



TRAIL GUIDE

About Us:

Founded in 1894 as The Andover Village Improvement Society, AVIS is one of the oldest land conservation organizations in the country.

AVIS manages more than 30 reservations comprising more than 1,200 acres in the Town of Andover. It relies on a corps of volunteers to lead the organization and to provide maintenance of its recreational trails and stewardship for the land and its wildlife habitat. Donations from community members and grant sources provide the funds to acquire, protect and manage its reservations.

Contact :

The Andover Village Improvement Society

P.O. Box 5097, Andover, MA 01810

members@avisandover.org

avisandover.org

GET
OUTSIDE!

Listen to our
hiking playlist
here:



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that AVIS reservations are located on the ancestral land of the Pennacook, Pawtucket, and other Indigenous people, which was their home for more than 10,000 years. We honor the land we manage and all the Indigenous people who were here before, are here now, and will be here in the future. We recognize that we are all guests on this land and are mindful of our impact. With this acknowledgement, we commit to continuously care for this land, using sustainable practices to protect the environment and provide stewardship for the ecology and habitat of AVIS reservations.



ANDOVER VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY

AVIS invites use of this property from sunrise to sunset for passive recreation including hiking, skiing, and nature walks. AVIS assumes no responsibility for any injuries to persons or property to anyone using this area.

Dogs

AVIS follows the town's leash bylaw — All dogs must be on a leash at all times on AVIS land.

PROHIBITED Items or uses include any activity which diminishes or harms the natural resources or tranquility of the reservation including –

- Weapons of any type including bows and arrows – see online at avisandover.org for exceptions during deer hunting season.
- Bicycles & Motorized vehicles
- Access from Routes 93, 495, and 125
- Fires & Camping
- Alcohol
- Paintball and Airsoft
- Tree cutting, including gathering and piling of branches, brush, & logs
- Plant collecting
- Littering
- Dumping of any kind, including leaves, grass clippings, and brush
- Repeated violations of the Rules may result in prohibition to use AVIS properties.

For further information, look online at avisandover.org



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OUTDOORS

"I felt my lungs inflate with the onrush of scenery- air, mountains, trees, people. I thought, 'this is what it is to be happy'"
- Sylvia Plath

Nature is a healthy way to cope with the stress of real life. In a society where the majority of the population work indoors, exposure to the benefits of nature are limited. Getting outdoors can contribute to physical wellness, mental wellness, and wellness in communities. According to Michelle Kondo, a research social scientist with the USDA Forest Service's Northern Research Station, "Wellness is wholistic in that it is comprised of physical and mental health as well as the health of our communities...All of these benefits add up and reduce adverse impacts on our bodies, and have restorative characteristics. So get outdoors and enjoy nature's gift of wellness".

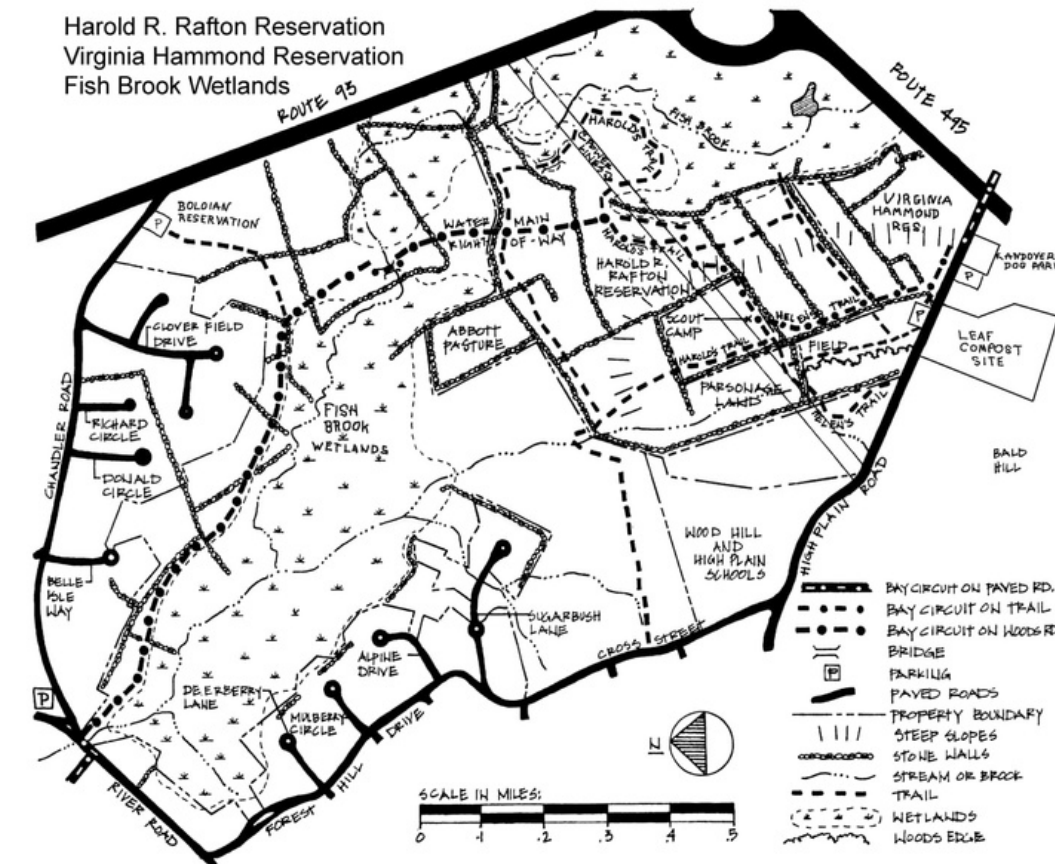
Rafton Reservation

"AVIS manages its reservations to protect native habitat and provide opportunities for the public to experience, enjoy and learn about nature through passive recreation."



ARTWORK BY AHS STUDENT, BORI KIM

RAFTON RESERVATION MAP



Features:

The largest of the AVIS reservations. Maple, birch, oak, hickory and sassafras trees can be found in these serene woods. Tall white pines grow along the ridges and hilltops and the ski loop trail passes through lovely hemlock groves. The forest floor is carpeted with ferns, partridgeberry and teaberry. Deer, beaver, fox and numerous bird species have been observed here.

History:

Rafton is the largest of the AVIS reservations. In 1968, this property was named for Harold R. Rafton, Andover's "sturdiest conservationist." Mr. Rafton's ability to persuade landowners to sell or bequeath land to AVIS for conservation and public use is legendary. Rafton Reservation was once farmland and woodlot. Many of the old stone walls remain, evidence of this area's agricultural past. An annual winter breakfast followed by skiing or hiking through the reservation has become a modern AMC and AVIS tradition.