Front St. walk left a few paces and cross Front to continue down Main St.	
14. Across from The Hare & The Hound Pub, cut across the parking lot and railroad tracks to a small red boxcar, which houses the Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar Children Museum. Read the sign (and peek inside if museum is open)	The tiny Gertrude Chandler Warner Boxcar Children Museum is dedicated to this Putnam woman (born 1890) who lived down the street and became famous as the author of a popular children's mystery series about four orphans. She wrote 19 books for the Boxcar Children series, and after her death in 1979, the mystery adventure series continued with over 175 more books written by other authors. Admission to the museum, open mid-May-mid-October (Sat. and Sun. only, 11 am-4 pm) is free, though donations are welcome.
15. Retrace your steps across the parking lot to Main St. Note the old railroad depot (built in 1905) to your left (now The Crossings Restaurant). Turn right on Main St. to Front St.	This area of Putnam is the site of the original Pomfret Factory Depot, an important manufacturing and railroad center. The Norwich & Worcester main track (c. 1839) crossed the Boston-Hartford route here. A commercial center grew up around the train station, attracting professionals from the surrounding towns.
15. Turn left on Front St. (now called Pomfret St.), crossing over Canal St. Carefully cross Kennedy Dr. to return to Putnam River Trail.	If you are ready for a bite to eat in Putnam, we have enjoyed meals on Main St., south of Front St., at <i>The Hare & The Hound</i> , <i>The Crossings Restaurant & Brew Pub</i> , and <i>Jessica Tuesday's</i> . There's also the more upscale <i>85 Main</i> restaurant and <i>Bear Hands Brewing Co.</i> next door. North of Front St. is <i>The Stomping Ground</i> and <i>Courthouse Bar & Grille</i> . On Canal St. are <i>Elizabeth's Farmhouse</i> and <i>Riverview Ice Cream</i> .
16. Turn left and retrace your steps south back to the Start Point.	Hope you enjoyed the Putnam walk!

