

## **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.

**LENGTH:** 11.0 miles

### **DIFFICULTY:**

Within the groomed Mountain Top Trail network this section is easy to intermediate. North of the MT trail network there are several steep climbs and descents. Snowmobile traffic can be heavy on weekends making the skiing more challenging. North of the Mountain Top network of trails there is only one bail-out opportunity at River Rd. 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. Climbing this section with skins or micro-spikes when skiing north to south is easier and safer.

### **DIRECTIONS TO TRAIL**

#### **ACCESS/EXIT POINTS (south to north):**

##### **1. Mountain Top Ski Center - Chittenden**

From Rte. 7, about 3 miles south of Pittsford turn east onto Sangamon Rd. Follow Sangamon Rd. all the way to the end and turn left onto Main St. Follow Main St. until just past the fire station. Turn left and immediately bear to the right of the Civil War monument onto Mountain Top Rd. The Mountain Top Inn & Resort is 2 miles up this road on your right. The X-C ski center is just beyond the inn on the left. Please check, pay the appropriate trail fee, and pick up a trail map, which will be very 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 Rd. (Furnace Brook Rd.) - Chittenden**

From Rte. 7 in Pittsford, take Furnace Brook Rd. approximately three miles to the village of Holden. Just past the fish hatchery turn left on River Rd. (FR 57). Go approximately three miles to the end of plowing. From the parking area head steeply uphill (east) on FR 57 (River Rd. unplowed in the winter) for approximately 1.0 miles to join the CT.

##### **3. Rte. 73 - Goshen**

From Goshen Four Corners go 1.3 miles east on Rte. 73 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 Rte. 73 another 0.5 miles to the east. From the wide shoulder, walk back down Rte. 73 about 0.3 miles and look over the snow bank for CT blazes heading downhill to the left (south).

### **ROUTE DESCRIPTION:**

From Mountain Top Ski Center **(0.0)** start **behind the Center and cross Mountain Spring Rd** and 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 Mt.Top Road aka Hewitt Brook Road and several connecting VAST trails **(1.1)**. Cross the Mt. Top Road and take Boondocks trail which is also marked with CTA blazes. Stay on the Boondocks Trail until you intersect with the Mt. Top Road again **(1.8)**. Ski

on this road, which is also part of the VAST trail system for about ¼ of a mile and 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 the Mt. Top Ski Center trail system and be skiing on GMNF land **(2.8)**. Head northwest on VAST Corridor #7 out of the GMNF and into the Town of Proctor watershed. This is a relatively flat stretch. As you re-enter the GMNF, the Trail 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 Rd. (FR 57) (5.6)**. To continue north on the CT, turn right on River Rd. To reach the end of plowing and a bailout point, turn left (south) on FR 57 and go approximately 1.5 miles. To continue north on the CT turn right and follow the CT blazes and VAST #7 signs north. The Trail winds back and forth across the unplowed portion of River Rd. for about two miles, passes the intersection with VAST 73, and reaches a log landing **(clearing)(7.6)**.

The clearing marks the beginning of what is known locally as the “Puss and Kill Trail.” This trail, which is shared with snowmobiles, climbs gradually to a notch on the shoulder of Goshen Mountain and then descends 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). It winds gradually uphill on old roads and eventually makes a sharp left (north) to cross the **Neshobe River Bridge (10.7)**. Continue uphill to **Rte. 73 (11.0)**.

**DISTANCE TO LANDMARKS:**

| <b>Mileage<br/>Northbound</b> | <b>Landmark</b>                         | <b>Mileage<br/>Southbound</b> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 0.0                           | Mountain Top Ski Center                 | 11.0                          |
| 1.1                           | Cross Mtn Top Road                      | 9.9                           |
| 1.8                           | Trail follows Mtn Top Rd                | 9.2                           |
| 2.8                           | Mtn Top Ski Center Boundary             | 8.2                           |
| 5.6                           | Spur trail to River Rd. (FR 57)         | 5.4                           |
| 7.6                           | Clearing, South end Puss and Kill Trail | 3.4                           |
| 9.2                           | North end Puss and Kill Trail           | 1.8                           |
| 10.7                          | Neshobe River Bridge                    | 0.3                           |
| 11.0                          | Rte. 73                                 | 0.0                           |

**SIDE TRAILS AND LOOPS:**

The extensive network of groomed trails at Mountain Top Inn Ski Touring Center provides many opportunities for loops and side excursions. Stop in at the Ski Touring Center for a map and to pay the appropriate fee. 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 Rd. and the Puss and Kill Trail.