



# SILVER MAPLE FLOODPLAIN PADDLE

## CONCORD, NH

Despite being within the limits of the City of Concord, NH, this paddle offers a beautiful and peaceful experience on a summer morning. You'll paddle a partial oxbow (former meander bend) of the Merrimack, as well as a section of the river's mainstem. Wildlife are abundant if you are quiet, especially in the flat water of the oxbow. There are also opportunities to rest or picnic onshore, swim and enjoy the trails on the Forest Society's Merrimack River Outdoor Education & Conservation Area.



**What you'll see:** Much of the shoreline along this paddle consists of an uncommon natural community, the **Silver Maple Floodplain Forest**. **Silver maple** trees make up nearly the entirety of the canopy, while **ostrich ferns** are abundant in the understory. This forest is fine with getting it's "feet wet" and tolerates annual flooding extremely well. Look for various **turtles** and **dragonflies** as you paddle. It is common to see **great blue heron** and **wood duck** in this section in summer, and if you are really lucky, you may see a **river otter** at play. If you get out to explore a sandbar, look for the shells of **Eastern ellipio**, a freshwater mussel that is an indication of good water quality!



**Location:** Concord, NH (see reverse side for map and launch details)

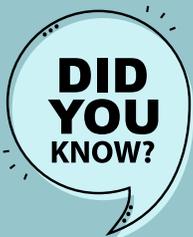
**Length of Paddle:** 3 miles total (out and back) but can be extended or truncated by paddling a longer or shorter distance upriver.

**Approximate time:** 2 hrs (longer with picnic or hiking stop at MROECA)

**Difficulty:** Easy to moderate, even flat water current can be swift on outside meanders

**What to bring:** PFD/lifejacket, water, lunch, water shoes, sunscreen and hat (high sun exposure), binoculars (optional), swimsuit (optional), small dry bag (optional)

**Be Aware:** Recent precipitation and weather can impact water level and current velocity. In low water, it may not be possible to get all the way around the oxbow.



- **Bank Swallows** create nest cavities in the steeply eroded sections of riverbank in this section of the Merrimack. **Avoid coming ashore in these areas**, or climbing the eroded banks. These birds are a threatened species in New Hampshire.
- The current is typically the swiftest on the outside edge of a river bend, and **slower on the inside edge**. If you are finding it hard to paddle upstream, try making sure you're on the inside edge of meander bends!



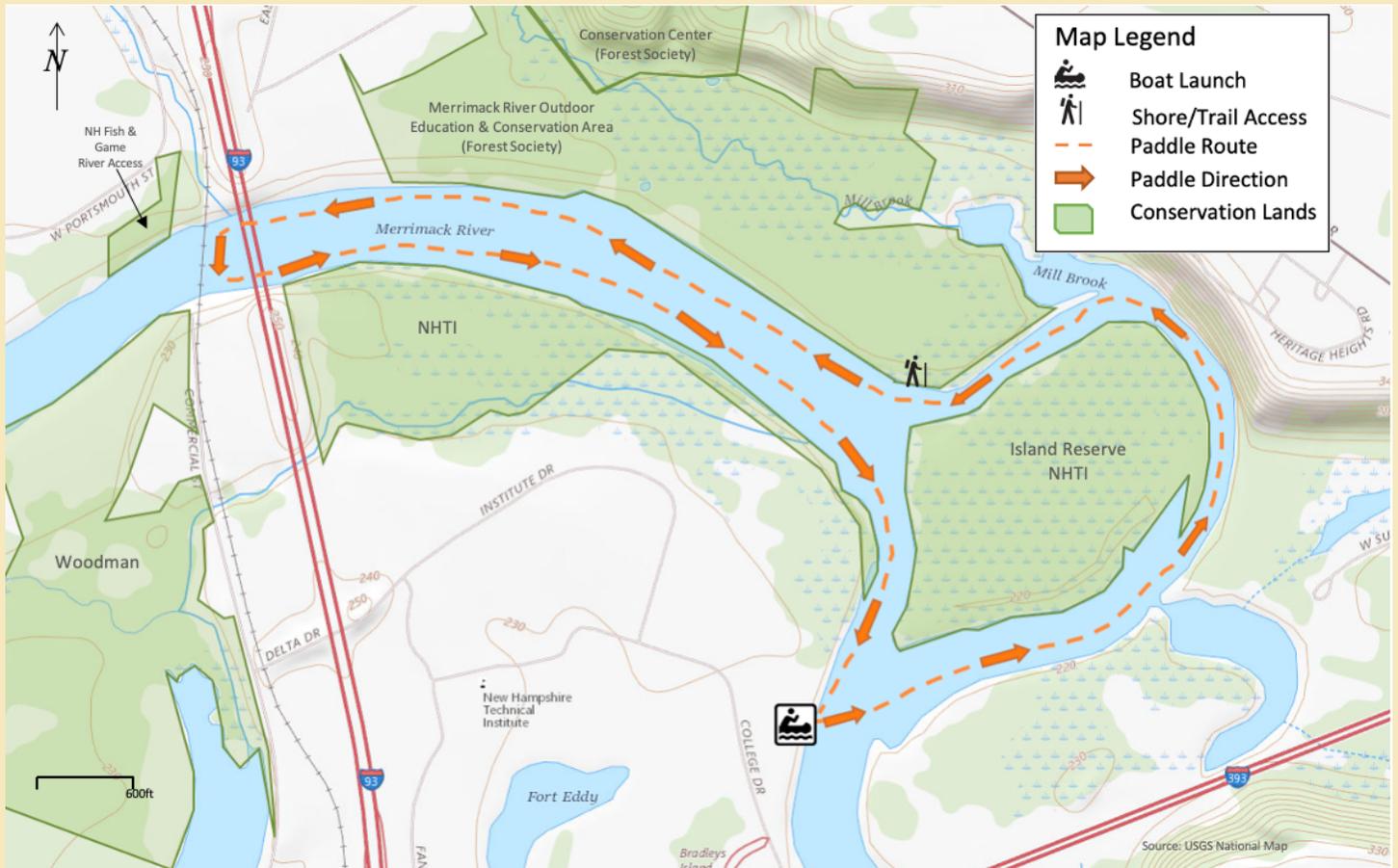
MERRIMACK RIVER  
WATERSHED COUNCIL



# GETTING THERE... maps & DIRECTIONS

**Launch (put in and take out):** NHTI Boat Launch (New Hampshire Technical Institute), College Drive, Concord, NH.

**GPS/Navigation App Coordinates:** 43.22289, -71.52477



## SUGGESTED route



Tag your photos #merrimackpaddlechallenge to share your adventures!

- From the **NHTI boat launch** paddle directly across the Merrimack into an **old meander bend** of the river (oxbow). This is a wetland habitat with abundant emergent vegetation (water lilies, pickerel weed) and aquatic wildlife. Look for turtles, dragonflies, ducks and herons. You may need to turn your boat around if gets too narrow or shallow (paddle in and back out), but at higher water this meander cutoff makes a full loop back to the Merrimack main stem.
- Back out on the main river, **head upstream** along the north bank along the silver maple floodplain forest. This property is the Forest Society's **Merrimack River Outdoor Education & Conservation Area (MROECA)**. A good spot to swim or enjoy the trails are marked on the map above. Note the eroded, cliff like sand banks along this outer bend of the river, and **please avoid coming ashore on these steep cliffs**.
- Continue **under the I-93 bridge** (1.0 mi) and upstream past farmland and forest (distance up to you!) before turning around. Enjoy a leisurely paddle with the current back to the boat launch.