



Island Pond

32 Mill Street, Island Pond, Vermont

Island Pond is nestled in the rolling hills of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, about 24 miles southeast of Newport. This scenic body of water forms the headwaters of the Clyde River and offers excellent opportunities for paddling, fishing, and taking in views of the surrounding hills. A town launch has features (gradual slopes, docks,) that lend themselves well to users with mobility challenges, although access currently requires navigating across grass and sandy to reach the water, limiting suitability for those in wheelchairs.

The shoreline is ringed by a road and dotted with homes, and there's a campground along the northeast shore. Despite its proximity to town, Island Pond remains a peaceful and rewarding place to spend time on the water.

Although called a "pond," the paddling experience here feels more like being on a small lake. With roughly 614 acres of open water, there's plenty to explore. A highlight of the trip is circling the small central island, from which the lake gets its name. The island is steep and rocky, framed by evergreens, and provides a striking focal point from any angle. The island was recently conserved by the Vermont Land Trust, with support of many community patterns, for all to enjoy.

From Lakeside Park on the north end, it's about 0.5 miles to the central island. A loop from the park, around the island, and back totals roughly 1.8 miles, which typically takes 30 - 50 minutes under calm conditions.

For those looking for a longer outing, a full circuit of the shoreline is manageable for most paddlers in a ½ day, with plenty of places to pull off for a break or a swim. The scenery—mountains in the distance and the feel of a remote northern lake—makes Island Pond a classic Northeast Kingdom paddling destination.

Access Description

This is a small, public park with one launch area, tables, and adjacent facilities (toilets, beach, etc) that provides access to the northwestern part of Island Pond.

Parking and Facilities

- The parking area is a mostly flat, gravel parking lot immediately off of Mill Street.
- There are two toilet facilities at the park, but neither are ADA compliant.
- Picnic tables (not ADA compliant)
- Shade structure

- Floating dock with 2 benches at boat launch
- NFCT Informational Kiosk

Pathway to Water Access

- The primary access to Island Pond is across a small, short grass field. From the parking area, it's approximately 140 feet to the start of the sandy beach, with an additional 10 feet across the beach to reach the waterline, for a total distance of about 150 feet. The grassy area is slightly uneven but free of major obstacles and hazards, with a gentle grade of roughly 5%. The pathway steepens slightly over the final 10 feet on the sandy beach, increasing from an 8% to a 10% grade at the water's edge.

Water Access

- The Primary canoe launch is the sandy beach 150' from the parking area. There is space to the right of a floating dock to launch a canoe or kayak that is about 25' wide. There is no official infrastructure available to assist in the launching or entering of watercraft.
- There is a compact, fine gravel trail from the parking lot. However, this path does not go to the water access, but instead heads to the left of the sandy beach and towards the other end of the park.

Environmental and Sensory Factors

- This is a popular town park with limited parking. However, clear traffic patterns at the boat launch make access manageable
- Although not an extremely large body of water, Island Pond is susceptible to wind & choppy conditions; check the weather before venturing out
- Motor boats are also allowed on this lake, paddle safely and make yourself visible
- Boat launch is visible from parking area
- This is a sunny park, but shade is available in a nearby covered picnic area.
- Lakeside Park is close to a heavily trafficked road, there can be a good amount of motor-vehicle noise

Potential Accessibility improvements:

- Installation of a designated accessible parking spot
- Installation of a level, durable trail to the water
- Removable roll out beach pad: allow wheel chair users to access the beach
- Bench / Assisted boat launch system at beach
- Increased informational signage
- Fully Accessible portable restroom







