



For More Information Contact:

Kooser State Park
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www.visitPAParks.com

Information and Reservations

Make online reservations at www.visitPAParks.com or call toll-free 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Saturday, for state park information and reservations

Kooser State Park

In the heart of the Laurel Highlands at an altitude of 2,600 feet, Kooser State Park attracts visitors year-round to its 250 acres of forest and the beautiful trout stream that flows the full length of the park.

The park's original design character was stamped by the Civilian Conservation Corps projects of the 1930s that established the existing lake and most of its use areas, its architecture and site details. The park's basic appeal lies in its intimate areas which are best suited for family outings and small groups. Picnicking, fishing, hiking, camping, cross-country skiing and family cabins are the major park uses.

Directions

Kooser State Park is on PA 31 midway between the Donegal and Somerset turnpike exits, at the eastern foothills of Laurel Mountain Summit. Kooser State Park is a one-hour drive from Johnstown or Pittsburgh.

Reservations

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Recreational Opportunities



CAMPING: modern sites, some with electric

The campground has been renovated to 35 sites, which is open from mid-April through the third Sunday in October. Most sites give visitors the ability to pull through with their camping equipment. There are 28 sites with electric hookups and seven non-electric sites. Four sites offer full hookups. ADA accessible sites and a sanitary dump station are available. This entire campground is open to pets. Please follow all pet camping rules.

CABINS: There are nine rustic rental cabins available for year-round rental, with summer rentals on a weekly basis. The smallest sleeps four with the largest sleeping eight. A modern shower house is available in the cabin colony. Each cabin has mattresses on the beds as well as a refrigerator, microwave oven, stove and sink with hot water. Renters bring all cooking and sleeping supplies. The primary source of heat is provided by a wood burning stove. Cabin 23 is ADA accessible. Cabins 21 and 22 are dog friendly.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING: The park's elevation and heavy snowfall creates prime conditions for cross-country skiing. Park staff set track on 1.5 miles of ski trail, which is marked with blue diamonds. The trail is classified as "easiest" and is popular with beginners to experienced skiers.



PICNICKING: Many picnic tables and the Mighty Oak Picnic Pavilion are available for year-round picnics. There is also a small stone pavilion centered in the picnic area that is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

HIKING:

Kincora Trail: 1.0 mile, more difficult hiking
 Named after a former church camp located here, this rugged trail provides challenging terrain and solitude for the day hiker.

Tree Army Trail: 0.5 mile, easiest hiking

This trail meanders along Kooser Run. In the summer, there is great access for stream fishing and you can enjoy the scenic beauty in the winter while cross-country skiing or snowshoeing. The trail is named after the Civilian Conservation Corps who were also known as Roosevelt's Tree Army.

Tell us about your hike at: www.explorepatrials.com.

HUNTING: Due to the park's small size, hunting is prohibited in the park. Hunters frequently camp in the park and walk to the Forbes State Forest lands that are adjacent to the park. Common game species are deer, turkey and black bear.

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 car, trailer or leased campsite. 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.

FISHING: The 4-acre Kooser Lake and Kooser Run are approved trout waters. Kooser Run is classified as a High Quality trout stream. Kooser Lake provides excellent fishing for trout, bass and blue gill, Kooser Run is stocked with trout. Night and ice fishing are prohibited on Kooser Lake. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission laws apply.



History

Kooser State Park is named for John Kooser and his descendants who in 1827, settled in the western end of the park near Kooser Spring. This original 920-acre tract was sold to the United Lumber Company in 1913. After the lumber company declared bankruptcy, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to purchase 2,730 acres, which included 720 acres of the original Kooser tract, for use as a forest reserve. In 1920, this area became part of Forbes State Forest. With the advent of affordable automobiles and the growing popularity of auto camping, the Kooser Public Camp was developed at the Van Dyke Spring in 1925. The camp was popular with travelers along PA 31 and included an open front lean-to, comfort station, tables and benches, fireplaces and garbage container.

In 1933, an area west of the Kooser Public Camp was selected as a site for a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp S-99. From 1934 until 1940, the CCC boys built a wooden and earthen dam creating a 4-acre lake, beach and bathhouse, a road around the lake, nine log cabins, trails, picnic areas, shelters, pavilions, park office, tree nursery and arboretum, as well as made improvements to Kooser and Van Dyke springs.

A tornado in 1945 caused severe damage to the CCC facilities. From 1952 until 1954, the remaining CCC buildings were leased to a church group for use as a camp known as Camp Kincora.

Major redevelopment of the park took place from 1955 through 1957 and in 1962 the Bureau of State Parks took over the operation of the park.

Nearby Attractions

Information on nearby attractions is available from the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau, 800-333-5661. www.laurelhighlands.org
 Somerset Chamber of Commerce, 814-445-6431. www.somersetcountychamber.com

FORBES STATE FOREST: The 58,000-acre Forbes State Forest provides hunting, fishing, hiking, general recreation and the highest point in Pennsylvania, Mount Davis, at 3,213 feet. 724-238-1200

LAUREL HIGHLANDS HIKING TRAIL: This 70-mile backpacking trail goes from Ohioypyle State Park to the Conemaugh River. The PA 31 parking and shelter area are near Kooser State Park. For more information, contact Laurel Ridge State Park, 1117 Jim Mountain Road, Rockwood, PA 15557. 724-455-3744

LAUREL HILL STATE PARK: This park is a gateway to thousands of acres of public lands and features a 63-acre lake. For more information, contact, Laurel Hill State Park, 1454 Laurel Hill Park Road, Somerset, PA 15501. 814-445-7725

Protect and Preserve Our Parks

Please make your visit safe and enjoyable. Obey all posted rules and regulations and respect fellow visitors and the resources of the park.

- Be prepared and bring the proper equipment. Natural areas may possess hazards. Your personal safety and that of your family are your responsibility.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Please camp only in designated areas and try to minimize your impact on the campsite.
- Firewood Advisory: Firewood may contain non-native insects and plant diseases. Bringing firewood into the park from other areas may accidentally spread pest insects and diseases that threaten park resources and the health of our forests. Campers should use local firewood. Do not take wood home and do not leave firewood. Burn It!
- Prevent forest fires by having a fire in proper facilities and properly disposing of hot coals. Do not leave a fire unattended.

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.

In an Emergency

Contact a park employee or dial 911. Directions to the nearest hospital are posted on bulletin boards and at the park office.

NEAREST HOSPITAL
 Somerset Hospital
 225 South Center Avenue
 Somerset, PA 15501
 814-443-5000