

Hiking

Before setting out on a hike, you should plan a definite route and destination. Leave a copy of your plans behind with someone in case there is an emergency. Take into account the terrain and elevation of the area while planning. Some good ideas for equipment on a hike are:

1. Footwear – shoes should be well broken in with hard soles and good traction. They should be large enough to allow the toes to wiggle while fitting snugly around the arch and heel to reduce friction. On smooth terrain, low shoes may work, but in rougher areas, it is advisable to wear high top shoes or boots for the ankle support.
2. Wearing two pairs of socks or polypropylene liners helps to reduce friction, which can cause blisters.
3. Dress according to the weather and terrain. If it is cold, dress in layers that can be shed as you warm up walking. Be sure to check a weather report before leaving so that you know the temperature and precipitation to expect.
4. Food should be light and prepared before you leave. It would be a good idea to have some kind of snack food to eat as you hike.

While hiking, it is best to come down lightly on the heel of your toes pointed straight ahead and push off with the toes. Keep the speed that is comfortable and enjoyable for everyone. If you are going too fast to concentrate on anything but walking, you may need to slow down. It is best to stop and rest for three to five minutes about every half-hour.

Always remember to obey all “keep out” and “no trespassing” signs. When walking cross-country, “watch your step” and don’t cross-planted fields. You should never hitchhike or walk on railroad tracks. Always get permission to start a cooking fire. If you are not sure of the safety of drinking water, purify it with tablets or boiling.

For more information regarding BSA hiking and camping policies and procedures see the current Guide to Safe Scouting: Camping online at www.scouting.org/pubs/gss/gss03.html#c.

Backpacking

Backpacking combines the experiences of camping and hiking into one trip. A crew should consist of between four and ten with at least two adult leaders. Packs should have a properly adjusted frame and hip strap. It is usually a good

idea to load the heaviest gear toward the top of the pack. Equipment is similar to camping gear but slimmed down to fit in packs. Items should be sealed in waterproof bags inside of the pack.

Personal Gear: Clothes Bag Containing:

T-shirts
Sleeping Bag
Foam Pad
Long-sleeve Shirt
Pants / Shorts
Jacket
Underwear
Socks
Poncho or Raincoat
Hat
Pair of Sneakers or Moccasins
Sweatshirt / Fleece
Waterproof Boots
Handkerchief

Other Equipment:

Soap in a box
Flashlight
Washcloth
Emergency Signal
Toothbrush and Toothpaste
Pocketknife
Canteen
Comb
First Aid Kit
Metal Mirror
Bible, Testament, or prayer book
Hand Towels
Toilet Paper
Deodorant

Extras you may want to take:

Watch
Cell Phone
Camera and Film
Wallet with money and ID
Notebook and Pencil / Pen
Nylon line
Drinking Cup
Insect Repellent
Sunscreen
Sunglasses
Air Pillow
Ladle
Large spoon
Water container
Scouring pads
Camp stove
Fire starter
Sewing kit (containing: thread, needles, and safety pins)

Playing Cards

Crew Gear:

2-man tent with pegs, guy lines, and ground cloths
Matches
Map and Compass
Heavy-duty trash bags
Plastic bags
Sugar container
Salt and pepper

While on the trail, it is a good idea to keep moving at an easy but steady pace with short, frequent breaks. Trail meals should be light and easy to prepare. To

avoid attracting animals, food scraps need to be carefully collected and disposed of away from camp. In some areas, it may be necessary to put any item with an odor in a bear bag strung from a tree. Lastly, all washing and bathing should be done well away from any water.

Hiking Trails <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/Forestry/hiking/index.aspx>

Appalachian Trail <http://www.nps.gov/appa/>

<http://www.appalachiantrail.org/site/c.jkLXJ8MQkH/b.1423119/k.BEA0/Home.htm>

This is the granddaddy of all hiking trails. First conceived in 1921 and completed about 50 years later, it gained national status in 1968 under President Lyndon Johnson through the National Trails System Act. It starts in the Spring Mountain Area of Georgia and extends up the Blue Ridge, through the Great Smokies, through the Alleghenies, Catskills, and Berkshires to Mount Katahdin, Maine; some 2,015 miles total.

Most of it is cleared and kept up by local hiking and outdoor clubs. Individual hikers have formed the slogan "Take nothing but pictures; leave nothing but footprints."

There are about 222 miles of the Appalachian Trail in Pennsylvania, entering on the south at Pen Mar, southeast of Waynesboro in Franklin County. It goes north through Caledonia State Park, through Pine Grove State Park, north of Harrisburg, through Clarks Ferry, past Dauphin County, and finally eastward to a connection with Horse Shoe trail. From here it goes onto the scenic Delaware Water Gap south of Stroudsburg along the Delaware River in Monroe Country on the New Jersey end.

Many Moraine Trails Council troops have hiked sections of the trail. They may take a 10 mile sector one summer and return the next for another until they have hiked 50 or more miles.

There are 20 shelters and wapper places and many scenic views. Some of the water holes have been dry since the late 1970's. A troop planning the hike might contact a local troop for information on that area of the trail.

Units are urged to get together maps on the sectors they plan to hike and stick with a definite pre-planned route.

Appalachian Trail Wonder

In addition to Caledonia Park, the trail runs through Michaux State Forests, Mont Alto State Park, and Pine Grove Park. In the east, the Mount Minsi Firetown is a popular stopping place, giving a panoramic view of the rugged Delaware Water Gap and Lake Lenape. Blue Mountain, Indiantown Gap, Stony Mountain

and the Susquehanna River are other highlights on the trail in the Keystone State. For information and segment maps write Appalachian Trail Conference, P. O. Box 236, Harpers Ferry, W.Va., 25425 or Keystone Trails Association, RD. 3, P.O. Box 261, Cogan Station, PA 17728.

Armstrong Trail <http://www.armstrongtrail.org/>

This trail runs from Schenley to Millville approximately 52.5 miles along old railroad beds. Overlooking the Allegheny River, there are many spots for fishing and camping.

Directions:

Contact: Armstrong Rails to Trails Assoc. c/o Armstrong County Tourist Bureau, 402 East Market St., Kittanning, PA 16201

Baker Trail <http://www.rachelcarsontrails.org/bt>

The **Baker Trail** extends 132 miles from Garvers Ferry, just off PA 356 opposite Freeport, to the Allegheny National Forest. There are ten camping areas with springs and adirondack-style shelters. Primitive sites for tent camping may be found along the trail. Most of the trail is easy walking; a particularly attractive section lies between I-80 and Cook Forest State Park. One scoutmaster reports: "South of I-80 the Baker Trail consists mainly of dirt roads and barking farm dogs." The Baker Trail Guide, available from the Pittsburgh Council of American Youth Hostels is a must for any group hiking the trail. Other information concerning the Baker Trail can be obtained from the Baker Trail Chairperson, American Youth Hostels, Pittsburgh Council. This trail was first established in 1959. It extends 140 miles from Freeport, on the Allegheny River, to the far northern border of the Allegheny National Forest.

It touches on Crooked Creek State Park, the Mahoning Creek Reservoir, and goes through Cook Forest State Park before it reaches the Allegheny Forest.

There are eight open-front shelters with wooden floors, each with room for 6-8 people. Most shelters are near water. In addition, there are many primitive campsites along the trail where tents can be used. There are no signs directing hikers, so they must be familiar with Baker Trail guide maps provided by the sponsor. Specific up-to-date price lists and information about the Trail can be obtained from the Pittsburgh American Youth Hostels, Inc. 6300 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15232.

This is an easy walking trail and most troops select sections of it for day walks.

Bear Run Nature Reserve
<http://www.visitpa.com/visitpa/details.pa?id=218782>

Over 20 miles of trails. Surrounding Fallingwater, the Bear Run Nature Reserve offers over 5,000 acres of mountain land and more than 20 miles of trails for hiking, nature study, and backpack camping.

Directions: Take PA Turnpike (I-76) east to New Stanton (exit 8) then south on US Rte. 119 to Uniontown. Travel east on US Rte. 40 to Farmington then north on PA Rte. 381.

Contact: Bear Run Nature Reserve, Mill Run, PA 15464 (724) 329-8501

Black Cherry Trail

A new nationally recognized trail, it is located in the eastern sector of the Allegheny National Forest. Only 1.2 miles long, it has 36 signed interpretive stops. It skirts the perimeter and ends within the lower campground of Twin Lakes. Here the Twin Lakes Trail takes over and extends westward to the North Country trek, near Brookston on State Route 948 on the McKean-Warren County line. Black Cherry has a wood chip path, with footbridges crossing a forest stream, wooden steps on steeper portions and rest benches.

Black Forest Trail <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/FORESTRY/hiking/black.aspx>

It is a 42-mile loop trail located in the northwest corner of Lycoming County near the village of Slate Run. The name is derived from the dense, dark (black) virgin coniferous forests. The Black Forest Trail passes through rugged country with spectacular vistas; many consider it the finest hiking opportunity in Pennsylvania. Hikers should strive to camp in areas designated on the map. These sites have been heavily used, and so a backpacking stove is suggested. The best time to hike this trail is the third week of June, when the mountain laurel is in full bloom.

The trail begins and ends at Slate Run, on State Route 414 on the east. State Route 44 on the west runs across the trail, which has on its east a short loop trail called Golden Eagle Trail. Black Forest Trail follows old railroad grades and lumber haul roads.

A detailed trail-guide and map are available for \$12.00 from:

Tiadaghton Forest Fire Fighters Association
P.O. Box 5091
South Williamsport, PA 17701

Forbes Trail

Little is known about this trail, except it has a great deal of history behind it. It is supposed to be the route British General John Forbes took from Ft. Ligonier to fight the French at Fort Duquesne in 1758. He and his colonials took the fort from the British, thus this 18 mile long trail was named in his honor. The trail starts in Westmoreland County, and it skirts Bushy Run Park, a famous Revolutionary battle site.

Information is available from the Pittsburgh Council, American Youth Hostels, Inc., 6300 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15232.

Freeport Trail <http://www.butlerfreeporttrail.org/>

The Butler-Freeport Community Trail is the corridor of the remarkably diverse Buffalo Creek Watershed in the southeast quadrant of Butler County. Starting in Laneville, the trail has Buffalo Creek as its companion for over 3 miles through the forest of the Buffalo Creek Gorge. The Buffalo Creek Gorge is the spectacular view which can be seen from bridge on Route 28 a mile north of the Sarver-Freeport exit. The Trail then picks up Little Buffalo Creek as its companion for another 8 miles, crossing the creek seven times. Many of the smaller tributaries are reminiscent of mountain brooks, offering natural cooling on a hot day and the thrill of rushing, tumbling water in all seasons. Gradually as the trail meanders northward toward Butler, it travels from the woods of the Gorge to a broader forest valley with the trail securely passing between cliffs on one side and the Little Buffalo Creek on the other to more open woods to farmland and village communities before again plunging into forest as it leaves Little Buffalo Creek near its headwaters.

Directions: Take PA Rt. 8 south to PA Rt. 228 east to Route 356. Take 356 south to Freeport.

Ghost Town Trail

This 20 mile trail runs from Armagh to Dilltown along old Black Lick RR rail beds and is good for hiking or biking. Many nice fossils can be found as well.

Directions: Take US Rte. 422 east to Dilltown end or go on to US Rte 22 and Armagh east of Ebensburg.

Contact: Indiana County Parks Dept., Rails to Trails Division, Indiana, PA 15701

Glacier Ridge Trail

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/jennings.aspx>

The **Glacier Ridge Trail** is a 7-mile trail from the Jennings Environmental Education Center (on PA 528 near the intersection of PA 8 and PA 173) to Moraine State Park. Check at Jennings for overnight parking. The scenery is not outstanding, but the trail is nearby and can be hiked by beginners. Camping is permitted in Moraine State Park by reservation only. Write Moraine State Park, RD# 1, Portersville, PA 16051; (724) 368-8811.

Glacier Ridge Trail was originally formed to connect several historic spots and two state parks. This trail begins beneath the bridge that spans a finger of Lake Arthur, in Moraine State Park. It is well-marked and extends along the north shore of Lake Arthur for about 10 miles. It is an ideal walk for troops and packs that wish to take just a day of the trail and see the various birds and wonders of nature.

Golden Eagle Trail

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/Forestry/hiking/eagle.aspx>

This 10-mile trail has been called the most nearly perfect hiking trail in Pennsylvania; for a free map, write: Bureau of Forestry, 423 E. Central Ave., S. Williamsport, PA 17701.

Directions: Take I-80 east to Lock Haven (exit 26) then turn north on PA Rt. 44. Go north on PA Rt. 414 to Slate Run.

Hickory Creek Trail

http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/alleggheny/recreation/hiking/hickory_creek/

A 12-mile loop trail in Warren County east of Tidioute; the trailhead is in the parking lot of Heart's Content Picnic Area. Since the trail is mostly flat, it is appropriate for novice backpackers. There are several beautiful clearings in the southern loop and along Middle Hickory Creek that are suitable for camping. The area has recently been designated a Wilderness Area, and so the Forest Service cannot clear storm damage and re-blaze. Hikers should keep map and compass handy. A map and more information is available in the Hiker's Guide to the Allegheny National Forest .

Laurel Highlands

Trail<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/laurelridge.aspx>

The **Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail**, one of Pennsylvania's best hiking trails, follows the Laurel Ridge for 70 miles from Ohiopyle to the Conemaugh Gorge. Access and parking are available at the southern end (Ohiopyle), the

northern end (near Seward), as well as Routes 653, 31, 30, and 271. The trail was carefully planned and passes many picturesque views, rock formations, and beautiful streams. It is well marked and suitable for beginners; mileage posts, found at every mile, help hikers locate themselves. The trail is very rugged and hilly in some places, especially the southern end. An excellent guide to the Laurel Highlands is available from Laurel Highlands Conservation and Development Project, Box 188, Laughlintown, PA 15655.

Eight shelter areas with adirondack-style shelters, fireplaces, tent sites, water, and latrines are located every 8 - 10 miles along the trail. Overnight camping is by reservation only; call (724) 455-3744 or write Laurel Ridge State Park, RD# 3, Rockwood, PA 15557, for reservations and a pocket size map of the trail.

Link Trail, now known as Standing Stone Trail

<http://www.hike-sst.org/>

Standing Stone Trail follows scenic ridgelines in Huntingdon, Mifflin, and Fulton counties: the south middle region of Pennsylvania's Tiltrock Country. Formerly known as "Link Trail" named for connecting [Mid State Trail](#) with [Tuscarora Trail](#), **Standing Stone Trail** is a destination in its own right, offering Pennsylvania hikers and backpackers a *link* to dramatic scenery, wild plant and animal life, and compelling history. Click for [highlights](#) of a trek along the **SST**.

Standing Stone Trail Club, Inc.
c/o Rich Scanlon, Treasurer
27 Sandy Lane, Suite 206
Lewistown, PA 17044

Directions: Take PA turnpike (I-76) east to Fort Littleton (exit 13) then turn north on US Rt. 522 a few miles.

Lower Trail <http://webpages.charter.net/cjmpsu/lowertrail/>

Another "Rails to Trails" endeavor, this trail travels eastward from Williamsburg to Water Street (just west of Huntingdon) approximately 12 miles. The trail parallels part of the old Pennsylvania Canal, displaying some of the oldest bridges and locks in this part of the state.

Contact: Blair County Rails to Trails
221 High St.
Williamsburg, PA 16693
814/ 832-2400

Mason-Dixon Trail

A 25 mile long trail running west from the Youghiogheny Reservoir along the Mason Dixon line.

Contact: Westmoreland Fayette Council BSA, 2 Garden Center, Greensburg, PA 15601 (724) 837-1630

Directions: Take PA Turnpike (I-76) east to New Stanton (exit 8) then south on US Rte 119 to Uniontown. Turn south on US Rte. 40 to PA Rte. 281 near Markleysburg. Go south to a gas line running east-west.

Mid-State Trail <http://hike-mst.org/>

Mid-State is just what it says - in the middle of the Keystone State. The trail runs northeast-southwest along the ridges. This 60 mile long route links many fine trails, old logging roads, and railroad grades that follows the Tussey and Longs Mountains. The trail is blazed with blue paint.

The trail's southern end is a Colerain picnic area on State Route 45, near Spruce Creek and north of Water Street on US. 22 upstream from Huntingdon, PA. The trail next could be entered from State Route 26 near Pine Grove Mills which is on Route 45. The US. Route 322 entrance would be made near Laurel Run Dam, close to Milroy. The trail goes through Poe Valley State Park near Poe Paddy. State Route 45 again crosses Mid-State east of Woodward at Hairy Johns picnic area where the trail extends on past State Route 192 and Raymond B.

Maps and a guide are available for a small fee from Hiking Division, 60 Recreation Building, University Park, PA 16802 (Penn State Outing Club); the Keystone Trails Association, RD. 3, P. O. Box 261, Cogan Station, PA 17728; or Bureau of Forestry, Department of Environmental Resources, PO. Box 11467, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

Minister Valley Trail

<http://www.brainygeography.com/features/PA.trail/ministervalleytrail.html>

Minister Valley Trail is a 6-mile loop in the Allegheny National Forest. Ample parking is available at the trailhead on Route 666 northeast of Tionesta, PA. The east leg passes interesting rock formations, and an overlook on the west leg provides an outstanding view of the valley. The trail is not difficult and is ideal for beginning backpackers. There are (heavily used) campsites at Triple Fork Camp. A trail map and complete directions may be found in A Hiker's Guide to the Allegheny National Forest.

Directions: Take PA Rt. 8 north to Oil City then north on US Rt. 62. Turn east on PA Rt. 666 to Porkey.

Montour Trail <http://www.montourtrail.org/>

The Montour Trail is a multi-use non-motorized recreational rail-trail near Pittsburgh, PA that will ultimately extend 46 miles from Moon Township near Coraopolis to Clairton. Currently, multiple sections of the trail totaling over 40 miles are completed. New sections are being added each year.

The trail is paved with a smooth surface of crushed limestone, which makes it ideal for all forms of non-motorized use: bicycling, walking, running, cross-country skiing, and nature appreciation. In certain sections, horseback riding is also permitted, but not on the improved trail surface.

A portion of the trail within Peters Township is called The Arrowhead Trail. It is owned and maintained by the Township.

The [Panhandle Trail](#) stretches 29 miles between Carnegie, PA, and Weirton, WV. The portion of the trail in Allegheny County is managed by the Montour Trail Council.

Directions: Take I-79 south to Coraopolis.

North Country Trail <http://www.northcountrytrail.org/>

The **North Country National Scenic Trail** is a premier footpath that stretches for about 4,600 miles linking communities, forests, and prairies across seven northern states. **Already, more than 1,800 miles have been certified off-road.** Additional miles follow shared paths, and some road walks yet remain. The map on the web page link above shows the trail in its entirety. When completed it will be the longest off-road hiking trail in the United States.

Northmoreland Fort Hand Trail

Only fort on Penna. frontier north of Ft. Pitt, 12 miles long

Contact: Northmoreland Fort Hand Trail, c/o Fred H. Martz , 410 Greenridge Road, New Kensington, PA 15068

Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail <http://www.nps.gov/pohe/>

Trail runs 70 miles from Seward to Ohiopyle. Eventually to run from the mouth of the Potomac River in Maryland to the Conemaugh Gorge near Johnstown.

Directions:

Contact: Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, c/o National Park Service, 1100 Ohio Drive, Washington, DC 20242

Rachel Carson Trail <http://www.rachelcarsontrails.org/rct>

The Rachel Carson Trail is a hiking trail north and east of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, spanning 35.7 miles (57.4 kilometers) from [Harrison Hills County Park](#) in the extreme northeast corner of Allegheny County, to [North Park](#) in the north-central area of the county. The trail is extremely varied, traversing several county parks, following power and gas lines, skirting suburban homes and farms, crossing creeks, meandering through woods and fields, and passing along the edge of steep bluffs. The terrain along the route ranges from paved roads to some areas that are quite primitive and rugged. Spurs lead into the mansion area at [Hartwood Acres County Park](#) in Indiana Township and the [Rachel Carson Homestead](#) in Springdale. Continuing urban development along the route of the trail brings disruption and requires rerouting from time to time. There are no camps or shelters along the way, meaning the trail is intended for day-hiking. The trail is relatively primitive and steep in places. No bridges have been built, so streams have to be crossed as-is.

Shenango Trail

The Shenango Trail runs parallel to the Shenango River, largely along the route of the former Erie Extension Canal. If you pay attention, you'll spot the shape of the canal and occasional remnants of structures. You'll also get nice views of the Shenango River just at the upper end of Shenango Lake. The trail is described as connecting Big Bend with Kidd's Mill, a distance of 7.5 miles. We rode from Big Bend to Hamburg, just under 4 miles, and extended our trip on the low-traffic roads nearby.

<i>Shenango Trail</i>	
Location	Big Bend to Kidd's Mill in Jefferson, Delaware, and Pymatuning Townships, Mercer County
Trailheads	Big Bend, New Hamburg, Kidd's Mill
Length, Surface	7.5 miles, dirt single-track
Character	Little used, rural, shady, many short steep hills
Usage restrictions	No motorized vehicles
Amenities	None
Driving time from Pittsburgh	1 hour 45 minutes northwest

If you're familiar with canal trails such as the towpaths of the C&O and the Ohio & Erie Canals, you may be interested in seeing how rapidly the woods reclaim a canal after maintenance ends. The canal prism itself shows up as a depression that's sometimes dry, sometime a creek bed, and sometimes a wetland. You may

see the foundations of a few structures such as culverts, but not very much remains. What little there is becomes more noticeable as you approach Hamburg.

The trail is mostly single-track. It's fairly level except for short steep hills at stream and pipeline crossings. The single-track is often interrupted by fallen trees or partly buried pipes. Riding it on a bicycle requires solid intermediate mountain biking skills, though if you're comfortable on easy single-track you can probably make do with a strong self-preservation instinct that identifies problem spots early enough to get off and walk.

From the Corps of Engineers parking area at Big Bend, cross the road and enter the trail through the wooden gateway. The trail here is typical of most of the route – single-track through open woods and shoulder-high growth. In a quarter-mile you'll pass under the road. Look across the river here to see a boat launching area. A hundred yards later you reach the first of many creek crossings. This one features a suspension bridge two planks wide and an option to ford the creek. A typical crossing is a rigid 3-plank wooden bridge one or two steps up from the trail. At many of the crossings, the soft banks of the creek may persuade you to lift your bike to the bridge.

Contact: French Creek Council BSA, 110 West Tenth Street, Erie, PA 16501, (814) 454-4565

Susquehannock Trail

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/FORESTRY/hiking/susquehannock.aspx>

The **Susquehannock Trail** is an 85-mile loop trail in northwest Pennsylvania about 10 miles east of Coudersport. The trail offers much unspoiled scenic beauty and abundant wildlife; it is suitable for backpackers with some experience. Maps, handbooks and information are available from the Susquehannock Trail Club, Ulysses, PA 16948 or the Coudersport Outdoor Center. The trail handbook gives possible campsites as well as shorter loop trails. Nearby Lyman Run and Ole Bull State Parks have swimming. Other nearby attractions: the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum and the Coudersport Ice Mine on Rte 6, the railroad bridge in Kinzua Bridge State Park, and Penn's Cave.

Tanbark Trail

This 8.8 mile trail begins at US 62 north of Tidioute, PA and travels southeasterly to the [Hearts Content Recreation Area](#) and finally links with the [North Country National Scenic](#) Trail at Dunham Siding. The northerly part of this trail passes

through the Allegheny National Recreation Area which offers some of the most primitive woodlands on the Allegheny Plateau.

Finding the trail: Trailhead parking is located at a pull-off on US 62 halfway between Tidioute or Warren, or at Dunham Siding which is on the Hearts Content Road at the junction of FR 116 and 119. From Warren or Tidioute, take US 62 to its junction with Hearts Content Road. From Sheffield, take the Austin Hill (Bull Hill) Road to the Hearts Content Road.

Hiking the trail: Watch the informational signs. This trail offers challenges to a wide range of skill levels as it drops dramatically from the plateau to the Allegheny River. Overnight camping is available at the Hearts Content Recreation Area.

Directions: Take PA Rt. 8 north to Oil City then north on US Rt. 62.

Tracy Ridge Trail

http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/allegheny/recreation/hiking/tracy_ridge/

A newly-recognized national trail is **Tracy Ridge** in northwest corner of McKean County part of the Allegheny National Forest. Tracy Ridge runs 4.2 miles from its beginning at Tracy Ridge along State Route 321. It winds along the edge of old farm lands and then follows Tracy Run west to the Allegheny Reservoir of Kinzua Dam. It joins the North Country Trail here. The trail is marked with paint on the trees.

Information is available from the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240. It is also available from the Ranger district offices located at Sheffield, Marienville, Ridgeway, and Bradford, PA.

Tuscarora Trail <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/Forestry/hiking/tuscarora.aspx>

<http://www.angelfire.com/pa2/yorkhikingclub/tuscarora.html>

This is another out-of-state trail. It starts in the state of Virginia, crosses West Virginia, and enters Pennsylvania at State Route 455 near Sylvan Franklin County. Here it picks up the Franklin- Fulton County line, and goes north from there 144.7 miles.

The trail can be entered at several places: crossing State Route 16 between McConnellsburg and Foltz; US Rt. 30 near McConnellsburg and Fort Loudon; or at Cowans Gaps Park up a mountain road from State Route 75, northwest of Fort Loudon. After passing over the turnpike at Tuscarora Tunnel it can be entered on State Route 75-641 junction near Spring Run before it swings again into wilderness for miles. After a while, it crosses Colonel Denning State

Park on State Route 233. Here the trail turns eastward to State Route 74 near Lebo and then proceeds to Sterretts Gap on Route 34. Finally, it joins the Appalachian Trail and ends. There are campgrounds and swimming areas as well as a church conference camp along the way to help the weary hiker on one of the longest trails in the state. Maps can be obtained from the state Bureau of Forestry, Department of Environmental Resources, PO. Box 1467, Harrisburg, PA 17120.

Twin Lakes Trail

http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/allegheny/recreation/hiking/twin_lakes/

This 15.8 mile long trail begins at the long loop of the Black Cherry National Recreation Interpretive Trail located at [Twin Lakes Recreation Area](#) and travels west to join with the [North Country National Scenic trail](#).

Finding the trail: The trailhead parking lot is located at the [Twin Lakes Recreation Area](#) off of SR 321, south of Kane, PA or north of Wilcox, PA. A hiker actually needs to hike the [Black Cherry National Interpretive Trail](#), which starts in the lower campground loop, and then access the [Twin Lakes Trail](#) from the far end of the interpretive [trail](#).

Hiking the trail: Watch the informational signs...this [trail](#) offers challenges to a wide range of skill levels as it climbs from Hoffman Run at the [Twin Lakes Recreation Area](#) over the plateau, and then drops into the headwaters of Wolf Run on its way to Tionesta Creek. Spots along Wolf Run will be wet. After crossing Tionesta Creek and then Crane Run, a designated Wilderness Trout Stream, the [trail](#) then climbs into the Tionesta National Scenic Area. The North Country National Scenic [Trail](#) junctions with the [Twin Lakes Trail](#) in the scenic area. Hikers then have the opportunity to move north or south on the cross-forest [trail](#). The [Twin Lakes Trail](#) is the second longest [trail](#) on the forest, and was intended to provide a link to the cross-forest North Country National Scenic [Trail](#) while allowing hikers to utilize the parking and recreational facilities available at the newly remodeled [Twin Lakes Recreation Area](#).

Directions: Take I-80 east to DuBois (exit 16) then turn onto US Rt. 219 north to Wilcox. Turn onto PA Rt. 321.

Warrior Trail

<http://www.co.greene.pa.us/secured/gc/depts/rec/tourinfo/grt.htm>

The Warrior Trail runs about 65 miles across Greene County in an east-west direction. It runs from Greensboro on the Monongahela River (east) to a spot near Woodlands, in the northern panhandle of West Virginia.

The trail is about 7,000 years old and undoubtedly was much used by the Indians and white men in Colonial days. Near the eastern terminal was Fort Redstone, and at Wheeling, West Virginia was Fort McHenry. Both places were important links in both the French-and-Indian War and Revolutionary War.

The trail itself is less than two hours from Butler, but the terminus is off Interstate 79. The trail crosses 79 as well as four other important highways (State Route 88, US. Route 19, State Route 218, and State Route 18). To do the trail from the east, exit I-79 at State Route 21, drive east to the intersection of State route 88 and drive south to Greensboro where you can start to hike westward. The trail is marked at each mile with a Warrior Trail post and in between are aluminum bands around trees for blazes. There is one shelter, that at Moninger's Park. Hotel and motel accommodations are available in Waynesburg.

This historic area is famous for its covered bridges, and some can be reached by short walks from the trail. The trail crosses over into West Virginia near a town called Cameron, south of Ryerson State Park at Wind Ridge, PA. Another side trip can be arranged to visit the western end of the Mason and Dixon survey of over 200 years ago. Those interested can contact Warrior Trail Association, P O Box 103, Waynesburg, PA 15370-0103, or Greene County Historical Society, Waynesburg.

West Rim Trail <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/Forestry/hiking/westrim.aspx>

The West Rim Trail is a 30 mile hiking trail located adjacent to the Western Rim of Pennsylvania's Grand Canyon.

The northern section of the canyon is about 800 feet deep and about 2,000 feet from rim to rim. The exposed rock is estimated to be more than 350 million years old. Most of the important geologic process which formed the canyons it now exists occurred less than 20,000 years ago.

Before glacial activity took place in the present Canyon area, the headwaters of Pine Creek took a northeastern drainage course. Glaciers deposited a blanket of gravel, sand and clay blocking the flow of Pine Creek. This natural dam forced Pine Creek to reverse its flow and drain to the south. This overflow cut through the drainage divide and formed the canyon.

The trail offers spectacular views of the Canyon. In some spots the trail follows the very rim of the Canyon, so watch your step.

Directions: Take I-80 east to Lock Haven (exit 26) then turn north on PA Rt. 44. Go north on PA Rt. 414 to Slate Run.

MARYLAND TRAILS

C & O Canal Trail <http://www.nps.gov/choh/>

Construction of the C & O Canal was begun in 1928 to link Washington DC and Pittsburgh. Construction was halted at Cumberland, Md. in 1850, because railroads had become a more efficient means of transportation. Many of the locks and aqueducts and most of the towpath have been preserved in the C & O Canal National Historic Park. There is much to see along the towpath: The 3120-foot Paw-Paw Tunnel, Fort Frederick State Park, Antietam National Battlefield, Harpers Ferry, Whites Ferry, Monocacy Aqueduct, Rileys Lock and Lockhouse, and the Great Falls of the Potomac.

Five Boy Scout Councils in cooperation with the park have developed the C & O Canal Historic Trail along the 184-mile towpath. The trail is ideal for beginning backpackers; free "Hiker-Biker Overnighter" primitive campsites are located about every five miles. For the trail guide (indispensable for trip planning), contact: Potomac Area Council BSA.

Canoeing and rowing on short and widely separated stretches of the canal is another recreational feature of the park. Several outfitters offer white water rafting in the nearby Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. For campground and general park information: Superintendent, C & O Canal National Historic Park, Box 4, Sharpsburg, MD 21782; (301) 739-4200.

Directions: Take PA Turnpike (I-76) to Bedford (exit 11) then turn south on US Rt. 220 to Cumberland, MD.

OHIO <http://hikingohioparks.com/>

Buckeye Trail <http://www.buckeyetrail.org/>

For more information, e-Mail to info@buckeyetrail.org.

The **Buckeye Trail** is an 1400-mile trail that encircles Ohio. It connects many parks, forests and wildlife refuges, reclaimed mines, and other conservation areas. It follows woodland trails, back roads, and miles of canal towpath. Prehistoric earthworks, covered bridges, abandoned canal locks, wayside inns, and mills are some of the historic places it passes.

Camping is permitted only at designated campsites; these are not yet frequent enough along the trail to enable backpackers to camp beside the trail every night. Trail maps indicate the locations of available campsites that are on or near the trail. Maps and pocket size guidebooks are available for each forty mile section of the trail. The booklet, "More Short Hikes on the Buckeye Trail," is available from the Buckeye Trail Association.

Mill Creek Park Trail

<http://hikingohioparks.com/mill-creek-park-hiking-ohio-parks.html>

10 mile trail, nature education center

Zaleski Backpack Trail

http://www.vintoncountytravel.com/zaleski_backpack_trail.htm

This trail was established to provide backpacking opportunities as well as to introduce some scenic and historic aspects of the forest. For a 10-mile day trip, follow loop ABCDEFA of the backpack trail. This is a rather lengthy and strenuous hike. Carry a canteen, lunch and energy-supplying snacks.

Directions:

Contact: Zaleski State Forest, Division of Forestry, Zaleski, OH 45698

WEST VIRGINIA

The high, rugged country of the Monongahela National Forest is the most outstanding area for hiking and backpacking within a half-day's drive of Butler. Many hikers favor the Potomac Ranger District, which includes Dolly Sods, Seneca Rocks, and the Spruce Knob area. Blackwater Falls and Canaan Valley are possible overnight stops en route as is Swallow Falls State Park in Maryland.

The best book on the area is the Hiking Guide to Monongahela National Forest and Vicinity [10]. For information and trail maps, contact: District Ranger, Monongahela National Forest, Petersburg, WV 26847; (304) 257-4488.
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/mnf/>

Dolly Sods, a 10,000-acre wilderness area on the Allegheny Plateau in the West Virginia highlands, offers hikers and backpackers solitude among strangely beautiful scenery. Year-round temperatures are cool and the region is constantly subjected to severe winds. Many plants are similar to those found at sea level in eastern Canada, and the Sods resemble the tundra near the Arctic Circle.

The most striking landmark in the Monongahela National Forest is **Seneca Rocks**, a 1000 foot blade like sandstone formation, which rises above the North Fork Valley at the mouth of Seneca Creek in the Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area. The top is accessible to visitors via a new 1.3-mile hiking trail.

The highest point in West Virginia, Spruce Knob, is an area of windblown spruce and rock outcroppings; it is easily reached by road.

Since 1975, The West Virginia Scenic Trails Association has been developing the Allegheny Trail, a north-south trail across the Mountain State. One of the better trails in the Monongahela National Forest, it is now complete from the Virginia state line to Blackwater Falls State Park. The "Hiking Guide to the Allegheny Trail" is available from the West Virginia Scenic Trails Association.

BSA-APPROVED TRAILS FOR WHICH PATCHES/MEDALS ARE AVAILABLE

Allegheny Highlands Council

Portage Trail

Kinzua Bridge Trail

Bucktail Council

Clearfield-Overland Trail

French Creek Council

Washington Trail

Erie Historic Trail

Shenango Trail

Greater Niagara Frontier Council

Niagara Frontier Trail

Greater Pittsburgh Council

Forbes Trail

Braddock's Crossing Trail

Greater Western Reserve Council

Johnny Appleseed Trail

Mill Creek Park Boy Scout Trail

Sandy Beaver Trail

Mason-Dixon Council

Forbes Trail

Antietam Battlefield Historic Trail

C & O Canal Historic Trail

Appalachian Trail in Pennsylvania

Potomac Area Council

C & O Canal Historic Trail

York-Adams Area Council

Gettysburg Heritage Program

Keystone Trails Association administers a hiking awards program with awards for hiking various trails and distances.

American Historic Trails, Box 26986, Charlotte, NC 28221, has a hiking awards program with trails in many major cities.