

WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL: WOONASQUATUCKET RESERVOIR & STILLWATER POND



| MAP LEGEND | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| ★ RIVER ACCESS | ● POINTS OF INTEREST | — ROADS |
| ■ WATER | --- WATER TRAIL ROUTE | - - - WALKING TRAIL |
| ▲ PORTAGE/DAM | ■ CONSERVATION LAND | |

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| LEVEL | Beginner |
| START/END | Put-in on the west side of Woonasquatucket Reservoir |
| RIVER MILES | 2½ to 5 miles |
| TIME | 2 to 4 hours |
| DESCRIPTION | Open lake |
| SCENERY | Wooded hills, with some houses and roads |
| GPS | N 41° 54' 6.14", W 71° 32' 45.24" |

WOONASQUATUCKET RESERVOIR PADDLE

At 300 acres and 2.3 miles long, Woonasquatucket Reservoir in Smithfield is the largest water body in the Woonasquatucket River watershed. The wooded shores, islands, and scenic hills make it a lovely place for a paddle. The reservoir can develop dangerous waves if there is too much wind. Even if the waves are not large enough to be dangerous it can be a lot of work paddling against the wind. Check the weather forecast, and pay attention to changing weather conditions once you are on the water.

The shoreline at the put-in on the west side ★ of the reservoir is sand and gravel and is a better place to launch from than the one on the east side ★. On the east side the shore is lined with rip-rap except for a relatively steep concrete ramp (not a ramp for trailers). There is a boat ramp at the west side put-in. Or launch your hand-carried boats at the Smithfield Conservation Commission ★ on the southern arm of the reservoir. Because of the small driveway and parking lot, trailers are not permitted at the Conservation Commission. There is a wheelchair accessible fishing dock at the Conservation Commission.

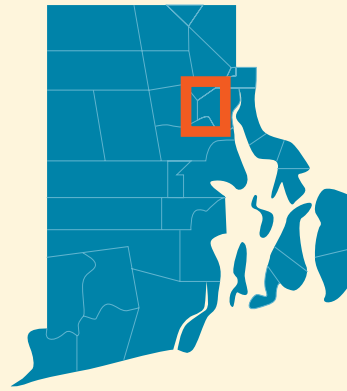
From put-ins 1 or 2, you can paddle up to the north end of the reservoir ④, where the Woonasquatucket River flows in. You can land and have a picnic lunch on the big rock next to the mouth of the river – just a rocky brook here. An informal trail on the east side of the river leads to Mowry Conservation Area. Watch out for poison ivy!

The southern arm of the reservoir ⑥ is also an interesting paddle, but it is a tight squeeze getting under the two pipes that run under the Pleasant View Avenue bridge ⑤, so if you just want to paddle the southern arm put in at the Conservation Commission. The southern arm is narrower than the main body of the reservoir and the wetlands along the shore are a good place to look for birds.



PHOTO: BRUCE HOOKE


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| LEVEL | Intermediate |
| START/END | DEM fishing access site at dam on the east side of Woonasquatucket Reservoir. |
| RIVER MILES | 2 miles round trip |
| TIME | 2 hours |
| DESCRIPTION | Narrow, winding, slow-moving river opening to pond |
| SCENERY | Steep, wooded hills |
| GPS | N 41° 54' 32.60", W 71° 32' 30.73" |







HISTORICAL NOTE

Woonasquatucket Reservoir was built in 1910 to provide a reliable water supply through the summer for the mills down river. It was never a drinking water reservoir. The WRWC runs paddle tours every summer and fall on four unique and beautiful sections of the Woonasquatucket River. See the full schedule at wrwc.org/events.php


STILLWATER POND PADDLE

From below the dam  on the east side of Woonasquatucket Reservoir you can paddle down the Woonasquatucket River to Stillwater Pond. This paddle takes you through the remotest section of the Woonasquatucket accessible to canoes and kayaks.


The put-in is from rock rip-rap. Be careful! The footing is unstable and the rocks are sharp! To get to the put-in from the parking lot off Farnum Pike  follow the concrete path down to the base of the dam and you will see the rip-rap area in front of you. Paddling down river you'll soon go under Farnum Pike. Then the river becomes very narrow and overhung with trees. If the water levels are low, some areas here will be rocky . If it is unusually high there can be enough current to make the paddling more challenging. In 1/3 mile you will pass under the high arch of the Stillwater Viaduct, built by the WPA during the Great Depression . Here the river slowly starts to open out until you reach Stillwater Pond, 3/4 mile from the put-in. Since it is small and has no major roads near it, Stillwater Pond is usually peaceful.



In the southern corner of the pond there is a good place to take out  just a little before the dam. The Stillwater Scenic Trail runs close to the shore here. Heading southeast along the trail takes you through the woods near a rocky spillway that drains Stillwater Pond. Watch out for poison ivy!

Once you have explored Stillwater Pond, turn around and paddle back up to the put-in. For the last 1/3 mile, from Stillwater Viaduct to the put-in, you will be paddling against some current

but usually not a lot. However, if the river is high there can be too much current to paddle against. In that case take out at the south end of the viaduct , walk under it up to the Stillwater Trail, turn right and follow the trail back to Farnum Pike. Turn right and go 1/4 mile up the pike to the put-in.

DIRECTIONS

Take exit 8B off I-295 (north or south) in Smithfield. This will put you on Route 7 (Douglas Pike) heading north. In about 3/4 mile, at the second light, turn left onto Washington Highway (Route 116). Go 1 mile to a T-junction. To get to the put-in near the dam on the east side of the reservoir  turn right here onto Farnum Pike (Route 104) and look for a DEM fishing access parking lot on the left.

To get to the other put-ins, turn left at the T-junctions, go 0.2 miles and turn right into Pleasant View Avenue (Route 116). This will take you across the reservoir on a causeway. At the end of the causeway turn right onto Log Road. To get to the put-in at the Conservation Commission  go 0.4 miles and turn left on Waterview Drive, go 0.1 miles and turn right into the small drive for the Conservation Commission. To get to the put-in on the west side  continue on Pleasant View Avenue across the reservoir and turn right onto Log Road. In 0.2 miles bear right at the fork to stay on Log Road. In another 0.2 miles look for a parking lot on your right. For launching hand-carried boats, use the second parking lot if possible to leave the first lot free for vehicles with trailers.

ALWAYS WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET AND CARRY A WHISTLE OR OTHER SOUND PRODUCING DEVICE, PREFERABLY ATTACHED TO YOUR LIFE JACKET. PADDLERS SHOULD CHECK WATER LEVEL AND TIDES, WEATHER, AND WATERWAY CONDITIONS PRIOR TO EVERY TRIP. REMOVE WHAT YOU BRING, CLEAN UP MORE IF YOU CAN. PLEASE RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY. REPORT ANY PROBLEMS YOU ENCOUNTER TO THE WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IF APPROPRIATE.



The Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council, a 501c3 non-profit, works closely with federal, state, and local partners in the watershed communities of Gloucester, North Smithfield, Smithfield, Johnston, Providence and North Providence to revitalize the river and reclaim it as a natural, historic, recreational, and economic asset for Rhode Island. www.wrwc.org

The Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP) protects and preserves Narragansett Bay and its watershed through partnerships that conserve and restore natural resources, enhance water quality and promote community involvement. NBEP supports the RI Blueways Alliance which is dedicated to creating a comprehensive water trail network to link Rhode Island's rivers, lakes and ponds to Narragansett Bay and to the rivers in Massachusetts that flow into the bay. The trail will be used to promote safety, conservation, recreation and economic development. www.ExploreRI.org



Watershed organizations throughout the Narragansett Bay watershed showcase paddling opportunities on downloadable paddle maps. The full list of maps is available at ExploreRI.org.

