



## Pennsylvania State Parks Mission

The primary purpose of Pennsylvania State Parks is to provide opportunities for enjoying healthful outdoor recreation and serve as outdoor classrooms for environmental education. In meeting these purposes, the conservation of the natural, scenic, aesthetic, and historical values of the parks should be given first consideration. Stewardship responsibilities should be carried out in a way that protects the natural outdoor experience for the enjoyment of current and future generations.



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2015



## DELAWARE CANAL STATE PARK



A walk along the 60-mile long towpath of Delaware Canal State Park is a stroll into American history. Paralleling the Delaware River between Easton and Bristol, this diverse park contains an historic canal and towpath, a 90-acre pond, many miles of river shoreline, and 11 river islands including the Morgan Hill group (3), Loors, Whippoorwill, Old Sow, Raubs, Lynn/Frog/Rock group, and Hendricks. From riverside to farm fields to historic towns, visitors to Delaware Canal State Park enjoy the ever-changing scenery along its corridor.

## A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

The 60-mile Delaware Canal is the only remaining continuously intact canal of the great towpath canal building era of the early and mid-19th century. Today, the canal retains almost all of its features as they existed during its century of commercial operation.

America was growing rapidly, in the early 1800s. Canals provided a better way of transporting resources to urban areas. When completed in 1832, the Delaware Canal connected with the Lehigh Navigation System at Easton and helped to develop the anthracite coal industry in the Upper Lehigh Valley. These canals provided a convenient and economical means of transporting coal to Philadelphia, New York, and the eastern seaboard.

As railroads became a more efficient means of transporting goods, it became increasingly difficult to profitably operate canals. The last, paying, canal boat completed its journey through the Delaware Canal on October 17, 1931.



On the same day, 40 miles of the canal were deeded to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Commonwealth acquired the remaining 20 miles in 1940.

The U.S. Congress officially recognized the canal's importance to the economic development of America by establishing

the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor in 1988. The canal is a Registered National Historic Landmark and its towpath is a National Recreation Trail.

## A DAY ON THE CANAL

The day of the boatman is long gone, but if you stand on the towpath and listen with a little imagination, you can hear ancient echoes: the rhythmic clip-clop of a team of mules pulling a coal-filled boat and the softer pitter-patter of a barefoot, 12-year old boatman's son, leading the mules along the towpath. The sun is just starting to rise, but already the Delaware Canal has been buzzing with activity for several hours. Boatmen have begun their long day, one that will last until after 10:00 PM, when they tie up for the night and their mules are finally unharnessed, fed, brushed, and bedded down.

To the east, the mighty Del. River runs parallel to the canal and is separated only by a thin sliver of tree-lined land of sycamores, oaks, poplars, and willows.

On the other side of the river are the hills and forests of New Jersey. As a barge glides quietly by, the aroma from a pot of extra-strong coffee and a cast-iron frying pan

filled with eggs and slabs of bacon frying on the deck-top stove wafts up the towpath.

Some boats are headed down to Bristol and on to Philadelphia, filled with 80 or 90 tons of rock-hard anthracite coal. These barges ride low in the water. Others are empty and ride high. They are heading upstream to Easton and then on to the Lehigh Canal for the trek to the town of Mauch Chunk (now called Jim Thrope), to reload

and do it all over again ... and again ... and again.

The still of the morning is suddenly interrupted by the sound of a boatman blowing his conch shell, warning the lock keeper he's approaching. If there's one thing these rough, tough, always-in-a-hurry boatmen hate, it is spending one minute more than is necessary at a lock. On the canal, time is money.



## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION



Delaware Canal State Park offers a wide variety of environmental, recreational, historical, and interpretive programs. Through hands-on activities, guided walks, and evening programs, participants gain appreciation, understanding, and develop a sense of stewardship toward natural and cultural resources.

Curriculum-based environmental education programs are available to schools and youth groups. Teacher workshops are also available. Group programs must be

arranged in advance and may be scheduled by calling the park office. Programs are offered year-round. For more information, contact the park office.

The Locktender's House in the popular destination of New Hope gives insight into the history of the canal, and serves as the headquarters for the Friends of Delaware Canal. While in New Hope take a mule-drawn canal boat ride to learn about life on the canal in the 1860s.

## DELAWARE AND LEHIGH NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

Delaware Canal State Park is in the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor. The corridor stretches more than 150 miles in eastern Pennsylvania from Wilkes-Barre to Bristol, and follows the historic routes of the Lehigh & Susquehanna Railroad, the Lehigh Navigation, and the Delaware Canal. The corridor showcases the extraordinary natural, cultural, and recreational resources and works in partnership to conserve the heritage and enhance the quality of life for its many residents. There are many places throughout the corridor that tell the stories that make the region so nationally significant. [www.nps.gov/dele/](http://www.nps.gov/dele/)



## RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

## Spend The Day

**TRAILS:** The 60-mile long Delaware Canal towpath runs from Easton to Bristol and is a National Recreation Trail. Once trod by mule teams pulling boats along the canal, the towpath is used today by walkers, joggers, bicyclists, cross-country skiers, and bird watchers.

Across the Delaware River in New Jersey, the 70-mile-long Delaware and Raritan (D&R) Canal State Park is one of the most popular recreation corridors for canoeing, jogging, hiking, bicycling, fishing, and horseback riding. The canal and park are part of the National Recreation Trail System.

Together, Delaware Canal State Park and D&R State Park have formed a series of looping trails connecting Pennsylvania and New Jersey via five bridges. By parking in one of several areas located along the loop trail, visitors have easy access to the canal towpaths in both states, and can ride, walk, or jog a complete loop back to their car. Loop trail connection bridges are in the Pennsylvania towns of Uhlertown, Lumberville, Center Bridge, Washington Crossing, and Morrisville.



The 30-mile stretch of parallel trails with five connecting bridges allows visitors to choose among 11 different options of length and distance. Each loop will lead visitors through quaint towns, scenic river views, and wooded forests. A perfect extended weekend could include riding the trails by day and staying overnight at one of the many bed and breakfasts along the way. Tell us about your hike at: [www.exploretrails.com](http://www.exploretrails.com)

**FISHING:** The Delaware River contains many species of game fish including American shad, striped bass, smallmouth bass, and walleye. Shad migration starts in early spring.

The Delaware Canal also contains a variety of warmwater game fish. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission regulations and laws apply.

**CANOEING:** Canoeing is popular in the canal, on the Delaware River, and at the Giving Pond Recreation Area.

Canoeists can launch from public access areas in Pa. and NJ to enjoy the water



trail which includes scenic views of River Islands and Nockamixon Cliffs natural areas. Water trail users will enjoy viewing wildlife along a major migratory route for raptors, waterfowl, and songbirds.

**CAUTION – The river poses hazards and visitors should use caution on and around the river.**

Non-powered boats must display one of the following: boat registration from any state; launch permit or mooring permit from Pennsylvania State Parks that are available at most state park offices; launch use permit from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

**BIRDING:** With its combination of shallow waterways, river islands, green spaces, and cliff faces, Delaware Canal State Park offers an abundance of habitats for birds and other wildlife. At least 154 bird species call the Delaware Canal home. Birds often sighted along the canal include: herons, double-crested cormorants, osprey, bald eagles, and a large variety of songbirds.

The Bird ID trail at the Giving Pond Recreation Area offers an opportunity for beginning birders to learn to identify some of our most common bird species. Natural Lands Trust and Bucks County Audubon Society also participate in birding programs at Delaware Canal State Park.

**HUNTING:** Hunting in Delaware Canal State Park is restricted to archery deer hunting only in appropriate seasons, in designated areas. All other types of hunting and trapping are prohibited.

The Giving Pond Recreation Area has 150 acres within Wildlife Management

Unit 5C. The SR 532 tract of park property across from Washington's Crossing Historical Park has 28 acre, in Wildlife Management Unit 5D.

Hunting woodchucks, also known as groundhogs, is prohibited. Dog training is only permitted from the day following Labor Day through March 31 in designated hunting areas. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission rules and regulations apply. Contact the park office for ADA accessible hunting information.

**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 unsecured 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.

## Stay The Night

**CAMPING:** Although Delaware Canal State Park has no overnight facilities, camping and cabins are available in nearby state, county, and private campgrounds. For information on rental cabins, contact Nockamixon State Park at 215-529-7300. For information on camping, contact, Bucks County Parks at 215-757-0571.



## THE DELAWARE RIVER

At 330 miles in length, the Delaware is the longest free-flowing river east of the Mississippi River and serves as a major migration corridor for birds and fish like American shad. Delaware Canal State Park maintains six public recreation areas with shoreline access to the river. Of the many

islands in the river, 11 are protected as the Delaware River Islands State Park Natural Area.

The 65-mile segment of the Lower Delaware River and selected tributaries are part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Systems. This designation recognizes

free-flowing rivers with exceptional natural, recreational, historical, and cultural resources.

## THE AMERICAN SHAD

American shad- *Alosa sapidissima*

- The American shad is the largest member of the herring family. Spawning adults commonly reach four to eight pounds.

- Female shad are called "roes" and males are called "bucks."

- Shad are an anadromous species which means they are born in freshwater, spend three to six years at sea, and return to their natal waters to spawn.

- Adult shad do not eat on their way to the spawning grounds. Unlike salmon, not all shad die after spawning and will eat on their return trip to the sea.

For centuries, there has been a dynamic interaction between the Delaware River and the people and cultures that have lived and worked in its basin. One of the best examples of this interaction is the story of the American shad. Because of its predictable migrations, shad have served as an important resource to many cultures throughout history.

The Leni Lenape depended on shad as a staple of their diet. They grilled them on

wooden racks, air dried, and smoked them. The shad was an important part of life for the early Moravians and other settlers in the Delaware Valley.

As human populations grew, pollution from sewage and industrial wastewater increased. By the early twentieth century, key fish populations of the Philadelphia waterfront had all but collapsed due to pollution, habitat destruction, and over-fishing.

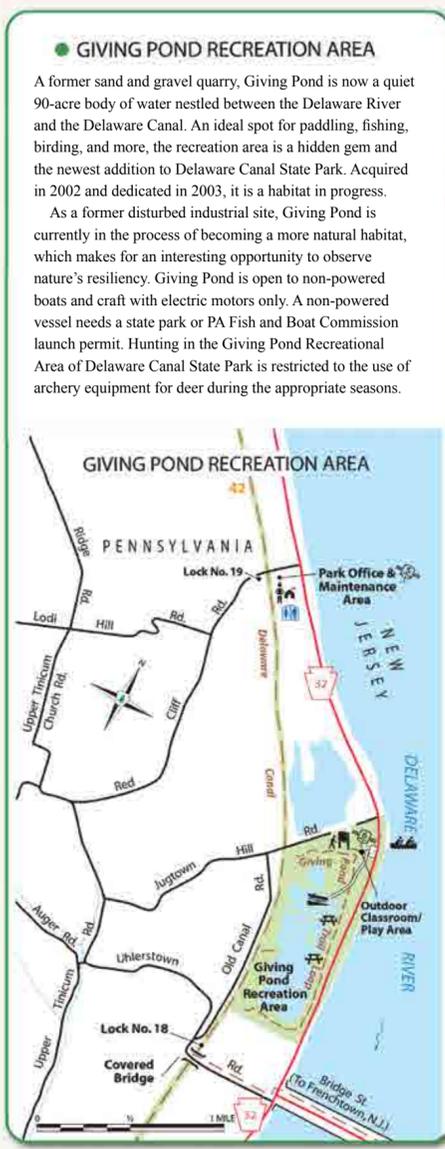
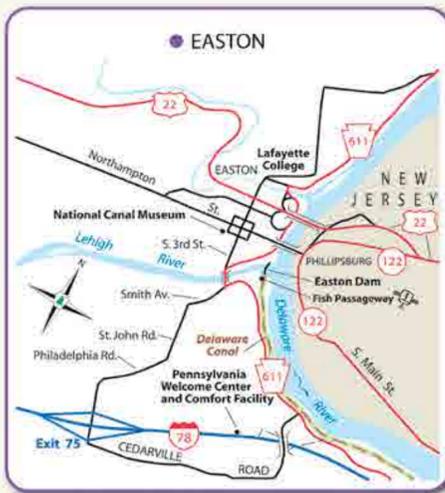
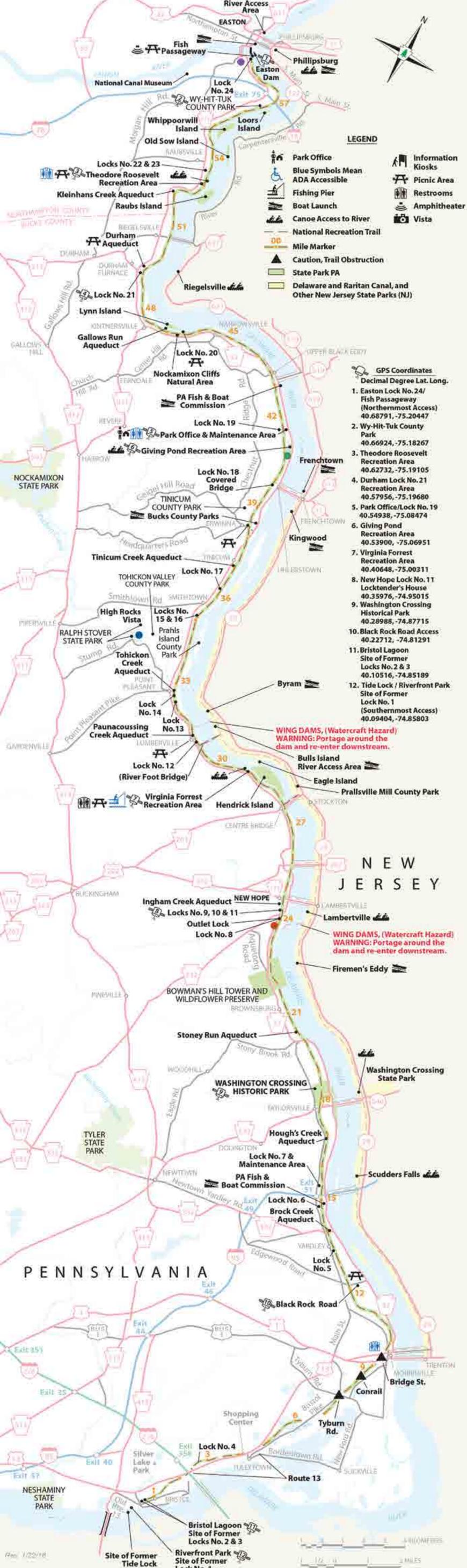
Water pollution worsened during World War II. In 1946, the Delaware Estuary experienced a 20-mile zone of zero dissolved oxygen. Without dissolved oxygen to breathe, all migrating fish, including the American shad, were prevented from passing into their native spawning grounds. In 1961, the Delaware River Basin Commission launched a pollution control effort which greatly improved water quality. Unfortunately, pollution was not the only barrier affecting American shad.

During the great canal building era of the 1830s, rivers were dammed to ensure water supplies for the canals. Two dams vital to the Delaware and Lehigh Canal system disrupted the shad migration up the Lehigh River, preventing the fish from reaching their spawning grounds.



To help the shad re-establish their native spawning grounds on the Lehigh River, while keeping the historic canal intact, park staff have maintained two fish passageways since 1993. These "ladders" allow the fish to navigate upstream around the dams, and on to spawning grounds in the Lehigh River as far north as the Frances E. Walter Dam.

# DELAWARE CANAL STATE PARK



## NATURAL AREAS

Pennsylvania state park natural areas are of unique scenic, geological, or ecological value. These areas are maintained in a natural condition by allowing physical and biological processes to operate, usually without human intervention. Natural areas are set aside to provide locations for scientific observation of natural systems, to protect examples of typical and unique plant and animal communities, and to protect outstanding examples of natural interest and beauty.

**Nockamixon Cliffs**  
Topography, geology, and scenic beauty combine to create the unique character of the Nockamixon Cliffs Natural Area. These sheer cliffs tower 300 feet above the Delaware River and dominate the landscape. Because the cliffs face the north, they receive little direct sunlight. This cool habitat supports an alpine-arctic plant community unusual this far south.



Delaware Canal State Park has two designated state park natural areas; Nockamixon Cliffs and River Islands. These areas contain threatened or endangered species and are unique natural environments. Visitors are welcome to explore these areas, but are asked to abide by the old saying, "take only pictures, leave only footprints." Camping, hunting, and trapping are prohibited within a natural area, including the river islands.

### River Islands

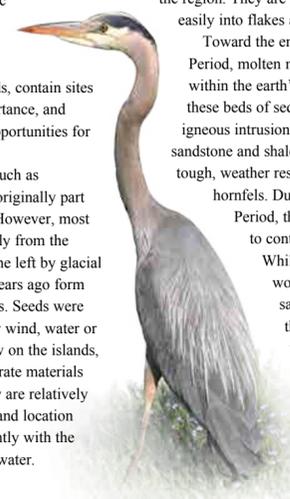
Eleven state park river islands are protected natural areas within a river corridor that is experiencing dramatic economic growth. The islands provide critical habitat for migratory waterfowl and songbirds, contain sites of archaeological importance, and enhance recreational opportunities for anglers and paddlers.

Some river islands, such as Hendrick Island, were originally part of the main shoreline. However, most islands grew individually from the river itself. Silt and stone left by glacial waters almost 10,000 years ago form the base of these islands. Seeds were eventually deposited by wind, water or wildlife. As plants grow on the islands, the roots bind the substrate materials together. Although they are relatively stable, the size, shape, and location of the islands shift slightly with the movement of the river water.

were heavily eroded and deposited red sand and mud in shallow lakes. Great pressure turned the sand and mud into red sandstone and shale that can still be found throughout the region. They are bright red and break easily into flakes and fragments.

Toward the end of the Triassic Period, molten magma from deep within the earth's crust flowed into these beds of sedimentary rock. The igneous intrusion heated the surrounding sandstone and shale, changing them into tough, weather resistant rock called hornfels. During the Jurassic Period, the region was subjected to continuous erosion.

While other rocks were worn away like the sandstone and shale, the hornfels resisted weathering, allowing the Nockamixon Cliffs to "rise" above the surrounding landscape.



## NEARBY PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS

- BOWMAN'S HILL WILDFLOWER PRESERVE**  
635 River Road (Rt. 32)  
Po Box 685  
New Hope, PA 18938  
(215) 862-2924  
www.bhwp.org
- DELAWARE & LEHIGH NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR**  
1 South Third Street - 8th Floor  
Easton, PA 18042  
(610) 923-3548  
www.nps.gov/dele/
- DELAWARE AND RARITAN CANAL STATE PARK**  
625 Canal Road  
Somerset, NJ 08873  
(609) 924-5705  
www.state.nj.us/dep
- LOCKTENDER'S HOUSE: DELAWARE CANAL MUSEUM & FRIENDS OF THE DELAWARE CANAL**  
145 S. Main Street  
New Hope, PA 18938,  
(215) 862-2021  
www.fodc.org
- HUGH MOORE PARK**  
**NATIONAL CANAL MUSEUM**  
2750 Hugh Moore Park Road  
Easton, PA 18042  
(610) 991-0503  
www.canals.org
- JACOBSBURG ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER**  
400 Belfast Road  
Nazareth, PA 18064  
(610) 746-2801  
www.visitPAparks.com
- NESHAMINY STATE PARK**  
3401 State Road  
Bensalem, PA 19020  
(215) 639-4538  
www.visitPAparks.com
- NOCKAMIXON STATE PARK**  
1542 Mountain View Drive  
Quakertown, PA 18951-5732  
(215) 529-7300  
www.visitPAparks.com
- RALPH STOVER STATE PARK**  
6011 State Park Road  
Pipersville, PA 18947  
(610) 982-5560  
www.visitPAparks.com
- SILVER LAKE PARK AND NATURE CENTER**  
1306 Bath Road  
Bristol, PA 19007  
(215) 785-1177  
www.silverlakenaturecenter.org
- TINICUM COUNTY PARK**  
River Road  
Erwinna, PA 18920  
(215) 757-0571  
www.buckscounty.org
- TOHICKON VALLEY PARK**  
Cafferty Road  
Pt. Pleasant, PA 18947  
(215) 297-0754  
www.buckscounty.org
- TYLER STATE PARK**  
101 Swamp Road  
Newtown, PA 18940-1151  
(215) 968-2021  
www.visitPAparks.com
- WASHINGTON CROSSING HISTORIC PARK**  
1112 River Road  
PO Box 103  
Washington Crossing, PA 18977  
(215) 493-4076  
phmc.state.pa.us

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- 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**  
Call 911 and contact a park employee. Directions to the nearest hospital are posted on bulletin boards and at the park office.
- Information**  
Delaware Canal State Park  
11 Lodi Hill Road  
Upper Black Eddy, PA 18972  
GPS: Lat. 40.54938 Long. -75.08474  
610-982-5560  
email: delawarecanalsp@pa.gov  
www.visitPAparks.com  
facebook.com/DelawareCanal

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