

## 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.

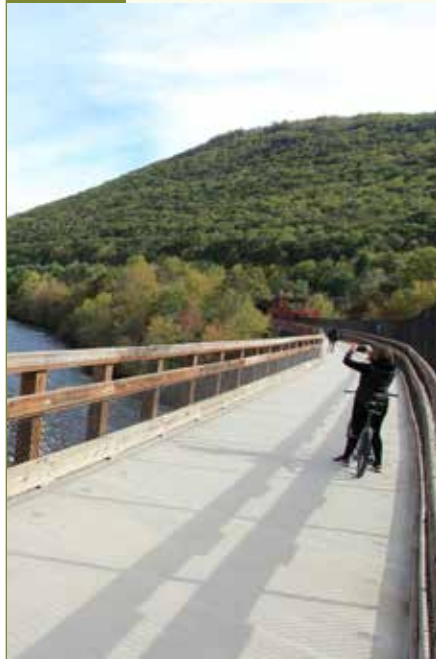
visitPAparks

2022



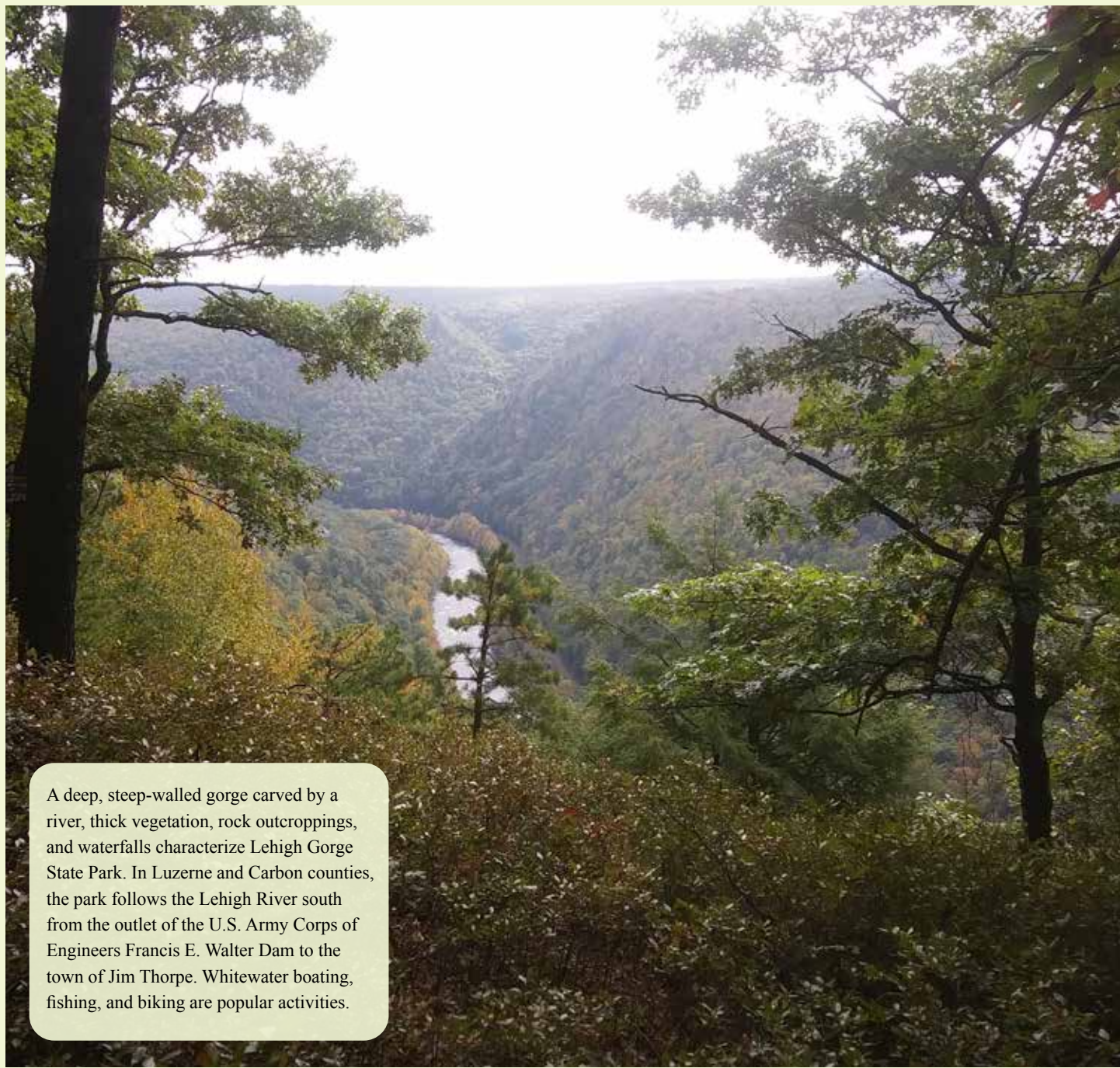
Marty Straub

## TOP 10 ACTIVITIES



1. Take a group of friends for a bicycle ride (or a hike) along the river on the Lehigh Gorge Trail.
2. Challenge yourself with a whitewater rafting trip.
3. Experience the wonder of the Upper Grand Section of the Lehigh Canal by standing inside Lock 22 near mile marker 124.
4. Explore railroad history at Penn Haven Junction.
5. Snowmobile a 15-mile section of the Lehigh Gorge Trail from White Haven to Penn Haven.
6. Eat a picnic lunch while enjoying the beautiful sounds and sights of Buttermilk Falls, north of Rockport.
7. Explore Audubon's Lehigh Autotour.
8. Photograph beautiful rhododendron along the Lehigh Gorge Trail in July.
9. Find your own secret fishing hole in the nearly 30 miles of river or its numerous tributaries.
10. Visit a neighbor – Hickory Run State Park!

## LEHIGH GORGE STATE PARK



A deep, steep-walled gorge carved by a river, thick vegetation, rock outcroppings, and waterfalls characterize Lehigh Gorge State Park. In Luzerne and Carbon counties, the park follows the Lehigh River south from the outlet of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Francis E. Walter Dam to the town of Jim Thorpe. Whitewater boating, fishing, and biking are popular activities.

Photo by Michael P. Gadomski

## RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

### Spend the Day

The 6,107 acres of park land follow the Lehigh River from Francis E. Walter Dam in the north to Jim Thorpe in the south. The Lehigh Gorge Trail follows 26 miles of a former railroad line along the Lehigh River, providing opportunities for hiking, bicycling, sightseeing, and photography. The trail is closed to motor vehicles.

**FISHING:** Fishing in the river and streams is permitted during seasons established by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. The northern section of the Lehigh River is stocked with trout and is most popular with anglers. Approved trout waters stretch from the Francis E. Walter Dam to Sandy Run. Whitewater boating north of White Haven is discouraged to promote this section for fishing activities.



**BICYCLING: 26 miles of trail**  
Bike on the crushed gravel Lehigh Gorge Trail. Mountain bike tires are recommended. Bicycle rentals and shuttle service are available throughout the area. Bicycle repair stations are located at the White Haven, Rockport, and Glen Onoko access areas.

**HIKING: 35 miles**  
The gorge is a natural area that possesses hazards like steep and treacherous terrain and fast-moving water. You are responsible for your safety and that of your family. Wear proper hiking shoes and use caution when hiking in the gorge.

**Bald Mountain Loop Trail: 8.5 miles, blue blazes, most difficult hiking**  
This trail ascends through deciduous forest before forming a loop on a plateau high above the Lehigh River. Several vistas on the southern side of the trail offer picturesque views of the Lehigh Gorge. Due to its secluded setting, hikers should be prepared with proper equipment including hiking boots, extra clothing layers, food, water, and supplies in case of an emergency.

**Lehigh Gorge Trail (D&L): 26 miles, no blazes, easiest hiking**  
This multi-use trail follows the scenic Lehigh River, showcasing several waterfalls, historic remnants of the Upper Grand Section of the Lehigh Canal, and many opportunities to see wildlife. Open to biking, hiking, and in some sections of the park, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing, the trail is enjoyable year round. Potable water is available seasonally at the White Haven and Rockport access areas. To maintain a safe and enjoyable environment, we ask that all visitors share the trail and follow the trail etiquette guidelines posted throughout the park.

**Vista Trail: 0.8 mile, yellow blazes, most difficult hiking**  
Accessed from Bald Mountain Loop Trail, this trail showcases several scenic vistas above the Lehigh River.

**HUNTING AND FIREARMS:** Most of the park is open to hunting, trapping, and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are deer, turkey, bear, and small game. The park also provides access to state game lands 40,141, and 149, which adjoin the park.

Hunting woodchucks, also known as groundhogs, is prohibited. Dog training is only permitted from the day following Labor Day through March 31 in designated hunting areas. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission rules and regulations apply. Contact the park office for ADA accessible hunting information.

**Use extreme caution** with firearms at all times. Other visitors use the park during hunting seasons. Firearms and archery equipment used for hunting may be unsecured and ready for use only in authorized hunting areas during hunting seasons. In areas not open to hunting or during non-hunting seasons, firearms and archery equipment shall be kept in the owner's vehicle or enclosed trailer. Exceptions include: law enforcement officers and individuals with a valid *Pennsylvania License to Carry Firearms* are authorized to carry a firearm concealed on their person while they are within a state park.



**WHITewater BOATING:** see other side.

## LEARN, EXPERIENCE, CONNECT



Lehigh Gorge State Park offers a wide variety of programs year round. Educational information depicting Lehigh Gorge's natural and cultural history is featured in the visitor center at Hickory Run State Park. Gain a better understanding of the park's natural, cultural, and historical resources through guided outdoor recreation, hands-on activities, walks, and other programs.

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 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.

## WILDLIFE WATCHING

River corridors and their riparian areas are home to a great diversity of plants and animals. Bald eagles, ospreys, hooded mergansers, belted kingfishers, and beavers are common river residents.

In summer, the Lehigh Gorge Trail is a great place to see fence lizards, vultures, and warblers, especially black-and-white and magnolia warblers. Many species of snakes, including timber rattlesnakes, can be seen sunning on or near the trail. While hiking or biking on the trail, visitors must give all wildlife the right of way through their habitat.



Red-spotted newt

## NEARBY ATTRACTIONS

Information on nearby attractions is available from:  
Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau.  
570-421-5791. [www.poconomountains.com](http://www.poconomountains.com)  
Luzerne County Visitors Bureau.  
888-905-2872. [www.tournepa.com](http://www.tournepa.com)

The 15,990-acre **Hickory Run State Park** lies in the western foothills of the Pocono Mountains. The park contains many opportunities for hiking, picnicking, swimming, camping, disc golfing, fishing, orienteering, and educational programming. It features Boulder Field, a National Natural Landmark. A visitor center for Hickory Run and Lehigh Gorge state parks provides self-guided exhibits to discover the parks' natural and cultural histories.

**Nescopeck State Park** encompasses wetlands, rich forests, and many diverse habitats. Meandering through the park, Nescopeck Creek attracts both anglers

and hikers. An environmental education center features exhibits and hosts educational programs.

### EXPLORING AUDUBON'S LEHIGH AUTO TOUR

Lehigh Gorge and Hickory Run state parks are featured in a unique auto tour entitled Exploring Audubon's Lehigh. The tour focuses on famed naturalist John James Audubon's 1829 visit to the Rockport area of the Lehigh River Valley and explores the valley's natural and historical landscapes. Signs mark the 53-mile route and identify tour stops. The tour begins in Jim Thorpe at the Old Mauch Chunk Landing and Jim Thorpe Visitor Center or in White Haven at the Lehigh Canal Depot. The tour is located within the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor.  
<https://store.delawareandlehigh.org>

### DELAWARE AND LEHIGH NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

Lehigh Gorge State Park is in the Anthracite Region of the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor. The corridor stretches 165 miles from Wilkes-Barre to Bristol, in eastern Pennsylvania, and follows the historic routes of the Lehigh & Susquehanna Railroad, the Lehigh Navigation, and the Delaware Canal.

The corridor showcases the extraordinary natural, cultural, and recreational resources and works in partnership to conserve the heritage and enhance the quality of life for its many residents. Corridor landings (visitor centers) are available throughout the region to connect visitors with the many stories that made the region nationally significant.  
<https://delawareandlehigh.org>

## INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS

**Lehigh Gorge State Park**  
c/o Hickory Run State Park  
3 Family Camp Road  
White Haven, PA 18661-9712  
272-808-6192  
[HickoryRunSP@pa.gov](mailto:HickoryRunSP@pa.gov)

An Equal Opportunity Employer  
[www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks](http://www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks)

### 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 HOSPITALS Rockport and White Haven Access Areas

Lehigh Valley Hospital-Hazleton  
700 East Broad Street  
Hazleton, PA 18201  
570-501-4000

### Glen Onoko Access Area

St. Luke's Leighton Campus  
211 North 12th Street  
Leighton, PA 18235  
610-377-1300



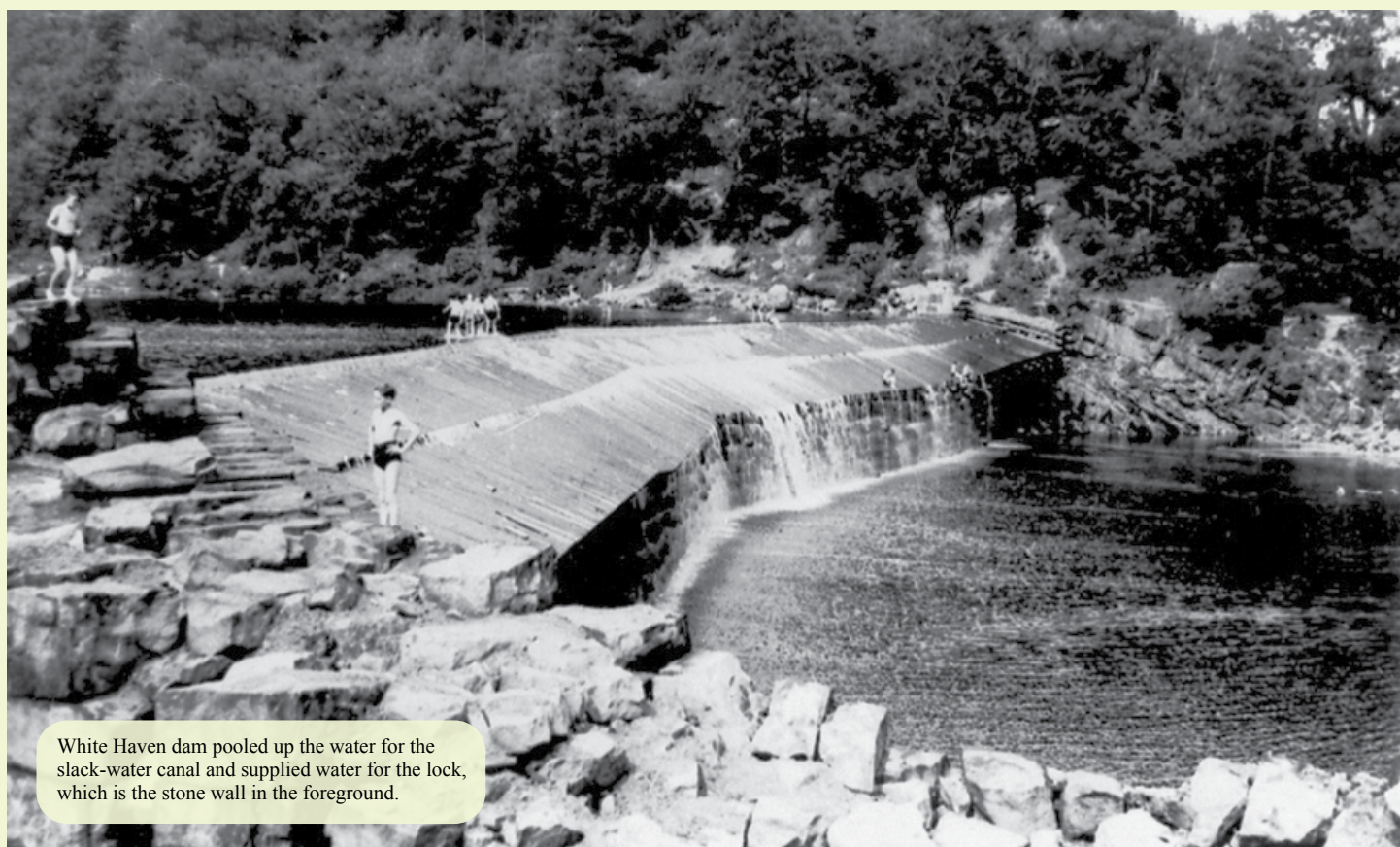
**CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
Prevent tick bites by wearing clothing treated with tick repellent. Avoid areas with brush, leaf litter, or tall grass. Stay on the trail.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/ticks>

**Blacklegged tick (deer tick)**  
  
Actual size



Red-spotted purple swallowtail

## HISTORY



White Haven dam pooled up the water for the slack-water canal and supplied water for the lock, which is the stone wall in the foreground.

Settlement was sparse during the 18th century until loggers arrived and began felling trees and building sawmills.

The discovery of anthracite coal at Summit Hill in 1791 caused much development and settlement of the upper Lehigh Valley. In the early 1800s, the need to transport increasingly large quantities of coal to markets down river led to the intensive development of canals.

Famed naturalist and painter John James Audubon visited the area in 1829 and spent six weeks painting birds. He was distressed at how quickly trees were cut and shipped down river. The industrial revolution was just beginning in the area.

Between 1835 and 1838, a series of dams, locks, and canals was constructed by Josiah White and the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. White constructed 20 dams and 29 locks over the 26 miles between White Haven and Mauch Chunk, now called Jim Thorpe. Five and one-half miles of canal were also built. It was called the Upper Grand Section of the Lehigh Canal because the locks and dams were larger and far more impressive than the locks of other canals.

When severe flooding destroyed the canal system in 1862, it was replaced with the new technology of railroads. Remains of locks, dams, and towpaths are still evident in the Lehigh River Gorge.



Loggers continued to clear-cut the huge white pine and hemlock trees for lumber and for the bark, which was used to tan hides. In the 1860s, the second largest tannery in the United States sat on the banks of the Lehigh River at the small town of Lehigh Tannery.

A terrible forest fire swept through the Lehigh Gorge area in 1875, burning the remaining standing timber, many sawmills, and stockpiles of lumber. The sawmills closed and the loggers departed.

At the turn of the century railroads brought visitors to Glen Onoko, a once bustling resort area at the southern end of the park. The popular Hotel Wahneta offered 47 rooms, a dance pavilion, tennis courts, and hikes to the scenic Glen Onoko Falls. A fire in 1911 closed the hotel and another fire in 1917 ended the resort era.

In the 1970s, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania began purchasing park lands. In 1980, the land was turned over to the Bureau of State Parks.



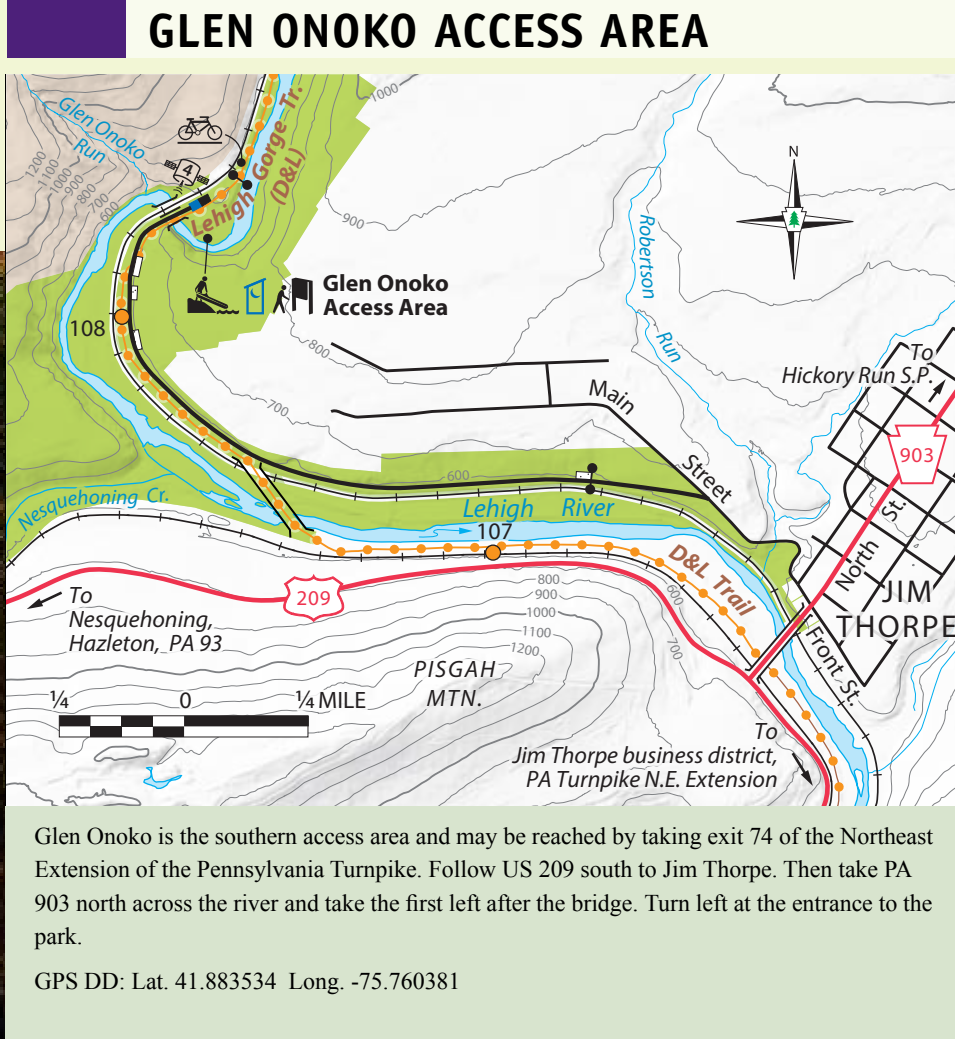
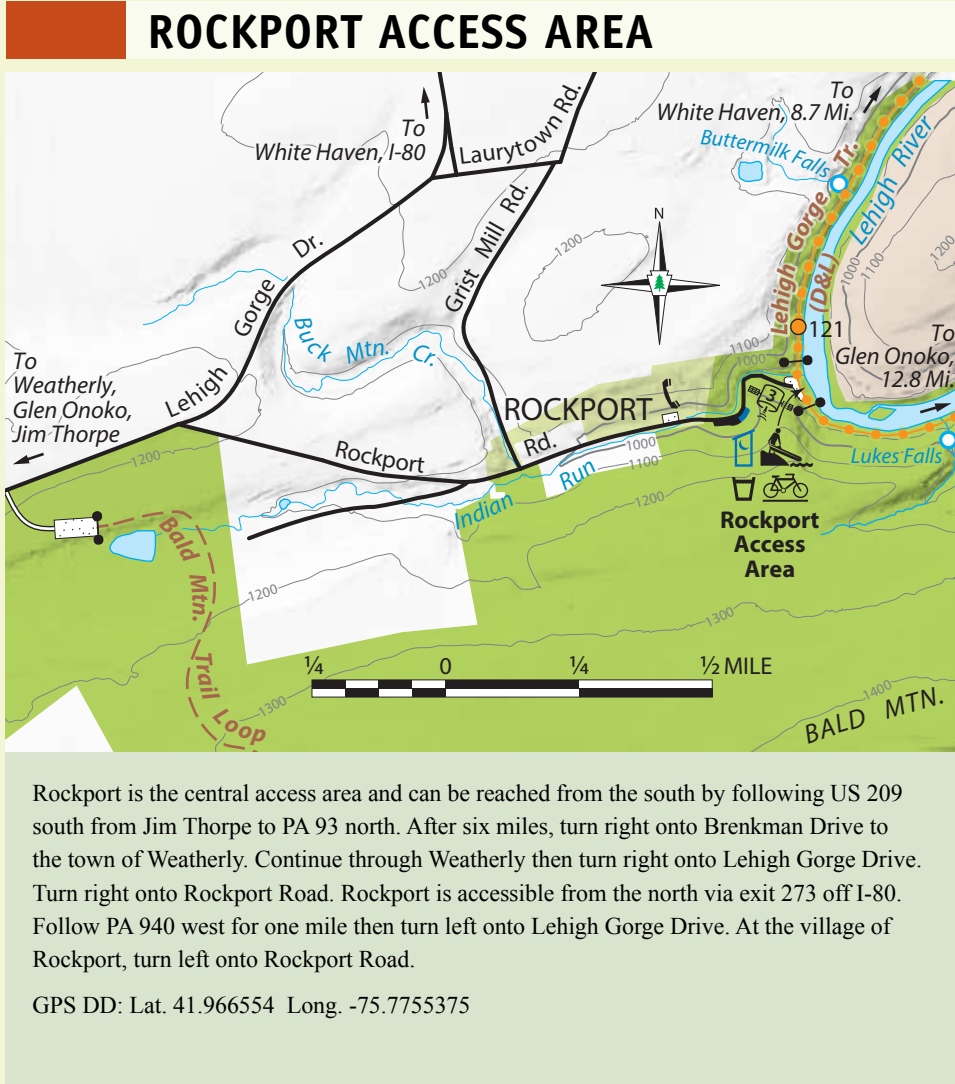
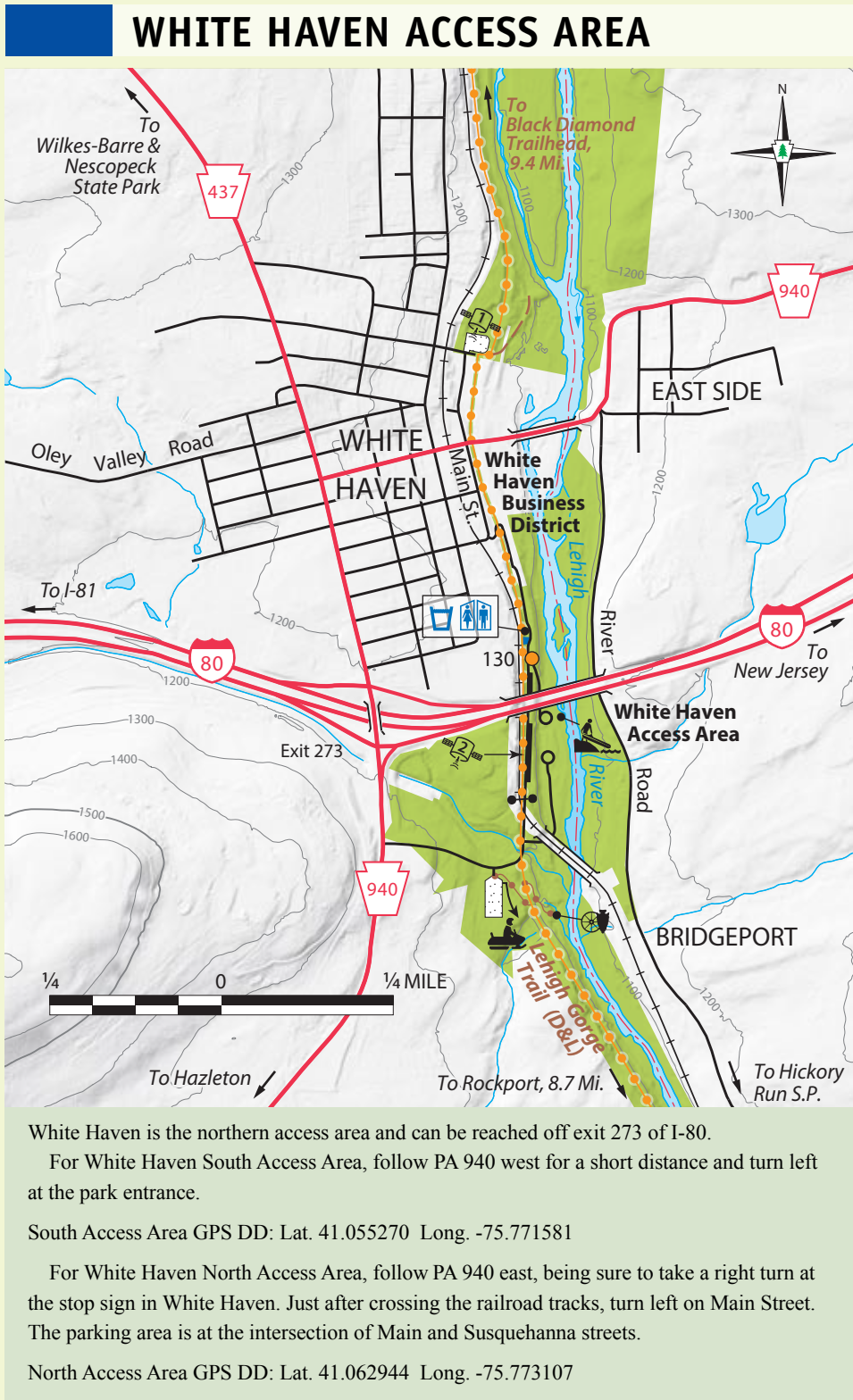
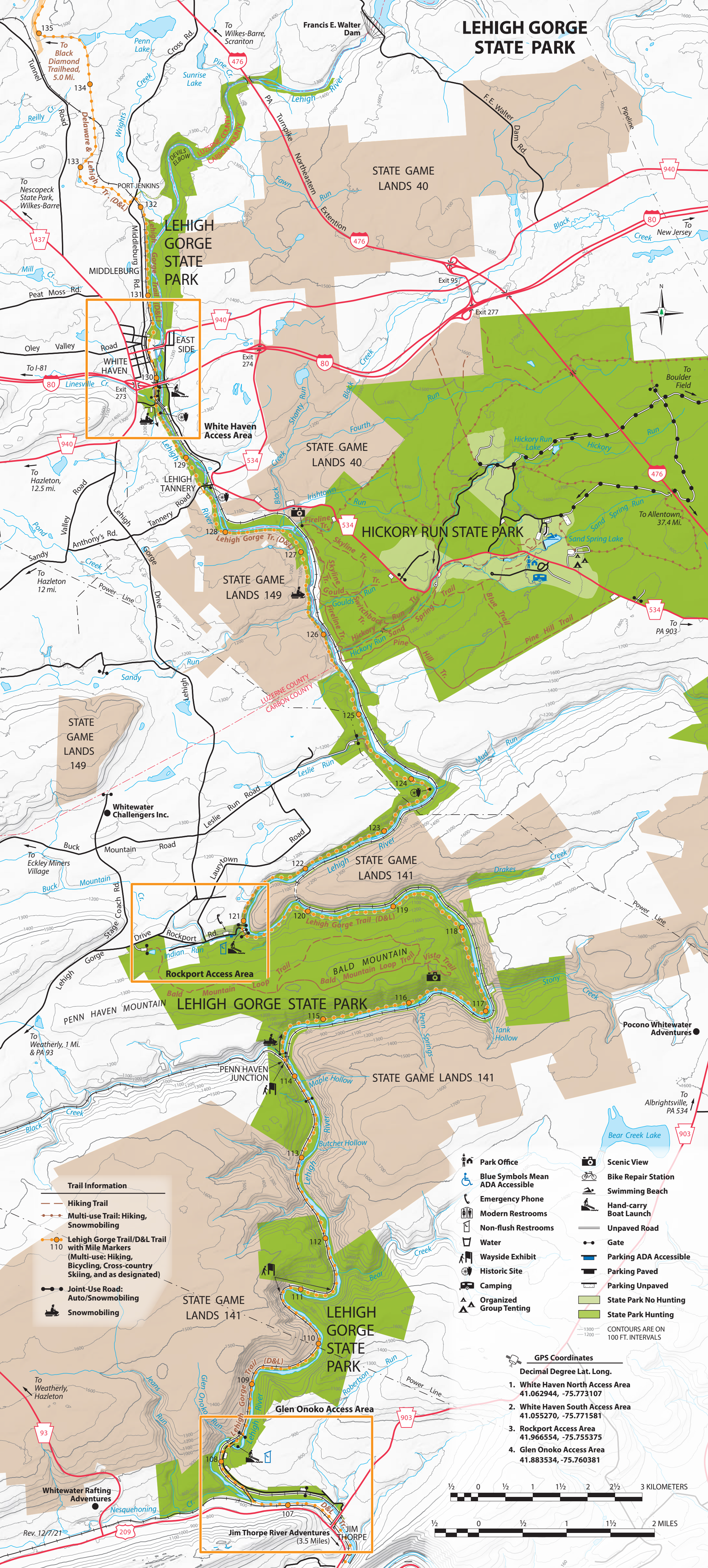
### Enjoy the Winter

The Lehigh Gorge Trail from White Haven to Glen Onoko is open to cross-country skiing. The 15-mile section from White Haven to Penn Haven is also open to snowmobilers. Parking for snowmobiling is at the White Haven or Rockport access areas.



Photo by Michael P. Gadomski






### WHITEWATER BOATING

**Trip Lengths**

River trips may be of three lengths:

- White Haven to Rockport: 8.7 miles
- Rockport to Glen Onoko: 12.2 miles
- White Haven to Glen Onoko: 20.9 miles

The White Haven to Glen Onoko trip by raft may take from 10 to 12 hours at lower water levels. Be sure to allow enough time to complete your trip before dark.




### Whitewater Regulations and Safety

A major attraction of the park is whitewater boating. This section of the Lehigh River is Class III whitewater and is popular for rafting, kayaking, and canoeing. All boaters must enter and leave the Lehigh River at designated sites. River flow is controlled by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the Francis E. Walter Dam and by streams flowing into the river throughout the park. Flow rates from the dam and scheduled water release dates are available at the U.S. Geologic Survey website <https://dashboard.waterdata.usgs.gov> or by calling the park at 272-808-6192.

**FLOW RATES:** At flows below 250 cubic feet per second (cfs), the river is very low and many parts are not deep enough for boating. From 250 to 1,000 cfs, the river becomes better for boating. Above 1,000 cfs, the level of difficulty becomes progressively greater and higher levels of skill and better equipment are necessary. At levels above 5,000 cfs, only expert boaters, in kayaks, closed canoes, or very large rafts should attempt the river.

**All boaters are required to wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device. Type I, III, or V vests designed for whitewater use.**

To protect the natural resources, the scenic beauty of the river, and its environment, the Bureau of State Parks has developed maximum commercial boating capacities on the Lehigh River and manages the number of boaters. Controls have been placed on the outfitters that provide commercial guided river trips. These controls are designed to cover the safety equipment, type of flotation devices used, and skill level of guides. Persons in canoes and kayaks should wear helmets and are required to add sufficient flotation to their watercraft for the displacement of water. Wetsuits or drysuits are recommended in the spring and the fall.




Photograph by Nate Kelly

### REQUIRED VESTS


**Type I**

This PFD is designed for extended survival in rough, open water. It usually will turn an unconscious person face up and has over 22 pounds of buoyancy. This is the best PFD to keep you afloat in remote regions where rescue may be slow in coming.



**Type III**

These life jackets are generally considered the most comfortable, with styles for different boating activities and sports. They are for use in calm water where there is good chance of fast rescue since they will generally not turn an unconscious person face-up.



**Type V**

There are special use PFDs for many specific purposes. Only type V PFDs that are designed for whitewater are permitted for use in the park.



**Licensed Commercial Outfitters**

Inexperienced boaters should not attempt the Lehigh River without qualified guides. Outfitted trips are available from concessionaires that provide rafts, guides, all necessary safety equipment, and transportation to and from the river.

The following is a list of licensed, commercial outfitters currently operating on the Lehigh River.

- Jim Thorpe River Adventures**  
123 Lehigh Drive  
Lehigh, PA 18235  
800-424-7238  
[www.jtraft.com](http://www.jtraft.com)
- Pocono Whitewater**  
1519 State Route 903  
Jim Thorpe, PA 18229  
800-WHITEWATER  
[www.whitewaterrafting.com](http://www.whitewaterrafting.com)
- Whitewater Challengers Inc.**  
288 North Stagecoach Road  
Weatherly, PA 18255  
800-443-8554  
[www.whitewaterchallengers.com](http://www.whitewaterchallengers.com)
- Whitewater Rafting Adventures Inc.**  
1 Hunter Street  
Nesquehoning, PA 18240  
800-876-0285  
[www.adventurerafting.com](http://www.adventurerafting.com)

