

About Valinski Section

Named after its former owners, Frank and Jean Valinski, this property of forest and meadows along the South Branch of the Raritan River contains a historic 1789 stone smokehouse that was part of the original farmstead of Jacob Gearhart (1735-1813). Gearhart fought in the Revolutionary War, and helped secure wooden boats that aided General George Washington and his troops on the famous crossing of the Delaware River on Christmas Eve in 1776. His family lived on the farm from 1765 to 1791. With a succession of owners over the next two centuries, the land was sold to Kenneth Estabrook (1924-2003) and his wife Virginia in 1970. As one of the state's most prominent attorneys in his day, the family moved from Cranford to this area for its charm and rural atmosphere. In 1975, the county bought the Valinskis' property, and in 1979, the field was purchased as an addition to the adjacent landholdings. Today, this property consists of 83 acres of open space.

The Valinski Section is part of the 1000-acre South Branch Reservation, a preserved greenway along the South Branch of the Raritan River that offers recreational opportunities to explore its amazing natural resources up close.



Eastern Bluebird nesting box

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.

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, and 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 N.J. State Motor Vehicle Act apply. Vehicles are not allowed in unauthorized areas. Parking is allowed in designated areas only. **ATV's, 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 and 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.

Valinski Section

of the South Branch Reservation

Trail Map and Guide



American Kestrel



Hunterdon County
Division of Parks & Recreation
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1020 State Route 31, Lebanon, NJ 08833
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Website: www.co.hunterdon.nj.us
(click on "Parks & Recreation")

Office Hours:
Monday-Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Valinski Section

Location: The Valinski Section is located on Hamden Road in Clinton Township and River Road in Franklin Township. It is open sunrise to sunset. No restroom facilities are available.

Directions from the Flemington area:

Take Route 31 north to the jug handle exit for Payne Road. Cross over Route 31. Proceed on Payne Road until the "T" intersection with Lilac Drive and turn right. Follow Lilac Drive to River Road and turn left. Proceed to Hamden Road and turn left again. Travel past the YMCA Camp Carr. Park in the small lot on the left before the bridge (502 Hamden Road, Annandale 08801 for GPS). Or cross over the river (road changes name to River Road) and park in the pull-off area on the left before the open field (123 River Road, Annandale 08801 for GPS).

Directions from the Clinton area:

Take Route 31 south to Allerton Road. Turn right on Allerton and after 0.5 miles make a left on Lilac Drive. After 0.5 miles, turn right on River Road and proceed as above.

Fishing

Adjacent to the South Branch of the Raritan River, the Valinski Section offers access to the river's edge for fishing. The river is stocked with Rainbow, Brook, and Brown Trout. State Fish and Wildlife laws 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. Visitors between September and February are strongly encouraged to wear blaze orange or confine visits to Sundays.

Canoeing

Canoeists can access the river just beyond the parking lots. Canoeing the South Branch of the Raritan River is a wonderful way to view wildlife and experience the outdoors. The corridor along the river provides excellent habitat for waterfowl. Aquatic reptiles, such as Painted Turtles, are regularly observed perched on the stone and tree outcroppings along the river banks.

(Revised 6/2016)

