

SECTION 3: ROUTE 9 TO SOMERSET RESERVOIR

SNAPSHOT:

This remote, back-country section of the CT offers varied terrain and scenic views of the Deerfield River, Mt. Snow, and Searsburg Reservoir.

LENGTH: 7.3 miles

DIFFICULTY:

This entire section is ungroomed. It is generally flat but there are a few steep ascents and descents and numerous small stream crossings. It is very remote with only one intermediate access point.

DIRECTIONS TO TRAIL

ACCESS/EXIT POINTS (south to north):

1. Rte. 9 - Searsburg

Approximately 4 miles west of Wilmington turn right off Rte. 9 onto Lund Lane, a paved, "No Outlet" road. The northbound CT heads into the woods just northwest of the parking area.

2. East Branch Trail - Searsburg

From Wilmington go approximately 5 miles west on Rte. 9 across the Deerfield River to Somerset Dam Access Rd. Turn right (north) and drive approximately 2 miles on the Access Rd. to a sign on your right for "NEPCO East Branch Trail." Ski across the Deerfield River on a footbridge and go north and then northeast on the East Branch Trail. Cross the East Branch of the Deerfield River on another footbridge, and join the CT after a total distance of approximately 0.4 miles.

3. Somerset Dam - Somerset

From Wilmington, go approximately 5 miles west on Rte. 9. Turn right (north) onto the Somerset Dam Access Rd. Drive approximately 9 miles and park in a small parking area just west of (before crossing) the dam. Use caution here as there can be heavy snowmobile traffic in this area, particularly on weekends. To head north on the CT cross below the dam, follow the snowmobile trail about .5 miles along the east shore of the reservoir. To head south on the CT, leave the road (and snowmobile trail) at the east end of the dam by descending a steep bank.

NOTE: Because Somerset Dam Access Rd. can be icy and is not frequently plowed, studded tires or four-wheel drive is recommended.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION:

From the Lund Lane cul-de-sac on the north side of Rte. 9 (0.0), the Trail heads north on an old logging road. After about half a mile, the road turns sharply to the right and heads uphill. At this turn, the CT leaves the road and goes straight into the woods to cross Vose Brook (0.6) via a bridge. The CT parallels the Deerfield River on an old railroad bed and passes the Searsburg Dam spillway (1.7). Here the Trail drops slightly in elevation and parallels the shore of Searsburg reservoir. The Trail regains the old railroad grade and continues north along the river. In about 0.3 miles, you will emerge from the woods into a small clearing to see the Searsburg Reservoir. The Trail continues north, generally following the bank of the river on the old railroad grade. After passing the confluence of the main branch and east branch of the Deerfield River, continue straight (north) for roughly 0.2 miles. Cross a bridge and notice the yellow blazed East Branch

Trail (2.6) joining the Catamount Trail from the left. This trail is your last possible exit/access point for about 4.5 miles. It is about 0.4 miles from this junction out to the Somerset Access Rd. via the East Branch Trail.

To continue north on the CT, follow the blazes north crossing several bridges built by a VT Youth Conservation Corps crew. The Trail eventually leaves the river and old railroad bed (4.4) and climbs up another shoulder, crisscrossing a stream several times. The ridge of Mt. Snow can be seen to the east along the way. The Trail passes some beaver ponds and comes down another streambed. Climb steeply to emerge on the Somerset Dam Access Rd. (7.0) just below the dam. Turn left and cross below the dam to reach the parking lot (7.3). Be alert for snowmobiles.

DISTANCE TO MAJOR LANDMARKS:

Mileage	Landmark	Mileage
Northbound		Southbound
0.0	Rte. 9 (Lund Lane)	7.3
0.6	Vose Brook	6.7
1.7	Searsburg Dam Spill-way	5.6
2.6	East Branch Trail Jct.	4.7
4.4	CT Leaves Old RR Bed	2.9
7.0	Somerset Dam Access Rd.	0.3
7.3	Somerset Dam Parking	0.0

SIDE TRAILS AND LOOPS:

The East Branch Trail intersects the CT approximately 2.6 miles from Rte. 9, providing an intermediate bail-out point or an alternative starting point. It is an approximately 0.4-mile ski from the East Branch Trail access point on the Somerset Dam Access Rd. to the intersection with the CT.