

## **Trans Adirondack Route: A Walk on New York's Wild Side**

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*Length* 240 miles

*Climbing* 25,000 vertical feet

*Location* Adirondack Park, Upstate New York

*Trail Type* Point-to-point

*Scenery* Hardwood and softwood forests, 55 bodies of water, dozens of streams and rivers, three summits with extensive views

*Terrain* Easy to difficult. The route ascends three peaks and includes six sections of off-trail travel, which make it difficult. For the rest of its course the route gently runs along waterways and from pond to pond. Currently the route is composed of 7 miles of off-trail travel, 53 miles of road walking (more scenic and remote than you would think), and 180 miles of trails.

*Navigation* Pick up a copy of *Blue Line to Blue Line: The Official Guide to the Trans Adirondack Route* and a complete map set of the route from [transadk.com](http://transadk.com). Free printable updates to the guidebook and map set are available on this website, too. Since it's a route, a myriad of trail markers are used, and there are sections that are totally unmarked, requiring map and compass work assisted by the guidebook and maps.

*Getting to the Northern Terminus* From the south (Capital District) get on I-87 (Adirondack Northway), and follow this north for 150 miles to get off at exit 37. Follow Route 3 west for one mile and then get on Route 190 (Military Turnpike) and follow this northwest for 25 miles to Ellenburg. Merge onto Route 5 (Ellenburg Center Road and Old Route 90) and follow this southwest for three miles to Ellenburg Center. Turn north on Brandy Brook Road. The northern terminus is on Brandy Brook Road a hundred feet north of the post office. Drive time is three hours, 185 miles.

*Getting to the Southern Terminus* From the east (Capital District) get on I-90 and follow this west for thirty miles to get off at exit 28. Follow Route 30A north into Johnstown, and then get on Route 67 and follow this west for ten miles to Ephratah. Turn north on Route 10 and follow this for three miles. Turn west on Route 29 and follow this for two miles. Turn northwest on East Fical Road and follow this for one mile. Turn north on East Road and follow this for one mile. The southern terminus is on East Road 0.2 miles north of Church Street. Drive time is an hour and a half, 70 miles.

*Why Hike This Trail* While everyone else is thru-hiking the Northeast's Long Trail (more than 5,000 thru-hikers, about 150 per year) and Appalachian Trail (more than 15,000 thru-hikers, about 800 per year) and finding shelters full and trails clogged, the Trans Adirondack Route has solitude waiting for you (12 thru-hikers, 3 per year). This solitude can be found in authentically wild land. Eight wild forests and five wilderness areas are traversed, and two of those wilderness areas exceed 160,000 acres. When three Trans Adirondack Route thru-hikers (who were fresh off a thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail) recently traversed the route, they were asked what they liked most about it. They offered a two-word answer. "It's wild."

*Climate and Weather* No one has completed a winter traverse of the route due to deep snow, unpredictable weather, and temperatures that can dip to 30 below. May is a good month for a thru-hike since it offers a window between hiking through rotten snow and getting harassed by insects. June and July are not recommended due to the billions of biting bugs that come out in the mountains during midsummer. August, September, and October are the best months for a prospective thru-hike. During these months temperatures range from 40 to 80 along with the possibility of rain, sun, or a combination of these.

*Camping* There are 47 lean-tos sprinkled along the route, yet there are none in the far northern and far southern sections. When not staying at these shelters you may camp "at large" in pristine areas. Campsites must be located at least 150 feet from trail, road, or water unless the spot is marked with a Department of Environmental Conservation "Camp Here" disk. The only unique regulation is that bear-resistant food canisters must be used if camping in the Eastern Zone of High Peaks Wilderness Area. This section of the route is approximately ten miles long. To avoid

carrying a canister, simply pass through this zone in one day. Renowned campsites can be found in the Cold River Country and Big Wilderness sections of the route (the route is broken into seven sections). A thru-hike demands no fees, no permits.

*Water Sources* The route passes 55 bodies of water and countless streams, nearly all of them located in remote country. Water sources are generally only a few miles apart at the most though streams may run dry during late summer. In the Far North section, water may be more difficult to find since that's where nearly all of the route's road walking is.

*Resupply Options* There are post offices located on or near the route at mileposts (hiking southbound, the popular direction) 0, 11, 39, 61, 73, 130, 144, 193, and 218. Small, seasonal grocery stores can be found on or near the route at mileposts 0, 63, 73, and 130. A great plan for southbound thru-hikers is to hike 130 miles to Long Lake's Northern Borne grocery store and then tackle the remaining 110 miles.

*Closing Thoughts* As the East's newest and wildest pathway, the 240-mile Trans Adirondack Route is designed for experienced hikers who are seeking true wilderness. If you're a backpacker who has grown tired of the "green tunnel" monotony of popular trails and want to test your skills and love for nature, this route is your ticket to New York's wild side.