

Trails on the Preston Forest Legacy Preserve



Merritt Parkway (1.5 miles total, blue blazes): A lower loop that climbs about 300 feet above the Winooski River valley. Starting from the trailhead, you climb steadily with numerous switchbacks in a generally southerly direction, reaching an altitude of 500 feet. Then the trail turns eastward and climbs more slowly to an old orchard clearing. From there the trail descends with many switchbacks eventually leaving the Preston Preserve to become a steep path next to St. Mary's Cemetery. Here the landowner permits only pedestrian use to reach Cochran Road opposite the trailhead of the Rivershore Trail. Go back westward on Cochran Road to complete the loop.

Preston Loop (1.8 miles, yellow blazes): At two points on the upper section of Merritt Parkway you can branch off uphill on this upper loop to reach an altitude of about 1000 feet. **Note:** this trail passes through land of two adjacent landowners whose permission stipulates that you stay on the marked trail (as indicated by signs as you enter these properties).

Alternate **Lung Ta Path (1.4 miles, white blazes):** From a high point on the Merritt Parkway above the orchard clearing, this trail follows a ridge to a rocky outcrop facing north across the Winooski Valley. From there you cross on to adjacent private land (with permission, providing you stay on the trail). The trail levels out past a series of prayer flags and then switchbacks down with occasional views across to Owl's Head to join the Preston Loop near the 'dog' intersection. (Option: Advanced bikers may descend only via **Visceral Trail** from the prayer flags).

Trailhead

The trailhead is on Cochran Road, about 0.2 miles east of the intersection with Huntington Road by Richmond's famous Round Church. Look for a utility pole and a road sign "Share the Road."

Parking

Just over the Winooski River bridge, at Volunteers' Green, or (2 cars) on Cochran Road by Saint Mary's Cemetery, or at Cochran's Ski area.

Other Information

The trails are on the Preston Forest Legacy Land (conserved by VT Forests, Parks and Recreation) and on adjacent land by agreement with landowners.

Trail Manager

Richmond Trails Committee trails@gmavt.net

Richmond Trails Map:

<http://tinyurl.com/RichmondTrailsMap>

