

# Lake Bethany

## Regional Water Authority Permit Required

A Regional Water Authority (RWA) Recreation Area, the Lake Bethany Trail System includes four miles of scenic trails that follow the lake shore and a scenic ravine carved out by the West River.

The trails at Lake Bethany are located both north and south of Hatfield Hill Road. The Lake Trail on the east side of the lake crosses an old field that once grew hay for the water company's draft horses. The field is now planted with white pine, larch and Norway spruce. Look for a large boulder called a glacial erratic. This boulder was pushed here by a glacier more than 15,000 years ago. The west side of the Lake Trail is a bird watcher's delight with habitat that includes maturing and medium-sized maple and birch, alternating with tall pines and clearings dominated by blackberries, goldenrod, and meadowsweet.

The Tamarack tree, also called the American Larch, is one of the only two native conifers that drop all their needles every fall. The trees along the Tamarack Trail are actually European Larch, a close relative. The Hemlock Trail has majestic hemlock spires further along its path. Nearly all of southern Connecticut was once cleared for farming, including some of these steep, rocky slopes. Farming was discontinued early here, and trees quickly returned that, protected in this ravine, have grown taller than on surrounding land.



Photo by RWA Photo Contest Winner

### Trail Description:

#### Wide Range of Trail Difficulties

Of all the trails in the Regional Water Authority's system, the West River Trail feels the most like Vermont. The trail follows moderate grades and offers a delightful view through the trees of the West River. As you hike, notice pieces of quartzite, a white mineral, in the stone walls and schist bedrock. Lastly, the River's Edge Spur drops steeply to the river, providing a short, but challenging hike down to the water's edge.

Total trail distance is approx. 3.8 miles

### Directions and Parking:

The Lake Bethany gated entrance and parking area is located along Hatfield Hill Road adjacent to the overhead power lines which can be reached via the Litchfield Turnpike (Route 69).

### Permitted/Prohibited Activities:

This site is for passive use only. No mechanized vehicles. Hiking only. Wading and swimming are prohibited. No fishing at this reservoir. Dogs are not permitted.



Photo by RWA Photo Contest Winner John Gustafson

**Total Trails Length:** Approx. 3.8 miles. Wide Range of Trail Difficulties

**White (Lake Trail):** 2.2 miles.

**Red (West River Trail):** 0.65 miles.

**Orange (Hemlock Trail):** 0.56 miles.

**Yellow (River's Edge Spur):** 0.06 miles.

**Blue (Tamarack Trail):** 0.29 miles.



**Claire C. Bennett  
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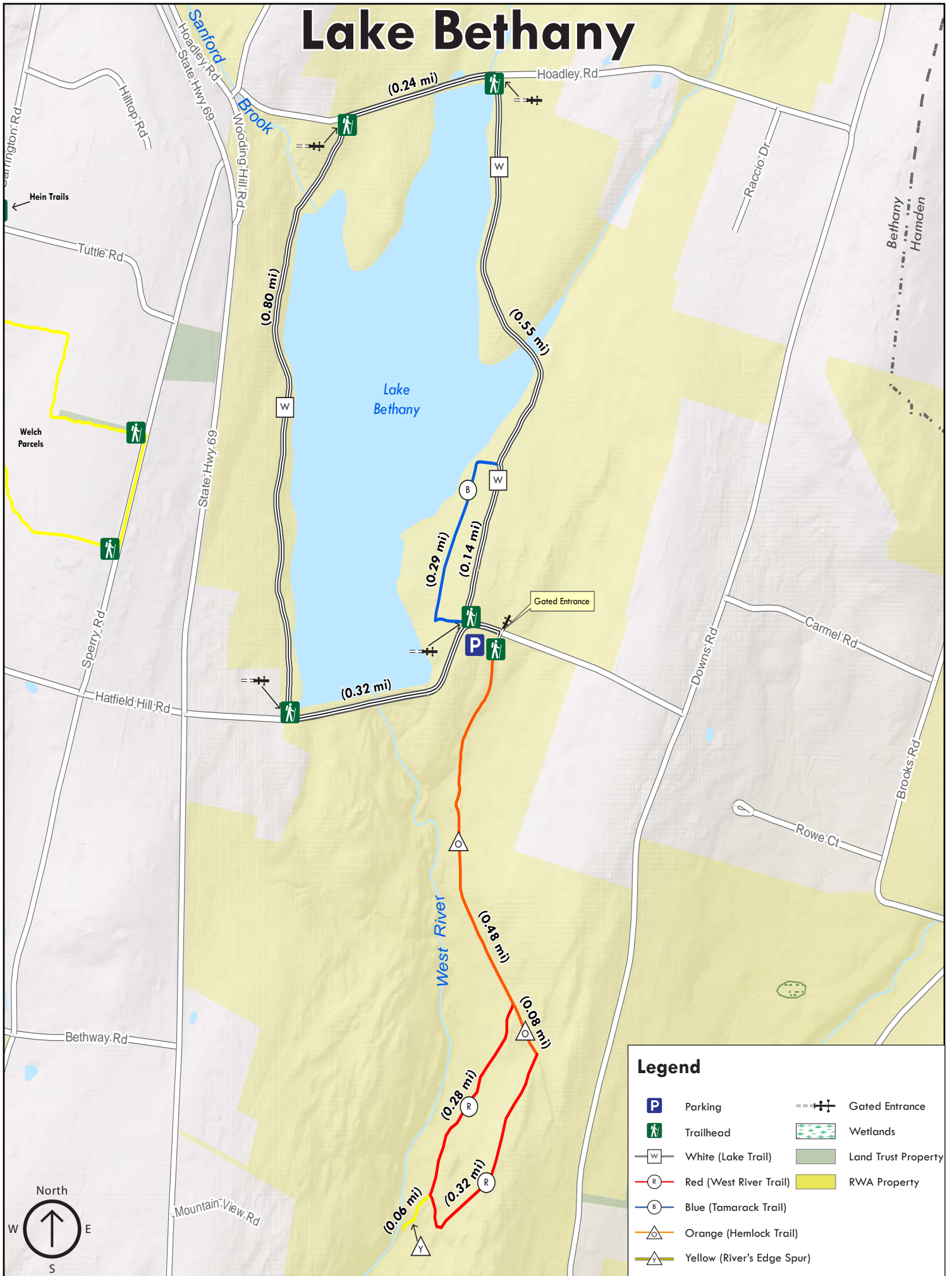
**For more information about this location, contact:**

Regional Water Authority  
Recreation Department  
(203) 401-2654

[www.rwater.com/recreation](http://www.rwater.com/recreation)



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## Legend

- Parking
- Trailhead
- White (Lake Trail)
- Red (West River Trail)
- Blue (Tamarack Trail)
- Orange (Hemlock Trail)
- Yellow (River's Edge Spur)
- Gated Entrance
- Wetlands
- Land Trust Property
- RWA Property