

Bayley Hazen Connector

An on road scenic bike route between the Cross Vermont Trail and Lamoille Valley Rail Trail

ROUTE GUIDE

The Bayley Hazen Connector (BHC) highlights a south to north on-road route that can be used to join together these two rail trails which run parallel to each other east to west, about 20 miles apart.

Navigate the route by following signs posted at intersections, together with the map and turn by turn directions. The route is entirely on public roads, some of which are paved and the rest are well maintained gravel. To see this information online, and for much more about trails across Vermont, go to crossvermont.org.



Route Sign

MAP KEY



= Bayley Hazen Connector (highlighted on road route)

Showcasing a scenic way to join the **Lamoille Valley Rail Trail** at the Danville Depot with the **Cross Vermont Trail** route on Montpelier & Wells River Rail Trail, in Newbury, at Boltonville Depot trailhead.

..... = Rail Trail; Cross Vt Trail (Montpelier & Wells River Rail trail) across south end of map, LVRT across north end of map.

..... = Cross Vt Trail route on roads (where there is a gap in old railbed)

..... = State Forest trails; multi use, non motorized. (See crossvermont.org for full details.)

— = public roads

P = trailhead parking

DANVILLE = town name



= Public land; State of Vermont Agency of Natural Resources.

TURN BY TURN DIRECTIONS

From **Boltonville Trailhead for Cross Vermont Trail (Montpelier & Wells River Rail Trail)**, turn right onto **Rte 302** then immediately right onto **Boltonville Rd**.

Take Boltonville Rd across the Wells River and bear left, uphill out of Newbury and into Ryegate.

Boltonville Rd merges with **South Bayley Hazen Rd**, continue straight on the paved road.

In Ryegate Center continue straight onto **North Bayley Hazen Rd** (which becomes dirt). (Passing by the larger paved road which bears right and whose name changes to East Rd.)

Just past the Barnet town line continue straight but the road name changes to **Mosquitoville Rd**.

At the south end of Harvey Lake continue straight, but the road name changes to **Harvey Mt Rd**.

Just north of Harvey Lake, turn left onto **West Main St**. Which name changes to **Peacham-Barnet Rd** at the Peacham town line.

Turn right onto **South Main St**. Then just before Peacham village the road name changes to **Bayley Hazen Rd** again; continue straight through the village.

A little ways north of Peacham village, follow the main paved road as it bears right and the name changes to the **Peacham-Danville Rd**. (Passing by where the Bayley-Hazen Rd becomes dirt and bears to the left.)

Just past the Danville town line the road name changes to **Peacham Rd**. Continue straight on through Harvey Hollow to the south side of **Danville village and the old depot trailhead for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail**.

BHC Map



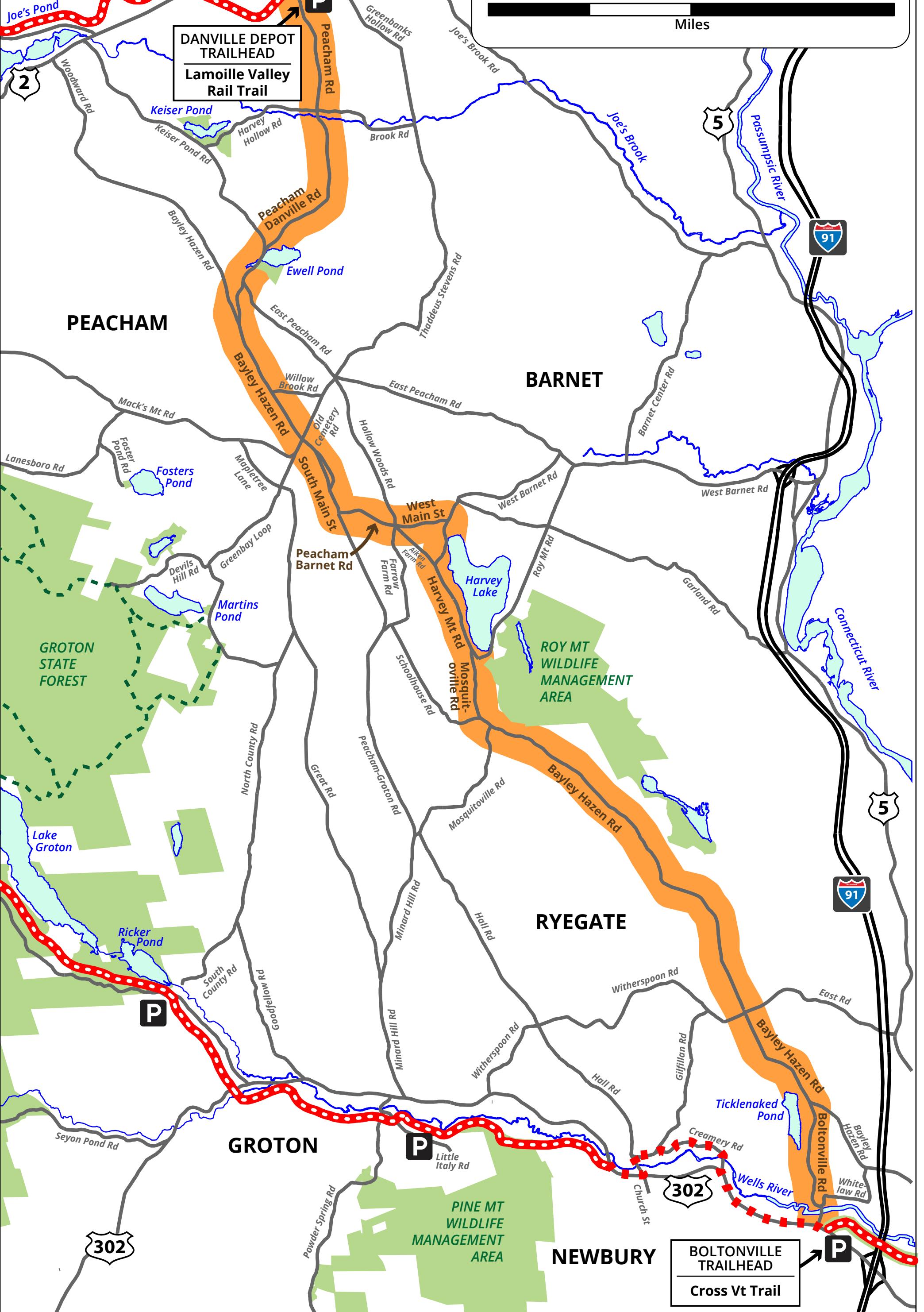
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2.5

Miles

DANVILLE

DANVILLE DEPOT
TRAILHEAD
Lamoille Valley
Rail Trail



The Historic Bayley Hazen Military Road

Why historic? What military? Who were Bayley and Hazen?

"Set about the Road you propose as soon as possible."

~ General George Washington

(in a letter to Jacob Bayley at Newbury, April 1776)

The Bayley Hazen Road was built during the American Revolution, by the rebel colonials, to support invasion of Canada. It was built through what was then a wilderness between the rebel colonies to the south and British Canada to the north. At that time the Wells River was on the northern edge of colonial settlement.

During the war years American rebel strategists repeatedly looked for ways to invade, or at least threaten, Canada. Daunting logistics blocked them. There was no easy way across the intervening open country with plenty of forests, swamps and mountains but no roads able to carry the columns of men and wagons of a marching army.

Unlikely as it seems today, it made sense to people then that the most direct way from New England to Quebec would be a 90 mile road built through the wilderness; starting at Wells River in Newbury and running northwest through a gap in the Green Mountains and on to Quebec.

In 1776 construction was authorized by George Washington himself. The road's course was surveyed by a team of locals including Joseph Susap. He was a Mi'kmaq who lived much of his life near what became the road's route. Joe's Pond is named after him.

The first summer of work was done by 110 ax men hired and led by Newbury militia officer Jacob Bayley. Construction was continued by a regiment of the Continental Army, including many Quebecois who had chosen the rebel side, commanded by Moses Hazen.

They extended the road just 50 miles reaching only as far as a northerly pass through the Green Mountains, ever since called Hazen's Notch. They also built fortified blockhouses alongside the road as they went.

Then work stopped and never resumed, as the attention of the war shifted elsewhere. Ironically the only military use of the road was by British raiders who later discovered it when traveling south. Two colonial soldiers were killed defending one of the blockhouses against these raids.

After the war, the road was quickly taken advantage of by civilians. It was the readily available way to resume moving north and establish further settlements. In addition to repurposing the road itself, initial settlers moved into the old blockhouse forts, converting them into the first homes of the new towns.

Over time the functional significance of the Bayley Hazen road receded as many hundreds and thousands of miles of other roads were built by Vermonters, spider webbing the landscape in the way we see today. However a memory persisted of the Revolutionary War romance of the original. In the 19th and early 20th century local citizens who wanted to memorialize and celebrate stories of their earliest days commissioned numerous monuments and markers along the old road. These are still in place and searching for them is a part of the fun of exploring the road today.

In recent decades interest in the Bayley Hazen Road has only grown as it became a tour route; even though the physical road exists now only in scattered segments. Cyclists, Sunday drivers, and others out to enjoy a backroads trip make a scavenger hunt for the remnant pieces.

Numerous guides to the full road are available, learn more at crossvermont.org.

The Cross Vermont Trail (Montpelier & Wells River Rail Trail)

Cross Vermont Trail celebrates local trails and works to link them together to make a state wide network following the Winooski and Wells Rivers.

We are working to save the old Montpelier & Wells River Railroad where possible and seeking to build new trail where needed to reconnect lost segments of the old bed. The Montpelier & Wells River ran trains until 1956 and then went out of business. Ownership of the old railbed has since divided among many landowners.

Cross Vermont Trail is a non-government non-profit association funded by charitable contributions. Detailed maps and trail descriptions at crossvermont.org.



The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail

At 94 miles long, the LVRT is the longest rail trail in New England and connects 18 towns from St. Johnsbury to Swanton. It is an all season multi purpose trail. The LVRT is owned by the State of Vermont as a "rail banked" property. The railroad ran trains until the 1990s and the full length of the old railroad has been saved in public ownership by the State.

The trail is operated by Vermont Agency of Transportation as a part of the "Vermont Rail Trail System." More information at railtrails.vermont.gov.



VTXL bikepacking route

The VTXL bikepacking route is a mapped guide to public roads that can be strung together to make long multi day bicycle tours. In all it runs crosswise the length of Vermont, from Canada in the northeast to Massachusetts in the southwest. For more information go to bikepacking.com.



Locally, the VTXL parallels and overlaps with the Bayley Hazen Connector. It provides an alternate to the BHC that prioritizes dirt roads over pavement, but which skips some other attractions. South to North, the route is: Starting on Route 302 in South Ryegate, go north on Church Street, right on Creamery Rd, left on Gilfillan Rd, left on Bayley Hazen Rd which turns in Mosquitoville Rd at Barnet town line, then left on Schoolhouse Rd, right on Farrow Farm Rd, straight onto Hollow Woods Rd, right on Thaddeus Stevens Rd which name changes to Greenbanks Hollow Rd, finally junctioning with the LVRT in Danville at the crossing with Joe's Brook Rd.