

Marshall Land Trails Assessment Notes

Marshall Land Forest

3/23/19...48 deg Partially Sunny, strong NW wind with residual snow/ice

From the well marked trailhead off Boulder Cove Road, a defined trail (field road) heads to the north with painted faded, yellow strip blaze. Stay to the right at the first intersection and begin the loop. The first branch to the right is a trail (NE) that proceeds back over a wooden walkway to West Road and the trailhead of the Hampstead Conservation land with its many trails. Return back to the primary trail and follow the yellow blaze thru stonewalls, over small streams until it reaches Big Island Pond. Along the way there are a couple of numbered sign posts identifying historical sites. The trail briefly parallels the shoreline but it not well marked and trail is not clearly defined with only an occasional blue blaze strip (faded) painted on trees. The loop trail turns from shoreline near a house and heads back to the trailhead. Along the way there is a branch trail to the right that proceeds to Boulder Cove Road. Near the trailhead the trail splits again and the right fork proceeds back to Boulder Cove Road a second time used primarily by ATVs. Remaining on the narrow, twisting primary trail returns back to the trailhead. The blazes of the trails have faded and are difficult to detect. There is a lot of ATV traffic on the major portion of the trails which have left many ruts and dig outs. Overall, the trails are in descent condition regarding clearing of debris probably do to the heavy ATV traffic. A previous Atkinson Town Forest wooden sign post with engraved trail map was found knocked down near trailhead and in serious repair condition.

1. Blazing

Present painted blazing (yellow and blue) is faded, confusing and difficult to observe
New blazing required

2. Trails

Well defined but have received a lot of ATV traffic...ruts and muddy
Some of the trails are past field road...wide and clear
Trails seem to be maintained by ATV operators by width of clearing...cut fallen trees
Several cross trail braches created by ATVs

3. Trail Expansion

A branch of the Marshall Land trail leads to the Hampstead Conservation Trails which provided a large parking area and information sign
Marshall Land trailhead is well defined with parking for at least six vehicles

4. Boundary Markers

Atkinson Town Forest markers are needed to define forest boundary lines at points where old field roads enter or leave the forest