



A Pennsylvania Recreational Guide for Promised Land

Promised Land
State Park



Pennsylvania State Parks Mission

The primary purpose of Pennsylvania state parks is to provide opportunities for enjoying healthful outdoor recreation and serve as outdoor classrooms for environmental education. In meeting these purposes, the conservation of the natural, scenic, aesthetic, and historical values of parks should be given first consideration. Stewardship responsibilities should be carried out in a way that protects the natural outdoor experience for the enjoyment of current and future generations.



2023



BALD EAGLES AT PROMISED LAND

Bald eagles have nested in the park since 1999. Adult eagles typically return to the nest in January and February, lay eggs from February to March, and young eagles are often visible on and around the nest from late April until July. The nest can be seen with the naked eye from the wildlife observation station, although binoculars or a spotting scope offer a better view. Viewing from a distance with good optics helps protect the eagles and their habitat.

There are few sights more thrilling than observing a bald eagle at its nest or in action along a shoreline. Responsibilities come with this enjoyment. Park visitors must ensure their presence and behavior do not disturb the eagles. Premature fledging can cause injury or death to an eaglet that cannot yet fly or defend itself. Respect their home and space by maintaining a safe distance from eagle nests and roosts. Laws prohibit human activity, including camping, fishing, boating, hiking, etc., within 330 feet of a nest. Do not cross the boundary line or disturb the nest.

During the nesting season, volunteers monitor the nest weekly from the observation station. New volunteers are always welcome. Contact the park office for more information.



Barb Lewis

PROMISED LAND STATE PARK



Monarch butterfly

Promised Land State Park is on the Pocono Plateau, 1,800 feet above sea level. The almost 3,000-acre park is surrounded by 12,464 acres of Delaware State Forest in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Directions

GPS DD: Lat. 41.29942 Long. -75.21412

Promised Land State Park is along PA 390 in Pike County, 10 miles north of Canadensis. The park is easily accessed from interstate highways 80 and 84. It is within a one-to-three-hour drive from Allentown, Easton, Bethlehem, Reading, Harrisburg, Scranton, and Wilkes-Barre. The park is about 100 miles north of Philadelphia and 35 miles from the New York and New Jersey state borders.

Reservations

Make online reservations at www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks or call toll-free 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Saturday.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Spend the Day



FISHING: Promised Land Lake and Lower Lake offer great opportunities for year-round fishing. Common fish species are largemouth and smallmouth bass, pickerel, muskellunge, yellow perch, sunfish, and catfish. An ADA accessible fishing pier is at Snow Shanty Boat Launch.

Lower Lake is approved trout waters and is stocked with brook, brown, and rainbow trout. Trout stamp restrictions apply to these waters. Fishing is prohibited prior to the start of the trout season. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission regulations and laws apply.

TRAIL SIGNING SYSTEM: Recreational trails are all marked with vertical blue blazes. At most trail intersections, a white post designates the trail name, intersection number, trail uses, directions, and other pertinent information.

Permitted trail usage is designated by international symbols. Any other markings are NOT relevant to this trail system. Additional trail information and descriptions are available at the park office or on the park website.



Trail Descriptions

HIKING: There are approximately 50 miles of hiking trails in Promised Land State Park and the surrounding Delaware State Forest. Splendid opportunities exist for nature study, relaxation, and exploration. Hike Bruce Lake Trail to a natural glacial lake, see the small waterfalls along Little Falls Trail, or walk a loop around Conservation Island. A hiking trail brochure and self-guided trail information for Conservation Island are available at the park office.

Trails lead through areas rich in historic and scenic interest. This is especially true from mid-May until mid-June when the native mountain laurels and rhododendrons are in bloom. Lowbush and highbush blueberries usually ripen in late July. Fall foliage typically peaks in early October.

Motorized vehicles are prohibited on all hiking trails; except snowmobiles, which are permitted only on designated snowmobile trails. Pets are permitted on trails but must be on a leash of 6 feet or less at all times. Before hiking, let someone know where you are going and when you will return. Take a map, stay on established trails, and plan to return before dusk. Wear proper attire and footwear when hiking. Be aware of hunting seasons and hunting areas within the park and wear fluorescent orange clothing during hunting seasons.

HORSEBACK RIDING: Promised Land State Park provides access to select equestrian trails in Delaware State Forest. Horseback riding is allowed on park roads and designated trails in Promised Land State Park. Horse rentals are not available. Six equestrian campsites are available in Lower Lake Campground.

BICYCLING: Riders share the road on the 6.5-mile paved road around Promised Land Lake, Lower Lake Road, and in the park's six campgrounds. Children age 12 and under MUST wear a helmet, and all riders are encouraged to wear a helmet. Please ride single file on all park roads. E-bikes are permitted but must follow all e-bike guidelines. www.dcnr.pa.gov/Pages/EBikePolicy.aspx

All *Pennsylvania Vehicle Code Statutes* apply when riding on state park roads. Please avoid riding PA 390 when possible; use Rhododendron Trail or Park Avenue instead.

MOUNTAIN BIKING: Mountain biking is permitted on Rhododendron Trail and designated trails within Delaware State Forest. E-bikes are permitted but must follow all e-bike guidelines. www.dcnr.pa.gov/Pages/EBikePolicy



LEARN, EXPERIENCE, CONNECT

Promised Land State Park offers a wide variety of programs from April through October. Gain a better understanding of the park's natural, cultural, and historical resources through guided outdoor recreation, hands-on activities, walks, special events, and other programs. Throughout the summer, programming is offered multiple times a week. To enhance recreational opportunities, the park has binoculars, snowshoes, fishing poles and tackle, and compasses available for visitors to borrow from the park office year round.

The Masker Museum at Promised Land State Park is one of the largest Civilian Conservation Corps museums in the Commonwealth, featuring interactive stories, displays and artifacts. A section of the Masker Museum has natural history displays, including a bird viewing area and a native plant garden outside. The volunteer run museum is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Opening times may vary due to volunteer availability. Please call the office for hours.

Curriculum-based environmental education programs are available to schools and organized groups. Call the park office to schedule a group program. A variety of professional development workshops are also offered for teachers.

Contact the park office or explore the online calendar of events, <https://events.dcnr.pa.gov>, for more information on programs and other learning experiences.



Stay the Night



RUSTIC CABINS: Nestled among evergreens and adjacent to Lower Lake, the Bear Wallow Cabin Colony has 12 rustic rental cabins that were constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. These rustic cabins each sleep up to five guests and have a fireplace insert, refrigerator, stove, microwave, coffee pot, electricity, outdoor fire ring, and adjacent private bathroom. Cabins 9 through 12 permit up to two dogs per cabin for a fee; pets are prohibited in all other cabins. Cabin 9 is ADA accessible, as is the nearby restroom. Whittaker Cabin sleeps eight guests and is located down a private driveway off North Shore Road. Linens are not provided. Up to two dogs are permitted at Whittaker Cabin.

Scattered around Promised Land State Park are approximately 220 privately-owned cabins on leased state park land. Please respect the privacy of these cabin owners.

CAMPING: modern facilities

There are seven camping areas. Campgrounds vary from basic modern campsites (flush toilets, no showers, and no electricity) to full-hookup (sewer, electric, and water hookup on site). Pets are permitted on designated sites in some campgrounds and must be physically controlled and attended at all times. Pets are prohibited in swimming areas, buildings, and all overnight areas not participating in the pet program. Pickerel Point, Deerfield, and the Pines campgrounds are near swimming, boating, fishing, and hiking.

The maximum stay in all camping areas is 14 days during the summer peak season and 21 days during the non-peak season. Campers are allowed one vehicle per site in addition to a sleeping unit. If an additional vehicle is needed and if it can fit on the site, one extra car pass may be purchased for a fee at the park office. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.



Enjoy the Winter

SNOWMOBILING: Registered snowmobiles are permitted on more than 23 miles of maintained, designated trails on both state park and state forest lands. Conditions permitting, the trails open the day after the last day of Pennsylvania's regular or extended rifle deer season and close April 2. Snowmobile maps are available at the state park office and the Delaware State Forest office. Snowmobile trails are marked with orange diamonds.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING AND SNOWSHOEING: Skiing and snowshoeing are permitted on all trails. The trails at Bruce Lake Natural Area and Conservation Island are recommended for skiing and

snowshoeing. During the winter season, snowshoes are available to loan from the park office with a photo ID, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM, Monday to Friday. Six inches or more of snow is required in order to borrow snowshoes.

ICE FISHING: Conditions permitting, ice fishing is popular on both lakes. Bases, pickerels, and panfishes can be caught in both lakes. Lower Lake is designated trout waters.

Ice thickness is not monitored. For your safety, make sure ice is at least 4" thick for a single user and 7" thick for a small group. Always carry safety equipment.

WILDLIFE WATCHING

Promised Land State Park is located within the Pocono Plateau: a rugged highland with rocky soil, nutrient-poor bogs, dark evergreen forests, and a diversity of wildlife and plants.

About 20,000 years ago, a giant sheet of ice nearly one mile thick covered Promised Land. The park's rocky soil is comprised of glacial till, providing direct evidence of the glacier. Much of the park is characterized by sphagnum moss bogs, evergreen trees, and thin, rocky soil. Blackburnian warblers, red-breasted nuthatches, and timber rattlesnakes are common to this habitat. In the spring, spotted and Jefferson salamanders and wood frogs flock to the bogs and seasonal pools to breed.

Area forests consist of a mix of deciduous tree species such as beech, oak, and maple. American redstarts, red-eyed vireos, and chestnut-sided warblers are common migratory songbirds that visit these forests. The National Audubon Society has designated Promised Land State Park and surrounding areas as part of the Bruce Lake Natural Area Important Bird Area.

In early May, serviceberry trees flower with a beautiful display of white. In late May, the plentiful mountain laurels bloom, followed by the rhododendrons in June. In mid to late July, blueberries ripen, providing a feast for bears, birds, and people.

A wildlife observation station is located on Lower Lake by the Bear Wallow Boat Launch. Approach the area quietly for the best chance to see wildlife such as bald eagles, waterfowl, otters, mink, and white-tailed deer.

Plants and animals are protected within the park. While you enjoy Promised Land, take only pictures and leave only footprints. Do not feed wildlife such as Canada geese and other waterfowl, as it can create unsafe and unsanitary conditions. It is also against Pennsylvania state park regulations.



Mink

HISTORY

The land that became Promised Land State Park was once home to the Minsi Tribe of the Wolf Clan of the Leni Lenape.

In 1854, John Atkinson transferred 4,252 acres of land referenced as the "Promised Land Lots" to his brother Asher Atkinson, both of Hawley, PA. In 1869, Dr. Joseph Jones acquired the land on which the park now sits as part of his extensive timber holdings. By 1876, the Shakers purchased land in the area. As a religious group with commercial ventures like timbering, the Shakers undertook contracting the forests to be timbered by Collingwood & Co. until purchased by the state.

Early European settlers and lumber operators in the area erected sawmills to process the large stands of conifer and hardwood trees. The land was repeatedly clear-cut. By 1903, the area was almost completely bare of trees. With the loss of trees came erosion, forest fires, and eviction of wildlife from the area.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania purchased the land from 1902-1904. The purchase price ranged from \$0.18 to \$2.00 per acre. In 1905, Promised Land became the fourth Pennsylvania state park. In 1905, the first campground was established in the pine plantation between Bear Wallow Road and the stream flowing into Lower Lake. The campground closed in 1925 and a new one was built in what is now the main beach picnic area. In 1911, the original (1890) earthen crib dam on Promised Land Lake was re-built for \$1,000. Between 1902 and 1933, the Commonwealth planted over 370,000 trees.

INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS

Promised Land State Park

100 Lower Lake Road
Greentown, PA 18426
570-676-3428
PromisedLandSP@pa.gov

An Equal Opportunity Employer

[f](https://www.facebook.com/PromisedLandSP) @PromisedLandSP

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Access for People with Disabilities

This symbol indicates facilities and activities that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible for people with disabilities. This publication text is available in alternative formats.

If you need an accommodation to participate in park activities due to a disability, please contact the park you plan to visit.

In an Emergency

Call 911 and contact a park employee. Directions to the nearest hospital are posted on bulletin boards and at the park office.

NEAREST HOSPITAL

Wayne County Memorial Hospital
601 Park Street
Honesdale, PA 18431
570-253-8100
www.wmoh.org



Black bear

THE BEAR TRUTHS

Many Pennsylvania state parks have healthy forests that provide perfect habitat for black bears. Although they appear cute and cuddly, black bears are wild animals.

A black bear can scramble up a tree like a raccoon and sprint up to 35 mph. Bears use their claws to tear apart rotting logs to find food as well as open trash cans and coolers. Pennsylvania has some of the largest black bears in the United States.

Black bears have an excellent sense of smell, which makes up for poor eyesight and fair hearing. Aromatic scents coming from your food, toiletries, and garbage can attract a curious and hungry bear from a great distance.

Keep your campsite clean. Clean up after meals, and store all food and scented items inside a locked vehicle. This practice will prevent bears and other wildlife from visiting your campsite at night. Do not hang garbage from the hook on the lantern pole provided at each site. Feeding bears is illegal.

Black bears normally avoid people, but bears dependent on eating human food can become aggressive when people get between them and food. Never approach a bear, and be especially wary of mother bears and cubs.

If you encounter a black bear, do not run. Back away slowly without making direct eye contact. If the bear does not leave the area, make a loud noise like blowing a whistle, honking a car horn, or banging a pot. Notify a park employee if you have difficulties with bears. Call 911 if it is an emergency.

In 1933, to relieve the rampant unemployment of the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The young men in the CCC received food, clothes, and a small paycheck, in return for building roads, trails, recreational facilities, fighting fires, planting trees, and performing many other conservation activities. CCC camps were built throughout the United States, including 151 camps in Pennsylvania.

Promised Land's Camp 8-139 opened in May 1933 and closed in July 1941. It was located in what is now Deerfield and Pickerel Point campgrounds. The hard-working young men transformed the land in and around Promised Land State Park. CCC boys built Pickerel Point Campground, the Bear Wallow Cabins, most of North Shore Road by hand, Egypt Meadow Dam, planted over one million trees, fought forest fires, and much more. Each August the park celebrates this legacy with a CCC festival.

On Sunday evening, May 31, 1998, an F-2 tornado with winds of 113-157 mph passed through Promised Land State Park. It cut a northeasterly path through the park and crossed Lower Lake Road, PA 390, and North Shore Road near Sucker Brook. Over 500 people were trapped overnight in the park, but no one was seriously injured. The park office has copies of "After the Wind Died Down," a booklet about the tornado and its aftermath.

Nearby Attractions

Information on nearby attractions is available from the Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau. 570-421-5791. www.poconomountains.com

Varden Conservation Area is located about 25 miles northwest of Promised Land on PA 296, north of Hamlin, Pa. Over 7 miles of trails navigate through Varden's old farm fields, forests, tree plantations, and nearby wetlands. 570-676-3428

Promised Land State Park is surrounded by 12,464 acres of **Delaware State Forest**. It includes two natural areas and numerous recreational opportunities such as hiking, mountain biking, equestrian trails, hunting, fishing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling. Camping is prohibited in the state forest area surrounding the park. 570-895-4000

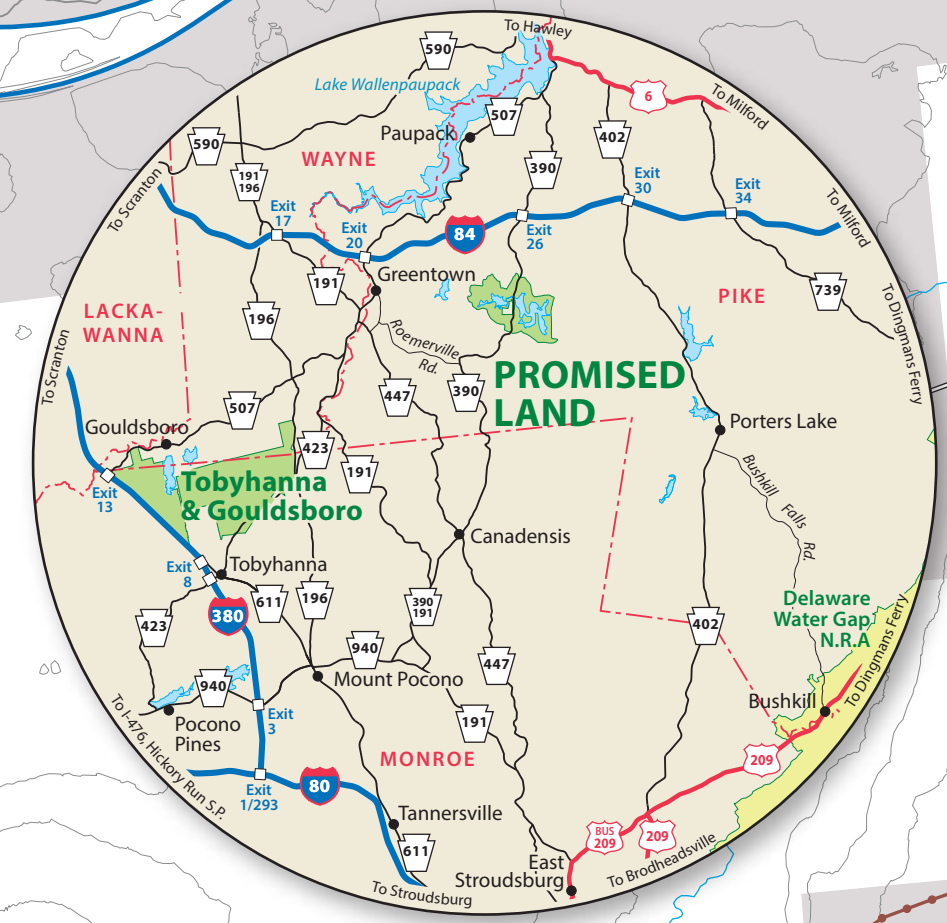
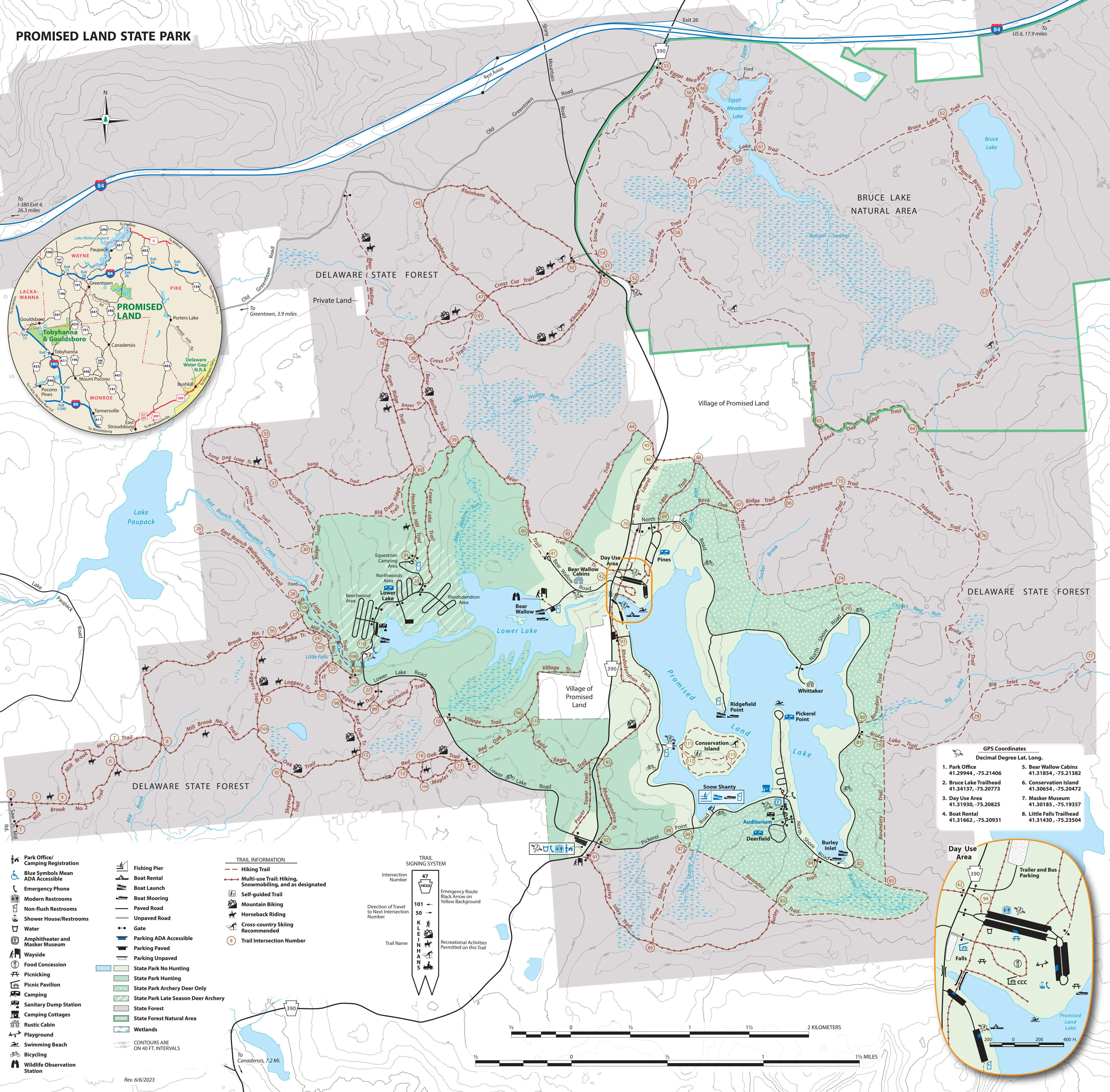
Comprising 70,000 acres of the Delaware River shoreline in Pa. and NJ, **Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area** offers canoeing, fishing, swimming, hiking, wildlife viewing, waterfalls, and historic areas. 570-426-2452. www.nps.gov/dewa

The 5,700-acre **Lake Wallenpaupack**, located 25 minutes north of the park, is open to public fishing and boating. The lake contains many species of warmwater fish in addition to trout. 800-762-6667



Mountain laurel

PROMISED LAND STATE PARK



- Park Office/Camping Registration
- Blue Symbols Mean ADA Accessible
- Emergency Phone
- Modern Restrooms
- Non-flush Restrooms
- Shower House/Restrooms
- Water
- Amphitheater and Masker Museum
- Wayside
- Food Concession
- Picnicking
- Picnic Pavilion
- Camping
- Sanitary Dump Station
- Camping Cottages
- Rustic Cabin
- Playground
- Swimming Beach
- Bicycling
- Wildlife Observation Station
- Fishing Pier
- Boat Rental
- Boat Launch
- Boat Mooring
- Paved Road
- Unpaved Road
- Gate
- Parking ADA Accessible
- Parking Paved
- Parking Unpaved
- State Park No Hunting
- State Park Hunting
- State Park Archery Deer Only
- State Park Late Season Deer Archery
- State Forest
- State Forest Natural Area
- Wetlands

- TRAIL INFORMATION
- Hiking Trail
 - Multi-use Trail: Hiking, Snowmobiling, and as designated
 - Self-guided Trail
 - Mountain Biking
 - Horseback Riding
 - Cross-country Skiing Recommended
 - Trail Intersection Number

- TRAIL SIGNING SYSTEM
- Intersection Number
- Direction of Travel to Next Intersection Number
- Trail Name
- Emergency Route Black Arrow on Yellow Background
- Recreational Activities Permitted on this Trail

- GPS Coordinates
Decimal Degree Lat. Long.
- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Park Office
41.29944, -75.21406 | 5. Bear Wallow Cabins
41.31854, -75.21382 |
| 2. Bruce Lake Trailhead
41.34137, -75.20773 | 6. Conservation Island
41.30654, -75.20472 |
| 3. Day Use Area
41.31930, -75.20825 | 7. Masker Museum
41.30185, -75.19357 |
| 4. Boat Rental
41.31662, -75.20931 | 8. Little Falls Trailhead
41.31430, -75.23504 |

