

Indigo Woods

What to look for on the Indigo Woods Trail

Please follow the blazes carefully as this trail is entirely within a Conservation Easement on private lands.

Throughout this walk, note the often very large trees, especially the oaks, tulip-poplar and beech that are growing within the easement. Moisture is obviously not a factor limiting growth here! Some trees will be toppled by winds, exposing their shallow root systems, especially where the water table is close to the surface. Understories are very lush with dense stands of spice bush, wild azalea, sweet pepperbush, dogwoods, and, of course, skunk cabbage and false hellebore in the wet swales.

Enter at the Trailhead. Almost immediately, turn right, and cross the river on a gravel bar. Once across, the trail splits; one branch, a spur trail, leads away from the river along a wire fence (the east boundary of Indigo Woods) to an opening in the fence where the trail turns sharply right (east) onto private land. From this point on the trail, which is blazed but not mapped, continues along paths and old roads to either the Double Loop Trail to the north, or near the Camp Hadley Trail to the east.

The other branch, the main trail, leads west along the north bank of the river. Follow for several hundred feet and then cross the river once more to an old road. Here, where the trail splits, is the base of a loop. The trail straight ahead, upslope, will return to this point via the right branch. Continue straight to where the trail eventually passes through a stone wall and into an old meadow. Continue to where the trail comes to the river, close to the site of an old mill dam.

Before crossing the river, look west to where the dam begins. Note the pile of stones. These stones were initialled and dated by Madison and Guilford selectmen as they periodically reconfirmed the location of their towns' common boundaries.

Cross the stream on stepstones and onto the northern side of the stone/earth dam. Observe where the sluiceway that leads from the dam directed the water to the mill site itself. Follow the trail atop the sluice wall to the mill foundation, and then cross the river once more. From this point on, the trail traces the southern bank of the river within its floodplain to the base of the loop. Cross the river once more and return to the trailhead or take the spur trail north to where it joins an old woods road and then passes through a stonewall and wire fence. The wall marks the end of the Indigo Trail and the beginning of the aforementioned unmapped trail on other private lands. Following it will lead to a branch north that joins the Double Loop Trail; straight ahead the trail passes east and then sharply north and over a high promontory before eventually ending on Warpas Rd. a few hundred feet west of its junction with Copse Rd., near the entrance to the Camp Hadley Trail.

The Mill

Active in the early and mid-1800s, this mill was used for sawing ship timber and other timber for Eber Hotchkiss, Hiram Wilcox and other local boatbuilders. Although the extensive ruins of the dam, sluiceway and mill are still very evident, little documentation of its construction and ownership is available.

Permitted Activities:

The trails areas in the MLCT properties are for hiking only. Dogs are allowed, but must be leashed. Please pick up all animal waste. Contact the State Forest HQ for other activities allowed on their sites.



Photo by Emmeline Alaconis, SCRCOG

The Indigo Woods Trail is an easy loop contained entirely on private lands within a Conservation Easement along the Neck River. It affords fine views of the River, especially in winter and spring in times of high water. It passes near and along the sluiceway wall of an historic sawmill dam site. An extended hike is possible via a short spur trail that leads to trails on other private land which, in turn, connect to other MLCT trails.

GPS Directions: 99 Riverside Ter, Madison, CT 06443

Category: An easy loop trail with several stepstone river crossings - these crossings may be difficult in times of high water

Start: Trailhead at the cul-de-sac on Riverside Terrace

Distance: About .75 miles

Approximate Time: Less than 1 hour

Parking: At the Riverside Terrace cul-de-sac near the trailhead

Historical Features: Ruins of the dam, sluiceway and

For more information about this walk contact:

Madison Land Conservation Trust
www.madisonlandtrust.org

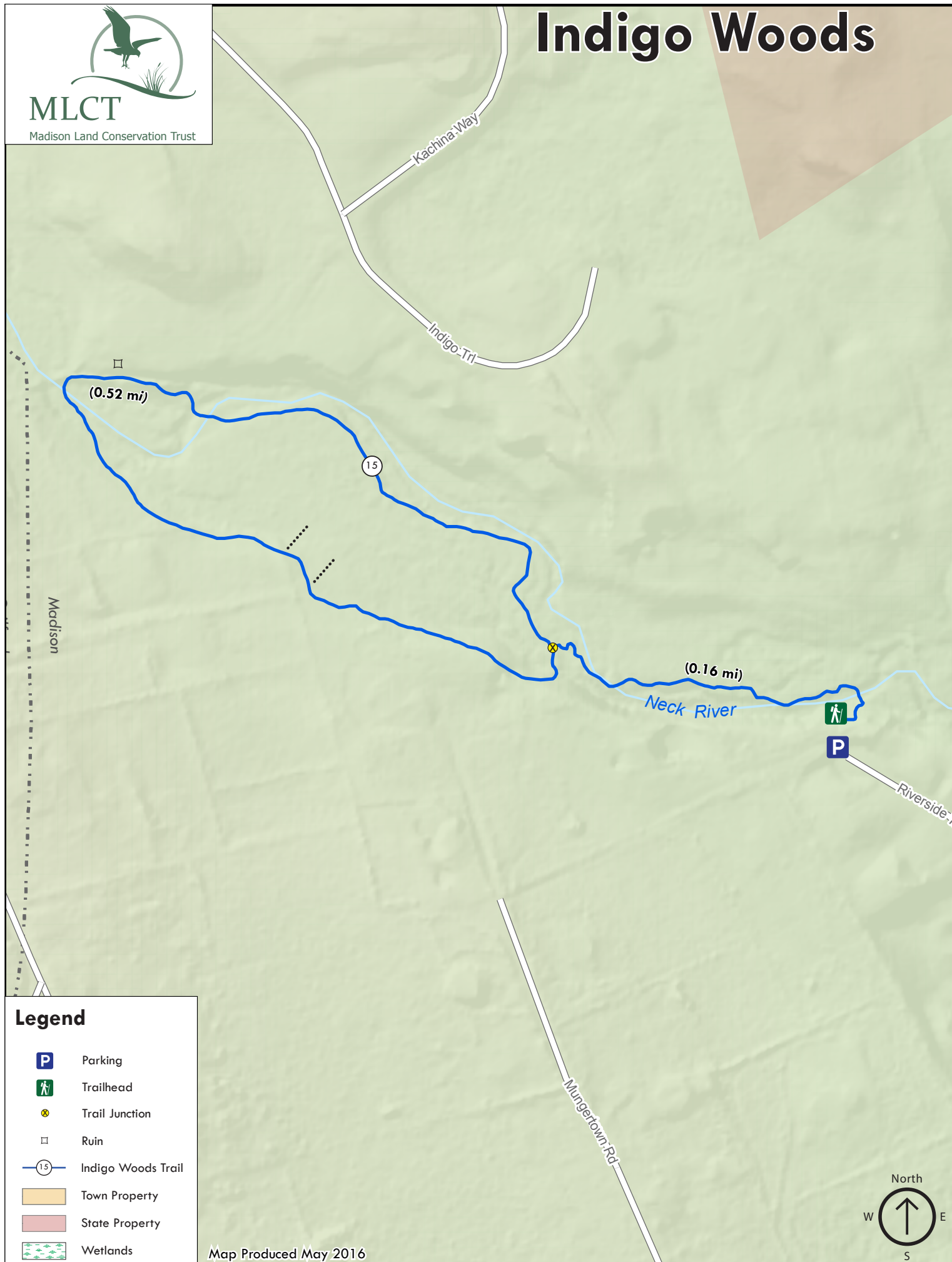




MLCT

Madison Land Conservation Trust

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Legend

- Parking
- Trailhead
- Trail Junction
- Ruin
- Indigo Woods Trail
- Town Property
- State Property
- Wetlands