

History of Crystal Springs

The Crystal Springs Preserve is comprised of 233 acres of mature forest, active farmland, meadows, ponds, and the headwaters of the Spruce Run in Hunterdon County. An additional 58 acres of this property exists in Washington Township, Morris County, and is maintained by the Washington Township Land Trust.

The park's name is derived from the mineral springs found in the area. These springs are high in iron content and known as chalybeate springs. In 1815, officials declared chalybeate springs to be the purest source of water. This led to the creation of one of the earliest resort and spa communities in the country, which was located on nearby Schooley's Mountain in Washington Township.

Crystal Springs Preserve was acquired through a multi-agency partnership in 2004 that involved New Jersey Water Supply Authority, Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance, Washington Township Land Trust Alliance, Township of Lebanon, New Jersey Division of Environmental Protection, and Hunterdon County.

Agricultural Use

The County contracts much of the land to a local farmer. In accepting the agreement, the farmer has agreed to farm the property while complying with a management plan. *Please be considerate. Stay on the trails and do not pick or damage any crops.*

(Revised 06/2016)

The Hunterdon County Division of Parks & Recreation is dedicated to preserving open space and natural resources, providing safe parks and facilities, and offering educational and recreational opportunities, all contributing to an enhanced quality of life for present and future generations.

Crystal Springs Preserve

Location: Crystal Springs Preserve is located in Lebanon Township at 20 Pleasant Grove Road, Port Murray 07865, and off of Califon Road, Long Valley 07853 (Washington Township, Morris County). The park is open from sunrise to sunset. No restroom facilities are available.

Directions from the Clinton Area:

Proceed north on Route 31 for 1.7 miles to Route 513 north. Turn right and follow Route 513 through High Bridge toward Califon for about 6.5 miles. Just past the old A&P, turn left onto Sliker Road and proceed about 1.6 miles to Pleasant Grove Road. Turn right on Pleasant Grove, and in about a mile, park in the camping lot of Teetertown on the right, or continue into Washington Township, Morris County (the road becomes to Califon Road). Make the first left in Morris County (look for a neighborhood with a small blue sign on the left that reads "51-55") and proceed to the end of the road. This is the park entrance. A grass parking area is on the right about 500 feet down the driveway.

Recreational Opportunities

Crystal Springs offers easy to moderate hiking opportunities. Much of the trail system is composed of pathways along the edge of the fields. A connector trail links up with the Teetertown Preserve. Five ponds are located on the property and are the headwaters of the Spruce Run. Anglers can fish for a variety of species, including bass, catfish, and sunfish. Ponds are designated for catch and release, and State Fish and Wildlife rules apply.

Hunting

In order to control the population of deer on park property, hunting is permitted. Hunters must obtain a special permit issued by the Division to hunt in the park. Visitors during hunting season are strongly encouraged to wear

Habitat of Crystal Springs

Crystal Springs Preserve surrounds the headwaters of the Spruce Run. This creek is one of three waterways that flow into the Spruce Run Reservoir, which is a vital source of drinking water for the county and state.

These headwaters are also important to wildlife. The ponds located within the park serve as a resting point for migratory waterfowl and herons. The water is also home to a variety of amphibians and reptiles. Frogs can be heard calling from the edge of the ponds and turtles can be seen swimming around or basking along the pond edge.

Beavers are active in and around the ponds, and evidence of beavers, including chewed trees, dams, and a lodge, is obvious.



Eastern Meadowlark

The 40-acre meadow located to the south of the ponds is dedicated as grassland bird habitat. It was planted with warm season grass in 2005 and is managed on a multi-year schedule to prevent field to forest succession. The Parks Division hopes that grassland birds such as Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark will establish themselves in this meadow.

Crystal Springs Preserve

Trail Map and Guide



Spotted Turtle



Hunterdon County

Division of Parks & Recreation

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(click on "Parks & Recreation")

Office Hours:

Mon.-Fri. 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

SUMMARY OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

The rules and regulations governing use of facilities or properties administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation are promulgated in accordance with provisions of the N.J. Statutes Title 40:32-7.12, which reads as follows:

"The Board of Chosen Freeholders may by resolution make, alter, amend, and repeal rules and regulations for the supervision, regulation and control of all activities carried on, conducted, sponsored, arranged, or provided for in connection with a public golf course or other county recreational, playground, or public entertainment facility, and for the protection of property, and may prescribe and enforce fines and penalties for the violation of any such rule or regulation."

These rules and regulations have been promulgated for the protection of our patrons and for the facilities and natural resources administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation.

Permits: A fully executed Facility Use Permit, issued by the County of Hunterdon for any activity, shall authorize the activity only insofar as it may be performed in strict accordance with the terms and conditions thereof. The State of NJ, County of Hunterdon, or the local municipality may require additional permits.

Prohibited Acts: The violation of any Municipal, State, or Federal law. Advertising, solicitation, ice skating, ice fishing, any other on-ice activities, downhill skiing, bathing, fuel-powered modeled aircraft, the release of any animal, explosives of any kind, poisons of any kind, after-hours use, alcohol without a permit in a non-designated area, controlled dangerous substances, weapons, posting of signage, inappropriate attire, and climbing on, or rappelling from any cliff, rock face, or boulder, with, or without the use of specialized equipment.

Regulated Activity: The sale of merchandise, aviation, boating, cross-country skiing, bicycling, and sledding. Battery-powered modeled aircraft and horses must be in designated areas, dogs must be restrained with a leash not exceeding six feet, pet waste must be removed, camping/fires are by permit only. All groups of 15 or more must obtain a permit for use of any Park area.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of Property: No person shall make, excavate on, destroy, paint, fill in, cut, remove or tamper with any property, organic or inorganic.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of Natural Resources: No person shall disturb wildlife or vegetation in any manner. No person shall pollute waters, litter, dump debris, or release helium balloons in any property. It is illegal to remove any natural resource from, or introduce any plant material, bulbs, or seeds to any property without a proper permit or license.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of People: No person shall obstruct a county employee/official, interfere with a visitor, conduct any unsafe act, or cause a hazardous condition.

Vehicles: All the provisions of the NJ State Motor Vehicle Act apply. Vehicles are not allowed in unauthorized areas. Parking is allowed in designated areas only. **ATVs, dirt bikes, and snowmobiles are prohibited on County Park lands.**

Enforcement: The rules and regulations of the County shall be enforced by duly authorized Rangers or representatives of the County under the provision of N.J.S.A. 40:32-2, thru 40:32-7.13. Any person who enters into a County Park for any purpose whatsoever has a duty and is presumed to be aware of the provisions of these rules and regulations governing the use of the facilities and properties administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks & Recreation.

Penalties: Any person violating any of the provisions of these regulations shall, upon conviction before a court or other adjudicative body of jurisdiction, be liable for the replacement, repair or restoration of damaged property, if any, and shall pay a penalty of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or other amount in the discretion of the court or other adjudicative body, or may be sentenced to imprisonment in the County jail for the term not exceeding ninety (90) days, or both, provided that this section shall not supersede any applicable penalty provision for specific offenses, which may be set forth in the New Jersey Code of Criminal Justice, N.J.S.A. 2C:1-1, et seq., or in any other applicable state or federal law.

NOTE: County Park Rangers of the Division of Parks and Recreation have the authority to issue summons and make arrests for violations of rules and regulations governing the use of facilities and properties administered by the Division of Parks and Recreation. This is only a summary of the rules and regulations. Rules applying to special conditions, activities, or situations may be supplemental to these rules and regulations. When special rules apply, they will be posted at affected areas. The complete text of regulations is available for inspection at the Park administration office in Clinton Township during regular business hours.