



Volunteers prepping the trails.

Directions to the Bear Brook pulloff:

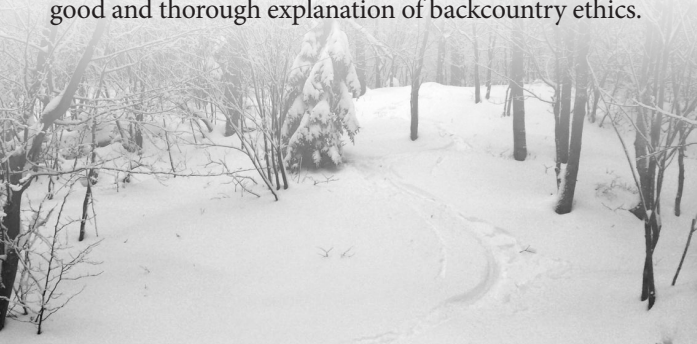
Leave Brandon heading east on Rt. 73, climbing to the top of Brandon Gap. Continue past the top/the Long Trail parking area for about 1/2 mile. There is a wide pulloff on the right; it is unmarked. If you reach the Chittenden Brook area, you have gone 1 mile too far.

This is the first of three glade areas to be developed. In the summer and fall of 2016 there will be workdays to open up the other two areas. There is one that has more moderate terrain that will be accessible to those using waxless skis. Please check on the Rochester Area Sports Trail Alliance website (rastavt.org) for dates of work parties.

The Catamount Trail:

For those looking for gentler terrain, the Catamount Trail runs just east of Brandon. This trail runs north-south the length of Vermont. The relevant trail sections are 14 and 15 and can be found on the web at catamounttrail.org.

Please practice good ethics and safe skiing in our area. See www.catamounttrail.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/vtbcEthic_longPrintable.pdf for a good and thorough explanation of backcountry ethics.



Here's a recommended list of things to bring:

- ✓ Telemark or alpine touring skis and boots
- ✓ Ski poles with baskets
- ✓ Climbing skins
- ✓ Backpack
- ✓ Plenty of non-alcoholic liquid to drink throughout the day
- ✓ Lunch and extra food in case an unforeseen problem causes a delay on the trail
- ✓ Extra layers of clothing to put on at breaks or in an emergency
- ✓ Extra socks, mitts or gloves, hat, or balaclava
- ✓ Gaiters
- ✓ Scraper to remove ice buildup on skis
- ✓ Compass and whistle
- ✓ Map
- ✓ Duct tape
- ✓ Moleskin, small first aid kit & space blanket
- ✓ Headlamp & extra batteries
- ✓ Chemical hand warmers
- ✓ Small pad to sit or stand on for lunch
- ✓ Wax for waxable skis or Maxi-glide for no-wax skis
- ✓ Goggles and/or sunglasses
- ✓ Helmet
- ✓ Toilet paper (optional: snow works too, and if you do use TP, be sure to pack it out.)
- ✓ Sunscreen / Lip Balm
- ✓ Personal identification and medical insurance card (if you have one)
- ✓ Aspirin
- ✓ Any medications you might need

Tell a responsible person where you will be and when you expect to return.



BACKCOUNTRY SKIING IN THE GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST BRANDON, VERMONT



Cover photos (top left and bottom): George Fjeld



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BRANDON'S Gateways to ADVENTURE BACKCOUNTRY SKIING



Backcountry skiing—also known as “skinning” for the nylon or mohair skins worn on skis to make walking uphill possible—is a rapidly developing sport with ancient origins; as far back as 8000 years ago people in Europe and Asia used animal skins on skis while hunting. In the last several years that concept has been modified and adopted by outdoor winter enthusiasts and has exploded upon the Vermont skiing scene. Alpine touring and telemark gear allow walking uphill on skis. They have enabled this sport to flourish, and it is gaining new devotees every year.

Why would someone want to walk uphill to ski down? Why not just take the lift at a ski resort? There are several good reasons. First, the walk uphill is extremely aerobic and it offers tremendous cardiovascular exercise; many people enjoy the climb even more than the descent! Second, it affords an opportunity to see beautiful and stunning natural winter vistas at a slow pace, something that is missed when hurtling downhill at high speeds. Third, it avoids the large crowds and expensive lift tickets at downhill ski areas; there is no cost to climb uphill, and rarely are there crowds. Finally, it is not limited by the hours of operation of formal ski areas; you can go any time you like (though it's not so much fun in the dark). Those seeking adrenaline along with a big dose of solitude will be drawn to backcountry skiing.



George Fjeld

BRANDON GAP BACKCOUNTRY SKIING IN THE GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST GLADES

Welcome to the newest ski area in Vermont! And without mechanical lifts! This great addition to our skiable terrain is the only National Forest glade project in the nation. In the fall of 2015, a local group of dedicated outdoors people received permission for and developed a 1,300 foot vertical gladed area. It consists of 4 glades and a skin track for going up. Located on Rt. 73 East, the Bear Brook pulloff is a short drive from downtown Brandon. The skin track leaves directly from the parking area; it is aggressive (pretty steep) but can be climbed in about an hour. The ski down is much shorter. From the top you can choose any of the 4 glades (see map), which mix back and forth over the hill. They



all end on the same woods road, which leads back to the skin track and parking area.

This is an area for the accomplished skier. The terrain is moderately steep. Skiers/snowboarders should travel in groups and be prepared to take care of themselves. There is no cell service or ski patrol! A sense of adventure is necessary. Louis or Sarah Patis at the Brandon Inn can give you more direction if needed.

MAP OF BEAR BROOK BACKCOUNTRY SKI AREA

