



The Energy Quest at Boston Lot

West Lebanon, New Hampshire

Physical Difficulty: Moderate

Special Features: Natural, Energy

Walking Conditions: Trail

Duration: 0:45

Bring: compass, field guide, swimsuit

To get there: From the south, head north on Route 10 from West Lebanon, NH towards Hanover. After passing the Wilder Dam, turn right into the Wilder Dam Picnic Area parking lot. From the north, head south from Hanover on Route 10 for 2½ miles and turn left into the parking area across from Wilder Dam. Your Quest begins here.

Clues:

Walk to the Great River Hydro Sign and turn around.
 Look for the types of energy that abound.
 The dam makes electricity that runs through the wires.
 There is even kinetic energy in the car tires.

Olcott Falls was an obstacle the settlers found
 200+ miles north of the Long Island Sound.
 The first dam here was built for a saw and gristmill.
 The Wilder Dam, erected in 1950, stands here still.

Follow the white pines south along a line
 As you walk, look for woodpecker holes (there are at least 9).
 Now you're looking for a 15' circumference white pine.
 Hanging on it is a "No Camping" sign.

Don't be fooled by my copycat friend,
 Head towards the brown gate where a large branch bends.
 Towering up to 200 feet tall, pine was the "Monarch of the trees."
 With clusters of five needles, like solar panels function these.

The old King of England claimed the pines for his ships' masts
 Upon which sails harnessed wind to traverse the oceans vast.
 Step over the non-native rock and head east—uphill—from the gate.
 And your next clue? Just keep your eyes open, wait.

Scan for a tree with an old fence scar.
 Opposite can you find the embedded metal bar?
 Woodpecker holes and witches broom,
 Rusty barbed wire—you should see these all soon.

Continue up the hill and around the bend
 Yellow and white birches left, a water bar to transcend.
 The water bar redirects the downhill flow.
 Twenty steps forwards, then to the right, we must go.

Step off the trail to visit the mossy log
Which is also known to block, slow and clog.
A fallen pine crossing the stream
Will provide energy as a nursery tree.

Hemlock seeds take root in the moss & lichen,
Find food and energy for which they have a likin'!
We also find an abundance of ferns—
Once cut, twice cut, and thrice cut by turns.

Fruit dots and spore cases for propagation,
Three million years ago food for dinosaur invigoration!
Back on and up the path, stop at water bar two.
Evidence of fire waits to the left of you.

Charcoal, charred tree trunks, hollowed within,
Open undergrowth, ponder...how did this fire begin?
Head toward the power pylons, to the crushed blue stone.
Onward and upward this Quest does roam.

Stop under the power lines if you like,
And eat a snack to fuel the rest of your hike.
Two kinds of energy are now overhead,
On sunny days you'll feel rays, warm and toasty like your bed.

The second kind pulses through power lines, harnessed by man,
And goes to power your toaster, fridge, and fan.
From here, continue uphill through the gate
To the top of the hill where a map will await.

To the left see a field... an aspen grove you will sight
But you need to keep on the beaten path to the right.
Take fifty steps more to a partially hollow white pine,
Then look for six trunks that are hidden behind.

You may only see four, but believe us, there's more,
In fact one of the trunks lies down on the floor!
Find a rock den, where in winter small mammal might reside...
For that's where your Valley Quest box does hide!

Please sign in, stamp in, and re-hide the box for the next visitor. We also encourage you to explore the trails around the reservoir.

Other things to do nearby: Boston Lot Lake is a great spot to swim, paddle, picnic, fish, and—if you get a permit first—camp. The Burnt Mountain Loop on the far side of the lake affords fine views.

Please be a good steward of the land: leave it better than you found it and pack out any trash you find.



Valley Quest is a collection of treasure hunts that share and teach the natural gems and cultural heritage of the Upper Valley with children, families, adults, and visitors. It is a program of Vital Communities, a regional nonprofit working to engage citizens, organizations, and communities in creating solutions to our region's challenges. Learn more at vitalcommunities.org



