



Central Adirondack Summer Family Challenge

For a FREE patch: Hike, Bike or Paddle any 10 of the following 16 challenges. Fill out the brochure and bring it to the Old Forge Visitor Information Center. [Click here for the Brochure](#)

The challenge begins April 1st. You must complete 10 of the 16 outings to qualify for the patch.

Bonus! If you have already hiked Bald Mountain, Rocky Mountain, or Black Bear Mountain, they can be included in your total. You do not have to hike them again.

*Please note: Due to many trails being used for snowmobiling and hunting, this challenge will be available only April 1st through the 3rd weekend of September.

All distances are approximate. Trail are full round trip totals, unless otherwise noted:

1. Lock and Dam - Easy 2 miles. This is an easy, family-friendly trail. From the trailhead, the trail heads immediately into the woods and is very flat until about 0.4 miles, where there is a short, very gradual hill. At about 0.9 miles there is another trail that turns off to the left and follows a snowmobile trail up a hill known as Humphrey Hill. Stay to the right on the main trail. The very last part of the trail becomes more like a gully as the trail slopes down to an open grassy area at the top of the short, picture-perfect falls at the dam. A short side trail to the left (south) of the dam leads to the bottom of the lock and dam. The lock and dam was originally built in 1888, in order to improve the very rough transportation conditions of the time. A train would carry passengers coming from the McKeever area (what was called the Moose River Settlement) to "Jones Camp" which used to be located near the lock and dam. The passengers would then board a steamboat named "The Fawn" and continue up the river to the Fulton Chain of Lakes.

For more information on this hike visit our website and blog:

<http://adirondackbasecamp.blogspot.com/>

This will also make for an easy paddle to the picturesque, historic falls. Just park and put in on the north side of the Green Bridge (closer to Route 28). Paddle under the bridge and follow the river around the bend towards the dam.

To get there: From NYS Route 28 in Thendara, turn onto Beech Street which is just north of the "New York Central" railroad bridge. Beech Street curves to the left after 2 blocks and becomes Green Bridge Road and then curves to the right and passes over the Moose River. Immediately after crossing the bridge, there is a small parking area to the right. This is the parking area for the trail.



Photos by Linda Grace

2. Bald Mountain (Rondaxe Mountain Fire Tower) - 2 miles intermediate hike. This extremely popular hike has a 2350 foot summit with views of the Fulton Chain of Lakes. A moderately easy climb, the trail starts out flat then ascends rapidly. It eventually evens out with some mild ups and downs over mostly bare rock through the trees and opens to a lookout just before the ridge that leads to the climbable tower. This mountain has a storied history with its many name changes and iconic fire tower. Here is one link that will get you started on learning about its history: <http://www.masterpieces.com/bald.htm>. Good news! If you have already hiked Bald Mountain, you do not have to do it again for this challenge.



Pictures: Top left - From the fire tower, by Linda Grace. Top right - Top of Mountain, by Mike Farmer. Bottom – aerial photo of Bald Mountain, by Kurt Gardner

3. Rocky Mountain - 1 mile, easy to intermediate climb. This is a family-friendly hike up a small mountain (2225 feet at the summit) that offers a nice overlook of the Fulton Chain of Lakes. It is located on the north side of NYS Route 28 between Eagle Bay and Inlet. The large parking area is also used for the trail up Black Bear Mountain at its east end. Don't let the first few feet of Rocky Mountain trail's mud scare you away from this wonderful little climb. There are some relatively steep sections, but the view is worth the effort. Good news! If you have already hiked Rocky Mountain, you may count that for this challenge.



Photo by Linda Grace

4. Maple Ridge/McCauley trails – Depending on which trail you take, you could have an easy hike/bike ride, a more difficult one, or an advanced challenge. Do any hiking trail and it counts. If you are into mountain biking, make sure you check out our new bike trails that count for this challenge as well!

It is highly advisable to stop at the Visitor Information Center for a map of this area or download it by clicking on this link for the Maple Ridge/McCauley trails map:

http://www.oldforgeny.com/documents/WARDAMapofMapleRidge_000.pdf

For more about this trail and the wonderful history of the hill you can visit these links:

<http://www.nelsap.org/ny/mapleridge.html> and

<http://adirondackbasecamp.blogspot.com/2016/11/mccauley-mountain-maple-ridge-multi-use.html>.



McCauley Mtn. photo by Kurt Gardner



Maple Ridge Trail photo by Linda Grace



5. Nick's Lake from Bisby Road - 6.2 mile loop, moderate. This is a fairly flat trail, often muddy in parts, making it difficult to negotiate around. It makes for a fun dirt bike ride or cross country run with many other connecting trails that could extend your trip if desired. From Route 28 in Old Forge, follow the signs for McCauley Mountain and Nick's Lake, heading up Joy Tract Road and turning left onto Bisby Road. The trailhead parking area is found about 0.2 miles up Bisby Road on the right hand side. It is a well-marked trail, mostly flat with only a few slight inclines. There are no views of the lake until you come to the southeast part of the trail. Cross the footbridge that comes out to the front of the beach. The trail is not marked at this point, but it continues past the beach, and the playground and then turn left onto the campground's road. Keeping the lake to your left, follow the road up a little ways past the boat launch and another beautiful view of the lake. Take the first left hand road after the boat launch and follow it by some campsites, again, keeping the lake to your left. You will eventually come to a sign for the trail beside a huge rock and in between campsites #94 and #92. This trail will continue by more campsites, going slightly up and down and then back into the woods. Once in the woods, there are some muddy, wet spots. Eventually the trail turns back out on the start of the loop where there is a sign to guide you back to your car.



Photo of Nick's Lake by Linda Grace

6. Moss Lake loop- 2.5 mile loop, moderately easy family-friendly hike. Moss Lake is an iconic Adirondack lake trail. It is a popular destination to hike, bike, run, x-country ski and snowshoe. The motorless lake is small enough that it can easily be paddled and explored in a day, and also offers many quiet and picturesque paddling spots. The hiking trail can be muddy in parts during rainy periods and travels some mild up and down terrain. Moss Lake was home to a privately owned girl's camp from 1922-1972. In 1974, a group of Mohawk Indians occupied this land for three years. For more history of Moss Lake, check out these books: The Adirondacks: Fulton Chain-Big Moose Region and The Story of a Wilderness by Joseph F. Grady or visit these links:

<https://www.adirondackexplorer.org/outtakes/running-around-moss-lake> and <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ganienkeh>



Accessible viewing dock at Moss Lake



Photo of Moss Lake by Kurt Gardner

7. Black Bear Mountain - Moderate to very difficult. There are actually two different trails up this mountain. The most obvious and most direct route begins from the parking area on the north side of NYS Route 28 between Eagle Bay and Inlet. The parking lot is actually part of an old road and is a shared parking area for Rocky Mountain climbers. This is a 4.5 mile round trip hike and is the shorter, more difficult and steeper route. Follow the yellow disks just under a mile, turn right, and then follow the blue disks. The second trail could actually be used to make a loop route and makes it a 6.3 mile round trip, when combined with the first trail. This second trail is not well marked, is a lot harder to follow and can be very muddy. It starts at the same parking lot as the first trail and is 6.2 miles round trip. Good news! If you have already hiked Black Bear Mountain, you do not have to do it again for this challenge.



Picture by Linda Grace

8. Vista Trail loop - Difficult 5.6 mile round trip trail follows a pleasant ridge with a few scenic outlooks. It is a challenging hike in that it starts with a rough initial ascent which is

followed by many ups and downs. A quiet mountain pond and Carry Lake make for nice pictures. It can be very muddy by Carry Lake at the bottom of the descent of Cork Mountain from Mountain Pond. Turn left onto the multi-use TOBIE trail (which is snowmobile trail 5 in the winter), and it is fairly easy and flat for the remainder of the hike (just under three miles) back to the parking area.

The trailhead and parking are located on the north side of NYS Route 28, 7.6 miles northeast of the Old Forge Visitor Information Center. This parking area is shared with the trailhead for Bubb and Sis Lakes.



Photos by Linda Grace.

9. Middle Settlement Lake - Moderate 6.4 miles. At the very beginning of this hike is a somewhat steep climb. But the rest of the hike is on a fairly level, beautiful trail that leads through wooded areas and only some up and down work. It can be muddy, especially near the northeast side of the lake. It is a very rewarding hike to a beautiful lake and lean-to.

From the Thendara Railroad Station drive three miles south on Route 28 to the U-shaped parking area on the left. Carefully cross Route 28 to the Scusa Access Trailhead that starts just over a wooden footbridge.



10. Cascade Lake and Falls - A moderate 6 mile walk if you do the loop and the falls (If you just go to the lake and back it is 4 miles round trip). This is a beautiful and pleasant trail which starts out flat, but has some small ups and downs on the south side of the lake. It is often extremely muddy and wet on the north/east side of the lake. From Route 28 in Eagle Bay, turn onto Big Moose Road. Follow this for 1.8 miles to the parking lot on the right.



Photo by Kathy Queen

11. TOBIE TRAIL (From Thendara to Pirate's ship by Old Forge Pond/beach) - This is an easy 5 mile ride/walk that is part of a longer bike trail. This section of the trail is close to town and could be done on either a mountain bike or street bike, and is not too hard for smaller children still on training wheels. Also parents or guardians will not have trouble pushing strollers. It starts in Thendara along NYS Route 28 south of the railroad station and ends at Old Forge Pond. It is easy enough to make into a round trip after playtime, or you may opt to cut the mileage in half by leaving a second vehicle at the park to load up after enjoying your time by the pond. You could use this trail as a great initiative for small children to hike/bike with you, since the pond offers the beauty of the pond, fishing off the dock, it is near the playground and the beach (note the beach is only open if a lifeguard is on duty). This is also right near the Visitor Information Center, where you may want to get information on more places to visit in our area.



Photo from TOBIE Bridge by Linda Grace

*The full TOBIE TRAIL offers opportunities for an easy mountain bike ride that could be as short or long as you want. It can be done in sections, or, if using two cars, could be done as a 14-mile trip one way. It starts in Thendara along NYS Route 28 south of the railroad station and ends at Arrowhead Park in Inlet. North of Old Forge, most of the ride is done on dirt and/or gravel roads and trails which function as snowmobile trails in the winter. The ride includes scenic river views, photogenic ponds, woods, and the possibility of seeing wildlife. There are many places along the trail to stop for a rest and picnic. For more information on this hike, please read the article, "The Town of Webb TOBIE Trail", written by Linda Grace, in the Fall 2018 issue of the Localadk magazine. It can be found on their website at <http://localadkmagazine.uberflip.com/i/1029965-local-adk-fall-2018> .

For a map of this area, or more information on this and other biking trails click on this link: <http://oldfor geny.com/recreation.html#biking>

(Note: During the fall hunting season, this area is part of a large parcel of land leased to a local hunting club. Watch for the Posted signs and be sure not to trespass.)



12. TOBIE TRAIL (From Old Forge Pond to Rondaxe)- This section of the TOBIE Trail is 12 miles, most of which is on a dirt road, or you may opt to cut the mileage in half by planting a second car at Rondaxe Road parking area. Start at the Old Forge Pond and follow the Tobie Trail signs, go through the covered bridge and turn left on North Street. Follow North Street all the way over the bridge, continue to follow the signs on the multi-purpose dirt road (snowmobile trail #1) for half a mile to the TOBIE trail sign, turn right and follow this dirt road. About a half mile on the left, be on the lookout for the small side trail, from where you can access Wheeler Pond. Wheeler Pond has a small beach area that would be a great place to take a break and have a snack, as you can listen and look for birds and other wildlife. After you enjoy your pond visit, simply continue your journey on the TOBIE trail. A little ways further you will pass a sign to the left leading around Wheeler Pond (this trail goes back out to trail #1; with no further views of the lake). Continue following the TOBIE Trail signs, and soon the trail runs parallel with the Adirondack Scenic Railroad. Eventually the trail signs will lead you to turn right onto snowmobile Trail #8 and over the Steel Bridge spanning the Moose River. From here it won't be too much longer to get to Rondaxe Lake, which is adjacent to Rondaxe Road. See note about the full TOBIE Trail by the * above.



13. TOBIE Trail (From Rondaxe Road to Eagle bay). This is an easy 13.4 mile bike/hike (or you may opt to cut the mileage in half by planting a second car at the Eagle Bay Welcome Center). Follow the TOBIE Trail up over the embankment with Rondaxe Lake on the left and West Lake on the right. It will lead you on a back country road where you will eventually get to the scenic, picture worthy Carry Lake. The path follows along the eastern side of Carry Lake which turns into a pretty little creek. This is the last part of the back-country woods, before the TOBIE Trail runs parallel with Route 28 the rest of the way to Eagle Bay. There is an Information and rest area in Eagle Bay, making it a nice place to stop. See note about the full TOBIE Trail by the * above.



Eagle Bay Welcome Center

14. Moose River from Rondaxe bridge to North Branch bridge - Easy, pleasant, four-hours one-way paddle. Curvy, downstream and lots of nice beachy areas for picnics, stretching and sunning. For more information on this trail click on the link and search for "Paddling the Moose River": <http://adirondackbasecamp.blogspot.com/> For this trip, two cars are needed or help from one of our local canoe and kayak outfitters to get you to your starting point. For local outfitters, please scroll down.



15. Moose River from North Street Bridge to Old Forge-Thendara Bridge - Easy, family-friendly, four-hour one way trip that does require one short carry around some rapids. For this trip, two cars are needed or help from one of our local canoe and kayak outfitters to get you to your starting point. For local outfitters, please scroll down.

*Note you could opt to do a full day trip from Rondaxe Bridge to Thendara.

16. Paddle from Old Forge Pond to 4th Lake, Inlet's Arrowhead beach- The put-in dock is located next to the Visitor Information Center, right before the covered bridge. You may temporarily park in the Information Center's parking lot to unload your canoe or kayak and all your gear. After you are all unloaded, you will need to drive past the covered bridge and turn right into the parking area for the Pied Piper and The Factory Store.

Please park in this parking lot, but away from the business, and in the parking spaces closer to the pond. After signing in, paddle up the channel through all four lakes. It is about a ten mile paddle. You may want to have another car waiting for you at the other end.

For more information on this paddling route, which is the first leg of the "90-Miler" Adirondack Canoe Classic, and some history about the Fulton Chain of Lakes please click on these links: <http://www.adirondackoutdoorsmagazine.com/stories/news-story/old-forge-paddling/printable>, <http://www.adirondackalmanack.com/2013/07/lakes-history-the-fulton-chain-mail-boats.html> , <http://www.adirondackalmanack.com/2014/01/fulton-chain-steamers-101-beginnings-1876-1895.html>, <http://www.macscanoe.com/adirondack-canoe-classic---the-90-miler.html>



Photo by Kurt Gardner