

Central Vermont

Back Road Bike Tours



Waterbury - Stowe - 22.2 Miles.

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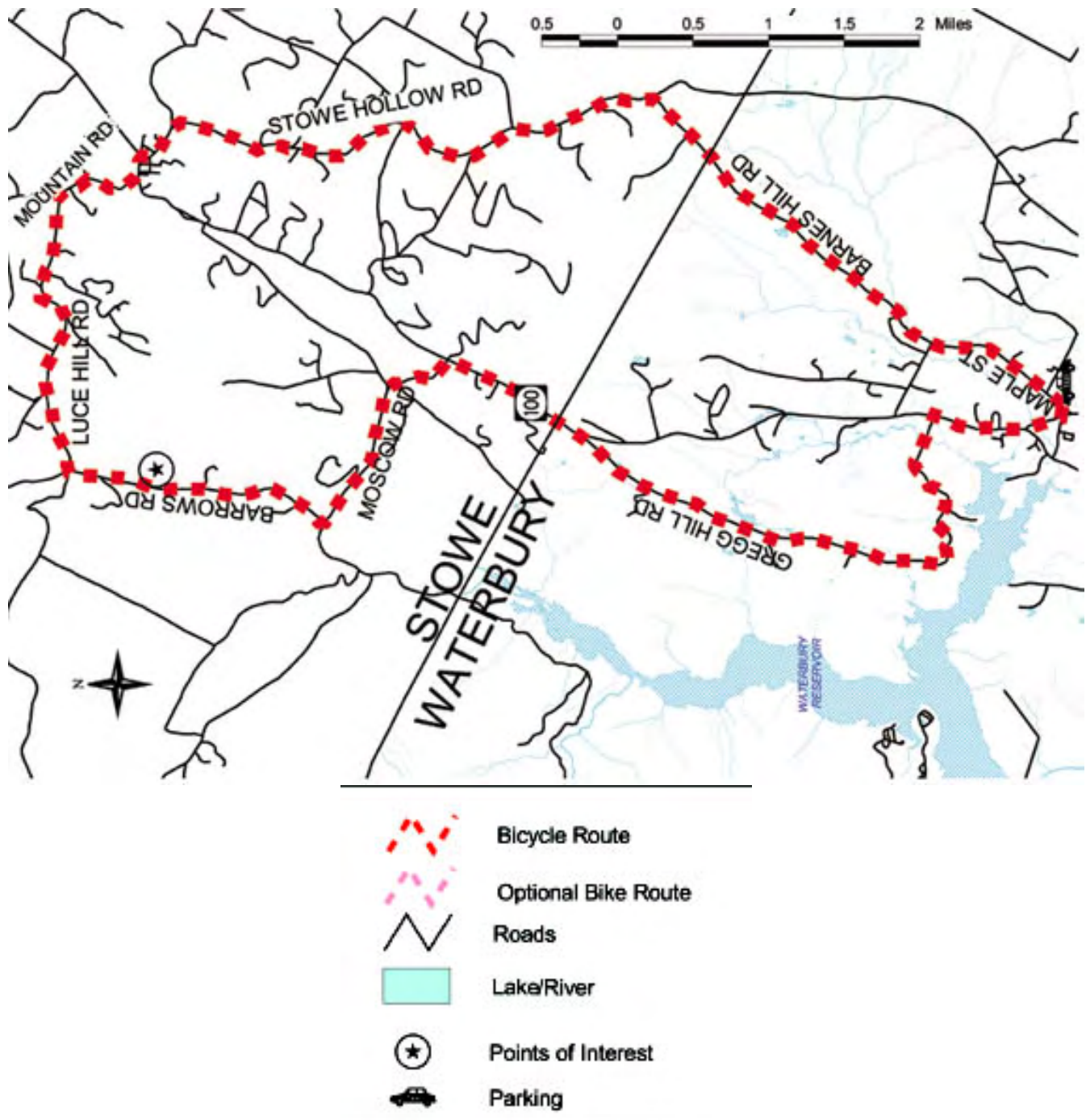
* Tour Difficulty: **8.5**

Terrain and Road Conditions:

Although this loop has a few fairly rugged climbs, they are broken up by stretches of easy, level pedaling - particularly on the Stowe Recreation Path - and exhilarating descents. Almost half of your trip will be covered on paved surfaces (including two and a half miles on the Stowe Bike Path) with the remainder being on fairly wide, well maintained dirt roads.

Tour Highlights :

Variety is the hallmark of this loop. It will take the cyclist past panoramic mountain views, under "haunted" covered bridges, through woods and pastures, along and over small rivers, into one of Vermont's best known villages, and past several shops and tourist attractions. Just about everyone will find the type of cycling experience they seek at some point on this ride.



Route Description:

➡ Park along the road at the Waterbury Center village green, reached by turning east off Route 100. The village green was the southern terminus of Vermont's last trolley line. The Mt.

Mansfield Electric Trolley Co. ran from Waterbury Center to Stowe from 1897 to 1932. Provisions are available at the general store west of the green, as they have been since the mid 1800's.

➡ Take 1 quick left at the green to reach Maple Street. For a mile or so you will ride on paved level ground through a residential neighborhood before



beginning your ascent of Barnes Hill. Here the pavement will give way to dirt and the gentle terrain and suburban feel will end. As you climb and crest Barnes Hill, excellent views of Mount Mansfield (Vermont's highest peak) and the Green Mountains will open up on your left. On the right, you will pass two scenic farms nestled at the base of the Worcester Range.

➡ At about 3.7 miles, you will bear to the left at a 3-way intersection. Here, Barnes Hill Road becomes known as Stowe Hollow Road. After a short ascent to the height of land between Waterbury Center and Stowe Village, the route drops sharply for a long, swift and very scenic 2-mile descent.

➡ At 5.6 miles you will arrive at a 4-way intersection with a STOP sign. Proceed across the intersection and under a covered bridge, onto Covered Bridge Road. According to local legend, this bridge has been haunted for 150 years by the ghost of a young woman named Emily who hung herself from the rafters after being spurned by her lover.

➡ Bear left back onto Stowe Hollow Road (paved) and descend quickly into the Village of Stowe (7.6 miles). This route will deposit you on Main Street (Rte. 100), opposite Community Church, Stowe's most famous landmark.

➡ Cross Main Street into the church driveway and go behind the building where you will find the Stowe Recreation Path. First, take a little time to explore Stowe Village. All varieties of food, accommodations and shopping are available in Stowe; both in the village and on the Mountain Road (Rte. 108). Car shows, horse shows, concerts, festivals, and other events are frequent throughout the year.

➡ The recreation path is a popular spot and for good reason. It is flat, scenic, paved and free of motorized vehicles. On weekends and holidays it can attract hordes of walkers, bikes, and roller bladers, so exercise caution. Keep your speed down and your eyes up. The path meanders back and forth along and over the West Branch of the Little River for about 5.5 miles. This tour, however, employs only a 2.7 mile section. Shortly after the 2.5 mile point which is marked on the pavement, the path crosses under a bridge. Immediately after the bridge, a parking area/access point will appear to the left. Get off the path here and turn right

out of the parking lot onto Luce Hill Road (paved; 10.3 miles)



➔ After a short flat, you will begin a fairly long, rather steep ascent. Proceed straight, passing Barrows Road on the left. (If you would like to shorten your excursion you may turn left onto Barrow's Road and cruise 1.7 miles to Moscow Road, thereby avoiding a steep climb and cutting 2.0 miles off the trip total.) Near what seems to be the top of the hill, the road turns sharply to the left and climbs more gradually for another 1/2 mile to the Trapp Family Lodge. The Trapps, of the Sound of Music fame, settled here and built this establishment after fleeing the Nazi's in the late 1930's. This hilltop location reminded them of their native Austria. The views to the left of the Worcester Range, and further up the road to the right of Nebraska Notch, are unparalleled.

➔ After passing the Lodge complex, the road turns to dirt and begins a very beautiful, but very steep descent into the Village of the Little River. Be sure your brakes are in good working order!

➔ At 14.2 miles at the bottom of the hill, take a left onto Moscow Road (paved). Proceed along the river and through the little Village of Moscow to the road's intersection with Rte 100 (16.4 miles).

➔ Turn right onto Rte. 100 South. Although this is a heavily traveled route, it has wide shoulders and you will only be on it for a short distance (less than a mile).

➔ Route 100 will make a gradual climb up Shutesville Hill. Near the top, across from a display of chainsaw carvings, turn right onto Gregg Hill Road (17.4 miles).

➔ Gregg Hill Road (dirt) will loop back to Rte. 100 after 3.9 very pleasant miles of cruising (21.3 miles).

➔ Turn right (south) onto Rte. 100. Turn left onto Hollow Road just after passing the Cold Hollow Cider Mill, one of Vermont's most popular tourist attractions. Continue back to the Village Green.

* Difficulty is based on a scale of 1 (Easy - Family Friendly) to 10 (Very Difficult - Experience is Advised).

We suggest reading the route description to figure out if this tour is right for you.