

SECTION 25: RYDER BROOK GOLF CLUB (FORMERLY FARM RESORT) TO ROUTE 15

SNAPSHOT:

This primarily back-country tour begins by climbing gently out of the Rte. 100 valley, then climbs and descends steeply over the shoulder of Elmore Mountain, and concludes with a downhill run on a snowmobile trail into the Lamoille River Valley. There are great views of Mt. Mansfield from the shoulder of Elmore Mountain.

LENGTH: 14.1 miles

DIFFICULTY:

From Ryder Brook Golf Course to Elmore Mountain Rd. the CT is of easy to intermediate difficulty, involving a gentle climb. From Elmore Mountain Rd. to Elmore Store is advanced because of steep ascents and descents. From Elmore Store to Rte. 15 is intermediate due to the gentler terrain and wider trail that is shared with snowmobiles. Allow at least six hours for an experienced skier in good snow conditions to ski this entire section.

DIRECTIONS TO TRAIL

ACCESS/EXIT POINTS (south to north):

1. Ryder Brook Golf Course - Morristown

Ryder Brook Golf Course is located on the west side of Rte. 100 in Morristown, 5.7 miles north of the Rte. 100/Rte. 108 intersection in the village of Stowe, and 3.2 miles south of the traffic light in Morrisville. Call the Ryder Brook Golf Course at 866-888-5810 for permission to park. Use the north parking lot, which has space for 12 cars. To pick up the Trail northbound, cross to the east side of Rte. 100. Ski northeast across the evergreen plantation toward a bridge on Goeltz Rd.

2. Elmore Mountain Rd. - Elmore

From Rte. 12 in Morristown go south on Elmore Mountain Rd. approximately 2.5 miles to the intersection with Bliss Hill Rd. Or, from Rte. 100 in Morristown go east on Goeltz Rd. and then Bliss Hill Rd. approximately three miles. The CT crosses Elmore Mountain Rd. at an old gray barn 0.4 miles south of the Bliss Hill Rd. junction. The only parking is along the roadside. Southbound, ski west across a large field, following a faint unplowed farm road. Northbound, climb east through the woods just right of a small field.

3. Elmore Village & Store - Elmore

The CT crosses Rte. 12 at the store in the village of Elmore, located five miles east of Morrisville at the north end of Lake Elmore. The town hall next door has parking for six cars. Elmore State Park has ample parking off Beach Rd, in the Beach parking lot but is sporadically plowed. , From the town hall: Southbound, walk 0.2 miles northwest along Rte. 12 to the entrance to Elmore State Park. Northbound, cross Rte. 12 and ski gently uphill northeast across a field, following a VAST trail to a T junction with an unsigned plowed road.

4. Rte. 15 - Wolcott

From the junction of Rte. 15 and 15A in Morrisville, go east 3 miles on Rte. 15. Parking is available at 15 East Collective on the north side of Rte. 15, about 0.75 miles west of the Corley Road/North Wolcott Rd. Park at the west side of the parking lot, keeping your vehicle parallel to Rte. 15. This will keep the center of the lot clear for truck deliveries. The CT crosses Rte. 15 seventy-five yards east of this parking lot. To ski south cross Rte. 15 and follow the Trail down a small farm road to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT). Turn left (east) on the LVRT.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION:

From the **Ryder Brook Golf Club (0.0)**, cross Rte. 100 and ski diagonally across an evergreen plantation (about 200 yards) northeast to Goeltz Rd. Ski (or walk east along Goeltz Rd.). Cross a bridge and in about 0.1 mile you'll see CT blazes on your right heading into a large field. Follow the blazes and blue flagging around the perimeter of the field, watching for a right turn into a wooded area. Skiing about 0.5 miles through an area of recently logged softwoods will bring you again to **Goeltz Rd. (1.3)**.

Cross the road and continue northeast into a large field marked by CT blazes on stakes. Cross **Randolph Rd. (1.6)** where there's a blaze on a telephone pole, and head east up through a smaller field to a tree line. Here the CT enters the woods and for the next couple of miles and winds through some lovely evergreens on wide trails, which are often groomed by the landowner. There are occasional clearings, two beaver ponds and some wonderful views of the Worcester Range to the east and Mt. Mansfield to the west.

Cross **Bliss Hill Rd. (3.1)**, and soon you'll ski through a large, flat field blazed along a fence line. Follow CT blazes to the right, staying close to the edge of the woods and away from the nearby house. Crossing a wire fence, make a right turn to enter the woods and in about 0.4 miles cross **Leahy Rd. (4.0)**. Follow a farm road as it winds through woods, a clearing, and some scattered trees before reaching another large, flat field. Head east toward the lone building, an old gray barn about 0.3 miles away on **Elmore Mountain Rd. (4.6)**.

Cross Elmore Mountain Rd. and angle slightly left (northeast) through the woods, just right of a small field. For the next five miles, until you reach Lake Elmore, you will be in a remote and rugged area. The Trail now climbs about 500 vertical feet through the woods to the **Elmore Mountain ridgeline (5.6)**. From the top of the ridge, ski downhill for about 0.2 miles on an old road (**CAUTION: steep, narrow and rough**). You are now on land conserved by the Vermont Land Trust. Watch carefully for a sharp left (north) turn off the road and into the woods. The Trail now heads north through beautiful deciduous forest and into Elmore State Park. The trail undulates, steadily climbs another 400 feet, and then descends gently, until finally reaching the **unplowed park road (7.9)**. Continue downhill to the Elmore State Park entrance, bearing slightly right near the entry booth and over a small berm. Continue straight, then bear right through a small field. Exit the bottom of the field on the left side into a short brushy area, then cross another small field to meet Rte. 12 at the Beach Road intersection. Turn right and proceed south along the side of Rte. 12 toward **Lake Elmore Village (9.5)**. The Elmore Village Store (deli and hot drinks inside, port-o-potty out back) is about 100 yards ahead.

NOTE: Be alert for other trail users in Elmore State Park. The park road is heavily used by skiers, snowshoers, hikers, and local mushers. Sled dogs are normally friendly but may be distracted by other dogs, creating a big tangle of harnesses and dogs. If you see a sled dog team while skiing with your dog, please call your dog to your side.

From the Elmore Store, cross Rte. 12 and ski about 0.1 mile northeast across a field on the VAST snowmobile trail to a T junction with the plowed Hosking Farm Rd. Turn right (with VAST trail) and walk along the road shoulder for 0.1 miles to a T junction with **Greaves Hill Rd. (9.8)**, where the VAST trail turns left. Leaving the snowmobile trail, cross to the south side of Greaves Hill Rd. and look for an opening in the hedgerow with a Catamount blaze set back from the road (to discourage snowmobile use). The Trail heads into a clearing and southeast toward a refurbished old barn.

Turn left and ski uphill past the barn and through a meadow. At the top of the field enter the woods on the left and soon you'll be in a small sugarbush. Please be careful of the maple sap lines that cross the Trail several times. Continue through an area of brushy growth. Cross a snowmobile trail (unplowed portion of Greaves Hill Rd.), and then go straight uphill into some softwoods. Catamount blazes continue for another half mile before the CT intersects VAST **Corridor #100A (10.9)** at a T junction.

Turn left (north) on VAST #100A (which has a nice variety of wooded trails, open northerly views, and is mostly downhill) and continue to a T intersection with Elmore Pond Rd. Turn left and follow the Trail (and VAST 100A) along the side of the road for about 100 yards. Cross Elmore Pond Rd. and (with the snowmobile trail) proceed down a driveway (be sure to carefully close gates behind you on this section where cows are grazed), which turns right (east) and becomes an unplowed road. After a long descent, the trail will pass a small house before bearing left and paralleling the edge of a high open field before joining a dirt road (seasonally plowed). At the bottom, at a snowmobile trail junction, leave VAST #100A (which makes a right turn) and turn left (west) up a plowed driveway. After a short climb, leave the driveway and follow the snowmobile trail to the right (north) for a downhill run to a farm and **Corley Rd. (12.9)**, which is plowed. Turn left and follow the road. Cross the Lamoille River on a bridge and ski northwest across a farm field to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT), which runs parallel to and few yards south of Rte. 15. Turn left and ski west on the LVRT for 0.7 miles, then make a sharp right turn on a farm road, and ski about 30 yards uphill to **Rte. 15 (14.1)**.

DISTANCE TO LANDMARKS:

Mileage Northbound	Landmark	Mileage Southbound
0.0	Ryder Brook Golf Club (Rte. 100)	14.1
1.3	Goeltz Rd.	12.8
1.6	Randolph Rd.	12.5
3.1	Bliss Hill Rd.	11.0
4.0	Leahy Rd.	10.1
4.6	Elmore Mountain Rd.	9.5
5.6	Elmore Mountain Ridgeline	8.5
7.9	Elmore Mountain Park Rd.	6.2
9.5	Elmore Village Store	4.6
9.8	Greaves Hill Rd.	4.3
10.9	VAST Trail #100A	3.2
12.9	Corley Rd.	1.2
14.1	Rte. 15	0.0

SIDE TRAILS AND LOOPS:

No side trails or loops have been identified for this section.