

**NJDEP Division of Parks and Forestry Allamuchy Mountain State Park
Marked Trail Descriptions**

Waterloo / 517 Trail (white blazes) 5.3 miles **Difficult**

The Waterloo / 517 Trail is an out-and back route that connects the Route 517 trailhead, located just off Route 517 on Stuyvesant Road with the Waterloo trailhead, which is located on the Sussex Branch Trail. This is the main trail within the Northern section of Allamuchy Mountain State Park as it serves to connect two major trailheads as well as providing access to other trails within the park. From either trailhead this trail begins with a moderately steep climb. Following the climb from either direction, the trail becomes rolling as it rises and descends as it makes its way through the park. The user will find several moderate climbs along the way which may pose a challenge to the beginner hiker or mountain biker. This trail provides a myriad of experiences for the user by crossing numerous rock gardens, granite rock slabs and creeks.

Pebble Loop (yellow blazes) 3.1 miles **Moderate Difficulty**

The Pebble Loop is most easily accessed via the Waterloo / 517 Trail from the Waterloo trailhead (on the Sussex Branch Trail) by following the white blazes. When accessing this trail via the Waterloo / 517 Trail (white blazes) the Pebble Loop begins with a sustained strenuous, rocky climb. The beginner hiker and mountain biker may find this trail challenging due to the rocky nature and moderately steep climbs. At approximately 1 mile this trail intersects the Highland trail. After passing the Highland Trail the Pebble Loop Trail continues with a gradual ascent encountering frequent rock gardens. At approximately 1.3 miles, the summit of the Pebble Loop, an impressive glacial erratic can be found. A glacial erratic is a rock that was moved by glacial activity. This geologic point of interest is called the “Pebble” by locals, hence the name of the trail. After the “Pebble” the trail begins a moderate descent which eventually becomes rolling. At approximately 2.0 miles the Pebble Loop joins with the Waterloo / 517 Trail (white blazes).

Ranger Loop (red blazes) 2.6 miles **Difficult**

The Ranger Loop is most easily accessed via the Sussex Branch Trail, at approximately 0.5 miles from the Sussex Branch parking lot. Beginning clockwise, the Ranger Loop begins with a strenuous, rocky climb. At approximately 0.6 miles, this trail intersects the Highland Trail. As the trail continues, the user will experience rolling terrain, with numerous rock gardens, and a small creek crossing. At approximately 2.3 miles the trail again intersects the Highland Trail. After passing Highland Trail, the trail begins a moderate descent back to the Sussex Branch Trail.

Iron Mine Loop (blue blazes) 1.3 miles **Moderate Difficulty**

The Iron Mine Loop is most easily accessed via the Sussex Branch Trail, at approximately 1.0 mile from the Sussex Branch parking lot. When accessing this trail from the southern (closer to the Sussex Branch Parking Lot) access point the trail begins with a moderate climb, which eventually becomes steeper with sections of loose rock. Large sections of exposed bedrock can be found approximately midway between the north and southern access points. When accessing this trail from the northern access point the trail drops down off the Sussex Branch Trail along a small creek, then begins a moderate ascent. Along this ascent, remnants of iron mines are evident. The ascent soon becomes strenuous as the trail makes a sharp left bend. The trail

maintains a consistently steep grade, eventually making a hard bend to the right and continuing its ascent. This trail is technical due to frequent rock gardens and sections of loose rock and strenuous ascents from either access point.

Waving Willie Trail (green blazes) 3.4 miles **Easy Difficulty**

The Waving Willie Trail, an out-and-back is most easily accessed via the Sussex Branch Trail, at approximately 2.5 miles north from the Sussex Branch parking lot or approximately 0.2 miles north from the Park and Ride lot on Rt. 206 at Cranberry Lake. This trail was named in honor of the famous “Waving Willie” who used to live in a house near the current trailhead. For years, motorists using Route 206 were greeted by Willie as he joyously greeted passing cars with a smile and a wave. The Waving Willie Trail begins with moderate leading to a strenuous climb. Eventually the trail crosses a large section of bedrock outcropping. Following the outcropping the terrain becomes rolling and rocky. After the rocky sections the trail widens and becomes somewhat smoother as it traverses an old logging road. At approximately 2.6 miles the Waving Willie Trail meets the Route 517 / Waterloo Trail (white blazes). The trail then continues to traverse old logging roads until the trail ends at the Cranberry Ledge Road parking lot.

Ditch / Cardiac Trail (purple blazes) 3.2 miles **Difficult**

The Ditch / Cardiac Trail is most easily accessed via the Switchback Loop (orange blazes) which originates at the Route 517 trailhead, located just off Route 517 on Stuyvesant Road. The quickest route to the Ditch / Cardiac trail is a clock-wise direction on the Switchback Loop. From the junction of the Switchback Loop, the Ditch / Cardiac Trail begins with gentle rolling terrain, winding through a small grove of pine trees, and eventually crossing a small creek. Immediately following the creek crossing the trail bears to the right where it begins a moderate climb. The trail crosses an old logging road several times as it continues to ascend. A man made rock “bridge” is one of the impressive features of this trail. Shortly after the rock “bridge” the trail will flatten out for a short period before continuing another moderate climb. A large section of exposed bedrock marks the beginning of another short gain in elevation. Eventually the trail will begin to descend with moderately technical terrain including loose rocks and small open sections of rock. After the conclusion of the descent the trail will turn left and eventually meets with the Waterloo / 517 Trail (white blazes).

Switchback Loop (orange blazes) 2.0 miles **Moderate Difficulty**

The Switchback Loop, a multi-use trail, begins just up the gravel road from the kiosk at the Route 517 trailhead, located just off Route 517 on Stuyvesant Road. In a counter-clockwise direction the Switchback Loop begins with a short climb and then bears to the right, then winds through a grove of pine trees. The terrain then becomes rolling with several short climbs and descents, crossing several small creeks along the way. In some places the old Route 517 is apparent. Eventually the trail will parallel the current Route 517 and then make a hard bend to the left which marks the beginning of a moderate, extended climb. The trail will meet with the Ditch / Cardiac Trail at the top of the climb. The Switchback Loop then turns left and begins a mildly technical descent and will terminate where it began, just up from the kiosk at the Route 517 trailhead.

Highland Trail (teal blazes) 3.8 miles Moderate Difficulty

The Highland Trail, a multi-use trail is accessible from either the Waterloo Road trailhead, just South of Waterloo Village on the southbound side of the road, or from the trailhead, on Drexell Road in Byram Township. The Highland Trail can also be accessed from various points within the park as this trail intersects with the white trail, the red trail and the Sussex Branch Trail. This trail is a predominately technical trail with numerous rocky sections and steep ascents and descents throughout. One of the impressive features of this trail is vista that is approximately 1 mile from the Waterloo Road trailhead. A large outcropping overlooks the Musconetcong River below, and provides an impressive view of the surrounding area.

Byram Trail (no blazes) 1.7 miles Easy Difficulty

The Byram Trail begins on Drexell Drive in Byram Township. It connects with the Sussex Branch Trail and also provides access to the Highland Trail. The Byram Trail gently winds through wooded areas with gently rolling terrain.

Sussex Branch Trail (no blazes) 2 miles Easy Difficulty

The Sussex Branch Trail is an abandoned railroad bed that connects two trailheads within the Allamuchy Mountain State Park. The Southern trailhead for the Sussex Branch Trail is located on Waterloo Road in Byram Township. The Northern trailhead is located at Cranberry Lake in Byram Township. The Sussex Branch Trail continues North after the Cranberry Lake parking area, providing access to Kittatinny State Park and other areas to the North.

Allamuchy Pond Trail 2.3 miles Moderate Difficulty

This scenic trail meanders through wooded habitat, open fields and along the shoreline of Allamuchy Pond. Access is provided for fishing at the pond, which has populations of perch, bluegills, bass and pumpkinseed. Views of the historic Rutherford Mansion can be seen as well as a variety of wildlife including deer, swans, great blue heron and beaver. Sections of the trail are rocky and moss covered rocks make walking tricky. The trail crosses over two small streams, which will eventually be bridged, and then opens up into an open field. A small parking area is planned for the future as a trailhead for hikers and boaters near the entrance to the Rutherford Mansion.