

This 65-acre property was recently protected by a collaborative effort by the Town of Gilford and the Lakes Region Conservation Trust (LRCT). The Town purchased the land through its Conservation Land Fund, and LRCT purchased a conservation easement, which adds an additional layer of protection. The Weeks Conservation Area was historically used as sheep pasture, a blueberry farm, and for timber harvesting. Today, the property is conserved for wildlife habitat and public recreation. Follow the Ledges-Iron Mine Trail to a ledgy vista and then on to [adjacent conserved land](#), the remains of a historic iron mine, and the other trails in the Belknap Mountain Range.

The parking lot which can hold up to 6 cars can be reached about 100 feet north of the junction of Hoyt Road and Belknap Mountain Road in Gilford. Please do not park in or block the turnaround or remove the chain.

The blue-blazed Ledges-Iron Mine Trail follows a woods road approximately 0.45 miles to a ledgy outlook (1,400 ft.), which offers a beautiful 180-degree vista to the northern extent of Lake Winnepesaukee and the western mountains. From there the Ledges-Iron Mine Trail merges (blue and yellow blazes) with Marge's Trail for about 0.1 mile where Marge's Trail (yellow blazes) departs to the northeast.

At 0.8 miles, the Ledges-Iron Mine Trail continues onto adjacent conserved land and land passes the site of the 1827 Gunstock Iron Mine and continues another 0.2 miles to the Ridge Trail. This iron mine is depicted on the original Dave Roberts [map](#) of the Belknap Range and is described by Dave [here](#). Shortly before you reach the Iron Mine is what appears to be a constructed road bounded on each side by large rocks. This road was initially overgrown but with the help of some lidar images we cleared most of it. We believe that this was a haul road constructed to provide a passable route for wagons or sledges to move the iron ore down to the valley below. Unfortunately, it is unclear what route the wagons took to reach Belknap Mountain Road, which we believe was the immediate destination before joining the more heavily traveled roads in Gilford to the foundry in Lakeport. Certainly a mystery to unravel.

A little north of the intersection of the Ledges-Iron Mine Trail and the white-blazed Ridge Trail is another northward- looking overlook. Worth a stop for a drink or some lunch. Continuing north from the Ridge Trail intersection for about 0.25 miles, Marge's Trail (yellow blazes) intersects the Ridge Trail (a short side trail to the northeast leads to the Flintlock ski trail) and descends southwest primarily along the contour about 0.5 miles back to the intersection with the Ledges-Iron Mine Trail. There is another overlook about 0.15 miles down from the Ridge Trail and shortly thereafter Marge's Trail crosses the right-of-way of the original 3,100-ft. rope tow on Gunstock (circa 1935), then continues down to meet blue-blazed Ledges-Iron Mine Trail.

The entire loop from the parking lot and back is about 2.5 miles.

This map is georeferenced, i.e. has embedded coordinates. Once downloaded to your drive you can import it into a smart phone app like Avenza or Gaia and track your route, view coordinates, measure distances , etc.