

Willington, Connecticut

Starting at Moose Meadow in Ruby-Fenton Park/Conservation Land in Willington, we find the way of the Old Connecticut Path across Willington following long forgotten roads and pathways. The route through Willington passes through deep woods along deeply worn trails that show the effects of heavy travel during the early years.



Fenton-Ruby Park - Willington, CT

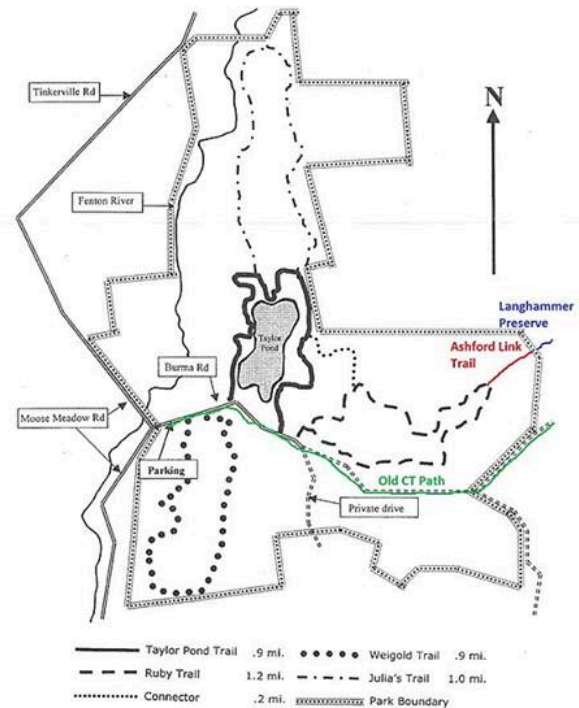


The Fenton-Ruby Park and Wildlife Preserve is a hidden gem to be discovered within a few miles of I-84. Fenton-Ruby Park includes a portion of the Old Connecticut Path that links the Fenton-Ruby with the Langhammer Woods preserve in Ashford. The two preserves share a connection along the Old Connecticut Path.

The forest is mostly mixed deciduous trees, including maple, oak, hickory, and beech, with some hemlock and pine. Most of the area was once grazing land for farms, as can be seen by the many stone walls. The park also includes Taylor Pond, a beaver pond, and some grasslands to the west of the Fenton River, as well as wetland along the river.

8: Fenton-Ruby Park: Burma Road, Willington, CT

- Town of Willington Conservation Commission
- Walking Trail System – 4.2 miles
- Ponds & Streams
- Boardwalks
- Self-Guided Geology Walk
- Distance: Variable
- Difficulty: 3-4



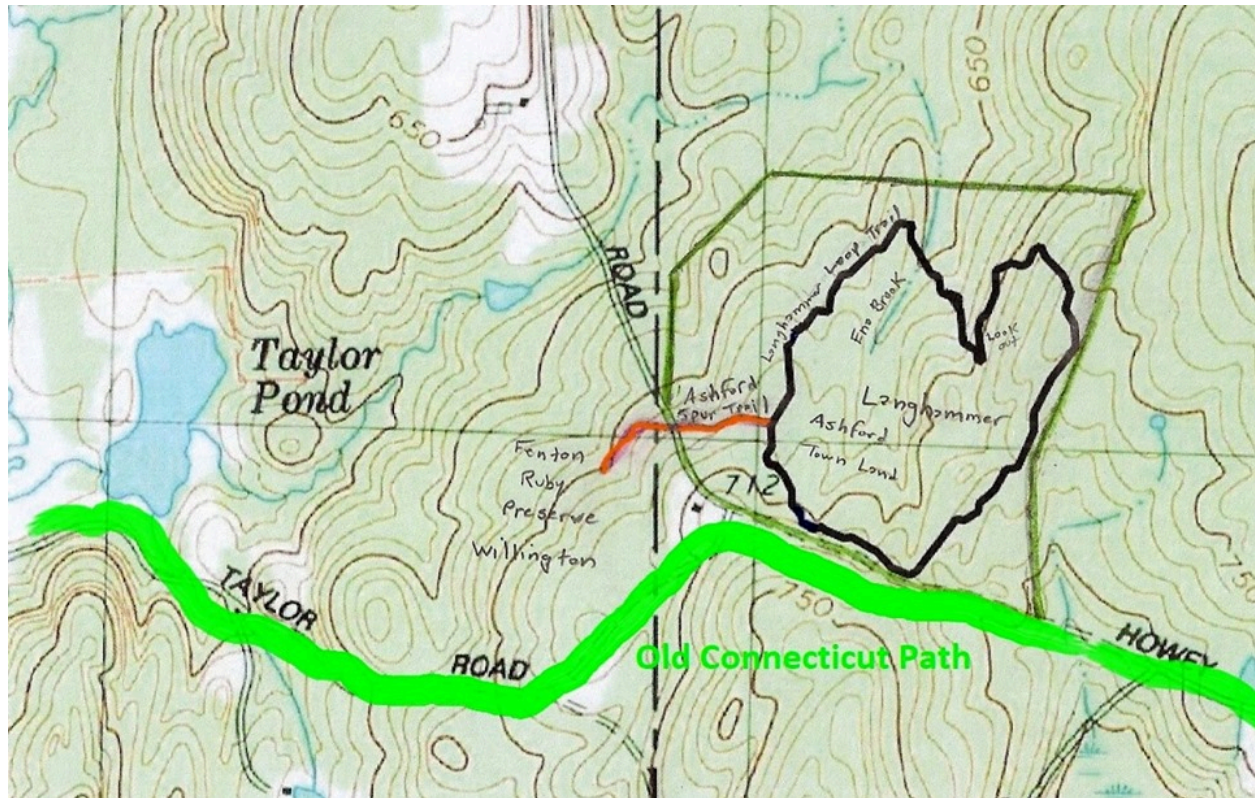
The new Ashford Link trail (red) connects Fenton-Ruby Park in Willington, CT with Langhammer Woods in Ashford. The Old Connecticut Path (green) runs through Fenton-Ruby Park and serves as part of the connection between Ashford and Willington conservation areas. For more information about Fenton-Ruby Park and direction, visit the Old Connecticut Path website at <https://sites.google.com/a/oldconnecticutpath.com/oldconnecticutpath/6-0-tours-walks-along-the-old-connecticut-path/ocp-walks-willington-ct>

Fenton-Ruby Park in Willington, CT offers a great place to walk along the Old Connecticut Path. A cold winter's day in the quiet space offers a respite from a noisy world.



To preview your walk here or plan a visit, see the videos at
<https://sites.google.com/a/oldconnecticutpath.com/oldconnecticutpath/move-1/2-75-finding-the-way-to-moose-meadow>

For an enjoyable circuit walk, follow the Ruby Trail and Langhammer Loop Trail to Ashford. Return to Willington along the Old Connecticut Path.

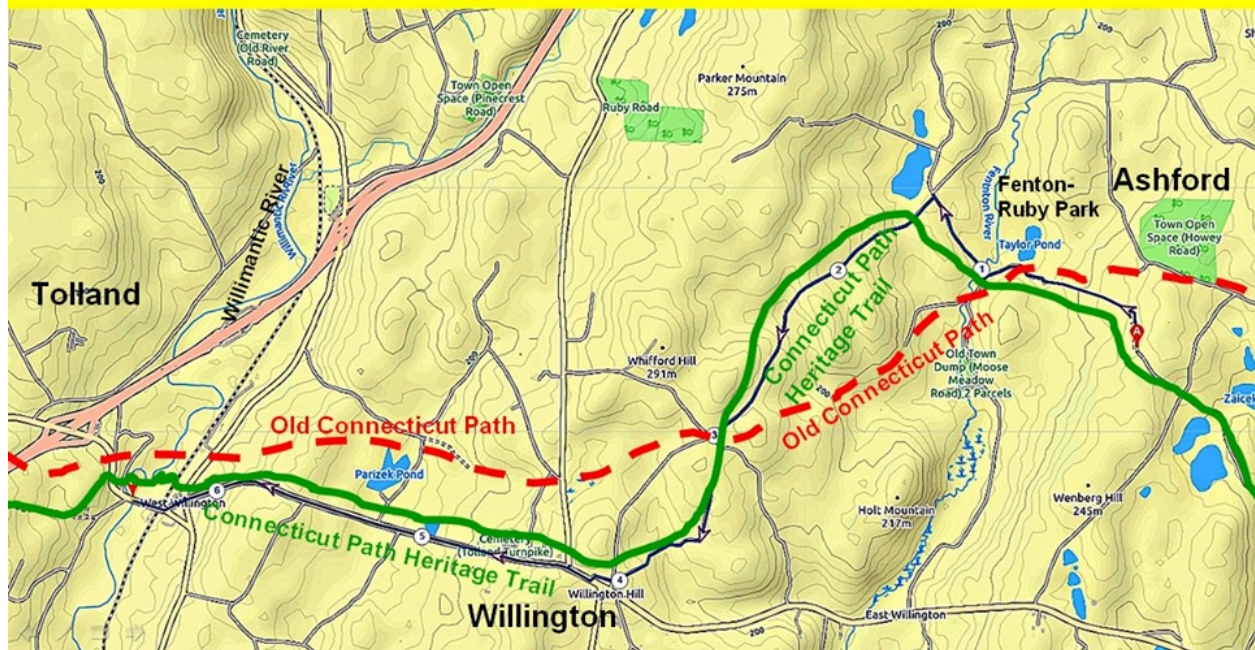


A guided walk along the Old Connecticut Path at Fenton-Ruby Park brought follows the footsteps of Connecticut pioneers.



The proposed Connecticut Path Heritage Trail enters Willington from Ashford along an ancient dirt road leading to Fenton-Ruby Park. A trail link and old road connects the Langhammer Woods preserve in Ashford with Fenton-Ruby Park in Willington along the Old Connecticut Path.

Connecticut Path Heritage Trail Willington, Connecticut



The route of the Old Connecticut Path crossed the Fenton River and climbed toward Willington Hill before descending to the Willimantic River. Much of the land between Fenton-Ruby and the Willimantic River is now privately owned with no developed trails. There is a potential for trail links along the Old Connecticut Path to be established in the future through community and land owner cooperation. Until further trail link westward are established, the proposed Connecticut Path Heritage Trail will follow local road to Willington Center and state highway to the Willimantic River crossing.

We visit a colonial era bridge crossing site on the Willimantic River and head downstream to explore the fording place where travelers on the Old Connecticut Path crossed on foot. This segment's route of travel ends in Tolland at the crossroads of the ancient and modern routes from Boston to Hartford.

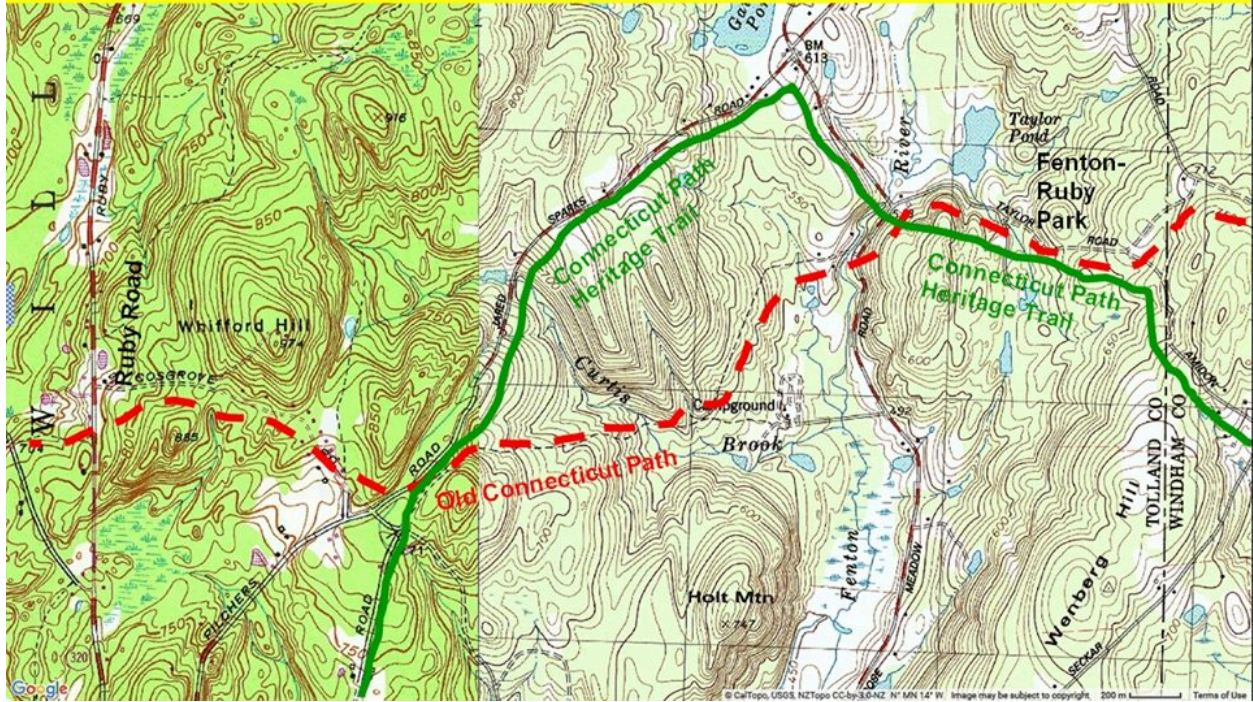


To view the video tour of the route from Moose Meadow across Willington to the Willimantic River Crossing in Tolland, click on the link Willington to the Willimantic River <http://youtu.be/Cn2kkfQkTXE>.

For more information about the route of the Old Connecticut Path across Willington, visit <https://sites.google.com/a/oldconnecticutpath.com/oldconnecticutpath/move-1/2-80-moose-meadow-to-the-willimantic-river-crossing-willington-tolland-ct>

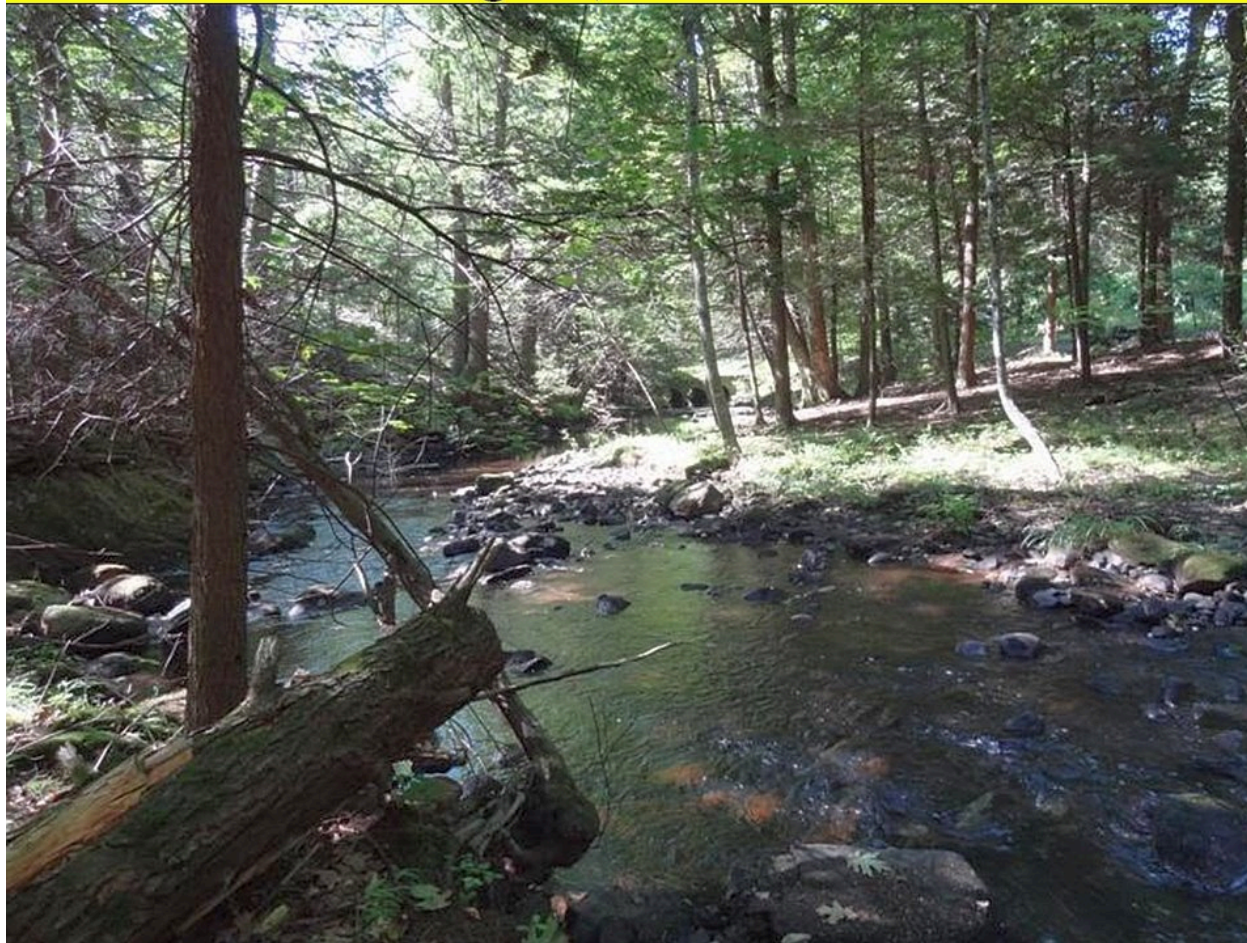
The Old Connecticut Path crossed the Fenton River and climbed towards Willington Hill along an ancient road, now closed, that can be seen as a dashed line from the Campground (Moose Meadow Camping Resort) to Jared Sparks Road. It likely continued along the corridor of Cosgrove Road.

Old Connecticut Path Fenton-Ruby Park to Ruby Road Willington, Connecticut



The Fenton River is a beautiful stream that can be easily crossed after the spring snow melt has passed.

Fenton River crossing Old Connecticut Path Willington, Connecticut



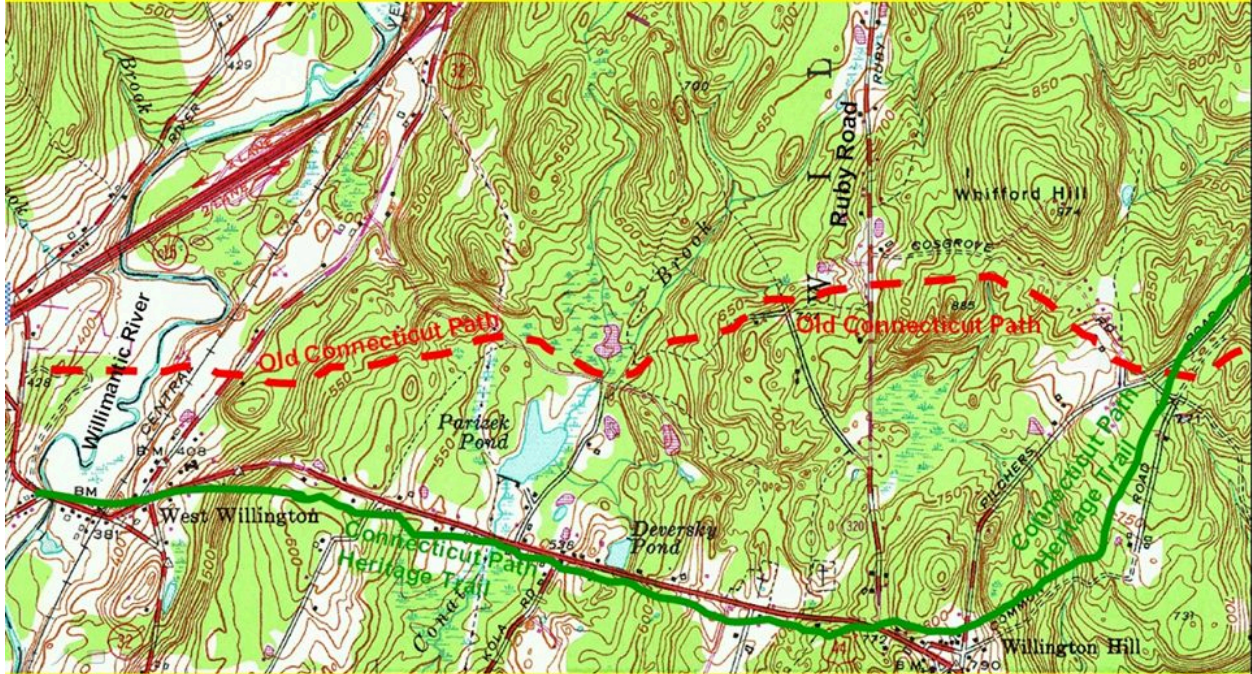
The Old Connecticut Path followed an ancient road that goes steeply uphill along Curtis Brook to reach Jared Sparks Road in Willington.

Old Connecticut Path Willington, Connecticut



Continuing west across Willington, segments of the likely route of the Old Connecticut Path remain hidden in the woods between residential developments.

Old Connecticut Path Ruby Road to Willimantic River Willington, Connecticut



The old roadway crossing Eldrege Mills Road is still evident, but has been adapted for use as residential driveways. The deeply worn road way west continues through the woods down hill to Trask Road.

An unexpected pleasure can be found at the Connecticut Welcome Center located on Interstate 84 westbound in Willington. A short path from the Visitor Center leads down to the banks of the Willimantic River to the site of the "Red Bridge" on the Center Turnpike near the crossing place of the Old Connecticut Path. This area is a little gem for those who need a quiet break from driving on the Interstate.

Westbound travelers on Interstate 84 may enjoy a walk along the Willimantic River from the Connecticut Welcome Center located in Willington. For more information and a short video introduction, click her to go to Willimantic River Walk - I-84 Welcome Center
<https://sites.google.com/a/oldconnecticutpath.com/oldconnecticutpath/move-1/2-80-moose-meadow-to-the-willimantic-river-crossing-willington-tolland-ct/willimantic-river-walk---i-84-welcome-center>



The short video (1 min:48 sec) provides a brief introduction to the path along the Willimantic River leading to the site of the "Red Bridge" that carried the Center Turnpike over the river.



Note: This video is low definition to keep the file size small. A high definition video will be filmed and produced at a future date.

<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B-OI0crUyMGTdmdqZ3JMaHpZamc/view>



Before bridges were built, the Willimantic River could be a dangerous river to cross during spring runoff and after heavy rain storms. The Old Connecticut Path crossed the Willimantic River a short distance down stream from the I-84 visitor center where the flood plain widens to create a shallower river bed.