



White Mountain National Forest

Welch/Dickey Mountain Trail



Welch Dickey Mountain Trail

4.5 miles (Round trip)

Moderate

Average time: 3.5 hours

The **Welch Dickey Mountain Trail** makes a unique scenic loop to the summits of two mountains. Welch Mountain is a prominent rocky peak that forms the western wall of the narrow gateway to Waterville Valley through which the Mad River flows. A short distance to the northwest is the exposed summit of Dickey Mountain. There are many outstanding views of the surrounding countryside that can be seen from open ledges and rock outcrops along the Welch Dickey Mountain Trail.

At one time this area was covered with red oak, red spruce and scattered white pine but fire ravaged the area in the 1880's. Welch and Dickey Mountains are susceptible to lightning strikes, which can result in fire. Today, jack pine (a pioneer species) is present, but declining. Jack pine is primarily a fire dependent species. The cones are serotinous which means they require heat to open and release seeds; temperatures of at least 160° F are required. Welch Mountain is one of five places in New Hampshire that jack pine survives. Other places include Lake Umbagog, Mount Chocorua, Webster Cliff and Sandwich Dome. Welch Mountain and Sandwich Dome is the southern most tip of this species range.

CAUTION: In wet weather the exposed bare rock may be slippery. Be aware of jagged drop offs.

Location

From I-93, from exit 28 go east on NH Route 49 about 6 miles. Turn left, cross bridge and follow upper Mad River Road 0.7 miles. At Orris Road turn right and go 0.6 miles to parking area. The trail begins at the Orris Road Parking Area (elevation 1040 ft.) it climbs to the summits of Welch Mountain (2605 ft.) and Dickey Mountain (2734 ft.), and then returns to the parking area (approx 3.5 hrs).

Distances

Entire Loop is 4.5 miles

Parking area to Welch Mountain is 2.0 miles

Welch Mountain to Dickey Mountain is 0.5 miles

Dickey Mountain to Parking Area is 2.0 miles

The Welch/Dickey Mountain Trail bears right after leaving the parking area and then crosses a brook. It climbs gradually through a mixed stand of birches, beech and maple, following back to reach the southern ridge of Welch Mountain. Here the trail passes through a stand conifers before coming out onto a broad exposed ledge (1.3 miles).

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