



Section 22: Bolton Valley to Trapp Family Lodge

SNAPSHOT

This popular section is a rugged, backcountry tour, climbing 1300 feet and descending 2300 feet. It features a narrow trail in the spruce forest above 2700 feet, a long descent through open forest, and marvelous views in many directions – including the Little River and Cotton Brook Valleys and Worcester Range to the east, Camel's Hump to the south, and Mount Mansfield to the north. The region between Bolton Valley and the start of the descent is a reliable area to find good early and late season snow, but the descent becomes very difficult if the snow is icy or crusty, or if there is insufficient snow cover.

LENGTH

9.4 miles (14.13 km)

DIFFICULTY

The portion between Bolton Valley and Nebraska Valley Road is suitable for advanced, properly equipped skiers only. It is long, isolated, and very steep. A group of three or more skiers is recommended for safety purposes. The portion between Nebraska Valley Road and Trapp Family Lodge has easier terrain, making it suitable for intermediate skiers. The last portion of this section is on Trapp's groomed trails.

When the CT leaves the Bolton Nordic Center network you are on a backcountry ski trail. It is not groomed and is not patrolled. There is a lot of climbing that can be challenging in deep snow, especially if there have been no skiers ahead of you breaking trail. We recommend heavier backcountry gear and climbing skins for this section. The descent into the Moscow valley is thrilling, but can be tricky to negotiate in icy conditions. The trail is narrow, passing through spruce trees and then open hardwoods on the descent. Due to the large amount of snow this area receives, CT trail blazes can often be obscured or completely covered by snow. Ski with at least two companions and stay together.

TRAIL ACCESS POINTS (south to north)

NOTE: Please remember to check in at the nordic center where you begin your tour (Trapp or Bolton) and purchase a trail pass. CTA members receive a coupon for discounted passes at both areas in their Membership Rewards Book.

1. Bolton Valley Nordic Center - Bolton

From Route 2 in the village of Bolton go north on the Bolton Access Road approximately 4.5 miles to the Bolton Valley Resort. The Nordic Center is located on the west side of the resort's main parking lot. Check in to get a trail map and pay the trail-use fee.

2. Nebraska Valley Road - Stowe

From I-89 exit 10 in Waterbury go north on Route 100 for 7.5 miles. Turn left (west) onto Moscow Road and go approximately 1.9 miles. After crossing a bridge, bear right on Nebraska Valley Road and continue west 3.5 miles to a roadside parking area on the left (large enough for about five cars). If this area is full, go 100 yards farther and turn right on Old County Road. There is a large parking area 0.1 mile up this road on the left.

3. Trapp Family Lodge - Stowe

From I-89 exit 10 in Waterbury go north on Route 100 for 7.5 miles. Turn left (west) onto Moscow Road. Go 1.4 miles and turn right (north) onto Barrows Road. Go to a stop sign and turn left on Luce Hill Road. Follow this steep, winding road, bearing left onto Trapp Hill Road. The ski center is the last building on the right just past the main lodge and just before a large parking lot.

Alternatively, from the intersection of Routes 108 (Mountain Road) and 100 in Stowe, head west on Route 108 for about 2.75 miles and turn left on Luce Hill Road. Continue past Barrows Road (on left) and then follow the directions above.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION (south to north)

From the **Bolton Valley Nordic Center (0.0)** the CT initially follows several of the marked and groomed Bolton Valley trails. Start on Broadway and turn immediately right (north and uphill) off Broadway onto the World Cup Trail and then onto Bryant Trail to **Bryant Camp (1.1)**.

Above the camp the CT enters Mount Mansfield State Forest. The CT continues up a short hill to the intersection with Gardiner's Lane and Birch Loop. Turn left (north) onto Birch Loop. The CT now traverses relatively flat terrain on Birch Loop, rising gently to 2800'. Upon reaching a trail fork, Birch Loop bears left and the CT goes to the right heading northeast.

NOTE: There are unmarked "renegade" ski routes dropping off either side of the CT from the ridge area. If you start downhill, be sure there are CT blazes on your route.

After about 100 yards the **Cotton Brook Trail (1.4)** turns off to the right (east), and the CT continues straight ahead (northeast). The trail now rises steeply uphill and makes a series of switchbacks. Follow the CT markers carefully, as "glade skier" tracks may intersect the trail. After straightening out, the CT heads basically north-northwest, coming to an intersection with the **Raven's Wind Trail (2.1)** at about 3300'. Raven's Wind goes left (west) as the CT heads up and right (northeast).

After passing the Raven's Wind trail intersection, the CT stays at a fairly constant elevation, with first gentle and then abrupt ups and downs. It skirts the east shoulder of Bolton Mountain, and can be difficult to follow. East of the summit of Bolton Mountain the route turns sharply right (east) to follow the ridge running east from the peak. It is easy to miss this turn if not paying attention. The route then winds along the ridge, with many tight turns and short, quick ups and downs. One open area, called "Windy Ridge," is a good spot for a lunch break. It marks the beginning of the constant downhill.

The CT leaves the ridge and begins dropping to the north in a series of long switchbacks. Caution is needed at the end of one of the switchbacks, as a trail, locally known as the JK Trail, heads right and toward Cotton Brook while the CT swings sharply left in a switchback. Signage for the JK Trail is inconsistent, so be sure to follow the blue CT blazes.

The CT continues through switchbacks and over some small stream crossings. After a short rise, there is a sharp descent ending abruptly in a steep **stream crossing at 2300' (4.4)**, which often has open water.

From the 2300' elevation line, the CT drops steeply then switches back through open woods. It then returns to parallel the stream, drops steeply into a side stream crossing and bridge, and descends steadily past an **old camp (5.4)**. Just above the camp, during a moderate descent, there is a stream crossing bridged by a fairly narrow culvert- be careful! A long, gentle slope follows, then a steeper drop beside a stream gorge, eventually ending at the parking area on **Nebraska Valley Road (6.5)**.

BAIL OUT POINT *For those looking for a shorter tour, the Nebraska Valley trailhead makes an easily accessible bail out point.*

To continue north on the CT turn left (west) for a road-walk of 100 yards on Nebraska Valley Road. Turn right (northeast) on the trail just after you cross the brook, and well before you reach Old County Road. The trail soon joins Old County Road and there is another short road walk to the end of plowing.

The CT then continues up the unplowed road past some seasonal homes and onto an abandoned section of the old road to join the groomed trail network of Trapp Family Lodge. Turn right on **Russell Knoll Track (7.9)** and follow the Trapp trail signs to Sugar Road and the **Trapp Family Nordic center (9.4)**. Please be sure to pay the appropriate trail fee.

DISTANCE TO LANDMARKS

Mileage Northbound	Landmark	Mileage Southbound
0.0	Bolton Nordic Center	9.4
1.1	Bryant Camp	8.3
1.4	Cotton Brook Trail	8.0
2.1	Raven's Wind Trail	7.3
4.4	Stream Crossing at 2300'	5.0
5.4	Old Camp	4.0
6.5	Nebraska Valley Road	2.9
7.9	Russel Knoll	1.5
9.4	Trapp Family Nordic Center	0.0

SIDE TRAILS AND LOOPS

Bolton Valley offers an extensive network of cross-country ski trails both groomed and ungroomed. It is one of the best locations in the eastern U.S. for back-country skiing because of its high elevation and reliable snowfall. Be sure to stop in at the Nordic center to pay the trail fee and pick up a trail map. Occasionally trail users without maps have gotten lost in the backcountry resulting in expensive search and rescue efforts.

Within Mount Mansfield State Forest, the CT intersects the Cotton Brook Trail, the "JK" Trail heading east into the Cotton Brook Basin, and many unmarked renegade routes. Attempt these trails only if you have appropriate back-country gear and have a guide who is familiar with these routes.

The Trapp Family Lodge maintains many miles of impeccably groomed trails that appeal to skiers of many different skill levels. Stop in at the nordic center to pick up a trail map and to pay the appropriate fee.

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 Bolton Valley (north to south)

1. From Trapp Family Lodge (S22 access point <3>) drive north 0.8 mi on Trapp Hill Rd.
2. Bear right Luce Hill Rd. and drive 0.8 miles
3. Turn right on Barrows Rd. and drive 1.8 miles
4. Turn left on Moscow Rd. and drive 1.5 miles. Bear right at River Rd.
5. Turn right on Rte. 100 and drive 7.6 mi.
6. Turn right on Rte. 2 and drive 6.6 miles.
7. Turn right on Bolton Valley Access Rd. and drive 4.3 miles to Bolton Valley Nordic Center (S22 access point <1>).

Drive to Trapp Family Lodge (south to north)

1. From Bolton Valley Nordic Center (S22 access point <1>) drive south 4.3 mi on Bolton Valley Access Rd.
2. Turn left on Rte. 2 and drive 6.6 miles.
3. Turn left on Rte. 100 and drive north 7.6 miles.
4. Turn left on Moscow Rd. and drive 1.5 miles. Bear left after crossing the first bridge.
5. Turn right on Barrows Rd. and drive 1.8 miles.
6. Turn left on Luce Hill Rd. and drive 0.8 miles.
7. Bear left at Trapp Family Rd. and drive 0.8 miles to Trapp Family Lodge (S22 access <3>).