



Mega Esker Trail

Loop hike:
Class 1
5.0 miles
1,000' vertical
2.5 hours

An esker is a long ridge of sand and gravel formed 12,000 years ago by glaciers that look like a railroad embankment. The Mega Esker is similar in height to the one located in Great Esker Park, Massachusetts which claims to be the highest esker in North America.

The other interesting features on the east side of the Mega Esker are 2 large kettle holes formed by large chunks of ice getting stuck as the glacier was retreating.

Another "cool" local glacier experience is the Long Esker Trail in Burlington. This esker is not as big, but it is about a mile long.

Maps
 A large and small scale map are good for this hike since most turns are on the Barnes Nature Center map.

Start at Sessions flagpole (41.732830, -72.955389) hiking southwest following the Beaver Pond Trail. Turn left at the base of the hill (0.7 miles). Follow the solid blue plastic blazes over the bridge to the junction with the Blue/ Black trail: B/B at 0.9 miles. Cross route 69 (1.1 miles). At 1.2 miles carefully look for the B/B painted blazes as the trail descends to the edge of Freeman Hill Brook, 60 yards before crossing a wooden bridge. Cross South Main St at 1.4 miles and at 1.7 turn left crossing over the brook on a solid bridge with a hand railing. This is the start of the Barnes Nature Center (BNC) White trail (W). (note the BNC map above) Follow the W trail on a number of board walks over a wetlands area as you approach a very significant glacial esker. Ascend about 90 feet up this esker, where the W trail levels off at 1.9 miles. At 2.1 the W trail ends at the junction with the Yellow Trail (Y). Bear left along the top of the esker on the Y trail. At 2.2 miles the Y trail turns to the right and descends the esker. There is also an optional extension to the left on a wide unmarked trail heading south to the 420 foot highpoint of the esker at 2.3 miles with view of Seymour Park. The esker now descends rapidly. Turn around here and return to the Y trail at 2.5 m. Turn left and follow the Y trail down the southwest side of the esker. At 2.5 the Y reaches the junction with the red trail (R). Turn left to follow the R over another bridge with a hand railing. Follow the R trail to the "T" junction at 2.9 m that is close to the BNC building. Turn right going around the small pond behind BNC. At 2.95 turn right onto the Blue/Black trail. At 3.7 you will cross over South Main Street again and then the wooden bridge. Follow the B/B painted blazes next to the brook for 60 yards, then ascend away from the brook. Cross route 69 at 4.0 miles followed by the bridge to Sessions at 4.2. Turn right onto the wide gravel Beaver Pond Trail at 4.3, returning to your car at 5.0.