

# Wilson's Falls Trail

Length: **7.5km**

Level of difficulty: **Easy to Moderate**

Add: "*Learn more about this area through our educational posts along the river*"

## **Rogers Rd Entrance**

- When coming from Hwy 11 turn on to pine street from Taylor Road at the lights by the Baptist Church. Follow Pine Street to the end of the road and turn right on to Dawson Crescent and then turn left on to Rodgers Road.

## **Wilshier Dr Entrance**

- When coming from Hwy 11 turn on to pine street from Taylor Road at the lights by the Baptist Church. Follow Pine Street and turn right on to Wilshier Blvd. Proceed to follow this road all the way to end where you will find the trail at the turnaround.

## **Granite Bluff Dr Entrance**

- When coming from Hwy 11 turn on to pine street from Taylor Road at the lights by the Baptist Church. Follow Pine Street and turn right on to Wilshier Blvd. Turn right on to Granite Bluff from Wilshier Blvd and the trail is on the left hand side.

## **Sander Dr Entrance**

- When coming from Hwy 11 turn on to pine street from Taylor Road at the lights by the Baptist Church. Follow Pine Street and turn left on to Sander Dr. Follow Sander to end of the road and the trail is on your left hand side.

## **Wilson's Falls Rd Entrance**

- When coming from Hwy 11 take Taylor Rd. towards Bracebridge and turn right onto River Road. Take river road down to a stop and go straight though on to Wilson's Falls Rd. Follow Wilsons Falls Rd all the way to the end where you will find a parking area and the trail starts at the gate.

## **Hydro Dam Bridge**

- This location is a great spot to observe the falls to take in its rugged beauty. You also get a magnificent view of the Muskoka River.

## **Wilson's Falls**

- Wilson's falls is a wonderful location to get a family photo taken or to have picnic and take in the scenery.

## **Educational Posts**

- Numbering 1 through 11 these educational posts give and ecological history of the Muskoka river and its environmental surroundings.

**Post #1: Hardwood Forest**

Ten thousand years ago, the area on which you are walking on was buried under the Wisconsin Glacier, the last of the ice caps to shape the landscape of Ontario.

**Post #2: Muskoka River**

You have now reached the North branch of the Muskoka River, which flows from Port Sydney to Bracebridge. The hill which you have just descended is actually the bank of a broader, deeper, ancient river.

**Post #3: Wetland**

Just East of the trail is a small wetland, a miniature ecosystem. It is fed by water running off the hills behind and is isolated from the river by the natural dike which the trail runs along.

**Post #4: Pine Stump**

During your walk you have probably noticed how fallen and decaying trees of various species nourish new life. Mushrooms, mosses, and seedlings grow on them in profusion, and they are home to many insects which hasten the process of decomposition and regeneration.

**Post #5: Island**

Islands of all sizes tend to form where sediment is swept downstream and deposited by slower currents and eddies close to shore. Usually their upstream ends are honed to sharp points by the current, while their downstream ends are blunter.

**Post #6: Stream Waterfall**

Water tumbling off the cliffs here has exposed the granite gneiss bedrock of the Precambrian shield. This is rock of many layers, tilted to the northeast. It is one and a half to two billion years old, some of the oldest on earth.

**Post #7: Rock Ridge**

Here is another window on the past. Over a billion years ago, the bedrock here was folded, tilted, and cracked by tremendous heat and pressure. At that time, the spot where you are standing was at least twenty kilometers underground.

**Post #8: Shoreline Plants**

This spot was very likely the beginning of a portage, a trail in use as long as humans have traveled on the river. Here paddlers would land and carry their packs and canoes up the escarpment and around the falls.

**Post #9: Granite Dike**

The band of rock slanting across the trail here is a crystallized intrusion that forced its way into the warm gneiss about a billion years ago.

**Post #10: Wilson's Falls**

The river drops 12.6 meters over the gneiss ridge of the escarpment. In the 1860's, Gilman Wilson and William Holditch constructed a water-powered sawmill here.

**Post #11: The Trans Canada Trail**

The Trans Canada Trail is the longest multi-use trail in Bracebridge. It is 26km long and runs from the Town of Gravenhurst and Huntsville boundaries. The creation of the Trans Canada trail has been a joint effort right across the country! Our section is no exception; many volunteer hours and donations of time and equipment have all helped to make this trail possible. Enjoy!