



Garden of the Gods



Shawnee Hills took millions of years to form. Rock formations and cliffs at Garden of the Gods — made of sandstone — are about 320 million years old. Long ago, parts of Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky were covered by a giant, inland sea. Then, great rivers carried sand and mud to the sea, where it settled along the shoreline. Over time, the sediments turned into layers of rock thousands of feet thick. At Garden of the Gods, that rock is more than 20,000 feet thick — about four miles deep. Eventually, a great uplift occurred that fractured the bedrock, exposing it to nature’s erosive forces. Since then, windblown sand, rain and freezing and thawing actions have worn down the layers of sediment creating beautiful rock formations at Garden of the Gods. To find out more, read on-site interpretive signs.

Observation Trail

Observation Trail is a quarter-mile-long-interpretive trail that leads to areas on top of the bluffs, which feature views of Shawnee Hills and Garden of the Gods Wilderness. You can see rock formations with names such as Camel Rock, Table Rock and Devil’s Smokestack. Observation Trail has some short, steep grades and a few steps. However, as a whole, the trail is not tiring. Caution: High cliffs in the area.

Campground and Picnic Areas

Pharaoh Campground — open year round — features 12 campsites, tables, fire grills, toilets, drinking water and trails. Nice views of the Shawnee Hills can be seen from the campground and picnic areas. Pharaoh Picnic Ground is open year round, as is the Observation Area. Overnight parking is not allowed

Wilderness Trail System

Rocky streams, sheer cliffs, pine stands, hardwood forest, trickling streams, rock overhangs and scenic vistas are here. Spring offers wildflowers and rushing streams. Autumn offers beautiful fall colors and few insect pests. Users are encouraged to obtain detailed maps before entering the backcountry. Overnight parking is allowed at the backpacker’s parking lot. Motorized vehicles or mechanized equipment are not permitted.

Length:

Observation Trail (flagstone path): ¼ mile (~30 min.)

Entire Trail System: 16.9 miles

Indian Point Trail: 1.6 miles

Trail Description:

Observation Trail: Flagstone surface; easy to moderate

General Trails: Dirt; easy to difficult

Season of Operation: Open Year-round

Observation Trail and Picnic Area:

Open Daily from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Facilities: Picnic area, campground (non-electric sites), vault toilets, backpacking, equestrian trails and hitching posts, and interpretive signs along Observation Trail.

Camping Fee: \$10/Campsite,

Driving Directions:

From Harrisburg: take Highway 145 south 5 miles, to Highway 34, then take 34 south for 10 miles. Then turn east onto Karbers Ridge Road 2.5 miles to Forest Road. Turn north. Drive 1.5 miles to the recreation area entrance road.

Trail Markings in Wilderness: Directional signs are at trail intersections only.

Trail Reassurance Markers =  white diamond

River to River Trail =  blue i

Safety: Extra caution should be used where the trail is near the bluffs and when traveling on wet slippery rocks. Be aware that search and rescue efforts may not be as rapid as expected in an urban setting. Poison ivy and venomous snakes are present in the area.

In the event of an emergency, call 911.

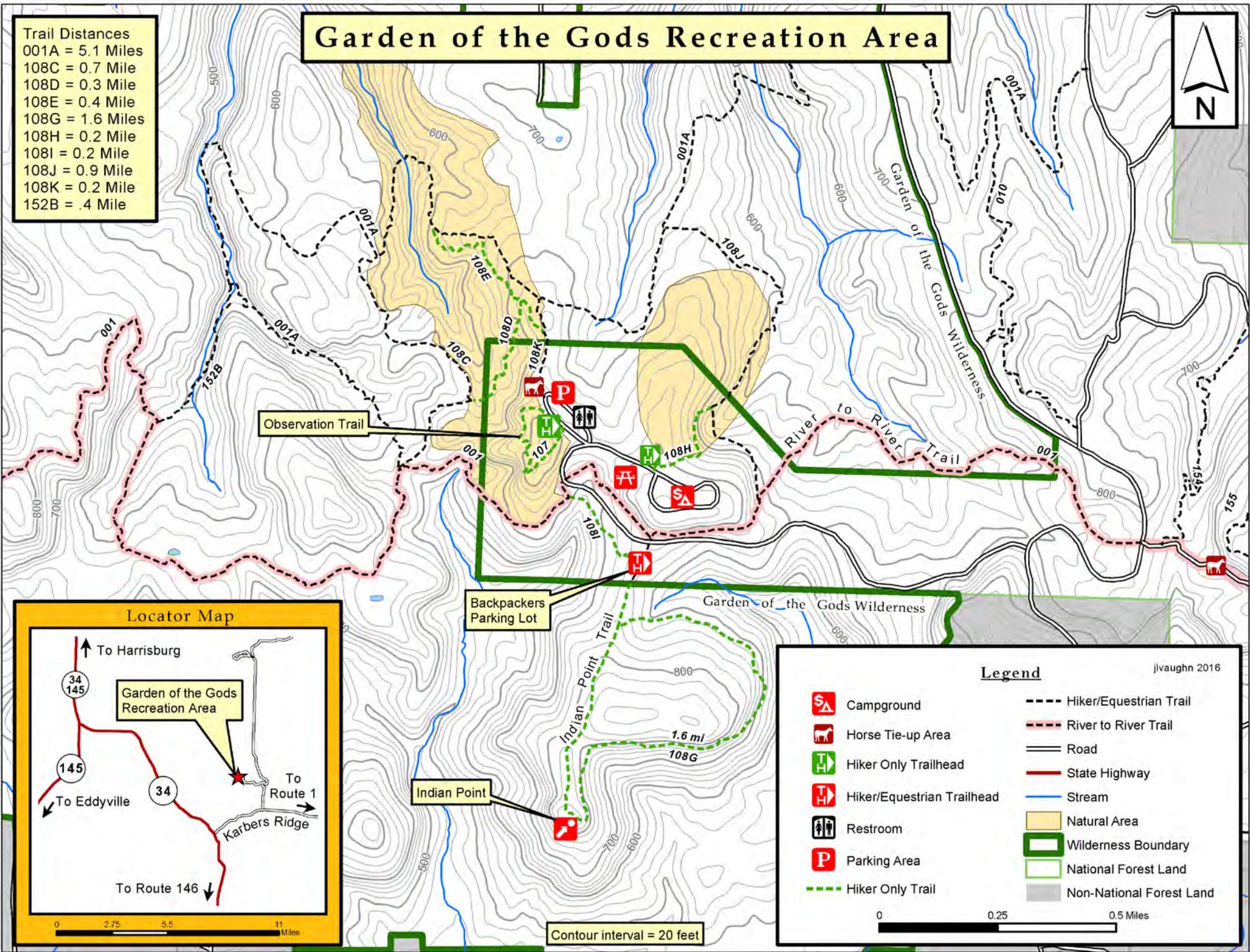
Site Regulations:

1. Observation Trail and Picnic Areas are open 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. No overnight parking.
2. Disposable food and beverage containers are not permitted on Observation Trail.
3. Pets must be leashed.
4. Use trash receptacles. Pack-it-In, Pack-it-Out applies to entire trail system.
5. Camp only at designated campsites. Quiet hours 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.
6. No reservations. Campsites are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.
7. There is a maximum of 2 tents, 8 people and 2 vehicles allowed per campsite.
8. Follow Leave No Trace outdoor ethics (Int.org).



Garden of the Gods Recreation Area

- Trail Distances**
- 001A = 5.1 Miles
 - 108C = 0.7 Mile
 - 108D = 0.3 Mile
 - 108E = 0.4 Mile
 - 108G = 1.6 Miles
 - 108H = 0.2 Mile
 - 108I = 0.2 Mile
 - 108J = 0.9 Mile
 - 108K = 0.9 Mile
 - 108L = 0.2 Mile
 - 152B = .4 Mile

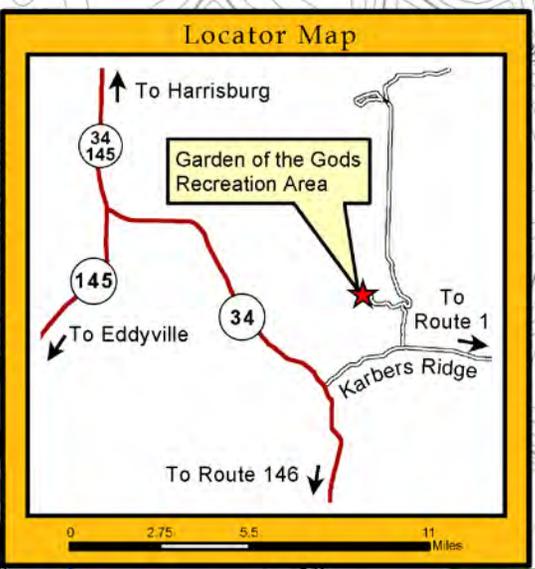


Observation Trail

Backpackers Parking Lot

Indian Point

Contour interval = 20 feet



jlvbaughn 2016

Legend

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campground Horse Tie-up Area Hiker Only Trailhead Hiker/Equestrian Trailhead Restroom Parking Area Hiker Only Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiker/Equestrian Trail River to River Trail Road State Highway Stream Natural Area Wilderness Boundary National Forest Land Non-National Forest Land
--	---

0 0.25 0.5 Miles