

Forbes State Forest Winter Recreation Etiquette and Safety



Forbes State Forest boasts over 300 miles of shared-use trails, gated forest roads, and public use roads. Popular winter activities include cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, dog sledding, mountain biking, and hiking. With this wide variety of recreation pursuits comes a diverse set of experiences and expectations that sometime conflict.

The listed etiquette guidelines, and suggested trails and loops, are meant to keep conflict to a minimum and disperse sometimes competing recreation uses.



For More Information

Bureau of Forestry
Forbes Forest District 4
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Laughlintown, PA 15655-0519
Tele: (724) 238-1200 • Email: FD04@pa.gov
Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/stateforests/forbes/index.htm>



Check out 'Forbes State Forest' on Facebook!

In the event of an emergency, contact a state forest employee or dial 911.

If you become lost: stop, stay calm, stay put, & dial 911. The further you walk the longer it will take to find you.

TRAIL BLAZES

Blue—shared-use trails that are maintained with a wider corridor and flatter tread for cross-country skiing. Open to non-motorized use.

Red—shared-use trails, usually with a narrower corridor and rockier tread. Open to non-motorized.

Yellow—trails open to **foot traffic ONLY** such as hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing.

Orange—designated trails **open to snowmobiles ONLY, no other use during snowmobile season.**

Joint-use roads are open to motorized vehicles, snowmobiles, and non-motorized uses. A list of these roads can be found on the website.

WARMING HUTS

There are two warming huts located within Forbes State Forest: the Laurel Mountain warming hut located along Laurel Summit Road, and the Schafer Run warming hut located in the heart of the North Woods Trail System. Both warming huts are open year-round and are equipped with a wood-burning stove, supply of fire wood, and nearby latrine. The Laurel Mountain warming hut is staffed on the weekends during the winter by Laurel Summit Nordic Ski Patrol volunteers.

The Laurel Summit Nordic Ski Patrol can be reached on the weekends during the winter by contacting the warming hut at: 724-238-6568.



Laurel Mountain warming hut

Schafer Run warming hut



WINTER SAFETY

- * Let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return.
- * Cell phones may not work in all areas.
- * Plan ahead—know road conditions, trail conditions, weather forecast, and determine a safe route.
- * Know your limits—keep mileage goals small, turn around when conditions are beyond your skills.
- * Bring extra food for energy, and drink plenty of water to keep hydrated.
- * Dress according to the weather—layers including wool or moisture-wicking synthetics, adequate wind and water protection.
- * Be aware of rapidly changing weather conditions in mountainous areas.
- * Carry a survival kit with at least extra clothing, map, compass, fire starter, first-aid kit, flashlight, cell phone, emergency shelter, whistle.
- * Slow down and stay centered as much as possible while driving on snowy forest roads.
- * Keep pets under control as they can be dangerous to skiers going downhill and other winter recreationists.



Signs of hypothermia:

Watch for the 'umbles': fumble, tumble, stumble, mumble, and grumble. This is the deterioration of fine motor skills and cognitive functions. Shivering, dizziness, and fatigue are physical symptoms of hypothermia. Seek medical attention immediately.

Signs of frost bite:

Numbness, prickly sensation of skin that progresses rapidly. Skin pales, turning red, then at later stages blue. Swelling and blistering is common in severe frost bite. Seek medical attention immediately.

WINTER TRAIL ETIQUETTE AND SUGGESTED TRAILS

MOUNTAIN BIKING

Winter mountain biking using ‘fat bikes’ is a growing sport on the Forbes trail system. The suggested trails and loops below are an attempt to accommodate fat bikes while keeping conflict to a minimum. Fat bikes cannot ride on **yellow-blazed** or **orange-blazed** trails or on Natural Area trails—but are ok to run on Joint-use roads (see website for a complete list).



Suggested trails for biking include:

Laurel Highlands Trail System

- Grove Run, Fish Run, Hobblebush, Rocky Gap, Outcrop, Darr, Brant, JE Miller Road.
- Suggested Loops: Grove Run Trail, Darr—Brant—Linn Run Rd, JE Miller Rd—Spruce Flats—Hobblebush—Fish Run—Laurel Summit Rd.

Mt. Davis Area

- Livengood, Wolf Rock, Laurel Run, Shelter Rock Rd, Tub Mill Run, Timberslide
- Suggested Loops: Livengood—Laurel Run—Wolf Rock—South Wolf Rock Rd; Shelter Rock Rd—Tub Mill Run—Timberslide.

Quebec Run Wild Area

- Many possible loops

Mtn Streams Trail System

- Mtn Streams Tr north of Auckerman, Blair Bros

Jones Mill Run Trail System trails

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

Cross-country skiing has long been a popular activity in both the Laurel Mountain and North Woods sections of Forbes. All **blue-blazed trails** are maintained for cross-country skiing. Some of the blue-blazed trails within these divisions are periodically groomed by volunteers. Yield to faster skiers, snow-grooming equipment, and other skiers going downhill.

Groomed Trails- Laurel Highlands Trail Sys.:

- The trails in the section bounded by Laurel Summit Rd, Locust Camp Rd, Locust Camp Trail, and Ski Slope Road are groomed by volunteers.

Groomed Trails -North Woods Trail System:

- All trails in the North Woods Trail System are groomed by volunteers.

Other Suggested cross-country ski trails include:

Laurel Highlands Trail System

- Summit, Spruce Run, Burma, Beam Run, Silvermine, Black Bear, Wolf Rock, Spruce Flats, Picnic Area.

Roaring Run and Jones Mills

- McKenna, Hillside, Tower Rd, South Loop, Lookout, Lookout Loop, Jones Mill Run



SNOWMOBILING

Snowmobiling is limited to designated and marked snowmobile trails, and designated joint-use roads. Snowmobile trails are marked with **orange diamond blazes**. Be sure to slow down at intersections or in areas of congestion. Follow speed limits, travel single file, and be courteous of other recreationists on the roads. Be aware of motor vehicles operating on forest roads.

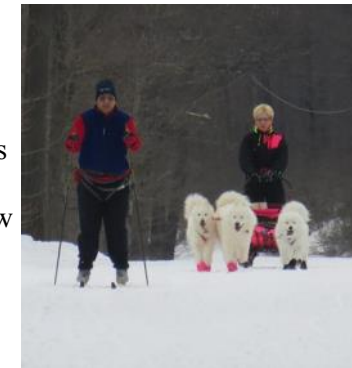


Suggested snowmobile trails include:

- All designated trails and roads are found on the *Laurel Highlands Snowmobile Trail System* map.

DOG SLEDDING

Dog sledding should be limited to trails and roads that are wide enough to accommodate dog sleds and other users, to keep user conflict low and safety high. This highly specialized activity should be limited to trails that will not interfere with cross-country skiing or snowmobiling.



Suggested trails for dog sledding include:

- **Laurel Mountain**—JE Miller Rd, Hickory Flats Rd, Weaver Road (to gate), Mtn Streams Trail (Sky Rd to Little Run), Blair Bros trail, Pike Run trail,
- **Blue Hole and Mt. Davis**—all Joint Use roads
- **Quebec Run Wild Area**—Quebec Rd, Tebolt Rd, West Rd

SNOWSHOEING and HIKING

Snowshoeing and hiking is permitted on any trail within the Forbes; **blue, yellow, or red-blazed**. Please note however, that one should **NOT** walk on trails groomed for skiers or in ski tracks. If you plan to follow blue-blazed trails, be sure to **stay out of the tracks** and to the side of the trail. Red-blazed and yellow-blazed trails will offer the best options for snowshoeing without conflicting with other recreationists.

Suggested snowshoe/hiking trails include:

Laurel Highlands Trail System

- Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail, Hobblebush, Hemlock, Rocky Gap, Outcrop, Beam Rocks, Wolf Rock Loop, Grove Run, Fish Run,

Other

- All trails in:4 the Roaring Run Trail System, Quebec Run Wild Area, White Tail trail, Mt Davis Area,

