

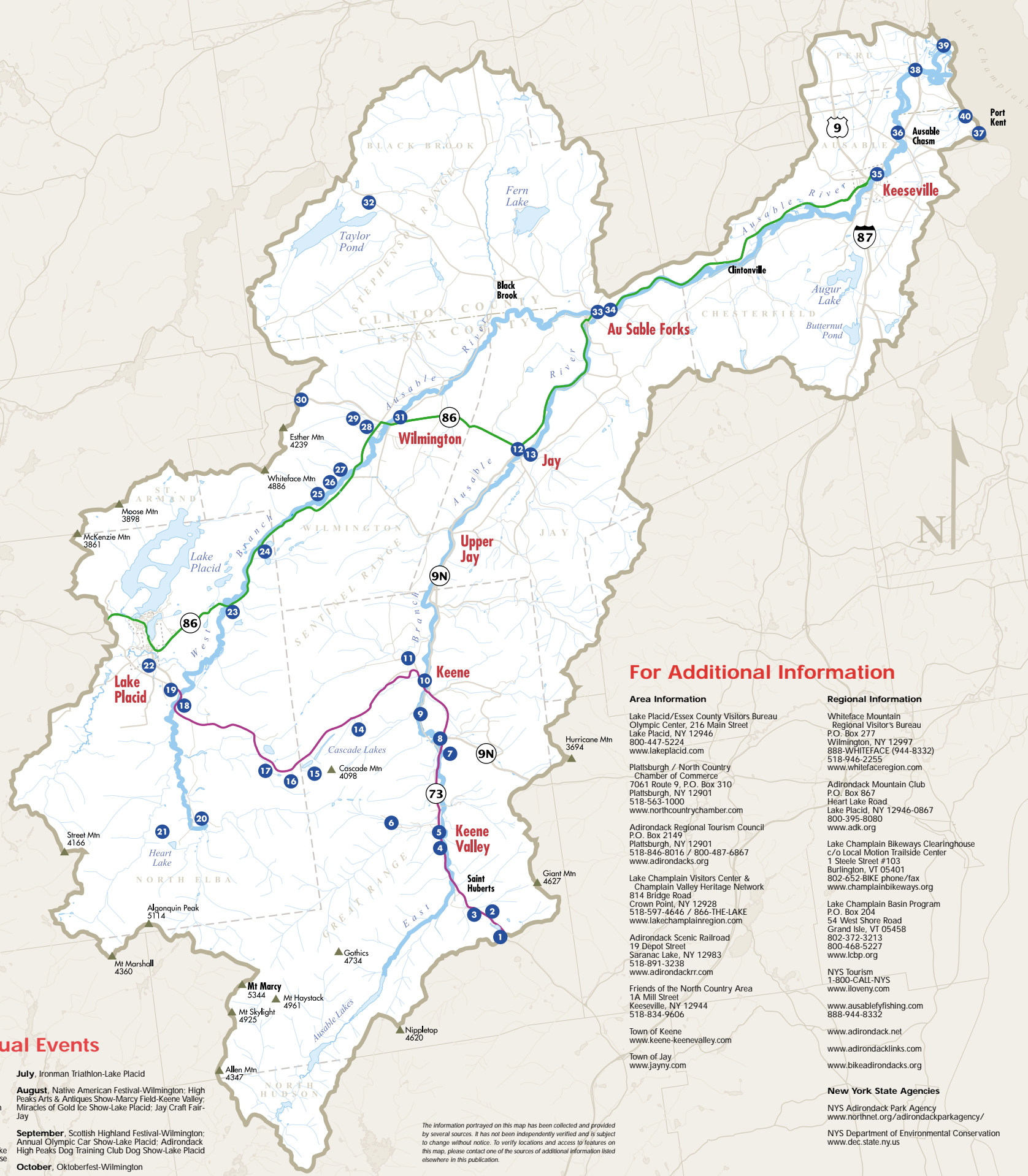


Au Sable River Watershed

A Traveler's Guide to River and Scenic Byway Resources

Key to Symbols

- Fishing access
- Boat Launch
- Swimming
- Canoe / kayak
- Cross country ski area
- Downhill / Alpine ski area
- Hiking / Walking Trail
- Rock / Ice climbing
- Mountain biking
- Bird Watching
- Picnicking
- Camping
- Golf course
- Food
- Lodging
- Gas
- Ferry / Boat tour
- Airport
- Scenic railroad
- Visitor information center
- Arts Center
- Historic bridge
- Historic site
- Museum
- Olympic site
- Scenic/Geologic Interest
- Olympic Trail Scenic Byway
- Route 73 Scenic Byway



For Additional Information

- Area Information**
- Lake Placid/Essex County Visitors Bureau
Olympic Center, 216 Main Street
Lake Placid, NY 12946
800-447-5224
www.lakeplacid.com
- Plattsburgh / North Country Chamber of Commerce
7061 Route 9, P.O. Box 310
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-1000
www.northcountrychamber.com
- Adirondack Regional Tourism Council
P.O. Box 2149
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-846-8016 / 800-487-6867
www.adirondacks.org
- Lake Champlain Visitors Center & Champlain Valley Heritage Network
814 Bridge Road
Crown Point, NY 12928
518-597-4646 / 866-THE-LAKE
www.lakechamplainregion.com
- Adirondack Scenic Railroad
19 Depot Street
Saranac Lake, NY 12983
518-891-3238
www.adirondackrr.com
- Friends of the North Country Area
1A Mill Street
Keeseville, NY 12944
518-834-9606
- Town of Keene
www.keene-keenevalley.com
- Town of Jay
www.jayny.com
- Regional Information**
- Whiteface Mountain Regional Visitor's Bureau
P.O. Box 277
Wilmington, NY 12997
888-WHITEFACE (944-8332)
518-946-2255
www.whitefaceregion.com
- Adirondack Mountain Club
P.O. Box 867
Heart Lake Road
Lake Placid, NY 12946-0867
800-395-8080
www.adk.org
- Lake Champlain Bikeways Clearinghouse
c/o Local Motion Trailside Center
1 Steele Street #103
Burlington, VT 05401
802-652-BIKE phone/fax
www.champlainbikeways.org
- Lake Champlain Basin Program
P.O. Box 204
54 West Shore Road
Grand Isle, VT 05458
802-372-3213
800-468-5227
www.lcbp.org
- NYS Tourism
1-800-CALL-NYS
www.iloveny.com
- www.ausablefishing.com
888-944-8332
- www.adirondack.net
www.adirondacklinks.com
www.bikeadirondacks.org
- New York State Agencies**
- NYS Adirondack Park Agency
www.northnet.org/adirondackparkagency/
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
www.dec.state.ny.us

A Sampler of Annual Events

- January**, Mountain Fest-Keene
- February**, Empire State Games-Lake Placid
- March**, March Madness at Whiteface-Wilmington
- May**, Ausable River Two-fly Contest-Wilmington
- June**, Whiteface Mountain Uphill Foot Race-Wilmington; Lake Placid Film Forum-Lake Placid; Lake Placid Horse Show-Lake Placid; I Love New York Horse Show-Lake Placid; Whiteface Mountain Uphill Bike Race-Wilmington
- July**, Ironman Triathlon-Lake Placid
- August**, Native American Festival-Wilmington; High Peaks Arts & Antiques Show-Marcy Field-Keene Valley; Miracles of Gold Ice Show-Lake Placid; Jay Craft Fair-Jay
- September**, Scottish Highland Festival-Wilmington; Annual Olympic Car Show-Lake Placid; Adirondack High Peaks Dog Training Club Dog Show-Lake Placid
- October**, Oktoberfest-Wilmington

The information portrayed on this map has been collected and provided by several sources. It has not been independently verified and is subject to change without notice. To verify locations and access to features on this map, please contact one of the sources of additional information listed elsewhere in this publication.

East Branch of the Au Sable River

North on NYS Route 73 and North on NYS Route 9N through Saint Huberts, Keene Valley, Keene, Upper Jay, Jay, into AuSable Forks

- 1 **Chapel Pond**, Route 73 The cliffs on the other side of Chapel Pond are often nesting sites for Peregrine Falcons.
- 2 **Roaring Brook Falls**, Route 73
- 3 **Parking**, Route 73, St. Huberts Trail to Giant Mountain.
- 4 **Parking**, Route 73, Keene Valley Trails to High Peaks.
- 5 **Keene Valley**
- 6 **Parking**, Keene Valley Parking, Trails to John's Brook Lodge, High Peaks.
- 7 **Marcy Field**, Route 73, Keene Valley Trails to Blueberry and Porter Mountains.
- 8 **The Kame**, Route 73 & 9N intersection, Keene Once thought to be an Indian burial ground, the Kame is actually a feature from the Ice Age; it was the base of a 5,000 foot high glacial waterfall.
- 9 **The Walton Bridge**, Hull's Falls Road to Gristmill Road, Keene The Walton Bridge, circa 1890, is a lenticular iron truss bridge formerly located over the Black Brook in the town of Black Brook, moved to this location in 1925.

West Branch of the Au Sable River

River Road (Essex County Route 21), Route 86, Haselton Road (Essex County Route 12), Silver Lake Road (Clinton County Route 1) skirting the village of Lake Placid, through Wilmington and Black Brook into AuSable Forks

- 10 **Keene**
- 11 **The Jackrabbit Trail**, Alstead Hill Road, Keene Located at the very end of Alstead Hill Road is the beginning, if you like uphill, or the end of the Jackrabbit Trail. This trail is approximately 35 miles of cross-country ski trail over public and private land maintained by the Adirondack Ski Touring Council. The trail is named in memory of Herman "Jack Rabbit" Johansen. There is no fee but membership with the ASTC is appreciated.
- 12 **Jay**
- 13 **Covered Bridge**, Jay The Jay Covered Bridge was built in 1857-58. It currently awaits restoration after being moved from its original site, and will be converted to a pedestrian bridge. This is the only remaining covered bridge in the Adirondack region.
- 14 **Parking**, Route 73, Keene, Trail to Pitchoff Mountain.
- 15 **Cascade Lakes**, North Elba
- 16 **Parking**, Route 73, North Elba Trails to Cascade, Porter and Pitchoff Mountains.

Mt. Van Hovenberg Winter Recreation Area/Verizon Sports Complex

North Elba Site of Bobsled, Luge, and Skeleton tracks, plus cross country skiing, snowshoeing and mountain biking.

MacKenzie-Intervale Ski Jumping Complex, Lake Placid View winter and summer ski jumping, as well as ride the chairlift to the 26 story elevator which will bring you to the observation deck atop the K120 tower.

John Brown's Farm, Lake Placid The farm and burial site of abolitionist John Brown are located just outside the village of Lake Placid. During the mid-1800's, Brown helped freed slaves establish new lives in this area.

Parking, Heart Lake Road, North Elba, Trails to High Peaks.

Parking, Heart Lake Road, North Elba, Trails to High Peaks.

Town of North Elba & Village of Lake Placid

West Branch Catch and Release, Wilmington & North Elba Five miles of the West Branch of the Ausable River are designated by NYSDEC as "Catch and release, artificials only." The Ausable supports a renowned trout fishery.

Parking, Route 86 Trail to Copperas Pond.

Wilmington Notch State Campground, Wilmington

Whiteface Mountain Ski Center, Route 86, Wilmington Site of the Olympic skiing events in 1980, Whiteface Mountain is open for Alpine skiing and snowboarding in winter, plus mountain biking and scenic gondola rides during the summer.

Parking, Route 86, Wilmington Trail to Whiteface Mountain and the Flume.

Wilmington

Parking, Wilmington Trail to Marble Mountain.

Whiteface Mountain Veteran's Memorial Highway, Wilmington This scenic toll route was dedicated by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1935. Drive nearly to the summit, and complete your ascent by walking a trail or riding an elevator through solid rock to the observation area for 360-degree views. The Atmospheric Science Research Station is also located on this road, with research equipment in place at Whiteface's peak.

Wilmington Bridge, Route 86, Wilmington This bridge, built in 1935, is representative of bridge architecture and aesthetics in the early automobile era.

Taylor Pond State Campground, Silver Lake Road

Main Branch of the Au Sable River

NYS Route 9N North to Route 9 North through Au Sable Forks, Clintonville, Keeseville to the Champlain Wildlife Management Area on Lake Champlain

Au Sable Forks

Rolling Mill Hill Bridge, Rolling Mill Hill Road, Au Sable Forks This is a Pratt Through Truss iron bridge built in 1879, one of the oldest bridges of its type in New York State.

Keeseville Keeseville's early history can be viewed through its historic buildings and bridges:

- The Ausable Horse Nail company buildings c. 1847
- Old Brewery c. 1850
- Grange Hall c. 1856
- Masonic Lodge c. 1852
- Upper Bridge c. 1878 Pratt Through Truss Bridge, oldest of its kind in NYS.
- Swing Bridge c. 1888 Iron suspension bridge, one of only ten ever built and one of two surviving.
- Stone Arch Bridge c. 1843 Arched sandstone masonry bridge, 110 feet long, the largest single span stone arch bridge in the US, as noted by the National Park Service.

The Old State Road Bridge, Old Chasm Road, Ausable Chasm Once part of the main North-South travel route for this area, the Old State Road Bridge, c.1890, affords a spectacular view of Rainbow and Horseshoe Falls.

The Ausable Chasm Bridge, NYS Route 9 This bridge, c. 1934, became the primary crossing over Ausable Chasm, and provides excellent views of the Chasm.

Rainbow Falls, NYS Route 9 Rainbow Falls is the upper part of Ausable Chasm, unique among the gorges and falls of the Ausable in that it cuts through Potsdam sandstone rather than the crystalline rocks of the mountains. In some areas the Chasm's walls are 175 vertical feet.

Port Kent

Carpenter's Flats Bridge, NYS Route 9 This is a Warren Through Truss bridge built in 1941, spanning the Ausable River 2.5 miles north of Ausable Chasm.

Ausable Marsh Wildlife Management Area/Ausable Point State Campground This is the point where the Ausable River meets Lake Champlain. The 580 acre area is managed by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation for recreation and scientific study. The area supports a large number of bird species, both nesting and migratory.

Wickham Marsh Wildlife Management Area The primary management objective for this 862 acre area is to provide nesting and feeding habitat for a variety of waterfowl through the use of water level control structures, ditching, shoreline clearing, and nest box construction. Foot trails allow viewing of points of interest, scenic vistas, and seventeen different ecological communities.



Au Sable River Watershed

A Traveler's Guide to River and Scenic Byway Resources



Welcome to the Au Sable River Watershed

From its beginnings in the highest of the Adirondack Mountains to its outlet at Lake Champlain, the Ausable River flows through rugged cliffs, thick forests, and extensive wetlands teeming with wildlife. One of the earliest explored Adirondack rivers, the Ausable parallels several New York State designated scenic road corridors, providing access to unsurpassed and boundless recreational opportunities. Its reputation today as a renowned trout fishery and recreational river contrasts with its early history as a working river which encouraged settlements along its majestic banks. Historic bridges and buildings provide insight to life in the Adirondacks as far back as the 1700s.

Two mountain streams, known as the East Branch and West Branch, give the Ausable its start in the High Peaks. Each branch travels over 35 miles to their meeting place in the appropriately named village of Au Sable Forks, where they form the main branch of the Ausable River, flowing another 22 miles to Lake Champlain. The second steepest river in New York, the Ausable has magnificent falls and gorges along its course, tempered by stretches

of canoeable flatwater and fly fishing heaven. Hiking, boating, canoeing, kayaking, biking, fishing, rock and ice climbing, Nordic and Alpine skiing, and much more can be enjoyed within the Au Sable River Watershed.

What's in a Name

You may have noticed that the name Au Sable/Ausable is spelled two ways. According to the United States Department of Geographic Names, either spelling is correct, depending on the usage. The river, valley, and watershed are officially spelled Ausable. The Town, Village, and school are officially spelled Au Sable. The original name Aux Sable, French for "of the sand," was used by the first explorers in reference to the sandy point formed at the mouth of the river on Lake Champlain.



About the River

East Branch

Ausable Lakes, St. Huberts, Keene Valley, Keene, Upper Jay, Jay

The outlet of Lower Ausable Lake is where the East Branch begins its bouldery descent to the tiny hamlet of Saint Huberts, collecting the drainage waters from some of the Adirondack's highest peaks, including Marcy, Gothics, Skylight, and Nippletop. As it moves on to Keene Valley, the river levels off, broadens, and meanders through this scenic valley area, paralleled by NY State Route 73, a New York State designated scenic byway. Upon reaching Keene, the East Branch cascades through Hull's Falls before continuing beyond these busy hamlets and flowing towards Upper Jay. One of two historic bridges along this branch of the Ausable can be found near Hull's Falls.

The East Branch's journey to Upper Jay finds it winding through a broad valley floor, turning freely and providing for beautiful views of the river, fields, and the Sentinel Mountain Range. NY State Route 9N follows the river's course, leading through the town of Jay, settled in the late 1700's. The Jay Covered Bridge, which crosses the East Branch, has been the subject of innumerable artists and historians. Past and present, Jay has been a haven for artists and writers. James Thurber, the notable humorist, set part of his short story, "Josephine Has Her Day," in Madden's Country Store in the mythical town of Dale, which was actually Jay. Asgaard Farm near Au Sable Forks, home of painter and illustrator Rockwell Kent, can still be viewed by passersby, preserved pretty much as seen in his paintings.

The East Branch meanders on to its confluence with the West Branch in the hamlet of Au Sable Forks.

West Branch

Mt. Van Hoevenberg, Lake Placid, Wilmington, Black Brook

Marcy and South Meadow Brooks in the High Peaks Range converge to give rise to the West Branch of the Ausable River. Waters from Algonquin, Wright, Colden, and Table Top mountains are carried by the West Branch over rocky terrain, emerging from the wilderness just before the Olympic Ski Jumps along NYS Route 73. Here the landscape flattens to a valley, allowing the river to slow and wind, picking up the Chubb River drainage beyond the ski jumps as it flows past the village of Lake Placid.

As the West Branch reaches NYS Route 86 beyond Lake Placid, on its way through North Elba to Wilmington, it starts to take on a different character. Confined by mountains on either side as it winds along Route 86, the river begins a steep descent which includes a series of falls. Monument Falls, Wilmington Notch, High Falls Gorge, and the Flume move the water of the West Branch quickly and dramatically through to the town of Wilmington, where it is slowed by the Wilmington Dam, forming Lake Everest.

Continuing on towards its confluence with the East Branch, the West Branch picks up another major tributary, Black Brook, and squeezes through a scenic flume before reaching Au Sable Forks.

Main Branch

Au Sable Forks, Keeseville, Lake Champlain

As the East and West Branches converge in the hamlet of Au Sable Forks, the Main Branch becomes a broad, rocky, river that also represents the boundary between Clinton County to the north and Essex County to the south.

First settled in 1825, Au Sable Forks maintains one of many historic bridges that cross the Ausable River between here and Lake Champlain. As settlements sprang up along the river, bridges were important connectors in areas divided by water.

The Ausable makes its way northeastward from Au Sable Forks, with NYS Route 9N winding alongside, passing through the hamlet of Clintonville before reaching the village of Keeseville. Historic bridges join this village that is split in two by the river, and many buildings built in the mid-1800's line its banks.

Venturing further in its quest to meet Lake Champlain, a mile downstream of Keeseville the Main Branch cuts through the gorges and falls known as Ausable Chasm. With walls as high as 175 feet, the water of the Ausable creates a spectacular and tumultuous scene before settling into a calm passage to the lake. The river empties into Lake Champlain with a flourish of wildlife along the delta, at the Ausable Marsh Wildlife Management Area.



Au Sable River Association
P.O. Box 217
Elizabethtown, NY 12932
518-873-3752
www.ausableriver.org

The Au Sable River Association was formed in August 1998 by residents of the watershed. The ASRA is a membership based organization which is working to improve the natural and cultural resources of the Au Sable River, its watershed, and the quality of life for residents. The ASRA brings together landowners, town governments, other non-profits, and State and Federal Agencies to identify problems and needs and implement solutions. We are a resource for residents and towns, providing assistance and information on a range of issues from water quality to stream restoration. We view the watershed in its entirety and cooperate with all interested parties to improve the health of the watershed and the quality of life for the residents and visitors.

We have a growing membership of residents and friends of the watershed. Our members support us by volunteering time and resources. We have a volunteer Board of Directors and a paid part-time Director. For more information about the ASRA or to become a member please contact us: Au Sable River Association, P.O. Box 217, Elizabethtown, NY 12932, 518-873-3752, www.ausableriver.org

This map is the product of a cooperative effort of the NYS Adirondack Park Agency and the Au Sable River Association. It was made possible by a grant to the Agency from the NYS Scenic Byways Program through the Federal Highway Administration and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century of 1998, administered by the NYS Department of Transportation. Additional funding support was provided by the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

The ASRA would like to thank the following for their time, effort and information: Boquet River Association, Essex County Planning Office, Friends of the North Country

Photos courtesy of Nathan Farb