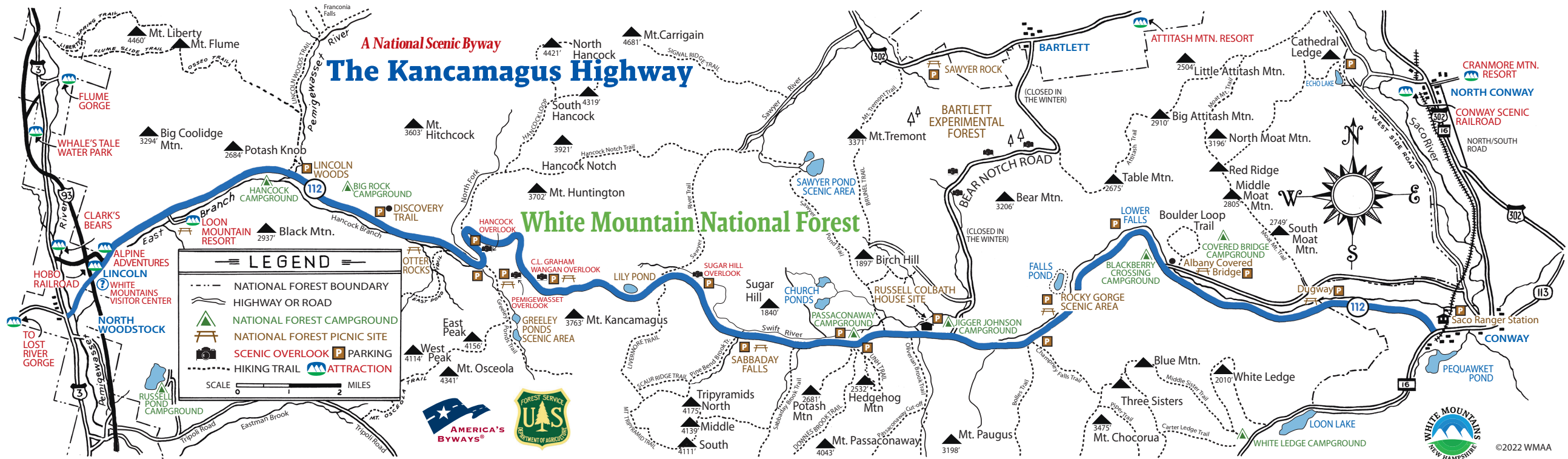


# The Kancamagus Highway





# Kăñ-că-mă-gŭs

KANCAMAGUS HIGHWAY • WHITE MOUNTAINS  
Established 1959

**The Kancamagus Highway** stretches across the White Mountains for 34.5 miles from Lincoln to Conway. This scenic road climbs to nearly 3,000 feet as it traverses the flank of Mt. Kancamagus at the height of land in Lincoln, and offers outstanding opportunities for distant mountain views, and native flora and fauna. Be sure to enjoy the views from the scenic vistas along the road.

The Kancamagus Highway was dedicated as the first of the **National Scenic Byways** in the northeastern United States – for its recreational opportunities and aesthetic, cultural and historic values. The road is open year round.

## HISTORIC CONNECTION TO NATIVE AMERICANS:

The mountains and lands here are named for New Hampshire's most legendary Indians: Passaconaway (Child of the Bear) a peace-loving chief who united over 17 Indian tribes of Central New England into the Penacook Confederacy, and died in 1669. **Kancamagus** (The Fearless One), was the grandson of Passaconaway, and the third and final Sagamon of the Penacook Confederacy.



Kancamagus tried to keep peace between the Indians and European pioneers. About 1725, Paugus (The Oak), was Chief of the Pequawket Tribe along the Saco River. Legends agree that **Chocorua**, thought to be a chief of the Ossipee Tribe died on the summit of the mountain which now bears his name. The mountain is located just south of the Kancamagus Highway.

**THE EUROPEAN SETTLERS:** The town of Passaconaway includes the fertile land along the Swift River, 12 miles from Conway. It was first settled by Europeans around 1790. The early settlers here eked out a living in this isolated valley for over a century by farming, taking in summer boarders, and logging, which was at its peak around 1900. The **Russell Colbath House**, located here, was built in the early 1800's, and today is a Forest Service Historic Site with a fascinating story about a woman, a lantern, and her wandering husband.

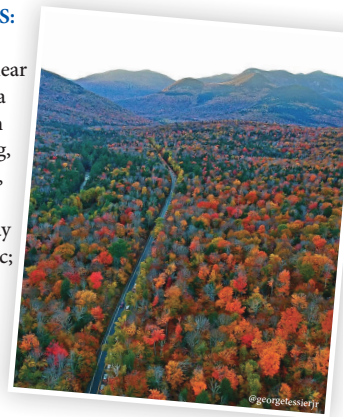
**THE HIGHWAY:** A town road to Passaconaway was completed in 1837. One hundred years later the route was extended west from Passaconaway and east from Lincoln. Much of the work was completed by the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corp) which had a camp at Blackberry Crossing. The State Highway Department worked on the road after World War II whenever money became available. The two sections were at last connected and opened to thru traffic in 1959. In addition to the Russell Colbath House, the **Saco Ranger**

**District Office and Information Center** is located at the east end of the Kancamagus Highway. The **White Mountains Visitor Center** is located at the west end of the highway just beyond Lincoln.

## RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

The US Forest Service provides many conveniences along and near the Kancamagus Highway. It is a popular spot for recreation such as picnicking, hiking, swimming, winter snowshoe and X-C trails, kayaking and fishing. The campgrounds along the Highway are mostly rustic and very scenic; offering a chance to escape to a quiet, wooded area. Pets are allowed on leash. **No camping or fires are permitted within 1/2 mile of the highway, except in designated campgrounds.**

**SCENIC AREAS:** Through the ages, the Swift River has worn a narrow cleft in solid rock, at an area today known as **Rocky Gorge Scenic Area**. Enjoy the outstanding natural beauty of **Falls Pond**, a short walk over the Gorge and rustic footbridge which leads to a scenic path around the pond. **Sawyer Ponds and Greeley Ponds Scenic Areas** are reached by 1/2 day hikes over forest trails. **Lower Falls** is a very popular swimming area in the summer, and a colorful spot for a picnic or photographs during the foliage season.



**OVERLOOKS:** These provide awe-inspiring alpine and valley panoramas, with views from the height of land looking far out over the Pemigewasset River Valley to the west, Mad River Notch to the south, and down into Livermore and Passaconaway to the east.

**TRAILS:** You'll find trails to fit your likes and fitness level. The **Rail 'N River Trail**, at the Passaconaway Historic Site is an easy 30 minute walk, perfect for families. **Sabbaday Falls** are particularly breathtaking and can be viewed after a short walk along the Sabbaday Brook trail. The **Boulder Loop Trail** at the Covered Bridge Campground is about 2.5 miles round trip with a lovely view from the top. Other trails starting at the highway offer pleasant hikes from 1/2 hour to several days. Detailed trail maps may be found at the Saco Ranger Station Visitor Center at the east end, or the White Mountains Information Center at the west end.

## THE WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST RECREATION PASS:

Vehicles parked in the National Forest are required to display a Recreation Pass. There are three pass options: a \$5 day pass available on-site, a \$30 annual pass or a \$40 household annual pass. For those holding the Golden Access, Golden Eagle or Golden Age pass parking is free. Passes are available at USFS Information Centers and the White Mountains Visitors Center.

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