

SECTION 4: SOMERSET RESERVOIR TO KELLEY STAND ROAD

SNAPSHOT:

This is an un-groomed wilderness section offering views of Somerset Reservoir and Grout Pond. The Trail briefly shares a snowmobile trail at the south end and for 0.5 miles at the north end.

LENGTH: 9.5 miles

DIFFICULTY:

The terrain is easy but this is a very remote section with access points only at the south and north ends. At times, winds coming across the frozen reservoir can create challenging snow drifts. Ninety percent of this section is un-groomed.

DIRECTIONS TO TRAIL

ACCESS/EXIT POINTS (south to north):

1. 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 on the East side of the road about 50 yards before 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 moderately steep bank.

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

2. Kelley Stand Rd. - Stratton

From Rte. 100 in West Wardsboro, go west on the Stratton/Arlington Rd. The road eventually turns into Kelley Stand Rd. After about six miles, look for a parking lot on your right (across from Grout Pond Rd on your left). Park along the edge of this lot rather than in the middle - the middle is reserved for snowmobile trailers.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION:

From the parking area on the west side of Somerset Dam, follow the road about 0.5 miles to the trailhead (0.0) on the east shore of the reservoir. The northbound CT enters the woods by the lake. Soon you will cross a small plank bridge (0.7) followed by a larger bridge where you may need to take your skis off to cross because of the steps. The Trail then runs along the lakeshore for three miles, sometimes making short detours into the woods to avoid rough ground. You will get nice views of the lake at various points along the way. After crossing Moon Brook (2.7), continue on for about half a mile. At this point you will reach an intersection (3.1) with a trail that is sometimes used by snowmobiles. The Catamount Trail crosses this trail and continues along the reservoir. (Turning left on this trail will take you down to the reservoir; turning right on this trail will take you to a large groomed VAST snowmobile trail. You can turn right on the VAST trail to loop back to the Somerset Dam Parking Area.)

Views of Stratton Mt. to the north and Mt. Snow to the south can be seen at various points between here and Grout Pond. As you approach Grout Pond, other trail networks will intersect the Catamount Trail. The Grout Pond trails are marked with plain blue diamonds as opposed to the CT blazes, which are blue diamonds with a black paw print. At an intersection with a sign for Pond Loop (7.1 mi), turn right and follow the CT blazes around the east shore of Grout Pond. Turn right onto a spur trail for East Loop

heading north (8.6 mi). At a small junction (9.0 mi), bear left and go about 50 yds to end on the Grout Pond Rd. Turn right on the Grout pond Rd which is a wide shared snowmobile route. Go 0.5 mi to end at the parking area on the Kelley Stand Rd (9.5 mi). Note: cell phone service is very poor on most of this section.

DISTANCE TO LANDMARKS:

Mileage	Landmark	Mileage
Northbound		Southbound
0.0	Somerset Dam parking lot	9.5
0.7	Small plank bridge	8.8
2.7	Moon Brook bridge	6.8
3.1	Intersection w/snowmobile trail	6.4
7.1	Intersection with pond loop	2.4
9.0	East Trail-Grout Pond Road intersection	0.5
9.5	Kelley Stand Rd.	0.0

SIDE TRAILS AND LOOPS:

Within the Grout Pond Recreation Area several loops are possible. A 6.3-mile loop partially on the CT and partially on snowmobile trails begins at the Kelley Stand Rd. parking area. This loop is suitable for intermediate skiers. The trail is wide and the terrain is gentle but snowmobile traffic is a concern. Follow the Grout Pond entrance road (which is also the CT for the initial 0.5 mi) south to Grout Pond cabin. Continue along the west shore of Grout Pond to the south end of the pond. Turn right (west) on West Trail. Leave West Trail by turning left (west) on a snowmobile trail that eventually heads north along the East Branch of the Deerfield River. Turn right (east) on Kelley Stand Rd. or the CT to return to the parking area.

A five-mile loop can be made starting from the Somerset Dam parking lot. Ski north on either the CT or the snowmobile trail to where the two trails meet again north of the Moon Brook Bridge. Return south on the other trail. Use caution when skiing on the snowmobile trail.

A relatively flat 7.3 mile loop can be made by skiing .5 miles down the Grout Pond entrance road then turning left on the East Trail. After .1 miles, bear left off of the CT and continue on the blue blazed East Trail. After a total of 3.4 miles, turn left (West) onto the West Trail loop, and return following the Grout Pond entrance road North.