

SECTION 4: SOMERSET RESERVOIR TO KELLEY STAND ROAD

SNAPSHOT:

This is an un-groomed wilderness section offering views of Somerset Reservoir and Grout Pond. The Trail briefly shares a snowmobile trail at the south end and for several miles at the north end.

LENGTH: 7.8 miles

DIFFICULTY:

The terrain is easy but this is a very remote section with access points only at the south and north ends. At times, winds coming across the frozen reservoir can create challenging snow drifts. Ninety percent of this section is ungroomed.

DIRECTIONS TO TRAIL

ACCESS/EXIT POINTS (south to north):

1. Somerset Dam - Somerset

From Wilmington, go approximately 5 miles west on Rte. 9. Turn right (north) onto the Somerset Dam Access Rd. Drive approximately 9 miles and park in a small parking area just west of (before crossing) the dam. Use caution here as there can be heavy snowmobile traffic in this area, particularly on weekends. To head north on the CT cross below the dam, follow the snowmobile trail about .5 miles along the east shore of the reservoir. To head south on the CT, leave the road (and snowmobile trail) at the east end of the dam by descending a steep bank.

NOTE: Because Somerset Dam Access Rd. can be icy and is not frequently plowed, studded tires or four-wheel drive is recommended.

2. Kelley Stand Rd. - Stratton

From Rte. 100 in West Wardsboro, go west on the Stratton/Arlington Rd. The road eventually turns into Kelley Stand Rd. After about six miles, look for a parking lot on your right. Park along the edge of this lot rather than in the middle - the middle is reserved for snowmobile trailers - or proceed by car to the VAST trail intersection.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION:

From the parking area on the west side of Somerset Dam, follow the road about 0.5 miles to the trailhead (0.0) on the east shore of the reservoir. The northbound CT enters the woods by the lake. Soon you will cross a small plank bridge (0.7) followed by a larger bridge where you may need to take your skis off to cross because of the steps. The Trail then runs along the lakeshore for three miles, sometimes making short detours into the woods to avoid rough ground. You will get nice views of the lake at various points along the way. After crossing a large bridge at Moon Brook (1.6), continue on for about half a mile. At this point you will reach an intersection (2.0) with a trail that is sometimes used by snowmobiles. The Catamount Trail crosses this trail and continues along the reservoir. (Turning left on this trail will take you down to the reservoir; turning right on this trail will take you to a large groomed VAST snowmobile trail. You can turn right on the VAST trail to loop back to the Somerset Dam Parking Area.)

Views of Stratton Mt. to the north and Mt. Snow to the south can be seen at various points between here and Grout Pond. As you approach Grout Pond, other trail networks will intersect the Catamount Trail. The Grout Pond trails are marked with plain blue diamonds as opposed to the CT blazes, which are blue diamonds with a black paw print. The CT traverses the west side of Grout Pond (which is visible through the trees if you look down to your right). The Trail

emerges from the woods at the Grout Pond Picnic Area (6.8) where there is a cabin open year around for use on a first-come, first-serve basis. There are also several three-sided wooden shelters. To get to Kelley Stand Rd., follow the unplowed access road/snowmobile trail (approximately 1 mile) to where it meets Kelley Stand Rd (7.8). The plowed parking lot is directly across from the Grout Pond entrance.

DISTANCE TO LANDMARKS:

Mileage Northbound	Landmark	Mileage Southbound
0.0	Somerset Dam parking lot	7.8
0.7	Small plank bridge	7.1
1.6	Moon Brook bridge	6.2
2.0	Intersection w/snowmobile trail	5.8
6.8	Grout Pond Picnic Area	1.0
7.8	Kelley Stand Rd.	0.0

SIDE TRAILS AND LOOPS:

Within the Grout Pond Recreation Area several loops are possible. A 6.3-mile loop partially on the CT and partially on snowmobile trails begins at the Kelley Stand Rd. parking area. This loop is suitable for intermediate skiers. The trail is wide and the terrain is gentle but snowmobile traffic is a concern. Follow the Grout Park entrance road, which is also the CT and a snowmobile trail, south to Grout Pond cabin. Continue along the west shore of Grout Pond on the CT to the south end of the pond. Where the CT leaves the snowmobile trail, turn right (west) on West Trail. Leave West Trail by turning left (west) on a snowmobile trail that eventually heads north along the East Branch of the Deerfield River. Turn right (east) on Kelley Stand Rd. or the CT to return to the parking area.

Another three-and-a-half mile loop can be made starting from the Somerset Dam parking lot. Ski north on either the CT or the snowmobile trail to where the two trails meet again north of the Moon Brook Bridge. Return south on the other trail. Use caution when skiing on the snowmobile trail.