

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ON THE BOSTON POST  
ROAD:**

Gibbons, Gail. 1986. From Path to Highway: The story of the Boston Post Road. HarperCollins.

Lawlor, Laurie. 2000. Horseback on the Boston Post Road, 1704. Alladin Paperbacks.

<http://groups.msn.com/AmericanRoadsandTrails>

**PARKING:** Limited parking can be found on the State Forest road (no name) and near the junction of rts 244 & 198. It is best to carpool if coming with a group.

**DOGS:** Dogs must be on leash at all times. Please bring a plastic bag to clean up after your dog.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO STAY ON THE TRAIL. TRAMPLING CAN DESTROY NATURAL HABITATS.**

**THE TRAIL IS OPEN TO FOOT TRAFFIC ONLY. MOTORIZED VEHICLES ARE NOT PERMITTED.**

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THE BOSTON  
TURNPIKE  
TRAIL  
EASTFORD, CT

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CONSERVING  
HISTORY AND  
NATURE

IN  
CONNECTICUT'S  
QUIET CORNER

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## WELCOME TO EASTFORD'S BOSTON TURNPIKE TRAIL !



You are standing on the only remaining unaltered portion of an early road system that first connected our towns and cities during colonial times. This was called the Boston Post Road. It was first established under King Charles II of Britain in 1673 and followed trails laid out in much earlier times by Native Americans.

The Boston Post Road was not a single road, but actually a system of roads that connected the important cities of the colonies: Boston, Hartford, Providence, New Haven, New York, Philadelphia, Williamsburg, and Charleston. The portion you are about to visit was part of the Middle Route that ran east from Hartford to Putnam, then on to Dedham, Massachusetts and finally to Boston. The trip from Boston to New York via this route was about 225 miles, considerably shorter than the southern Boston Post Road that ran along the coast.

As the name implies, an important function of these roads was

to carry the mail. Back in 1673 it took about a month for a letter to go from New York to Boston. First the mail was carried by horseback and then later by stage coach. These roads gave farmers a way to get their goods to markets and were important for moving troops during colonial wars and the American Revolution.

In order to raise money to pay for the upkeep of the road, the newly formed states of the United States allowed towns to charge tolls on their portions of the Post Road. The roads then came to be called "turnpikes" because of the turnstiles where travelers had to pay a toll before passing .

At some places along the Boston Turnpike Trail you'll notice that the old roadway still maintains its crown at the center. This allowed rainwater to drain off to the sides, an especially important feature in the mud season! Although cattle drivers were permitted to use the route, the cattle had to be kept off the main road. You'll see stone walls running parallel to the road in places. On the other side of these walls is where the cattle were permitted to walk.



## NATURE ON THE BOSTON TURNPIKE TRAIL

The Trail passes through part of the Natchaug State Forest as well as over privately owned land. We thank the land owners who have given their permission for the public to use this trail.

The portion of the trail between Old Colony Road and State Forest Road passes through what is now a typical maple/oak/hickory forest. Near to the State Forest Road the trail passes through wetland habitat. A small bridge and a short length of board walk have been constructed to ease your passage through these areas.

The Boston Turnpike Trail continues through hardwood forest down to Rt. 198. You can turn back and re-trace your steps on the old road way or follow the newly cleared loop trail and visit several different habitats. Along this section you'll cross a stream, find stands of coniferous trees planted by the Connecticut DEP Div. of Forestry, pass a vernal pool, and finally return to the old Post Road after passing by a meadow.

