



Contact Us

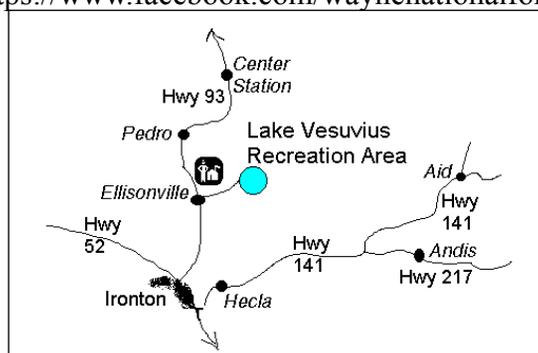
The Vesuvius Recreation Area is managed out of the Ironton District Office. Office hours are 8 - 4:30 Monday through Friday.

Ironton Ranger District
6518 State Route 93
Pedro, OH 45659
Phone: 740-534-6500

Federal relay system for the deaf and hearing impaired: 1-800-877-8339

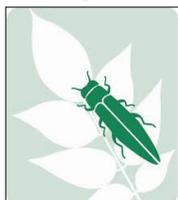
website: www.fs.usda.gov/wayne
Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/waynenationalforest>



The Vesuvius Recreation Area is 6.5 miles north of Ironton and US Highway 52 just off State Route 93. Follow the signs to County Road 29, turn right, then continue to follow the signs to the Vesuvius Recreation Area.

To help slow the spread of emerald ash borer and other invasive pests, no firewood may be transported onto Wayne National Forest lands, except commercially packaged wood with the USDA inspection label. You may collect a small amount (what can be carried by hand) of down and dead firewood to be used at your recreation site.



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Wayne National Forest *Lake Vesuvius Recreation Area*



Forest Service

FS-R9-041
01/2016

History of Area

The Vesuvius Iron Furnace (abandoned stack above) was one of 46 charcoal iron furnaces located in the six county Hanging Rock Iron Region of southern Ohio. The furnaces produced iron from 1818 to 1916. By 1875, southeastern Ohio led the nation in iron production. Civil War armaments, pots, kettles, wagon wheels, and other tools were made of iron from this region.

Hanging Rock iron was noted for its rust and corrosion-resistant characteristics. It was said that during the War, the demand for iron became so great that many iron masters would start the pigs of iron off to war before they cooled, and occasionally the hot iron would set the wagons on fire on the way to market.

To fuel the furnaces, the forests were repeatedly cut, and the wood converted to charcoal. Each furnace required cutting over 300 acres of timber annually to keep up with the demand.

Early predictions had boasted the iron ore in the Hanging Rock region would produce iron for 2,700 years. But shortly after the Civil War, the Hanging Rock seams were depleted and by the 1900's, most of the Hanging Rock furnaces had ceased operation.

The Vesuvius Furnace was built in 1833 and named for an Italian volcano. Only the rock chimney and a wall remains, built without benefit of mortar. The chimney was only a small part of the operation that once produced iron.

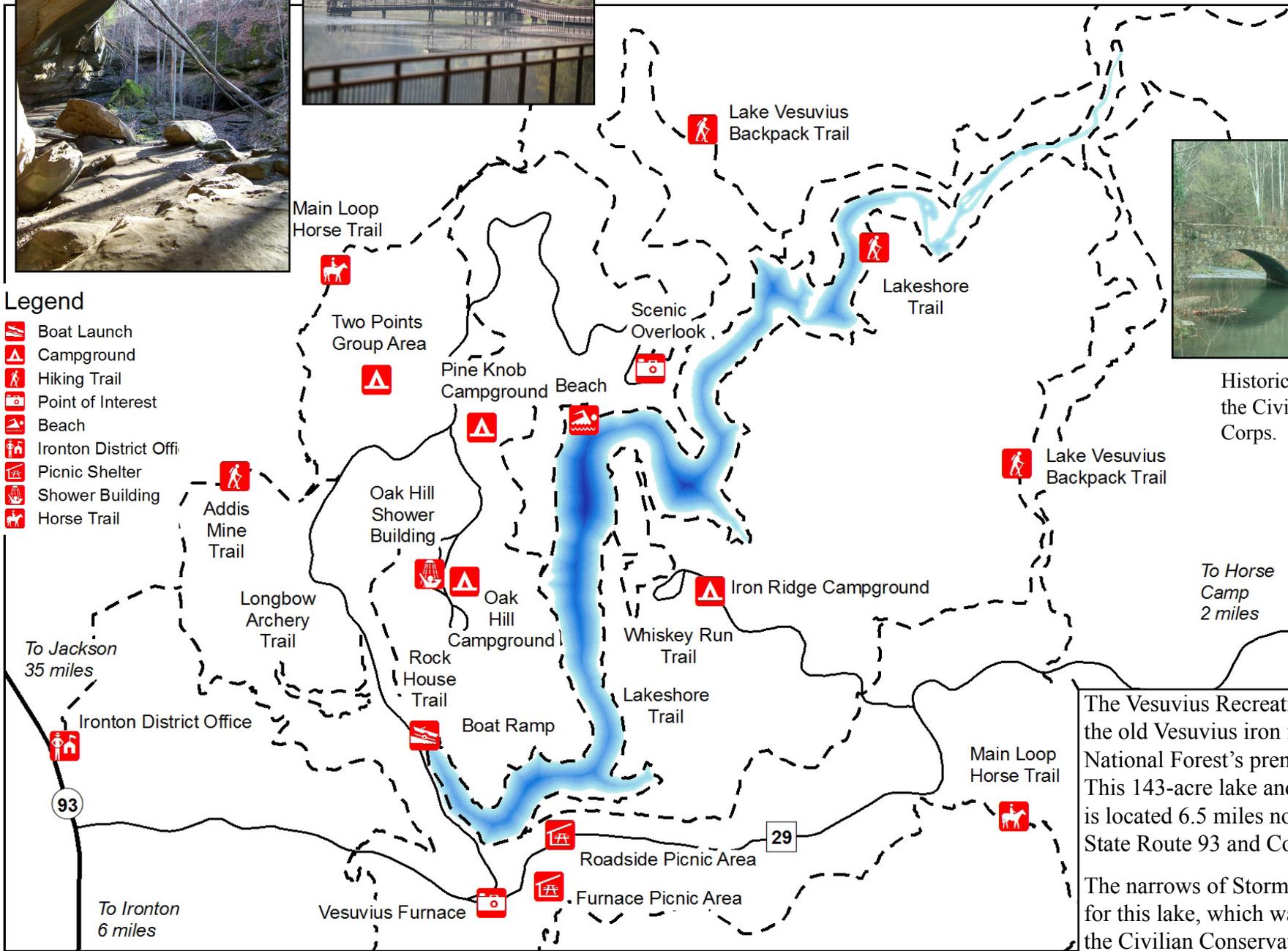
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Welcome to Lake Vesuvius Recreation Area



Legend

-  Boat Launch
-  Campground
-  Hiking Trail
-  Point of Interest
-  Beach
-  Ironton District Office
-  Picnic Shelter
-  Shower Building
-  Horse Trail



Historic rock bridge built by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

The Vesuvius Recreation Area, named for the old Vesuvius iron furnace, is the Wayne National Forest's premier developed site. This 143-acre lake and 1200-acre complex is located 6.5 miles north of Ironton, just off State Route 93 and Co. Road 29.

The narrows of Storms Creek offered a site for this lake, which was dammed in 1939 by the Civilian Conservation Corp. The rugged hills and cliffs offer a scenic backdrop for this historical and beautiful site.

History (continued) -

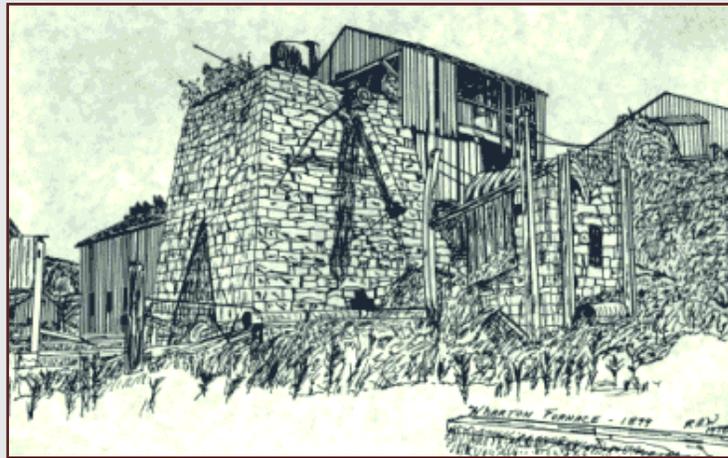
The Vesuvius Furnace employed about 100 men who were paid in goods or in scrip redeemable only at the company store. They produced 8 to 12 tons of iron each day in the form of pig iron. Pig iron was then sold to manufacturers of other iron products. Each ton of iron required 190 bushels of charcoal, three tons of iron ore, and 300 pounds of limestone. The three ingredients were poured in the top of the furnace and then the charcoal was ignited. Air was blown (or blasted, hence the name blast furnace) up through the ore and fuel mixture through the smaller, inverted V-shaped openings in the side of the stack.

Once heated to the proper temperature the iron ore and limestone melted. Impurities in the mixture floated to the top and formed a glassy waste product called slag. The larger inverted V-shaped opening was used to draw off the iron and slag separately.

The molten iron was released into a series of sand trenches. The central trench branched into side ditches, each filled with molten iron which then cooled and solidified. The central trench was called sow iron, the side trenches, pig iron. The names came from the similarity of appearance to piglets nursing on each side of a sow pig.

Note:

When visiting Vesuvius please remember that all pets must be on a leash and camping and parking are allowed only in designated areas.



A drawing of a furnace operation, normally on two levels..

Oxen hauled the pig iron by wagon to the shipping point. It took about 50 yoke of oxen to move the iron pigs to the docks. Once loaded on river boats, the ore was taken to Pittsburgh. In 1851 rail lines were completed to most of the furnaces providing more efficient transportation.

As the iron seams played out and the circle of denuded land required ever further hauls of wood for charcoal the last furnace closed in 1916. Between 1900 and 1930, census records show a 40 percent drop in the area's population.

Camping Regulations

Camping is enjoyable and memorable. Be courteous to other visitors.

To insure that everyone has fun and to protect forest resources the Vesuvius Recreation Area has the following guidelines.

- Don't let a violation notice spoil your outing.
- Camping units must be occupied the first night and equipment must be attended each 24 hour period.
 - Eight people or your immediate family plus

Vesuvius Furnace gets new life -

A large Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) camp was established near the old furnace in the 1930's. The manpower provided by the CCC crews constructed the Vesuvius Lake and Recreation Area.

The narrows of Storms Creek offered a good dam site for a lake and the rugged hills and out-cropping cliffs formed a scenic backdrop to the historical site. The old oxen road which had hauled out the pig iron was widened and gravelled, and trees were planted on the hillsides.

Recognizing its historic value, a roof was added to the rock furnace in 1991 to protect the massive stonework and firebrick from further water damage.

two vehicles are permitted at your site.

- Pay promptly.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Adequate paved or gravel surface is available. Keep vehicles and trailers off the road shoulders and grass areas.
- Quiet time is 10 p.m. - 6 a.m. and generators, loud audio devices and noisy activities are not allowed.
- Visitors must leave the area by 10 p.m.
- Firearms and fireworks will not be used in the campground.
- Wash food and personal items away from the drinking water supplies. Use water faucets for drawing water only.
- Deposit all garbage in dumpsters.
- Within the campground, use cars, motorbikes, motorcycles or other motor vehicles only for entering or leaving.
- Do not chop, carve, cut, drive nails or otherwise damage trees.

Welcome

to the Lake Vesuvius Recreation Area. This multi-purpose development is located 6.5 miles north of Ironton, just off State Route 93 on County Road 29. The facility offers a variety of activities in a fully accessible setting.

Camping

Two family campgrounds and one group campground are available. All sites have tables, fire rings, and tent pads. Drinking water, garbage containers, and restrooms are located throughout the campgrounds. There are no sewer hookups.

Some campsites may be reserved by calling toll-free the National Recreation Reservation System (NRRS) at 1-877-444-6777 or their web site is: www.Recreation.gov. These campsites, and others in the campgrounds are otherwise available on a first come basis. NRRS charges an additional fee for reservations.

Holders of Federal Age and Access Passes are charged a reduced rate.



Iron Ridge Campground

This campground has 32 sites. Please refer to the website to find out which sites have electricity and other amenities, as well as which sites are designated for tents.

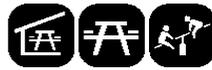
Oak Hill Campground

This campground consists of four loops, Pine Knob, White Oak, Post Oak and Scarlet Oak, with a total of 28 sites. All sites have electric and water hookups and are reservable through NRRS. The restrooms and showers are fully accessible. For more information visit the website.



Two Points Group Area

This campground is available to groups with a capacity of up to 50 people and includes a shelterhouse.



Picnicking

Picnic tables and grills are located throughout the recreation area for free day use.

There are two shelter houses available which may be reserved from the NRRS for a fee (see the section under camping for contact information). Both have water, grills, and picnic tables available and are close to hiking trails. The capacity of the shelters is 200 people each.

The Vesuvius Furnace Shelter (Site #3) has electricity and a ball field. The Vesuvius Roadside Shelter (Site #4) has no electricity. An amphitheater is available near the Vesuvius Shelter.



Emergencies

For emergencies call 911. For non-emergencies call the Lawrence County Sheriff's office @ 740-532-3525. The nearest phone is located at Tipton's Grocery.



Boat Dock and Swimming Beach

The swimming beach is open daily during the summer season from 10 am - 9 pm weather permitting. A parking fee is charged at the beach. No swimming is allowed at the boat dock, along the boardwalk, near the dam, or the spillway.

Only boats with electric motors are allowed. Operation of gasoline motors is prohibited. The boat launch is open year round.



Fishing

Fish are stocked periodically and fishermen report that Lake Vesuvius is a great lake for catching largemouth bass, bluegill, channel catfish, and rainbow trout. Ohio State fishing licenses are required for anglers 16 years and older.



Trails

Boardwalk Trail - .32 mile fully accessible trail between the boat dock and spillway.

Lakeshore Trail - 8 mile trail follows the waterline around Lake Vesuvius along rock bluffs and across foot bridges.

Rock House Trail - 1/2 mile paved interpretive trail to a rockshelter and geologic formations. Starts at boat ramp parking lot.

Vesuvius Backpack Trail - 17 miles of trail through a variety of vegetation and topography.

Vesuvius Horse Trail System - 31 miles in the main loop. Another 15 miles of connector trails traverse some of the areas most scenic countryside. Two trailheads offer camping and parking for equestrian use.

Whiskey Run Trail - 1 mile trail from Iron Ridge Campground connects to Lakeshore Trail passes by abandoned charcoal pits.

Longbow Archery Trail - 3/4 mile accessible trail is located across from the boat launch.

Oak Hill Campground Trails - Four trails connect different parts of the Oak Hill Campground and Rock house Trail forming a 1.5 mile loop.

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