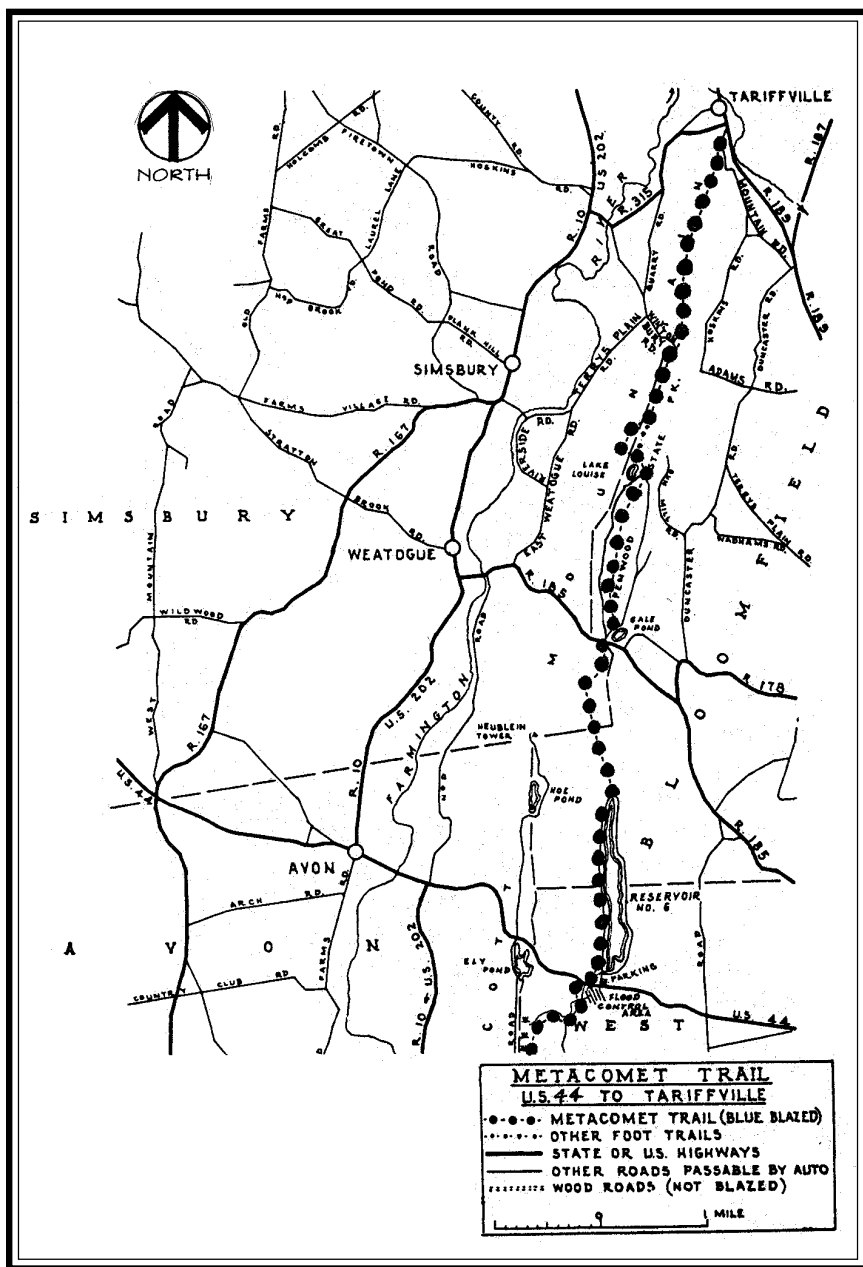


METACOMET TRAIL



METACOMET TRAIL

The Metacomet Trail extends along the Metacomet Ridge from Meriden to Lake Sunapee in New Hampshire. A seven mile portion runs along Talcott Mountain in Simsbury. The traprock ridge here is formed from three layers of volcanic basalt sandwiching layers of sedimentary rock, with their angled edges facing west. The trail has several access points, including Talcott Mountain and Penwood State Parks. Hiking conditions range from smooth and easy to rough and treacherous, with views that are unequaled in the valley. The entire trail is marked with blue blazes. Hikers must be wary of numerous unmarked side trails and access roads.

The northern section of the trail begins 1/4 mile up Mountain Road (off Route 189 in Tariffville). On the right there are stone pillars and the remains of a cast iron gate marking the road that led to a structure known as Bartlett's Tower. Built in 1889 as a pavilion and bowling alley, Bartlett's Tower was a destination frequented by picnicking day trippers from Hartford. Traveling by train to the Tariffville station, and then by carriage to the seventy foot tower, visitors enjoyed varied recreation and the famous panoramic view. Today, a chimney sits at the top of the slope—all that remains of the tower, which burned down on May 24, 1936. There is a good viewpoint just to the north of the chimney.

Continue to follow the blue blazes along the ridge. Just past the second power line you'll find an interesting side trail to the right along the cliff; this leads to yet another scenic viewpoint. Down an incline the trail rejoins the blue blazed trail, and nearby there is a kettle pond and an open ledge with a view of the Farmington Valley. This portion of the trail ends after 2 1/2 miles on Wintonbury Road. The trail continues in Penwood State Park.

