

Blinnshed Ridge

What to look for on the Blinnshed Ridge

The trail entrance offers two options. There is a short extension north of Blinnshed Road which passes an old, stone-lined firepond. This section soon joins the Blinnshed Loop.

The main trail proceeds south behind the Country Day School, along the west shoulder of a ridge that slopes to a wetland. Here, the forest contains large oaks, beech and tulip-poplar trees. Soon the trail enters State Forest where the presence of tree stumps indicates that this forest is under active management. At the rocky end of a ridge, descend a series of "plateaus" to near the wetland. Skunk cabbage, false hellebore and spicebush clearly delineate the wetland in early spring, and marsh marigolds occur on the banks of moving riverlets. Cross first one small stream, and then another a few yards beyond, on cedar log bridges. Soon, a crossing path (not blazed) leads southward past several excellent vernal pools (100 feet).

The blazed trail soon ascends the edge of a large glacier-smoothed outcrop. This is a fine place to observe birds and other wildlife. Descend the rock to another wet swale with a fine cedar log crossing. In marked contrast to the oak-hickory woods on the drier ridges, yellow birch and red maple dominate the narrow, cooler wetland swales.

Climb once more over a series of low, rocky ridges and then, close by the State Forest boundary, look for the Neck River as it enters from the west below. Descend the last ridge and into the opening created by a powerline right-of-way. This opening is crossed by the beautiful little Neck River. Deer can often be seen here, especially in the early evening.

Blue blazes on rocks and the nearby power pole point the way across and out of the opening. Near the pole, the trail splits—turning either south into the woods and along the river, or east into the woods and along a woods road trail to eventually join the Neck River Trail. This point where the trail divides is the base of a loop.

The trail south follows the meandering river, each turn bringing to view a new, lovely scene. Eventually, near a quiet pool, swing sharply east away from the river, and then north across a rocky swale and to the junction with a logging road. This is the junction with the Neck River Trail which leads to the east (right). To the west, Trail #2 leads back to the loop base near the river and powerline opening.

Permitted Activities:

The trails areas in the MLCT properties are for hiking only. Dogs are allowed, but must be leashed. Please pick up all animal waste. Contact the State Forest HQ for other activities allowed on their sites.



Photo by Emmeline Alaconis, SCRCOG

The Blinnshed Ridge Trail passes through forest communities typical of our region. Special features include several ridges alternating with narrow valley wetlands, a massive rock outcrop, and a beautiful section along the Neck River. There is an opportunity to extend the hike by joining either Blinnshed Loop or the Neck River Trail.

Category: An easy trail over several low ridges, rock outcrops and along a beautiful stretch of the Neck River

Start: At the trailhead on Blinnshed Road

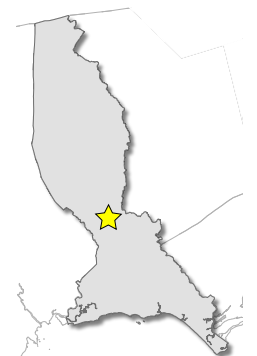
Distance: From trailhead south, around the end loop and return: 2.0 miles; to the junction with the Neck River Trail: 1.1 mile

Approximate Time: About 1-1.5 hours

Parking: Near trailhead and at The Country School

For more information about this walk contact:

Madison Land Conservation Trust
www.madisonlandtrust.org



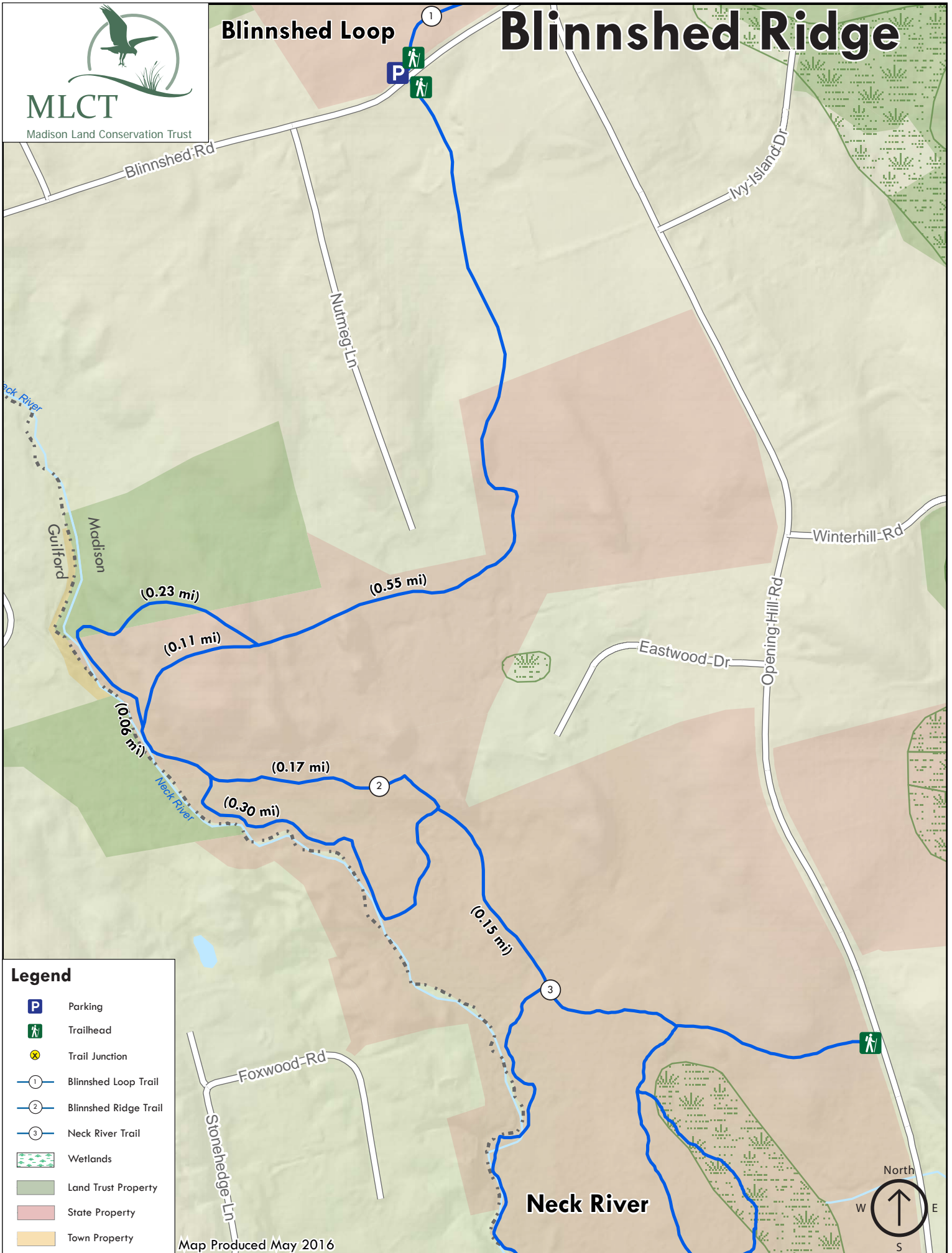


MLCT

Madison Land Conservation Trust

Blinnshed Loop

Blinnshed Ridge



Legend

- Parking
- Trailhead
- Trail Junction
- Blinnshed Loop Trail
- Blinnshed Ridge Trail
- Neck River Trail
- Wetlands
- Land Trust Property
- State Property
- Town Property

Map Produced May 2016

