



Section 14: Mountain Top to Route 73

SNAPSHOT

Largely within the Green Mountain National Forest, this section follows the groomed trails of Mountain Top Ski Center and a VAST snowmobile corridor trail.

NOTE: Please remember to check in at the Mountain Top Ski Center and purchase a trail pass if you are utilizing the CT within their trail system. CTA members receive a coupon for a discounted pass in their Membership Rewards Book.

LENGTH

11.0 miles (17.70 km)

DIFFICULTY

Within the groomed Mountain Top Trail network this section is easy to intermediate. North of the Mountain Top trail network there are several steep climbs and descents. Snowmobile traffic can be heavy on weekends making the skiing more challenging.

It is suggested that you ski this section north to south when conditions are icy and/or limited snow cover. One long steep section is an old logging road with some high banks with limited opportunities to turn, so when skiing south to north, the descent can be very challenging. Bring climbing skins. With good snow conditions, this descent can be fun.

TRAIL ACCESS POINTS (south to north)

1. Mountain Top Ski Center - Chittenden

From Pittsford, take Route 7 south and turn left on Oxbow Road. Continue straight on Creed Hill Road. Go straight and stay on Beebe Hill Road and then Holden Road. At the Y intersection, turn left onto Mountain Top Road and travel up 1.8 miles to the Mountaintop Inn. The X-C ski center is just beyond the inn on the left.

Please check-in, pay the appropriate trail fee, and pick up a trail map, which will be helpful in following the CT through the Mountain Top trail network. If you plan to park overnight at the ski center, let the staff know so they won't launch a search at the end of the day.

2. River Road (Furnace Brook Road) - Chittenden

From Route 7 in Pittsford, take Furnace Brook Road approximately three miles to the village of Holden. Just past the fish hatchery turn left on River Road (FR 57). Go approximately 3.0 miles to the end of

plowing. From the parking area head steeply uphill (east) on FR 57 (River Road is unplowed in the winter) for approximately 1.0 miles to join the CT.

NOTE: There is currently no parking available at the River Road Access (Furnace Brook Road). Cars parked here risk being towed.

3. Route 73 - Goshen

From Brandon, take Route 73 East approximately 7 miles to a widening of the plowed shoulder of the road. There is enough room to parallel park several cars on the south side of the road. You can also park in the Long Trail parking area on the south side of Route 73 another 0.5 miles to the east. From the wide shoulder, walk back down (west) on Route 73 about 0.3 miles. The northbound CT climbs steeply up a log road from Route 73, just downhill of where the CT intersects Route 73 from the south.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION (south to north)

From **Mountain Top Ski Center (0.0)** start behind the Center and cross Mountain Spring Road. Proceed downhill through a pasture with great views of the Chittenden Reservoir and into the woods on Hewitt Brook Run.

Continue on Hewitt Brook Run to the bottom of a long gradual hill to a major intersection with Mountain Top Road (also called Hewitt Brook Road) and several connecting VAST trails **Cross Mountain Top Road (1.1)** and take Boondocks Trail which is also marked with CTA blazes.

Stay on the Boondocks Trail until you **join Mountain Top Road (1.8)**. Ski on this road, which is also part of the VAST trail system for about 0.25 miles, then turn left off the road onto the New Boston Trail.

Follow the New Boston Trail, which is also part of the VAST trail system. After .9 miles you will have officially left Mountain Top Ski Center trail system and have entered the **Green Mountain National Forest (2.8)**.

Head northwest on VAST Corridor 7 out of the GMNF and into the Town of Proctor watershed. As you re-enter the GMNF, the CT begins to descend and then goes steeply down to the west. A sharp right (north) turn toward the bottom of a steep pitch puts you on gentler terrain to **River Road (FR 57) (5.6)**. To continue north on the CT, turn right on River Road.

BAIL OUT POINT: *To reach the end of plowing and a bailout point, turn left (south) on FR 57 and go approximately 1.5 miles to the parking area on Furnace Road.*

To continue north on the CT turn right and follow the CT blazes and VAST 7 signs north. The CT winds back and forth across the unplowed portion of River Road for about two miles, passes the intersection

with VAST 73, and reaches a **clearing (7.6)**. This log landing marks the beginning of what is known locally as the “Puss and Kill Trail.”

Follow this trail, which is shared with snowmobiles, climbing gradually to a notch on the shoulder of Goshen Mountain and then descending a steep, long hill. Near the bottom of this hill, the **CT leaves the Puss and Kill Trail (9.2)**, and the snowmobile trail (VAST 7 and 73), by making a sharp turn to the right (northeast).

The trail winds gradually uphill on old roads and eventually makes a sharp left (north) to cross the **Neshobe River Bridge (10.7)**. Continue uphill to **Route 73 (11.0)**.

DISTANCE TO LANDMARKS

Mileage Northbound	Landmark	Mileage Southbound
0.0	Mountain Top Ski Center	11.0
1.1	Cross Mountain Top Road	9.9
1.8	Trail joins Mountain Top Road	9.2
2.8	Enter Green Mountain National Forest	8.2
5.6	Spur Trail to River Road (FR 57)	5.4
7.6	Clearing/South End of Puss and Kill Trail	3.4
9.2	CT leaves Puss and Kill Trail	1.8
10.7	Neshobe River Bridge	0.3
11.0	Route 73	0.0

SIDE TRAILS AND LOOPS

The extensive network of groomed trails at Mountain Top Ski Center provides many opportunities for loops and side excursions. Stop in at the Ski Center for a map and to pay the appropriate fee. Visit <https://mountaintopinn.com/event/cross-country-skiing/> for more information.

There is also an ungroomed two-mile long side trail paralleling the Puss and Kill Trail. This trail takes off to the west near the intersection of River Road and the Puss and Kill Trail.

SHUTTLE DIRECTIONS

Please use caution and common sense when using these directions. Some roads may not have signs. After a heavy snow it may be difficult to locate the trailhead or end-of-plowing. Your GPS will not replicate all of these routes and may direct you to a road that is not plowed, closed and impassable. When in doubt, follow someone familiar with the local area.

Look for blue blazes (Catamount Trail), yellow blazes (Catamount Trail Side Trail) or CT parking signs which may be present. If the road seems impassible, park and explore on foot. Always park clear of access roads and gates. Leave room for others to park including snowmobile trailers. Do not park in snowplow turnarounds.

The location of the Catamount Trail on these maps is approximate. Temporary reroutes are not displayed. Always visit the Catamount Trail Association website for the latest trail information and maps. www.catamounttrail.org

Drive to Route 73 (south to north)

1. Go south from Mountain Top (13 Mountain Spring Road) (S14 access <1>) for 0.1 miles.
2. Turn right on Mountain Top Road and go 1.9 miles.
3. Turn right on Chittenden Road (pass Holden Road) and go 1.2 miles.
4. Turn right on Sangamon Road and drive 2.2 miles.
5. Turn right on US 7 and go 7.8 miles.
6. Turn right on McConnell Road and go 3.3 miles.
7. Turn right on Route 73 and go 5.0 miles to the plowed shoulder on Rte. 73 (2881-2983 Gap Rd.) (S14 access <3>) on the right.

Drive to Mountain Top (north to south)

1. From the plowed shoulder on Rte. 73, (S14 access <3>) head west for 5.0 miles.
2. Turn left onto McConnell Rd. and continue for 3.3 miles.
3. At the intersection, turn left onto Rte. 7 and drive for 7.8 miles.
4. Shortly after passing the Vermont Electric Power Co., turn left onto Sangamon Rd. and continue for 2.2 miles.
5. Take a left onto Chittenden Rd. at the "T" intersection and go 1.2 miles.
6. Turn left onto Mountain Top Rd. and continue for 1.8 miles.
7. Bear left onto Mountain Spring Rd. and the parking area will be on your left after 0.1 miles (S14 access <1>).