



Cycling Challenge Sept. 11-13 Raises Money For Northeast Passage

Media Contact: [Keely Ames](#)
603-862-0070
Northeast Passage

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Media Note: Northeast Passage staff and participants will be available all weekend for interviews and photo opportunities. On Friday, Sept. 11, we will be riding through the Franconia Notch recreation trail, past the Mount Washington Hotel to the Appalachian Mountain Club's Highland Center in Crawford Notch. Please contact us at 603-617-0104 for specific times and locations.



Participants in Northeast Passage's Three Notch Century. Photo credit: Nate Maher

DURHAM, N.H. - The sixth annual Three Notch Century to benefit the University of New Hampshire's Northeast Passage will be held Sept. 11, 12 and 13, 2009 in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

The Three Notch Century will challenge cyclists to conquer 100 miles in one, two or three days. Handcyclists and bicyclists can choose the number of days that matches their ability level and desired challenge. This event is designed for people of all abilities, including expert cyclists and people with disabilities.

The route takes participants on a challenging and scenic ride through Franconia Notch, Crawford Notch and up and over the Kancamagus Highway.

The three- and two-day options will start in Lincoln and proceed to the Flume and the State Forest Recreation Trail, riding approximately nine miles of rolling hills that crisscross the Pemigewasset River to Profile Lake. Some say this is the most challenging part of the ride with its several gradual uphill climbs.

In Crawford Notch, the road opens up with stunning views of Mt. Washington and the elegant hotel with the same name. Towering cliffs frame the road and several waterfalls dot this section of the route. A fast plummet downhill takes cyclists through Crawford Notch and into the hustle and bustle of North Conway. Past the shops is the quietest stretch of road of the ride, tree-lined and winding; this takes riders along the Swift River -- where the water rushes through jagged rocks and the sights and sounds make riders forget they have the Kancamagus Highway climb to contend with. Ending with a covered bridge, Dugway Road puts cyclists onto Rt. 112.

The first six or so miles of the Kancamagus are relatively easy, riding past scenic pullouts and overlooks. The views open up as cyclists begin to climb (hopefully just in time to distract from the burning and exhaustion). The summit makes the pain all worth it -- expansive views of the whole valley and sense of accomplishment for having made it this far! Again, another fast downhill will put cyclists back in Lincoln before they know it.

The one-day century option starts in North Conway and follows the same route, tackling the Kancamagus Highway first. This event includes overnight lodging and meals for those choosing to ride for three or two days and includes a celebration dinner in North Conway on Saturday, Sept. 12.

The Three Notch Century is sponsored by Martin's Point Health Care, Portsmouth Regional Hospital and WPKQ.

Northeast Passage is a program of the University of New Hampshire's College of Health and Human Services and an affiliate of Disabled Sports USA. Northeast Passage develops and delivers innovative, barrier free recreation and health promotion programs. All proceeds from this event directly benefit Northeast Passage's programs.

If you are interested in participating in the Three Notch Century, visit www.threenotchcentury.org or call 603-862-0070. For more information on Northeast Passage, visit www.nepassage.org.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 11,800 undergraduate and 2,400 graduate students.

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Photograph available to download: <http://www.unh.edu/news/img/threenotchcentury.jpg>

Caption: Participants in Northeast Passage's Three Notch Century.

Credit: Nate Maher