

About Musconetcong Gorge Preserve

Previously, this land was owned by the Warren Manufacturing Company. Started in 1873 by John L. Riegel, this paper plant processed wood pulp from the forest into sheets of paper through steam-powered machinery harnessed by the river. The timber was also used to make charcoal, which was sold to farmers as fertilizer. Mill workers stacked and burned the timber on man-made flat areas against the hillside called “charcoal landings.” The remains of several charcoal landings are still visible along the trails. Look for flat areas with very dark soil. Near Musconetcong Gorge, the towns of Warren Glen and Riegelsville were built by the paper company to house their workers. The company was more recently known as Fibermark, Inc. The county acquired much of the property in 1977, and smaller parcels have since been added, bringing the total area of the preserve to 523 acres.

Recreational Opportunities

The trails at the park are designed for hiking only. Most of the trails range from moderate to slightly difficult. They take advantage of the smoothest grounds but are steep in some areas. This park offers beautiful vistas.

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. Visitors between September and February are strongly encouraged to wear blaze orange or confine visits to Sundays.

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.

(Revised 7/2016)

Musconetcong Gorge Preserve

Location: The Musconetcong Gorge Preserve is located in Holland Township, west of Bloomsbury Boro and adjacent to the Hunterdon County border with Warren County. Parking is available at 182 Dennis Road, Bloomsbury 08804. The park is open sunrise to sunset. No restroom facilities are available.

Directions from Interstate 78:

Travel west on I-78 to exit 7 and bear right to Route 173 west. On route 173, drive 1.3 miles to Route 639. Turn left onto Route 639 and travel 4 miles. At the stop sign, bear left on Route 519, then turn left and cross the Musconetcong River, staying on Route 519. Take the next left onto Dennis Road (a gravel road), and go 0.2 miles to the parking area located on the left side of the road.

Directions from Milford:

Travel on Route 519 north for 5.8 miles to Dennis Road. Bear right onto Dennis Road and travel 0.6 miles to the parking area on the right-hand side.

Habitat and Wildlife

This oak-hickory forest is a major food source for wildlife. Gray Squirrels and White-tailed Deer are common residents, and evidence of Black Bears in the park has been recorded.

The ravine and water seeps located in the park provide excellent habitat for reptiles and amphibians and can be identified by rocky areas with moss and ferns growing around them.

Several types of birds can be seen throughout the year. Evidence of woodpeckers, such as the Downy Woodpecker, can be found along the Nature Trail. Turkey Vultures and hawks can be seen flying above as they use the thermal pockets created by the Musconetcong Ridge. With the ample supply of acorns and nuts, do not be surprised if you come across a flock of Wild Turkeys in the park.

General Trail Information

Self-Guided Nature Trail: Located on the left side of the parking lot, this trail leads to a wonderful view of the ravine and stream that runs through the park. This trail was established as an Eagle Scout Project, for which a separate brochure is available.

Railroad Trail: This easy hiking trail begins on the other side of the ravine and runs parallel with the old rail bed adjacent to the park property until it dead-ends. Two trails branch off the Railroad Trail: The Gas Line Road and the Waterfall Trail.

Gas Line Road: A service road for a gas line, this trail is steep and rocky and it connects to the Highlands Trail.

Waterfall Trail: Follow this trail up the ravine to a scenic waterfall. This trail links up with the Gas Line Road.

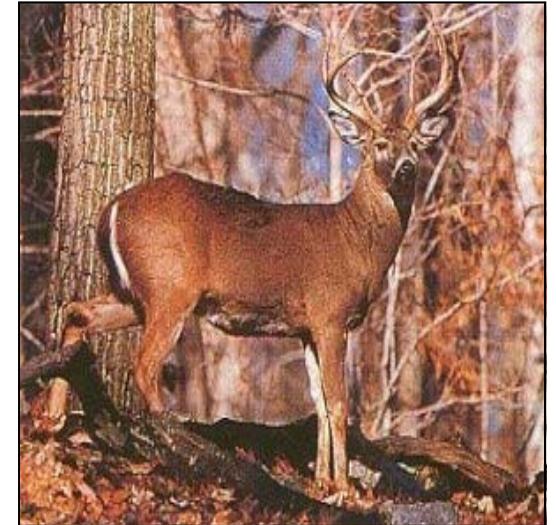
Ridge/Highlands Trail: The Ridge/Highlands Trail departs from the right side of the parking lot and is a moderate to difficult trail. The trail runs along the ridge of the mountain. The Highlands Trail extends 150 miles from Storm King Mountain on the Hudson River in New York south to Riegelsville on the Delaware River in New Jersey. Blazed with teal-colored diamonds, the trail displays the scenic and natural beauty of the Highlands Region. A portion of the trail lies within Musconetcong Gorge Preserve. For more on the Highlands Trail, visit the New York - New Jersey Trail Conference’s website, <http://www.nynjtc.org/region/highlands-trail>.



Eastern Gray Squirrel

Musconetcong Gorge Preserve

Trail Map and Guide



White-tailed Deer buck

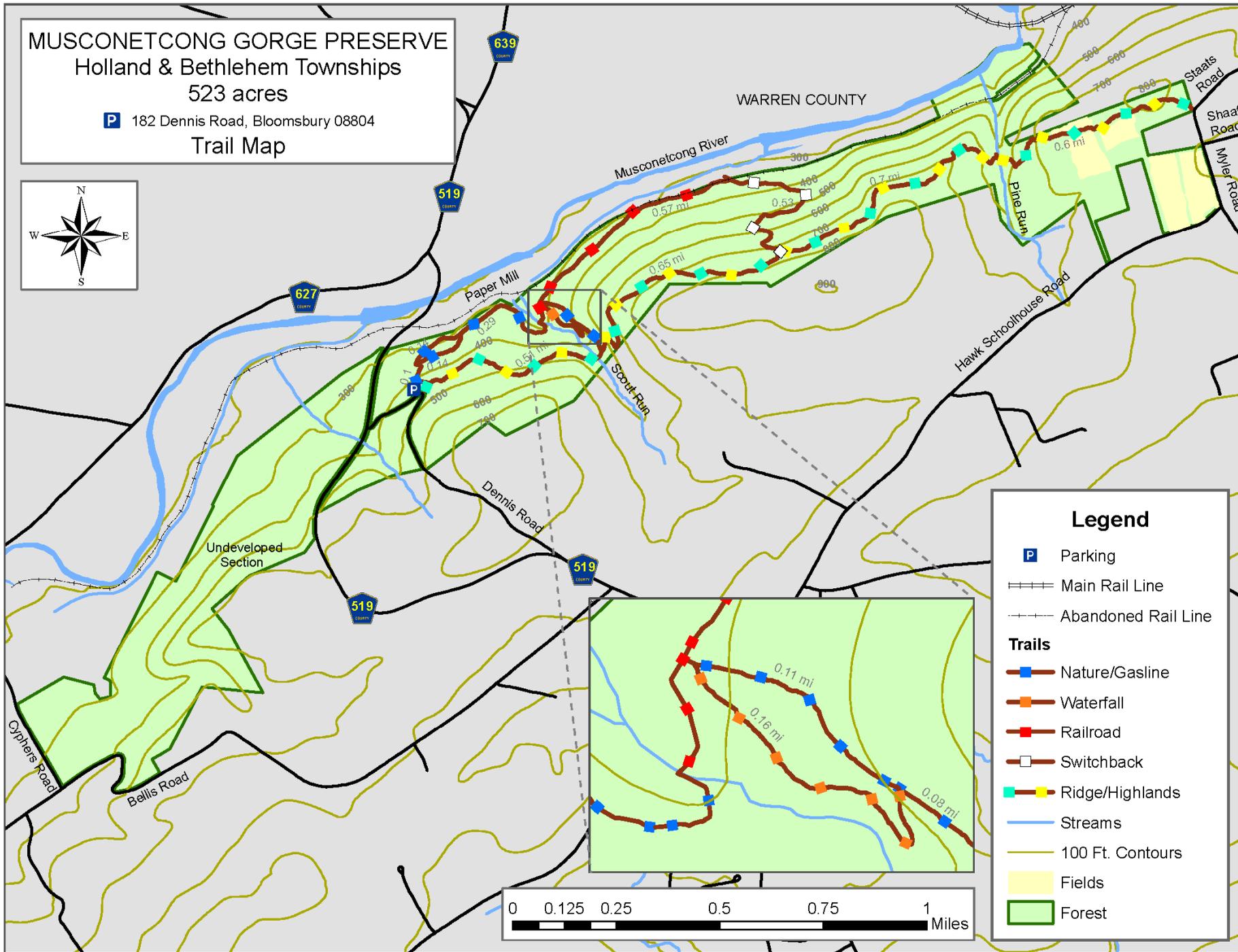


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Office Hours:
Mon.-Fri. 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

MUSCONETCONG GORGE PRESERVE
 Holland & Bethlehem Townships
 523 acres
 182 Dennis Road, Bloomsbury 08804
Trail Map



Legend

- Parking
- Main Rail Line
- Abandoned Rail Line
- Trails**
- Nature/Gasline
- Waterfall
- Railroad
- Switchback
- Ridge/Highlands
- Streams
- 100 Ft. Contours
- Fields
- Forest



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.