

WELCOME!

The Hickory Creek Wilderness, encompassing 8,863 acres of mature Northern Hardwood forest, was Congressionally designated by the Pennsylvania Wilderness Act of 1984 as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System, a special area that was set aside to provide a place...

"... Where the earth and it's community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

-The Wilderness Act of 1964

Located on the Bradford Ranger District of Allegheny National Forest in Warren County, Pennsylvania, the Hickory Creek Wilderness consists of gentle to moderate terrain drained by the East Hickory Creek watershed. Topography ranges from 1273 feet where East Hickory Creek exits the Wilderness to 1900 feet on the plateau.

Wilderness is intended for those seeking a truly primitive outdoor experience. Unlike many other trails and recreation areas of the Allegheny National Forest, there will be no shelters, campgrounds, water spigots, restrooms, or detailed trail signs. Wilderness is intended to provide an experience of personal challenge where you can meet and live with nature on its own terms. There are no trail improvements such as bridges to make travel easier. The trail is more difficult to follow than those in non-wilderness areas, and is blazed infrequently with faded yellow markers that may be difficult to locate in some areas. In keeping with wilderness values, these blazes will be allowed to fade with time, and be replaced with markers more in keeping with the natural environment. **Motorized and mechanized vehicles and equipment of all kinds (including bicycles) are prohibited within the wilderness.**

"There is no quiet place in...cities. No place to hear the unfurling of leaves in the Spring or the rustle of an insect's wings."

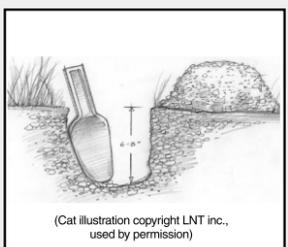
- Chief Seattle

BE PREPARED

As a visitor to the wilderness, you should be aware that you are entering a primitive environment where you will be faced with the challenge of being entirely self-sufficient for whatever time you decide to remain there.

It is essential to inform someone of your plans and schedule. Leave your itinerary with someone who can call the Warren County Sheriffs Department if there is an emergency. The nearest hospital is located in Warren, 15 miles to the north. You may see few other people, so you should plan ahead to avoid problems, and it is always a good idea to hike with another person.

Human waste may be disposed of by digging a cathole: Select a site 200 feet or more from water sources and potential campsites and dig a hole 6-8 inches deep. After use, fill in the hole completely.



ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT FOR BACKCOUNTRY TRAVEL

Sturdy, well broken in footwear, first aid kit, pocket-knife, flashlight or headlamp, waterproof matches or fire-starter, plenty of food and drinking water, lightweight backpacking stove and fuel, raingear and clothing appropriate for all seasonal weather conditions, bear-bag and rope or cord for hanging food and waste away from animals, candle, a trowel for digging catholes to bury waste, map and compass.

Potable drinking water is available at the trailhead and at Heart's Content Recreation Area. Though waters that course through the Hickory Creek Wilderness are considered of high quality, all drinking and cooking water should be filtered or brought to a rolling boil prior to use.

"We do not inherit the land from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."

- Kenyan proverb

WILDERNESS REGULATIONS

National Forest wilderness is managed to protect wilderness attributes for future generations, preserve natural ecosystems, and provide a primitive wilderness experience. You can help maintain the wilderness character of this area by observing the following rules and practicing "Leave No Trace" backcountry ethics:

* **PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT**—Wilderness contains no trash receptacles—you are required to bring all refuse out with you to dispose of in a proper facility. Plan ahead, repack food in lightweight, reusable plastic bags to reduce waste, and bring only what you need. Leave cans and plastic containers at home. **NEVER attempt to BURN any of your trash.** No matter how hot the fire, some litter, especially metal foil or cans, will not be fully consumed, and **the aroma of burned trash will attract bears and other wild animals to invade campsites.** A fire ring is never considered to be a trash receptacle.

* **Do not cut, deface, or damage any live trees or shrubs.**

* It is **prohibited at all times to leave a fire unattended** for any amount of time without completely extinguishing it.

* It is **prohibited to "blaze" routes with marking paint or flagging ribbon.** Use a map and compass to find your way, leaving no trace of your route.

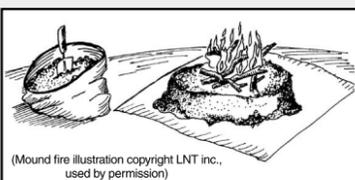
* **Mountain Bikes and any mechanized travel are prohibited** by federal law to be possessed or operated anywhere in the wilderness. Wheelchairs, however, are allowed for persons requiring them.

* **Motorized vehicles and equipment of any kind are prohibited** by federal law to be possessed or operated anywhere in the wilderness.

* **Pack animals for transportation are allowed within the wilderness.** These pack stock are not allowed on the Hickory Creek, Tanbark, or any other designated hiking trail.

LOW IMPACT MOUND FIRES:

Campfires are generally discouraged due to the very high impact they place on wilderness resources. However, if you should choose to have a fire, a **low impact mound fire** is the best choice to Leave No Trace of your visit on the land. To build a mound fire, you must collect some mineral soil, sand or gravel from an already disturbed source (such as under the roots of a blown down tree). Lay a ground cloth or sheet of plastic

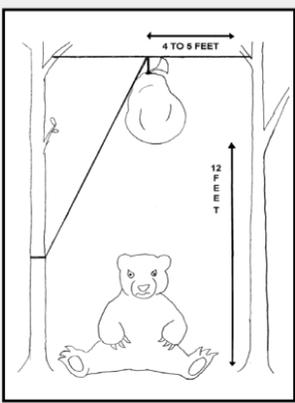


on the fire site and spread the soil into a circular, flat-topped mound at least 3-5 inches thick. The thickness of the mound is critical to insulate the ground below from the heat of the fire. Use only small diameter wood for your fire, so it will be more fully consumed. When breaking camp, scatter the cold ashes and unburned debris over a wide area, and return the mineral soil to where you collected it. **Digging a fire pit is not recommended**—this is very disruptive to the soil and vegetation, and more importantly, coals can remain hot in the ground, and pose a fire danger long after the fire appears to be out.

NOTICE: *If the weather becomes dry for an extended period, a burning ban may be declared throughout the Forest, and campfires will be prohibited in the wilderness. Check with an Allegheny National Forest Office for current fire danger conditions.*

BEAR NECESSITIES

- **Always hang food in a bear bag**, a line suspended between two trees at a distance of four to five feet from either, and suspended a minimum of 10-12 feet from the ground.
- Food and scented items such as toothpaste or deodorant should not be taken into, or stored in, a tent.
- Place kitchen areas and hang food at least 100 feet downwind of campsites.
- **Avoid food with strong odors.**
- **NEVER burn or bury trash or leftover food**—no matter how hot the fire, some residual odors and unburned waste will remain to attract bears and other animals into popular camping areas. Hang trash the same way as food and always **PACK OUT WHAT YOU PACK IN.**



- **Camping is permitted throughout the Hickory Creek Wilderness, but we ask visitors to use established, already impacted campsites whenever possible.** If you choose to camp in a pristine spot, select a campsite 100 feet away from trails and streams, avoid trampling vegetation and disturbing the soil, and remove all traces of your presence when breaking camp, especially fire rings and burned debris. Avoid camping in the same location for more than two consecutive days.
- **Campfires are allowed, but strongly discouraged; a backpacking stove is a far better choice.** It is easier to start and cook with than a fire, it doesn't blacken cookware, and causes far less impact to the environment.
- **Do not build "structures" of any kind**, such as lean-tos, tables, or furniture within the Hickory Creek Wilderness. You should leave no trace of your visit in your campsite when you leave.
- **Dogs are permitted, but must be kept under your control at all times.** Dispose of your dog's waste in a cathole, just as you would human waste.
- **Hunting, fishing, and trapping are allowed in the wilderness** subject to the rules of the Pennsylvania Game Commission and the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission. **During the big game (Late September-December) and spring turkey season (April-May), it is recommended that hikers wear fluorescent hunter orange vests and hats.**

"Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand of it. Whatever he does to the web he does to himself."

- Chief Seattle

LEAVE NO TRACE! OUTDOOR ETHICS

1. PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- Know the regulations and special concerns for wilderness.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
- Use a map and compass to reduce your chance of becoming lost.

2. TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 100 feet from lakes and streams.
- Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites. Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy. Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
- **In pristine areas:** Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.

3. DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- **Pack it in, pack it out.** Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. **Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.**
- Deposit of solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 100 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

4. LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

5. MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.

6. RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Observe wildlife from a distance.
- Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Hang your food in a bear-bag to protect it and avoid habituating animals to humans as a food source.

7. BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on *Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics*, visit the Leave No Trace Inc. website at www.lnt.org.

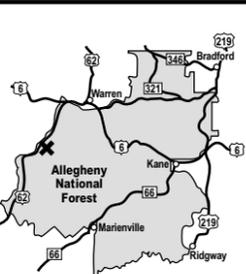
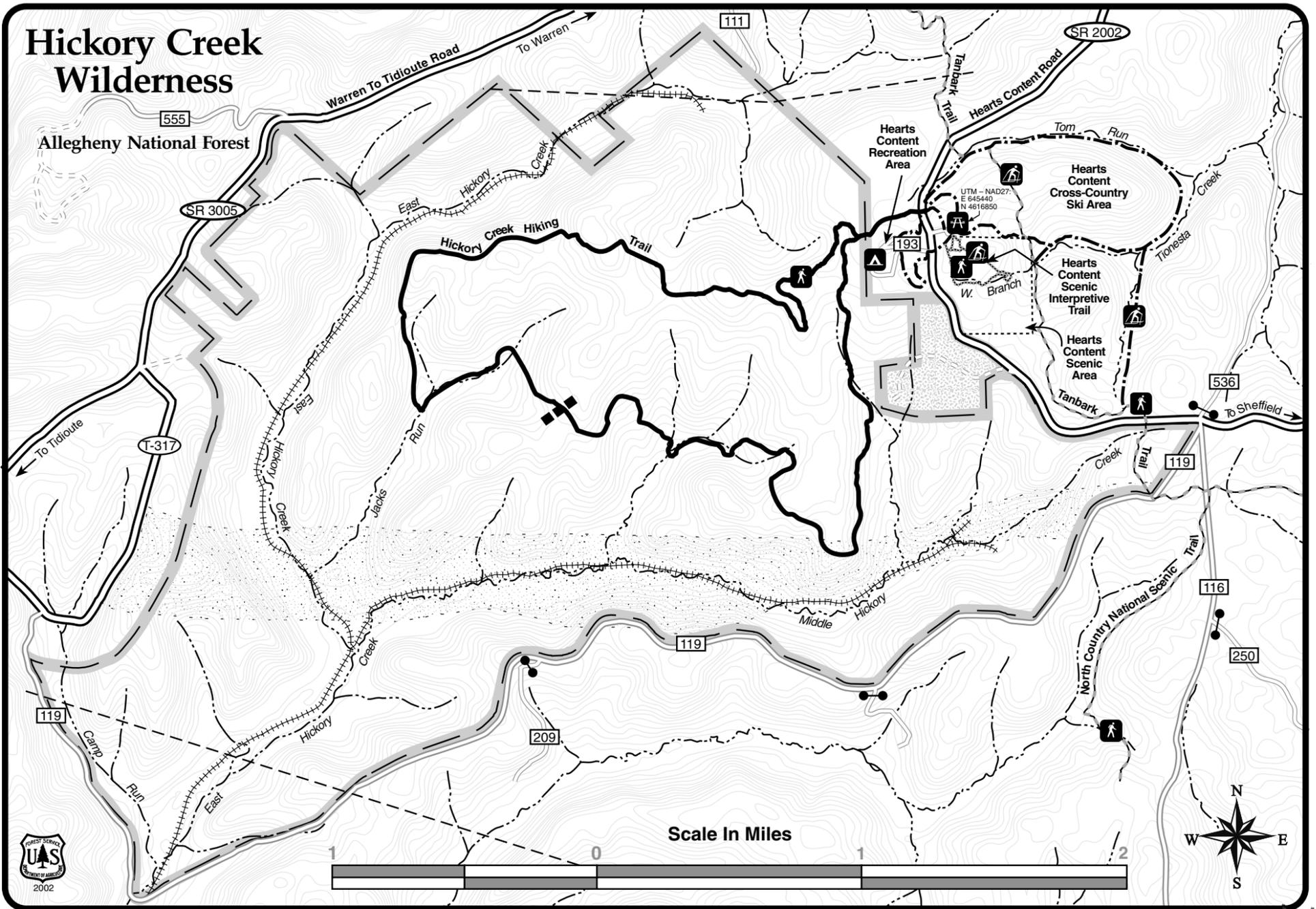
VOLUNTEERS

If an individual or service organization is interested in volunteering to help with wilderness related work projects, please contact the Wilderness Ranger at the Bradford Ranger District (814) 362-4613.

"Simplicity in all things is the secret of the wilderness ... When in the wilds, we must not carry our problems with us or the joy is lost."

-Sigurd Olson

Hickory Creek Wilderness



Legend	
	Campground
	Picnic Area
	Hickory Creek Hiking Trail
	Other Trail
	X-C Ski Trail
	Wilderness Area Boundary
	Tornado Swath 1985
	Old Railroad Grade
	Highway ⁹⁴⁸
	Forest Road ⁴⁴⁴
	Stream
	Gate
	Pipeline
	Old Artillery Range
	Private Land

"I am glad I shall never be young without wild places to be young in. Of what avail are forty freedoms, without a blank spot on the map?"
 -Aldo Leopold, 1887-1948

Hickory Creek Wilderness



HOWARD ZAHNISER

A Pioneer in the American Environmental Movement: Tionesta, PA was the home and burial place of Howard Zahniser, author of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which established the National Wilderness Preservation System on federal public lands. His vision was to create a National system of Wilderness Areas that would be permanently protected by law and provide wild places for future generations in perpetuity. This was the world's first such system. The Wilderness System now includes over 105 million acres—more than four percent of the entire U.S. land area!

Zahniser's eloquent words in the Act that he so carefully crafted, captured the spirit of preserving wild areas...

"A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, and where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."
 -The Wilderness Act of 1964

"The Wilderness that has come to us from the eternity of the past we have the boldness to project into the eternity of the future."

To know the wilderness is to know a profound humility, to recognize one's littleness, to sense dependence and interdependence, indebtedness and responsibility."
 -Howard Zahniser, February 25, 1906 - May 5, 1964

HIKING THE AREA

There is only one major designated hiking trail within the wilderness boundary. Hickory Creek Trail is a loop of about 12.1 miles situated in the middle of the area. Many backpackers and dayhikers use the Hickory Creek Trail. It is marked with faded yellow blazes, which will be allowed to fade with time and be replaced with more natural trail markers. **NOTICE:** the trails indicated in the Sierra Club book, "Allegheny National Forest Hiking Guide" listed as side loops, are not designated hiking trails, and the U.S. Forest Service does not maintain them.

FINDING HICKORY CREEK WILDERNESS

Parking is available at the picnic area within Heart's Content Recreation Area, 15 miles southwest of Warren, PA. Follow SR 3005 about 11 miles to the junction with the marked State Road 2002 which leads to Heart's Content Recreation Area (four miles) directly across from the Heart's Content Campground.

SERVICES

Food and gasoline are available at Sheffield and Tidioute. Warren, 15 miles away, offers a full range of services.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY DIAL 911

Or contact Warren County State Police at (814) 723-8880. You may contact the authorities through the campground host at Heart's Content, or if they are unavailable the nearest pay phones are at the Cherry Grove Volunteer Fire Department or in Sheffield, 11 miles to the east of the trailhead.

MAPS

It is highly recommended that Wilderness visitors always carry a compass, detailed USGS topographical maps of the area they are traveling, and the skills to use both. The Wilderness is located within the Cherry Grove and Cobham quadrangles. These maps are available at the Forest Service offices listed below.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Northern Alleghenies Vacation Region
 315 2nd Avenue • P.O. Box 804 • Warren, PA 16365
 (814) 726-1222 • (800) 624-7802
www.northernalleghenies.com

USDA Forest Service, Allegheny National Forest:
Bradford Ranger District Star Route, Box 88
 Bradford, PA 16701 (814) 362-4613
 (814) 368-8116 TTY
www.fs.fed.us/r9/allegheny
Forest Supervisors Office 222 Liberty Street
 Warren, PA 16365 (814) 723-5150
 (814) 726-2710 FAX

Allegheny National Forest

U.S. Department of Agriculture
 Forest Service

