



Flowing to the Pool Quest

Norwich, Vermont

Created by [Jonathan Stallsmith](#)

Difficulty: Medium

Walking Conditions: Marked path and off trail

Type of Quest: Natural

2 hours, bring a bathing suit, bug spray, sunscreen and food.

To get there:

Take exit 13 on I-91 into Norwich for .5 mile. Take a left onto Beaver Meadow Road and follow for 1 mile. Take a left onto an unmarked road right before Brigham Hill Rd. If you wish to park a second car at the end of the trail, continue on Beaver Meadow Rd. for 1.4 miles; there is a small pull off on the left.

Clues:

Welcome to the Norwich Pool, a pleasant location for a picnic or barbecue and a cold, refreshing swim in the town's water hole. The "pool" is a running stream in the spring, but is dammed up for swimming during the summer. Your journey will end back here so you can enjoy the water after gaining a better sense of where it comes from.

Start by walking past the pool and into the trees beyond. You will walk along the stream for a while, but the road on the other side will stay in view. The trees in the early going will be mainly hemlocks with ferns creating a thick blanket on the ground.

You will reach an area where many large trees have fallen and will begin to walk up above the stream. The trees are dead, but their spirit lives on; as these trees decay, they help build the soil by recycling their nutrients. This means that they provide for trees that will grow in their place. Above the stream, be careful not to tread too close to the edge of the ledge. Knocking soil down will destroy the area where plants can grow and also add unwanted dirt to the stream that could kill aquatic animals. There is a clearing due to power lines over head, and a bridge below that crosses the stream. Venturing out on the bridge, you will be able to look up and down the rushing water, but, surprisingly, this walkway will lead nowhere.

Past the bridge is a clearing blanketed with ferns and shaded by the thick canopy of both coniferous and deciduous trees alike. The succession of the forest can be seen here as conifers, such as the hemlock, become less abundant ante deciduous trees, such as oak or maple, become more so. Overtime, areas go from grass to bushes to conifers to deciduous. This means that this part of the woods has gone undisturbed longer than the areas with just conifers. Ahead is a waterfall, created by a man made dam, on top of

which the beavers have created a dam of their own. Observe the beaver's creation with care.

Rock stairs will lead you up and away from the stream. As you walk along out of sight of the stream, an occasional brook will remind of the water flowing below. All of these tributaries flow to the stream, which flows to the Connecticut River, which in turn, flows to the Atlantic Ocean. Think of all the brooks, leading to all the streams, leading to all the rivers, leading to all of the oceans all over the world, and you will understand why even a little bit of pollution can cause a big mess if each brook was contaminated just slightly.

You will also see stonewalls on the walk, a total of three. These stones are a result of farmers clearing land for their farms many, many years ago. The stream below will come in and out of sight. A series of straight-aways in the path and small pond alive during the spring, lay ahead. A stream will come back into view, but there is no way of knowing if this is the stream you want to follow, because a second stream comes into view. This is where two streams meet to form the one that you have been following. A trail intersection will be just across this stream. Straight through the intersection are three benches, a good spot to rest. But, for an even better location; head off the trail to where the two streams meet to form one. Sit down and peer under the rocks piles here, if you're lucky, you might find treasure!