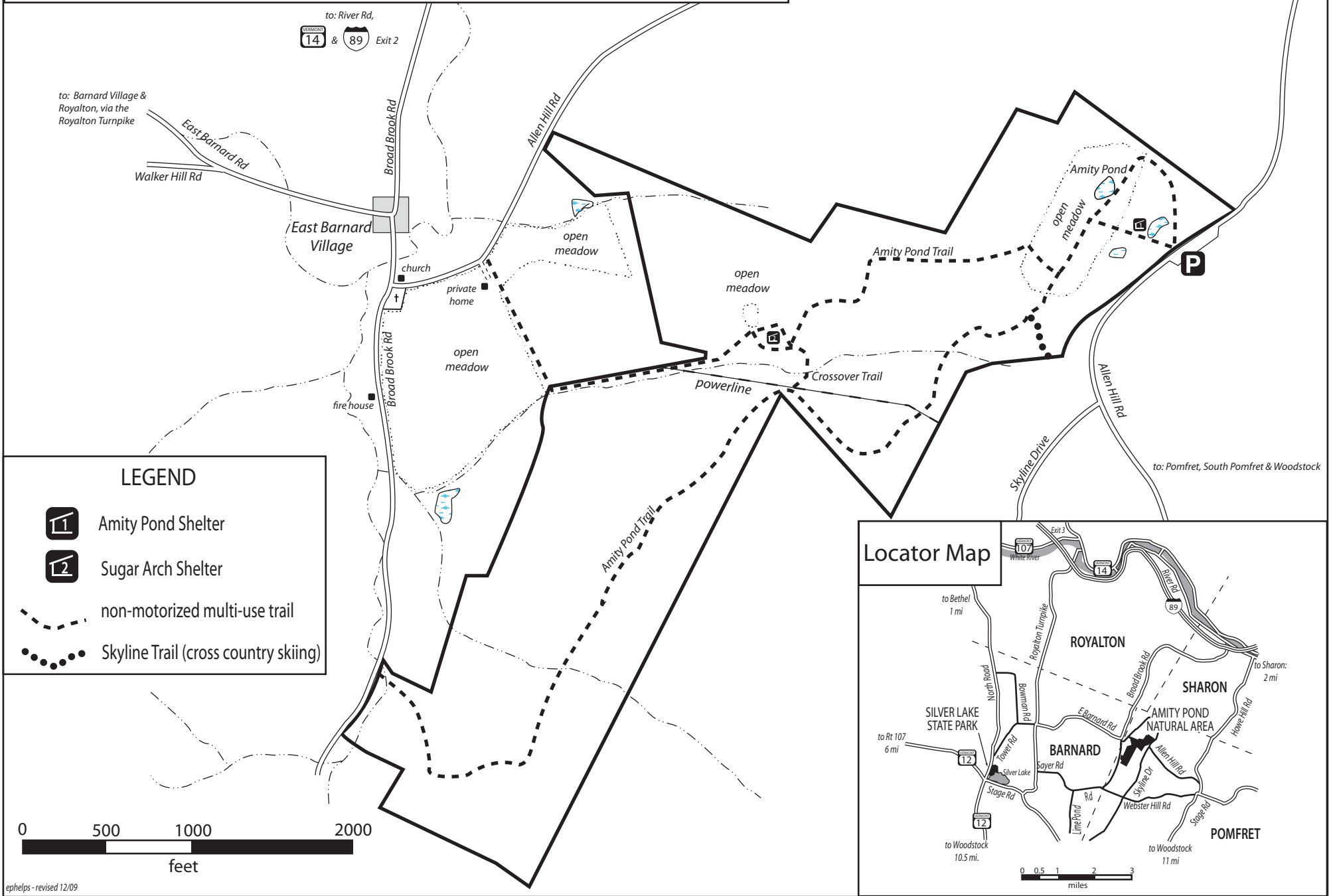


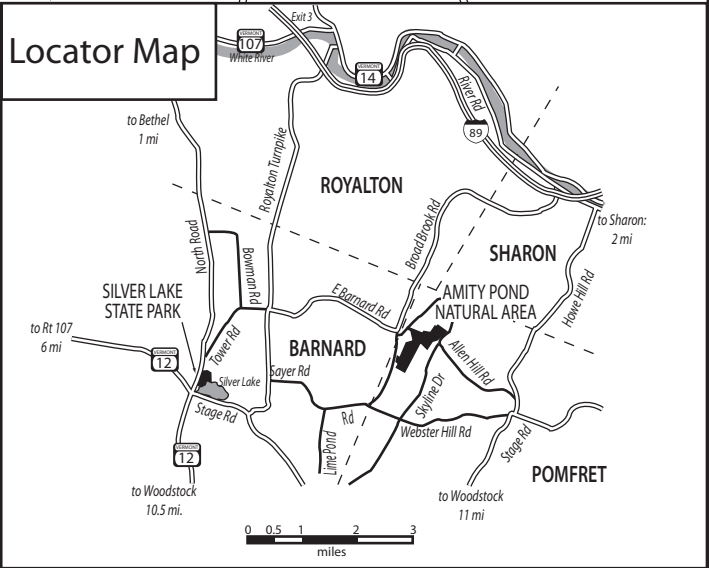
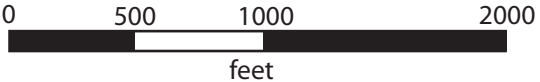
# Amity Pond Natural Area

## State Park - Pomfret, Vermont



**LEGEND**

- Amity Pond Shelter
- Sugar Arch Shelter
- non-motorized multi-use trail
- Skyline Trail (cross country skiing)



# AMITY POND

## NATURAL AREA

State Park

Pomfret, Vermont



**Welcome to Amity Pond Natural Area.** This 182-acre parcel was donated to the State of Vermont in 1969 by Richard and Elizabeth Brett.

The Bretts felt there were not enough places where one could be removed from technology and machinery, and donated the property to “provide a natural environment for quiet relaxation by people who walk, ski or snowshoe.” Deed restrictions prohibit the use of machinery except that needed for emergency or maintenance purposes. The parcel became a State Natural Area in 1983.

The property is managed to protect the integrity of the natural landscape and cultural resources while providing opportunity for compatible recreation, education and research. A typical example of upland Vermont, the area was once heavily forested. Beginning in the 18th century it was cleared for pasture and farmland before it was abandoned in the early 1900’s. Evidence of past land use, including sugar arches, stone walls and an abandoned road, is abundant.

The habitat suits deer, hare, grouse and a wide variety of other small animals. There are three brooks, some swampy places and many limestone outcroppings. The flora is varied, composed of northern hardwoods, some softwoods and a variety of ferns, grasses and shrubs. Two meadows are maintained per deed requirements; they offer excellent views and provide edge habitat for wildlife.

Local legend describes the origin of the area’s name. Two young women attending the East Barnard School vowed eternal friendship, but one married a Barnard man and one married a Pomfret man. In the days of no telephone, keeping in touch could be a problem. So each summer, they chose a day to meet at the tiny pond at the height of land. Thus, the area became as Amity’s Pond.

The site has two camping shelters; each has a fireplace and non-potable water supply. Access is on Allen Hill

Road. Parking is available at a small pull-off on the right side of the road across from the entrance.

Just to the west of the entrance is the Amity Pond Shelter. Several temporary ponds are nearby. The Bretts created these ponds as an experiment in water conservation. Designed to be empty in the fall to hold back the snowmelt and the spring rains that would otherwise run off the land, the ponds should be full in May. Gradually the pond water seeps into the soil. Some water also evaporates, but the aim is to save approximately six inches of run-off by holding the water where it falls for as long as possible.

### **Amity Pond Natural Area Trails**

There are several loop options of different lengths and difficulty. Trails are marked with blue paint blazes on trees. Trails are open to all forms of non-motorized and non-mechanized recreation, including: hiking, horseback riding, pack animals, ski touring and snowshoeing.

#### **Option 1: Amity Pond Loop. 0.4 miles, easy.**

Start by the entrance sign, bear right on an old road and ascend gently through woods into an open field reaching the height of land with views of Mt. Ascutney, Killington Peak and Pico Peak. Amity Pond is located on the right of the trail in a grove of trees. Continue past the small pond until the trail descends and a large rock is visible on the left. Just past this rock, a side trail on the east side of the Amity Pond trail leads to the Amity Pond Shelter and back to the parking area.

#### **Option 2: Crossover Loop. 1.5 miles, moderate.**

Start this hike the same way as the Amity Pond loop. At the large rock, continue south on the Amity Pond trail to a junction marked with directional signs. Turn west following the sign for the Sugar Arch Shelter, crossing a field and descending through the woods to the signed junction with the Crossover Trail. The Sugar Arch Shelter is located a short distance from this junction. Turn east following the Crossover Trail to its signed junction with the Amity Pond Trail. Turn north and follow the trail back uphill to the parking area.

#### **Option 3: Amity Pond-East Barnard Loop. 3 miles, moderate.**

This loop involves hiking along town roads to connect the two sides of the Amity Pond Trail near East Barnard village. Near the Sugar Arch Shelter, at the signed junction of the Amity Pond and Crossover trails, follow the Amity Pond trail downhill along an abandoned road. The trail turns to the north just before a fenced field, and follows the fence line along the edge of the woods to the east of a

fenced horse pasture and barn. Just above the house, the trail crosses a small footbridge and proceeds through a field to Allen Hill Road. Turn left and follow this gravel road west to its intersection with Broad Brook Road near the East Barnard Cemetery. Turn south along Broad Brook Road, and travel past the fire station to the bridge crossing Broad Brook. Just past the bridge, the trail turns off the town road to the east, fords the brook and continues uphill to the parking lot. Use caution when fording the brook; it may be dangerous to cross during times of high water or when icy.

### **Skyline Trail: 6.3 mile ski touring trail**

The northern section of the Amity Pond Trail serves as the start of the Skyline Trail, a 6.3-mile cross-country ski touring trail. Start at the Amity Pond entrance. Follow the Amity Pond trail south to a junction where the Skyline Trail branches off to the left. The trail proceeds south on private lands to Suicide Six Ski Area. The Woodstock Ski Touring Center maintains this ungroomed trail. The Skyline Trail is marked with blue and orange blazes.

### **Guidelines for enjoying Amity Pond Natural Area:**

- Trails are for multi-purpose, non-motorized use only. No motorized vehicles, road or mountain bicycles are allowed.
- Camping is allowed only at the two shelters. No potable water is available.
- Fires may be kindled only at the shelter fireplaces. Only dead and downed wood may be gathered.
- No radios are permitted, per deed restriction.
- No living plants, trees flowers, or other vegetation may be cut or picked.
- Stay on marked trails.
- Carry out all trash and waste that you bring in. Leave only your footprints.



**AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

**1 National Life Drive, Davis 2**

**Montpelier, VT 05620**

**(888) 409-7579**

**[www.vtstateparks.com](http://www.vtstateparks.com)**

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