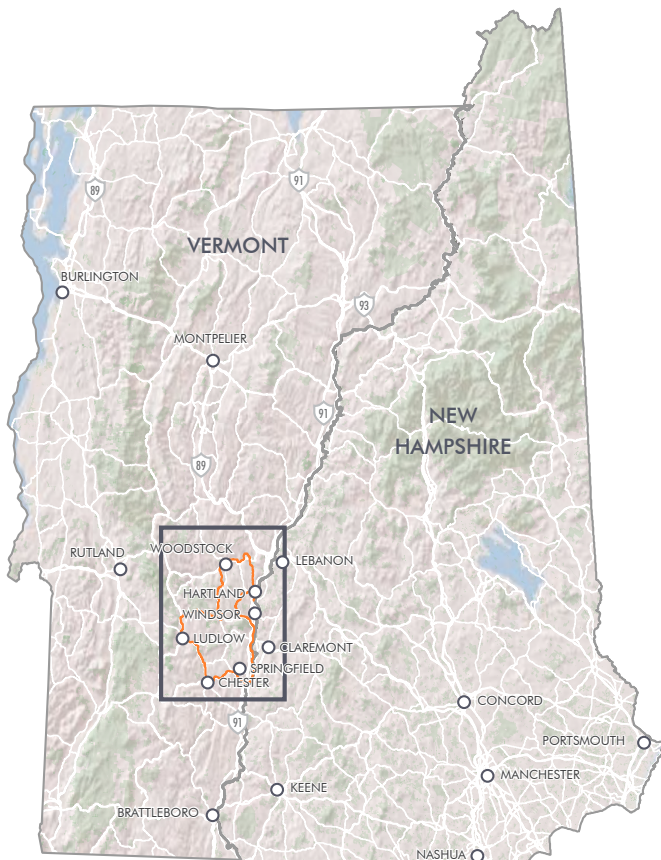


Area Overview

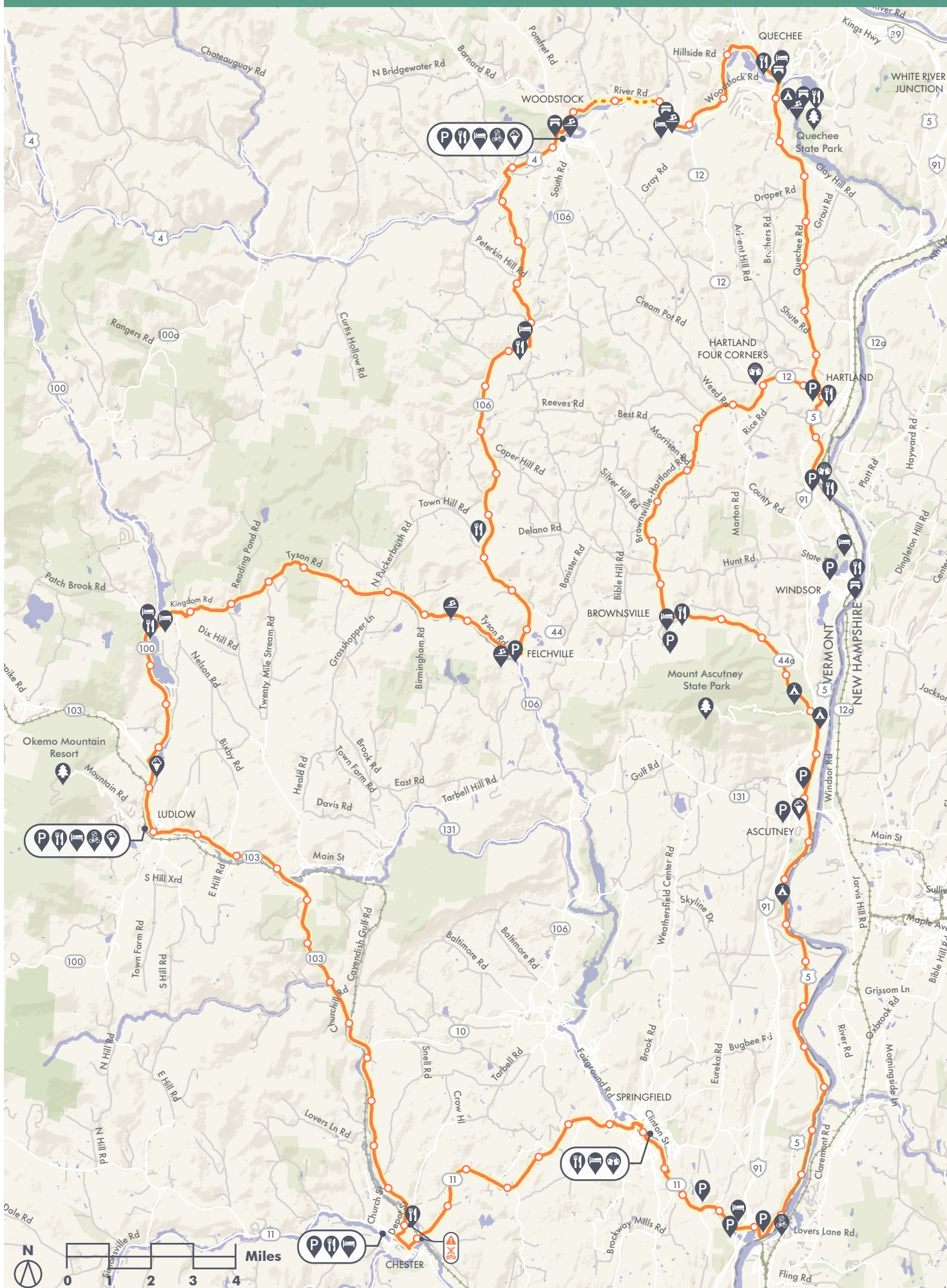


Once known as "Precision Valley" for the large number of factories and manufacturers it hosted in the late 1800s, Southern Windsor County is also developing into a premier New England cycling destination with miles of great roads to ride and many historic villages to explore by bicycle. It is home to quaint town centers with lodging, restaurants and retail as well as many historical sites, natural features and covered bridges. In addition to great paved road routes, it is also filled with a network of gravel and farm roads for those looking for more adventure and have wider tires. It hosts two of Vermont's premiere gravel events—The Overland and Gravelfest. For those looking for a challenge, there are iconic rides like the Mt. Ascutney Hill Climb and the South Windsor Century. For those that like to meander, there are several short options that pedal past bucolic farms and sugar shacks and run along tree lined brooks. Whether you are looking for a quick lunch ride or a multi-day New England tour, Southern Windsor County has plenty to offer! Enjoy the ride!



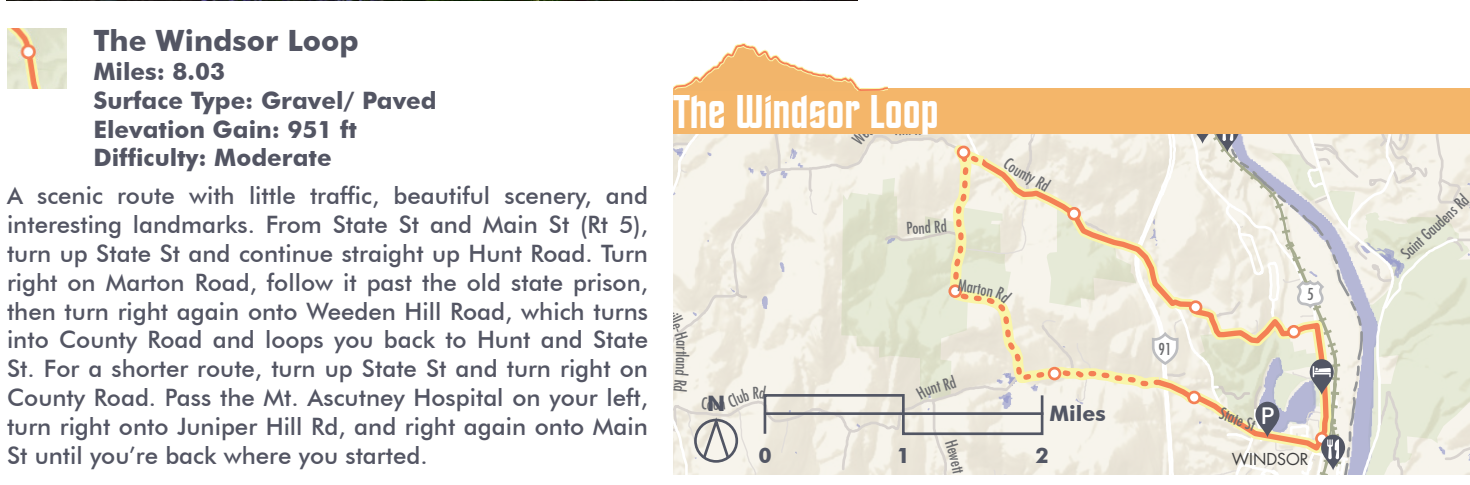
Photo: Liz Grades

Southern Windsor Century



Southern Windsor Century
 Miles: 101.2
 Surface Type: Paved
 Elevation Gain: 6,564 ft
 Difficulty: Challenging

The Southern Windsor Century is a 100 mile road ride with a short dirt road section that can be ridden by most bikes. Ridable as either an epic all day sampler of the farms, rivers, covered bridges and historic villages of the area, it can also be broken up into a long weekend leisurely tour. For those looking to ride the route as a weekend tour, Chester and Woodstock make the perfect overnight destinations. Both have historic town centers with restaurants and lodging options. For those tackling the route in a single day, food and amenities are plentiful on the route. For those that would rather sleep beneath the stars, Mt Ascutney State Park, in the Town of Windsor, offers camping as well as other outdoor recreational activities.



The Windsor Loop
 Miles: 8.03
 Surface Type: Gravel/ Paved
 Elevation Gain: 951 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate

A scenic route with little traffic, beautiful scenery, and interesting landmarks. From State St and Main St (Rt 5), turn up State St and continue straight up Hunt Road. Turn right on Marton Road, follow it past the old state prison, then turn right again onto Weeden Hill Road, which turns into County Road and loops you back to Hunt and State St. For a shorter route, turn up State St and turn right on County Road. Pass the Mt. Ascutney Hospital on your left, turn right onto Juniper Hill Rd, and right again onto Main St until you're back where you started.

Covered Bridge 50

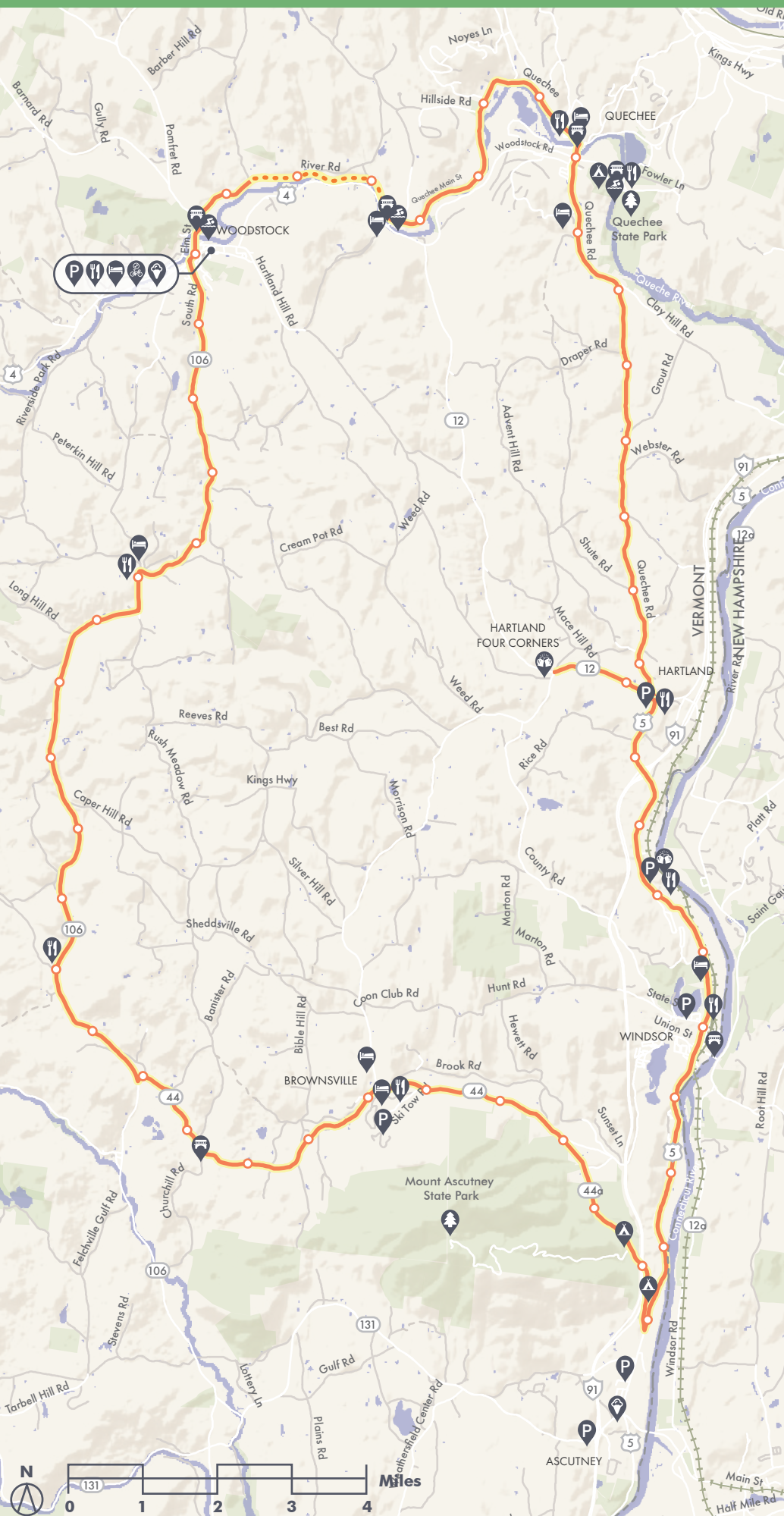


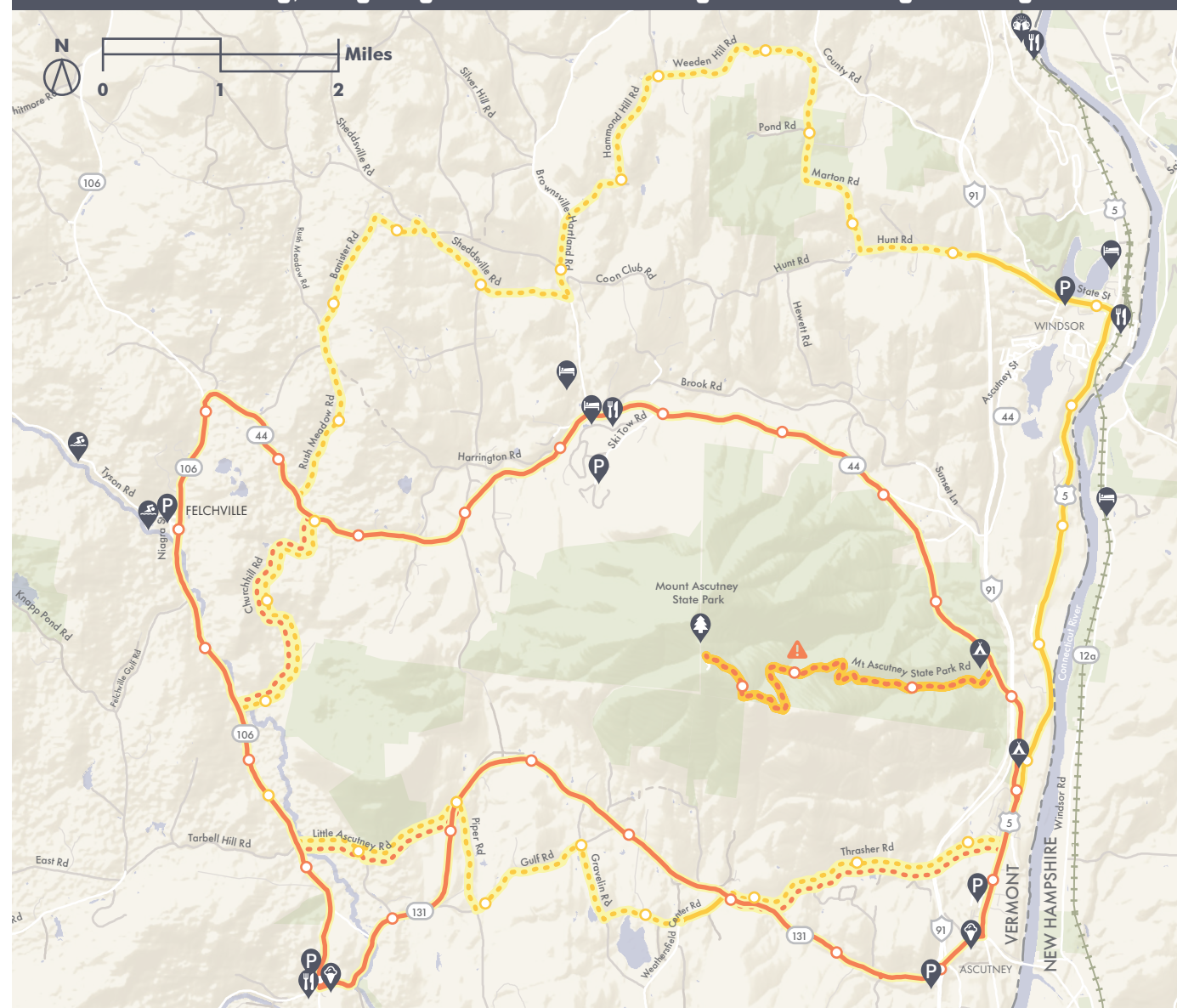
Photo: J. Miers - User (Wf-shared), Jaela16 at sds.wikivoyage

Covered Bridge 50
 Miles: 50.2
 Surface Type: Paved
 Elevation Gain: 2,843 ft
 Difficulty: Challenging

This route is a 50 mile paved road ride that connects 5 historic covered bridges in Southern Windsor County, including the Cornish-Windsor covered bridge which was built in 1866 and is one of the longest covered bridges in the United States. A good place to start and end the ride is Artisan's Park, in Windsor, a collective of 8 unique Vermont businesses including Harpoon Brewery. This route is best for the confident road cyclist looking to get a good sampling of road riding in Southern Windsor County. The rolling route parallels the Connecticut River, passes several small farms, and skirts the northern boundary of Mt. Ascutney before looping back to the town of Windsor.

Around Mt. Ascutney Dirty Way Around Mt. Ascutney Around Mt. Ascutney Grave Option

Around Mt. Ascutney, Dirty Way Around Mt. Ascutney & Mt. Ascutney Parkway Climb



Around Mt. Ascutney
 Miles: 23.6
 Surface Type: Paved
 Elevation Gain: 1,328 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate

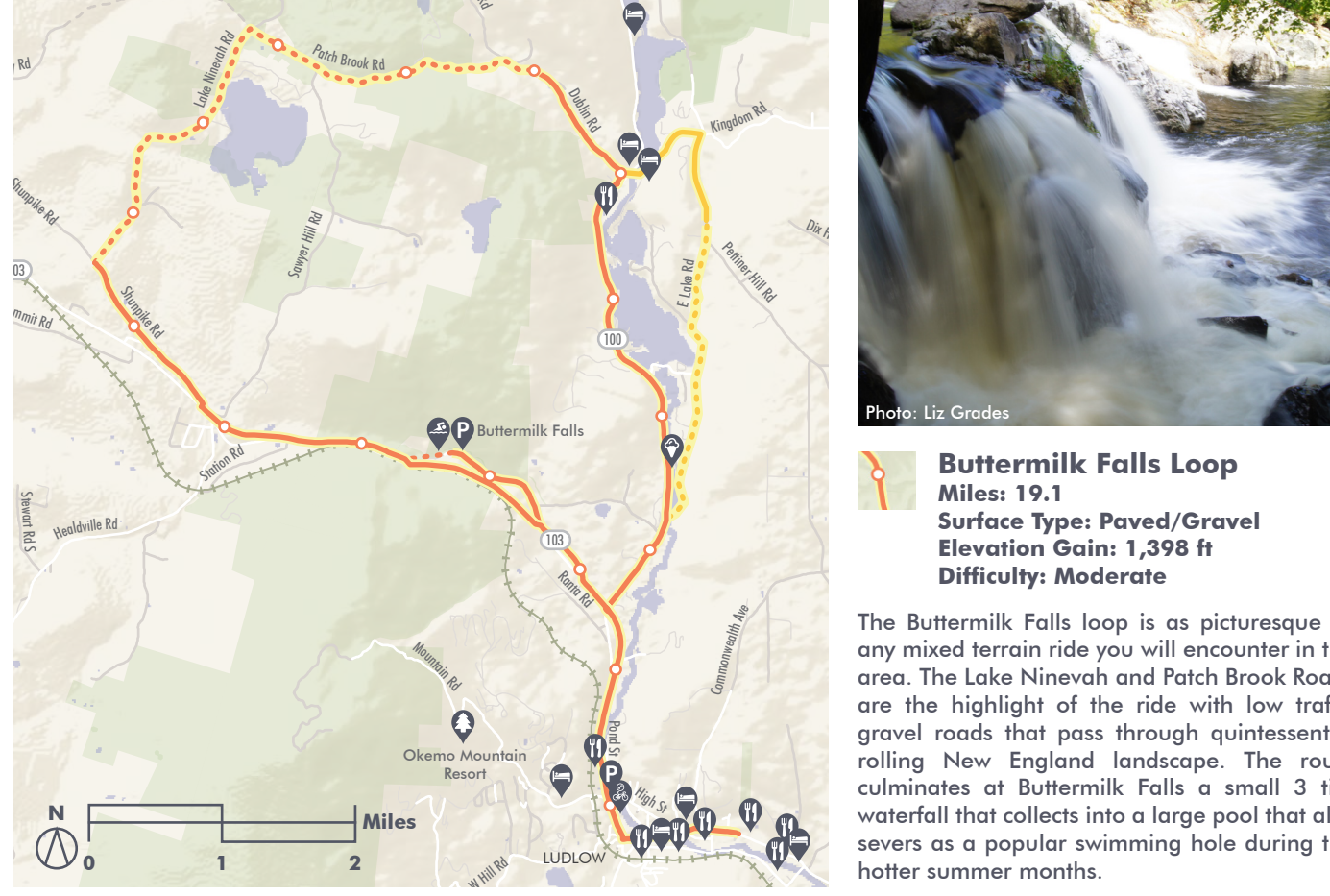
Gravel Options (follow orange dashed line)
 Miles: 18.9
 Surface Type: Paved/Gravel
 Elevation Gain: 1,230 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate

Riding around Mt. Ascutney is one of the classic road rides in the area. This paved road ride is best suited for those comfortable with riding on two lane county roads with low to moderate traffic volumes. Like all routes in the area, the terrain is generally gently rolling and passes by small pastoral farms. This loop can be easily modified by combining it with the "Mt. Ascutney Parkway Climb" or a series of "Gravel Options" highlighted on the map. The gravel segments are low volume, graded town roads which can be traveled by most bikes (for a more adventurous gravel ride see the "Dirty Way Around Mt. Ascutney" ride, below). A great place to start this ride is Mt Ascutney State Park, in the Town of Windsor, which offers day use parking, overnight camping and access to other activities like hiking and trail running for a fee.

Dirty Way Around Mt. Ascutney
 Miles: 28.2
 Surface Type: Mostly Gravel
 Elevation Gain: 2,941ft
 Difficulty: Challenging

For those looking for more adventure, this mixed surface version of the classic Mt. Ascutney Loop adds another 10 miles and 1500 feet of climbing over rougher terrain. The gravel sectors explore the drainages of a few small creeks and brooks through undulating terrain. While not overly technical, this route includes some rougher "Class IV" forest roads, so a bike with tires in the 35mm and larger range is recommended, is being equipped with basic bike repair tools.

Buttermilk Falls Loop



Buttermilk Falls Loop
 Miles: 19.1
 Surface Type: Paved/Gravel
 Elevation Gain: 1,398 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate

The Buttermilk Falls loop is as picturesque as any mixed terrain ride you will encounter in the area. The Lake Neveah and Patch Brook Roads are the highlight of the ride with low traffic gravel roads that pass through quintessential rolling New England landscape. The route culminates at Buttermilk Falls a small 3 tier waterfall that collects into a large pool that also serves as a popular swimming hole during the hotter summer months.

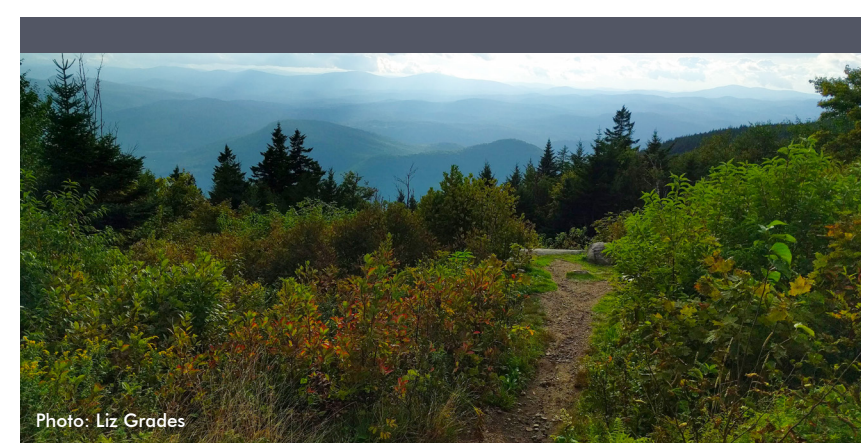


Photo: Liz Grades

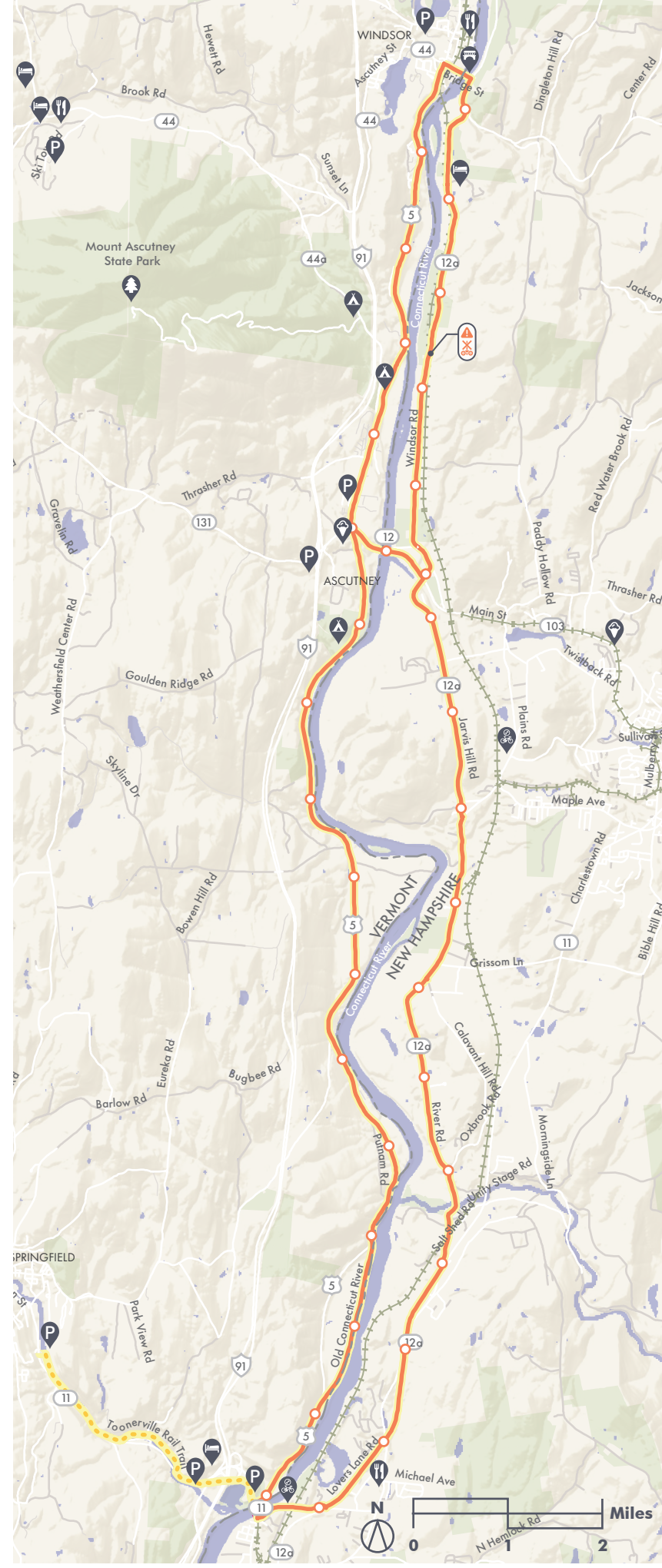
Mt. Ascutney Parkway Climb
 Miles: 7.4
 Surface Type: Paved
 Elevation Gain: 2,270 ft
 Difficulty: Challenging

The iconic Mt. Ascutney is the second highest peak in Windsor County, and your legs will feel it as you ascend 2300 feet in 3.7 miles on the Mt. Ascutney Parkway. With an average grade of 11% and a maximum grade of 16%, this climbing route will test your mettle and your low gears.

The parkway is part of Mount Ascutney State Park, which charges a daily per person entry fee during the operating season for all amenities located inside of the main gate, including using the road. There are several overlooks to take a break or just take in the scenery. Descend responsibly since the route is open to automobile traffic and the grades are steep.

A good local's tip is to ride this route before the park officially opens at 10am, so you can "enjoy" the climb car free.

Connecticut River Loop



Connecticut River Loop
 Miles: 35.1
 Surface Type: Paved
 Elevation Gain: 1,714 ft
 Difficulty: Easy

The Connecticut River is the longest river in New England and separates Vermont and New Hampshire. The surrounding valley is known for its rich farmland and was also once a main thoroughfare for massive logging drives in the 1800s. This beginner and family friendly route takes in the best of the "upper valley" with a leisurely figure 8 that traverses both sides of the river. You can ride the entire route in a day and cross into New Hampshire or ride it in a series of smaller loops. Amenities and lodging are plentiful along the route.

The 3.2-mile Toonerville Trail is the only rail trail in the region and provides an excellent low-stress, off-road riding option between Springfield and the Connecticut River. Benches along the trail provide resting spots to take in scenic spots along the Black River, a tributary of the Connecticut. While on the trail keep a look-out for kingfisher or blue herons!

Legend

- Paved Road
- Gravel Road
- Paved Bike Route
- Gravel Bike Route
- Mile Marker
- Caution - Steep Grade
- Rail Road Crossing
- Parking
- Bike Shop
- Food
- Ice Cream
- Brewery/Tavern
- Swimming Hole
- Covered Bridge

How To Use This Guide

The Mount Ascutney Regional Commission is pleased to provide this guide to encourage residents and visitors to explore our region by bicycle. The guide provides both maps and narrative descriptions of 19 ideal cycling routes. All of the maps identify the towns and villages they pass through, so routes may be selected by location using the individual map panels or the area overview map. One might also utilize the "route profiles" found at the top of each map to select a ride based on their relative length and elevation changes. If the route profile looks flatter, the ride is flatter; if the profile has more peaks and valleys, the ride will have more elevation change.

Routes are identified by yellow or orange lines—solid lines denote paved routes while dashed lines denote unpaved routes. Each route passes through multiple towns and villages, and while they may be started anywhere along the route, likely parking areas are denoted with a parking icon. Open circles on the route lines signify mile markers—simply count the number of circles on the route between your current location and your destination to calculate distance. Bike shops, food, ice cream, breweries and taverns, swimming holes, and covered bridges are all identified on the maps with corresponding icons. Areas with potentially steep grades and rail road crossings are also identified on the maps.

Turn-by-turn cue sheets, GPS tracks, local bike shop information and digital routes via Strava®, Map My Ride®, and Ride with GPS® are available on our website at www.RideWindsorCountyVT.weebly.com/.

CREDITS

The Mount Ascutney Regional Commission would like to thank all those involved with creating this guide, including our stakeholder group of area cyclists, our partners at the Chambers of Commerce, and our consultants (SE Group and Path Less Pedaled). We would also like to thank our funders. This map was developed with funding from the Vermont Agency of Transportation and Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development.



Map designed by: SE GROUP

Disclaimer

Notice to Bicyclists: This map and accompanying information is intended solely to assist bicyclists in their selection of facilities to ride on throughout Windsor County. In providing this information, Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC) does not designate these facilities as formal bikeways. MARC also does not assume liability for bicyclists who choose to travel upon any of the facilities shown on this map, nor does MARC guarantee the stability, condition or fitness of any of the listed facilities for bicycling. Many of the facilities identified on this map cross and/or run on public roads that are exposed to daily wear and tear and degradation due to weather, motorized traffic and other environmental factors. Facilities may contain pavement imperfections, including ruts, cracks, and bumps. Riders may encounter expansion joints, debris, encroaching vegetation, stormwater inlets, and other natural and man-made features. Riders should also remain alert for areas of visual impairment and other irregularities that may impact rider and motorist ability to see each other or potential road hazards. The chance that one may come into an area of visual impairment or a route irregularity warrants special care on the part of route users. This map includes facilities within multiple jurisdictions. Conditions and design elements may vary between jurisdictions. It is the responsibility of the individual rider to remain alert at all times as to the conditions of the facility, pedestrian and other traffic on the facility, and the inherent potential for conflict in any shared-use space. Riders should always ride with care for their own safety as well as the safety of all other users of the facility or right-of-way.



Photo: Jason Rossmussen

Connecticut River Loop
 Miles: 35.1
 Surface Type: Paved
 Elevation Gain: 1,714 ft
 Difficulty: Easy

North Loop - Miles: 11.6
 Elevation Gain: 391 ft

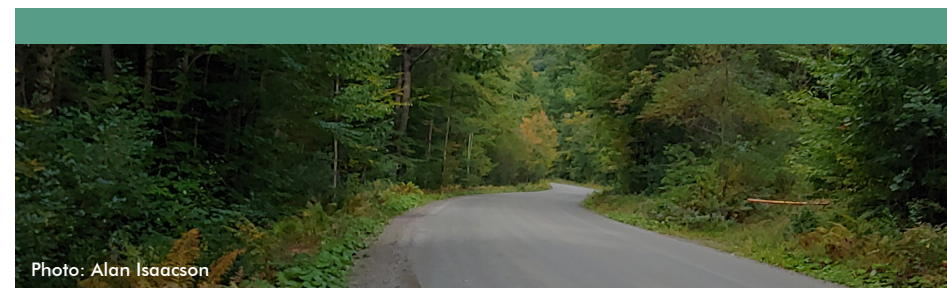
South Loop - Miles: 23.4
 Elevation Gain: 1,313 ft

Toonerville Trail
 Miles: 3.2
 Surface Type: Paved
 Elevation Gain: 146 ft
 Difficulty: Easy



Bicycling Routes

Photo: Liz Grades



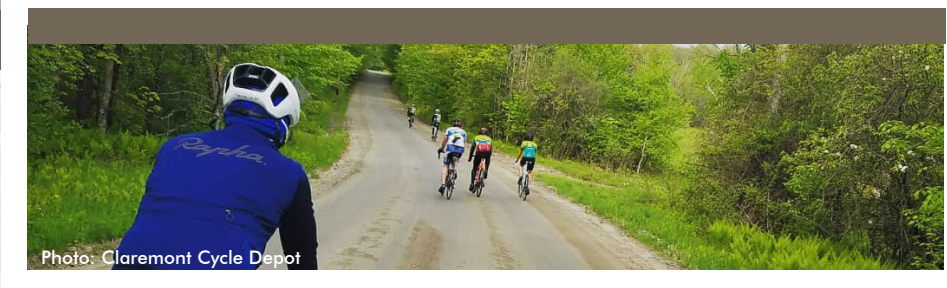
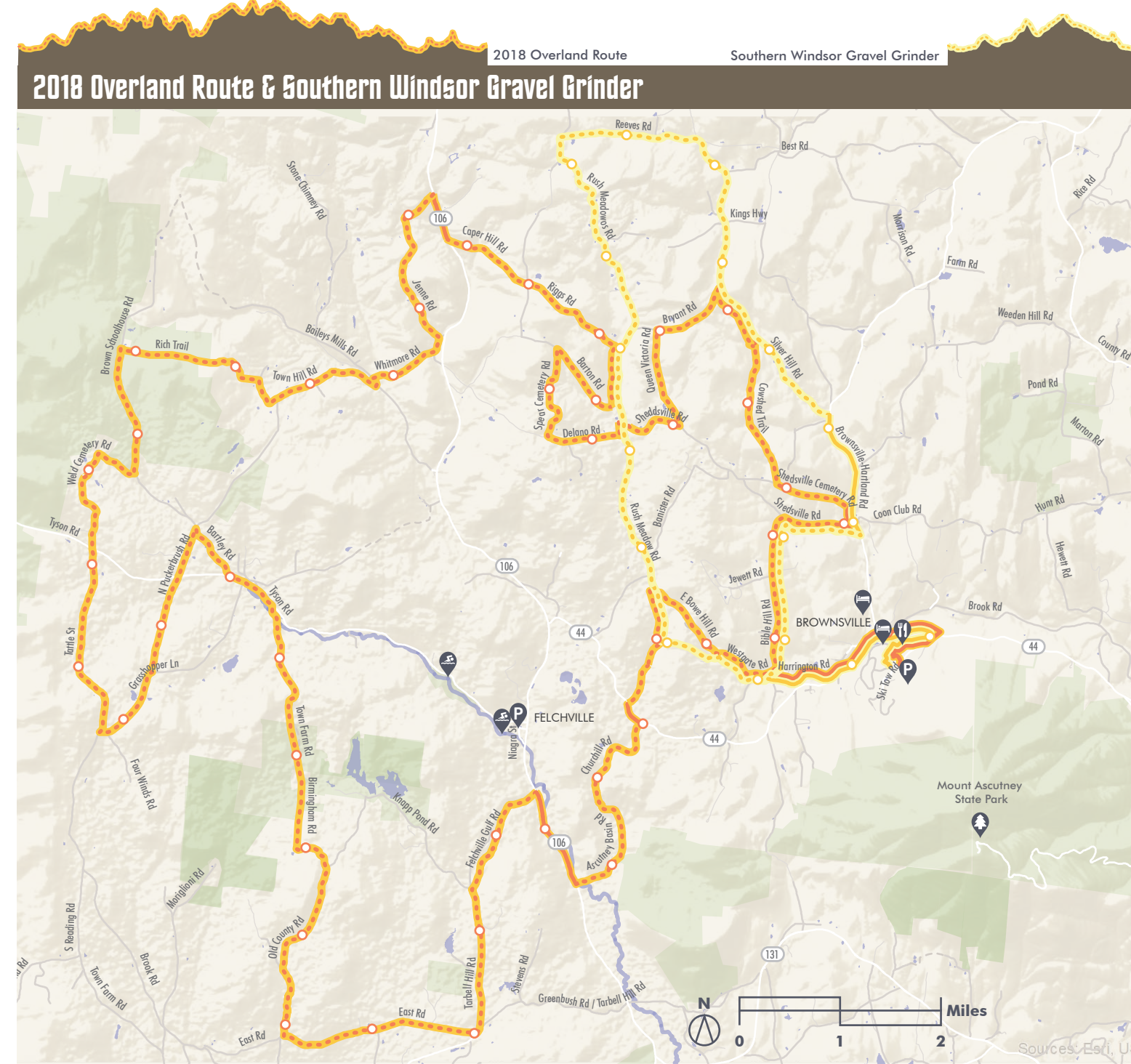
Popple Dungeon Loop
 Miles: 20.7
 Surface Type: Gravel/Paved
 Elevation Gain: 1,815 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate/Challenging

The Popple Dungeon Loop is a relatively short route that starts in the historic town of Chester which has several restaurants and boutique shops. While short, this loop is full of punchy climbs that creep into double digit grades. Fortunately, no actual dungeons exist in the area, but instead the road got its name from the dense canopy of trees along the road which gave it a "dungeon" like feel. Stretches of the route are made up of low traffic gravel roads that are in good rideable condition.



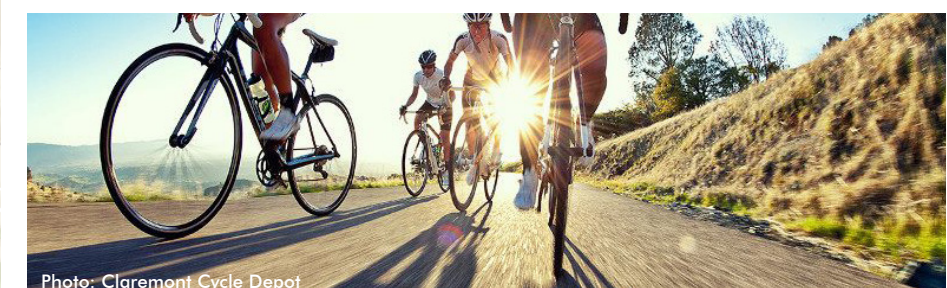
Williams River Loop
 Miles: 11.3
 Surface Type: Gravel/Paved
 Elevation Gain: 432 ft
 Difficulty: Easy

The Williams River Loop is a short and scenic mixed terrain ride from the historic town of Chester. Riding clockwise from Chester, you meander on Green Mountain Turnpike, a small unpaved country road with little traffic surrounded by trees. After crossing the Williams River on the Bartonsville Covered Bridge you return on VT-103, a larger main road that has a generous shoulder. From there, it is a quick and flat trip back to Chester with plenty of time to grab a meal at one of the many restaurants.



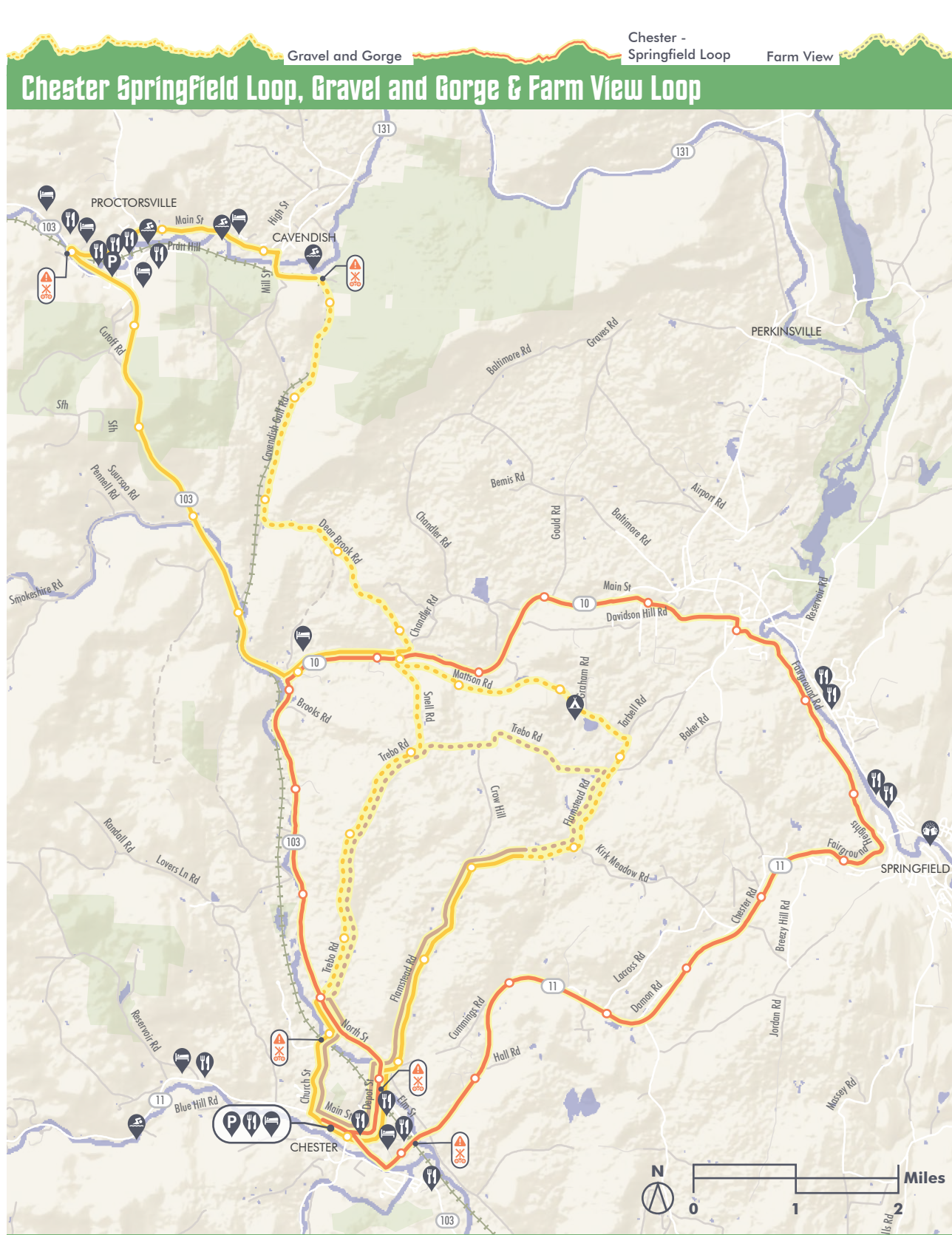
2018 Overland Route
 Miles: 45.7
 Surface Type: Gravel
 Elevation Gain: 6,009 ft
 Difficulty: Challenging

The Vermont Overland route is the brainchild of Vermont local and past national champion, Peter Vollers. At 45 miles with a lung busting 6000 feet of climbing, it is not for the faint of heart. You can race it annually with serious amateurs and professional cyclists at the popular annual Vermont Overland and Gravelfest in August (more information at vermontoverland.com), or you can do it at a much more relaxed paced on your own. Be prepared. The terrain is steep and chunky with some technical descents. Bring an appropriately geared bike with wide tires as well as tools to self-repair on the course.



Southern Windsor Gravel Grinder
 Miles: 19.7
 Surface Type: Gravel
 Elevation Gain: 2,008 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate/Challenging

If you want to explore some gravel riding but don't have the time to tackle the full Overland route, the Southern Windsor Gravel Grinder route is a good way to sample the area. At 20 miles with 2000 feet of climbing, you will still get a fair amount of climbing in a compact loop. Be prepared with a bike with appropriately sized tires (hint: leave the 25mm tire road bike at home) and low gears. A great starting point for both these routes is the small town of Brownsville, which is near three covered bridges in the area and has both lodging and places to eat.



Gravel and Gorge
 Miles: 26.5
 Surface Type: Gravel/Paved
 Elevation Gain: 2,388 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate/Challenging

This mixed terrain route is a figure 8 that incorporates the tree lined Trebo and Flamstead Roads but also ventures northward towards the towns of Cavendish and Proctorsville. The route is named after Cavendish Gorge, a series of small cascading waterfalls just east of the town of Cavendish. No visit in the area is complete without a stop at Singleton's General Store in Proctorsville. Singleton's is a family owned business that is part sporting goods store and part smokehouse, which is known for their meat selection and is the perfect place to stop for a mid-ride snack.



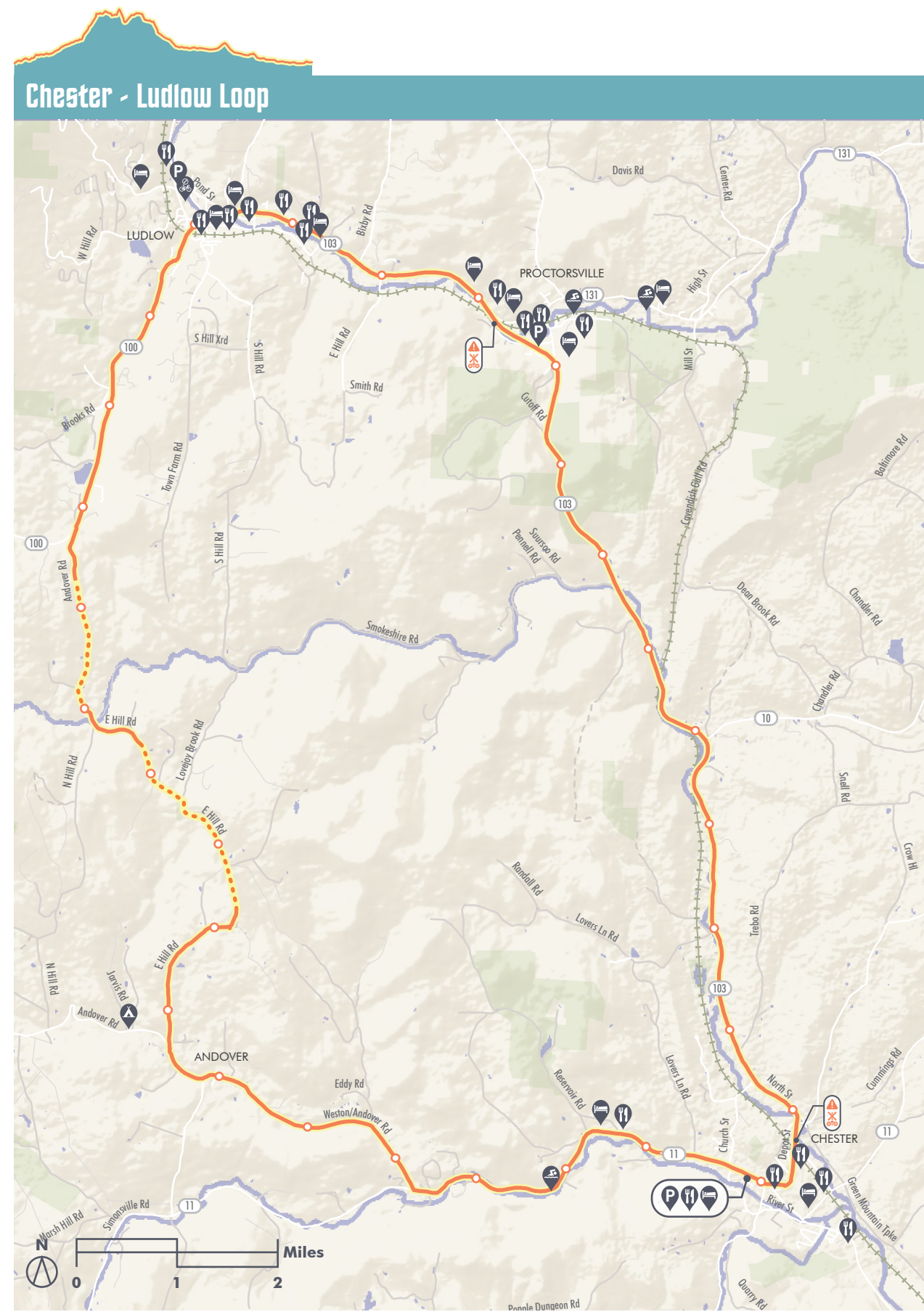
Farm View Loop
 Miles: 11.1
 Surface Type: Gravel/Paved
 Elevation Gain: 1,323 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate

The Chester Farm View Loop is a short but picturesque route that is the perfect ride to slip in before breakfast or lunch. Leaving clockwise from Chester, the route follows Trebo Brook and climbs for three miles on a single lane country road, before returning back into town on Flamstead Road. The route is idyllic, offering glimpses of farm land from between the trees that line the route.



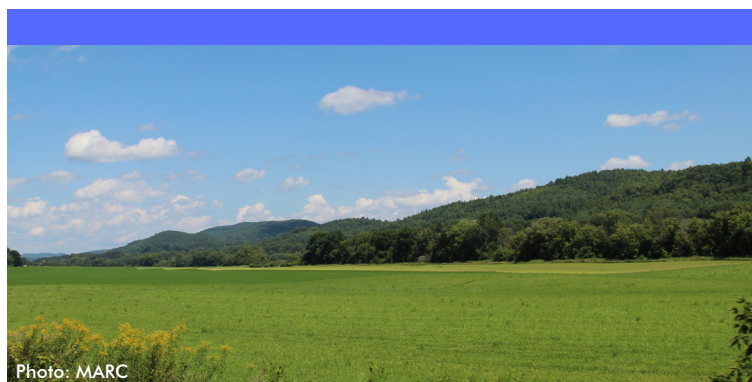
Chester - Springfield Loop
 Miles: 19.9
 Surface Type: Paved
 Elevation Gain: 1,195 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate

This short and moderately hilly paved loop connects the small towns of Chester and Springfield. Heading East from Chester, you encounter the only significant hill of the day a 2.5 mile climb that gains 400 feet with a maximum gradient of 7.3 percent. From there, you enjoy the ridge passing quaint farm houses before descending into Springfield. If you happen to have worked up an appetite, there are a number of great restaurants in the area. From Springfield you follow rolling country roads parallel the Black River, Great Brook and Williams River before returning to Chester.



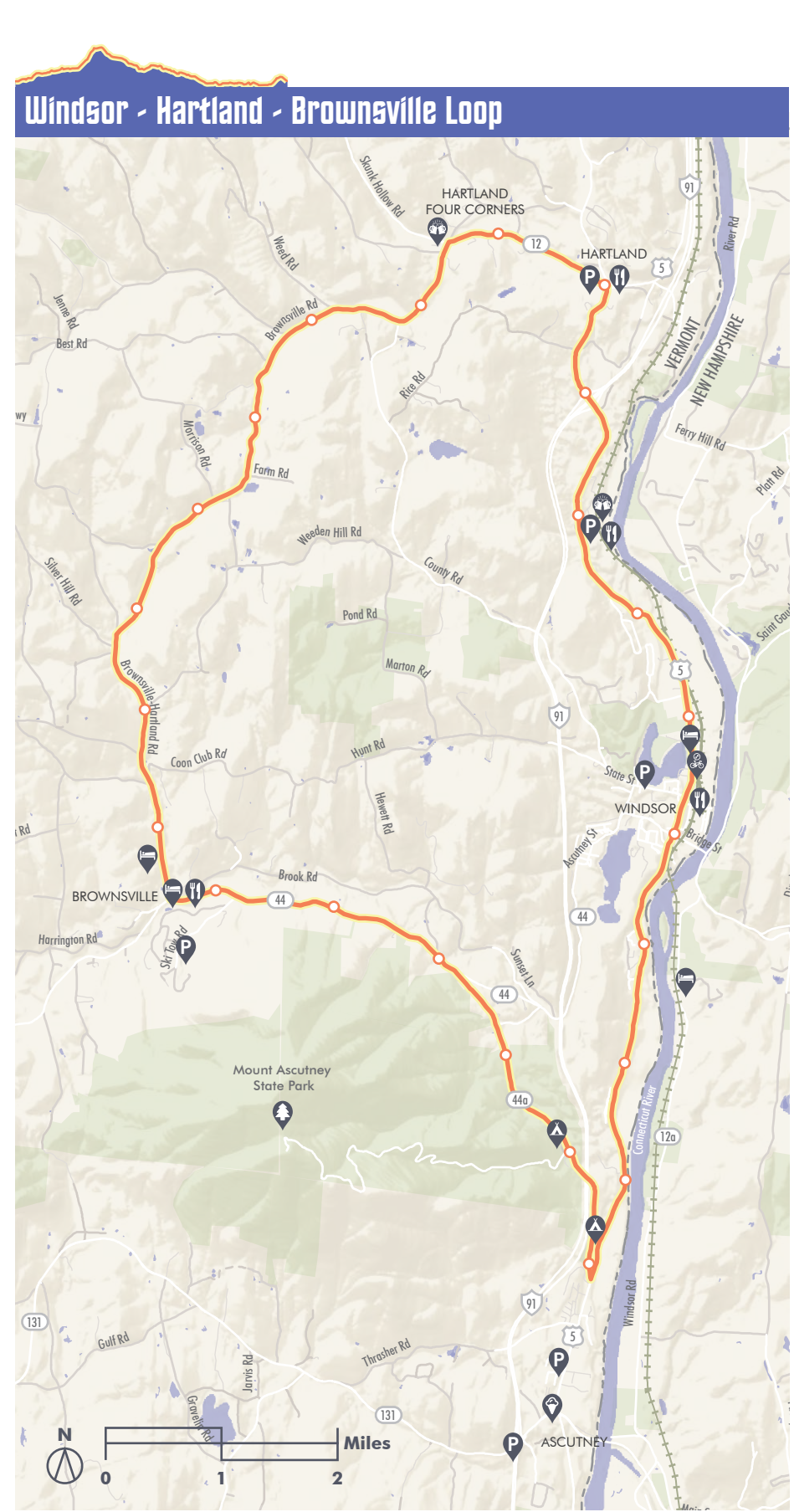
Chester - Ludlow Loop
 Miles: 29.1
 Surface Type: Paved/Gravel
 Elevation Gain: 2,312 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate/Challenging

Chester and Ludlow are known for their historic village districts as well as being a hub of arts, restaurants and boutique shopping in the region. The Chester - Ludlow loop connects these two historic villages in a rolling mixed terrain route with stunning views of Mt Ascutney. Heading clockwise from Chester, the route slowly climbs until it reaches Andover, where the road decidedly points upwards. With a max grade almost nearing 12 percent, the route makes up what it lacks in distance with climbing. After a short and fast descent to the Williams River, you make another punchy climb before generally descending back towards Chester on VT-103.



Windsor - Hartland - Brownsville Loop
 Miles: 23.1
 Surface Type: Paved
 Elevation Gain: 1,353 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate

Windsor is known as the "birthplace of Vermont" and makes a great starting point for this tour of three villages. This loop takes you on lightly traveled country roads that run parallel to the Connecticut River and slowly climbs on Brownsville Rd. You'll pass bucolic farms, horses, cattle and sugar houses where sap is turned into maple syrup. You'll also be treated to great mountain views from the rolling hills.



Ridgeview Loop
 Miles: 32.4
 Surface Type: Paved/Gravel
 Elevation Gain: 3,072 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate/Challenging

The Ridgeview Loop is a short mixed surface loop which manages to pack in a respectable amount of climbing. Clockwise from Springfield, you enjoy a short warm-up on Fairgrounds Rd. The first significant hill climb begins when you turn on to Gulf Rd. Once at the top, you descend towards Ascutney for a brief respite before climbing once again on Goulden Ridge Road. Enjoy the rolling ridge on Skyline Drive, a single lane low traffic gravel road with a canopy of trees above you before descending and making your way back towards Springfield.



Riverview Loop
 Miles: 34.8
 Surface Type: Paved
 Elevation Gain: 1,947 ft
 Difficulty: Moderate

Springfield is a developing post-industrial town, which was once home to many machine shops and precision parts manufacturing. Riverside School on the banks of the Black River makes a great starting point for this route. Once you leave the park, the punchy hills begin immediately on the lightly traveled Fairground Road. The hills continue on 106 and 131 until the final sustained climb just south of Little Ascutney State Wildlife Management Area. From there you descend towards the Connecticut River and follow a generally flat route back towards the town of Springfield.

