

Woods and Waterfalls

HIKING AND BIKING ON THE PENNSYLVANIA SIDE

Delaware Water Gap
National Recreation Area

National Park Service
Pennsylvania/New Jersey



Hidden Lake Picnic Area

Several old dirt roadways and footpaths circle this quiet lake on a fairly level walk of about 2 miles. Start a counterclockwise tour from the south end of the beach and picnic area parking lot, and stay on slightly higher ground away from the lakeshore. On the west shore of the lake, pass an old lodge and follow its access road north. Turn west to follow the lakeshore. Cross the footbridge to the path on top of the dam to return to the beach and picnic area.

Toms Creek Picnic Area

This trail heads west alongside the creek. The first mile is a flat stroll, ideal for children. *Toms Creek is on a parallel road off the west side of Route 209 between mileposts 4 and 5. Look for signs on Route 209.*

Dingmans Falls

A flat boardwalk trail, accessible to wheelchair-users, leads through a hemlock ravine to the base of Dingmans Falls (1/2 mile round-trip, no climb.) From the base of the falls, a steep climb of 240 steps reaches the top of the falls. Rangers give guided walks to the falls at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday in summer.

George W. Childs Recreation Site

A loop trail with steep stairs and boardwalks leads 1-8/10 mile and 100 ft. down a hemlock ravine and past three waterfalls on Dingmans Creek. *Swimming in the creek at Childs Recreation Site is NOT allowed.*

Directions to the main parking area and restrooms at Childs Recreation Site:

From the traffic light at mile 14 on Route 209, take Route 739 west (a left turn if northbound on 209.) Continue 1 2/10 miles, and turn left onto Silver Lake Rd. Continue 1 7/10 miles, turn left onto Park Road, and then immediately turn left again into the main parking area.

Raymondskill Falls

A 1/4-mile round-trip hike leads through a hemlock ravine to the Upper Falls. (70 ft. climb) The Middle Falls are a 1/2-mile round-trip, using steep, uneven stairs (150 ft. climb.) Raymondskill Creek at the bottom of the ravine is a 1 mile round-trip with a steep ascent on the return (200 ft. climb.) *Raymondskill Road is on the west side of Route 209 (a sharp left turn if northbound), at about milepost 18.*



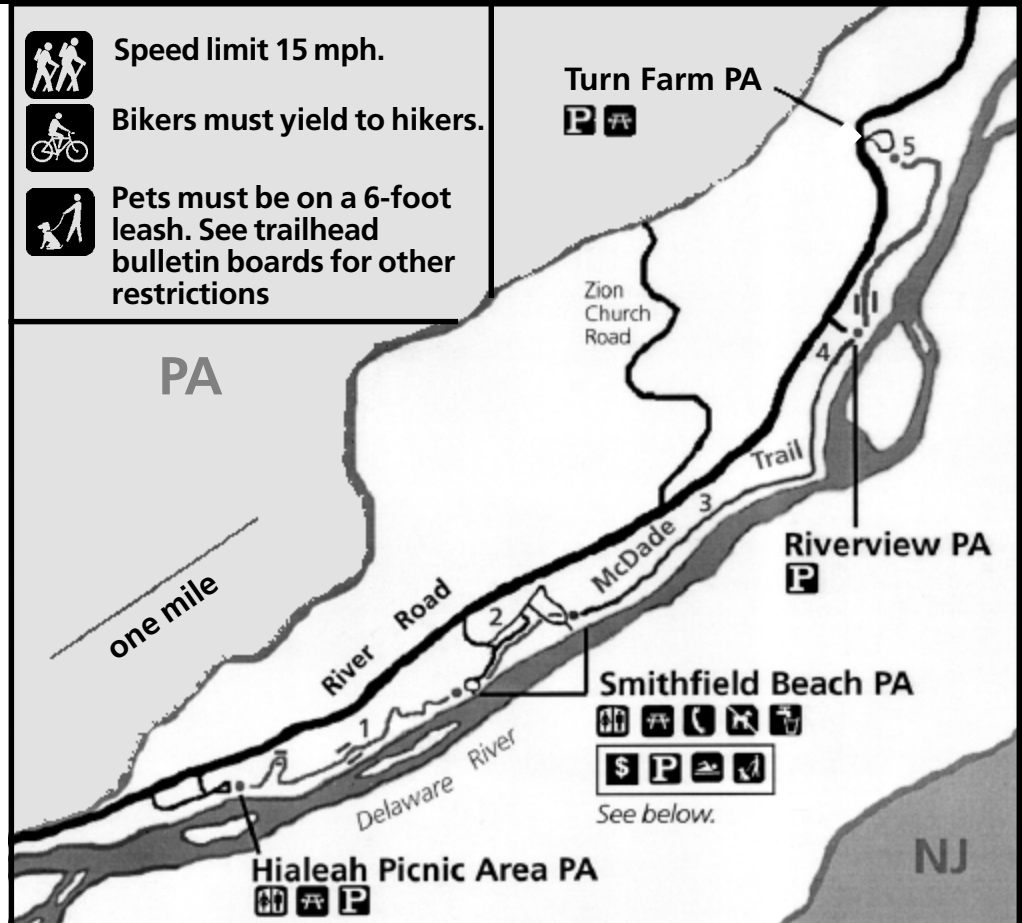
Speed limit 15 mph.



Bikers must yield to hikers.



Pets must be on a 6-foot leash. See trailhead bulletin boards for other restrictions



McDade Recreational Trail

Joseph M. McDade Recreational Trail is a planned recreational trail which, when completed, will extend for 37 miles on the Pennsylvania side of the park. The first segment of 5 miles is open for hiking, biking, and crosscountry skiing.

A second section of the trail runs 2.7 miles from Milford Beach to Pittman Orchard. (near Raymondskill Road) *These two sections of the trail do not interconnect.* Additional sections of the trail are nearing completion.

Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC)

PEEC has 12 miles of varied trails open to the public, ranging from a 1/4-mile sensory trail to a 5-mile hike that involves descending a ledge. Maps are available at PEEC's visitor center and at www.peec.org/prog/trails.html.

Sensory Trail (1/4 mile)

A rope guide leads blindfolded hikers through a listening and sensing experience.

Two Ponds (1 1/2 miles, white blaze)

Wildlife viewing, pine stands, and views of Pickerel Pond.

Fossil Trail (1 1/4 miles, blue blaze)

Look for (but don't take!) fossils along an ancient marine escarpment.

Sunrise Trail (5 miles, yellow blaze)

Wetlands and forest. Hilly terrain with one steep descent using guide cables.

Tumbling Waters Trail (3 miles, orange blaze)

Scenic vistas and two waterfalls with a return through a meadow.

Scenic Gorge Trail (2 miles, red blaze)

Fairly easy trail which follows a stream. This trail can be muddy in rainy weather.

Hawk

1-800-543-HAWK
1-800-543-4295



Your 24-hour toll-free phone number for reporting crimes or emergencies in the recreation area

Trail Guide

DINGMANS FALLS RAVINE

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The Delaware Watershed

Dingmans Creek flows into the Delaware River and is part of its watershed. The Delaware River is one of the last free-flowing rivers in the eastern United States, and provides 10% of

the nation's population with drinking water. Since 1978, more than 37 miles of the river have been protected as a *Wild and Scenic River*.

Dingmans Ravine

Glaciers covered this area 11,000 years ago. When they began to melt, the glaciers gave the waterfalls and streams extra carving power.

The abrasive action of particles carried by the flowing water for thousands of years has helped to carve the waterfalls of the ravine.

Silver Thread Falls

Silver Thread Falls appears to have been chiseled by hand, but the forces of nature are the only sculptors here. Shale, the sedimentary rock beneath the falls, splits easily both vertically

and horizontally. The shale has split at joint fractures, and falling water has flowed through the weak cracks to help create this 80-foot waterfall.

Eastern Hemlock



Eastern hemlock
(*Tsuga canadensis*)

The large evergreen trees of the ravine are Eastern hemlocks (*Tsuga canadensis*), the state tree of Pennsylvania. Thriving in the damp, cool and shady micro-climate of the ravine, hemlocks have a shallow root system with which they cling to the steep sides of the ravine and to its rocky floor.

In addition, an insect from Asia, the *hemlock woolly adelgid*, is threatening Eastern hemlock trees in North America. Infestation greatly weakens and often kills hemlocks. Adelgids are widespread from southern Virginia to northern Massachusetts; in some areas, entire hemlock stands have been lost. The future of Eastern hemlocks in Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is not certain. Resource specialists are monitoring the presence of hemlock woolly adelgid in the recreation area.

The shallow roots, though, leave them vulnerable to fire, drought, erosion, wind, and heavy snows, as well as to trampling by humans. ***Please stay on the boardwalk trail!***

Dingmans Creek

While crossing the second footbridge, note the color of Dingmans Creek. Tannic acid from the bark of hemlock trees leaches into the soil and the creek, coloring the creek and making it slightly acidic. This is the same chemical used to "tan" hides, and in the 19th century there was even a *tannery* upstream from here.

Tannin is an *astringent* which causes tissue to contract. "Bark tea" was an early American remedy for sore gums and diarrhea, and hemlock bark also helped to stop bleeding. Both native Americans and early colonists drank a tea made from the twigs and needles of the hemlock that was rich in vitamin C.

Rhododendron

Rhododendron are so plentiful in the ravine because they thrive in acidic soil. Although hybrid varieties of rhododendron bloom in May, you will have to wait until July to see the large, pinkish-white blooms of this plant in the ravine.

Rhododendron leaves curl tightly under when it is cold outside. This reduces the surface area exposed to cold and conserves heat and moisture. If food is scarce, whitetail deer can be found browsing on rhododendron, however ***all parts of this plant and its sap are extremely poisonous for humans.***

Dingmans Falls



Cascading over stair-step layers of shale, Dingmans Creek plunges 130 feet to create magnificent Dingmans Falls.

The many fallen hemlock trees create habitat for residents of the ravine, and as the trees decompose, they also replenish the soil. Despite the acidity of the soil and the creek, many fish, including native brook trout, live in Dingmans Creek and can be seen in its deep pools.

The water power of Dingmans Creek attracted saw, grist and cider mills here in the 1800s, and the falls have been a tourist attraction for more than a century. From 1888 to its federal acquisition in 1975, Dingmans Falls was a private enterprise that charged admission to see the falls.