

Camping Policy Loyalsock State Forest



Pennsylvania’s vast state forest system comprises 2.2 million acres for you to use, enjoy and explore. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources’ Bureau of Forestry manages these forests to ensure their long-term health and to conserve native wild plants.

Loyalsock State Forest comprises 115,000 acres in Bradford, Lycoming, and Sullivan Counties.



Dual Certified Forest

Pennsylvania’s 2.2-million-acre state forest system is one of the largest dual certified forests in North America. The forest is certified under Forest Stewardship Council™ and Sustainable Forestry Initiative© standards.

The FSC© is an independent organization supporting environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world’s forests.

SFI© certification focuses on protection of water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk, and forests with exceptional conservation value. Dual certification ensures that Pennsylvania’s state forests are managed to the highest third-party standards.



Loyalsock State Forest
Resource Management Center
6735 Route 220, Dushore, PA. 18614
telephone: (570) 946-4049
email: fd20@pa.gov

or

Forest Maintenance Headquarters
86 Dry Run Road, Hills Grove, PA 18619
telephone: (570) 924-3501

In the event of an EMERGENCY contact:
Sullivan Co. Dispatch at (570) 946-4115
Lycoming Co. Dispatch at (570) 329-4066

or dial 911

The staff of Loyalsock State Forest is responsible in protecting the natural character of the state forest while offering low impact, dispersed recreational opportunities. The intent is to provide as many recreational opportunities as possible without negatively impacting the resource. A camping policy with guidelines allows forestry staff to manage this use and to integrate it with other forest activities. As a camper and forest user, your cooperation and consideration, by following the policy and guidelines, will help make everyone’s recreational experience more enjoyable.

You can obtain camping permits online at:

<https://pennsylvaniastateparks.reserveamerica.com>

Permits are available by telephone at:

888-727-2757 (888-PA-PARKS)

If it is within 2 days of your camping trip, you can acquire permits in-person at our Resource Management Center in Laporte, weekdays 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM or at the Forest Maintenance HQs near Hills Grove (seasonally when staffed).

There is a nightly charge plus an administrative fee for each permit.

Permits must be acquired before you camp. Same-day permits aren’t available online or by phone after 12:00 noon. Same-day permits after noon must be acquired in-person.

General Camping Policies

1. Camping without a current Camping Permit is prohibited when required per this policy and regulations.
2. A Camping Permit will be valid no more than 7 consecutive nights. Afterwards, the camper must vacate the campsite for a minimum of 48 hours. Exceptions to this require authorization issued by the Forest District Manager.
3. A Camping Permit will not be issued to anyone under age 18.
4. The permit must be displayed at your campsite.
5. Human waste must be buried. All field privies (cat holes or slit trench latrines) must be at least 6 inches deep and at least 200 feet from a lake, stream, spring, or other open water source. Self-contained portable toilets are encouraged, may be required at some campsites and must be emptied at an approved disposal site. There are no human waste disposal facilities on the Loyalsock State Forest.
6. Only downed and dead wood within the immediate area of the campsite may be gathered for camp firewood. Power saws are not permitted without a valid Fuelwood Permit. Cutting live trees or standing dead trees is prohibited.
7. Use of camp stoves is encouraged. Stone fire rings are not permitted when a steel ring is provided. Campfires must be attended at all times. Campfires must be thoroughly extinguished and the ashes scattered or removed before leaving the site.
8. Proper disposal of trash is the responsibility of the camper. **Burning or burying garbage, trash and litter is strictly forbidden.** All trash and refuse resulting from camping must be carried out. There are no trash receptacles on the Loyalsock State Forest.
9. Horses may not be tied directly to trees. Horses will be tied in a manner which they cannot reach and damage trees. Horse manure in camping area must be deposited in composting facility or removed from State Forest land.
10. Pets must be controlled at all times. No more than two (2) dogs are allowed per campsite. Chains, or any other restraint, cannot be attached to a tree.
11. No live vegetation (shrubs, trees, etc.) is to be cut or harmed in any way. No nails or screws are to be placed into trees. Vehicles must remain on improved surfaces.
12. All strings, ropes and wires are to be removed prior to departure. Tables, chairs or other furniture must not be left on the site.
13. Loud music or noise that disturbs the quiet and peace of the natural setting is prohibited. Random shooting, target practice with firearms and fireworks are prohibited.
14. Campsites are open to inspection at all times, whether attended or not, by designated Department personnel.
15. Violators of this camping policy may have camping permits revoked or denied. All violations are recorded and visible to all DCNR State Parks and State Forests.

Due to heavy use, each campsite must be rested for a 6-month period in order to address sanitation concerns. EVEN numbered sites are available for camping from January 1st to June 30th and ODD numbered sites are available for camping from July 1st to December 31st.

Motorized (Roadside) Camping Policy

Motorized Camping, aka Roadside Camping, is defined as overnight camping in or near the vehicle where the vehicle may be used for storage or transportation. In general, roadside camping is accomplished in a tent, trailer, van, RV, truck camper, etc., along or near a roadway.

1. A camping permit is required for all motorized camping regardless of the length of stay.
2. Motorized campsites are by reservation only. Sites are available for occupancy at 3pm. All sites will be vacated by 3pm on the last day of the permit. All motorized camping must be at a numbered campsite designated for motorized use. Vehicles and camping units must remain on the developed area and not restrict general traffic flow.
3. Camping is restricted to the designated camping site and is not allowed in the site’s parking area.
4. Motorized camping with horses is restricted to the equestrian trailhead along World’s End Road. Any other site requires written authorization.
5. Motorized campers are encouraged to use commercial or state park campgrounds.
6. The vast majority of Motorized Campsites are not appropriate for use with trailers, fifth-wheels, and RVs. Those users should seek state park campgrounds.

Primitive (Trailside) Camping Policy

Primitive Camping is defined as camping in remote areas where all equipment is transported manually (non-motorized vehicle methods including watercraft, bicycle, horse) and where a motorized vehicle is not located near or part of the camping experience.

1. Primitive campers may not use motorized campsites without a valid camping permit. Backpackers on the Old Loggers Path may stay one night at Masten Campground in the designated Backpack Camping Area without a permit.
2. Campsites must be at least 25 feet from the trail. Campsites should not be visible from the trail.
3. All camping should be at least 100 feet from any stream or other open water source. Some well established primitive trailside campsites that do not meet this criterion due to steep topography or other local permanent conditions are exempt from this requirement. Camping at waterfalls is strictly prohibited.
4. Primitive camping for more than one night at any location requires pre-approval and a permit. Backpack campers do not require a permit if they are only staying for one night at each location along a designated trail. Backpack Camping along the Loyalsock Trail, Old Loggers Path and Link Trail is limited to one night at the same location due to high use and limited places suitable for camping.
5. Backpack Camping does not include Walk-In Camping where persons are walking a short distance to the campsite and carrying large items such as coolers and chairs. Non-backpack camping using campsites along trails that are a short walk from a roadway is prohibited.

Group Camping Policy

Group Camping is defined as more than 10 people in a unit while any type of camping. Written authorization must be obtained from the Forest District Manager. A camping permit and Letter of Authorization are issued to the group and must be displayed at the campsite. Additional restrictions may apply and most sites are not appropriate for group camping.

Open Fires

Open fires prohibited **from March 1 through May 25** and also any time the fire danger is posted as **high, very high, or extreme** without authorization from the District Forester or a designee. This prohibition does not apply to propane stoves, and canned heat when used in a safe manner. Steel fire pits (i.e. Solo, Breeo) are NOT authorized for use during these periods when campfires are prohibited.

Areas Closed to All Camping

- Within one road mile of the entrance to a State Park.
- Natural Areas are closed to camping.
- Wild Areas are closed to motorized camping, group camping and primitive camping for more than one night.

Motorized (Roadside) Campsites

See map on reverse side for motorized campsites. All motorized camping must occur at a designated numbered site with a valid permit. Sites are reserved when a permit is issued. Campers must only occupy the site for which they are permitted. All other areas of the state forest district are closed to motorized camping without written authorization and permit from the District Forester.

