

Tour #16 Western Foothills

This hilly 62 mile loop requires bicyclists in good physical condition to explore the back roads and byways of Southwest Maine. A marvelous network of country roads are hidden in the foothills of western York and Oxford counties where life seems to have changed little during the last century. This is quintessential New England-old stone walls and maples line the narrow country roads. Along the way, cyclists encounter river views, mountain scenery and gracious old homes.

Alternate #1 provides a shorter 28 mile loop along the Saco and Ossipee River valleys. It avoids the hilliest sections of this tour.

Alternate #2 provides a 46 mile loop which includes the covered bridge and also avoids the steepest climbs.

Special features: Pretty villages of Cornish and Maplewood; spectacular mountain and river views; Porter-Parsonsfield Covered Bridge; Willowbrook Country Museum in Newfield; gracious old homes in North Parsonsfield.



Above: Parsonsfield-Porter covered bridge. This bridge is on the National Historic Register; it crosses the Ossipee River and was built in 1876 (re-furbished in 1970).



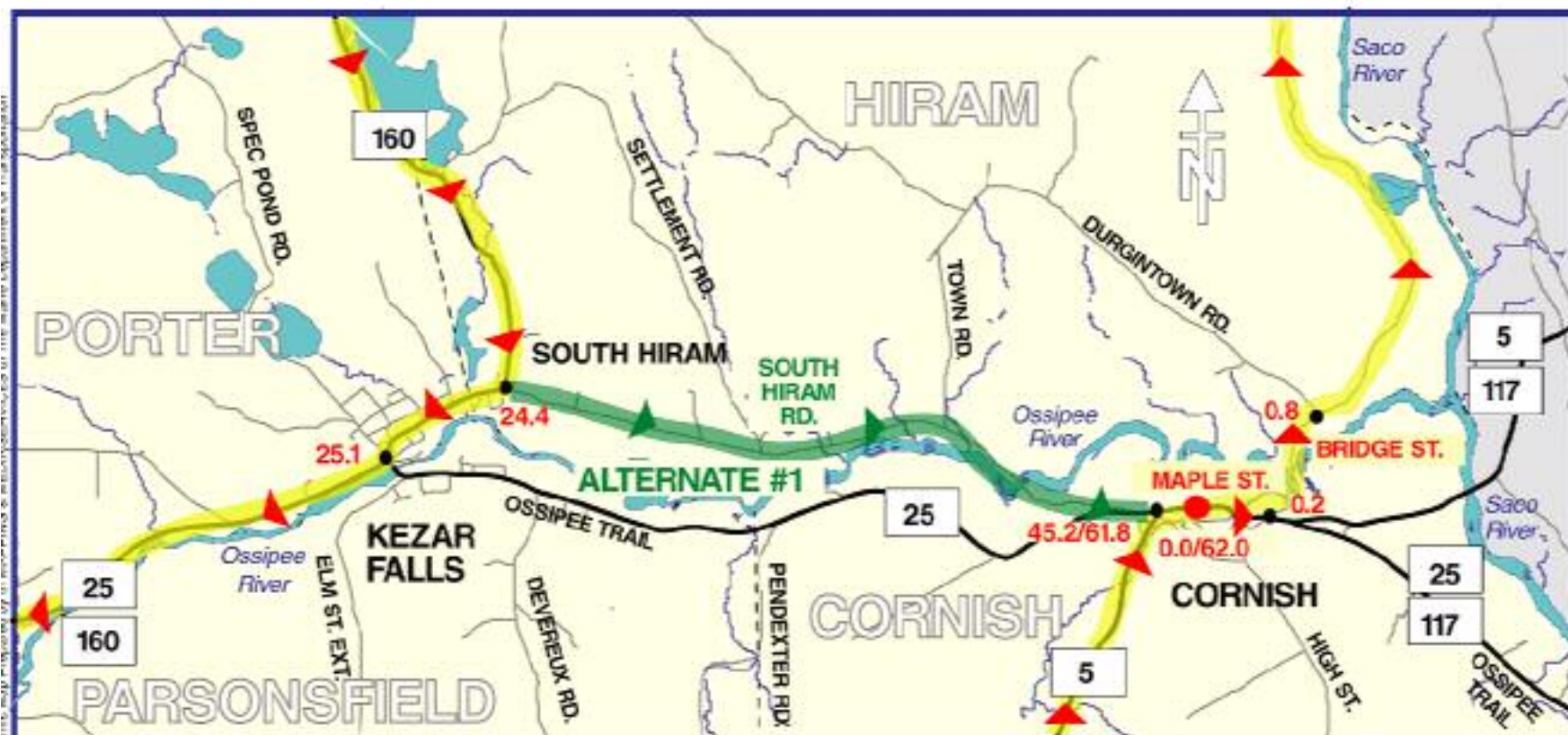
Above: One of the many interesting buildings in Parsonsfield village near the Parsonsfield Seminary.

Road conditions: Generally good; broken pavement on ME 160 south of the Ossipee River.

Services: No bike shops, so be sure to carry spare parts and tools; other basic services available. For accommodation information, contact Cornish Association of Businesses, P.O. Box 573, Cornish, ME 04020. Telephone 207-625-7447. They have an excellent guide to the area called 'Ahhh Cornish'. Back Country Excursions in Parsonsfield offers accommodations and guided mountain biking tours; contact them at 207-625-8189.

Cautions: Narrow, winding roads; moderate traffic, no shoulder and blind hills on short section of ME 5 south of Limerick; moderate traffic and no shoulder on ME 113.

Starting point: Ride originates from Cornish Town Office on ME 25 (Maple Street) in Cornish -- the large yellow building next to the True Value Hardware. Park as far from the entrance to the town office as possible.



KEZAR FALLS - CORNISH



DISTANCE: 28, 46 and 62 mile loops
TERRAIN: Flat to very hilly

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