

## Trough Creek State Park

The 541-acre Trough Creek State Park is a scenic gorge formed as Great Trough Creek cuts through Terrace Mountain before emptying into Raystown Lake. Rugged hiking trails lead to wonders like Balanced Rock and Rainbow Falls. Rothrock State Forest and Raystown Lake National Recreation Area border the park, making a large, contiguous area of public land for recreation.

## Directions

GPS DD: Lat. 40.31192  Long. -78.12984

From PA 994, Trough Creek State Park is at the end of Little Valley Road.

## 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.

## Recreational Opportunities

**CAMPING: 27 sites, all with electricity**
The campground opens in mid-April and closes in mid-December. The camping area accommodates most campers and has a non-flush restroom. No shower facilities are available in the campground. Each campsite has an electric hookup, picnic table, and campfire ring. Most sites have a separate crushed stone tent pad. Pets are permitted at designated campsites. A sanitary dump station is next to the park office.

**TROUGH CREEK LODGE:** This renovated, historic, two-story home is available for rent year round and sleeps 10 people. Originally constructed in the mid-1800s as the ironmaster's home, the stone home was covered with stucco and scribed to look like brick, a common practice when the home was built.

The lodge has a modern eat-in kitchen, two bathrooms, four bedrooms, and central heat. The home has spacious porches, yard areas, and sits atop a hill near the ruins of Paradise Furnace. The lodge is accessible for people with disabilities.

**BOATING: non-motorized only**
A hand-carry boat launch for non-motorized boats is in Area 5 just below the dam remnant. It provides access to slack water boating in Raystown Lake.

In the spring, boaters enjoy swift water boating in Great Trough Creek.

**HUNTING AND FIREARMS:** About 100 acres are open to hunting, trapping, and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are white-tailed deer, wild turkey, and squirrels. Trough Creek State Park adjoins Rothrock State Forest and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lands, which are open for hunting. The gate on Old Forge Road is open during hunting seasons to give access to forest lands.

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.

**SNOWMOBILING:** The park serves as a trailhead for trails in Rothrock State Forest. Parking and non-flush restrooms are available at Pavilion 1 and along Terrace Mountain Road near the campground. A snowmobile trail map is available at the park office.



**PICNICKING:** Picnic areas throughout the park provide a variety of scenic sites. Non-flush restrooms and water are available at some of the picnic areas.

Large Pavilion 1, and pavilions 4 and 5 may be reserved up to 11 months in advance for a fee. Unreserved pavilions are free and may be used on a first-come, first-served basis. Pavilion 2 is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

**FISHING:** Great Trough Creek hosts a variety of warm- and coldwater fish species including trout, smallmouth bass, rock bass, sucker, and panfish. Trout are stocked annually.

Lake fishing is available via a short walk along Terrace Mountain Trail to a sheltered cove of Raystown Lake. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission regulations and laws apply.



## Hiking: 5.8 miles

The hiking trails of Trough Creek State Park are famous for their beauty and scenic views. Sections of the trails are steep and narrow with rocks and roots covering the surface. Some trails follow rock ledges with vertical cliffs and pass through boulder fields and narrow ravines.

Hikers should use extreme caution and wear sturdy hiking boots with ankle support. Trail conditions may be slippery when wet or icy depending on weather conditions. Children must be supervised at all times.

**Abbot Run Trail**
**0.16 mile | More difficult hiking | Connector trail | White blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

Connecting Old Forge Road and Balanced Rock Trail, Abbot Run Trail follows and crosses shaded Abbot Run.



**Balanced Rock Trail**
**0.25 mile | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Green blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking
**Trailhead amenities:** benches

This trail starts at Balanced Rock Parking Lot along Trough Creek Drive and ends at the geologic marvel, Balanced Rock and an overlook of Great Trough Gorge. Along the way, the trail crosses Great Trough Creek on a suspension bridge, follows Abbot Run, and passes Rainbow Falls. The trail was created by the CCC in the 1930s.

**Boulder Trail**
**0.75 mile in the park, 1.05 miles total | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Red blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

The 1.05-mile Boulder Trail follows an old logging road up the mountain through an oak and hemlock forest, including a portion of Rothrock State Forest, between Ice Mine and Balanced Rock Parking Lot.

**Brumbaugh Trail**
**0.1 mile in the park, 2.4 miles total | Most difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Orange blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

Contained mostly within Rothrock State Forest, this 2.4-mile hike has the easiest grade when starting at the Balanced Rock Parking Lot on Trough Creek Drive. Those wishing a challenge can start at Area 5 Parking Lot. Although technically an out-and-back-trail, it can be a loop by walking Old Forge Road or Trough Creek Drive. A seasonal view of Raystown Lake is near the highpoint of the trail and is closer to Area 5.

**Cemetery Trail**
**0.28 mile | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Orange blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

Starting at Paradise Furnace Parking Lot, this trail crosses a small stream on a wooden bridge then begins a moderate climb to the 17th century Paradise Furnace Cemetery.

**Copperas Rock Trail**
**0.43 mile | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Red blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking
**Trailhead amenities:** non-flush restrooms

From the trailhead at Copperas Rock Parking Lot on Trough Creek Drive, this trail climbs a steep and rocky slope through oak and hemlock trees and ends on Ledges Trail.

Hikers can make a 2.5-mile loop by following Ledges Trail, Abbot Run Trail, Balanced Rock Trail (descending past Rainbow Falls), and following Rhododendron Trail back to Copperas Rock Trail just above the parking lot.

**Laurel Run Trail**
**0.12 mile in the park, 1.8 miles total | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Blue blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

From the trailhead in the Area 4 Parking Lot, the trail climbs into Rothrock State Forest and intersects Boulder Trail. Many hikers create a loop by following Boulder Trail to Trough Creek Drive and then back to the trailhead. This scenic trail crosses Laurel Run several times and crosses a highland forest.

**Ledges Trail**
**0.91 mile | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Blue blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

From a trailhead on Trough Creek Drive near the park office, Ledges Trail follows the ridgetop offering panoramic views of Great Trough Creek Gorge before intersecting Abbot Run Trail. Near a short connector trail to Old Forge Road are the remnants of what likely was a CCC-era pavilion.

**Nicholas Crum Trail**
**0.5 mile in the park, 1.5 miles total | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | No blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing recommended
**Trailhead amenities:** non-flush restrooms

Starting at Paradise Furnace Parking Lot, this multi-use trail climbs into Rothrock State Forest.

**Raven Rock Trail**
**0.32 mile | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Yellow blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

Starting at the upper end of Abbot Run Trail, this trail intersects Balanced Rock Trail near the geologic wonder, Balanced Rock. The trail ends along Trough Creek at the base of Raven Rock, a favorite nesting site for ravens according to local legend. Hikers will need to retrace their steps for the return trip.

**Rhododendron Trail**
**0.6 mile | More difficult hiking | Connector trail | Green blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

Between Copperas Rock and Balanced Rock trails is Rhododendron Trail, named for the beautiful shrubs that line the trail and bloom during early July. A steep portion of the trail is very rocky and requires cautious hiking.

**Terrace Mountain Trail**
**1.07 miles in the park, 29 miles total | More difficult hiking | Point-to-point trail | Blue blazes**
**Recreations permitted:** hiking, biking, backpacking

Terrace Mountain Trail traverses the eastern side of Raystown Lake and spans some of the area's most remote and challenging terrain, including lands owned by the state park, Rothrock State Forest, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. From the end of Old Forge Road, the trail goes south to Weavers Falls. From the end of Trough Creek Drive, the trail goes north to Corbins Bridge below Raystown Dam. In Area 5 of the park, bikers have to ride briefly on Trough Creek Drive, walk the bikes across the bridge, and ride on Old Forge Road.



## History

Little is known of the original inhabitants of the land that became Trough Creek State Park. It was occupied by Native Americans for short periods of time as they migrated away from the increasing European population. The Albany Purchase of 1754 acquired the land from the Haudenosaunee.

The Appalachian Mountains blocked the movement of European settlers from the east, delaying the settlement of the Great Trough Creek Gorge until Nicholas Crum traveled northeast from Baltimore in 1785. Crum harnessed the power of the creek with a turbine gristmill to grind grain. George Knoblough followed and in 1789 built a short-lived bloomery to smelt iron.

Attracted by the gorge's natural resources of iron ore, limestone, trees, and waterpower, Reuben Trexler, an ironmaster from Berks County, Pennsylvania, constructed a bloomery in 1818. Trexler partnered with his father-in-law, Jacob Lesher, another Berks County Ironmaster, to build Trough Creek Furnace which produced far more pig iron than the bloomery. Charcoal fueled the furnace, requiring an acre a day of trees to produce enough charcoal to fuel the furnace for one day.

John Savage of Philadelphia leased the furnace in 1832 and renamed it Mary Ann Furnace. He built Savage Forge to process the pig iron into bar iron. William Firmstone, an Englishman with knowledge of European iron making techniques, managed the furnace. Mary Ann Furnace continued smelting iron with charcoal until going out of blast in the 1850s or 1860s.

The demand for iron created by the American Civil War led Horatio Trexler, son of Reuben, to rename the furnace Paradise Furnace and return it to blast in 1865. The end of the Civil War and the resultant economic downturn led to Paradise Furnace going out of blast for the final time in 1869.

In 1910, the partnership of Caprio and Grieco established a logging railroad from Marklesburg, Pennsylvania, to Paradise Furnace, a distance of eight miles. At Paradise Furnace, a sawmill produced mine props, timber, and railroad ties from the second-growth timber of the valley.

In 1913, the railroad incorporated as the Juniata and Southern Railroad and extended the rail line seven miles to reach the Broad Top Coal and Mineral Company's mine at Jacobs, Pennsylvania. In 1917, the mine closed and the timber was depleted. The railroad was dismantled and scrapped. Due to the need for metal for World War I, the scrap sold for more than the original cost to build the railroad. With the loss of its trees, the land was prone to floods and forest fires.

In 1933, to relieve the rampant unemployment of the Great Depression, President Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The young men in the CCC received food, clothes, and a small paycheck in return for building roads, trails, and recreational facilities, fighting forest fires, planting trees, and performing many other conservation activities.

In June of 1933, Company 1331 arrived and lived in tents while they built Camp S-57, named Camp Paradise Furnace. The young men planted trees, constructed roads and trails, and created Trough Creek State Park, which opened in 1936. World War II ended the CCC and Camp S-57 closed in 1941.



CCC Camp S-57-PA

## Learn, Experience, Connect

Trough Creek State Park offers a wide variety of programs April through October, including stream studies, guided hikes and amphitheater programs. Gain a better understanding of the park's natural, cultural, and historical resources through guided outdoor recreation, hands-on activities, walks, special events, and other programs.

Curriculum-based environmental education programs are available to schools and organized groups. Call the park office to schedule a group program. Professional development workshops are also 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.

## 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**
J.C. Blair Memorial Hospital
1225 Warm Springs Avenue
Huntingdon, PA 16652
814-643-2290

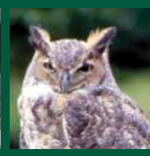
A Pennsylvania Recreational Guide for

# Trough Creek State Park









pennsylvania DCNR
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES




**Trough Creek State Park**
**16362 Little Valley Road**
**James Creek, PA 16657-9302**
**814-658-3847**
**TroughcreekSP@pa.gov**

**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.**

**www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks** PAStateParks

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## Nearby Attractions

Information on nearby attractions is available from the Huntingdon County Visitors Bureau. www.raystown.org

About 12 miles southwest of Trough Creek State Park, just off of PA 26 in Saxton, Bedford County, is **Warriors Path State Park**. This day-use park is on a peninsula created by a large meander of the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River. Picnicking, river fishing, and hiking are popular recreational activities. 814-658-3847

Over 97,000 acres of **Rothrock State Forest** land in Huntingdon County provides opportunities for hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, hiking, and low-impact recreation. 814-643-2340

**Raystown Lake National Recreation Area** is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recreation area that encompasses a 30-mile-long, 8,300-acre lake and the surrounding 21,000 acres of land. Raystown offers camping, unlimited horsepower boating, marinas, beaches, scenic overlooks, and trails. 814-658-3405

## 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.

## Natural History

Trough Creek State Park is in the Valley and Ridge Province of the Appalachian Mountains. Once a great mountain range, weathering and running water reduced the Appalachians into long, narrow, sweeping ridges. Great Trough Creek carved away at the ridges creating the unique geologic features seen today. The gorge is still undergoing slow geologic changes as Great Trough Creek continues to erode the valley.

**WATCHING WILDLIFE:** Trough Creek Drive is a great place to see woodland birds, like scarlet tanagers, veerys, waterthrushes, nuthatches, vireos, wood-pewees, chickadees, and pileated woodpeckers.

Hiking trails are avenues to see spring wildflowers and hear or see spring warblers. Trails are lined with mountain laurels, which bloom in mid-June, and rhododendrons, which bloom in early July.



Copperas Rock

Copperheads, timber rattlesnakes, and five-lined skinks can often be found sunning on rock outcrops throughout the park. Skinks also sun on the old dam. Black bears, white-tailed deer, and turkeys are often seen along Little Valley Road, just before entering the park. Osprey and bald eagles often fish Great Trough Creek, especially at the northern end of the park.

**COPPERAS ROCKS:** Copperas Rocks is named for the coppery-yellow stain on the cliff surface. The crystalline, yellow precipitate is ferrous sulfate that leaches from a small pocket of coal. Although this substance is one of the main pollutants in abandoned mine drainage, the small quantity here is not harmful to the stream. Early settlers used ferrous sulfate as a mordant for setting the dye color in cloth.



**BALANCED ROCK:** This huge boulder is perched on the edge of a cliff, looking ready to fall off at any moment into Great Trough Creek far below. Balanced Rock, an "erosion remnant," has hung in place for thousands of years. The rock was once part of a cliff with layers of hard and soft rocks. Soft rocks below Balanced Rock eroded away first, easing Balanced Rock into its current position.

To preserve the natural beauty of Balanced Rock, please do not spray paint or vandalize any natural features.

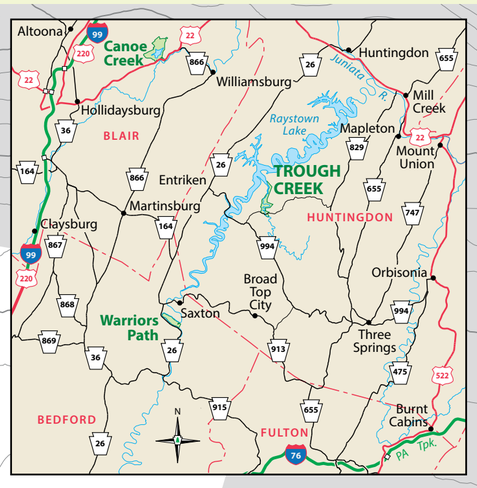
**ICE MINE:** While building a railroad line, workers likely discovered cold air flowing from the mountain side, a natural refrigerator. In the 1930s, the CCC developed the site as one of three tourist ice mine sites in the state.

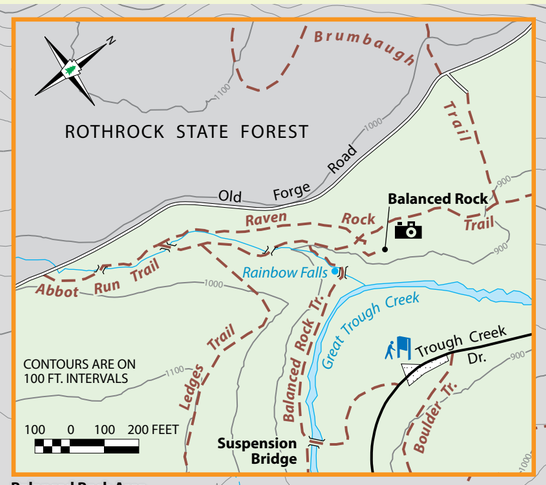
In winter, cold air diffuses into spaces between the rocks of the hillside. In spring and summer, cold air flows down through the spaces between the rocks and into Ice Mine. In the past, this caused snowmelt and moisture in the air to refreeze in the entrance of Ice Mine. Today, little ice forms in Ice Mine, likely because the stone wall around Ice Mine blocks the snowmelt. During the spring and summer, visitors can still experience the chill of winter by stepping down into Ice Mine.

**RAINBOW FALLS:** The waters of Abbot Run cascade in a lovely waterfall that is easily seen from Balanced Rock Trail. The waterfall is best viewed in the early spring and after a heavy rain.



Rainbow Falls




Balanced Rock Area

# TROUGH CREEK STATE PARK

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

TERRACE MOUNTAIN

RAYSTOWN LAKE

ROTHROCK STATE FOREST

*To PA 994, 1.0 Mi. & Saxton, 9.8 Mi.*

Balanced Rock Area

Savage Forge Site

Dam Ruins

AREA 5

Ice Mine

Trough Creek Drive

Old Forge Road

Little Valley Road

Terrace Mountain Rd.

Terrace Mountain Road

Horse Knob Fire Trail

Ledges Trail

Rhododendron Trail

Boulder Trail

Laurel Run Trail

Copperas Rock Trail

Brumbaugh Trail

Terrace Mountain Trail

Raystown Lake Trail

AREA 1

AREA 4

Paradise Road

Paradise Furnace

Historic Cemetery

Nicholas Crum Trail

Cleavon Trail

Trough Creek Lodge

Youth Forestry Camp 3

Tar Kiln Road

Tar Kiln Run

John Bum Road

Cassville Rd.

*To PA 994, 3.0 Mi. & Newburg, 3.4 Mi.*

*To Cassville/PA 829, 5.8 Mi.*

*To PA 829, 5.7 Mi. & Calvin, 6.9 Mi.*

*To PA 829, 5.8 Mi.*

- Park Office
- Blue Symbols Mean ADA Accessible
- Emergency Phone
- Non-flush Restrooms
- Water
- Amphitheater
- Vista
- Wayside Exhibit
- Picnicking
- Picnic Pavilion
- Hand-carry Boat Launch
- Camping
- Recycling/Trash
- Sanitary Dump Station
- Paved Road
- Unpaved Road
- One-way Road
- Joint-use Road: Auto/Snowmobile
- Equestrian and Snowmobiling Trailhead Parking
- Parking Lot ADA Accessible
- Parking Lot Paved
- Parking Lot Unpaved
- Gate
- State Park No Hunting
- State Park Hunting
- CONTOURS ARE ON 50 FT. INTERVALS

**TRAIL INFORMATION**

- Hiking Trail
- Multi-use Trail: Hiking and as designated
- Bicycling
- Mountain Biking
- Cross-country Skiing Recommended
- Horseback Riding
- Snowmobiling

⅛ 0 ¼ ½ ¾ KILOMETERS

⅛ 0 ⅛ ¼ ⅜ ½ MILE

*Rev. 12/27/23*