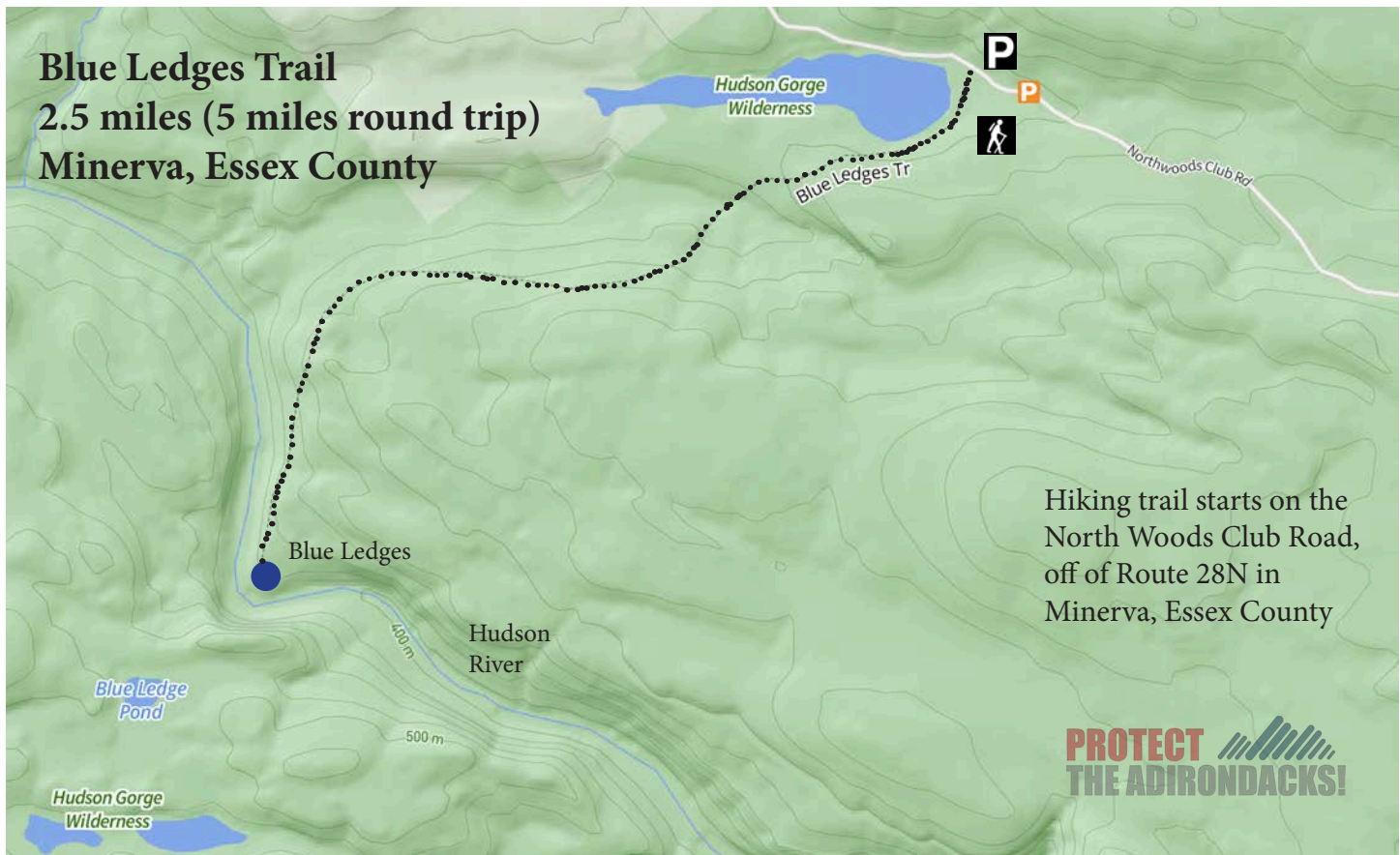


## Blue Ledges Trail



The 2.5-mile trail to the Blue Ledges passes through beautiful forests and then drops steeply to the Hudson River. The trail is located in the public Forest Preserve in the Hudson Gorge Wilderness area. The trailhead is located on the North Woods Club Road in Minerva, Essex County, off of Route 28N. The trail leads to the riverside, with great views of the famous Blue Ledges cliffs. There is a small beach and large boulders for exploring up and down the river. The area is popular for swimming in the summer.

The trail begins across the road from the parking area on the North Woods Club Road, crossing over a small stream before reaching the trail register. After that, it continues south and skirts around a pond that can be seen from the trail. It then breaks away from the pond and continues directly south towards the Hudson River. The trail is in relatively good condition, though there are multiple muddy areas, some with stepping stones placed for crossing. The surrounding forest is mixed northern hardwoods.





Close to two miles along the trail, it reaches the rim of the Hudson Gorge. The Hudson River is a few hundred feet below, but not visible through the trees. The trail turns left and follows the river downstream and then descend into the river valley. This is the steepest section of the hike. The trail continues for the final half mile before reaching the Hudson River. There are long sandy stretches with large boulders on the riverside. Towering white pines, cedars and hemlocks line the river.

The return trip is similarly easy, with only the short uphill stretch near the river to climb. The hike is very easy and suitable for anyone who is able to walk the full five miles and can hike a small hill section at the end, and the destination offers a number of activities that families, or any hiking group, would enjoy.

**Help Protect the Forest Preserve and Be Prepared When You Hike:** Please follow “carry in, carry out” rules for all trash and follow other **Leave No Trace** principles when hiking in the public Forest Preserve and other wild areas. The seven Leave No Trace principles are: 1) Plan ahead and prepare; 2) Stay on hiking trails and camp at designated areas; 3) Dispose of human waste and trash properly; 4) Leave what you find; 5) Minimize campfires; 6) Respect wildlife; 7) Respect other hikers. **Educated and prepared hikers do not damage the environment or need search and rescue unless injured.**