

Vinalhaven Land Trust

Founded in 1986, Vinalhaven Land Trust (VLT) offers over 17 miles of well-maintained trails on our preserves.

In 2021 we celebrated our 35th anniversary. In 2017, our accreditation was renewed with the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. In addition to our role as stewards of these properties we also offer educational programs and guided walks throughout the year. For more information, visit our kiosk to find maps, schedules of events, and detailed preserve brochures. It's located at Skoog Park, just 2/10 of a mile west of the ferry terminal along Sands Road. Feel free to enjoy our picnic table overlooking Sands Cove where you can relax with your lunch.

VLT's work relies on the generosity of our members. For more information on how to support our work, please contact us.

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Vinalhaven Land Trust conserves and stewards our island's important natural, recreational, and agricultural resources, including scenic and other traditionally valued places, for the benefit and enjoyment of the entire Vinalhaven community. Through education and engagement, VLT seeks to advance understanding and appreciation of the natural world.

Lower Mill River Preserve



History

In 2006, Vinalhaven Land Trust gratefully accepted Charles Sullivan's donation of a parcel of land on the northwest side of the Carrying Place Bridge. Subsequently, VLT purchased two adjacent lots, including the aptly named "Fish Hook" peninsula.

In 2013, VLT received a conservation easement on yet another nearby parcel of land, a 46-acre site just west of the Carrying Place Bridge, which allowed us to establish a hiking trail from Vinal Cove to Round Pond. This trail was completed in the summer of 2013, and visitors may now enjoy more than a mile of hiking through mature spruce forests and over bare granite ledges.

In 2020, Charles Sullivan gifted VLT yet another property to the west of the Fish Hook Trail, the Overlook parcel. New trails were established in 2021 and are now open for the public to enjoy. The Lower Mill River Preserve encompasses the trails at Round Pond, Overlook, and Fish Hook.

Together, these five properties comprise roughly a hundred acres and preserve half a mile of shoreline, characterized by bold granite ledges and forested hillsides that descend dramatically to the mud flats and salt marshes of the Mill River.

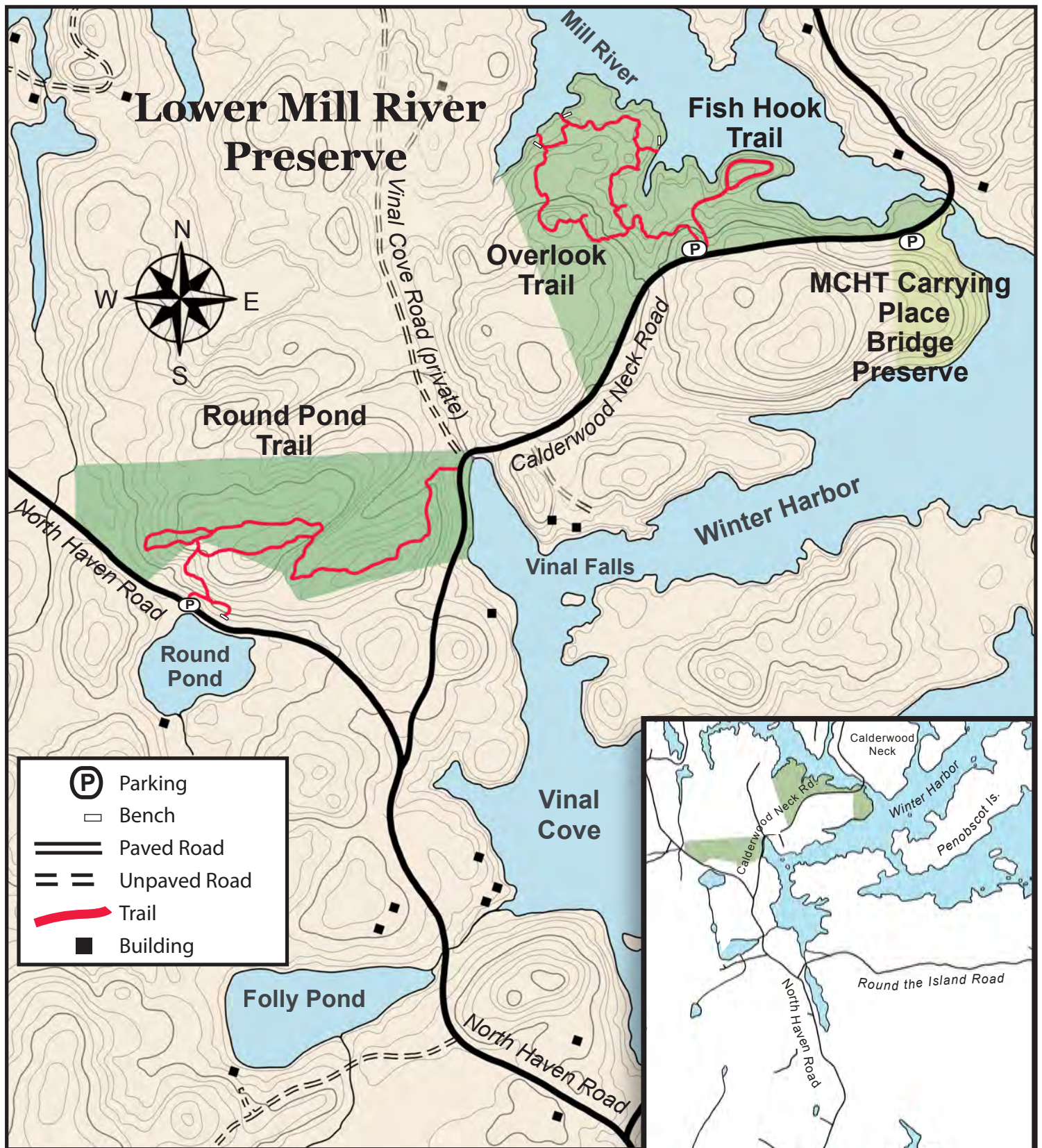
Lower Mill River Preserve forms a bookend to an existing preserve owned by MCHT, Carrying Place Bridge Preserve, which is further protected by an easement held by VLT.

Features

Round Pond Trail: Excellent opportunities to see warblers and other forest songbirds, dramatic granite outcrops with pitch pine forests; just a few yards east of the Round Pond trail you might catch a glimpse of a magnificent red spruce fully three feet in diameter. The two loops total 1.2 miles of trail, almost all shaded.

Fish Hook Trail: Short, shady trail, it passes by one of the largest eastern hemlocks on the island and through mixed forest to a mature grove of red pines atop Fish Hook, a steep-sided peninsula that juts into the Mill River. A great place to see eagles, ospreys, loons, kingfishers, and assorted wading birds; also offering excellent views of mussel beds and clam flats, tidal waterfall, and midsummer sunsets.

Overlook Trail: Adjacent to and just west of the Fish Hook Trail, allows visitors to see Vinalhaven granite in its natural, unquarried condition. Massive ledge outcrops, with hardwood seeps filling the spaces between them, offer expansive views from high above Mill River. Notice some of the largest red spruce trees on the island, and several benches allow a pause and shoreline vistas. The loop trail, which starts at the Fish Hook parking lot, about one mile in length, undulates in height from sea level to almost a hundred feet above it. This new trail gives hikers a nice workout —with rewards of some fine views.



Size: VLT Fish Hook Trail is on 15 acres of land, Overlook on 34, Round Pond on 45, and MCHT's Carrying Place Bridge Preserve on 13 acres.

Trails:

- Round Pond trail (with loops) 1.2 miles, moderate difficulty;
- Fish Hook trail, 0.6 miles round trip, moderate difficulty;
- Overlook Trail, one mile loop, moderate difficulty
- ADA-accessible trail at Mill River, about 100 yards round trip, easy; Carrying Place Bridge trail to Winter Harbor shore, 0.3 miles round trip, easy

Features: Kayak access, shaded trails, varied terrain, tidal flats, sunset views

Be Aware:

- Foot traffic only
- Stay on marked trails



Directions: From ferry, go left on Sands Rd. for .4 miles, then right on Old Harbor Rd. for .3 miles, then bearing slightly left onto North Haven Rd. for 2.5 miles, at which point you reach the junction of North Haven Road and Calderwood's Neck Road.

For Round Pond Trail, bear left at this intersection and park in gravel pullout 0.2 miles on the right; For Fish Hook Trail and Overlook Trail, bear right at intersection and park in gravel lot 0.6 miles on left; For Carrying Place Bridge Preserve, go an additional 0.2 miles and park in gravel lot on right.