



Section 24: Edson Hill to Rider Brook Golf Club

SNAPSHOT

This section includes groomed trails at Edson Hill Ski Touring Center, ungroomed backcountry terrain, snowmobile trails, open farm fields and a golf course. It gently loses elevation as it proceeds north. A side trail connects to Beaver Meadow and Burling Camp. Wonderful farm fields, beautiful hardwood forests, and some gorgeous mountain views highlight this section.

The bridges in Sterling Forest were constructed in 2007 by the VT Youth Conservation Corps, the Stowe Mountain Bike Club, CTA, and the Town of Stowe, and rebuilt by the CTA and Stowe Trails Alliance in 2016.

You will be skiing through the Lepine Farm. The Lepine sisters were among the first farmers to conserve their property through the Vermont Land Trust. They also granted CTA its first permanent trail easement. The pasture is now owned by Scott Bidwell.

LENGTH

12.0 miles (19.31 km)

DIFFICULTY

The section contains moderate hills, requiring minimal technical skiing ability. It is a great intermediate level section that allows skiers to experience ungroomed skiing without too many challenging parts of the route. Small stream crossings and some uphill climbs will require sidestepping and herringbone. Several road crossings allow this section to be broken into shorter tours.

TRAIL ACCESS POINTS (south to north)

1. Edson Hill Ski Touring Center - Stowe

From the junction of Routes 100 and 108 in Stowe village, take Route 108 north for about 3.2 miles. Turn right onto Edson Hill Road. Go about 1.3 miles and look for a sign for Edson Hill Manor on the left. The Ski Touring Center is about 200 yards up the Manor access road on the right. Be sure to purchase a trail pass before using the CT within their system.

2. Sterling Falls Gorge - Stowe

From the junction of Route 100 and 108 in Stowe village take Route 100 north for 1.7 miles and bear left on Stagecoach Road. Travel another 1.7 miles and turn left (west) on Sterling Valley Road (also known as Sterling Brook Road). Follow Sterling Valley Road for about 3.5 miles to Sterling Forest Town Parking Area. This is the main parking area. Limited parking can also be found by turning sharply left on Sterling Gorge Road just before the town parking area and proceeding a few hundred yards. Do not cross or block the wooden bridge.

3. Ryder Brook Golf Course - Morristown

Ryder Brook Golf Course is located on the west side of Route 100 in Morristown, 5.7 miles north of the Route 100/108 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. Southbound, ski west and uphill across the resort's golf course.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION (south to north)

NOTE: Please purchase a trail pass from the Edson Hill Touring Center before using the CT within their trail system. CTA members receive a coupon for a discounted pass in their Membership Rewards Book.

From the back (north side) of the **Edson Hill Touring Center (0.0)** head north through the pine plantation and then go left and downhill to cross the dam of a small pond. Pick up Manor Trail on the right and ski uphill along the driveway toward the Manor. Just before the Manor, cross the driveway and head toward a small wooden barn on the right. Beyond the barn head into the woods on the Pennschuss Trail. After a hundred yards, turn left on Spring Trail. Head uphill to a trail intersection and take Puck's Cut to Worcester Loop and continue uphill (north) to Penn Station, which is a major trail junction in a large clearing.

Continue straight through the Penn Station clearing, cross **Wade Pasture Road (0.8)**, and continue past some large homes. Please stay on the trail and respect homeowners' privacy. Re-entering the woods, the CT curves to the west and just before an old deer camp bears right and climbs steeply to reach the junction with **Old Billings Road (1.3)**.

Turn right and head north and then east on Old Billings Road, skiing gradually uphill along a side hill. Just past the height of land, the CT turns left (north) off Old Billings Road, paralleling the contour of the hill through Stowe's Sterling Forest. This section twists and turns with numerous brook crossings.

At the intersection with the **Marston Trail (3.2)** turn right, and ski downhill for a short distance before reaching a busy snowmobile corridor. Cross the snowmobile trail after listening for oncoming traffic. Continue to a junction and turn left. Ski through a large meadow, just past the pond, then bear left to cross Sterling Brook on a bridge to the **Sterling Gorge parking area (3.8)**.

At the parking area, the trail continues through the meadow, enters the woods, and soon crosses the access road to the Lower Sterling Gorge parking lot.

BAIL OUT POINT: *For an intermediate stopping point, turn left at the road crossing and follow Sterling Valley Road to the Sterling Gorge parking area.*

The CT continues through the woods, crosses a snowmobile trail twice, goes downhill, and soon enters a swampy area within the Mount Mansfield State Forest. Watch for CT blazes to lead you through the maze of swamp and old log roads. At a fork, turn right (northeast) and descend steeply. Make a sharp right (east) onto a short bypass of the snowmobile trail.

After reaching the east-west running **VAST Corridor #15-100C (5.4)**, turn right (continuing east) and follow this busy snowmobile corridor downhill and out into a large meadow. Stay on the snowmobile trail to a chute that takes you to a lower meadow and a main snowmobile trail junction. Continue east on the snowmobile trail through the fields until it crosses **Mud City Loop Road (6.8)**.

BAIL-OUT POINT: *To reach an intermediate bail-out point (enough room to park two or three cars) ski to your left (northwest) for a couple of hundred yards just past the snowmobile junction about 1/3 mile before crossing Mud City Loop Road.*

After crossing Mud City Loop Road, follow the snowmobile trail east through a power line cut and behind a house. Entering another field, the trail descends, and follows the road a short distance to avoid crossing a deep gully. Beyond the gully, the CT goes through several farm pastures. Look for CT markers on wooden posts and use care when crossing the wire fences.

After passing behind an old barn, the trail bears left and returns to the snowmobile trail to enter the Lepine farm pasture. As the farmhouse comes into view, the snowmobile trail turns right and crosses Mud City Loop Road. Bear left on the CT, leaving the snowmobile trail.

From the junction, the CT travels diagonally (east) through several pastures and crosses a few electric fence lines. Look for CT blazes on fence posts and temporary winter posts. Ski across the next field and by the last telephone pole in the meadow, bear right, cross an electric fence line, and enter a small overgrown wooded section between pastures. After crossing a barbed wire fence, the CT follows the back edge of the pasture, and as it heads uphill, crosses the fence and returns to an overgrown, wet wooded section. Bearing left it soon reaches an old out-building, along the tree line.

Here the trail bears right past a small farm pond, and then across **Cole Hill Road (8.8)**. At the road junction the CT enters the pasture to ski uphill parallel to the VAST trail. At the top of the first hill, the CT rejoins the VAST trail, continuing uphill then down to another small pasture. The CT/VAST trail veers right into the woods for a long gradual descent to **Lyle McKee Road (10.3)**.

Cross to the south side of Lyle McKee Road, and immediately turn left (east) off the snowmobile trail. Ski across a driveway (house on the right), and through the woods bearing to the right and into a field below the house. From here, ski to the right (west side) of a farm pond to a telephone pole marked with a blue blaze on the side of **Stagecoach Road (10.8)**. Cross the road and ski onto the farm lane to the right of the barn.

Follow the farm lane southeast between two pastures. Make a sharp right and head down hill to cross a small brook. Turn left (east) and ski parallel to the brook to a post. Turn right (south) and ski toward a telephone pole marked with a CT blaze on **Golf Course Road (11.3)**. Cross the road onto the back corner of the Ryder Brook Golf Course. Ski east-southeast through the golf course, staying more or less parallel to the road, until you come to the Ryder Brook Golf Course buildings and parking area on **Route 100 (12.0)**.

DISTANCE TO LANDMARKS

Mileage Northbound	Landmark	Mileage Southbound
0.0	Edson Hill Touring Center	12.0
0.8	Wade Pasture Road	11.2
1.3	Old Billings Road	10.7
3.2	Marston Trail	8.8
3.8	Sterling Gorge Parking Area	8.2
5.4	VAST Corridor #15-100C	6.6
6.8	Mud City Loop Road	5.2
8.8	Cole Hill Road	3.2
10.3	Lyle McKee Road	1.7
10.8	Stagecoach Road	1.2
11.3	Golf Course Road	0.7
12.0	Ryder Brook Golf Course/Route 100	0.0

SIDE TRAILS AND LOOPS

The Edson Hill Ski Touring Center maintains a network of groomed and ungroomed trails that provide opportunities for loops of varying lengths.

An excellent four-mile loop can be accessed from the upper Sterling Gorge parking area. To ski the loop counter-clockwise from the parking area, head south on the CT, through the meadow, and to the intersection with the Marston Trail. Turn right (west) and ski uphill, staying straight on the Marston Trail where the CT turns left (south). The Marston Trail eventually turns south returning to the CT after crossing a driveway just past an old deer camp.

The 3.5-mile Upper Sterling Gorge Loop can be accessed from either of the Sterling Gorge parking areas. This loop is suitable for skiing and snowshoeing. Use caution crossing the fast-running Sterling Brook early in the season.

The popular, six-mile, Burling Camp Loop starts on the CT/VAST Corridor heading west from Mud City Loop. Instead of turning left (south) on the CT continue west about 0.4 miles on the VAST trail. At a large black and orange sign with an arrow pointing left for continuing south on the VAST trail, veer to the right (west), heading uphill on the trail to Burling Camp. Ski west and then northwest to the Beaver Meadow Lodge and Burling Camp. These cabins are available for winter camping on a first-come, first-served basis. To continue the loop from Burling Camp, head east (downhill) and either ski out to the Beaver Meadow Road parking area, or turn right on a snowmobile trail and ski southeast on the snowmobile trail to return to Mud City Loop.

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

Driving To Edson Hill (north to south)

1. From the Ryder Brook Golf Course (S24 access <3>), turn right on Rte. 100 and drive south for 4.7 miles.
2. Turn right on West Hill Rd. and drive 0.7 miles, then left on Mayo Hill Rd. for 0.5 miles.
3. Take a left on Weeks Hill Rd. and continue 0.3 miles until reaching Mountain Rd./Rte. 108
4. Turn right on Mountain Rd. and continue for 2.7 miles.
5. Turn right onto Edson Hill Rd. and drive 1.3 miles.
6. Turn left at the intersection of Edson Hill and Weeks Rds. (Edson Hill Manor entrance). In about 0.4 miles you will reach the Edson Hill Ski Touring Center (S24 access <1>) on your right.

Driving to Ryder Brook Golf Course (south to north)

1. From Edson Hill Manor (S24 access <1>), head southwest on Edson Hill Rd. for 1.7 miles.
2. Turn left onto Mountain Rd./Rte. 108 and continue for 2.7 miles.
3. Turn left onto Weeks Hill Rd. and drive 0.3 miles, then take a right onto Mayo Farm Rd. and go 0.5 miles.
4. At the intersection, turn right onto West Hill Rd. and continue for 0.7 miles.
5. Turn left onto Rte. 100 and follow for 4.7 miles. Ryder Brook Golf Course (S24 access <3>) and the parking area will be on your left.