

The Hook Natural Area

Situated in Union County (Lewis and Hartley Townships) and Centre County (Haines Township), the Hook Natural Area is bounded on the north by Pine Creek Hollow and Jones Mountain Roads, on the east by a PP&L Power Line, on the south by Old Shingle Road and Sharpback Hollow Road (not maintained or recommended for vehicular travel) and on the west by Kessler Trail, part of the Mid State Trail System.

The Hook is an area typical of many of the small watersheds in the Ridge and Valley province of Pennsylvania.

It has remained relatively undisturbed by humans. The first, last, and only major incursion was made during the years 1893 to 1896, when the area was completely harvested by the Laurelton Lumber Company. The 85,000-board foot-per-day mill was fed by a "wildcat" tram road, which ran up and across Buffalo and Little Mountains and descended into the Hook, where it terminated. Later, a second tram road that ran along Stony Run facilitated the removal of timber from Cranberry Flats area during the period of 1895 to 1898.

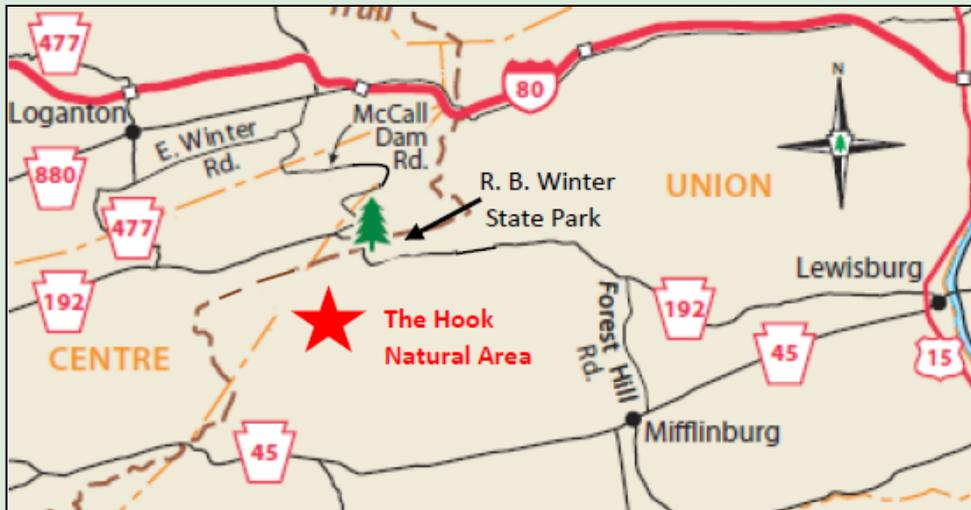
Today, the only evidence of this activity are the abandoned tram roads, barely recognizable in many places, and an occasional stump or part of a log left behind by these early loggers.

The Commonwealth purchased this land between 1902 and 1906.

Nature has replaced the dense growth white pine, eastern hemlock and white oak forests with the present second-growth forest comprised of black oak, chestnut oak, scarlet oak, red oak, white oak, hemlock, white pine, red maple, black birch, yellow birch, and white birch. The understory vegetation contains small seedlings and saplings of the aforementioned species but is primarily composed of non-tree species such as grasses, ferns, sweet fern, huckleberry, dogwoods, serviceberry, mountain laurel, and rhododendron.

The north branch of Buffalo Creek rises from a high mountain perched water table area just east of the Kessler Trail, and winds its way eastward. A natural brook trout stream, it is joined by Panther Run from the north to form the main water course. The dark amber color of the stream results from decomposed organic matter that has been leached out of the soil by ground water.

A designated parking lot is located off Buffalo Mills Road. Numerous locations along Pine Creek Hollow, Jones Mountain Road and Old Shingle Road also allow for parking.



When parking along state forest roads, be sure to park completely off the road and avoid blocking gates.

It is always a good idea before parking to scan the area for any obstacles such as rocks or culvert pipes, and to make sure that the area is suitable for safely parking.

Care for the Land

State forests belong to all Pennsylvanians. Take time to enjoy them, but know the rules and regulations designed to protect the forests and you. Please be careful with fire, keep our forests litter free, and don't damage trees and other plants.

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.



For more information

Bald Eagle State Forest
Forest District #07

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pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Hook Natural Area Bald Eagle State Forest Foot-Traffic Only



Stretching across the Union County/Centre County line, the Hook Natural Area is a 5,119-acre watershed contained entirely within Bald Eagle State Forest.

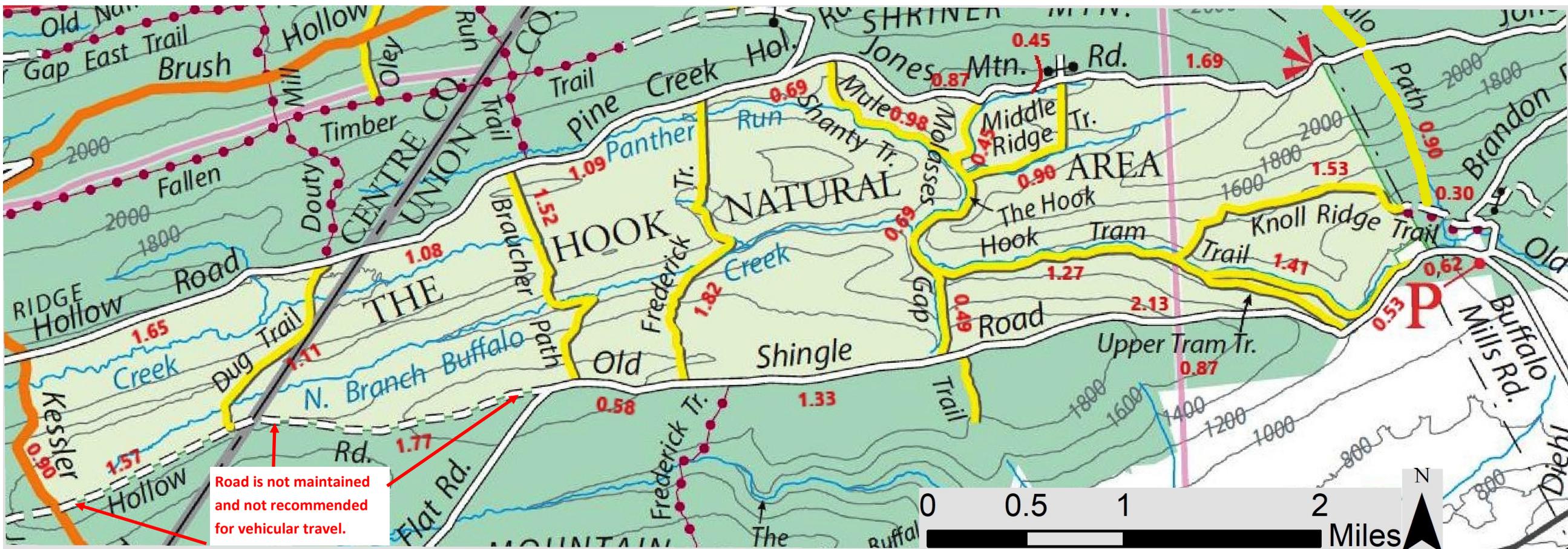
By utilizing the multiple state forest roads and trails that make up the boundary, and nine hiking-only trails within the Hook Natural Area, nearly thirty miles of contiguous hiking is possible.

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.

Bald Eagle State Forest spans across 194,602 acres and stretches into Snyder, Union, Centre, Mifflin, and Clinton counties.



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Road is not maintained and not recommended for vehicular travel.

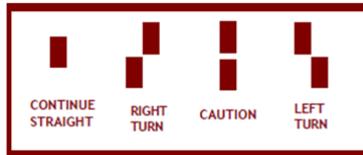


LEGEND

- Bald Eagle State Forest
 - Natural Area
 - County Line
 - Township Line
 - Improved Dirt Road
 - Drivable Trail
 - Mid State Trail
 - Hiking Trail (Foot-Traffic Only)
 - Shared-Use Trail (Hike, Bike, Horseback)
 - Powerline R/W
 - Gate
 - Vista
 - Parking*
 - Trail/Road Segment Distance in Miles
- Contours Are on 200 Ft. Intervals
- * numerous locations along Pine Creek Hollow Road, Jones Mountain Road and Old Shingle Road allow for parking.

Each trail is blazed with the color shown on the map. A blaze is a marking, painted 2x6 inch rectangle or a 5x7 inch plastic diamond, to reassure users that they are indeed following a trail and not a skid road or deer trail.

Blazes direct travel by their arrangement. Their colors vary and represent the use that is allowed on that trail (see examples below and to the right).



WHAT DO DIFFERENT TRAIL COLORS MEAN IN THE BALD EAGLE STATE FOREST?

- CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRAIL + OTHER SHARED-USE (NON-MOTORIZED) USES PERMITTED
- LOCAL DISTRICT HIKING TRAIL - HIKING ONLY
- MID STATE TRAIL-HIKING ONLY
- SHARED-USE (NON-MOTORIZED) HIKING, BIKING, HORSEBACK RIDING PERMITTED
- SNOWMOBILE TRAIL + OTHER SHARED-USE (NON-MOTORIZED) USES PERMITTED
- ATV TRAIL + OTHER SHARED-USE (NON-MOTORIZED) USES PERMITTED
- LICENCED DUAL SPORT MOTORCYCLE/OFF-HIGHWAY MOTORCYCLE TRAIL + OTHER SHARED-USE (NON-MOTORIZED) USES PERMITTED