



SOURCE TO SEA

SELF-GUIDED PADDLE 2020

Consider a donation to support our work to improve the Androscoggin River Trail & make next summer's S2S the best yet!

At no cost to you, you can support food pantry's in Western Maine by logging your paddling, biking and hiking adventures through the "[Second Nature Adventure-Give Back When You Get Outside Challenge](#)" in conjunction with [Maine West](#). Go to Maine Trail Finder, locate the Androscoggin River Trail marker near Rumford, paddle any part of the Trail, and log your outing!

The first five paddles can be done as out and back paddles preventing paddlers from needing to shuttle between sites. The last two are most easily done going downriver and shuttling. In the interests of public health, we suggest using bikes to shuttle when your group includes more than your family members. Drop your bike off at the downstream access and then bike back to pick up your vehicle at the end of your paddle. Remember to lock your bike and you can lock your kayak with the same lock, putting it through the seat frame, provided you have a seat frame.

SOURCE PADDLE:

The Androscoggin starts in Lake Umbagog, so this paddle will incorporate the headwaters of the river, either way. It can be done three different ways, either of which will involve a remote paddling experience.

Alternative 1: *Streamer Pond out and about*

You can start at Steamer Diamond, just North of Errol, and paddle up-river to Lake Umbagog, then back. This paddle is on the Androscoggin and has many side inlets to explore, and will turn around in the lake itself. If you paddle the lake, remember that it can be very windy. If you just paddle the inlets, depending on water height, there are miles of side routes to explore, so keep aware of your route.

Alternative 2: *Refuge up and back*

The second option would be to paddle from the *Lake Umbagog Refuge* up the Magalloway River, then back down it to the refuge. There aren't as many side options, but there are a lot of loon nests and sightings this way.

Alternative 3: *Refuge to Steamer Pond*

The third option is to paddle from the wildlife refuge down the Magalloway, across the edge of Umbagog, then down the Androscoggin to the Steamer Diamond take out. If you do this, you will need to shuttle. Both take outs have parking and are right on Route 16, and Route 16 between them is a fairly narrow, two lane road, so bicycling is good so long as you remain cautious. Also, be aware of where the Andro leaves Umbagog so you don't end up paddling down the lake!

This area is well known for its many loon nesting sites and eagle sightings, and as a very peaceful, remote feeling stretch of the river with no white water to worry about.

Note that there are few alternate take-out points to stop at.

The nearest amenities, food, gas, etc, is in Errol, although the wildlife refuge has bathrooms.

TWIN BRIDGES NATURE PADDLE, TURNER:

Alternative 1: Round Trip Paddle:

The trip can start at either Twin Bridges on Rt 219 in Turner, Freeman's Landing in Leeds, or Center Bridge in Turner.

Facilities: At Twin Bridges: trail to hand carry access over rocks.

At Freeman's Landing: a short walk to hand carry access with small, accessible dock.

At Center Bridge: a ramp. Generally, portable toilets at Freeman's Landing and Center Bridge.

Parking available at all sites, but Center Bridge parking can be crowded on weekends.

Description/Why you may want to paddle this section: This is the headwaters of Gulf Island Pond that is backed up by the Gulf Island Pond dam. There is very little current, but winds blowing up or down the valley can be strong. Check the River Trail Guide for distances from point to point. The area feels quite remote with undeveloped land of the Riverlands State Park featured on river left (heading downriver, to your left). There is a picturesque farm as you begin the paddle from Twin Bridges and a number of backwaters and islands with backwaters, primarily on the river left. We suggest paddling to the left (easterly of the islands) for the most scenic experience. If doing an out and back trip, there is no need to paddle all the way to Center Bridge. Check the Map and Guide or Google Earth for a view of the islands.

Alternative 2, Bike Shuttle:

This is a trip starting at either Twin Bridges or Freeman's Landing and ending at Center Bridge. See the above description for scenery and other information. To provide for physical distancing with non-family members, we suggest biking as the shuttle method at either the beginning or end of your trip. Plan accordingly. The primary route for vehicles would be Rt 4. For biking, we suggest the back roads on the easterly side of the river through the town of Leeds. These are narrow, but lightly traveled town roads. There are several hills that may be difficult for some.

GILEAD TO BETHEL (OUTDOOR ADVENTURE OR DAVIS PARK)

This is a popular, scenic paddle. There are a few short sections of rapids (consult the River Trail Map and Guide on this site). Several outfitters are providing shuttles, and shuttle by bike is possible using either Rt 2 or North Road. Rt 2 has fast moving traffic but wide shoulders and somewhat gentle, but long hills. North Road, a rural, narrow road with lots of curves has much less traffic though has shorter and steeper hills.

DIXFIELD TO CANTON

This section features a wide river with a few short sections of rips and easy rapids. During periods of low flow, there are also a few areas where sand and gravel bars just below the surface are too shallow to navigate. The Dixfield access site is located on Canton Point Rd, which, when coming from Dixfield village, departs from Rt 2 as that road turns sharply to the left. Canton Point Rd to Rt 140 is the vehicle route. It is a narrow, but reasonably lightly traveled road featuring typical Maine curves and a few hills. Rt 140 does not have wide shoulders and is more heavily traveled. Bass fishing is excellent along this stretch, so you might want to consider bringing your rod and reel.

AUBURN TO ANDROSCOGGIN LAND TRUST'S RANCOURT PRESERVE

Try this lovely out and back paddle in the middle of Lewiston/Auburn!

The launch is behind the Cumberland Farms on Center Street in Auburn. The concrete boat launch allows for easy access to put in your kayak or canoe with plenty of parking as well.

Paddling up river under the Veterans Bridge one can enjoy viewing eagles or osprey and ducks. A little way up the river after crossing under the bridge there is a sand bar on river right. Easy access getting out and back in the river from this respite.

Walk up the hill to the pathway and turn left for a short walk to Rancourt Preserve purchased, developed, owned and managed by the Androscoggin Land Trust. Easy to view the rips further up river by walking past the Preserve markers to an overlook down to the river. Take a picnic lunch to enjoy while at the Preserve but as always remember to carry in and carry out. Leave no trace.

Once back on the river, you can continue up river to play around in the rips below the dam before returning back to the launch. A lovely paddle in the middle of Downtown L/A.

PADDLE OUT-AND-BACK, CENTER BRIDGE BOAT LAUNCH, ANDROSCOGGIN RIVERLANDS STATE PARK, AND GULF ISLAND POND

Park at the Center Bridge Boat Launch on Center Bridge Road by the Greene-Turner Bridge. There is a paved boat launch with nearby parking.

The State of Maine provides a detailed, downloadable map of Androscoggin Riverlands State Park, which covers the west shore of the paddle route:

<https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parksearch/PropertyGuides/Maps/FullSize/androscogginriverlandsmap.pdf>

Begin your trip by paddling along the right (west) side of the river. In approximately 10 minutes you will reach the steep, sandy entrance to the Picnic Meadow where there are picnic tables and a pit toilet (may or may not be open).

An old foundation from one of the Old River Road's original houses that was removed as part of the Gulf Island Dam construction project in 1927 lies near the south edge of the meadow.

Back on the water you can see several more old homestead foundations underwater near the shore, and arrive at two picnic/camping islands.

For a short hike (about 15 minutes), paddle into the bay just before the second island and disembark on the north shore of the bay. You'll be very close to the park's Homestead Trail. Follow it north to see more elaborate remnants of the homes that once populated the road.

Continue paddling south. Shortly you will see a buoy in the middle of the river, and signs on both river banks opposite it. There may be a line of bubbles running lengthwise in the middle of the river. This marks an oxygen diffuser line, which pumps oxygen into the impoundment created behind Gulf Island Dam to improve its oxygen level.

Beside the last picnic/camping island, Bradford Brook Bay widens out to the right (west) with two long coves branching north and south. Opportunities for interesting wildlife and bird watching are many in the marshes and inlets of the bay. Opposite the island is the Bates College boathouse, home to the college's championship rowing team.

At this point, you may choose to turn around and paddle back to Center Bridge. There is very little current (which is why supplemental oxygen is needed). For a change of scene, you may want to paddle on the east side, with its steep banks, ravines, and farm fields

You can also continue south. Cherry Pond Boat launch, on the east shore, may be closed at present due to the COVID-19 virus. The next takeout is the portage just before Gulf Island Dam. The takeout is connected to Switzerland Road in Lewiston by a long, gated dirt road with plenty of places to stash a bike if you want to bike back to Center Bridge to get your vehicle.

From Switzerland Road, take Rte. 202 north and turn left on Meadow Hill Road in Greene. Meadow Hill Road becomes North River Road, then Allen Pond Road, and leads to the Center Bridge boat launch.

WATER STREET BRUNSWICK TO BAY BRIDGE BRUNSWICK

This paddle may be done as point to point or out and back from either end. The important thing to note in this area is the tide. Check the tide chart for the Androscoggin River/Brunswick. It is much easier to paddle upstream with the tide. There are many inlets and islands to explore on this route. It is also a great place to watch the Air Show (which unfortunately has been cancelled for 2020). This is wonderful area for birds and jumping fish. If you like to kayak fish this a great place to do that as well. We often see sturgeon jumping in the area close to Bay Bridge. Both ends have good parking. Water St has Porta-Potties.

If you put in at Bay Bridge it is also a nice paddle out into Merrymeeting Bay to Brick and Bird Islands. Brick Island is a pleasant area to stop for lunch and usually a bald eagle or two. Again be sure to watch the tides and wind as conditions can change very rapidly on the Bay.



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