

Hiking Zealand Trail

A rigorous full day's hike can be had by starting at the Hale Brook Trail ascending Mt. Hale, descending to the AMC Zealand Falls hut and Zealand Valley via the Lend-A-Hand trail, then out the Zealand Trail and Road. This is an 8.6 mile loop hike and a full day should be set aside for it. There is approximately 1.0 mile of road walking from the end of Zealand Trail to the Hale Brook Trail parking lot.

Zealand Trail

Access: Route 302, turn at U.S.F.S. Zealand Campground, up Zealand Road 3.6 miles to trailhead and hiker parking lot.

Trail Beginning: 2100 ft. elevation (636 m). Trail begins at the end of the Zealand Road across the Hoxie Brook Bridge.

Trail Ending: 2460 ft. elevation (745 m). Trail ends at the junction of the Ethan Pond Trail and the Twinway, 0.2 miles below Zealand Falls Hut.

Length: 2.5 miles (4.1 km) junction of Twinway Trail.

Camping: To limit resource damage and enhance the recreation experience of all users, the following regulations are in effect:

1. Camping & fires are prohibited above treeline.
2. Camping & fires are prohibited within .25 miles of Zealand Road.
3. Camping & fires are prohibited within .25 miles of Zealand Falls Hut.
4. Fire permits are not required to use wood or charcoal fires within non-restricted areas. However, you are responsible for any fire you kindle and are subject to a fine and any suppression costs if the fire escapes.

The Zealand Trail leaves from the hiker parking lot at the end of Zealand Road, 3.6 miles from U.S. Route 302. The trail follows a recently built logging road for 600 ft., crossing Hoxie Brook Bridge then striking into the woods at the terminus off the road. At this point, the trail begins to follow the grade of the original Zealand Valley Railroad. After approximately 0.7 miles the trail takes a sharp right turn where the Zealand River is accessible through a clearing to the left. For 2 miles, the Zealand Trail gradually ascends through northern hardwood forests, overgrown meadows and swampland. At 2.3 miles, the A-Z Trail to Mt. Avalon and Crawford enters on the left. The Zealand Trail passes to the east of Zealand Pond ending at the junction of the Twinway Trail. At this point the Ethan Pond Trail continues straight ahead through Zealand Notch to Thoreau Falls and Ethan Pond Shelter. The Twinway trail to Zealand Falls Hut enters to the right. The first 0.1 mile of Twinway Trail is flat. The remaining 0.1 mile is steep and rocky with a spur trail entering left to Zealand Falls. The A.M.C. Zealand Falls Hut is located on the Twinway Trail just above the falls. Water is readily available but should be boiled or chemically treated as it is untested.