

Re-Supply Information--2007

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Introduction:

A few comments about the information provided below: The purpose of this article is to provide some suggestions and possibilities for prospective Appalachian Trail thru or long-distance hikers, and to provide advice on such things as Re-Supply of food and equipment; information on mileage and distances, and how long particular stretches of the Trail will take to hike; some lodging information, and some other suggestions, tips, and other ideas that hikers might find useful.

This is NOT intended to be a blue-print, framework, or manual for anyone to plan their hike by. There is no one "right" way to hike the A.T.; no one "right" way to plan your schedule or hiking itinerary; no one "right" way to re-supply yourself. Something like 9,500 men and women have hiked the A.T. in its entirety, and no two have done it the same way. It'd be presumptuous in the extreme for any one to claim that's there only one correct way to plan or execute your hike. There isn't.

So this isn't a blueprint, and shouldn't be treated as one. It isn't meant to be rigidly adhered to, and nobody is suggesting that deviating from these ideas or suggestions would be a mistake. On the contrary, people have to find out works for THEM, and the information contained here is merely what I discovered over the years what worked for ME, based on my own experiences, and conversations with, or observations of thousands of other hikers.

Nearly all of the businesses or hiker service providers that are named here are known to me personally: I've either visited them, patronized them, or both, and usually, on several occasions at least. Of the places or locations that I have NOT personally visited or experienced, but merely know what I've heard from others, I will always make this clear. But by and large, these are places, businesses, and facilities that I know well.

In NO cases have I been compensated or paid for providing favorable commentary about any business or service; on the very rare occasions where I choose to omit mentioning or discussing a service provider, or fail to provide a positive reference or recommendation, this is based on my own feelings and experience. Different people have different perceptions of different places. Over the years, I've always tried to keep an open mind, and I advise others to do likewise. Also, if I fail to mention a particular place, this absolutely does not mean that there's anything wrong with it. There are hundreds of businesses and services that cater to A.T. hikers, or that hikers can avail themselves of, and there are new ones every year. And there are plenty of older ones that I've never seen or somehow managed to miss. It is inevitable, then, that there will be some places and businesses that will be left out of this article, and it should not be inferred that my doing so is necessarily deliberate, or intended to steer hikers away from anywhere. Listing every single facility or business on or near the A.T. would be impossible.

The information below is being published in February 2007. Many of the 2007 hikers will be hiking until October of that year, and even later if they are hiking Southbound. This means that some of the information here will be close to a year old by the time hikers reach certain locations and encounter certain businesses and service providers.

Hikers should be aware that in the course of a calendar year, there are always changes on the A.T. New places open with little fanfare or announcement. Places that have taken care of hikers for years suddenly decide to close. Owners change, as well as management policies. Places that catered to hikers for years might decide they wish to go after a different clientele. Prices for goods and services change frequently, and they very seldom go down. Hikers that use the information below when planning their trip need to be aware of all this, so prepare for the unexpected.

This article is as accurate as I could make it as of its writing and publication, but neither the author nor any website that re-prints any or all of this information can be held responsible if businesses or service providers aren't what you expect them to be when you arrive there. The Trail is always changing, and the prudent hiker knows this, and is always capable of keeping some flexibility, and will change their plans or itinerary based on what circumstances demand.

Hikers planning to re-supply in whole or in part by mail need to do careful research: If a published guidebook tells you that a particular place receives and holds hiker mail, or is open thru a particular date in the year, then this information is probably reliable. But if one has any doubts, especially as regarding whether or not a place accepts hiker mail and packages, or if you expect to be hiking very early or very late in the hiking season, it would be wise to contact these places BEFORE your mail is sent. A few phone calls or E-Mails ahead of time can save a lot of grief later on.

It is suggested that people use the most current guidebooks available when doing their planning. A book just a few years old will omit many things, and may well contain errors. There is some excellent information available in the "Articles" section of <http://www.whiteblaze.net/> that gives all sorts of suggestions on how to send and receive mail while hiking: There is information on labeling and addressing; information on the best way to ship things; suggestions on how certain items should be mailed, etc.

A few quick suggestions of my own:

- Whenever possible, try and send mail/parcels to NON Post Office locations, such as motels, hiker hostels, Outfitters, etc. These places are open 7 days a week, including holidays, so you'll have easier access to your mail, and less chance of arriving in a town and finding the P.O. closed.
- Make sure you carry a list of all the places you expect to receive mail, so you won't overlook any, nor will you go into town thinking you have mail there, when in fact, you don't.
- If a particular box contains something vital, such as a new credit card, eyeglasses, medications, maps, etc., make sure you know which parcel this is. Hikers fre-

quently skip mail stops, or have stuff “bumped” ahead from one location to another; before doing this, you’ll want to know exactly what’s in each box, so you don’t skip a box that contains something important.

- ☑ Make sure your “base camp” person at home has their own copy of the Companion or Handbook, as it’ll contain all sorts of information on where you’ll be staying; where one can send you mail; phone numbers and contact info on all sorts of businesses, facilities, gear manufacturers, etc. It’ll make it easier for folks to keep track of your progress, in case they need to find you, meet up with you somewhere on or near the Trail, etc.

Because I assume that virtually 100% of people will be using one of the principal A.T. guidebooks such as the Thru-Hiker’s Companion or Thru Hikers Handbook both before and during their hikes, in almost every case, I have NOT provided detailed information on the places I mention, such as addresses, telephone numbers, etc. All of this sort of information is available in these guidebooks.

If the information provided below proves useful to anyone hiking in 2007, I’d be delighted to hear about it. Likewise, if anyone feels that there are significant mistakes or omissions here, I’d like to hear about that, too, so these lapses and errors can be noted, in order to improve future versions of this article.

Finally, distances and hiking times between Re-Supply points are based on my own personal experiences as well as observation of other hikers. Most of my hikes lasted approximately 180 days. Hikers planning longer or shorter trips will need to adjust their scheduling and re-supply planning accordingly. A few weeks into the trip, hikers will have a fairly good idea of how long it’ll take them to cover a particular stretch of Trail, and will develop a good feeling about how much food is required, but it’s always a good idea to carry a little extra, especially early in the trip, in case a section of the Trail, for whatever reason, takes longer to cover than you’d planned.

PART ONE: SPRINGER MT. TO DAMASCUS,VA

- ☑ One should plan to arrive at Amicalola Falls State Park fully supplied and ready to hike. The park visitor center has very limited hiker supplies, and little food other than drinks and snacks.
- ☑ I generally leave Springer with 3-4 days worth of food/supplies, which is sufficient to get from there to Neels Gap, which is presently 30.5 miles from the summit of Springer.

If you are planning to hike from Amicalola Falls State Park to the summit of Springer, and spend your first night on or near the summit, you’ll need to bring a day’s extra. Likewise, if you anticipate a really slow start, i.e. less than 6-8 miles day, you may wish to bring a bit extra. But in most cases, 3-4 days should be sufficient; resist the temptation to start with too much stuff.

- ☑ It is possible to go into the town of Suches from Woody Gap (19.9 miles from Springer) and re-supply overnight there, but this is unnecessary for most folks. Mountain Crossings/The Walasi-Yi Center at Neels Gap is a great facility run by wonderful folks. You can send a maildrop here if you wish (there’s a small fee if you do so), or you can buy what you need from their excellent food selection, which is geared towards backpackers. This is also a great place to field-strip your pack and go thru your stuff in case you’ve discovered items you want to send ahead, or more likely, home. If you think you’ve made mistakes with some of your gear or clothing, and think you want to change or replace some things, talk to the staff, who are experts at helping hikers determine what they really need, or more often, what they DON’T really need. The Outfitter shop here is excellent, and the staff is superb. There is also lodging available here, and if you need to get to a real town, you can get a shuttle to Blairsville, Dahlonega, or Hiawasee.

Neels Gap to Dick’s Creek Gap/US 76 is 36.5 miles. You’ll need 3-4 days worth of food to get there, depending mainly on what time of day you leave Neels Gap, and how far you get on the first day.

Note: Hikers that plan on Re-supplying in Helen GA (20.0 miles past Neels) can obviously bring less food with them. A few hikers plan on hiking from Neels to Franklin without re-supplying; this is inadvisable, as it’s so easy to get in and out of Hiawasee, but if you DO decide to do this, it’s just over 76 miles between Neels and Franklin and will take most folks just under a week.

- ☑ Some hikers go into Helen from Unicoi Gap (20 miles from Neels); I seldom do as I don’t much care for the town; if you must get off the Trail here for supplies, bad weather, or anything else, I think it’s better to go into Hiawasee instead.
- ☑ From Dick’s Creek Gap/76 it’s easy to get into Hiawasee; hitching is fairly easy here. Don’t get pressured into paying for a ride: Every year there seem to be a few shifty locals who hang out here and only tell you AFTER you’re in their car that they expect to be paid for the ride!

Hiawasee is a pretty good Trail town, though it is spread out a bit; there are all sorts of services for different budgets (motels, etc). Most of the hotels accept hiker mail, but you might want to check first.

In addition to motels in town, there are several hostels nearby. The Blueberry Patch has been taking care of hikers for years, and the new place, Cloud 9, got raves from hikers in 2006. (I have not been to Cloud 9 yet, but have heard nothing but great things. Staying at a working Trout farm and catching your own dinner is pretty cool).

Leaving Hiawasee, it’s 40 miles to Winding Stair Gap/US 64, the road crossing for Franklin. I’d bring 3-4 days of supplies from Hiawasee; those planning to skip Franklin and continue on the Nantahala Outdoor Center/US 19 should bring 2-3 days more.

- ☑ Most hikers will want to go into Franklin, which has excellent services for hikers. Local business owner, and a great friend of the Trail, Ron Haven, offers a free shuttle between Winding Stair Gap and town, and he doesn’t care whether you

stay at his motels or not (tho you should!). He also is available for town shuttles, which is good, as Franklin is pretty nice-sized.

Note: Hikers using older guidebooks should be aware that Rainbow Springs Campground, where hikers re-supplied for years, is now closed. Most hikers will probably want to go into Franklin.

Your next Re-supply point will likely be the Nantahala Outdoor center; it's less than 30miles from Franklin; I'd bring 2-3 days worth of food.

The Nantahala Outdoor Center, universally known to hikers as the NOC, is directly on the A.T. Lodging and laundry services are available, as are several restaurants. There is limited re-supply here, and a small food maildrop might not be a bad idea, as the food selection here is not great and tends to be over-priced. Remember not to send or purchase too much, tho, as the next main re-supply point, Fontana Dam, is only 28 miles further North. Hikers needing more services than what the NOC offers can hitch or get a ride into Bryson City.

Fontana Dam, NC is one of the handful of places where it makes sense to send yourself a food maildrop. You'll absolutely need some sort of major Re-Supply here before entering Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and while there is a small market in Fontana Village, the selection is lousy, overpriced, and unreliable, especially if you arrive late in the afternoon and discover that the 15 hikers just ahead of you pillaged the place. A short walk from the market is the Village's Outfitter, which also has a small food selection. In all likelihood, tho, you'll want to get food sent here; how much you send depends whether or not you plan to hike all the way thru the National Park, or re-supply in Gatlinburg. If you plan to hike straight thru, you'll need 6-7 days worth of food; if you're going to Gatlinburg, bring 3-4. If you're hiking earlier in the season and will be more likely to encounter rough weather, delays, and slower mileage, you might want to bring a bit extra.

Another alternative is stay with the very nice folks at the nearby Hike Inn Motel, who will shuttle you to Robbinsville where there is a real market.

Note: Keep in mind that the P.O. in Fontana Dam closes at noon on Saturday and doesn't re-open til 8:30 on Monday morning; depending on what day or what time of day you leave the NOC, make sure the Fontana P.O. will be open when you get there! If it looks like you'll NOT going to make it to Fontana by noon on Saturday, you're probably better off staying over a little longer at the NOC, rather than cooling your heels in Fontana til Monday morning; there's a lot more to do at the NOC.

Thru-hikers seem to have a love-hate relationship with Gatlinburg, TN. It is indeed a pretty tacky place, but I've always found the year-rounders to be quite friendly. The folks at the Outfitter are great and there are a ton of cheap places to stay. Over the years, the preferred motel for hikers seems to be the Grand Prix, a short walk from the Outfitter's. There is a cheap shuttle bus that will take you all over town, or you can just walk and people watch which is both entertaining and horrifying at the same time.

Leaving Gatlinburg, I'd bring 3-4 days worth of supplies; with a few extra if you're planning to hike all the way to Hot Springs without stopping.

Just outside the National Park, some hikers re-supply or stay over at Mountain Moma's. As an alternative, I strongly suggest you stay on the Trail for a few more miles and visit Standing Bear Farm, a unique and wonderful place. They have limited, but perfectly adequate re-supply available there, or they can shuttle you to a nearby small market. Also, they accept maildrops. Just remember, you won't need much as it's only just over 30 miles from there to Hot Springs.

Note: As of this writing, Mountain Moma's is reportedly up for sale, and may or may not be open for hikers when you arrive. I strongly suggest contacting them ahead of time if you plan to send mail there.

Hot Springs is one of the great trail towns, and a great place to take some time off; many hikers take their first complete "zero day" (meaning a day that one hikes zero miles!) here. It is also the first place where the Trail leaves the woods and goes directly thru a community.

There are all sorts of places to stay; Elmer's is the most popular; I usually stay with Brian and Frank at the beautiful Duckett House Inn. Either one is wonderful. There are other lodging options available, including motels, cabins, even a campground. There are NOT a lot of services here, but the small town has everything you'll likely need: restaurants, a pub, a public library, two small markets, a Dollar Store, and one of Trail's best Outfitters, Bluff Mountain.

As far as food re-supply, definitely stop at the Outfitters first, as they have the best selection of hiker-oriented foods, including natural and organic products. You can supplement this at the small markets or Dollar Store, but in all likelihood, you'll find everything you need at Bluff Mt. They also have the town's one ATM and offer limited Internet service. This is the last good Outfitter you'll likely see til you get to Virginia (unless you get a ride into Johnson City TN) so if you have gear or footwear issues, you might want to resolve them here. If possible, try and get help from co-owner Wayne, who is the best packfitter I know, and is also great with shoes and boots. He can be particularly helpful if you decide you want to switch to a different, and more likely smaller, backpack.

If you need to get to a larger market, or larger town such as Asheville, talk to Wayne's partner Dan, who handles shuttles.

Your next stop will be Erwin, TN, just under 70 miles away. Most people get there mid-day of their fifth day out from Hot Springs. There is a new hostel about 16 miles North of Hot Springs, Hemlock Hollow Farm, which allegedly has limited re-supplies. I've never been there. There might also be a new hostel of some sort near Sam's Gap. In all likelihood, tho, you'll be going from Hot Springs to Erwin without re-supplying, so plan accordingly. And speaking of Sam's Gap, it is not advisable to try to get to Erwin from there, as hitching is illegal.

- ☑ Erwin TN, tho long and spread out, has become a great hiker town in recent years. There are all sorts of places to stay including hostels and motels, and dozens of good places to eat. In recent years, most hikers have elected to stay at Miss Janet's House, a hostel in the center of town. Her hospitality is legendary. It's also conveniently close to downtown, so the Post Office, Library, supermarket, many restaurants, and even a movie theater are within walking distance.

Important note: While Miss Janet provides rides to and from the Trail, other shuttle rides are NOT free. One of her greatest annual expenses is keeping her van running, so if she takes you around town, or takes you to the Outfitter in Johnson City or to Wal-Mart, if you stay a few days and do some slackpacking, and especially, if you are not one of her houseguests, make sure you contribute to the fuel/van fund, and make sure everyone in your group does likewise. If you see someone NOT paying, call them on it.

Hikers that don't plan on overnighing at Janet's, or can't stay because it's full, can still leave their packs on the porch while they run their town errands. They're welcome to use house services, too (shower/phone/laundry/internet) but make sure you leave a small donation when you do so. Her operating costs are enormous, so every little bit helps. If she discovers that the hostel is full, she usually does a shuttle around dinnertime, and will take people anywhere else they want to go; those planning to take a "zero day" the next day can usually get a spot in the hostel by signing up for the next day, assuming that bunks are available. Lastly, while a lot of hikers have done a "work for stay" at Janet's, this is not always available, either because there's no work to be done, or more likely, the work slots are filled, so don't take the work/stay option for granted. You'll have a great time here, but do right by Miss Janet. Her place runs on love, but it doesn't run on air.

For most folks, I'd bring 5-6 days worth of supplies when leaving Erwin.

- ☑ There is a hostel, Greasy Creek Friendly, about 24 miles North of Erwin. It has limited re-supplies. This is also one of the places I've never seen or visited.
- ☑ Some folks re-supply in either Elk Park or Roan Mountain. I generally do neither, as this is a difficult place to hitch-hike. Close to the 19E road crossing, the nearby Mountain Harbor B&B has a great reputation, tho I've never stayed there; they accept maildrops and will also provide paid shuttles to a market.
- ☑ Instead of Re-Supplying in Elk Park or Roan Mountain, I generally continue hiking another 24 miles to Dennis Cove, and stay at Kincora Hostel, one of the absolute best places on the whole A.T. Bob and Pat Peoples have been running Kincora for a decade and they are, without a doubt, two of the finest folks you'll meet on your whole trip. You can send mail here if you wish, but keep in mind that Bob runs a daily shuttle to a supermarket, where you can get everything you'll need for the easy 50-mile stretch to Damascus, VA.

If you stay at Kincora, and you'd be completely crazy not to, keep in mind that while the suggested "donation" is only \$4.00 (this hasn't changed since 1997!), you should try and leave more. First off, many folks leave nothing whatsoever, thinking that

"donation" means "free." Secondly, what you get at Kincora is priceless; the services Bob and Pat provide would cost six or seven times as much anywhere else, so please, give what you can, and make sure your friends do likewise. Also, Bob is the Trail maintainer of this section of the A.T., and it's a tough one. He's always got some sort of work project going on, so if you want to help out, it's a lot of fun, Bob's great to work with, and it's a cool way to give something back to the Trail.

Note: There are two other hostels nearby, including a new one. Both offer light re-supply. I have never stayed at either place. For details, see your guidebooks.

- ☑ Good re-supply is available in Hampton, TN, 9 miles past Dennis Cove. One can either get to town via a blue-blazed trail from the A.T., or from the road crossing at 321 near Watauga Lake. The Braemar Castle Hostel in the center of Hampton is also a very nice place to stay.
- ☑ The 50 miles from Dennis Cove to Damascus, except for a few bumps, is very easy. You'll need no more than 3 days worth of food; most people do two big, but very easy days the last two days getting into Virginia.
- ☑ When you get to Rt.421 near Shady Valley, it's possible to hitch 3 miles to several small markets; at this point you're less than 15 miles to Damascus, so most folks don't bother.
- ☑ Damascus, VA is one of the great Trail towns, so try and take some time off here. There are all sorts of lodging possibilities to fit every taste and budget, and several good places to eat. It's a great gear town, with several Outfitters, including the legendary Mt. Rogers Outfitter, which you'll walk right by as you enter town. Excellent re-supply is available at the big new Supermarket just outside of town; you'll also walk past two smaller markets as you hike thru the town.

Note: There isn't another good Outfitter for quite awhile after you leave Damascus; if you have gear issues of any sort, you should take care of them here. Many folks "switch out" their winter/cold weather gear and clothing here, and switch to lighter clothes, sleeping bags, etc. I VERY strongly suggest one resists the temptation to do so; I'd hold on to your warmer stuff until you reach Bland or maybe even Pearisburg. This is especially the case for early starters who get here in April or before. I have seen it snow several days North of Damascus on the 22nd of May, so be smart here, even if it means carrying a few extra pounds.

- ☑ In most cases, you'll want to take 5-7 days worth of supplies out of Damascus, less if you plan to re-supply in Troutdale, Marion, or Sugar Grove. Be aware that the up-coming section of the Trail is spectacular; for many people, this stretch is their favorite part of their hike, so you might want to slow down your pace a bit and enjoy it, meaning a bit of extra food might come in handy.

PART TWO: DAMASCUS VA TO HARPERS FERRY WV

How much you carry out of Damascus depends on whether or not you wish to leave the Trail and roadwalk/hitch; there are many options for light re-supply almost every day after you leave town.

- ☑ It is possible get limited re-supply in Whitetop, VA about 24 miles north of Damascus (The road crossing is VA 600 at Elk Garden). I have never been to this store.
- ☑ At Dickey Gap (VA650/16) one can hitch into Troutdale. There is a church hostel with an excellent reputation if you wish to overnight; there's also a B&B. Limited re-supply, as well as cooked meals, are available at the Troutdale Trading Post; be aware that both the store and the cafe are closed on Sundays; you'll most likely get here 3-4 days after leaving Damascus, so if you have mail being sent here, or plan to buy food here, plan accordingly so you arrive on the right day. If you anticipate arriving when either the store or Post Office is closed, I'd advise either spending an extra day in Damascus, or slowing down and doing smaller mileage days between Elk Garden and Old Orchard shelter, as this is one of the loveliest stretches of the entire Trail. As stated earlier, if you plan to do this here, i.e. slow down your daily miles, you'll obviously need to bring extra food.

Note: If you plan to send mail to TroutDALE, check your mailing label and zip code carefully, as there is also a TroutVILLE, VA several weeks further North.

- ☑ At VA16 (about 64 miles from Damascus) it is possible to have food (pizza, subs) delivered to the Visitor Center. Most folks who stay at the adjacent Partnership Shelter take advantage of this. From this road crossing, one can also hitch to nearby Marion, which has large supermarkets and lodging options; it is also possible to hitch to nearby Sugar Grove, which is closer, but has a much smaller market. I have never re-supplied in either location.
- ☑ 11 1/2 miles further North, at US11/VA683, there is a good-sized convenience store directly on the Trail. Many hikers also overnight at the friendly Relax Inn Motel, which will hold mail for guests. It is also possible to hitch a few miles to nearby Atkins, which has a market; hikers should note that this market, which I've never visited, is CLOSED on Sundays.

Note: It is about 75 miles from Damascus to US11/83. If you do not plan on stopping to re-supply at Whitetop, Troutdale, Marion, or Sugar Grove, I'd bring 5-6 days worth of food from Damascus. I usually make it at the end of the fifth day, but a little extra couldn't hurt.

- ☑ About 45 miles north is Bland, which has a good market, as well as several small restaurants and a motel. There may also be a new hostel there for 2007. The miles in this stretch are fairly easy; most folks will arrive in Bland late in the afternoon of their third day from US11. Hikers who stay at the Relax Inn and get on the Trail late in the morning and have a shortened first day out, may wish to

bring a bit more.

Note: The town of Bastian is a closer hitch to the Trail, but don't bother going there, as there is nothing there for hikers.

- ☑ Hikers that plan to skip Bland can get light re-supply at VA608; there's a small market less than a mile from the Trail. I've never been there. A much better bet would be to go to Trent's Store, about half a mile from the Trail crossing at VA606, about 18 1/2 miles past Bland. It is possible to tent near the store, tho a better idea would be to re-supply, and then hike the easy two miles to Dismal Falls, a wonderful place to camp and swim. In any case, you won't need to get much here, as you're less than 25 miles from Pearisburg, a major Trail town.
- ☑ Woodshole Hostel, about 10 miles south of Pearisbug is a wonderful place to overnight. Other than sodas and candy bars, there is no re-supply here; the first eight hikers who sign up can pay a nominal fee for a wonderful breakfast.
- ☑ Pearisbug is very popular with hikers. Like Erwin, it's fairly spread out, but excepting an Outfitter, it's got just about everything you'll likely need. There are all sorts of lodging options, tho hikers should remember that the church hostel is quite a ways from the Trail. There are several motels, and while most folks seem to stay closer to the town center, I've always opted for the Rendezvous Motel, which is directly at the Trail crossing as you enter town. The proprietor, Brenda, has been a great friend to hikers for many years, and may be available if you need a shuttle, a ride to the clinic, etc. (Hikers needing more services than Pearisburg offers may want to hitch or catch a shuttle to Blacksburg, a large university town with all services. Brenda may well be able to help you with this).
- ☑ For re-supply, there's a large Food Lion in the center of town. For other shopping needs, there's a Wal-Mart, tho it's a bit further out. There are all sorts of places to eat, with the All Sports Bar next to the Holiday Motor Lodge being favored by hikers. Lastly, there is another large supermarket called Wade's directly on the Trail as you are leaving Pearisburg, which is very useful if you realize you've forgotten something. Fuel is available at the hardware store and some of the motels.
- ☑ There's a small market at Newport VA (at VA42, about 40 miles north of Pearisburg); I've never been here. About 27 miles further, at VA624, there's a good-sized convenience store .4 from the Trail. About five miles after that, you'll reach VA311, where most hikers hitch into Catawba, where there is a small market next to the Post Office.

If you arrive in town on the right day, don't skip the wonderful Homeplace Restaurant, which many hikers consider to be one of the best on the whole Trail. Catawba is around 73 miles from Pearisburg; you'll likely get there in 5-6 days. When leaving Catawba, you won't need much as it is only 20 miles to the next major re-supply point.

Note: For many hikers, this 20-mile stretch is a long twenty; plus it contains two very

scenic spots, McAfee Knob and Tinker Cliffs, where many hikers spend a good deal of time. I would advise bringing more than one day's worth of food here unless you KNOW you'll be hiking this stretch in one day. Personally, I'd bring a bit extra and slow down a bit here.

- ☑ US220/Daleville - This isn't really a "town" stop, but there is a great deal for hikers. The largest supermarket on or very near the Trail is the 24-Hour Kroger Superstore just under half a mile to your left. There are all sorts of restaurants and shops in this mall, including a coffeehouse and a small, but quite friendly Outfitter. Motels and other restaurants are found close to the Trail crossing, or about half a mile away, to your right, uphill. Hikers should use caution here, as it's a VERY busy road. Because of the closeness and size of the market, I wouldn't send food here; also, the Post Office, in nearby Troutville, is over a mile's walk off the Trail. The motels at the 220 crossing will hold mail for guests. It is just under 93 miles from Pearisburg to Daleville; if you elect NOT to re-supply before Rt220, this stretch will likely take you about a week, or just under.
- ☑ 21 miles after Daleville, there is a small market in nearby Buchanan; I've never been, and have been told by some that this can be a tough hitch. Shortly after that, at VA614/Jennings Creek, there's a campground with a small store. Also, at the Buchanan crossing (Bearwallow Gap/VA43) one can go five miles on the Blue Ridge Parkway to the Peaks of Otter recreation area, which has lodging, restaurant meals, and a very small store. If you do this, you'll most likely be walking, as hitching is both difficult here as well as illegal.
- ☑ At US501, about 86 miles from Daleville, there is re-supply in both Glasgow and Big Island, with the better market being in Glasgow. There are restaurants in both small towns, and lodging in Glasgow. Better shopping is available in Buena Vista, but this can be a rough hitch. Daleville to Glasgow takes most folks 5 days, or they stay at pretty Matt's Creek shelter and go into town the morning of the sixth day.
- ☑ Hikers can also hitch to Buena Vista from US60, about 22 miles north of the Glasgow crossing.
- ☑ Just under 40 miles from Glasgow/Rt 501, there is limited re-supply at the Montebello Camping and Fishing Resort; also, many hikers stay at the popular Dutch Haus B&B, where you can get mail, or pay for a shuttle to a store. I have never been to either place, but have heard great things about the Dutch Haus.

Note: If you plan to go into Montebello, be prepared to hoof it, as the road gets very little traffic; you'll likely be walking, unless you catch a ride from the Dutch Haus folks.

- ☑ At VA56, you can hitch to a small camp store at Crabtree Falls campground, 4 miles from the Trail. I've never been there, but I plan to go this year, as the waterfall is reputedly spectacular.

Note: the store may be open only on weekends.

- ☑ Rockfish Gap/Interstate 64 (About 77 miles from Glasgow; 6 days hiking for most folks). Nearly every hiker will want to go into nearby Waynesboro, a large and friendly town with great services. All sorts of lodging options exist, including a church hostel, tenting at the YMCA, or several motels, of which the Quality Inn is the most popular. The best supermarket is in the center of town; best meal is the amazing Chinese Buffet next to the market. The Outfitter is several miles from the town center; you should either hit it as you are entering town, or go on your way back to the Trail.

While there are indeed several camp stores in Shenandoah National Park, the food is mostly snacks, or tinned stuff for car campers. I would NOT plan on re-supplying solely from these stores; I would bring at least 3-4 days of food from the supermarket in town.

- ☑ It'll take most folks about 5-7 days to get thru Shenandoah Park. If you need to leave the Park for any reason, one can hitch to Luray from Thornton Gap (about 81 miles from Rockfish Gap). Luray has all major services including an Outfitter, tho unless it's an emergency, you'll most likely want to wait til you get to the outfitter in Front Royal, or the superb outfitter in Harpers Ferry. At Compton Gap, just before leaving Shenandoah, many hikers in recent years have spoken well of Terrapin Station hostel, which holds mail and offers shuttles to nearby Front Royal. However, hikers should note that this place will most likely be CLOSED for the 2007 season; if it is open, there will most likely be signs ahead of time telling you so.
- ☑ US522 Many hikers hitch into the large and spread out town of Front Royal here, which offers all services. Hikers should use extreme caution here; this is a VERY busy highway.

Hikers that don't want to deal with this hitch should be aware that just five miles after the 522 crossing, just past the Jim and Molly Denton shelter, it is possible to walk to Linden VA via a side trail that cuts off of the A.T. about 150 paces North of the shelter. (Follow this Trail down- hill for about five minutes; you'll hit a road. Continue straight ahead, follow this road for 7-10 minutes, you'll hit a "T" intersection. Go left for a few minutes; this will bring you to the center of Linden, right by the store. The new Post Office is a short walk. To get back to the Trail, reverse your steps. One can also, of course, get to Linden from VA55, a few Trail miles AFTER the Denton shelter). The Linden store is small, but has enough to get you the 45-odd miles to Harpers Ferry.

- ☑ About 34 miles North of 522/Front Royal, light re-supply is available at the very nice Bear's Den Hostel. Some camp fuels are available here.
- ☑ Just past Bear's Den, at VA7/679, at Snickers Gap, one can walk about a mile to a small market. I've never been here.
- ☑ Hikers that overnigh at the ATC Blackburn Center, about 12 1/2 miles south of Harpers Ferry, can't re-supply there, but guests will in all likelihood be cooked

dinner by the caretakers!

- ☑ Welcome to Harpers Ferry WV, the un-official halfway mark of the Trail. When you arrive in town, you'll have completed 1009 miles of hiking! There is very little in the way of re-supply in Harpers Ferry itself, other than a 7-11 in nearby Bolivar. There is a town bus, which will get you to Charles Town, which has restaurants, supermarkets, and a Wal-Mart. You will NOT want to hitch there, tho. Occasionally, there are friendly locals who might be offering shuttle rides; you can check for this at the ATC Headquarters. For most folks, a food maildrop is an excellent idea here, and I'd ship it to the ATC office instead of the Post Office, as the ATC office is open 7 days a week in the summertime, including the July 4th weekend, which is when a lot of folks hit town. There is an excellent Outfitter just off the Trail in the town center; in addition to gear, they also have a small selection of snacks and hiker food. There are several lodging options, including a very nice hostel across the Potomac in Maryland. If possible, try and spend a bit of time here, as there's a lot to see, especially for those interested in American history. And when you drop by the ATC office to check in and get your picture taken, ask the staff if there are any volunteer projects going on; it's a great way to give a little back to the Trail.

PART THREE: HARPERS FERRY, WV TO KENT, CT

How much you want to carry out of Harpers Ferry is up to you: There are any number of small grocery stores in Maryland and southern PA that are quite close to the Trail:

- ☑ The Harpers Ferry Hostel on Sandy Hook Rd. has limited hiker supplies, and is also very close to a convenience store. They also accept mail/parcels.
- ☑ At Turners Gap/US40A one can hitch 2 miles or so to a small market in Boonesboro.
- ☑ .4 from the Trail crossing at I-70, there's a small camp store at Greenbriar State Park.
- ☑ At Wolfsville Rd. (MD17) one can go 2.4 miles west to the small market in Smithsburg; this is 39.9 miles from the Potomac River. At MD64, 2.1m from the AT, there's a Food Lion supermarket as well as a pharmacy, hardware store, and other shops. Also, there's a new hostel on Wolfsville Rd., the Free State Hostel, that will have bicycles available for guests, which should make re-supplying a lot easier.
- ☑ 12.5 miles later, at PA16, there's a small market in Blue Ridge Summit, 1.2m East.
- ☑ At PA30, just under 60 miles from Harpers, there's a small market about a mile to the West. In Caledonia State Park, which the Trail goes thru, there's a snack bar by the pool. PA30 is also the road crossing where you can hitch into Gettysburg, which has all major services and is an extraordinary place to visit.

Note: Do not go anywhere near Gettysburg between 28 June and 7 July unless you want to be overwhelmed by two hundred thousand Winnebago-driving Civil War enthusiasts and their boisterous offspring.

- ☑ There's a very small camp store at Pine Grove Furnace Park, about 78 miles from Harpers. Not much there, but you can get some snacks to last you the 19 quick miles to Boiling Springs. The Ironmaster's Hostel in the park may also have limited hiker supplies for sale.
- ☑ At Pine Grove Road, there are two private campgrounds to the West; both maintain small camp stores.
- ☑ At PA34, you're just .2 from a small grocery store; at PA94, you're a couple of miles from the market in Mt. Holly Springs, but you're so close to Boiling Springs at this point that you may as well wait and shop there instead.
- ☑ In Boiling Springs, there's a good supermarket, but if you don't need it badly, you can probably get what you need at the convenience store that's visible from the Trail. You won't need much as Duncannon is just 25 miles North.
- ☑ At Trindle Rd. (PA641) one can hitch about two and a half miles to the west, towards Carlisle; there's a new shopping center with many shops, including a Target.

Note: It's about 98 miles from the Potomac River to Boiling Springs, and unless it's very hot, these are fairly easy miles. It will take most folks 6-7 days to cover this section.

- ☑ Duncannon PA is one of the great Trail towns. The century-old Doyle Hotel is a legendary hiker stop, with wonderful owners and a very friendly staff. The food, served in the famous bar-room, is great. The Doyle is undergoing a long-term gradual renovation, so if you haven't been there for awhile, you'll be pleasantly surprised at the changes. A very great deal of hard work has been put into the building in recent years, and it shows. That being said, the rooms are quite spartan, and people needing amenities such as TV's and telephones might do better at the Truck-stop motel at the North end of town. Stodgy folks, especially older ones, might also turn up their noses at the Doyle's accommodations, and it can get fairly festive at night, so this is probably not the best spot for anyone who has embraced sobriety. For those on a limited budget, the little campground at the north end of town is quite simple, but is also friendly and cheap. For your Re-Supply, the Post office is a few blocks away, and the Doyle also holds parcels. The town Supermarket, Mutzbaugh's, is quite large, but DON'T try and walk there unless you want to get killed. It's on a very busy street with no sidewalk, so try and get the daily van shuttle from the Doyle instead. The nearby Ottebein Methodist Church welcomes hikers, and offers internet service; the Doyle also has a computer available for a small fee. Hikers having any problems or emergencies, or who need a shuttle elsewhere, or medical service, etc. would do well to find Mary Parry, a local who has been taking great care of hikers for many

years. Many folks seem to get to Duncannon right around the 4th of July. As gritty and hardscrabble as it seems to some folks, Duncannon is one of the friendliest towns on the whole Trail, and is a great place to take some time off.

- ☑ One has different options leaving Duncannon. At PA501 (about 46 miles from town) you can hitch to a market in Pine Grove; from the Shartlesville/Cross Mtn. Rd., (17 miles later) you can go into Shartlesville, which has restaurants and a convenience store.
- ☑ A lot of folks opt to get a maildrop in Port Clinton, tho it's generally quite easy to hitch or catch a ride to nearby Hamburg, which has a large market, as well as other services, including lodging. Hikers should note that the small outfitter mentioned in older guidebooks has now closed, tho you can get fuel, limited hiker fuel, footwear, and other gear items at the massive Cabela's outdoor superstore near Hamburg. This place is geared more towards hunters/fishermen/car campers, but it does have items of interest to hikers. There's also a gun room in which one could re-enact the First World War and about 12,000 stuffed animals of every persuasion. I think when taxidermists die, they go to Cabela's if they've been good. There is also a cafe restaurant that serves very large amounts of food to the predominantly very large people taking a break from their gun shopping. By the way, there may well be a van shuttle from Port Clinton that will take you to Cabela's and back again.

In Port Clinton itself, the Port Clinton Hotel has simple lodging. It also has great food. Hikers are welcome at the bar, but try and clean up a bit if you plan to eat in the main dining room. Also, don't miss the Peanut Shop, an old-fashioned candy shop that you'd think stopped existing around 1940. There's also an ATM here. Most folks stay at the picnic pavilion; you can also tent by the river across from the pavilion; a great diner is close by for breakfast. Fuel may be available at the pavilion, as well as jugged water.

- ☑ At the Blue Rocks Trail crossing, about 12 1/2 miles from Port Clinton, there's a small camp store at the Blue Rocks Campground.
- ☑ At Lehigh Gap, about 40 miles from Port Clinton, most folks go into either Slatington or Palmerton, with Palmerton being much more popular, and with better services. If the "Police Station" hostel is still open, please make sure you and your friends obey all posted regulations; along with the church hostels in Damascus and Vernon, NJ, this is one of the most "threatened" hostels on the Trail, due to abuse by hiker guests.
- ☑ Five miles later, at Little Gap, one can walk a mile and a half to a small market in Danielsville.
- ☑ Many folks go into Wind Gap (PA33), about 61 miles from Port Clinton. There are all sorts of services here, but be prepared to walk a good bit as most of them are quite far from the Trail.

Note: You're only about 16 miles from the New Jersey border at this point, but this is

a nasty, rocky stretch, and may take you a bit longer than you think.

- ☑ There's not that much actually in Delaware Water Gap, but there's a great church hostel right next to the Post Office. For shopping, there's a convenience store, a great bakery, and a small outfitter, as well as several restaurants, including a pizzeria and a great diner. Many folks opt to go into nearby Stroudsburg, a large college town that offers full services. The outfitter may offer a cheap van shuttle to Stroudsburg (beware of the unreliability of this!) and there may be real bus service connecting the two towns as well. If so, look for a schedule at the hostel.
- ☑ You'll probably want to bring a few days of food out of DWG, but don't over-do it; you'll be pleasantly surprised at all of the shopping/eating possibilities in New Jersey and New York.
- ☑ The Mohican Center, a good example of the Appalachian Mountain Club getting things right, offers sandwiches and snacks, as well as lodging. They also accept hiker mail. This is a great place and is an easy 10 mile hike from DWG.
- ☑ There are restaurants and convenience stores within walking distance of Culver's Gap, 28m north of DWG.
- ☑ At NJ23 (42 miles from DWG), one can hitch into Port Jervis, NY, which has restaurants, motels, and a supermarket.
- ☑ Just over 50 miles into New Jersey, the trail zigzags into New York State briefly; Unionville NY, less than half a mile from the Trail, has a friendly deli/market and an extremely friendly Post Office.
- ☑ 12 miles later, at NJ94, most hikers go into nearby Vernon, which has a wonderful church hostel, a picnic pavilion you can sleep at if the hostel is full, several restaurants, and a large supermarket.
- ☑ At the NY17A crossing, about 15 miles from Vernon, there are small markets in Greenwood Lake, Bellvale, and Warwick. Most folks avoid this and carry food from Vernon.
- ☑ At NY17/Arden Valley Rd. one can hitch 2 miles to a convenience store.
- ☑ The Post Office in Bear Mountain may not be open in 2007. Hikers planning to send mail here would probably do better to send it to nearby Fort Montgomery, which also has restaurants and a small market.
- ☑ Just after crossing the Hudson, at US9, one can hitch into Peekskill, a large town with all major services.
- ☑ At NY52, there's a very friendly deli/market .4 to the east, with a pizzeria right next door.
- ☑ At NY55, there are restaurants and a large supermarket 2m to the west.

- ☑ From Country Road 20/West Dover Rd., one can hitch into Pawling, which has markets, restaurants, and a free place to tent.
- ☑ At NY 22, you can walk half a mile to a deli.
- ☑ At Hoyt Rd. there are restaurants and a grocery store if you hitch to nearby Wingdale.
- ☑ Just off the Trail at the Bull's Bridge Rd. crossing, there's a very friendly convenience store.
- ☑ Kent, CT offers all major hiker services with the exception of inexpensive lodging. Hikers may wish to stay at the very nice Mt. Algo shelter just south of town, then do their town stuff in the morning, and then move on.

Note: You are about to enter the most bug-infested area of the entire Appalachian Trail, so when in Kent, don't forget to pick up maximum strength Deet, or you WILL be hating life in short order.

In terms of time and mileage, it takes most folks 2-3 days to cover Maryland, and 15-17 for Pennsylvania, which for me, also includes a zero day in Delaware Water Gap. (Add days if you plan to take time off over the July 4 holiday). DWG to Kent, i.e. the NY/NJ section takes most folks 10-11 days.

PART FOUR: KENT CT TO HANOVER NH

- ☑ When leaving Kent, it's possible to re-supply at Cornwall Bridge (about 11 miles from Kent), or in Sharon, which is about 4.5 miles west of the West Cornwall Road Crossing, (16m from Kent). I generally do neither, and instead pack 2-3 days worth of supplies, which gets me to Salisbury.
- ☑ Salisbury is small, with limited services, but these include a great market (with a killer deli which is pricey but worth it!), a pharmacy, a coffeehouse, an ice cream store, a bank with ATM, and a very friendly library. Limited fuel is available at the Auto Shop.
- ☑ After Salisbury, one has several options: At MA 41, about 15 miles north of Salisbury, there's a convenience store in South Egremont, a mile and change to the west.
- ☑ At US 7, there's a supermarket just under two miles to the west. A mile further brings you to Great Barrington, which has markets, lodging, and restaurants. Going 3 miles east from Rt 7 brings you to Sheffield, which has a market and a few restaurants.
- ☑ There is a small hiker hostel at MA 23 that will hold UPS/FedEX packages for guests, but this place does not enjoy a particularly inspired reputation for friendliness.

- ☑ Tyringham, MA has a Post office and not much else.
- ☑ At US 20, one can hitch about 5m into Lee which has supermarkets, lodging, and restaurants. It can be a tough hitch.
- ☑ 19 miles later, the Trail goes directly thru the town of Dalton. There's a small market as well as a convenience store. There are also several extremely friendly locals who take in hikers; if you stay with them, please respect all house rules, and remember that you're in a quiet residential area, so behave accordingly. If you stay with these folks, you'll certainly have a ride to a nearby mall that has a supermarket and several good restaurants, including an AYCE buffet place. There's also a great coffeehouse in the center of town and a very friendly town library. In short, Dalton is a great place to take some time off.

Note: Don't pack too much out of Dalton (or the next town, Cheshire) as you're very close to Rt. 2, which has an enormous supermarket near the Trail crossing. However, before you get to this road, you have to go up and over Mt. Greylock, which can be something of a beast on a hot day. I've found it's better to re-supply AFTER Greylock and not before.

It is about 70 miles from Salisbury to Dalton, but these are fairly easy miles. Most folks do this in 4-5 days.

- ☑ In Cheshire, about 9 miles from Dalton, there's a small market near the Trail, as well as a convenience store.

Note: Don't plan on staying or eating at the lodge on top of Mt. Greylock; it will not be open this year, and perhaps not until 2009.

- ☑ About 14 miles from Cheshire, you'll reach very busy MA 2. To your right is the large town of North Adams, with all sorts of services. Williamstown, a much prettier alternative, is an equal distance to your left. Lodging is cheaper in North Adams; it is possible to pitch a tent behind the Outfitter in Williamstown if you get permission. The best local supermarket is the Stop and Shop superstore, about .4 to the west. Williamstown has all sorts of other services, including theaters, pubs, many restaurants, a great coffeehouse, and one of the best public libraries on the entire Trail. It can be a very nice place to take some time off.

Note: Hitching into Williamstown from the supermarket can be difficult; I've found it easier to hitch from the Trail crossing; when leaving town, I have the driver drop me at the market; then I do my shopping and roadwalk back to the Trailhead.

- ☑ Unless you're planning to go into Bennington (18.4m from Rt. 2) you'll need 4-5 days worth of supplies from North Adams/Williamstown. This will last you the 58 miles to VT 11/30 and the easy hitch into Manchester Center.

Note: Bennington is becoming a great hiker town, due in no small measure to the good folks at Nature's Closet, a small outdoors store in the center of town. They sell fuel by the ounce here, and also have bicycles for hikers to use, which is good, as the

supermarket is quite a ways away.

- ☑ Manchester Center is a great Trail town, with only two real problems; the Post Office is kind of out-of-the-way, and there's no cheap lodging. There is, however, just about everything else, including two good outfitters, a big supermarket, a movie theater, laundromat, bagel shop, fast food and other restaurants, and best of all, Northshire Books, the finest bookstore you're likely to encounter on your trip, which also has a cafe and free internet service.

Note: Hikers should check in with the folks at Eastern Mountain Sports, as well as looking at the bulletin boards in the laundromat, as over the years, there have been locals that take in hikers for a nominal fee. If you don't overnight in town, and few do, a good time/money saving plan would be to stay at the very nice Spruce Peak Shelter, a very easy 2.5 miles south of town; then go into town, do all your stuff, and then get out, staying at the new Bromley shelter or at the top of Bromley Mtn. (If you get out of town earlier and feel like going 10 miles, the top of Baker Peak is a very cool place to camp on a nice night).

It's about 96 miles from Manchester Center to Hanover; this will take most folks around 6 days. It can be done without re-supplying, but you do have all sorts of options:

- ☑ 18 miles from Manchester, at the Danby-Landgrove Rd., there's a market about 3.5m to the West. There's also a campground, with a small camp store and some fuels.
- ☑ 26m from Manchester, 2.8m West of the VT140 crossing, there's a little market in Wallingford.
- ☑ 6.5m later, at VT103, there's a general store in Clarendon one mile to the West.
- ☑ At US4/Sherburne Pass, it's a fairly easy hitch into the large town of Rutland, which has extensive services. The town of Killington is 2.2. miles to the East, tho if you're going into Killington, it probably makes more sense to stay on the Trail til you get to VT100, where an excellent convenience store is about .7 from the Trail. The Inn at Long Trail (at Sherburne Pass) is a great place to eat or stay, with a wonderful tap room. There are good campsites directly across the highway from the Inn.
- ☑ From VT 12, one can easily hitch into nearby Woodstock, which has a supermarket and other services.
- ☑ A few miles later, at the Woodstock Stage Road, one can walk or hitch a mile to South Pomfret, which has a general store.
- ☑ In West Hartford, you'll walk right by a small general store/deli which has been closed recently, but will hopefully have re-opened by summertime.
- ☑ There is a large general store in the center of Norwich VT, but you're probably

much better off to wait til you arrive in Hanover, which has an excellent supermarket.

From the Mass/VT border to the Connecticut River (Hanover) is about 150 miles; it'll take most folks 9-12 days to hike, but if you have the time and the weather is cooperating, slow down and enjoy it. Many folks consider the Vermont section to be one of the prettiest sections of the entire Trail, with all sorts of beautiful places to hike, camp, and swim. A lot of folks wish they'd spent more time there, so slow down if you can.

PART FIVE: HANOVER, NH TO MONSON, ME

Hanover used to be great Trail town, one of the best. It's still a great place for hikers to spend some time, tho there are, of course, a few difficulties (i.e. shortage of cheap lodging; as well as inconveniently located services such as laundromats and Outfitters).

For food Re-Supply, Hanover has one of the Trail's best supermarkets, the Co-Op Food Store, which you'll pass just before you head out of town. It's a bit pricey, but on the other hand, it has a great selection of things you won't find elsewhere, including food in bulk and a great natural/organic section. Vegetarians and vegans would do well to do much of their shopping for the rest of the trip here, and prepare mail-drop parcels to send on ahead.

In addition to the Co-Op, there's a large 24-Hour convenience store on Main St. (very good if you're leaving town early) and also there's Stinson's on Allen St., which has great sandwiches and the Trail's best tobacco selection, among other things.

In terms of restaurants, there's a new Quizno's subs in town; the burrito place that used to be "The Wrap" is now called Boloco's (it's next to City Hall); and Ramunto's Pizza has moved off of Main St; it's now located next to the Public Library on South St. Note: The very friendly owner of Ramunto's will probably be giving out free slices to thru-hikers in 2007 so you should certainly stop by. If you like the first one, I suspect you'll want more.

The most hiker-friendly place in town is still Five Old Nugget Alley off of Main St. Hikers are welcome right off the Trail just as they are in the front bar-room (which also serves a full menu); you might want to clean up a bit if you're going to eat in the main Dining Room. EBA's on Allen St. has great specials including pizza on some nights and fajitas on Thursday's; their Sunday brunch is amazing, but you probably won't want to hike afterwards. Lou's is great for breakfast, but pricey. A good alternative is EBA's or the nearby Bagel Basement. The Canoe Club is a very nice place to eat, but a little fancy for most hikers; the Hanover Inn is quite nice if someone else is paying. There are all sorts of ethnic restaurants that are fair to good, and most of them overpriced. Best coffee on the entire Trail is still the Dirt Cowboy Cafe on Main St. near the Green.

For gear, Omer and Bob's sporting goods on Allen St. is a good place to start; they have some footwear, as well as clothing and accessories. The North Face store on

Main St. is not really a complete outfitter, tho it has all sorts of stuff from its home company, and is quite friendly. The Hanover Outdoors shop on Lebanon St. (you'll walk right by it on your way north out of town) mainly has higher end outerwear, but they also have some footwear, accessories, and plan to carry fuel by the ounce as well as canister fuel. They may also have a small collection of useful things such as water purification options; bootlaces, and other small items. The owner is extremely hiker-friendly and looks forward to meeting a lot of folks in 2007, so you should certainly drop by. Also, they have an extraordinary collection of fishing gear and tackle; anyone planning to fish while on the Trail will go a little nuts in here.

If you need a real Outfitter, there's free bus service to the nearby town of West Lebanon, where you'll find an Eastern Mountain Sports and an L.L. Bean store. (The bus stop is in front of the bookstore on Main St. You can get schedules inside the store). Tell the driver you want the "Powerhouse Mall" stop if you're going to the Outfitters. There is also bus service to a Wal Mart; a Borders books; several large supermarkets, and all sorts of restaurants.

Other services in Hanover include veterinarians; a new CVS pharmacy; a fine bookstore; a great small used bookstore; a pet store (behind the movie theater; it has all sorts of good specialty dog food); and all sorts of retail shops. There's also a wonderful movie theater.

Unless you're lucky enough to be someone's guest on campus, laundry will be a problem. There's a place in town that will wash and fold your laundry, but it's quite expensive. Otherwise, you'll have to leave town. (There's a bus that goes to the laundromat, or you can share a cab with several other hikers).

For showers, you may be able to catch one at the Dartmouth Gym, if you leave an ID at the front desk. There doesn't seem to be any set policy on this; I think receiving this service sort of depends on who's on the desk when you get there.

For lodging, there are OK motels outside of town; over the years, the Sunset has been the more popular. It is farther than you'll want to walk; once again, you may want to share a cab with several other hikers (The best local company is Big Yellow Taxi; in Vermont, call (802)281-TAXI; in New Hampshire, try (603) 643-TAXI. They are reasonable and reliable).

There are also several new hostels located north of town; check your Handbook or Companion for details.

If you're going to camp out, don't do it on campus, or in public places like the cemetery. This will probably get you arrested. Likewise, DO NOT crash out in any Dartmouth College building, including the Outing Club Building. Relations between hikers and campus Security have nose-dived in recent years because of this.

There is good (and perfectly legit) camping just North of town: Follow the Trail thru town just over .4 from Main Street; just past the Food Co-op, the Trail goes along the edge of a soccer field and enters the woods. Immediately upon entering the woods, there will be good campsites to the left of the Trail. A few caveats: Don't party hearty here, as homes are very close by; also, don't camp ON the soccer field itself

unless you want a late-night visit from the police. And don't leave your stuff untended while you do your town errands; this is a very well-traveled spot, and someone might pinch your stuff or think you abandoned it. Lastly, clean up your trash! Town officials are starting to get concerned about hiker garbage left here. There are barrels less than .2 away so please use them!

Lastly, Hanover is a good spot if you have to get off the Trail, or if someone is coming to visit you. Amtrak service is available in nearby White River Junction VT; there's regular bus service (the company is called Vermont Transit; their schedule is posted at www.vermonttransit.com/). There are several buses a day to Boston and Logan Airport (try and find an "express" bus that goes there directly); there's also a small airport in nearby Lebanon NH and larger ones in Manchester NH and Burlington VT, both of which are about 90 minutes away by bus. The bus stop is in front of the Hanover Inn on East Wheelock St.

Very important note: You'll be going above treeline in the White Mountains just a few days after leaving Hanover; make sure you get your cold weather gear (clothing, heavier sleeping bag, etc.) sent back to you here, or buy some. If you don't do this in Hanover, do it in the next town, Glencliff. But DO NOT head into the Whites with just your barebones summertime stuff, even if you arrive in July or early August. The weather in the high country can be very unforgiving.

It's only around 43 miles from Hanover to Glencliff, but it's tougher miles than you might think; most folks make it in 3 days or early on the 4th. If you're sending food or gear to the Glencliff Post Office, make sure it's going to be open when you arrive! Oh, and speaking of Post Offices, a lot of hikers seem to be in New Hampshire over the Labor Day weekend. This means that if one doesn't get to a Post Office by closing time on Saturday of the holiday weekend, you'll be without your mail til Tuesday morning! This can mean a long time cooling your heels in town waiting for your mail, which can be very expensive. Make sure you know ahead of time where you'll be around the holiday weekend, and either slow down or speed up so you make that rendezvous with your mail!

- It is possible to re-supply in the little stores before Glencliff; i.e. Lyme Center, Lyme, or Wentworth, but I never do. I find it easier just to bring what I need from Hanover.
- The hostel in Glencliff, the Hiker's Welcome, is excellent. Don't send mail there without checking first (the P.O. is right across the street). From Glencliff, you can hitch or catch a cheap shuttle to nearby Warren where there is a small market.
- I suggest that hikers re-supply in North Woodstock, unless they want to pack a really big load out of Glencliff. The market in North Woodstock is fine; anyone needing a larger store, or an outfitter can walk or hitch to nearby Lincoln, which has all sorts of services.

Note: This can be a tough hitch and a long roadwalk!

- Make sure you read up on the White Mountains in your Handbook or Companion

so you know regulations; facilities; fee areas, etc. You will probably score a few meals or a few night's lodging at the Appalachian Mountain Club Huts (big cabins, really), and you may get the limited thru-hiker work-for-stay option at some of the Huts. However, and this is very important, don't take either the AMC food or lodging for granted. Bring enough food with you to be self-sufficient if necessary, especially if you're in the thick of the hiker pack and find no work-stays or no space available when you arrive at a Hut.

- ☑ At Crawford Notch; there is lodging and meals (for guests) available at the AMC Highland Center; one can also hitch to a camp store at a nearby campground, or to the general Store in Hart's Location, a few miles away (details on these places in your guidebooks).
- ☑ I do NOT suggest that you use the alleged Post office on the summit of Mt. Washington for a maildrop of any sort, as it historically has erratic operating times and even more erratic (read absent!) staffing; many hikers arrive there to find it completely closed.
- ☑ The little store at the AMC center in Pinkham Notch has extremely limited food re-supply, tho you may find a few Liptons and candy bars. You might also want to catch a meal there if the dining room is open. It's possible to hitch from Pinkham Notch to the town of North Conway, which has all sorts of services, but most folks wait til they get to Gorham, just 20-odd miles down the Trail. If you need to be in Gorham for any reason right away, it's an easy hitch from Pinkham; then you can come back and fill in what you skipped.
- ☑ Gorham is a good Trail town, tho again, it's all spread out. Plan your shopping wisely unless you want to spend all day walking around 9 miles up and down Main St. There are all sorts of town services; the Wal Mart and big supermarkets are quite a ways away. Other shops, including the outfitter and some other outdoorsy stores are on Main St. For lodging, Gorham used to be a good hostel town; many hikers nowadays choose to share a motel room with friends.

Note: This is the last town with a real outfitter located anywhere close to the Trail; if you anticipate gear, clothing, or especially footwear problems, I would take care of them NOW.

It generally takes me around 12-13 days to hike from Hanover to Gorham. If you consider that it'll take you 3-4 days to get from Hanover to Glencliff, this means you'll be in the high country of the White Mountains for around nine days. Make sure you bring enough provisions, but don't overdo it. If the weather is good, you may make much better progress than you anticipated. Your longest stretch between supply points will be between North Woodstock and Gorham. I'd bring 5-6 days of food, less if you're fast. You may well end up scoring something at the AMC Huts, but again, it's really important that you don't take this possibility as a given.

You'll be entering Maine a day or two after you leave Gorham. Count on taking 22-27 days to finish your trip from Gorham, with the biggest factor being how co-operative the weather is. 24-25 days seems about right for most folks; keep this in mind if you

have friends or family members meeting you at Katahdin. (Along these lines, most folks hit Katahdin 37-40 days after leaving Hanover).

Re-supply options in Maine are few and far between, especially when you keep in mind that there's over 280 miles of Trail in the state. Double check and make sure you've got everything you need before leaving a town in Maine, as if you've forgotten something, you'll simply have to get by without it for awhile. I always make a "To Do" list before I go into a town; it makes for quicker, more efficient shopping and errand-running, and greatly decreases the chance I'll forget something important.

Another thing to remember is that some of the places and facilities in Maine (like Shaw's or the Abol store, for example) either don't take credit cards or charge an additional fee if you use them. It's best to bring sufficient cash with you out of Hanover.

Lastly, if you're one of those folks who likes to pack really big food bags because you prefer to avoid towns, or you think you can save time and money by skipping some town stops, DON'T do that in Maine. Especially in the first half of the state, this is not terrain where you'll want to carry nine or ten days worth of food. I've done this, and lived to regret it.

- ☑ It's possible to hitch into Bethel for supplies (around 31 miles north of Gorham; you'd hitch from Grafton Notch). This can be a tough hitch; most folks keep going.
- ☑ Andover is an easy hitch from the Trail. There are two grocery stores; they are both OK, but nothing special. Many hikers make up a small maildrop from Hanover and send it here. The distance from Gorham to Andover is only around 45 miles, but don't let this fool you, and don't underestimate the difficulty of this section; I'd bring 4-5 days worth of food from Gorham.

There are all sorts of lodging options in Andover. The Pine Ellis has been popular for years; the Andover Guest House is also very popular. In recent years, The Cabin hostel outside of town has become a hiker favorite. Note that most folks who stay at the Cabin stay for several days at least and do some slackpacking (i.e. pack-less hiking) and return to the hostel for several nights in a row. If you plan to do this, you'll obviously need to buy less food, so don't go crazy on your maildrop or your food shopping.

Pay close attention to your itinerary and hiking plans when you leave Andover; if you plan to Re-Supply in Rangeley, it's 37 miles from Andover and you'll most likely come to the Rt.4 Trail crossing towards the end of the 3rd day. If you plan to bypass Rangeley and go all the way to Stratton, it's another 32 miles, so bring 2-3 more days worth of food. This is a solid section.

- ☑ In Rangeley, there's a big new supermarket, as well as a great bookstore, several restaurants, and a nice hostel, Gull Pond. If you want to save some money, remember that there's a great big shelter and additional campsites at Piazza Rock, just 1.7 easy miles past the Rangeley road crossing.

- ☑ The market in Stratton is fine. There are all sorts of dining and lodging options; over the years, many hikers have stayed at the White Wolf Inn, tho the other places all enjoy fine reputations.
- ☑ It's only around 40 miles from Stratton to Caratunk, but again, this is a solid section. Count on taking 3 days. If you've got an old guidebook, remember that the general store in Caratunk has long since closed. If you don't get a maildrop, you should walk less than a mile up the road to Rivers and Trails, which is run by Steve Longley, a legendary Trail figure, and probably the guy who just ferried you across the Kennebec River. Steve has a small camp store which is more than adequate to get you to Monson, an easy 37 miles (bring three days worth of food). Steve also has a small bunkhouse and lots of tent space as well as a few small cabins. Sometimes, there may be a work-stay project if he has things he needs a hand with. There is fancier lodging and dining up the road a bit.
- ☑ Monson will be your last Trail town. Shaw's boarding house is very popular with hikers and accepts mail; otherwise, the Post office is nearby. There are other lodging options as well, as well as a laundromat, several places to eat, and a very friendly public library. The general store is OK; you may also want to check out the enormous hiker boxes at Shaw's before you shop; lots of folks get monstrous maildrops here, and end up dumping a lot of perfectly good food they don't need. If you need a real supermarket, the folks at Shaw's can shuttle you to nearby Greenville, Guilford, or Dover-Foxcroft. Fuels of all sorts are available at Shaw's.

Important Note: There is presently ONE place to re-supply between Monson and Abol Bridge at the border of Baxter State Park. Hikers NOT planning to stop at this one place, White House Landing, should, in all likelihood, bring 6-8 days worth of food with them from Monson. Note also that W.H. Landing might NOT be accepting hiker maildrops this year; do not send them anything with checking ahead of time.

- ☑ Abol Bridge. Unless you go into the town of Millinocket before finishing your trip, the camp store by the bridge is absolutely the LAST place to buy food before entering Baxter State Park. Note the word BUY. Do NOT send maildrops or anything else to either the Abol Store, or the Baxter gate, or any of the camp-sites/Ranger stations in the Park, unless you have absolutely gotten the permission to do this, which you probably won't get. And make sure to get an extra day's rations at Abol Bridge in case you have to kill a day in the park waiting on the weather to improve for a better summit day. If you find you don't need your extra food, you can always give it away to a hungry new arrival who you'll see at the foot of Katahdin after you've summited.
- ☑ In my experience, I generally make camp in Baxter on the 7th day out of Monson, and summit on the 8th day. Keep this in mind if someone's going to meet you or pick you up. And remember that Baxter gets REALLY crowded on the weekends in August and September. Unless your friends or family can ONLY come get you over the weekend, I'd try to summit early or mid-week, unless you want to share Katahdin with a crowd.

When you leave the Park, Millinocket has all sorts of lodging and dining options.

One can catch a bus in nearby Medway; see you guidebooks for details on the best way to make your way home.

And now you're done! Congratulations, and very best wishes on your next adventure! I hope the information above has proved both useful and accurate, and once again, if you think I've forgotten anything important or left out anything significant, please let me know so I can include these additions or corrections in the next edition of this article.

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