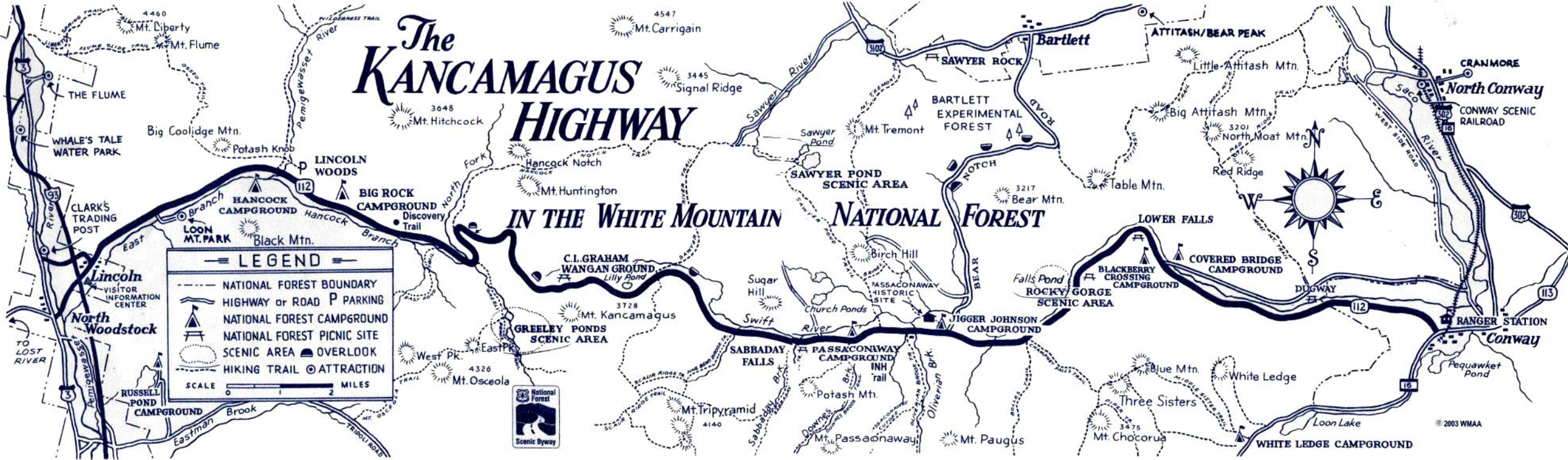


# The KANCAMAGUS HIGHWAY

## IN THE WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST





## *Welcome To* *The* **KANCAMAGUS HIGHWAY**

Recently dedicated by the US Forest Service as a Scenic Byway for its recreation opportunities and aesthetic, cultural and historic values, the Kancamagus Highway stretches from the Pemigewasset River at Lincoln 34 1/2 miles to the Saco River at Conway, NH. The route climbs to nearly 3000 feet as it traverses the flank of Mt. Kancamagus near Lincoln. It is open year-round, weather permitting.

**HISTORY:** The mountains here perpetuate the names of New Hampshire's most legendary Indians:

Passaconaway (Child of the Bear) was a peace-loving chief who, in 1627, united over 17 Indian tribes of Central New England into the Penacook Confederacy. As first "Sagamon," he ruled wisely until his death in 1669.

Kancamagus (The Fearless One), grandson of Passaconaway, succeeded his uncle, Wonalancet, around 1684 as third and final Sagamon of the Penacook Confederacy. Kancamagus tried to keep peace between the Indians and pioneering whites, until aggravated

English harassments brought war and bloodshed. The confederacy's tribes scattered after 1691, and Kancamagus and his followers moved north to upper New Hampshire or into Canada.

About 1725, Paugus (The Oak), was Chief of the Pequawket Tribe along the Saco River. Later, around 1760, Chocorua, brave and perhaps a chief of the Ossipee Tribe, lived near today's Conway or Albany. Legends agree that Chocorua died on the summit of the mountain which now bears his name.

**THE SETTLERS:** Passaconaway, or Albany Intervale, the fertile land on the Swift River, 12 miles from Conway, was first settled by white men around 1790. The Russell Colbath House, located here, was built in the early 1800's, and today is used as a Forest Service Historic Site and Information Center. (Open daily in season). Early settlers 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 HIGHWAY:** A town road to Passaconaway was completed in 1837. One hundred years later the route was extended eastward and westward from Passaconaway and from Lincoln. The two sections were at last completed 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. This center provides visitor information about the highway, related facilities and forest management activities. A Visitor's Information Center is located at the west end of the highway in Lincoln.

**RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES:** The US Forest Service provides many conveniences along and near the Kancamagus Highway. Picnic sites have tables, drinking water and sanitary facilities; campgrounds offer family units with parking, tenting spaces, an open fireplace and table, drinking water and sanitary stations. Trailers are permitted; no hook-ups. Campsites are available on a first-come basis; limited reservations are accepted at some campgrounds. Pets are allowed on leash. Camping fees are posted at each area's entrance. 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, today designated 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's hikes over forest trails. No overnight camping is allowed at Greeley Pond and only on platforms and in the shelter at Sawyer Pond.

**OVERLOOKS:** These provide awe-inspiring alpine and valley panoramas. Sabbaday Falls are particularly breathtaking and can be viewed after a brief walk along the Sabbaday Brook trail.

**TRAILS:** Nature's lessons, land forms and the multiple uses of the White Mountain National forest are explained by labels or by numbered stakes on self guided trails. Rail 'N River Trail, at the Passaconaway Historic Site is an easy walk taking about 30 minutes.

Boulder Loop Trail at the Covered Bridge Campground is about 2.5 miles. Other trails starting at the highway offer pleasant hikes from 1/2 hour to several days. Detailed trail maps may be purchased at the Saco Ranger Station Visitor Center in Conway or the Information Center in Lincoln.

Help keep the Kancamagus Highway clean. Please do not litter.

*"Take only photographs; leave only footprints."*