

# CATHANCE RIVER TRAILS

## Cathance River Nature Preserve & Head of Tide Park

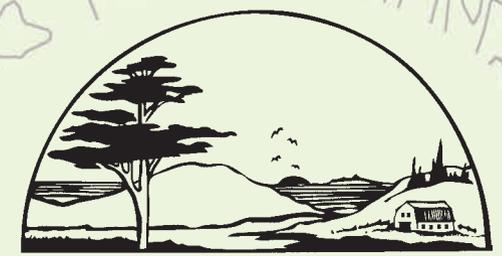
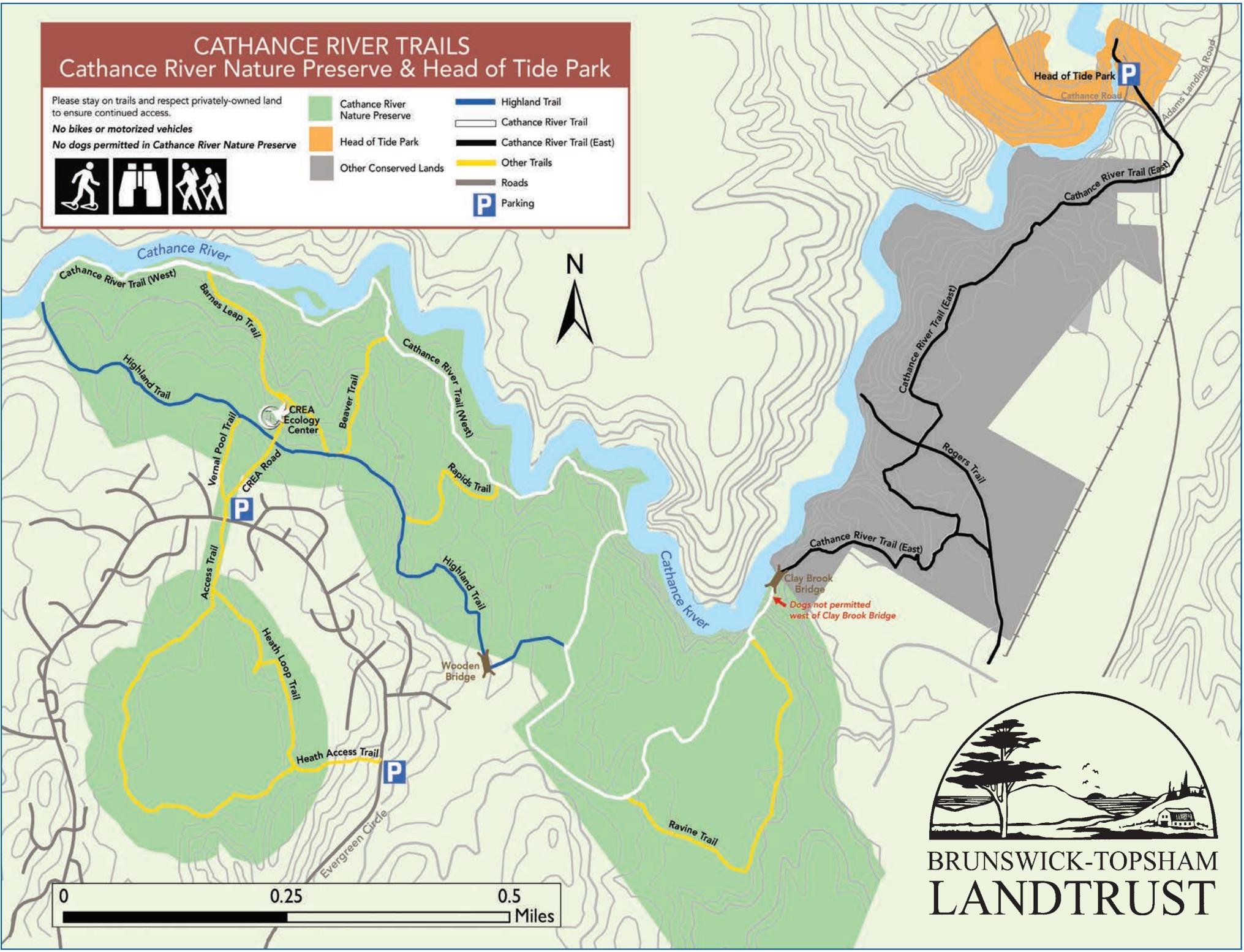
Please stay on trails and respect privately-owned land to ensure continued access.

No bikes or motorized vehicles

No dogs permitted in Cathance River Nature Preserve



- Cathance River Nature Preserve
- Head of Tide Park
- Other Conserved Lands
- Highland Trail
- Cathance River Trail
- Cathance River Trail (East)
- Other Trails
- Roads
- P Parking



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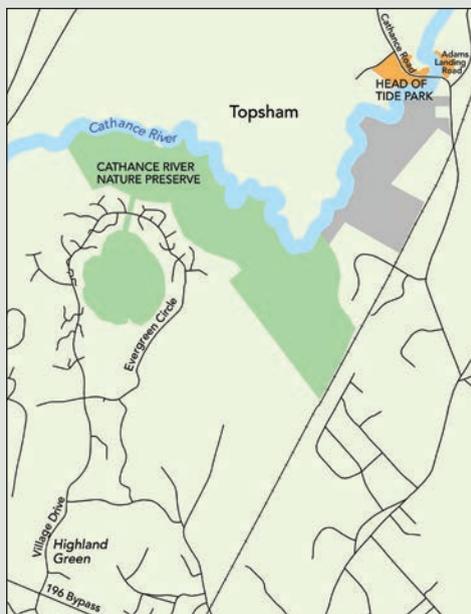
## Cathance River

The Cathance River is one of the region's hidden gems, retaining a remote feel despite its proximity to Topsham's busy community center. The public and private conservation lands traversed by the Cathance Trails are crucial to the health of the Cathance River, which flows to the ecologically significant, globally unique, and economically valuable Merrymeeting Bay. Due in large part to the extensive areas of wild rice and excellent fish spawning and nursery habitat, the tidal freshwater marshes of the Cathance and Merrymeeting Bay support thousands of water-dependent migratory birds, large raptors, and over 60 species of fish. The Cathance River Trails provide the opportunity to observe the wild rapids of the Cathance, have the chance to see the many wild animals that call this area home, and visit unique habitats such as a heath and a freshwater tidal marsh.

The 230-acre **Cathance River Nature Preserve** was created in 2001 when the developer of Highland Green donated a conservation easement on the parcel to the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust (BTLT). With that donation BTLT was able to work with Highland Green to create and manage over five miles of trails on the conserved land. In addition, a valuable new community organization was created, the Cathance River Education Alliance (CREA), which promotes ecological awareness and nature-based learning from its Ecology Center at the Cathance River Nature Preserve.

Cathance River Nature Preserve was the catalyst for BTLT's effort to establish a conservation corridor along the Cathance River to protect habitat, water quality, and recreation along the river. Over 1,100 acres have now been protected and nine miles of trails created within the watershed, including the connection to Head of Tide Park via the locally designed and fabricated aluminum pedestrian Clay Brook Bridge.

**Head of Tide Park** is a collaborative project of the Town of Topsham and the BTLT. The Park protects and enhances the head of tide area on the Cathance River, including a spectacular fifteen-foot waterfall, and provides picnic areas, toilet facilities, parking, viewing of the waterfall, and hand-carry boat access to both the upstream and tidal portions of the river.



### DIRECTIONS TO PARKING AT HIGHLAND GREEN

To access the Cathance Trails via Cathance River Nature Preserve, park at Highland Green Retirement Community in Topsham. From the Route 201 – Route 196 intersection in Topsham, take Route 196 east (Coastal Connector/Brunswick-Topsham Bypass) to the first set of lights. Turn left at the lights into Highland Green on Village Drive. Follow Village Drive to the golf clubhouse, then turn right and follow signs for Hiker Parking on dirt road. Park at the kiosk.

### DIRECTIONS TO PARKING AT HEAD OF TIDE PARK

To access the Cathance Trails via Head of Tide Park, follow the Cathance Road in Topsham to where it crosses the river. Parking is located at the Park on both the north and south sides of Cathance Road. The trailhead is near the bathrooms and kiosk on the northern side of the road.

### TRAIL USE RESTRICTIONS

- Open dawn to dusk
- No off-road vehicles, bicycles, snowmobiles, or horses
- No fires or camping
- Stay on marked trails
- No hunting or trapping
- Observe posted trail rules
- No dogs permitted on Cathance River Nature Preserve (west of Clay Brook Bridge)
- On-leash dogs permitted (dog waste removal required) ONLY east of Clay Brook Bridge

*Most of the Cathance Trails are located on privately-owned conserved land that is made available for public use. Please respect use restrictions to ensure continued public access.*



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Online maps available at [www.btl.org/trailmap](http://www.btl.org/trailmap)

### OUR MISSION

To preserve, protect, and steward the cherished landscapes and rich natural resources of our communities, to provide access for recreation, and to support local agriculture and other traditional land uses, now and for generations to come.