

Beltsville Agricultural Research Center

The Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (B.A.R.C) is a facility of the Department of Agriculture. It stretches from College Park to Bowie and from Greenbelt to Laurel. Primarily farmland, it is the largest patch of open space close-in to Washington, D.C. and makes-up part of the green-space surrounding Greenbelt. Since it's a place of business, not a park, much of the B.A.R.C. facility is off-limits to the public. The parts that are open however, provide a pleasant place to workout for runners, cyclists, and in-line skaters. Herds of deer 30 and 40 in number, crowded in from the encroaching suburban development, can sometimes be seen roaming along the edges of the fields near sunrise and sunset.

Getting There

From the Capital Beltway (I-95), take the Baltimore Washington Pkwy. north 3.65 miles to Powder Mill Rd. Turn right on Powder Mill Rd. following signs toward the N.A.S.A Goddard Space Flight Visitor Center. Turn right one quarter mile later onto Soil Conservation Service Rd. Turn left after one mile onto Beaverdam Rd. Turn right immediately into the small and unostentatious Crider Memorial Garden parking lot.

Area Routes

Beaverdam Road East (7.3 or 5.1 miles, VI or IV)

The open surroundings for most of this route make it best used on days when temperatures are comfortable or even cool. Spring can offer-up the bright green colors of new crops in the fields and breezes to push or slow you. On a day after a rare Washington, D.C. snowfall, the roads are generally cleared enough to be passable on foot, thus offering an alternative to going in circles in a smaller park somewhere else. Winter is also the time of year for one of Washington, D.C.'s oldest but lesser known running marathons. In fact, this course, though it starts from a different place, follows nearly the whole route used by the George Washington's Birthday Marathon which is held annually in February. That marathon travels this loop three times with additional mileage run on Springfield Rd. By marathons standards, the topography of the course is considered hilly but for traveling a single loop, the hills do not factor heavily into finishing. You'll probably focus more on the tranquil countryside. On one end of the route, you will pass the National Agricultural Research Service Visitor Center, a lodge built by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Many cyclists use the roads of this route as well as other B.A.R.C. roads. Relatively few cars pass through except during rush hours. Even then it usually is tolerable. No water is available. The long route can be cut short by skipping the trip to the lodge and returning on the slightly busy Soil Conservation Service Rd.

Odell Road (9.5 miles, VII)

A little more shady than the Beaverdam Road East routes, this route is also longer and just a little hillier. Good paved shoulders along Soil Conservation Service (SCS), Powder Mill, Odell, and Edmonston roads were designed with bicycle traffic in-mind and make sharing the road with auto traffic manageable. Some caution is necessary however first along SCS where traffic is sometimes fast, and next along Springfield Rd. where for one mile there is no shoulder and more

than one blind curve. The route tours to the northern borders of the B.A.R.C where occasional houses and subdivisions have recently been built. The site of the Van Horn's Tavern (no longer standing), is also on the route and once was a well traveled stopping point for George Washington and others during colonial times. Rochambeau's troops camped there in 1782 upon returning from victory at Yorktown. No public access water or facilities are available on route.

N.A.S.A (7.9 miles, VII)

Use this route to do some hill training. After a short downhill start, a three-staged increasingly steeper mile long climb puts you near some of the buildings of the N.A.S.A Goddard Space Flight Center. Look back from where you came and you'll see all the way to Anne Arundel and Montgomery counties. It'll probably feel like more, but the hill is not as high as it seems with only a 120ft of vertical elevation gain. The early portions of the route pass along some busier roads but the view, and the segments in Old Greenbelt, Research Rd. and Beaverdam Rd. make it worthwhile. See the routes in Buddy Attic Park/Old Greenbelt for descriptions of the Greenbelt and Research Rd. segments. The final section returns over rolling hills on Beaver Dam Rd.

Nearby and Connecting Zones

Buddy Attic Park/Old Greenbelt
Patuxent Research Refuge North Tract
Laurel River Walk Trail
Fran Uhler Natural Area/Race Track Spur

What to do Afterward

Food and Drink

La Hacienda - Mexican - 301 262-8800
Maharaja - Indian cuisine - 301 552-1600
Osaka - Japanese - 301 552-1442
Gringada - Mexican cuisine Rt 1, Beltsville - 301 210-3010

Entertainment and Edification

National Aeronautical Space Administration (N.A.S.A.) Goddard Space Flight Visitor Center -
9AM - 4PM daily - 301 286-2000
Patuxent National Wildlife Refuge and Visitor Center - short hikes, waterfowl, indoor nature
exhibits, tram tour (301) 497-5760
Howard B. Owens Science Center - planetarium - 9601 Greenbelt Rd - 301 918-8750
Dorsey Chapel - rural African American community church from circa 1900 - 301 352-5544,
TTY 301 669-2544
Marietta - plantation home of Gabriel Duval, Associate Justice on the Supreme Court in 1811;
301 464-5291, TTY 301 277-8456
Montpelier Mansion & Arts Center - 1783 mansion; artists and classes; mansion 301 953-1376,
TTY 301 699-2544; Arts Center 301 953-1993, TTY 301 490-2329

Beaverdam Road East

Distance: 7.3 miles or 5.1

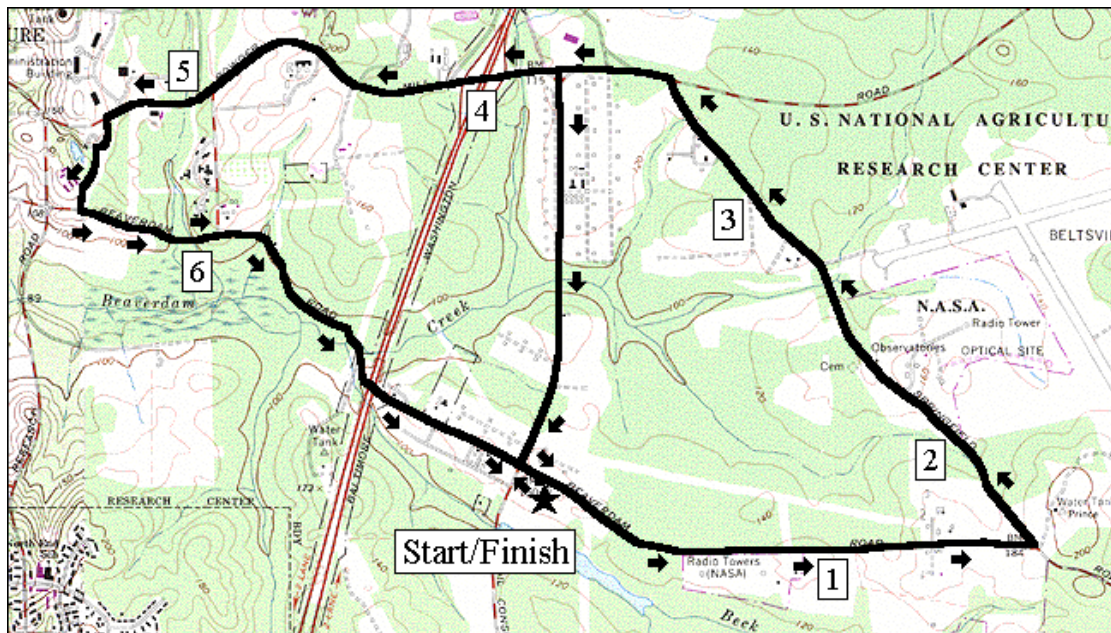
Rating: VI; three hills, sunny farmland roads

7.3 Mile Route

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| <p>R 0.0 Beaverdam Rd from parking lot
1.05 gate to cornfield; bottom of hill on R</p> <p>L 1.6 Springfield Rd
2.2 Goddard Geophysics &
Astronomical Observatory on R</p> <p>L 3.4 Powder Mill Rd (use shoulder)
<*</p> <p>3.8 Soil Conservation Rd
4.0 B. W. Parkway underpass (!)
4.1 Springfield Rd
4.9 Pesticide Rd
5.0 Entomology Rd</p> | <p>L 5.3 to National Visitor Center</p> <p>BL 5.4 through parking just past visitor center</p> <p>L 5.6 Beaverdam Rd
5.95 one lane bridge (!) (on downhill)
6.05 Pesticide Rd
6.6 one lane bridge
6.8 B. W. Pkwy underpass
7.0 8712 Beaverdam Rd
7.3 Soil Conservation Rd
>*</p> <p>R 7.35 into parking</p> |
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*5.1 Mile Route

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| <p>CL 3.8 Soil Conservation Rd</p> | <p>L 1.05 Beaverdam Rd (pick-up cues at mile 7.35 on 7.35 Mile route)</p> |
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MN | TN
11°

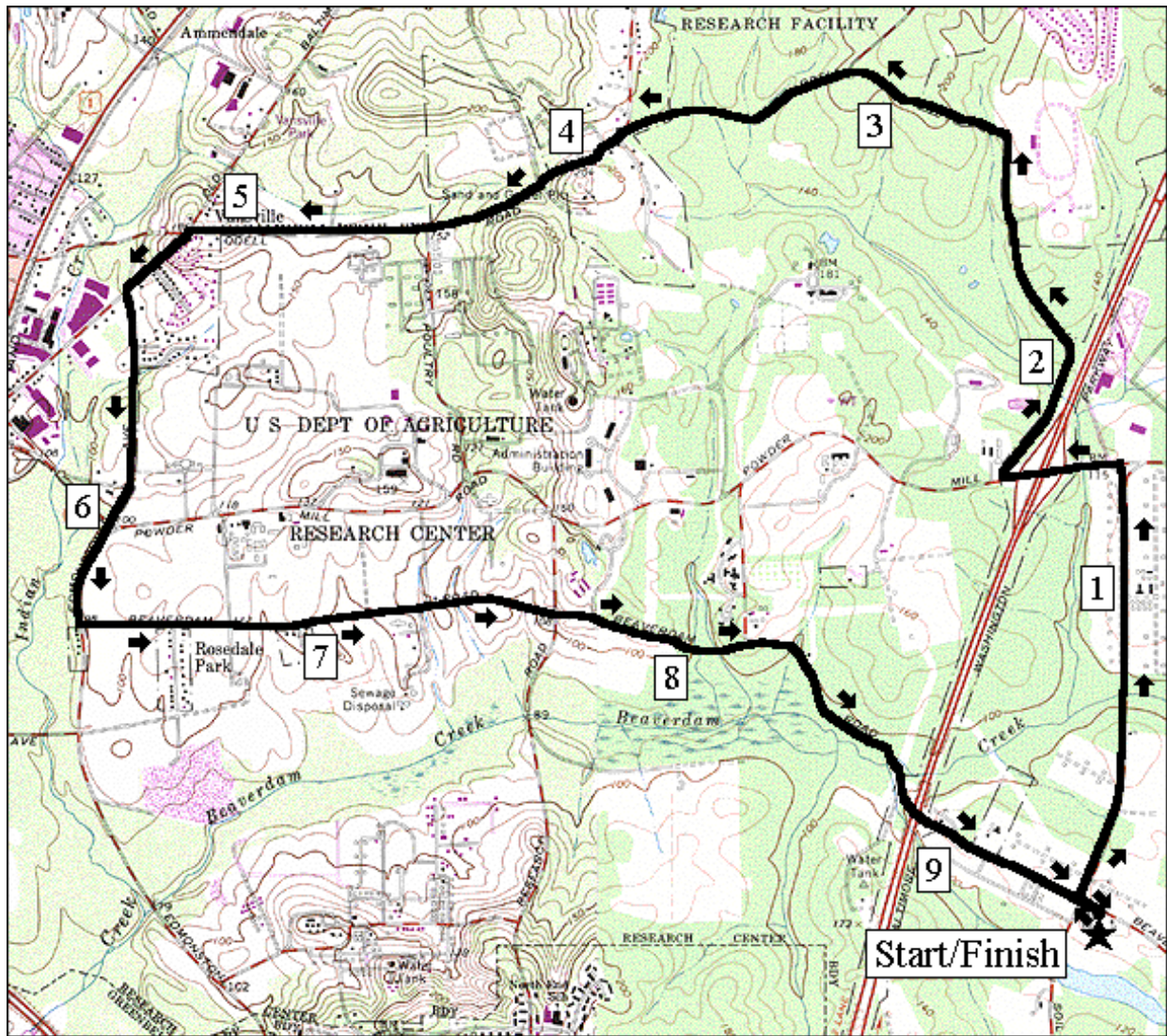
Odell Road

Distance: 9.5 miles

Rating: VII; paved roads through woods, farm fields

- L 0.0 Beaverdam Rd; from parking
- R 0.05 Soil Conservation Rd (use shoulder)
- L 1.3 Powder Mill Rd at T
- 1.5 B.W. Parkway underpass (!)
- R 1.6 Springfield Rd. (! first mile w/o shoulder or path)
- 2.65 Capitol College
- 2.8 Lighthouse Pl
- BL 3.15 Odell Rd
- BL 3.95 at stop, to stay on Odell Rd at Elington Dr
- 4.0 Odell Farm Ct
- 4.7 Poultry Rd
- 5.0 5414 Odell Rd
- BL 5.1 Old Baltimore Pike (site of Van Horn's Tavern)
- CL 5.35 Edmonston Rd. (! use shoulder)
- 6.0 Powder Mill Rd (!)
- L 6.3 Beaverdam Rd
- 6.85 one lane bridge
- 7.65 Research Rd.
- 8.05 one lane bridge (!) (on downhill)
- 8.2 Pesticide Rd
- 8.75 one lane bridge
- 8.9 B. W. Pkwy underpass
- 9.45 Soil Conservation Rd
- R 9.5 parking

Odell Road



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N.A.S.A

Distance: 7.9 miles

Rating: VI; paved roads, sidewalks

- L 0.0 Beaverdam Rd; from parking
- L 0.05 Soil Conservation Service (SCS) Rd.
 - 1.35 traffic signal
 - 1.6 N.A.S.A Goddard Visitor Center entrance
- CR 1.85 Greenbelt Rd 193 (!); (use sidewalk & shoulder)
 - 2.4 N.A.S.A Goddard main entrance & shopping center
 - 2.5 Cipriano Rd
- XS 3.05 at Mandan Rd Xwalk
- R 3.3 E. Roosevelt HS exit at Frankfort Dr; use sidewalk
- BR 3.4 counter-clockwise around HS, through parking lot toward apex of Hanover Pkwy & Xwalk
- BR 3.6 cross Hanover Rd; start Gladys Noon Spellman Trail (unmarked Xwalk & sidewalk to paved path)
 - 3.7 hiker/biker bridge over B.W. Pkwy
- R 3.9 Ridge Rd. (use sidewalk)
 - 4.05 Hamilton Pl
 - 4.4 Northway
 - 4.55 Plateau Pl
 - 4.75 Laurel Rd
- R 4.85 Research Rd
 - 5.1 BARC gate (pass under if closed)
 - 5.75 Beaverdam Creek bridge
- R 6.05 Beaverdam Rd (just past gate; pass under if closed)
 - 6.45 one lane bridge (!) (on downhill)
- 6.6 Pesticide Rd
- 7.2 one lane bridge
- 7.45 B. W. Pkwy underpass
- 7.85 Soil Conservation Rd
- R 7.9 to finish & parking

N.A.S.A.

