

OUTSTANDING GEOLOGIC FEATURE OF PENNSYLVANIA

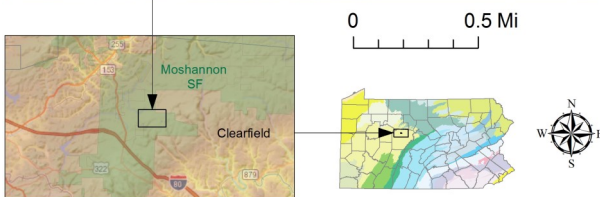
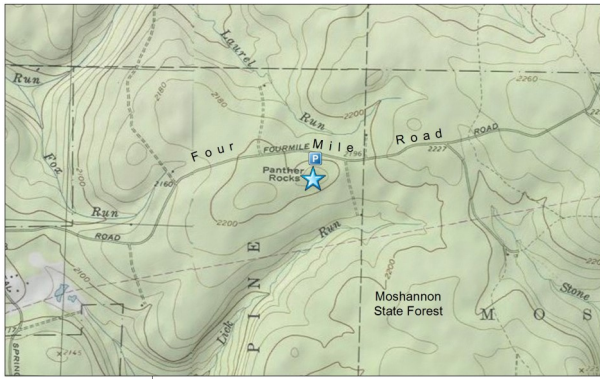
PANTHER ROCKS, CLEARFIELD COUNTY

Stuart O. Reese, 2016



Location

Moshannon State Forest, Clearfield Co., Pine Twp., lat: 41.14318, lon: -78.49005 (parking); Huntley 7.5-minute quadrangle



Geology

Panther Rocks is a small “rock city” made of several large sandstone blocks. “Streets” in the rocks are vertical fractures called joints that have widened over time by frost or ice wedging. Overhangs, crevices, and a short tunnel have formed from an outcrop of medium- to coarse-grained sandstone. Joint separations vary from a few inches to as much as 20 feet. From the south side, one can access the top of Panther Rocks where pockets of moss grow on an unevenly weathered surface. Various patterns of differential weathering in the resistant sandstone can be seen along the joint surfaces. The rock unit is the Pottsville Formation, which was deposited in streams and rivers during the Pennsylvanian Period more than 300 million years ago. Various sedimentary structures in the sandstone, such as crossbedding, ripple marks, and channels, can be seen. The rock city is located at an elevation of about 2,235 feet in the Pittsburgh Low Plateau section of the Appalachian Plateaus physiographic province.



Sandstone blocks at Panther Rocks. Upper left photograph shows moss on the top surface of the sandstone. Unpaved roads on state forest land must be accessed to reach the site, which is off of Four Mile Road in Pine Township (marked by a sign).

Recommended Reading

[Moshannon State Forest](#) web page of DCNR.