



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.

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2022

Photo by Susan Enos

LAUREL HILL STATE PARK



Photo by Linda Seamon

Laurel Hill State Park consists of 4,512 acres of mountainous terrain in Somerset County. The 63-acre Laurel Hill Lake is a focal point of the park. Laurel Hill is surrounded by thousands of acres of pristine state park and state forest lands. A trail system invites

visitors to explore the park and observe the diversity of plants and wildlife. The Jones Mill Run Dam and the Hemlock Trail Natural Area are two must-see destinations on your visit.

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.

Directions

GPS DD: Lat. 40.01023 Long. -79.2244

From I-76, take exit 110 (Somerset) and drive west on PA 31 from Somerset for eight miles. Turn left onto Trent Road and follow the directional signs to Laurel Hill State Park.

The park may also be reached from exit 91 (Donegal) off I-76 by turning left on PA 31 east and traveling 14 miles. Turn right onto Trent Road and follow directional signs to the park.

LEARN, EXPERIENCE, CONNECT

Laurel Hill State Park offers a wide variety of programs year-round. Gain a better understanding of the park's natural, cultural, and historical resources through guided outdoor recreation, hands-on activities, guided walks, and evening programs. A visitor center, open seasonally, is located

within the farmhouse at the entrance to the campground.

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.

HISTORY

Far longer than many areas of the state, the Laurel Hill Valley escaped the unbridled logging that swept through Pennsylvania. The steep stream valleys and rugged hills made logging difficult until technology laid the tracks to enable the trees to be easily transported. Powerful, slow locomotives climbed the switchback tracks through Laurel Hill and hauled logs to the mills.

From the late 1800s to 1930, logging companies clear-cut the trees of the park, leaving behind a wasteland of brambles prone to forest fires and flooding. Only the Hemlock Trail Natural Area escaped the loggers' reach.

Beginning in 1935, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration began purchasing sub-marginal agricultural and forest land so that it

could be converted to better use. The National Park Service was given the responsibility of the Recreational Demonstration Areas. Laurel Hill was one of five areas in Pennsylvania targeted for restoration and reforestation, organized group camping, and day picnicking.

Beginning in 1935, with cooperation of the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters, men of the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) began building roads, trails, bridges, and recreational facilities.

Two CCC camps, SP-8 and SP-15, arrived on July 1, 1935, and began building camps for themselves (currently Group Camp 8 and Group Camp 5). The 200 young men

in each camp worked year round building park facilities including group camps, picnic areas, waterlines, roads, and Laurel Hill Lake. World War II ended the CCC.

In October of 1945, the Department of the Interior transferred the project to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and it became Laurel Hill State Park.

The Laurel Hill Recreational Demonstration Area Historic District includes all CCC-constructed buildings and structures that retain a significant degree of integrity. This historic district contains the largest intact collection of CCC architecture in Pennsylvania State Parks.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Spend the Day

PICNICKING: Five picnic pavilions with electricity may be reserved up to 11 months in advance for a fee. Unreserved picnic pavilions are free on a first-come, first-served basis. Three picnic areas have over 500 picnic tables, modern restrooms, charcoal grills, and potable water nearby.

Trent Picnic Area has a canoe/kayak launch, large ball field, playground equipment, and two picnic pavilions.

Beach Picnic Area has playground equipment, a sand volleyball court, boat rental, food concession, and three picnic pavilions.

Old Mill Picnic Area, located at the upper end of the lake by the boat mooring and launching area, provides excellent shoreline fishing.

SWIMMING: A 1,200-foot sand beach is open from late-May to mid-September, 8:00 AM to sunset. Swim at your own risk. Please read and follow posted rules. Swimming is only permitted within the designated buoy areas. Maximum depth is five feet. The beach has an ADA accessible ramp to the lake, a beach wheelchair, an ADA canoe/kayak launch, and an ADA accessible restroom. A food concession is available from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

HUNTING AND FIREARMS: Over 2,200 acres are open to hunting, trapping, and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are rabbit, squirrel, grouse, turkey, deer, black bear, Canada goose, and raccoon. Most of Laurel Hill Lake is open to goose hunting.

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 uncased 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.

HIKING AND MOUNTAIN BIKING: See [Trails section](#) on other side.

BOATING: electric motors only
Laurel Hill Lake has 45 mooring sites and two boat launches. An ADA canoe/kayak launch is in the Beach Area. A boat rental at the beach has paddleboards, rowboats, paddleboats, canoes, kayaks, and hydrobikes available Memorial Day through Labor Day. Motorboats must display a boat registration from any state. Non-powered boats must display one of the following: boat registration from any state; launch permit or mooring permit from Pennsylvania State Parks, available at most state park offices; launch use permit from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

FISHING: Laurel Hill Lake's many fish species include bass, trout, catfish, sucker, bluegill, perch, crappie, northern pike, and sunfish. An ADA accessible fishing pier is near the Old Mill Area. Laurel Hill Creek and Jones Mill Run are excellent trout streams.

A fishing license, not available at the park office, is required for people ages 16 and older. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission regulations and laws apply.

ORGANIZED GROUP TENTING: Adult and youth groups may use the 100-person capacity area. This area is open year round. Limited facilities include Adirondack shelters, non-flush toilets, potable water, fire rings, and picnic tables. Reservations are required. Youth groups must have one adult leader for every 10 youths. Trailers are prohibited. Fires can only be made in park supplied fire rings. Standing timber cannot be cut.

HUFMAN LODGE: Tucked away in a secluded area of Laurel Hill State Park, Huffman Lodge is modern, yet retains rustic charm. The wood burner, cathedral ceiling, and large, private deck overlooking the park and the Laurel Highlands make the lodge cozy and spectacular.

The lodge is well equipped for the winter recreation season, including ski and snowboard racks, and glove and boot dryers. The two-story lodge has five bedrooms, which sleep 14 guests. It also has three bathrooms (two full, one ¾), one and one-half kitchens, recreation room, and laundry. Guests must provide their own linens.

COPPER KETTLE LODGE: Situated minutes from Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Hidden Valley Resort, and the Great Allegheny Passage, Copper Kettle Lodge provides opportunities for recreation and relaxation year round. The lodge sleeps eight guests and provides all the comforts and amenities needed, except for linens. Three bedrooms, one bathroom, full kitchen, living room, dining room, rec room, and the large great room offer plenty of space.

Stay the Night



Huffman Lodge

CAMPING: modern sites, electric, and full-hookup

Of the 264 campsites, 149 have electric and 12 have full-hookup. The campground has modern restrooms, warm showers, sanitary dumping stations, coin-operated laundry, and drinking water. Pets are permitted on designated sites for a fee.

The campground opens in mid-April and closes the third Sunday in October. Site occupancy is limited to one family unit (persons living under one household) or five unrelated people, including one responsible individual 18 years of age or older.

CAMPING COTTAGES: Eight cottages near the campground each sleep five people in either single bunks or double/single bunks, and have wooden floors, windows, electric heat, lights, outlets, screened porch, picnic table, and fire ring. Camping cottages do not have running water, but showers and restrooms are in the cottage area.

ORGANIZED GROUP CABIN CAMPS: Large cabin camps are available for nonprofit organized youth and adult groups from the first Friday in June to September 30. Facilities include modern restrooms, central shower house, large dining hall, and kitchen, plus small cabins for campers. Applications are only available at the park office.

SLEDDING: A sledding hill is in the field loop area of the campground. Sled under the lights on weekends until 9:00 PM as conditions permit. A fire ring and wood are also provided for sledders.

SNOWSHOEING: All 15 miles of hiking trails are ideal for snowshoeing.



WILDLIFE WATCHING

The rich flora and fauna of Laurel Hill State Park make it a great place to watch wildlife year round. The mixed deciduous forest is dominated by oak, maple, cherry, and poplar trees with an understory of witch hazel, serviceberry, rhododendron, and mountain laurel shrubs. Although most of the park was timbered in the early 1900s, for unknown reasons the Hemlock Natural Area remains intact. Many of the massive eastern hemlocks within this six-acre old growth stand are over 300 years old. Look and listen for black-throated green warblers and Blackburian warblers who depend on this unique habitat.

Wildflowers are common and range from the early blooming trillium and spring beauty that grace the trail edges, to the bee balm that colors the fields and roadsides well into November.

Whether by sound or sight, visitors can enjoy a wide variety of bird species, both migrant and resident. Especially popular are the tree swallows and eastern bluebirds that inhabit the park's nest boxes. The trail winds from below the campground to the meadow across from the visitor center. This relatively open area is also a popular hunting ground for diurnal raptors, such as red-tailed hawks, and nocturnal predators, such as small screech owls that nest in the area each year.

In the spring and early summer, calls of spring peepers, bullfrogs, and American toads



Photo by Linda Seamon

fill the night, intermingled with the haunting calls of great horned and barred owls. Ruffed grouse drum on air making a sound like an engine trying to start.

Late in the summer, the chirps, trills, and buzzes of katydids, cicadas, and tree crickets fill the night.

Small mammals like woodchucks, chipmunks, and gray and red squirrels are commonly seen throughout the park during daylight hours. White-tailed deer and eastern

cottontail rabbits are most often seen at dawn or dusk in the open meadow areas. Elusive minks, foxes, black bears, coyotes, bobcats, and fishers have been spotted in the park. Familiar to every camper are the skunks, raccoons, and opossums that search for carelessly stored camp foods.

Only observe wildlife from a distance and do not feed wildlife.

INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS

Laurel Hill State Park

1454 Laurel Hill Park Road
Somerset, PA 15501-5629
814-445-7725
LaurelHillSP@pa.gov

An Equal Opportunity Employer
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 HOSPITAL

UPMC Somerset
225 South Center Avenue
Somerset, PA 15501
814-443-5000



Nearby Attractions

For information on nearby attractions, contact Go Laurel Highlands. 800-333-5661. www.golaurelhighlands.com

Kooser State Park's 250 acres of forest and stream provide a beautiful backdrop for picnicking, fishing, hiking, camping, and cross-country skiing. 814-445-8673

Laurel Ridge State Park is home to the 70-mile Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail, and offers snowmobiling, hunting, and cross-country skiing. 724-455-3744

Ohioypyle State Park has whitewater rafting on the Youghiogheny River and biking on the Great Allegheny Passage. 724-329-8591

Forbes State Forest provides 60,000 acres for hunting, fishing, hiking, and the highest point in Pennsylvania – Mount Davis, 3,213 feet. 724-238-1200

Laurel Mountain State Park offers a family-friendly downhill skiing and snowboarding area. The lodge offers food and beverages. For more information, contact the Laurel Mountain Ski Resort at 724-238-2801. www.laurelmountainski.com

Fallingwater, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, is open for guided house tours. 724-329-8501. www.fallingwater.org
Hidden Valley and Seven Springs Mountain resorts have skiing, dining, and conference hosting. Hidden Valley Resort. 814-443-8000. www.hiddenvalleysresort.com
Seven Springs Resort. 814-352-7777. www.7springs.com

The **Flight 93 National Memorial** visitor center and memorial plaza are open to the public. 814-893-6322. www.nps.gov/flni/index.htm



TRAILS: 15 miles



Photo by Ron Bruner

HIKING: Trails within the park have yellow blazes with signs at intersections.

Beltz Trail: 2.75 miles, more difficult hiking
Beltz Trail follows an old road grade from Jones Mill Run Road to Buck Run Road and provides access to many of the park's trails as well as several on Forbes State Forest.

Bobcat Trail: 1 mile, most difficult hiking
This rugged and remote trail, through a tunnel of thick mountain laurel, offers opportunities to view wildlife between Beltz Trail and Buck Run Road. The trail crosses Buck Run in numerous places that do not have foot bridges.

Copper Kettle Trail: 1.25 miles, easiest hiking
This family-friendly bike trail meanders along the western shoreline of Laurel Hill Lake. It connects Old Mill Picnic Area to the Beach Picnic Area and the campground. It provides excellent fishing access, and allows visitors to explore the park without using a vehicle.

Hemlock Trail: 1.2 miles, more difficult hiking
Narrow at times and running along steep banks in places, this trail looping through the six-acre Hemlock Natural Area is comprised of old growth Eastern hemlock trees along a portion of Laurel Hill Creek.

Lake Trail: 1.75 miles, most difficult hiking
This scenic trail winds along Laurel Hill Creek and follows the eastern shore of Laurel Hill Lake. It is a steep, narrow, sloping path and is slippery in places.

Martz Trail: 1 mile, easiest hiking
This wide trail passes through several forest ecosystems between Beltz Trail and Buck Run Road and provides the widest variety of tree species during fall foliage.

Pumphouse Trail: 1.6 miles, easiest hiking
A slow, gradual incline leads from the Pumphouse Trail parking lot along a wide path to the Jones Mill Run Dam. Benches and large rocks provide a resting place where visitors can enjoy this scenic historic site built by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Ridge Trail: 1.5 miles, more difficult hiking
This wide, grassy trail between Jones Mill Run Road and the Beach Area is often used as a wildlife corridor. It offers the best opportunity for chance encounters with wildlife and viewing animal tracks and traces.

Shay Trail: 0.5 mile, easiest hiking
This trail pays homage to the Shay locomotives that traversed Laurel Hill Creek Valley during the logging of the early 1900s. It connects Ridge, Tram Road, and Pumphouse trails.

Tram Road Trail: 1.7 miles, more difficult hiking
This trail follows the general course of the logging railroad that traversed Laurel Hill State Park and Jones Mill Run in the early 1900s.

Water Line Trail: 0.6 mile, more difficult hiking
An uphill grade from the Pumphouse Trail Parking Lot, this trail is perfect for viewing geologic features such as the lepidodendron fossils common to the park.

- For a Safe Hike:**
- Wear sturdy shoes to protect your feet.
 - Carry the proper safety equipment, like a first aid kit and a poncho.
 - Stay on the trail. If you hike off trail, you could become lost or damage fragile habitat.
 - Carry drinking water. DO NOT drink from streams, springs, or lakes without properly treating the water first.
 - Tell someone where you are going and when you will return.

MOUNTAIN BIKING: Ridge, Beltz, Martz, Pumphouse, Shay, Waterline, and Copper Kettle trails are all open to mountain biking. Beltz Trail connects to several trails in Forbes State Forest that are also open to mountain biking.

