

SOUTHERN PINELANDS TRAIL SECTION - PART ONE of the NJ STATE LONG TRAIL

Burlington, Atlantic and Cumberland Counties

The Southern Pinelands Trail is roughly 102 miles long. It offers magnificent views of lakes, reservoirs, ponds, rivers, creeks, saltwater and freshwater wetlands and the Cape May Canal, Delaware Bay, and the Atlantic Ocean. Its existing and extinct historic sites include Batona, Pleasant Mills, Amatol, Weymouth Furnace, Mays Landing, Bethlehem Loading Company in Estelle Manor County Park, Williamsburg in the Tuckahoe WMA, Cape May Court House, Cold Springs Village, a WW2 "Martello" observation tower, and Cape May Lighthouse. You are on the outer coastal plain, so do not expect much change in elevation, but do expect swampy conditions in and after wet weather, bogs, and plenty of stream crossings. Also be prepared for ticks and chiggers in season, with sealed leggings and chemical repellent.

This description should be read in conjunction with the accompanying map. More of the Southern Pinelands Trail will be paint blazed blue in the near future.

The Southern Pinelands Trail passes through Burlington, Atlantic, Cumberland and Cape May counties.

Map 24 Batsto-Hammonton Creek

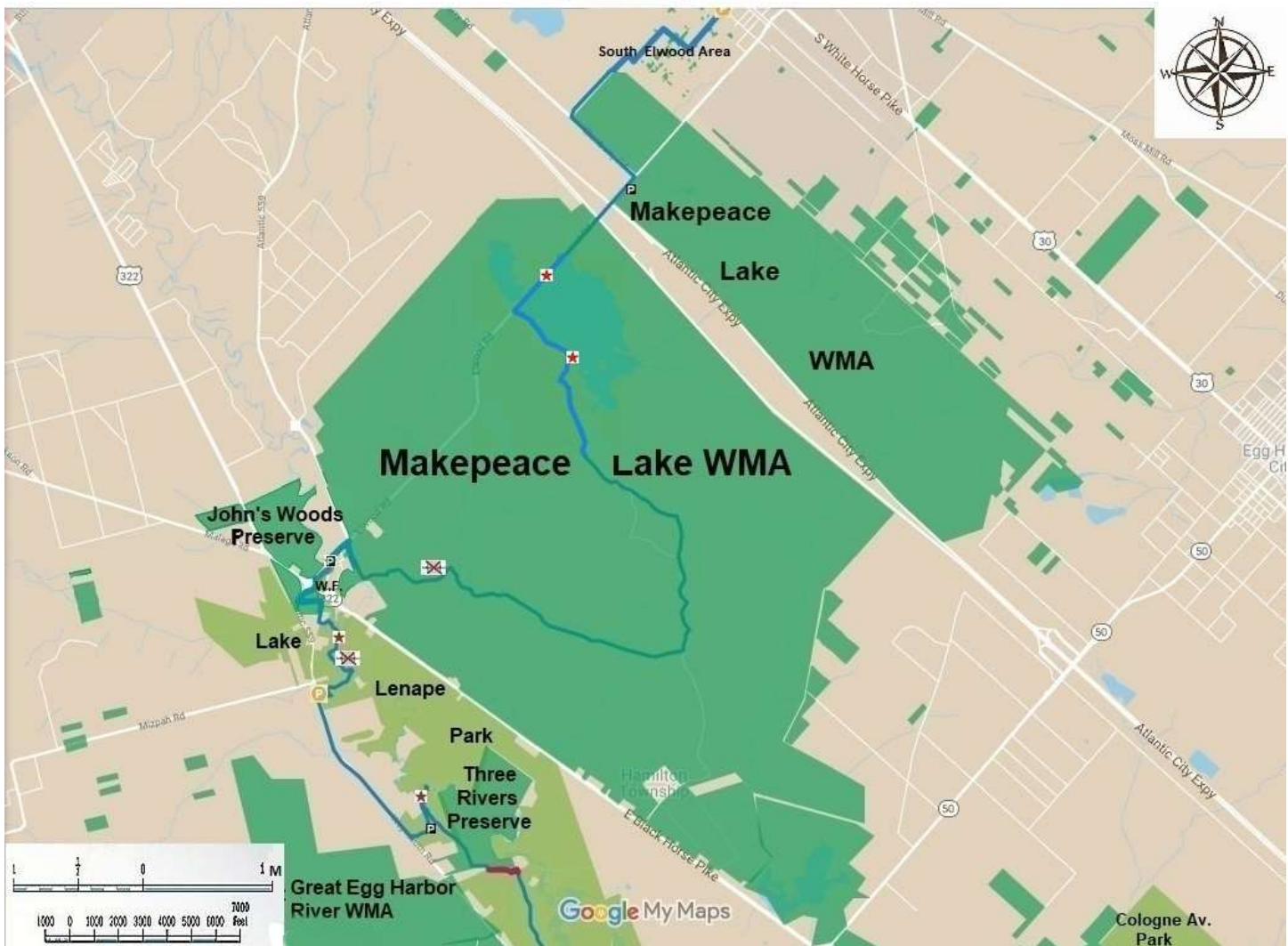


Miles	Detailed Trail Data from North to South
0.0	<p>The Southern Pinelands Trail begins a few miles north of Batsto at the conjunction of the Batsto Lake White Trail and the Batona Trail. Each of the three following loop trails features beautiful views of the lake. In 2017 the white loop trail was blazed white on Carsonite posts for 0.9 miles along the lake. Some of its views are best observed by moving several yards to the right to look down on the lake from the ridge line you are now on. The next loop trail was blazed blue on the posts in 2017. It is at lake level for 0.5 miles of lake views. The third loop trail was blazed red on the posts in 2017. It has 0.2 miles of lake view and 0.2 miles back to the beginning of the three loop trails.</p> <p>Through-hikers will have passed or parked 5.0 miles north on the Batona Trail at Quaker Bridge. If you begin your hike from the parking lot at Batona, hike 0.1 miles north to the junction of the three loop trails. Hike 0.2 miles north west on the posts blazed blue and white to the Batona Trail; Hike 2.5 miles north on it, turn left on the post marked white trail. The Batona Trail is paint blazed pink on trees throughout its length.</p> <p>It is 0.2 miles south from the beginning of the three loop trails through the parking lot to the Park Headquarters. This is a mandatory stop for hikers on the Southern Pinelands Trail.</p> <p><i>Parking at Batsto is 0.3 miles north on Batsto Road from CR 542. CR 542 runs from Hammonton on the west to the Garden State Parkway on the East.</i></p>
2.0	<p>From the park headquarters, go west 0.4 miles through historic Batsto Village. Enjoy the restored residential, commercial and farm buildings, that include an operating sawmill, iron forge, general store, post office, zoo, and craft centers. There are no trail markings here. At the beginning of the woods, posts painted yellow go north on the existing yellow trail, straight into the woods for 0.2 miles, cross the Mullica River Bridge into Atlantic County. Continue northwest for 0.2 miles on the trail marked yellow; continue northeast and northwest for 0.2 miles to view the new (2019) bridge site on your right for the yellow trail back across the Mullica and the deep but empty Pleasant Mills Industrial Canal on your left. Hike 0.1 miles west to the unmarked West Mill Fire Line Road. Hike 0.3 miles south on it to the weakened Nescochague Creek Bridge. This bridge has been closed to vehicular traffic for years. Cross it carefully on its north side. You will now pass the Pleasant Mills Methodist Church.</p> <p>For a side trip turn right immediately after the church and hike 0.3 miles to the Nescochague Canal. It carries most of the water of Hammonton Creek north here. Note the difference between these two canals. In the future this is the projected site for a bridge continuing the trail south. Return to the church parking lot. The trail runs 0.1 miles through it to CR 542. The left side of the parking lot is owned by the church. The right side is owned by the State Park. Whenever the church is being used, park as far from it as you can. <i>This parking lot is on CR 542, seven miles from Hammonton.</i></p>
4.5	<p>Road Hike. Go straight from the parking lot 0.6 miles on Elwood Pleasant Mills Road (CR 623); turn right or west on Jackson Road for 0.9 miles; continue west on CR 542 for 0.2 miles. Turn left or south on Moore Avenue. It makes a right turn in 0.3 miles; follow it another 0.6 miles. Turn left onto Columbia Road (CR658) for 0.7 miles, pass Hammonton Creek. Just after the guard rail ends there is space for roadside parking. <i>This roadside parking is 0.9 miles south of CR 542.</i></p>

8.0 This is the entrance to Hammonton Creek Wildlife Management Area. There is an unblazed, dead-end hike here of 1.4 miles. The first 0.1 mile follows the open field west then south. Please avoid the residential house, the pen for large dogs and the equipment storage area, to your left. Turn west onto a well-used dirt road, after 0.1 miles pass a creek, after another 0.6 miles find a less used dirt road and turn left or south for 0.6 miles. At the well-marked no trespassing signs, turn around and hike back to Columbia Road.

The next three miles of good trail is prohibited to hikers. When the property is purchased, go south west for 0.3 miles, observe a small creek, go south east for 0.4 miles, go 0.5 miles south, go 0.6 miles west, observe world War I manufacturing ruins named Amatol; turn south west for 0.5 miles, turn left on the Amatol race track, another historic ruin, for 0.1 miles here bushwhack 100 feet to the next 0.1 mile of dirt road to Moss Mill Road (CR 561). Hike straight across the county road into another property owned by the same person. Hike 0.2 miles to US 30. **This whole route is shown in red on the accompanying map; do not hike it now.** Then hike 0.3 miles east on the north side of White Horse Pike (US 30). Cross it at Snow Hill Road. *Parking is roadside just south of here.*

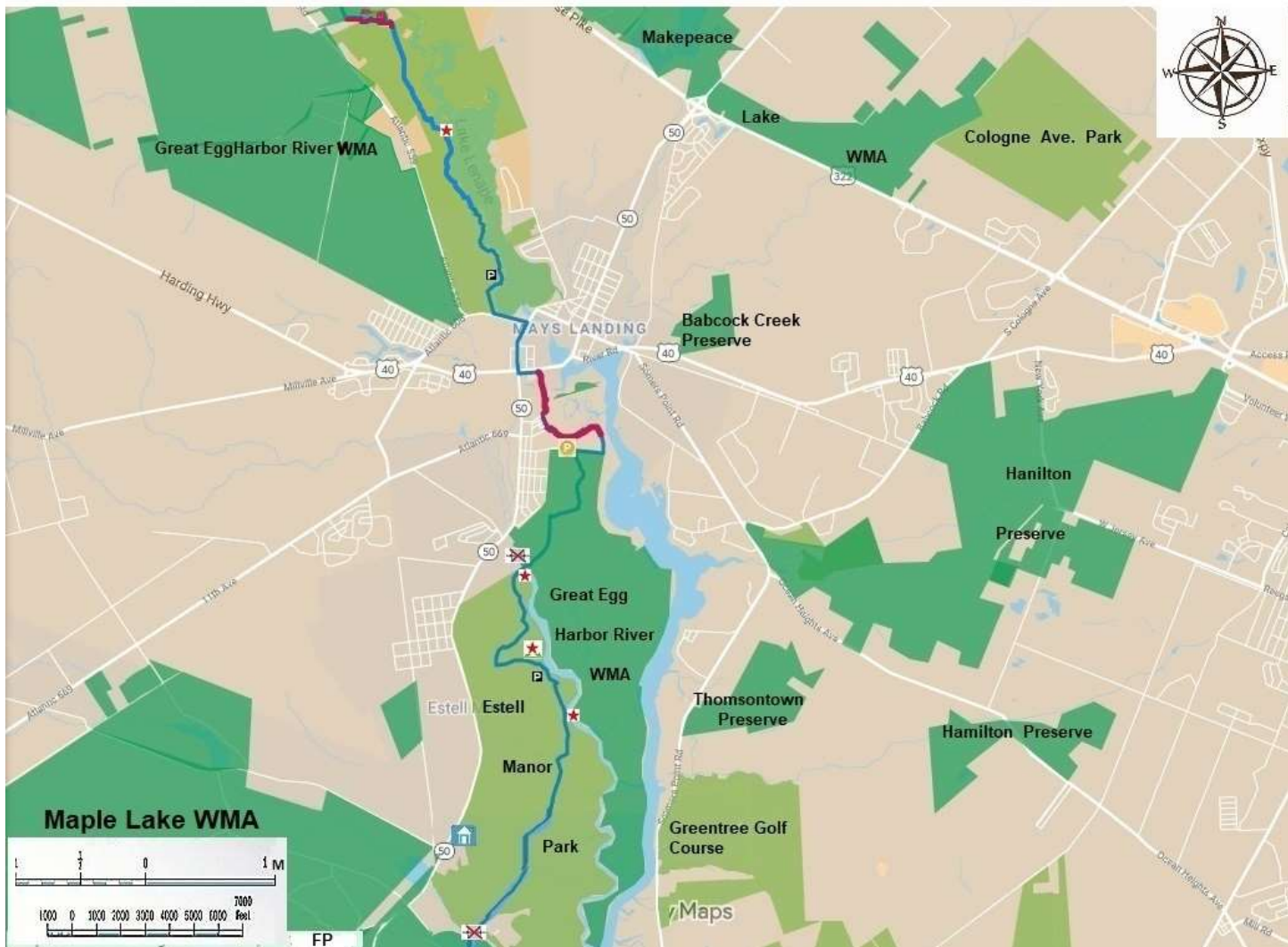
Map 25 Makepeace



12.0	<p>Proceed south another 0.2 miles on Snow Hill Road cross the active Atlantic City Railroad. Turn left on Railroad Avenue for 1.3 miles. This is a pleasant rural street for hiking, unlike the faster state highways and county roads in this area. Older hikers should describe the board game “Monopoly” to younger hikers. At Spruce Street turn right for 0.2 miles. <i>Pass Reading Avenue, park on Spruce Street, respect the construction company’s, located to your right, need for access.</i></p>
13.6	<p>Hike straight south into the woods up a hill. Yes, a hill. The streets through here are paper streets owned by Mullica Township. Some of the properties are privately owned. A few of those are posted no trespassing. A minority of these properties are owned by the State. Many are owned by the Township. You should stay on the dirt roads. Proceed 0.6 miles south on dirt Spruce Street. Turn right or west on an unmarked street for 0.3 miles. Turn left or south on another unmarked dirt road for 0.6 miles. Come to a place owned by F&W on the left side of this road. Continue straight ahead for 0.6 miles. The left side of the road is paint blazed blue here. Turn left on Blueberry Road for 0.7 miles. At CR 623 (Weymouth-Elwood Road) turn right and hike 0.1 miles to the target practice range.</p>
16.5	<p>This is the principal parking lot for the 11,624 acre Makepeace Wildlife Management Area. Its principal purpose is a target range. Respect the activities of any users of the range. The whole nine miles of the trail in Makepeace WMA is paint blazed blue. <i>The lot is located on CR 623 two miles south of US 30.</i></p> <p>Turn left out of the parking lot onto CR 623, pass over the Atlantic City Expressway. Soon observe the freshwater marshes to your right. At 0.7 miles turn left onto the dam for Makepeace Lake. This is the best part of this hike. Enjoy it for the next 0.5 miles. In season you can enjoy geese, ducks, herons, egrets, bald eagles, turtles, frog calls in season, salamanders and, of course deer. This is a good place to fish. At a “T” intersection turn left. There are a few more good views of the lake, slightly off the road to your left. One of the best is at 0.6 miles.</p> <p>Continue on the main dirt road to the southeast for another 2.7 miles to the center of this wild area. Turn right on another dirt road that usually has a puddle in its center. Proceed another 2.1 miles to Big Ditch.</p> <p>The crossing of Big Ditch is now a three foot deep ford. We hope that a telephone pole will be placed across here soon. However, if you go 0.2 miles downstream sometimes you can cross on a fallen tree and the ford there is only two feet deep. In another 0.2 miles south, cross Big Ditch West on a culvert. In another 0.8 miles turn left and hike 0.1 miles to paved Gale Road, turn right on it for 0.1 mile to CR 559, Elwood-Weymouth Road. Turn left for 0.1 miles; cross the Great Egg Harbor River on an historic “Pony” truss bridge and turn left into the County Park.</p>
24.4	<p>Weymouth Furnace County Park includes the remains of an iron furnace and later paper mill—that operated in the 19th century using water power from a millpond upstream and several millraces, and that included a village for workers and their families (Google ‘Weymouth Furnace’). The park is used by many kayakers and canoeists enjoying the river between Penny Pot (upstream) and Lake Lenape (downstream). Note the artesian well. Also notice the parallel dry millraces on both sides of the park. <i>Parking here is on CR 559 0.3 miles north of its intersection with US 322.</i></p>

24.4	<p><i>In 2018 there is a temporary bypass route here. It runs 0.3 miles down CR 559 to US 322 then on down 559 for 1.0 miles to “Foundation” parking.</i></p> <p>The future route will remain in the park for 0.3 miles. Proceed up the millrace on your right, hike to US 322, and cross at the stoplight through the dedicated pedestrian crossing. Then it will pass through or adjacent to John Woods Preserve. Turn left into the Preserve 0.1 mile after the highway crossing; continue through the woods for 0.2 miles walk up dirt Deep Run Road next to the preserve for 0.2 miles.</p> <p>The third portion of this hike is again through a portion of the county park system, which may become known in the future as the Deep Run Unit. From the road, hike downhill for 0.2 miles to the Great Egg Harbor River and hike south east down the river for 0.4 miles to the mouth of the Deep Run. Local Park users have created a number of uncoordinated paths through here; the county should connect them and improve them. County Public Works should build a 4’ wide hiking bridge here. The next 0.2 mile should continue along the river. This portion will be on a raised berm, perhaps created by dredged materials; it will be harder to cut. The next 0.3 miles will be on an access right of way to a private property. Any hikers along here should step off the road for any vehicles using it. T</p> <p>he final 0.2 mile will be down and up to Foundation parking. On each of these three segments, we recommend that the managing agencies cut the trail to a maximum width of four feet, to discourage any use by motor vehicles.</p>
26.3	<p><i>Foundation parking is 1.0 miles south west of US 322 on CR 559. The ruins of the foundation can be seen from the road. The next 1.3 miles is on CR 559 to Acagisca County Park.</i></p>
27.6	<p>Hike into Acagisca County Park for 0.2 miles to parking. Continue east for 0.2 miles to the spectacular bluffs view of the Great Egg Harbor River. Enjoy. Repeat hiking backwards for 0.1 miles. Then turn left at a 45-degree turn. In 0.1 mile began hiking through the campgrounds. Continue for 0.3 miles to the driveway to the conference center. Continue another 0.1 miles to the end of the county park.</p>
28.6	<p>In 2018 the Three River Preserve, a property owned by the New Jersey Natural Land Trust, was not open to the public. In the future 0.5 miles of the trail should be cut through here. It should be restricted to a width of four feet to prevent any vehicular traffic. There is an in-holding with an easement access here. The trail should cross the easement at right angles; hikers should not walk up or down the easement in either direction.</p>

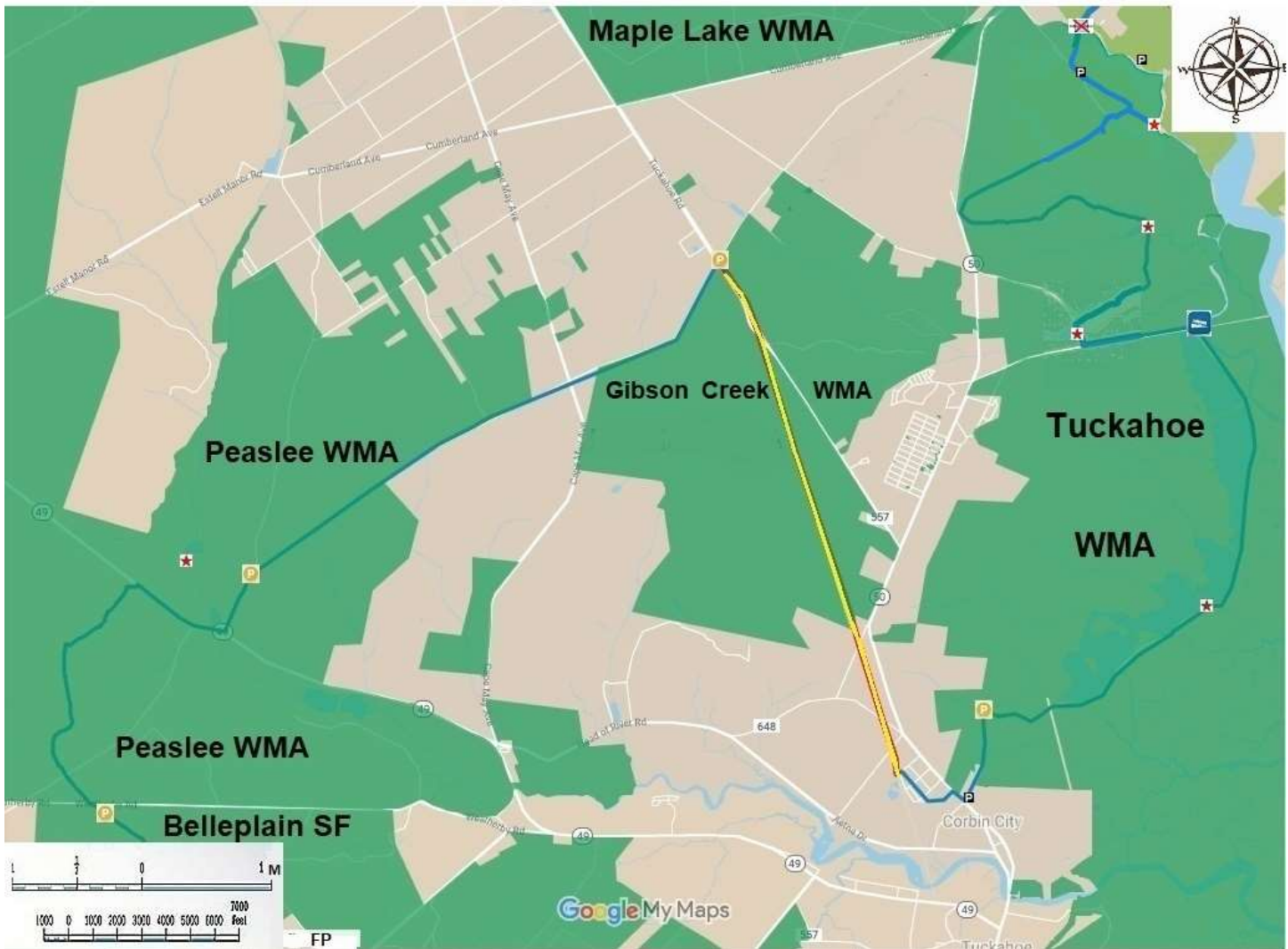
Map 26 Great Egg Harbor River



<p>29.1</p>	<p>There is a private property which separates the Preserve from the County Park. It should be purchased. Then turn east for 0.3 mile on another access easement. This easement is partially owned by nine private property owners and the county government and includes the Mare Run Bridge. The Trail should be placed on it whenever access has been assured between Three Rivers Preserve and Lake Lenape County Park.</p>
<p>29.4</p>	<p>To the immediate south of the Mare Run Bridge, the trail begins again inside Lake Lenape County Park on dirt roads and paths for 2.8 miles to CR 559 or Weymouth Road in Mays Landing. In 0.8 miles hike through a road gate to prevent vehicles from moving through this area. In another 0.2 miles, bushwhack left to the lake for 160". Now turn right and enjoy the lake on a path which gets better and better as you hike south. This lake view is a high point of the Southern Pinelands Trail. For the next 1.6 miles keep the lake to your left until you reach the park headquarters. Continue out of the park for 0.3 miles to Weymouth Road (CR 559). <i>This is the vehicular entrance to the park.</i></p>
<p>32.2</p>	<p>You are now in historic Mays Landing. Turn left on the sidewalk on Weymouth Road (CR 559) for 0.3 miles. We recommend the Cajun food at the town's main (signaled) intersection, and the nearby bakery and preserved former train station near the trestle that once carried the Newfield Branch of the Reading Railroad across the Great Egg Harbor River. Turn right onto the sidewalk for Mill Street for 0.4 miles, where there is a stoplight at the intersection of</p>

	<p>US 50 and NJ 40. Turn left after the light for 0.1 miles, pass the gas station, Lenape Plaza, and the MacDonald's. Turn right on the former route of the Belcoville RR for, this is now private property, but it is open to walkers and bikers, proceed 0.2 to Danehauer Lane. We recommend that Hamilton Township or a Land Trust acquire the route of the rail road for the trail.</p> <p>Proceed into the next private property straight across Danehauer Lane in Weymouth Township. This property features a lake and marsh with a good trail on its west and south sides. It is regularly used by walkers and bicyclists going from Belcoville, through an apartment complex, to go to the Plaza. It is also used by hikers from Riverside Drive (less frequently) to go to the plaza. We recommend that a land trust buy this property for its intrinsic environmental value and for 0.7 miles of the trail. Hike up the hill from the Lake to West Riverside Avenue; hike south on Riverside for 0.1 miles turn west or right on Lowell Street for 0.2 miles; park at this entrance to the Hammonton Creek Wildlife Management Area. <i>This parking area is on Lowell Street 0.4 miles east from NJ 50.</i></p>
34.3	<p>The trail is paint blazed blue in this WMA. Hike south for 0.5 miles; turn right for 0.2 miles (This area is wet after a rain.) Turn left or south, hike another 0.5 miles to the missing South River Bridge. This is a great view. You can park here.</p> <p><i>There is a temporary bypass route to get to the other side of the bridge. Hike northwest for 0.3 mile; pass ruins of the former Belcoville manufacturing complex. Turn left onto Grace Street for 100 yards. Turn southeast on NJ 50 for 0.9 miles, turn left at an obscure entrance for hikers only into Estelle Manor County Park for 0.7 miles on a path to the missing bridge.</i></p>
35.5	<p>The Southern Pinelands Trail runs for 4 miles through Estelle Manor County Park. It is paint blazed blue. The Park has more than 20 miles of multipurpose trails and many more miles of mountain bike trails. Some of the multiple natural and historic points are described hereafter. From South River go southeast for 0.1 miles on a bluff or former RR embankment; go south and southwest on Duck Farm Loop for 0.8 miles; make a sharp left on Smokeless Powder Trail for another 0.3 miles.</p> <p>Here you find the remains of the WW I powerhouse and water supply buildings of the Bethlehem Loading Company, which made naval ordinance. There is also an artesian well, a good view, canoe access to the South River, and parking. Continue straight ahead onto the elevated boardwalk; take it 0.8 miles to the first right turn; continue straight ahead for another 0.7 miles to the last right turn on Gunpowder Trail which takes you to the Nature Center. The raised boardwalk is one of the most important handicap access routes in New Jersey. From its end continue south and southwest for 0.6 miles, cross Purple Heart Drive twice, view the veteran's cemetery to your left. Continue straight ahead on the Center Trail for 0.2 miles to the Missing Bridge at Stephens Creek.</p>

Map 27 Tuckahoe-Peaslee



	<p>We recommend that the county reconstruct these two missing bridges. This ends your hike on the NJ State Long Trail in the County Park. There is parking here on Purple Heart Drive. This is a plug for a mandatory stop at the nature center at the main entrance to the park. It is 3.7 miles south of Mays Landing on NJ 50. Here you can learn the history of the area from displays, brochures and the staff and get a copy of the park map and its multiple trails left over from the naval ordinance era.</p> <p><i>From Purple Heart Drive there is a temporary bypass route of the missing bridge at Stephens Creek. Proceed 0.5 miles west on cut grass, pass, and visit the Manor House. Turn south on NJ 50 for 0.3 miles. Turn left on Steelman Road for 0.6 miles. Enter the Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area. Turn left to the missing bridge.</i></p>
<p>39.5</p>	<p>The Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area is a spectacular place to hike, featuring beautiful views of a freshwater reservoir, salt marshes and pine and oak forests. The eleven miles of the Southern Pinelands Forest through it are paint blazed blue. <i>Parking is 0.6 miles east on Steelman Road from SH 50 4.2 miles south of Mays Landing.</i></p> <p>Begin at the missing Stephens Creek Bridge, hike 0.4 miles south west on the old railroad, hike 0.2 miles south east on Steelman Road to parking, continue hiking 0.6 miles to the old</p>

	<p>clubhouse center. From the clubhouse, hike 1.5 miles southwest, passing a pond with waterfowl on it and fields with deer, fox, and raccoon on them at times. Turn south east and east for 1.6 miles to another view of ponds and salt marshes at Jacksons Creek. Go 0.5 miles south, go 0.6 miles southwest go 0.2 miles south to old Tuckahoe, crossing a 4' wide hiking bridge over Gibson Creek. Go 0.8 miles east on drivable gravel Gibson Creek Road to a boat launching area.</p> <p>Began the 3.7 mile hike along spectacular Tuckahoe Lake. It is freshwater on your right with views of saltwater marshes to your left. In season this is a great place to observe waterfowl, shore birds, wading birds, raptors, terns, kingfishers, snakes, frogs, and muskrat. It is a great place to fish. Use the observation tower. Go west through the woods for 0.5 miles. <i>At this turn you can park.</i> Turn left or south for 0.6 miles in the WMA. Continue paved Griscom Mill Road for 0.2 miles next to residential homes to NJ 50. <i>You can usually park at the Corbin City Municipal Building on NJ 50.</i></p>
50.7	<p>Corbin City is the smallest municipality in Atlantic County. There are good restaurants here in both directions on NJ 50. Cross the highway at the municipal building; proceed northwest for 0.1 miles; turn left on Kansas Road, turn right on Harding Lane, turn left on Samson Road for 0.6 miles of residential street walk. Arrive at the railroad tracks.</p> <p>The next 4.5 miles will be on the rail right of way. The railroad is a type of private property where other public or private persons can rarely find a responsible person to work with. Therefore, if you choose to hike here please be highly responsible. Do not walk on the rails or ties. Only hike on the maintenance road next to the track. In the first 1.5 miles pass three roads for vehicles in Corbin City. The last is Bunker Hill Road (CR 545).</p> <p>Most of the next 3.0 miles is in Estelle Manor City and has the Peaslee Wildlife Management Area on both sides of the track. In another 0.8 mile come to a side trip on an old dirt road running west for 1.4 miles to Warner Mills Stream; private property blocks the road there. If it is ever purchased, we recommend that the trail be rerouted here. In another 1.6 miles cross under CR 557. In another 0.6 miles come to paved First Avenue. Leave the railroad. <i>There is parking here.</i></p>
55.9	<p>Hike south west for 1.5 miles on paved first Avenue. Peaslee is on your left for most of this jaunt; residential homes are on the right. At Tuckahoe Road (CR 666) First Avenue becomes dirt. Continue south west on it, in 0.7 miles a dirt road coming in from the east on private property may be the future route for this trail. Peaslee is on the right. Continue south west for 2.0 miles. Peaslee is now on both sides of this municipal street. There is parking here. There is also a cool side trail to your right for 0.5 miles to a view of the Tuckahoe River. <i>This side trail will become the permanent route when a proposed Tuckahoe River hiking bridge is constructed. This parking area is 0.5 miles north of NJ 49.</i></p>
60.1	<p>Hike 0.5 miles south on dirt First Avenue; turn right or west on NJ 49 immediately pass an old cranberry operation on the right at the Tuckahoe River and cross into Cumberland County. Continue west on the highway for 0.7 miles to a place with dirt roads on both sides of the highway. To the right there is a side trail for 0.5 mile to the missing Tuckahoe River Bridge. This trail is badly overgrown and should be cut by Cumberland County hikers. To remain on the Southern Pinelands Trail, which is paint blazed blue from here to its end, turn left into the Peaslee WMA woods; go 0.1 miles. Turn left on another dirt road and proceed for 0.7 miles. Turn south west on another dirt road which was heavily overgrown in 2019, for 0.2 miles.</p>

	<p>Stop at the utility line. The utility line running northwest is the possible beginning of a North Cumberland Trail running from here to south Milmay through Peaslee WMA. Continue south on the same dirt road for 0.8 miles, going around a few curves, to Hunters Mill Road.</p> <p>Enter Cape May County. Continue for 0.3 miles to CR 548. <i>Park across the street. This parking is three miles east of NJ 47.</i></p>
63.1	Hike south into Belleplain State Forest in Cape May County.

The NJ State Long Trail (NJSLT) is a 383-mile long hiking trail and greenway that will extend from the northern end of the state (High Point, the highest point in New Jersey), to the southern end (Cape May Point, at sea level).

The NJ State Long Trail is a project of the New Jersey Sierra Club <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey>, in cooperation with partners across the state working on trail development and maintenance.

For more information on the NJSLT, see <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/new-jersey-long-trail>