



The Sierra Club Hiker's Guide to the Tri-State Region

3rd Edition – Revised March 2021

**Trails in Northern Kentucky, Southwest Ohio, and Southeast Indiana
Recommended by Sierra Club's Northern Kentucky Group**



Introduction

The idea for this guide began at a Northern Kentucky Sierra Club group meeting when one of the members mentioned that he was new to the area and was looking for places to hike. Members suggested various places, and many soon realized that almost no one had a comprehensive knowledge of trail systems in the Northern Kentucky - Greater Cincinnati Area. The group proposed that some kind of "Where to go guide" be established so that the collective knowledge of group members could be shared.

The result was the 1st Edition of this guide, designed and assembled by Mike Becher. This 2nd edition resulted from brainstorming sessions by a new hiking guide committee in 2013 led by John Robbins with the assistance of Karen Upton. Several other NKY Group members including Robbins and Upton hiked and gathered information to describe and verify information presented on all the trails in this guide. It does not contain every trail in the area but we feel we have included the best ones. Several trails in the original guide were deleted because of issues like only paved paths, poor trail conditions, or long driving distance from Northern Kentucky. Some trails were added because they are new or were missing from the original guide.

We apologize if we have inadvertently omitted anyone's favorite hiking trails. If a reader notices a hike is missing but needs inclusion, let us know. If a reader feels information in the guide is inaccurate, misleading, or simply not as good as it could be, share corrected information with us. This is a work in progress, expected to be revised again in the future. We hope that it will be a valuable resource and that contains the collective knowledge of many of our region's most avid hikers and naturalists. Send your information and comments to the Northern Kentucky Group contacts listed at the end of this guide.

Structure and Function of the Guide:

The guide presents each hike similarly so readers have quick information to identify and review destinations. Estimated hiking distances and brief driving instructions are given so readers can decide how much time they need for hiking and travel. A roadmap or GPS is recommended to verify best routes for each reader. All hikes are in the 12 county territories of Northern Kentucky Group and adjacent counties in northern Kentucky, southwest Ohio, and southeast Indiana.

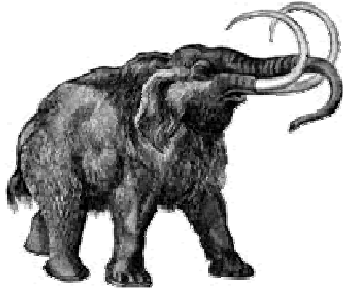


Each destination includes a map of the hiking trails. A short description of each hike’s area is also included so readers have some idea about the character of the destination. An effort has been made to note unique and interesting aspects of many places, often centering on ecology or geology, but also historical aspects when known. These details are intended to give readers an appreciation for what makes the area special. It is also our goal that some readers will be intrigued enough to learn more about the location from the park offices, visitors centers, and web sites.

The sites in this guide serve as examples why preservation and conservation of natural landscapes are important. If visiting or just reading about the places described in this guide creates interest in getting involved in a local organization dedicated to protecting such natural resources, the Sierra Club welcomes your participation and membership. Indeed, some hikes in this guide are destinations for group “outings” led by local Sierra Club leaders. Contact information for local Sierra Club groups and chapters are listed at the end of this guide.

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Big Bone Lick State Historical Site

Location: southwest Boone County KY: 3380 Beaver Rd, Union 41091. Park phone: 859-384-3522

Website: <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/historicsites/big-bone-lick/default.aspx>

Driving Directions: Park is on KY-338. KY-338 is 1st exit off I-75 / 71 north of I-71 / I-75 split near Walton. Follow 338 west, changing roads to follow the 338 signs, the last at a blinking light where US-42 & KY-338 split. KY-338 descends a long hill into a valley. Park entrance is on left.

Hiking Trail Miles: About 4.1 miles unpaved and mostly through woods, also about 0.9 miles on a partially paved interpretive trail. Gobblers Trace (about 0.6 mile) connects the museum parking lot to the campground. Cedar Run (about 0.9 mile) is a loop trail with both trailheads accessible from the ridge along Gobblers Trace. Bison Spur (about 0.2 mile) connects Cedar Run to Bison Trace trail along the bison pens. Bison Trace (about 0.5 mile) is a flat path along the bison pens and to-from the museum parking lot. Coralberry Trail (about 1.9 miles) circles Big Bone Lake, but the northern part of this trail was closed in 2020 (see map). Big Bone Creek Trail (about 0.9 mile) is a mostly flat, partially paved interpretive trail behind the museum.

Trail Features: Mostly wooded trails with climbs & descends, some up to 150'. Restroom access is uncertain November to April except when museum is open. Coralberry Trail loops around Big Bone Lake which is partially visible at times through the woods, fully visible where trail crosses an earthen dam. Cedar Run and Bison Spur were created by NKY Sierra Club in early 2000s. Coralberry and Cedar each cross wooden footbridges over creeks. Bison Trace parallels the fenced pastures where the herd is often visible.

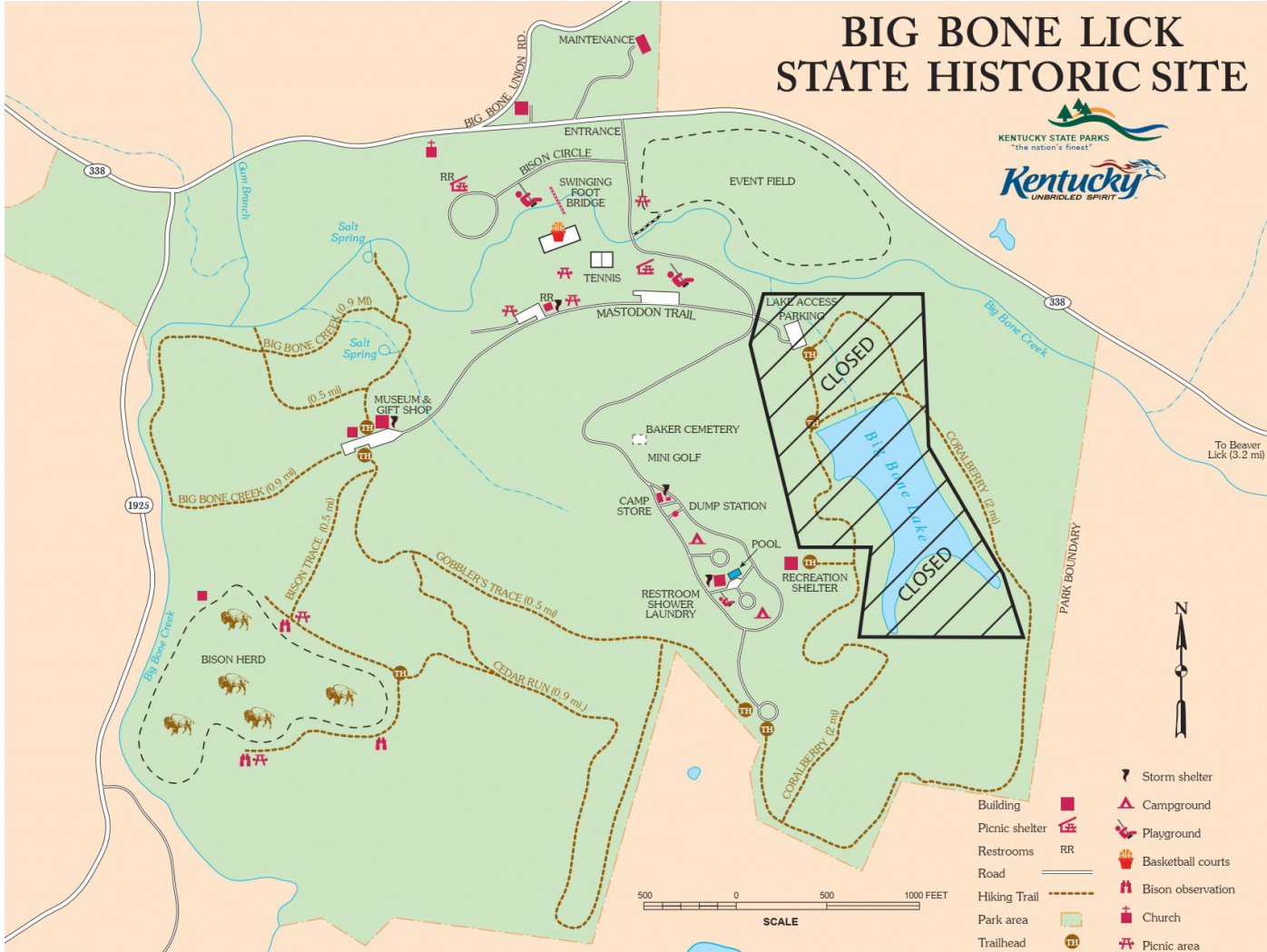
Dogs: Allowed if leashed.

Park History: The park's history is quite unique and the landscape is also interesting. The park sits atop warm salt springs that have bubbled up since the Pleistocene and can still be seen today. Large Pleistocene mammals such as woolly mastodon were attracted by the salt springs.

Some became trapped in marshy soil and their bones became the fossils for which Big Bone was named. The site was the first major New World fossil site known to Europeans and it is among the first scientifically significant fossil locations in the world. George-Louis Buffon, one of the finest 18th century European naturalists, studied fossils from the site. Jefferson sent Lewis and Clarke on a collecting expedition to Big Bone. Many fossils found by Lewis and Clarke are in museums around the world, including the French National Museum of Natural History in Paris and the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia. Some are held by Cincinnati's Museum Center. A few fossils can be seen in Big Bone's own museum.

The salt springs also influenced more recent history. Native Americans hunted the animals that continued to be attracted to the area for its minerals. White pioneers collected salt by boiling the water. The area became a trading center due to this important preservative.

Other Activities: Fishing, camping, picnicking, miniature golf, tennis, many nature programs.





Blue Licks Battlefield State Park

Location: 10299 Maysville Road, Carlisle, KY 40311

Website: http://parks.ky.gov/parks/resortparks/blue_licks/default.aspx

Directions: Take the AA Hwy east to Maysville. Turn south on U.S. 68. Park is 25 miles south of Maysville.

Trail Miles: Six trails, totaling less than five miles. The Heritage trail is the longest, at two miles, and retraces the history of the Blue Licks Springs, complete with a re-constructed trade fort. The Heritage trail also passes through a nature preserve that is home to one of the most endangered species of wildflower, the Short's Goldenrod.

Dogs: Dogs are allowed on leashes.

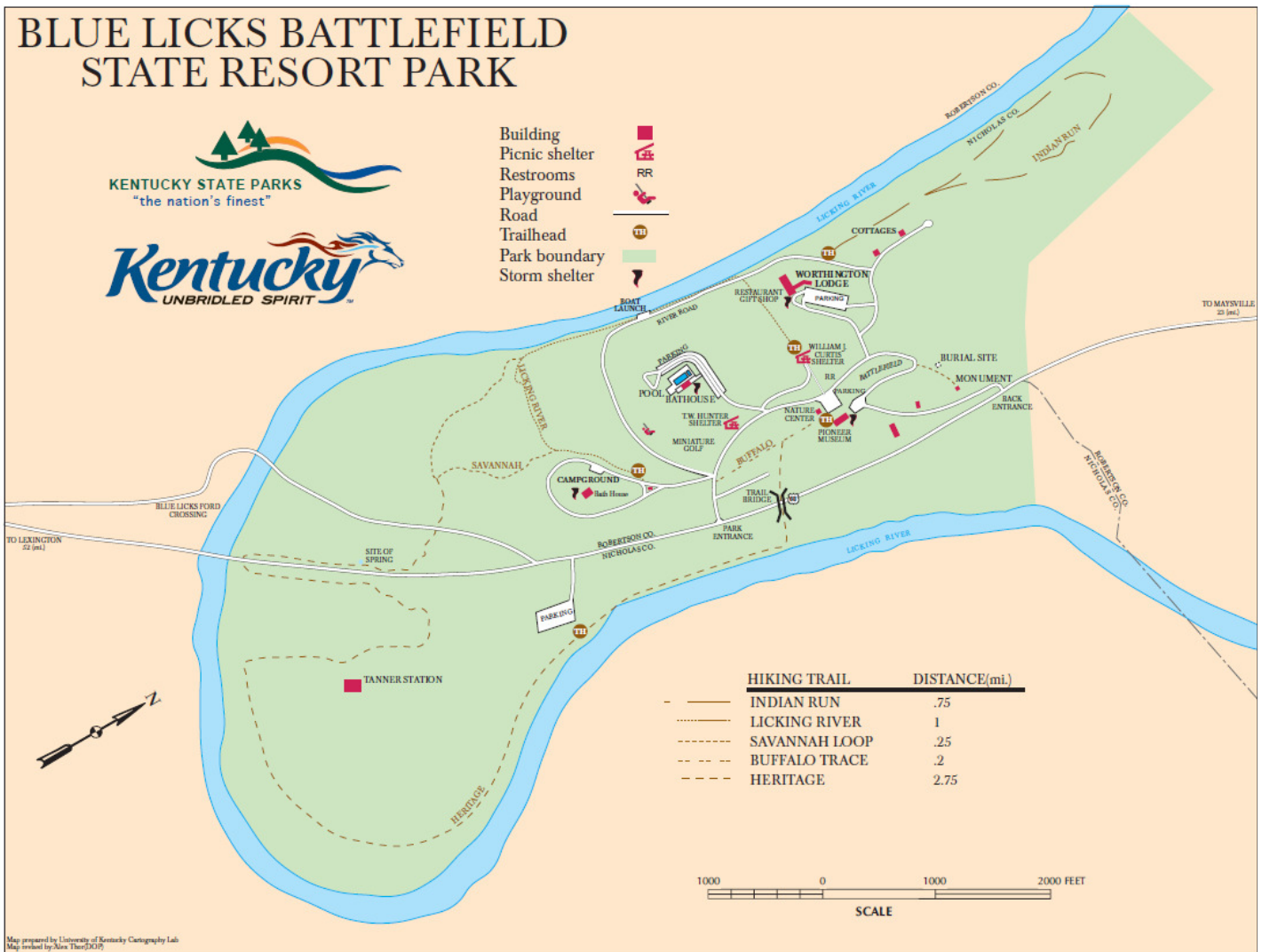
Description: Throughout history, the salt springs attracted prehistoric animals, Indians, and pioneers, including the legendary Daniel Boone. Many 19th-century southerners came to the area seeking rejuvenation from the therapeutic waters of the springs. Blue Licks is more widely known, however, as the site of the last battle of the Revolutionary War. It took place 10 months after the surrender of the British General Cornwallis at the Battle of Yorktown. Kentuckians engaged Indians and British soldiers near the Licking River. Though, vastly outnumbered, they suffered great losses, including one of Boone's sons. Boone's words, "Enough of honour cannot be paid," are inscribed on the monument dedicated to the soldiers who died in the battle.

Other Activities: There is a lake available for fishing, boating and swimming. There are also campgrounds, picnic areas, miniature golf, and a playground. A museum is available to learn more about the historical aspects of the park.

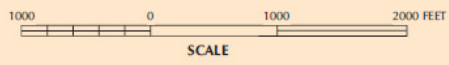
BLUE LICKS BATTLEFIELD STATE RESORT PARK



- Building
- Picnic shelter
- Restrooms
- Playground
- Road
- Trailhead
- Park boundary
- Storm shelter



HIKING TRAIL	DISTANCE(mi.)
INDIAN RUN	.75
LICKING RIVER	1
SAVANNAH LOOP	.25
BUFFALO TRACE	.2
HERITAGE	2.75



Map prepared by University of Kentucky Cartography Lab
Map revised by Steve Thayer/2017



Boone Cliffs Nature Preserve

Location: western Boone County KY: 4990 Middle Creek

Rd, Burlington KY 41005

Website: <http://www.boonecountyky.org/parks/ParkInfo/19>

Directions: From the junction of I-75 and KY 18 (aka Burlington Pike) near Florence, follow KY 18 west for 10.8 miles, then left on Middle Creek Road for 1.5 miles to gravel parking area on left side of road

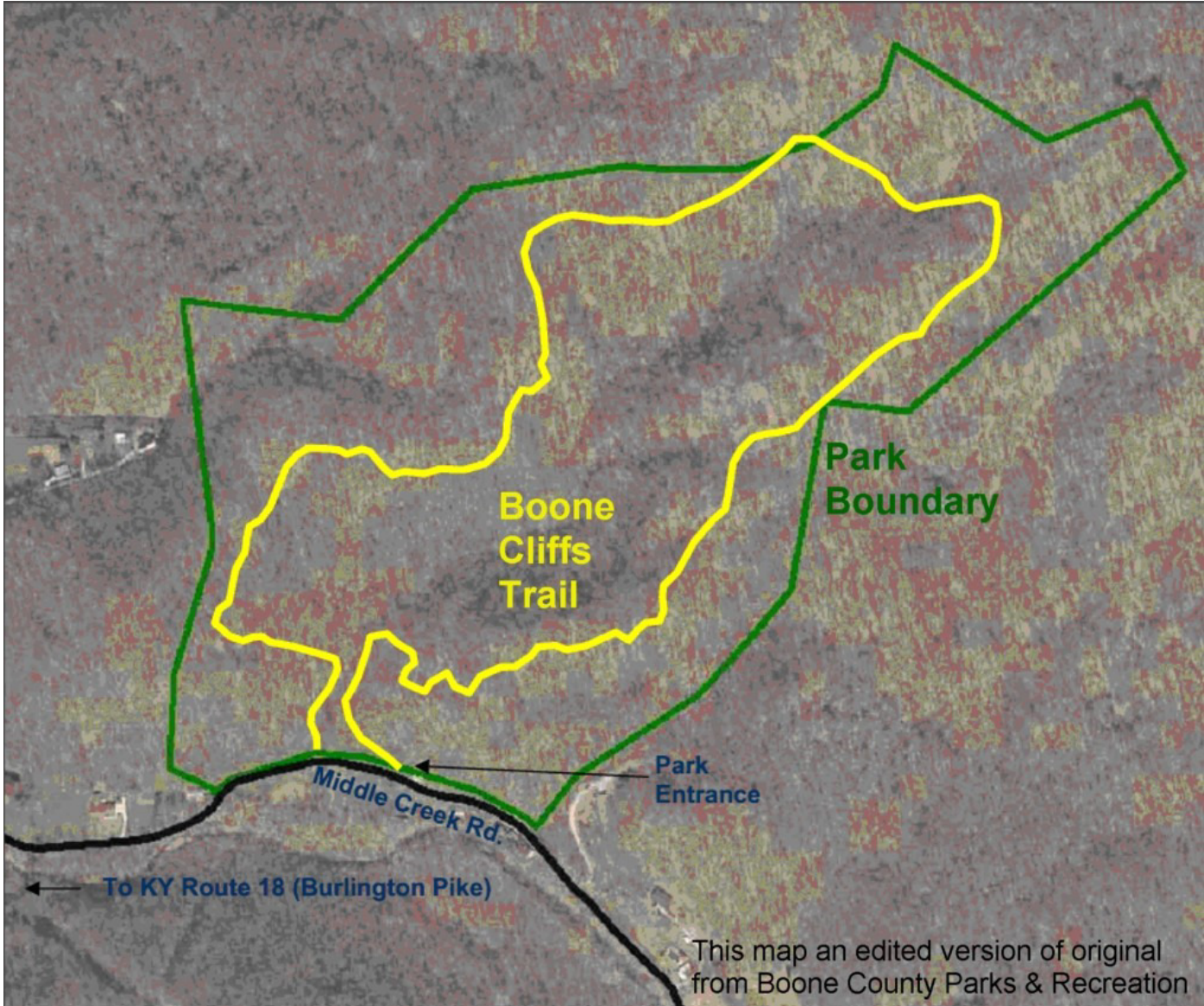
Trail Miles: 2.4 hilly miles. There are 3 nice old benches strategically placed atop the ridge.

Dogs: Dogs are not allowed in the nature preserve.

Description: Situated along a tributary to Middle Creek, Boone Cliffs State Nature Preserve boasts 74 acres of rich flora, fauna and unique geological features. The preserve derives its name from the 20- to 40-foot conglomerate "cliffs" that rise above the valley slopes. The "cliffs" are not actually cliffs but rock outcroppings amidst deposits of pebbles and soil left behind in the most recent glaciations. Now managed by Boone County, the Nature Conservancy had recognized and managed the site because the cliffs are unique geologic features in the northern Kentucky landscape. One of the first sites established by the Kentucky chapter of the Nature Conservancy, it boasts one of the most diverse examples of mixed mesophytic forest in the area. Wildflowers here are brilliant in the spring and there are over 300 species of plants that have been catalogued in the preserve.

A species to look for in the preserve is salamanders. Look for the Northern Redback Salamander in the leaf litter. The preserve is one of the few places where this species can be found in Kentucky. Other species may be seen closer to the unnamed tributary of Middle Creek that flows through the preserve. Especially impressive is the Dusky Salamander, which is used as an indicator species for exceptionally high water quality.

Other Activities: Activities in the preserve should be limited to low impact ones, such as hiking, wildlife viewing and nature photography. During hunting season, use caution since private lands used for hunting surround this park.





Boone Extension Nature Center Trails

Location: south-central Boone County in Northern KY

Address: 9101 Camp Ernst Road, Union, KY 41091

Website:

*Unknown. **This trail is open to the public only during limited hours on certain days.** For more information, phone the Boone County Extension office at 859.586.6101.*

Driving Directions: From the KY-536 interchange at I-71/75, go west on KY-536, passing the US-42 intersection. After leaving Union KY, continue westbound on 536 until reaching Camp Ernst Rd on the right. Turn right (northward) on Camp Ernst Rd and travel almost 1.5 miles (just past Central Park on the right), then turn left (west) into the Nature Center parking lot.

Hiking Trail Miles: 3 miles covered by 3 trails – several trail loops are possible

- **Red Trail** is the longest trail, a 1.9 mile loop
- **Yellow Trail** is 0.7 miles, over half of which is a shared section of Red Trail
- **Blue Trail** is a 0.4 mile shortcut between 2 sections of Yellow Trail

Rating: Relatively easy, but there are climbs which may tire some walkers. There are no restrooms or water supplies along the trail, but there are restrooms and water at the welcome center near the parking lot where hikers must register before hiking.

Trail Features: The trails are unpaved except in some gravel-covered sections. They are well-marked with colored arrows along the trail, so it is difficult to get lost, even when red and yellow trails merge or separate. Many trees along the trails have numbered signs which coincide with numbered tree descriptions in a handout available at the welcome center during registration, so the trails are excellent for learning local tree identification.

Along the trails are several wildlife observation shelters as well as a shelter at a vernal pond. The observation shelters are usually open only during scheduled visits by teachers and students.

Dogs: Not permitted.

Park History: These trails are owned and managed by the Boone County Cooperative Extension to the University of Kentucky and Kentucky State University to offer off-campus information, education and assistance to local consumers about local nature, agriculture, gardening, wildlife, farm animals and health. The nature center also hosts a variety of scheduled programs which require attendees to register in advance.

These trails are only open to the public during limited hours on certain days, so it is important to contact the Boone Extension office before hiking there (see phone number above).

Central Park is across the street (on the east side of Camp Ernst Rd) from the Boone County Extension Nature Center. Central Park offers several miles of paved and unpaved walking trails which are not only open to the public without advanced reservations, but are also accessible for handicapped individuals, wheelchairs and child strollers.

Trail map courtesy of Boone Extension Nature Center:





California Woods Nature Preserve

Location: In Hamilton County of SW Ohio, east of Cincinnati, off Kellogg Avenue between Lunken Airport and I-275.

Website: www.cincinnati-parks.com/index.php/california-woods

Driving Directions: From the I-275 / Kellogg Ave. exit just north of the Ohio River, go west (toward Cincinnati) on Kellogg Ave. Before crossing the Little Miami River or reaching Lunken Airport, look for a small park sign marking the park road on the right (NE) side of Kellogg Ave.

Hiking Trail Miles: 3.37 miles

Trail Features: It's a beautiful place to hike in a forest on all dirt trails. Trails are not well marked in places, but you can't get lost since they all loop and interconnect. Be prepared to climb hills because there is very little flat ground.

With 113 acres of forest, California Woods Nature Preserve offers something for all nature lovers, featuring 53 species of trees, more than 200 species of herbaceous plants, and Lick Run Creek, home to kingfishers, snapping turtles, small fish, myriad invertebrates and the occasional visit from grebes, mallards, wood ducks and beavers. The park is open dawn to dusk. Park is adjacent to the Magrath Preserve, a designated "Important Birding Area".

Dogs: Not allowed.

Other Activities: A picnic shelter is available. There is also a Nature Center but it is only open when there is a scheduled program. Its restrooms are only open on program days.

California Woods

Salem Rd

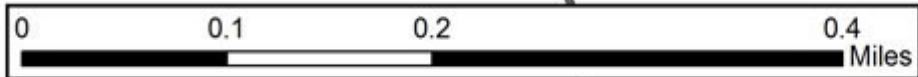
Legend

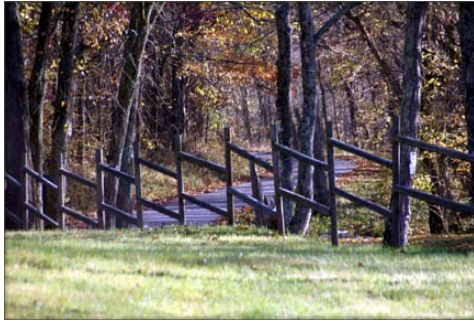
- Difficult
- Easy
- Moderate

Kellogg Ave - US-52

Apple Hill Rd

Fairway Ln





Cedar Line Nature Preserve

Location: In Butler in north Pendleton County KY

Website: <http://pendletoncounty.ky.gov/aboutus/Pages/CedarLineNaturePreserve.aspx>

Driving Directions: Drive US 27 into Butler in north Pendleton County. Turn east on KY-177. In about ½ mile where 177 veers sharply right, continue straight (east) onto Flour Creek Rd. Go about 2.5 miles, passing Vater Rd on the left. Preserve is on the left (north) side of Flour Creek Rd at Hale Rd intersection. Turn left on Hale and park in the gravel area immediately on the right.

Hiking Trail Miles: About 2

Trail Features: This is a new trail system through a 43 acre preserve with paths on several surfaces including dirt, grass, moss, and rocks. Trails cross a couple streams, which are dry most of the year. Trails also cross over several wood footbridges and pass near old rock fences. Many little square signs note the trail names, and only some trail sections were confusing when hiked in October 2014. If confused in sections with no signs, notice that trails are often edged with fallen trees and limbs. There are also many split wood benches along the trails. Enter the preserve at the obvious break in the fence across Hale Rd from the gravel parking lot.

A-Trail is the longest, circling the preserve's perimeter, covering about 0.8 miles and about 180' elevation change. A-trail passes an old barn, passes through one of the rock fences, and has junctions with all the other trails, allowing a variety of hike loop options. C-trail is maybe the most scenic trail, climbing next to an intermittent stream through the center of the preserve.

Dogs: Not allowed.

History: Original property owner Karen Kuhnhein donated Cedar Line Preserve to the Pendleton County Fiscal Court when she died. She wanted visitors to be able to explore and experience the natural beauty of its grounds as she had. She had created so many trails through the preserve that current trail maintenance is allowing many to return to nature. Over 40 species of trees and 27 species of birds have been identified in the preserve. Many trees still have Karen's signs noting their species. The preserve is open daily during daylight hours for guests to explore by foot travel only. Hunting occurs on adjacent properties in November, so even though

hunting is not allowed in the preserve, it might be wise to avoid Cedar Line Preserve during November.

Other Activities: Flour Creek offers opportunities for aquatic education, including in-stream walking wearing knee boots. It flows adjacent to the parking area, but property ends at the bridge.

Hiking Trails At Cedarline Nature Preserve

Corner of Flour Creek & Hale Roads, east of city of Butler in northern Pendleton County KY

GPS tracks and map by:
John F. Robbins
12 Sep 2020

A-Trail

- Loop path around perimeter of entire trail system
- 0.92 miles long
- 175' elevation change

C-Trail

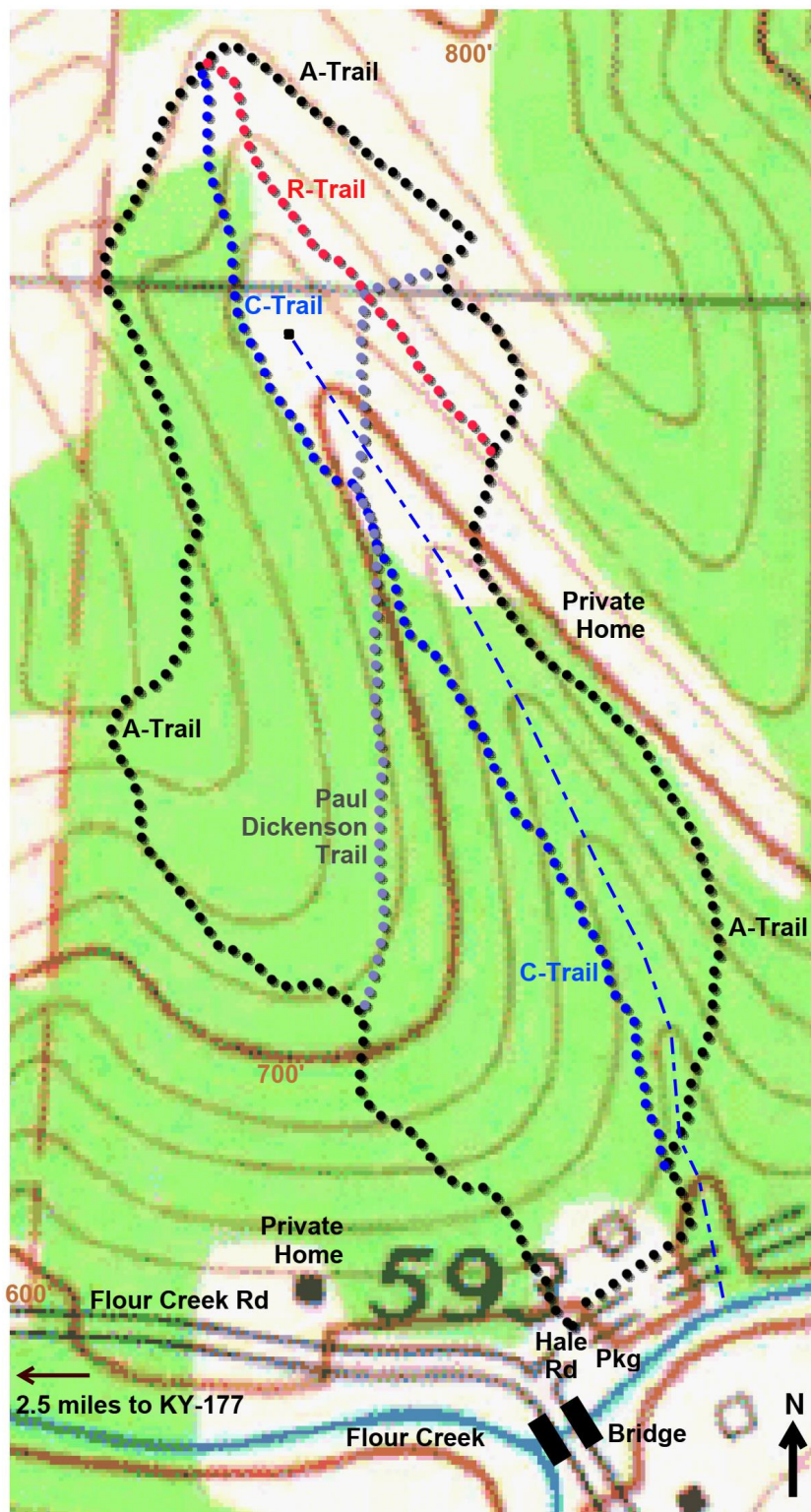
- 1-way path between highest and lowest points of A-Trail
- 0.33 miles long
- 124' high-to-low elevation change

R-Trail

- 1-way path between 2 points on A-Trail
- 0.14 miles long
- 24' high-to-low elevation change

Paul Dickenson Trail

- 1-way path between 2 points on A-Trail, below AT&T phone lines
- 0.21 miles long
- 66' high-to-low elevation change





Clifty Falls State Park

Location: near Madison in Jefferson County, Indiana, about 1 hr 20 min from Florence KY

Park Website: www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2985.htm

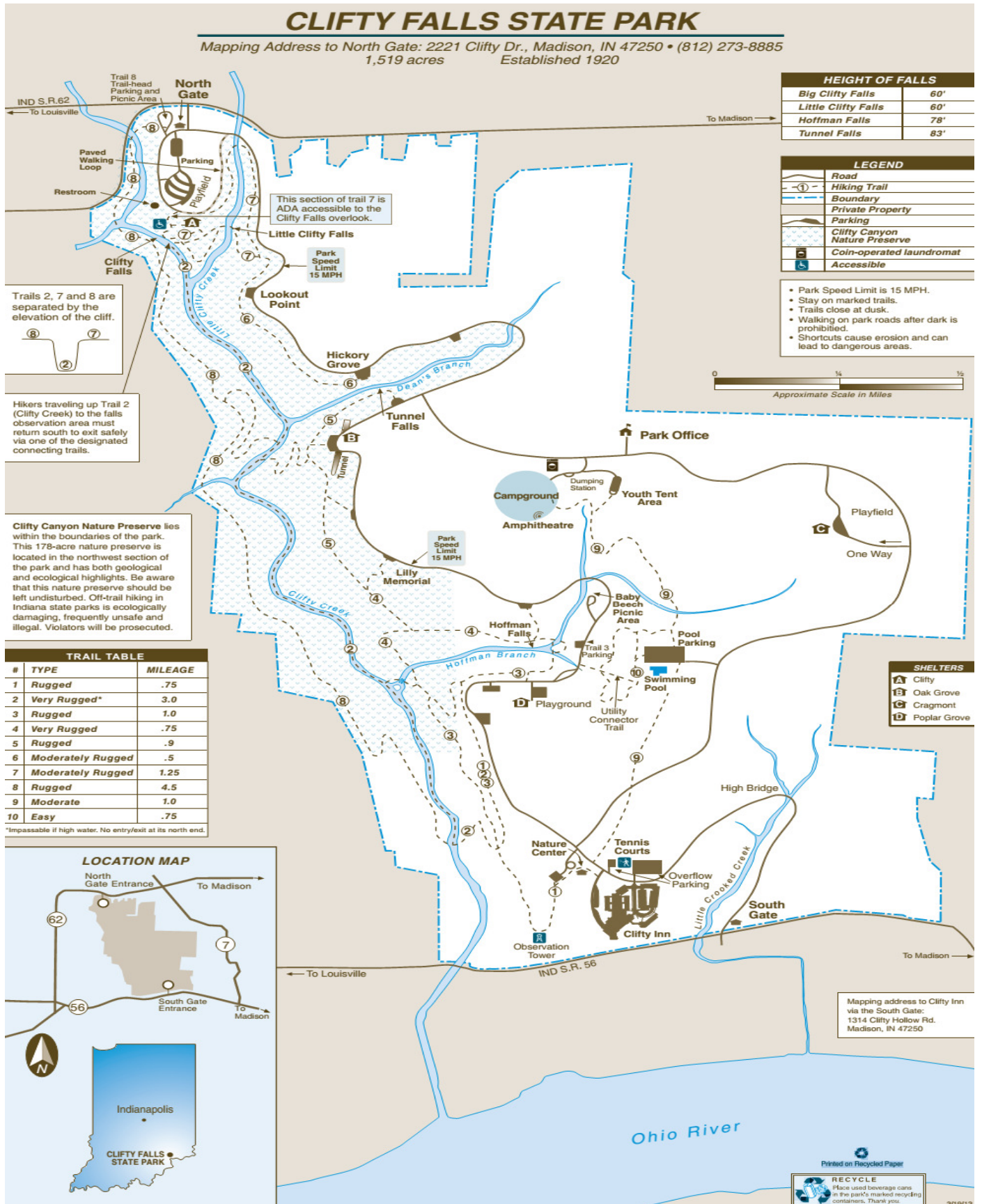
Directions: I-71 south to exit # 44 (Carrollton / Worthington). Turn right onto KY-227 north. Follow 227 for about 3 miles then turn left onto US-42 / KY-36 which follows the Ohio River to Milton, KY. Then follow the signs for US-421 and cross the river into Madison, Indiana. Drive through Madison, turning left on 2nd, right on Baltimore, left on Main. Main Street becomes IN-56. The South entrance to the park will be on the right.

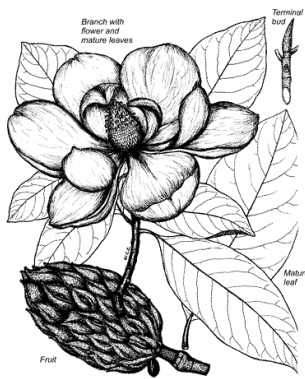
Trails: There are 10 trails for a total of about 15 miles. Trails are often steep and rocky; good hiking shoes and walking poles are recommended. Some parts of the trails have handrails and wooden steps for safety, but other parts can be rugged. Read trail descriptions and know your limitations before starting any of the trails leading down into the canyon. One trail on the park's north side is handicap accessible. Skip visiting the Observation Tower because the view is mainly of the power plant on the Ohio River; the north side of the park is much prettier.

Dogs: Dogs are allowed on a leash.

Description: Clifty Falls and the nearby Ohio River are products of the Ice Age. The Ohio River is a trench cut by sand- and gravel-laden melt waters of the glacial ice mass and it marks the southernmost advance of the glaciers. The canyon of Clifty Falls canyon is a subsequent erosion feature. From the lip of Clifty Falls at an elevation near the general level of the county, Clifty Creek plunges more than 70 feet. In nearly 3 miles of canyon, the creek descends another 250 feet to the Ohio River. There are four major waterfalls and numerous minor ones in the park.

Other Activities: Park includes Clifty Inn and Restaurant and a campground with a swimming pool and waterslide (not a natural waterfall, but still fun). Park also has a nature center, a tennis court, 2 playgrounds, and several good picnic spots. Park is beautifully maintained and facilities are clean. Just watch your footing on the trails: there are many steep drop-offs! The following





Devou Park Mountain Bike Trails

Location: Covington, on Sleepy Hollow Road (KY-1072)

Website: www.devouparktrails.com

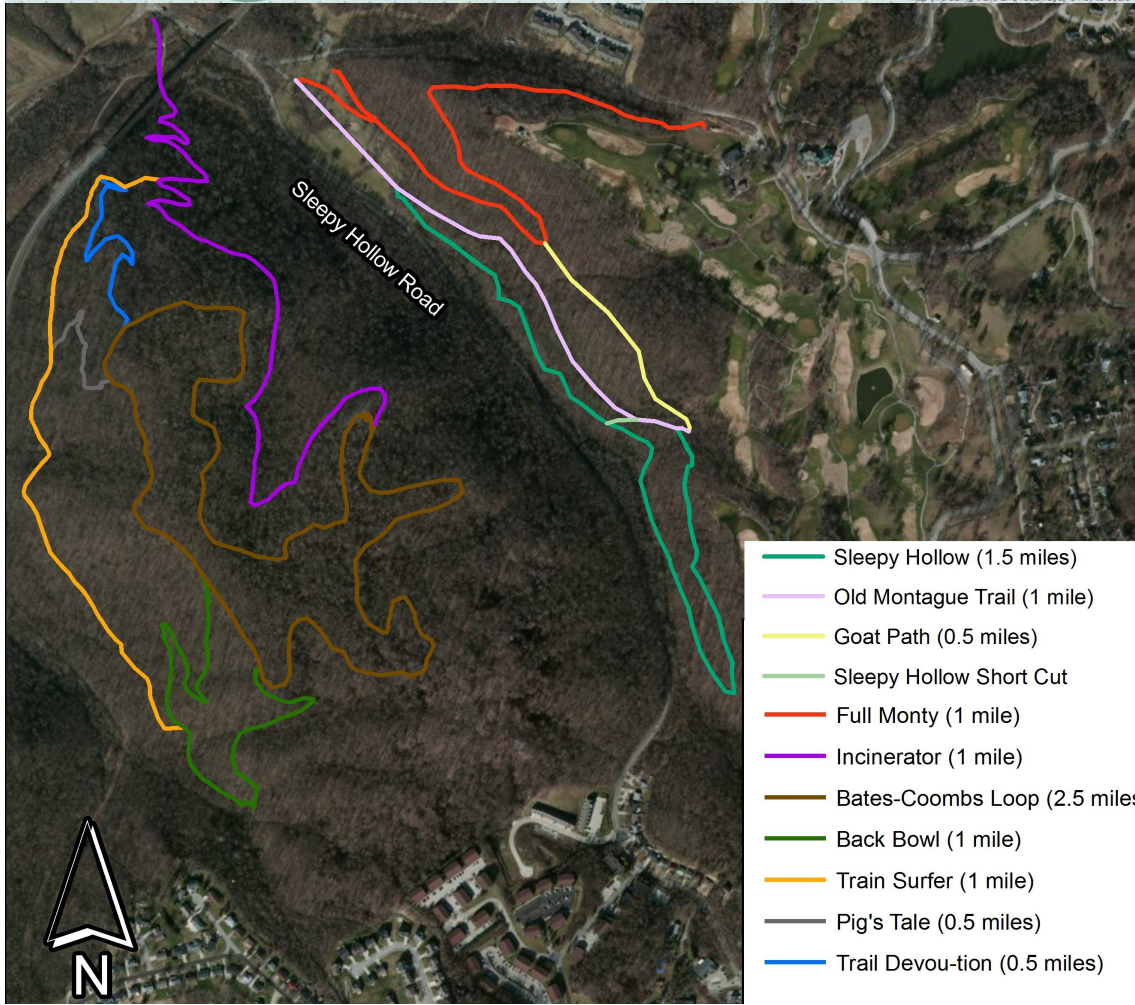
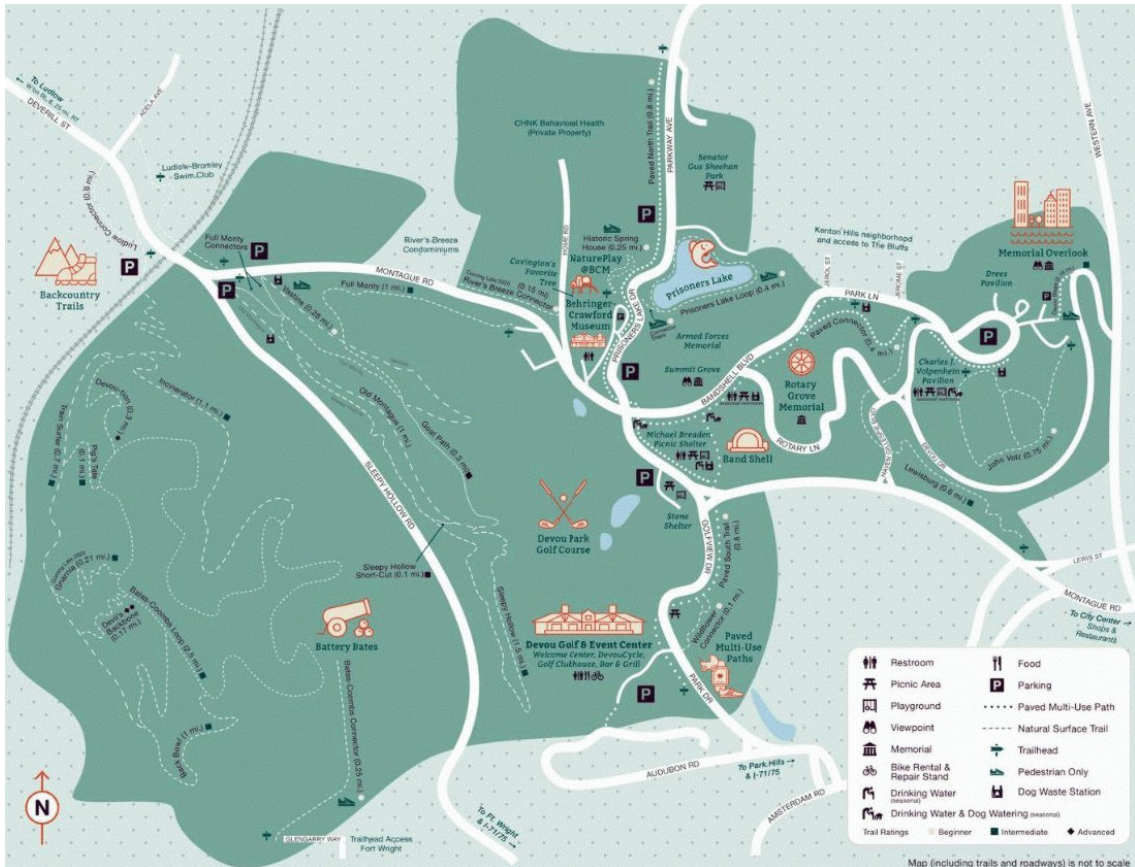
Driving Directions: From Ludlow on KY-8, take Deverill Rd south until it turns into Sleepy Hollow Rd. Enter Devou Park after crossing the railroad track. Or from I-71/75, take exit 189 (Kyles Ln) and turn north toward Dixie Hwy (US-42). Turn right on Dixie Hwy then take the 1st left on Sleepy Hollow Rd (KY-1072). Stay on Sleepy Hollow Rd until entering Devou Park. There are parking lots on the south side of Sleepy Hollow Rd and on Montague Rd just off Sleepy Hollow on the north side. There are maps at the trailheads near the parking lots.

Hiking Trail Miles: 11 different trails, ranging from .5 to 2.5 miles each, for a total of 8 miles. They interconnect to allow many different routes of varying length.

Trail Features: The Devou trails are single-track, 16 inch wide dirt paths designed to meet international mountain bike standards, but hikers and trail runners are welcome as well. Expect a 400 foot elevation gain with numerous switchbacks. Trail etiquette reads that bikes yield to foot traffic. However, there are many places that, in the interest of safety, a walker should step off the trail to allow a biker to pass, especially if they are barreling downhill. Wearing headphones is not recommended since a hiker needs to listen for approaching bikers. This may not be the best trail to hike with a group because conversations can drown out the sound of bikes and too many people in one spot could increase the potential for accidents.

Dogs: Allowed on-leash, but be aware that fast moving bikes may spook them.

History: The Devou Park MTB Trails is an all-volunteer, all-donations effort, opened in 2010 with continued improvement and expansion. Chad Irey, a local resident and outdoor enthusiast, was the mastermind behind the plan to convert the unused acreage at Devou Park into a maze of off-road trails. The trails are supported and maintained by the Cincinnati Off Road Alliance and the Kentucky Mountain Bike Association.



Dinsmore Woods Nature Preserve



Location: western Boone County KY: 5700 Burlington Pike,
Burlington KY 41005

Website: www.boonecountky.org/parks/ParkInfo/18

Directions: Take Exit #181 from I - 75/71. Go West on KY 18 for 11.3 miles, passing through Burlington at mile 5. The preserve is on the right just past the intersection with Middle Creek Rd. Parking is available at Middle Creek Park on the left side of the road.

Trail Miles: 1.7 miles

Trail Features: Dinsmore Woods trail goes through 107-acre Dinsmore Woods, which once belonged to the adjacent Dinsmore Homestead, a visit in itself (see www.dinsmorefarm.org). The trail is hilly and treacherous in some places, needing some work in places. In fall 2013, there were many places where fallen trees across the path necessitated crawling over or under. In some places the trail is not clearly marked and could be easily missed. In the spring there are stinging nettles so a hiker is advised to wear suitable clothing!

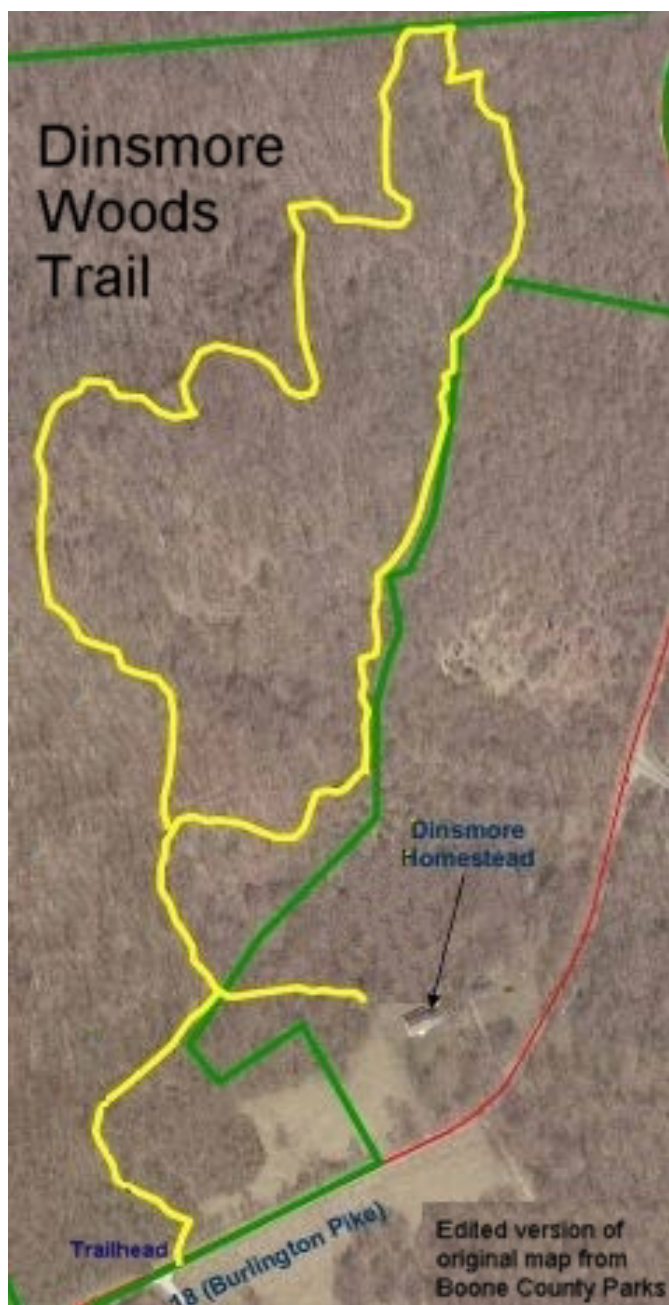
Dogs: No dogs allowed. This includes dogs on leashes.

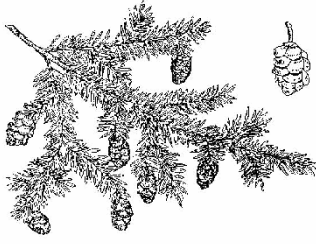
History: This is a unique natural area acquired in 1985 by the Kentucky Chapter of the Nature Conservancy. It has never been commercially logged so is one of the most mature forests in the area. It is also one of the only places in Northern Kentucky to experience Pleistocene glaciations. The glaciations and retreat resulted in an area of moist fertile soil and higher soil acidity than is found in nearby areas. The resulting forest is a mix of hardwoods with species of maple, oak, and ash predominating.

The Nature Conservancy acquired the site because of the presence of Running Buffalo Clover, a federally endangered plant species that can be found adjacent to the forest. This species was thought to be extinct until 1985 when two small populations were found in West Virginia. Years

later when there were only 46 known populations in USA, 23 were in Kentucky. So the Nature Conservancy was using the site to encourage proliferation of the Running Buffalo Clover, also partnering with researchers from Northern Kentucky University to test methods of controlling invasive species (especially garlic mustard), which are a threat to the native clover. Nowadays Dinsmore is managed by Boone County.

Other Activities: Dinsmore is popular for bird watching, likely due to the unique character of the forest. It's only 2 miles from Boone Cliffs, another popular hiking destination. During hunting season, use caution since private lands surrounding the park are used for hunting.





Edge of Appalachia Nature Preserve

Location: Southeast of West Union in Adams County OH.

4274 Waggoner Riffle Rd, West Union, OH 45693. 937-544-2880

Website: <http://www.cincymuseum.org/nature>

Map: <http://www.cincymuseum.org/sites/default/files/2014-Edge-of-Appalachia-Trailheads.pdf>

Driving Directions: From 275 in Northern KY, go southeast about 49 miles on KY-9 / AA Hwy into Mason County KY. Exit left to go north on Clyde T Barbour Blvd / KY-3071 / US-62 / US-68. In 4 miles cross the Ohio River on the William Harsha Bridge. At intersection with US 52, turn left on US 52 / US-62 and go east about 2.2 miles into Aberdeen OH. Turn left on Market St / OH-41 then meander north and east through rural Ohio counties Brown then Adams for 16.9 miles. In West Union OH, turn right on W Main St / OH-125 / OH-41 then go east on OH-125 for 6.5 miles, staying straight on OH-125 when OH-41 departs left. About 0.3 miles past OH-348 and Ohio Brush Creek, there are 4 options depending on which trail. See map.

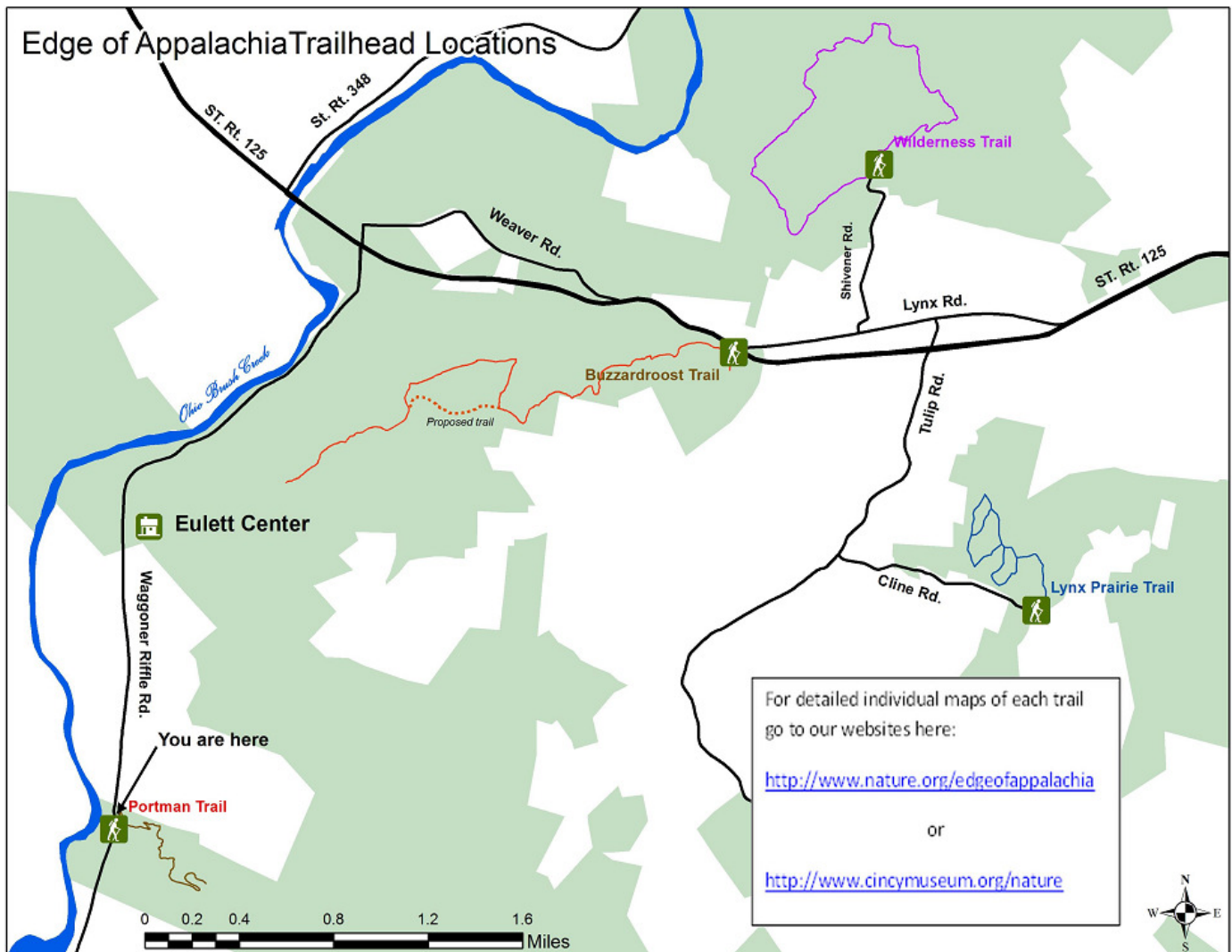
Trail Features: The trails offer hikers access to different sections of the 16,000-acre nature preserve, one of the most bio-diverse natural areas in the region, with many cliffs, forests, streams, plant diversity and rare wildlife species

- Charles A. Eulett **Wilderness Preserve Trail** is a 2.5 mile loop. Trailhead is on Shivener Rd which runs north off Lynx Rd. Lynx runs northeast off OH-125 near Buzzardroost Trail.
- Christian and Emma Goetz **Buzzardroost Rock Preserve Trail** is a 4.4-mile round trip hike traversing the front of the Appalachian Escarpment to a rock promontory 900 ft above Ohio Brush Creek. Trailhead is on OH-125, east of Waggoner Riffle Rd.
- E. Lucy Braun **Lynx Prairie Preserve Trail** is a 1.4-mile trail meandering through 10 prairie openings in an otherwise forested area. Lynx is one of the preserve's cradles of plant diversity, topping more than 600 recorded species. Trailhead is at end of Cline Rd which runs off Tulip Rd south of OH-125. The north end of Tulip Rd intersects Lynx Rd.
- Joan Jones **Portman Trail** is a 1.6 mile trail opened in 2014. It climbs from the Ohio Brush Creek Valley to a rock promontory with breathtaking views. Trailhead is on Waggoner Riffle Rd, south of OH-125.

Dogs: No prohibitions noticed but keep dogs on leash.

History: The Richard and Lucile Durrell Edge of Appalachia Preserve is one of the largest privately owned preserves east of the Mississippi, with 11 unique preserves: Ohio Brush Creek, Cedar Falls, The Wilderness, Buzzardroost Rock, Red Rock, Lynx Prairie, Cave Hollow, Hanging Prairie, Germany Hill Prairie, Abner Hollow and the Rieveschl Preserves. Four are recognized as National Natural Landmarks—a testimony to their significance. Cincinnati Museum Center has partnered with the Ohio Chapter of the Nature Conservancy to protect these areas for over 50 yrs.

Other Activities: Advanced Naturalist Workshops continue the Edge's study and cataloging of preserve resources and offer field training for those interested in nature study. Science Camp for children to reconnect with nature and have the time of their life. Eulett Center (on Waggoner Riffle Rd between OH-125 and Portman Trail) is a new facility available to rent for conferences, business meetings, and community events.





Fort Thomas Landmark Tree Trail

Location: In Fort Thomas of northern Campbell County KY, only a few miles south of downtown Cincinnati, next to Carmel Manor Nursing Home at 100 Carmel Manor Dr

Website: [www.ftthomas.org/Recreation/WalkProgram/Tree trail brochure.pdf](http://www.ftthomas.org/Recreation/WalkProgram/Tree%20trail%20brochure.pdf)

Driving Directions: From I-471 take Exit 3, Grand Ave. If traveling south on 471, turn left on Grand and go about 2.5 miles toward Fort Thomas. If traveling north on 471, veer right on Fort Thomas ramp and go about 2.1 miles. Either way, when at a 3 way stop where Grand Ave merges with South Fort Thomas Ave, continue straight on South Fort Thomas Ave about 0.5 miles then turn left at the stop light onto River Rd. Take an immediate left at the Tower Park sign. Drive through 2 stop signs, pass the Army Reserve Center, then pull into a gravel parking area on the right, sufficient for 3 cars with a large sign designating the trailhead. If you reach Carmel Manor you've gone too far.

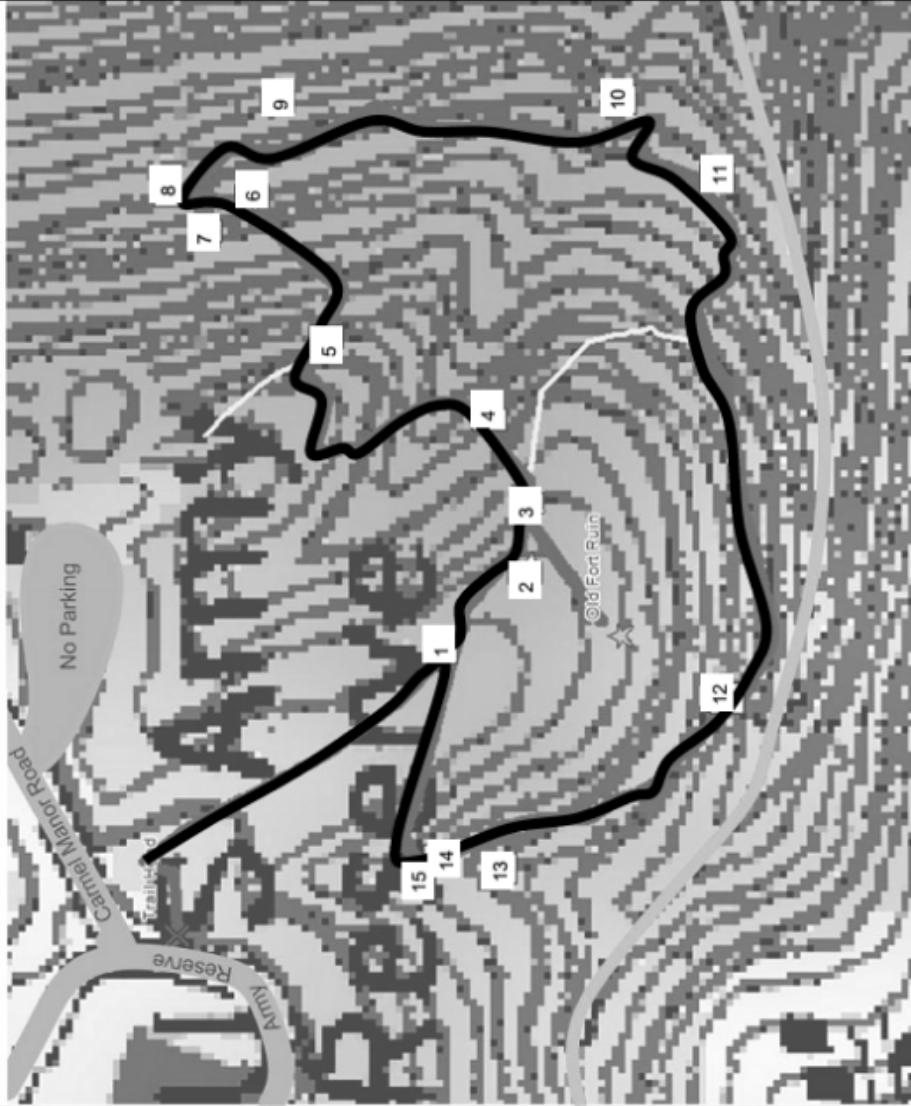
Hiking Trail: Approximately 1 mile, open dawn to dusk

Trail Features: This little known gem features enormous old-growth trees, some dating from the 1600's. Print the trail guide from the website above for detailed information on 15 of the trees which all have markers. This single-loop, shady, hilly trail consists of soil with exposed rocks and roots of moderate difficulty. There are beautiful views of the Ohio River before the trees leaf out. Several benches can be found along the trail, and there is a nice picnic table on the first part of the trail. Deer frequent the park. Watch for the bald eagle which was recently spotted in the area. The park is located on private land and is well maintained by volunteers, so you must stay on the trail. No bikes are permitted. This trail is immediately adjacent to Tower Park, which is also featured in this guide.

Dogs: Allowed but must be leashed

Fort Thomas Landmark Tree Trail

No Parking in Carmel Manor. Please park near the entrance to the trail or at the Sports Complex (running track) parking lot.



Each brown line indicates an elevation change of 20 feet. The closer the lines are, the steeper the grade.

- Landmark Trail
- Trail Head
- Old Fort Ruin
- Creek
- Emergency Trails Only

	Approximate Age in years	Circumference Feet' inches"	Height
1. Kentucky Coffee tree	40	2'6"	45
2. Shumard Oak	200	10'1"	60
3. Shumard Oak	175	8'6"	55
4. Northern Red Oak	175	9'5"	80
5. Northern Red Oak	125	7'6"	70
6. American Sycamore	225	14'	90
7. Chinkapin Oak	350	13'8"	90
8. White Ash	140	8'6"	80
9. Northern Red Oak	175	9'8"	85
10. Northern Red Oak	200	11'2"	85
11. Shumard Oak	250	11'11"	90
12. Shumard Oak	175	9'3"	80
13. Shumard Oak	175	8'9"	85
14. Shumard Oak	225	10'10"	80
15. Chinkapin Oak	175	8'11"	60



General Butler State Resort Park

Location: Carroll County, in western Northern Kentucky, near convergence of Kentucky and Ohio Rivers. 1608 Hwy 227, Carrollton, KY 41008. 502-732-4384

Website: <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/resortparks/general-butler/trails.aspx>

Driving Directions: Take I-71 to exit 44, then go northwest on KY-227.

Hiking Trail Miles: Up to 6.25

Trail Features: Woodland Trail is a 1.5 mile loop with access available at many points throughout the park, going through a mature woodland forest of large tulip trees, beech and hickory, many popular wildflowers and bushes along trail. Fossil Trail is a 4.5 mile loop with 3 access points, crossing open fields and going through old hardwood forests behind a stone overlook which is the county's highest point. Boy Scout Trail is a .25 mile trail connecting Butler-Turpin State Historic House to Fossil Trail. Fossil Trail is also open to bikers April-November.

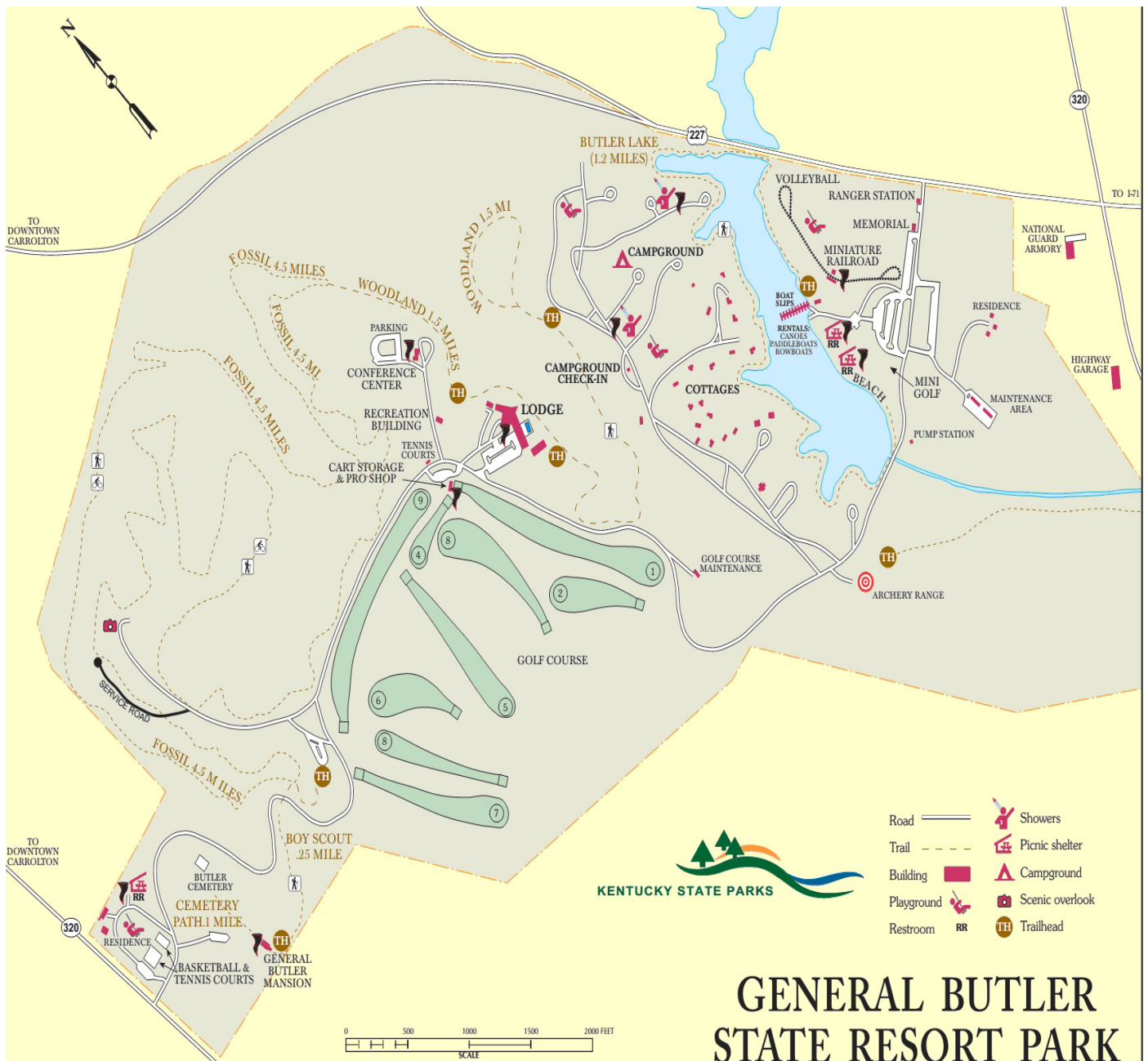
Trails are not well marked, but their paths are clear and mostly in wooded areas. A hiking stick comes in handy in some places. Restrooms are available at the lodge. Be sure to check out the overlooks both from the lodge and the one built by the CCC which is close to the trail.

Dogs: Dogs are allowed on leash.

History: General Butler is Northern Kentucky's 1st state park and one of the first ten in the commonwealth. On August 12, 1931, a 300-acre tract comprising part of the old William O. Butler family farm became Kentucky's 6th state park. Not only is the park a historic site, it is also a place of great natural beauty, the only spot in Kentucky that has a unique view of the convergence of the Kentucky and Ohio Rivers. The Butler family for which the park is named is one of Kentucky's great historic families. General Percival Butler, a Revolutionary War soldier settled in what is now Carroll County, Kentucky in 1796. Butler's 4 sons became prominent figures in Kentucky history.

General Butler State Resort Park preserves the Butler family home built in 1859, a brick federal-style residence with 8 large rooms, 2 wide halls, a 3rd floor and spacious basement. The house is open for tours. The original park built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) has 791 acres. CCC built a beautiful stone pavilion on the highest hill overlooking the Kentucky River.

Other Activities: Besides hiking, park is great for biking, birding, camping (111 campsites with utility hookups and grills), canoeing, fishing (in the 30-acre Butler Lake, no motorized boats allowed), golf, tennis and swimming (in the lodge pool - open seasonally). There are rental cabins and a lodge, gift shop, museum and a recreation building including a game room.





Gunpowder Creek (Sperti) Nature Park

Location: central Boone County in Northern KY, south of Burlington

Address: 6750 Sperti Lane, Burlington KY 41005

Website:

https://www.boonecountyky.org/departments/parks/gunpowder_creek_nature_park.aspx

Driving Directions: From Burlington KY on KY-18, go south on East Bend Rd at the old Boone County Courthouse. Go 1 mile then turn left onto Hanover Blvd. Then turn right onto Sperti Lane. The park is at the end of Sperti Lane on the left.

Hiking Trail Miles: About 1.25 each way, making for a 2.5 round-trip.

Rating: Relatively easy and not too long, but the creek is about 210' below the elevation of the parking lot, so there's a 210' climb on the return hike, which some will find difficult. There are no restrooms or water supplies along the trail.

Trail Features: The trail is an unpaved, mostly gravel-covered 1800's logging trail that travels from an elevation of 830 feet to 620 feet and ends near Gunpowder Creek at a stone seating area. The creek over many years has eroded its bank along some sections of creek-side trail, so be careful about footing especially when the trail is wet or slippery.

If hiking along the creek during or after a rainy spring, expect to see a lively, aggressive stream, sometimes with floating debris washed from elsewhere in the county or uprooted mature trees tossed into creative logjams. If hiking in late summer, expect to see a calm, shallow stream you can skip rocks across.

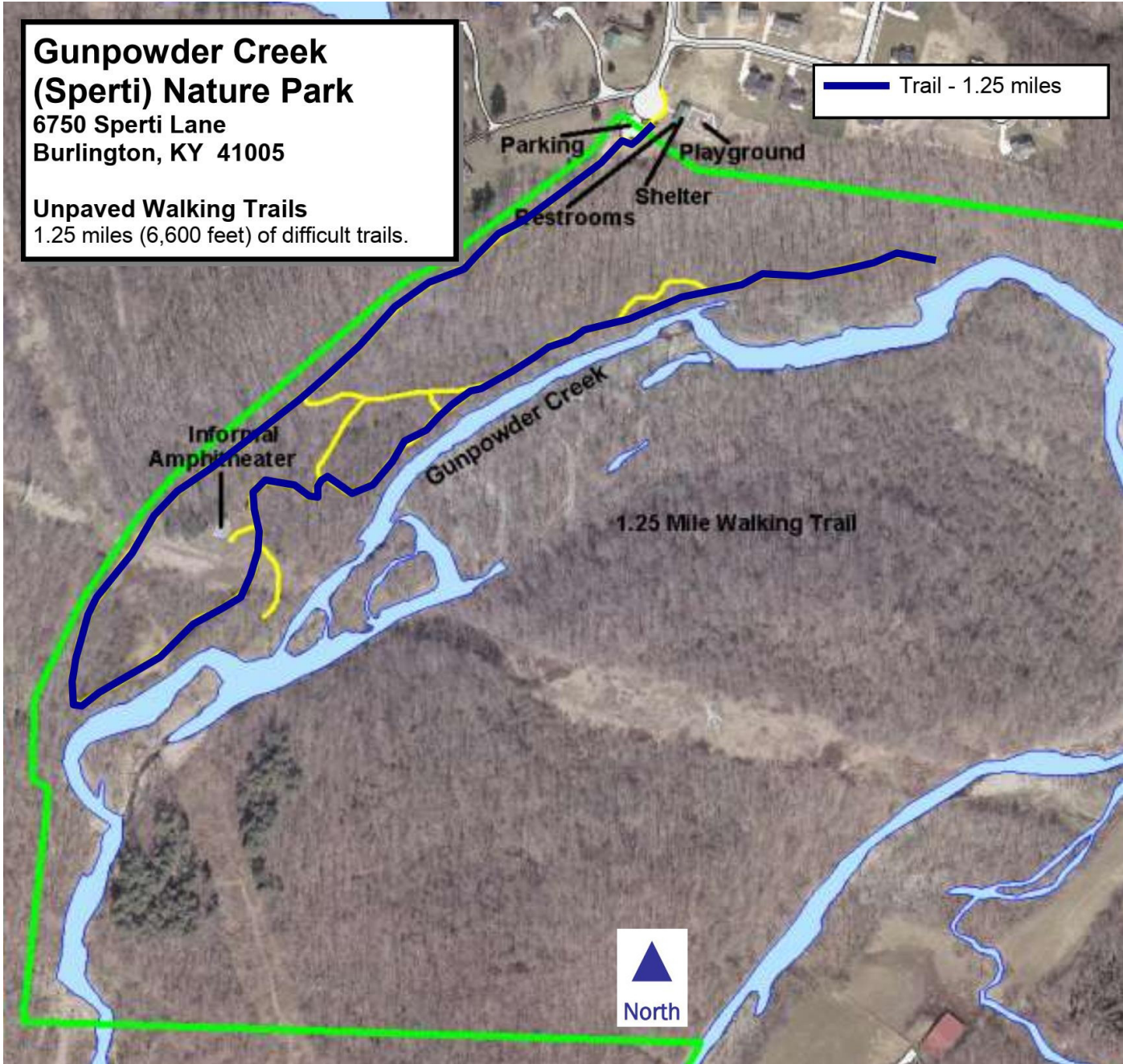
Dogs: Permitted if on a leash.

Park History: Owned and managed by Boone County Parks, Gunpowder Creek Nature Park covers 122 wooded acres and includes a stand of mature oak trees on the northern hillside that is one of the best remaining undisturbed areas of woodland in the region. Many rocks along the creek contain a rich fossil record of when this region was once below a tropical sea.

If you visit when the creek is calm and low-level, or if you bring a horse, you can cross the creek and explore the more than 100 acres of the park on the opposite side of the creek from the trail.

Besides the trail and creek, there's a childrens' playground near the parking lot and a shelter with electricity and a water fountain which can be reserved.

Trail map courtesy of Boone County Parks:





Highland Cemetery Nature Preserve

Location: Kenton County KY: 2167 Dixie Highway, Fort Mitchell, KY 41017-2998. 859.331.3220

Website: www.highlandcemetery.com/facilities.html

Directions: Take exit 188 (Ft. Mitchell / Dixie Hwy.) off I-71 / 75. Go south on Dixie Hwy. Make a left at the white entrance gates of Highland Cemetery, directly across from the Kroger and Expressway Plaza. Bear to the right after you enter the Cemetery to find the trail entrances.

Trail Miles: 6 Trails totaling 3.4 miles

Dogs: Leashed dogs are allowed on the trails. Please keep dogs off the gravesites.

Description: The trails are located along a hillside and several spurs have inclines to lower or upper sections, some with wooden or stone stair-steps, some just long inclines on dirt trails. If you do all the trails in one loop hike, it can be a good workout. The trails have been installed as environmentally as possible. They are no wider than necessary to preserve the vegetation. Dead trees are left standing to provide food, nesting and den sites for a variety of wildlife.

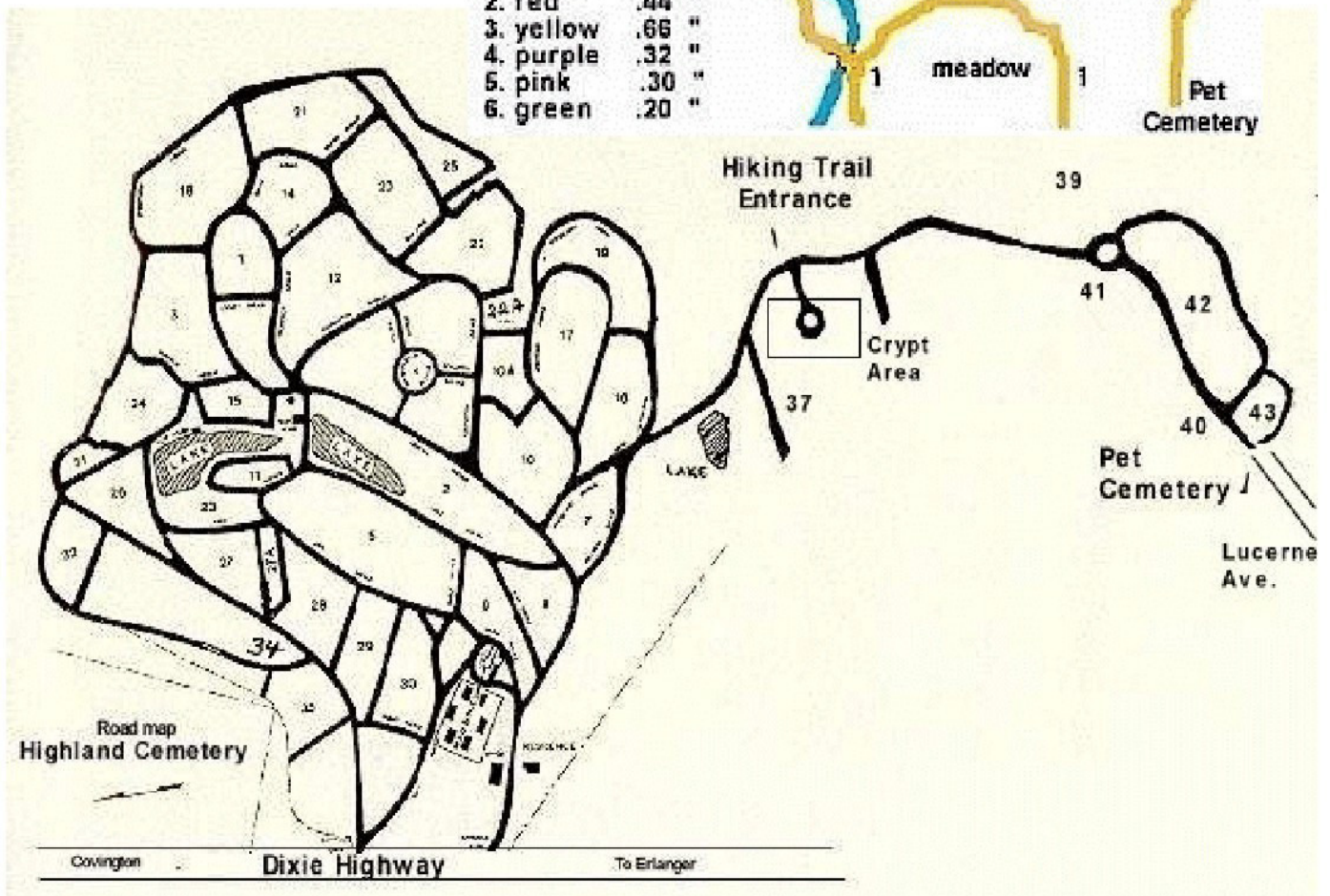
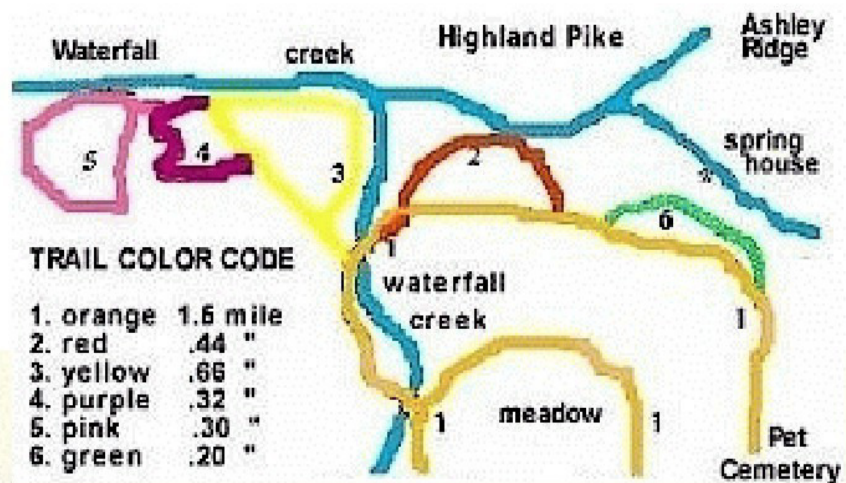
Highland Pike, Ft. Wright, Ft. Mitchell, and the cemetery border the 150 acres of undeveloped cemetery property covered by the trails. The trails are a great place to view woodland wildflowers in the spring, peaking around mid-April. Early spring and summer are ideal times for bird-watchers wanting to see many of our native species and Neotropical migrants. A few years ago a bald eagle was sighted in the cemetery. The maple trees make for great color in the fall, peaking in mid- October. Winter is just as interesting with formations in streams and animal tracks in the snow. The Cemetery trails are open daily from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm.

History: The cemetery property contains three lakes, hundreds of large trees and rolling hills, waterfalls and streams. 150-acres of this 250-acre land was turned into a Wildlife Enhancement

Program and hiking trails were installed. The cemetery itself is also fairly interesting. The oldest grave is that of Mary Anne Blythe, born in Frederick, Maryland in 1798 and died in 1868. A number of civil war veterans are buried on the site along with many prominent northern Kentucky residents. One of the more interesting gravestones bears a life size likeness of J.D. Shutt, a businessman and state representative, who is buried beneath.

Other Activities: The Highland Cemetery is next to the Ft. Wright Nature Preserve that has its own trail system. The following trail and cemetery map was constructed from 2 separate downloadable maps available from the website.

Highland Cemetery Trails





Kincaid Lake State Park

Location: Pendleton County KY: 565 Kincaid Park Rd, Falmouth, KY 41040. Phone: 859.654.3531

Website: <http://parks.ky.gov/parks/recreationparks/kincaid-lake/default.aspx>

Directions: Travel US-27 south into Falmouth, then turn east on KY-22. After the Licking River bridge, then turn left on KY-159 and go 3.5 miles. Turn right at the park entrance and drive 1.5 miles, turning right at the recreation area. A paved path from the shelter building leads to the trailhead at the woods' edge. The shelter has restrooms.

Trail Miles: Upto 2.5 miles overall if hiking all portions of the 2 connected trails in loops.

Trail Features: Two trails named for native flora, Ironwood and Spicebush, travel through a variety of nature habitats, covering upto 180' elevation change from creek valley to hilltop. Some low areas can have water flowing over the trail. Some trail sections are steep, rocky and/or damp, creating sometimes slippery conditions. Trails are not complicated, but in fall 2013 there were a few signs uprooted or giving incorrect directions or showing incorrect trail name. Some newly installed sign posts hint new signs may be coming. In the meantime, trust the map in this guide or in the trail shelter more than the signs, especially at trail junctions.

Each trail is reached via a path between the trailhead and a suspension bridge. Descend into the woods until reaching a trailside shelter with plaques on flora and fauna. Trail continues through the shelter, exiting the opposite side, descending initially on imbedded wood steps, finally entering a marshy meadow. Turn left, following the creek until reaching a wood suspension bridge over the creek. Ironwood Trail veers left before the bridge. Spicebush starts on the bridge's other side.

Ironwood roller-coasters along the left of the creek for a half mile before crossing the creek on flat rocks. Then it climbs, gradually becoming steeper, eventually entering a Cedar grove. Continue climbing another half mile then turn right, walking a quarter mile on a wider park maintenance trail. At a 3-trail junction, choose either to path to loop back via Spicebush.

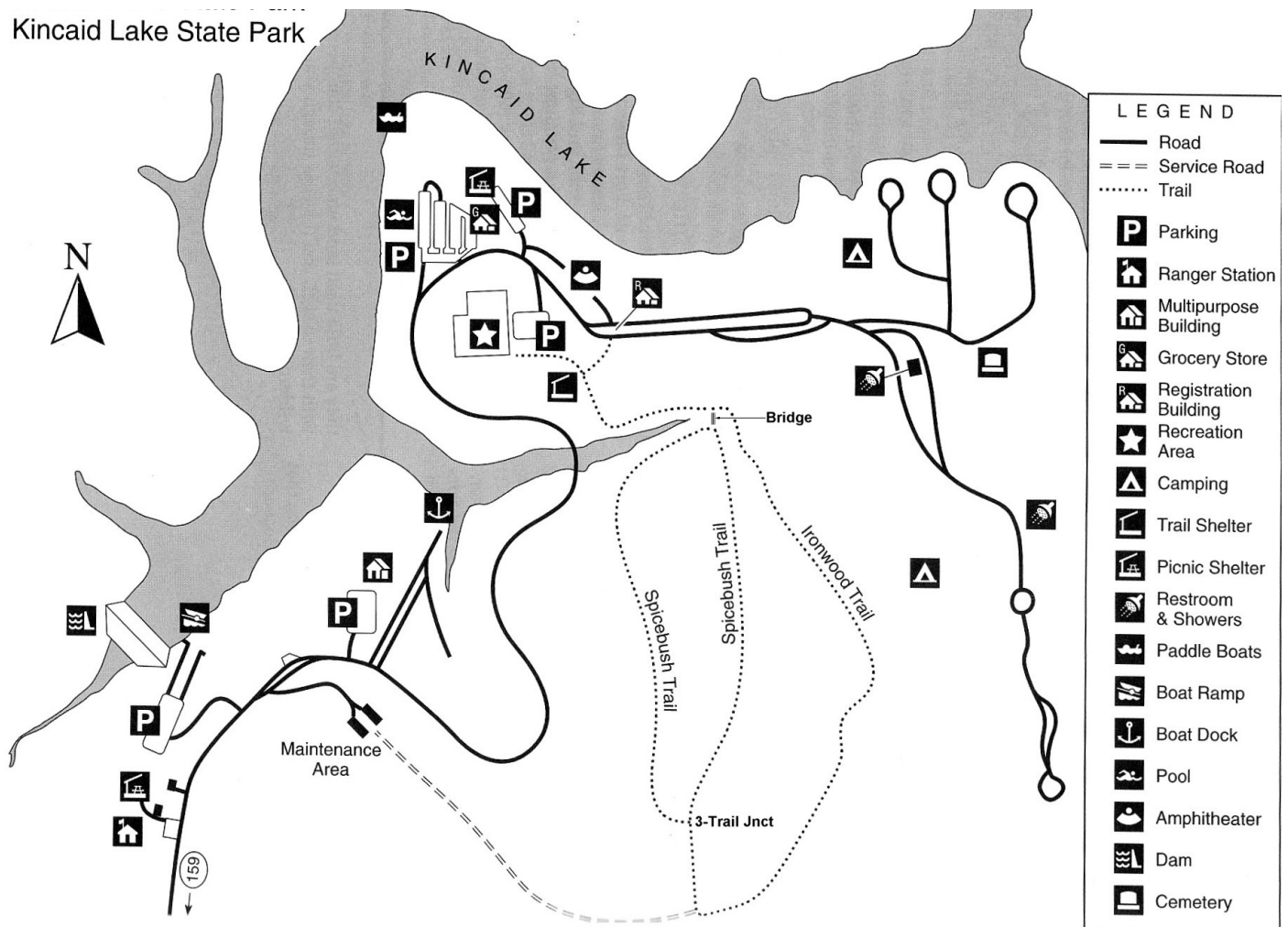
Spicebush Trail is a 1-mile loop. After crossing suspension bridge, turn right, following the creek

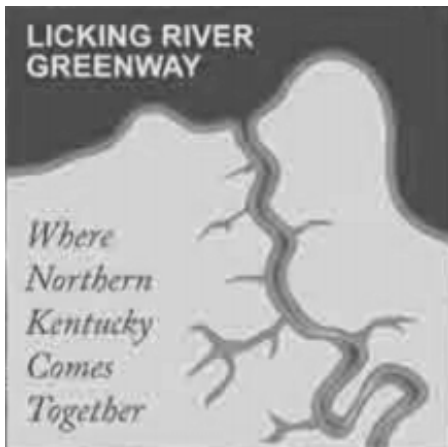
along its opposite bank back to the marshy meadow. Turn left, climbing steeply into a hardwood forest. Pass a stand of Virginia Pines, a clearing, a stand of Cedars, finally reaching the 3-trail junction. Turn left to return on Spicebush or right to return via Ironwood (maybe twice as long).

Dogs: Leashed dogs are allowed.

History: Kincaid Lake joined Kentucky State Parks in 1958 when the Kincaid Park Development Assn transferred 800 acres to Kentucky for the creation of a lake and state park. Kincaid Creek’s dam was constructed in 1961 and by 1963 Kincaid Lake opened to the public.

Other Activities: The main attraction is boating, fishing and swimming in the 183 acre lake surrounded by a second-growth hardwood forest. The park also has 9-hole golf, miniature golf, playgrounds, tennis and basketball courts, picnic areas and a year-round campground.





Licking River Greenway Trails

Location: Northern Kenton County, starting in Covington KY at Levassor Place, just east of Eastern Ave, going north along the Licking River until it dead ends in about 1.6 miles across the grass levy near the end of 8th St at Randolph Park. There is no trailhead at the current north end of the trail. Extensions to this trail are planned, so expect this description to change in the future.

Website: http://lickingrivertrail.org/web/Licking_River_Greenway_and_Trails.html

Driving Directions: Levassor Ave runs east from Madison Ave (aka KY-17), just north of the intersection of KY-16 and KY-17. Drive east on Levassor, which runs along the south side of Holmes High School. Turn left on Eastern Ave, then an immediate left into the Holmes parking lot where you will see signs for trail parking. From the lot, look across Eastern Ave to see a sign announcing the trailhead. Trail runs north from Levassor, just a few feet east of Eastern Ave.

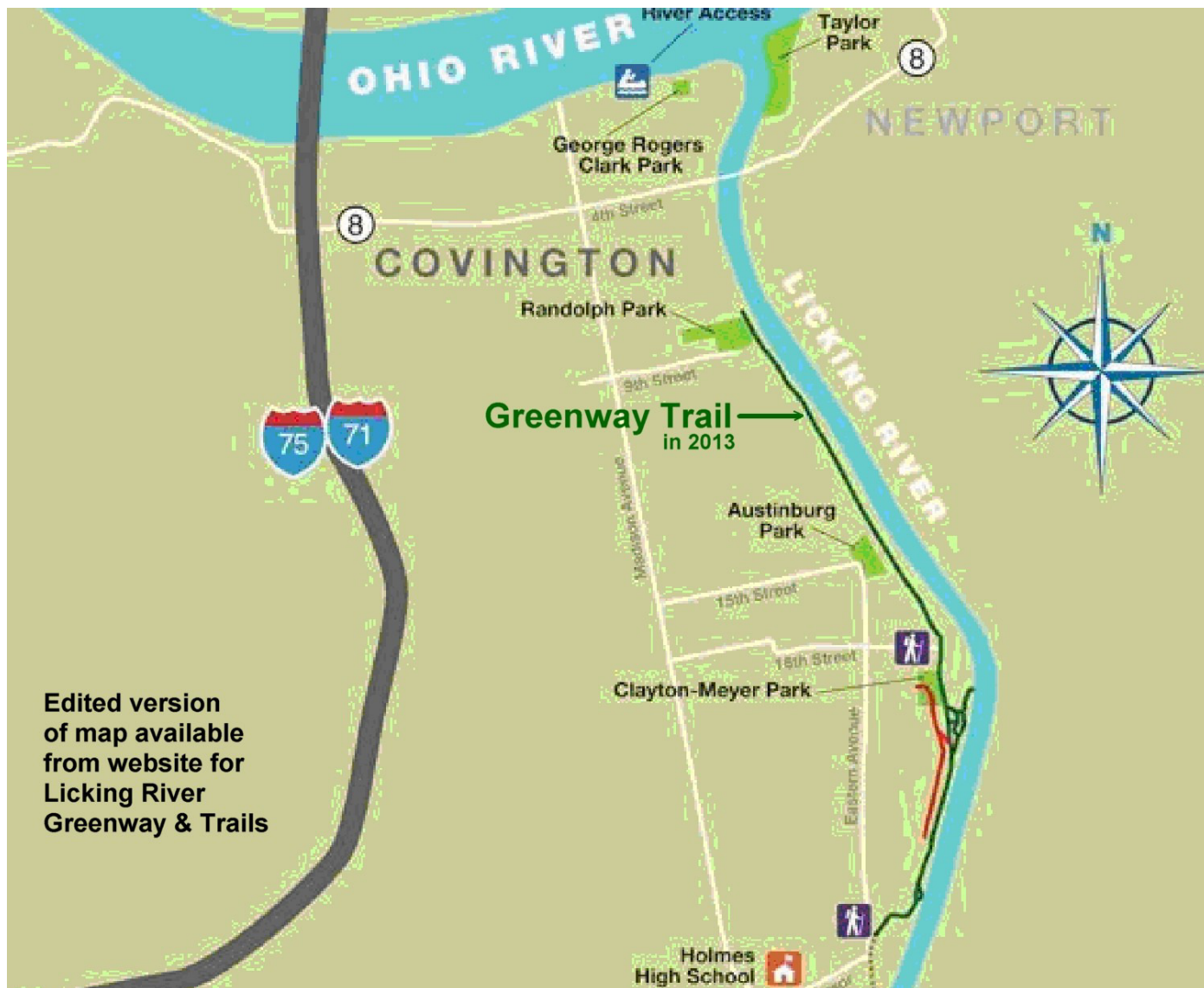
Hiking Trail Miles: 2, including the spur trail to Tot-Lot at 17th and Glenway Aves.

Trail Features: The main trail corridor currently runs between the Licking River on the east and the levy/flood wall system on the west, going north from Levassor Ave until ending in about 1.6 miles across from the levy from Randolph Park, near 8th St's deadend. Most of the trail is gravel, but approximately 0.6 miles from the Levassor trailhead, a blacktop spur runs southwest over the flood wall to a Tot-Lot on Glenway Ave, just north of 17th St. The trail can be entered there, but parking is not as convenient. Where the trail crosses the floodwall, a blacktop path also runs south about 0.2 miles over the levy until it dead-ends at the bottom of a steep hill at the base of the floodwall. The top of the levy provides a good vantage point for Downtown Cincinnati and Covington buildings, so it's worth the steep walk.

Continuing about 0.1 miles north from the blacktop spur, 16th St. passes through a floodgate and terminates at the Rizzo Painting Co. The trail runs along the east side of the painting company and continues for about a mile to the end of the gravel path.

According to the web site, much more trail is planned, but only about two miles (including the spur) are complete as of October 2013. There are many views of the Licking River, but currently there are no easy access points from the trail into the river, as for kayaks or canoes.

History: Licking River Greenway & Trails is a multi-community Northern Kentucky effort to create an urban greenway from the mouth of the Licking River to the I-275 loop. The trails system seeks eventually to connect neighborhoods and businesses on both sides of the river.





Miami Whitewater Forest

Location: Northwest Hamilton County in SW Ohio, west of Cincinnati, north of Harrison: 9001 Mt. Hope Rd, Crosby Township, OH 45030

Website: <http://greatparks.org/parks/miami-whitewater-forest>

Driving Directions: I-75 north to I-74 west OR I-275 west to I-74 west (passing through Indiana to Ohio). Once westbound on I-74, take exit # 3 for Dry Fork Rd and turn right. After about 2.5 miles, turn right onto New Haven Rd, then an immediate right onto Mt. Hope Rd. The park is approximately 1/2 mile ahead on Mt. Hope Rd.

Entrance Fee: An annual Motor Vehicle Pass costs \$10 and will give access to all of the Hamilton County Parks for the year in which it was purchased; a one-time daily pass costs \$3.

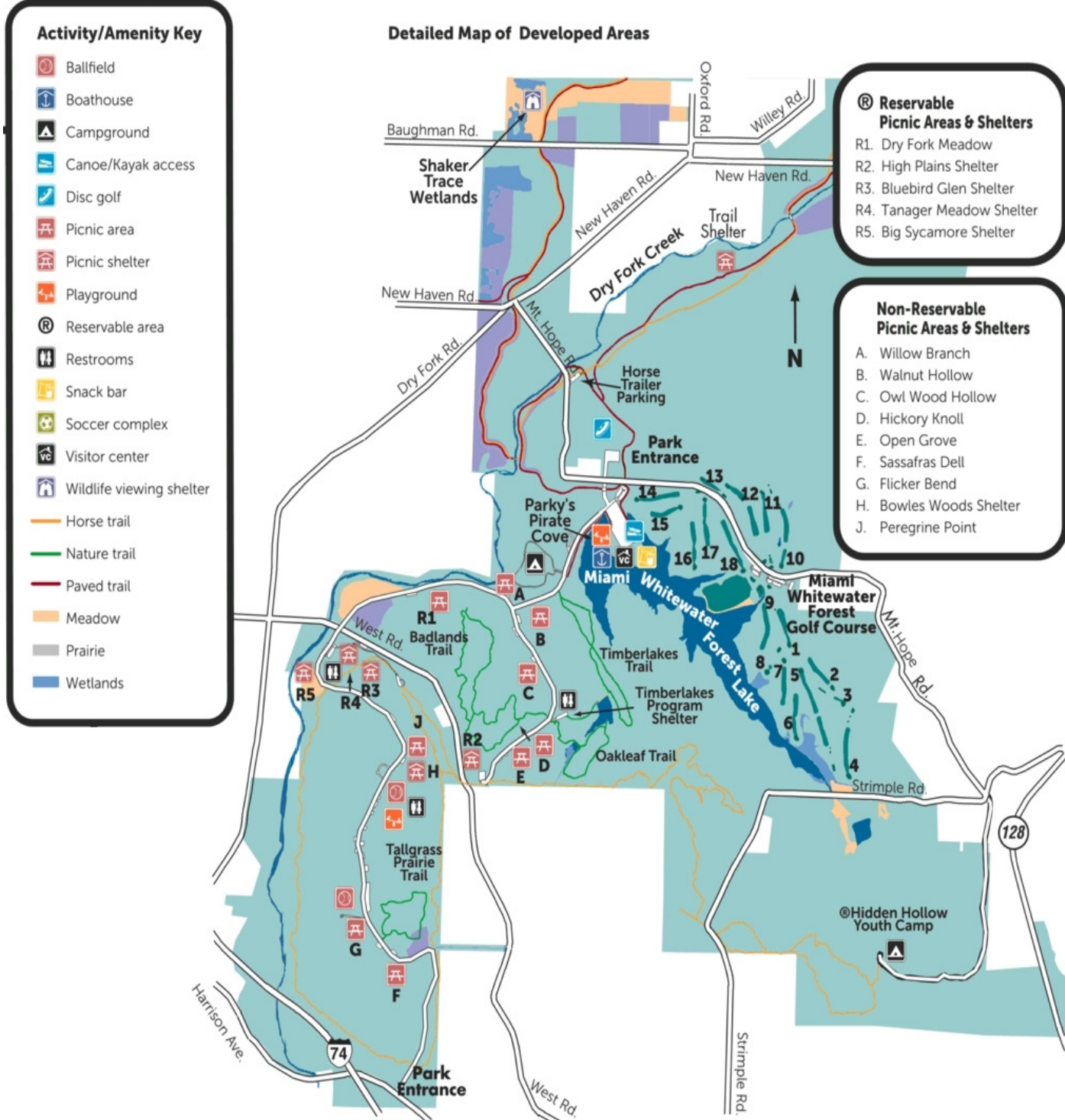
Hiking Trail Miles: The nature trails total about 4.5 miles, including the 1.7 mile Badlands, 0.8 mile Oakleaf, 0.6 mile Tallgrass Prairie and the 1.4 mile Timberlakes trails. Park also has a paved 7.8-mile Shaker Trace Trail (outer loop) and a 1.4-mile Parcours Trail (inner loop).

Trail Features: Paved trails are relatively flat but the nature trails have elevation changes with numerous steps/water boards. Paved loops are great for biking, pushing a stroller or jogging. The longer outer loop trail threads through numerous habitats including farm fields, wildflower meadows and wetlands, and it includes a bird viewing area. Cincinnati Bird Club calls it “the best area for marsh birding in SW Ohio.” The shorter nature trails are good for walks with children and dogs, or trail running. Watch for exposed roots and numerous water boards installed to mitigate damage from rain runoff. Badlands Trail is probably the most strenuous of the 4 nature trails.

Dogs: Dogs are allowed on leashes but owners must provide their own baggies to clean up after pets. There are containers to store baggies if you have extras you would like to leave behind for others who have forgotten theirs. The “largest dog park in the region” is planned for 2014.

Other Activities: The largest of the “Great Parks of Hamilton County” Ohio, Miami Whitewater

offers diverse outdoor entertainment besides hiking on its 4345 acres, including bicycling, camping in a 46-site campground, boating and fishing on the 85-acre picturesque lake, horseback riding, regular and disk golf, even access to a soccer complex and a visitor center with nature display and gift shop. Boats and bicycles are available for rent, and lakeshore fishing is permitted. Park is open daily, dawn to dusk.





Morning View Heritage Area

Location: southeast Kenton County in Northern KY - about 25 minutes southeast of Independence.

Address: 15168 Decoursey Pike, Morning View 41063.

Website:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=edc5a552867545ce81b806330798e2ab>

Driving Directions: From Independence KY, go south on KY-17 (Madison Pk). Continue south through the KY-16 intersection. After an “Atwood” community sign, turn east (left) on KY-2042 (Moffett Rd). After 5.2 miles turn right on Kenton Station Rd (which is still KY-2042). Turn right on KY-177 and drive south about 5 minutes. Look for the preserve’s parking lot about ½ mile south of the KY-14 intersection where there is a Morning View Post Office. There is no sign yet but the new gravel parking lot is on the west side of Decoursey (KY-177), on the opposite side of the road from the railroad track. It has 2 entrances. A black barn is obvious behind a wood fence.

Hiking Trail Miles: 3.13 miles. There are several loop hike options with upto 175’-200’ elevation change. The shortest loop hike is flat and only about 0.4 miles. The trails are recently blazed, temporarily marked with small flags and plastic strips attached to bushes and trees.

Rating: Easy, but there are multiple climbs & descents upto 200’. Unpaved trails can be slippery or tricky, especially in wintery or wet weather. There are no restrooms or water supplies onsite.

Trail Features:

Wetlands Trail, a flat mowed loop path thru tall grass, is 0.43 miles if walked as a simple loop. It starts at the barn’s right and leads thru the wetlands and past bat habitats. It also leads to the rear trailhead of Dickerson Trail.

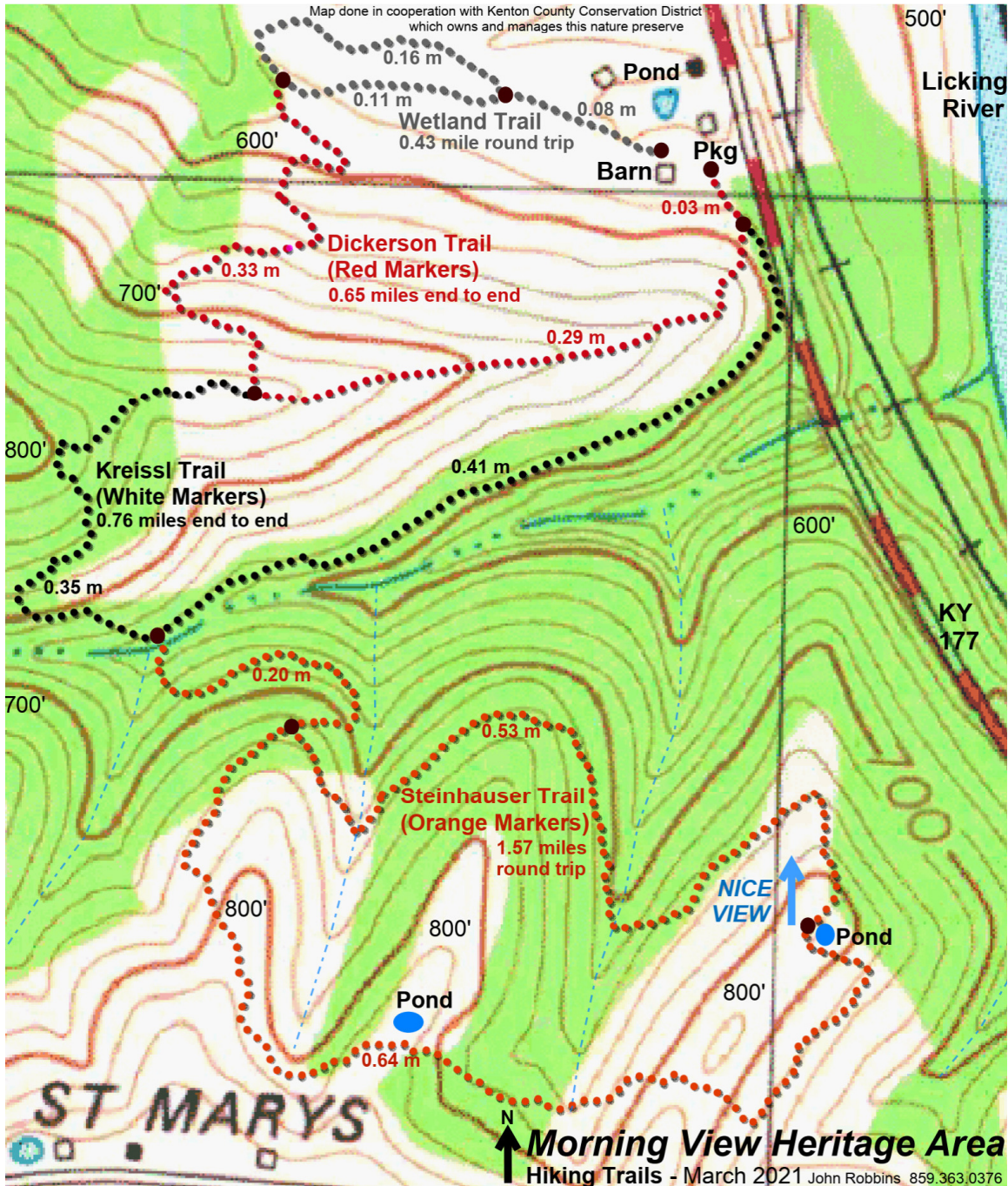
Dickerson Trail, a mostly wooded path with some nice ridgetop vistas, is 0.65 miles if walked end-to-end and includes about 175’ of elevation change. There are red markers along the trail. It intersects with both Kreissl trailheads. The front trailhead starts at barn’s left and the rear trailhead is in the back corner of Wetlands Trail.

Kreissl Trail traverses a nice valley along a stream but also visits a ridgetop about 200’ higher than its lower trailhead. The trail is 0.76 miles end-to-end and there’s about 190’ elevation gain from the lower trailhead to its high point. There are white markers along the path. The trailhead for Steinhauser Trail is 0.41 miles from the lower trailhead off Dickerson Trail.

Steinhauser Trail offers a 1.57 mile round-trip hike and is marked with orange markers. From its only trailhead on Kreissl Trail, it starts by crossing a creek then climbing into the preserve’s southern ridges, gaining about 200’ elevation from trailhead to high point. There are nice viewing opportunities to the north from the east-most high point, including Licking River and railroad track.

Dogs: Not permitted even if leashed.

Park History: This preserve is part of the upper Licking River watershed, one of the most biologically significant rivers in the nation. Most of the preserve's land was once owned by German immigrants, the Steinhausers, who settled in Kenton County in 1858. The land remained in the family through 6 generations before they decided to sell it. In 2010, Kenton County Conservation District (KCCD) received a grant from Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board to purchase the 204 acres of fields and forests, plus more than 3,600' of Licking River frontage. KCCD was awarded the 2015 Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Stewardship Award for its efforts at Morning View, including participation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to install roosting structures for endangered Indiana bats, doing bottomland hardwood forest restoration and building constructed wetlands. Trail blazing since 2016 has been led by volunteers from Northern Kentucky Sierra Club.





Mt. Airy Forest

Location: Hamilton County in northwest Cincinnati (inside city limits). Main entrance is in 5000 block of Colerain Av (US 27), about 7 miles north from downtown Cincinnati

Website: www.cincinnatiiparks.com/index.php/mt-airy-forest

Directions: Take I-75 north from downtown Cincinnati to I-74 (Exit 4), going northwest toward Indianapolis. Almost immediately, take exit 18 onto US-27 (must be in right lane to exit) and turn to go north toward Colerain. Drive US-27 north for about 2 miles. After climbing most of a winding hill, the park's main entrance is on the left.

Hiking Trail Miles: As many as 30 miles overall. "E" trail alone is 11 miles. A good 4-mile hike could be created by hiking south on trail C from the south side of Trail Ridge Rd's "oval" (see circle 13 on the map). Veer right on trail B, staying with B until veering right on trail F. Eventually veer left onto trail C and hike back to the north side of the Trail Ridge Rd oval.

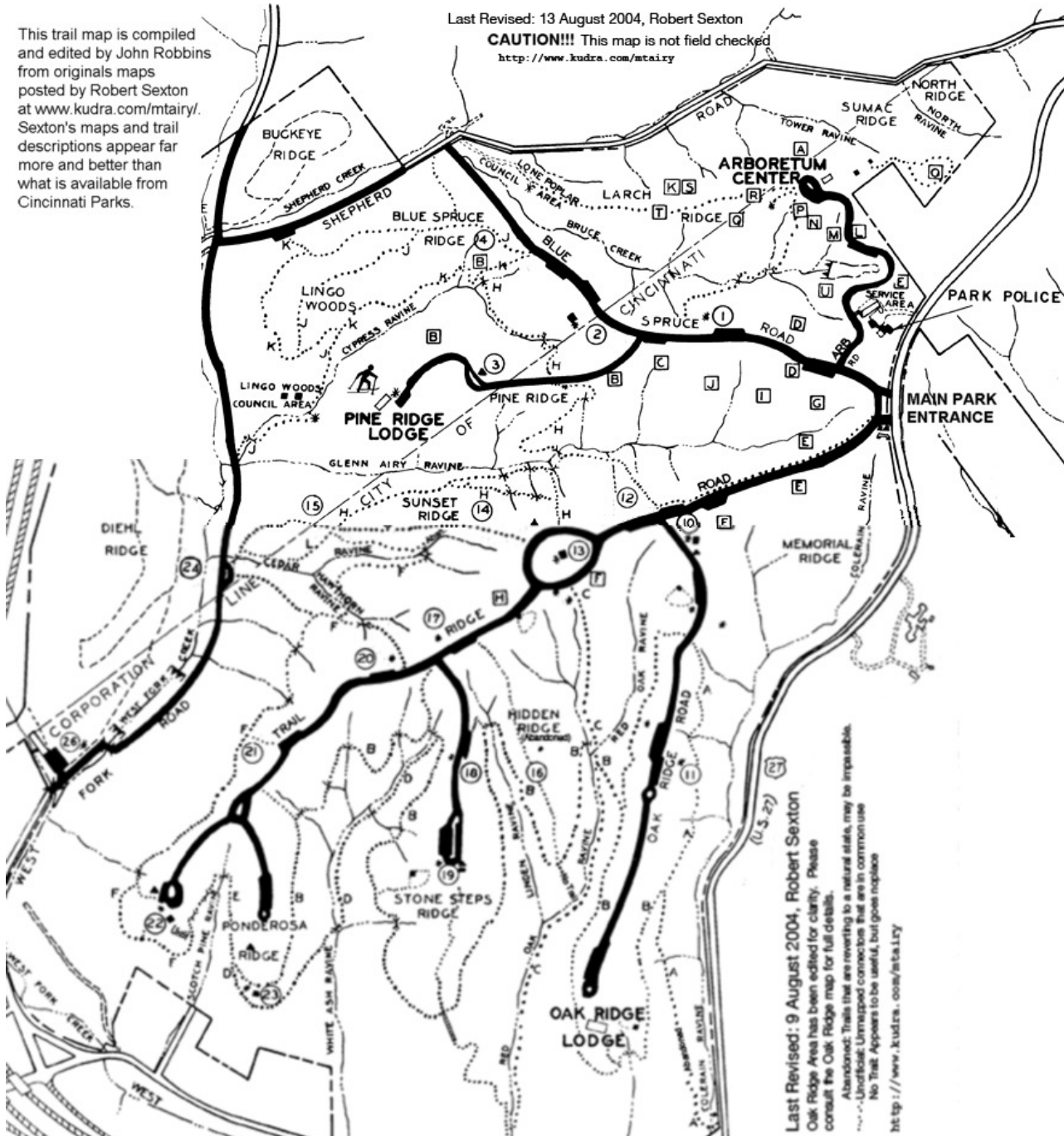
Trail Features: Most of the trails are well-marked but there can be confusion in some sections. Most trails are relatively close to park roads. "E" trail is blazed red on white. Mt. Airy Forest's trails are recognized by the U.S. Department of the Interior as a "National Recreation Trail" and by Boy Scouts of America as "The Trail of Explorers." For more information about the trails, visit: <http://www.kudra.com/mtairy/> and <http://cincy.selecthikes.com/destinations/mtairy/longhike.htm>.

Dogs: Dogs are allowed on trails with a leash. There is also a designated Dog Park where dogs can socialize off of their leashes.

History: Mt. Airy Forest is the largest park in the Cincinnati Parks system, also one of the largest urban parks in the USA. In 1911 the Cincinnati Park Board purchased land that had been used for growing crops and grazing dairy cattle. Replanting efforts began almost immediately and eventually resulted in the picturesque forest that exists today. The land now is composed of

approximately 700 acres of reforested hardwoods, 200 acres of reforested evergreens, 269 acres of wetlands, 170 acres of open meadows and a 120 acre arboretum with over 5,000 species of plants including an acclaimed dwarf conifer collection.

Other Activities: There are horseback bridle trails off Diehl Rd, an enclosed dog park, disc (Frisbee) golf course, two forest lodges, 26 picnic areas (3 which can be reserved), a famous arboretum, specialty gardens, gazebos, a picturesque lake and 2 areas for overnight youth camping. Mt. Airy has Ohio's only wheelchair accessible public treehouse. The park even attracts cross-country skiers during snowy winter months.





Quiet Trails Nature Preserve

Location: Harrison County KY, between Falmouth & Cynthiana

Website:

<http://naturepreserves.ky.gov/naturepreserves/Pages/quiettrails.aspx>

Driving Directions: From US-27 about mid-way between Falmouth and Cynthiana, go east on KY-1284 to Sunrise and what looks like a 3-way intersection, giving no choice but a left or right turn. However, go straight across this intersection onto Pugh's Ferry Rd on the right side of the old Sunrise General Store. Drive carefully on Pugh's Ferry Rd since it is very narrow and curvy. Bear left twice to avoid veering onto 2 little deadend roads. Quiet Trails is marked by a small parking lot on the right side of Pugh's Ferry Road about 1.8 miles from the Sunrise General Store.

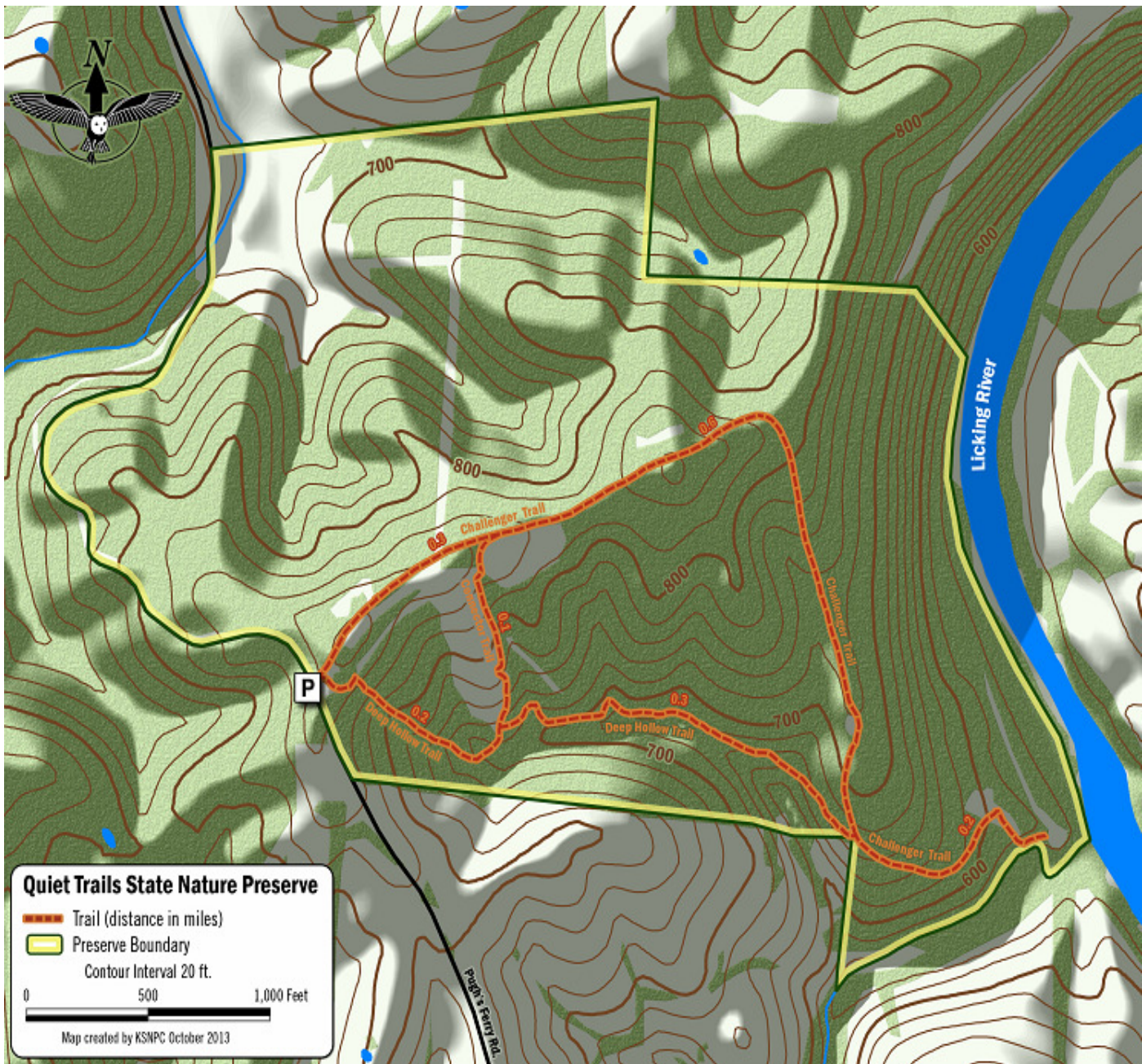
Hiking Trail Miles: Almost 2 miles of unpaved wooded trails in 2 main trails, Challenger and Deep Hollow, which can be combined for a loop hike down to the Licking River and back. More distance can be achieved by hiking along the river, but no trail is defined down there.

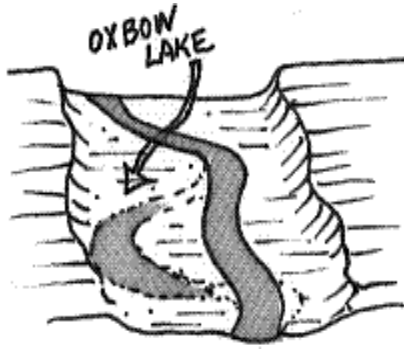
Trail Features: Mostly wooded trails, mostly clear and well maintained. About 300' drop in elevation from parking lot to the banks of the Licking River. The climb back to the parking lot can be taxing for some. No restrooms, drinking water or facilities. A small roofed shelter is near the river. One mile long, Challenger Trail leaves the parking lot's left side, staying on the ridge while passing a couple ponds where birds, small amphibians and reptiles are often seen. Next it passes a now-discontinued "Sassafras Trail" junction on the left, where a wildlife-viewing blind still stands. Soon Challenger descends, passing an old barn then Deep Hollow Trail junction. Trail descent continues into a clearing with a small roofed picnic shelter, then drops to the Licking River. Returning via Deep Hollow Trail is a steady gradual uphill hike in a scenic creek-valley, with the trail much steeper near its end at the opposite side of the parking lot.

Dogs: Not allowed.

Preserve History: Dedicated as a nature preserve in 1992, Quiet Trails was donated to

Kentucky in 1991 by Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Wigglesworth, Jr. They initially bought 110 acres of ridges and ravines bordering the Licking River in the 1970s, creating trails, also building birdhouses and planting native wildflowers, grasses and trees to attract and sustain wildlife. 55 more acres were purchased and dedicated in 1997. The Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission manages the area primarily for environmental education and passive recreation. The preserve is a “Watchable Wildlife Site” with a diversity of birds, trees and wildflowers representing the richness of Bluegrass fauna and flora. Over 130 species of birds, 98 species of trees, over 100 species of wildflowers and at least 10 species of amphibians and reptiles have been seen at Quiet Trails.





Shawnee Lookout Park

Location: southwest Hamilton County OH, west of Cincinnati:
2008 Lawrenceberg Rd. North Bend, OH 45052

Website: <http://greatparks.org/parks/shawnee-lookout>

Directions: From the west portion of I-275 in SW Ohio, exit at Kilby Rd. Go right on Kilby Rd, then right on U.S. 50, then left onto Lawrenceburg Rd. Park entrance is on the left in 1.5 miles.

Entrance Fee: An annual Motor Vehicle Pass costs \$10 and will give access to all the Hamilton County Parks for the year in which it was purchased; a one-time daily pass costs \$3.

Trail Miles: 4.7 overall: 1.3 miles on Blue Jacket, 2 miles on Little Turtle, 1.4 on Miami Fort.

Trail Features: Trails are well maintained, have elevation changes and spectacular views of Ohio and Great Miami River valleys. Blue Jacket Trail has a scenic overlook of the Great Miami.

Dogs: Dogs are allowed on leashes but owners must provide their own baggies to clean up after pets. There are containers to store baggies if you have extras you would like to leave behind for others who have forgotten theirs.

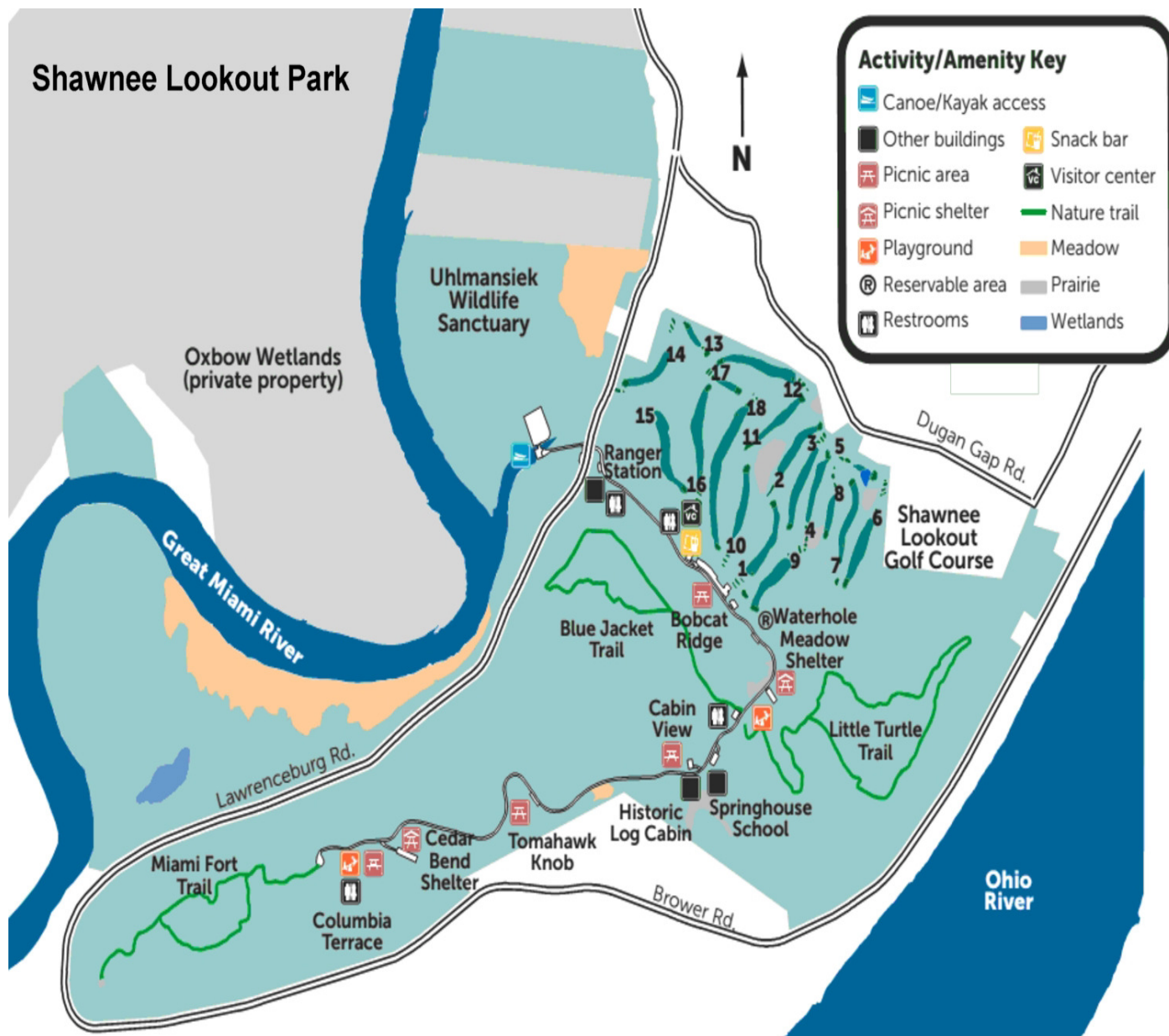
History: Shawnee Lookout Park sits in a prime location between the Great Miami and Ohio Rivers. It contains 1,515 acres, which is a mix of fields and forest.

Shawnee Lookout is next to the 914-acre Oxbow protected wetlands, one of the most incredible areas for viewing wildlife in the region. It is named for the horseshoe or oxbow shaped lake that formed when flood waters cut a new course for the prehistoric Great Miami River. The Oxbow still floods most years, refreshing and revitalizing the wetlands. The area is an essential stopping point for many migrating waterfowl. Over 270 species of birds have been catalogued in the protected area. 66 species of fish and 442 species of vascular plants have also been recorded. Shawnee Lookout is also next to the 263-acre Ulmansiek Wildlife Sanctuary, a seasonally flooded riparian habitat located along the Great Miami River, noted for the wide variety of migratory

waterfowl that use it as a resting area. Another 914-acre wetlands is located adjacent to the park, protected through conservation easements, providing valuable habitat for a variety of wildlife.

The area was also home to Native American Tribes including the Hopewell and Shawnee. Hopewell mounds can be seen in the park although most are not marked.

Other Activities: One of the “Great Parks of Hamilton County” Ohio, Shawnee Lookout has a boat ramp to the Great Miami River, and fishing is allowed from riverbanks. There is an 18-hole golf course, picnic areas and a playground. The park contains the historical Springhouse School and Log Cabin which demonstrate pioneer living. There is also a Native American archaeological earthworks and museum. Park is open daily, dawn to dusk.





St. Anne Woods and Wetlands

Location: eastern Campbell County: St. Anne Convent, 1000 St. Anne Dr, Melbourne KY 41059

Website: <http://stannewetlands.org/>

Driving Directions: East on KY-8 E (aka Mary Ingles Hwy) toward Melbourne. Just before Melbourne turn left on Anderson Ln. Parking area is about 1/4 mile on the left, just before the railroad tracks.

Hiking Trail Miles: Main marked trail with several side loops has estimated length 1.5 miles

Trail Features: This is a pancake flat, unchallenging trail which would be ideal for a young family summer evening walk. St. Anne Wetlands Research and Education Center is situated along the western border of Melbourne, bounded by the Ohio River on the north and route KY-8 on the south. The earthen fill of an east-west railroad right-of-way divides the property into north and south sections. Permission is required to enter the fenced north section. The unfenced, 21.7-hectare south section supports a forested wetland as well as a tree-planted meadow slope bordering KY-8. The signed nature trail loop through the south section is accessed from a parking area along Anderson Ln. The trail is open to the public during daylight hours.

Dogs: There appears to be no specific prohibition

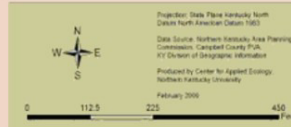
Other Activities: Throughout the Center there are several stations showing natural wonders to be found. For a virtual tour, visit: <http://stannewetlands.org/tour.html>

St. Anne Wetlands Map

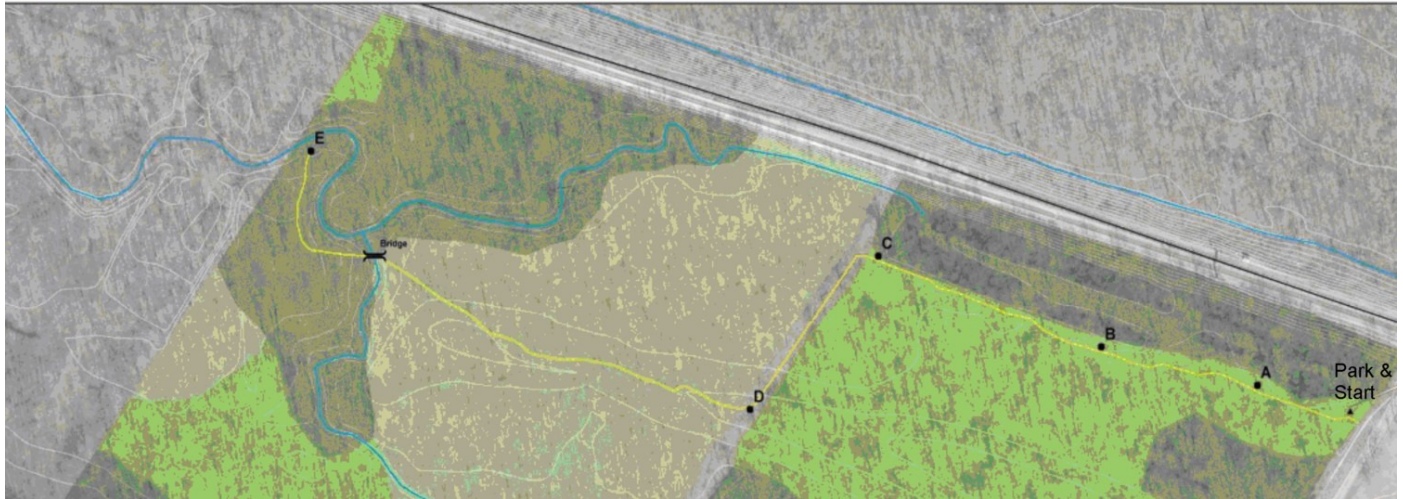


Legend

- Entrance Kiosk
- Streams
- Mature Forest
- Learning Stations
- Topography (2 ft contours)
- Late Second Growth Forest
- Trail
- Railroad
- Early Second Growth Forest



Projection: State Plane Kentucky North
Datum: North American Datum 1983
Data Source: Northern Kentucky Area Planning
Commission, Campbell County, PA, KY
Department of Geographic Information
Produced by Center for Applied Ecology
Northern Kentucky University
February 2005





Tower Park

Location: In Fort Thomas KY, a few miles south of downtown Cincinnati

Website: <http://www.ftthomas.org/Recreation/TowerPark.html>

Driving Directions: From I-471 take Exit 3, Grand Ave. Coming south off 471, turn left on Grand and go about 2.5 miles toward Fort Thomas. Coming north off 471, veer right on the Fort Thomas ramp and go about 2.1 miles on Grand. When finally reaching a 3 way stop where Grand Ave merges with South Fort Thomas Ave, continue straight on South Fort Thomas Ave a few blocks, then turn left at the big water tower & canon. Turn left again at the first stop sign and park. One of the trailheads is marked with a sign and located right off of the parking lot as you drive in.

Hiking / Mountain Bike Trail Miles: Several Miles (over 4)

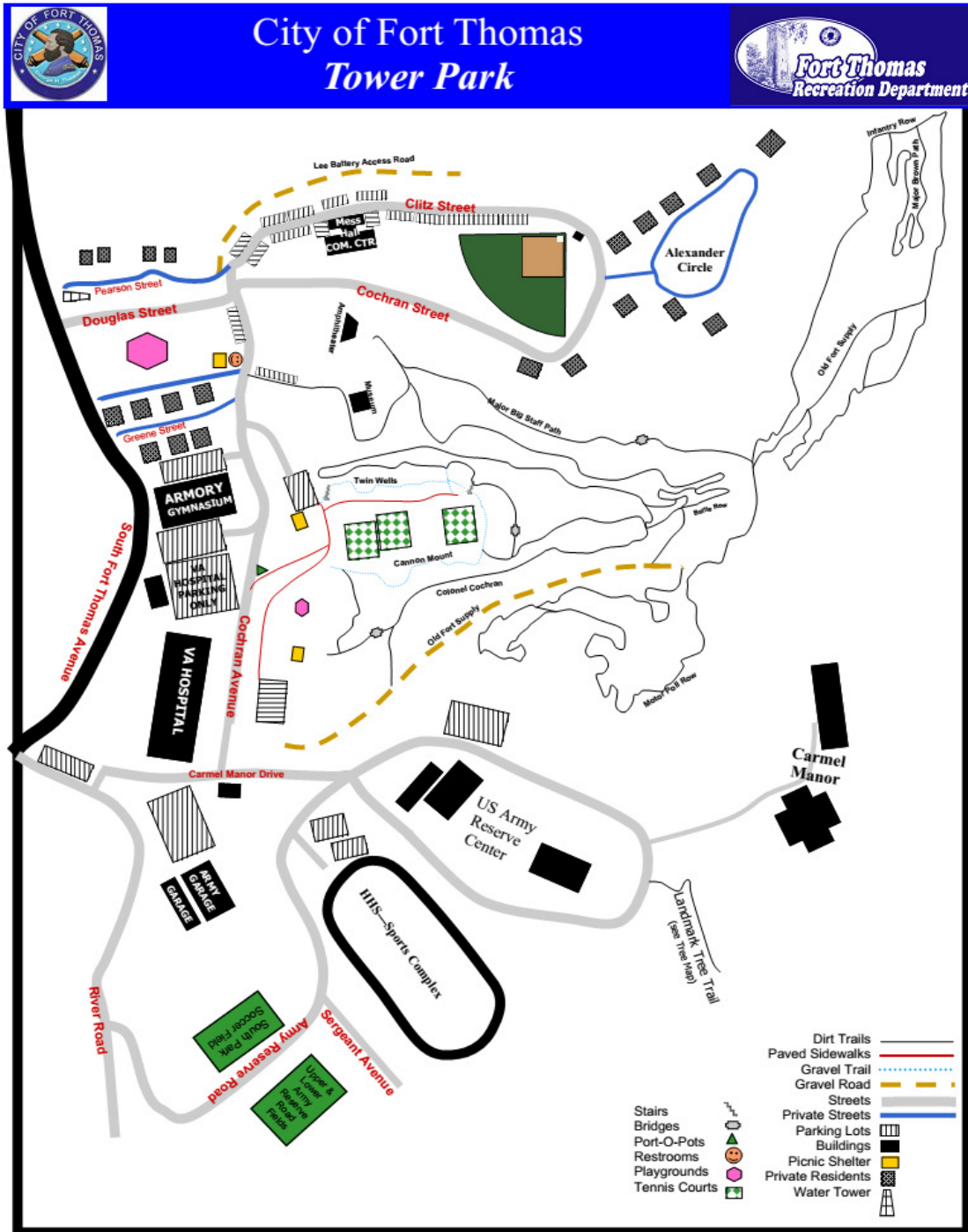
Dogs: Allowed but must be leashed

Description: Hilly soil and gravel trails wind through the park. Names like Battle Row, Old Fort Supply Rd and Major Brown Path recall the era when the park was home to an active military post. Located on 86 acres of forest on an old army post, much of the military housing for the officers is still standing, some vacant, some restored and occupied. Trails loop and interconnect but none are very long, so there is little danger of getting lost. Although a few hills are very steep, most are moderate in angle & length. The park is open dawn to dusk. Deer frequent the area at quiet times, and recently a bald eagle was spotted soaring overhead.

Other Activities: There are several large picnic shelters with numerous tables. a large well-equipped playground, restrooms, and a water fountain. There are basketball courts, tennis courts, volleyball courts, and a baseball field. There are also 10 signs in the park with “QR” codes visitors can scan with their smart phones to retrieve further information from the website.

Ecological restoration is in progress, a project of Northern Kentucky University’s Center for Applied Ecology. Down the gravel road alongside the tennis courts, look for posted marker #30 on the right. Parts of the trail are red blazed. It is a loop trail about a mile long. Returning to the gravel road, continue down it for a close-up look at the stream restoration which parallels the road.

For less adventuresome souls, paved and tree-lined sidewalks run through the park, winding around playground areas, old and new military housing, also past Veterans Hospital. Following the blacktop loop road at the south end of the park that goes by the Army Reserve Center, find the historic Fort Thomas Landmark Tree Trail which is not part of Fort Thomas Tower Park. (This 1-mile trail is described elsewhere in this hiking guide.) Fort Thomas Military and Community Museum is open noon to 4pm Wed-Sun (check times), including a display on the Beverly Hills Supper Club Fire which was featured on the TV program “Mysteries at the Museum” which aired on the Travel Channel.





Withrow Nature Preserve

Location: Eastern Hamilton County OH, east of Cincinnati:
7075 Five Mile Rd, Cincinnati OH 45230

Website: <http://greatparks.org/parks/withrow-nature-preserve>

Driving Directions: From southeast portion of I-275 in Ohio, take Five Mile Rd exit. Go south (down the hill) on Five Mile Rd, turn left at stop sign onto Old Five Mile Rd. Look for park entrance a few houses down on the left.

Entrance Fee: An annual Motor Vehicle Pass costs \$10 and will give access to all the Hamilton County Parks for the year in which it was purchased; a one-time daily pass costs \$3.

Hiking Trail Miles: Trout Lily Nature Trail is 1.7 miles with a scenic overlook of the Ohio River.

Trail Features: This 270-acre is designated as a nature preserve, therefore has very few amenities. Trout Lily Nature Trail is a great place for joggers and dog walkers. It is relatively flat, with only a few elevation changes and steps/water boards. There is a beautiful overlook of the Ohio River and a nice walk through a wild flower field with numerous blue bird boxes. The only facilities available are a portable toilet. The house located on the property is open to wedding parties only. There are a couple of benches along the trail but this is not the place for a picnic.

You will see many downed trees along the trail, the result of destruction caused by the Emerald Ash Borer. Infected trees that could fall on trails, driveway, or parking area were taken down for safety reasons. Other infected trees deeper in the woods were left to eventually fall on their own.

Hepalica Hill Loop Trail (in top right corner of the map) is permanently closed due to a landslide on that corner of the property.

Dogs: Dogs are allowed on leashes but owners must provide their own baggies to clean up after their pets. There is a container to store baggies if you have extras to leave behind for others.

Other Activities: One of the “Great Parks of Hamilton County” Ohio, the preserve also offers an outdoor wedding setting and a gazebo that accommodates up to 100 guests.

There is no park map. This is a photograph of one of the signs posted along the trail.





Woodland Mound Park

Location: In the southeast corner of Hamilton County, between Ohio Route 125 (Beechmont Ave) and Old Kellogg Rd, east of Eight Mile Rd: 8250 Old Kellogg Rd., Cincinnati OH 45255

Website: <http://greatparks.org/parks/woodland-mound>

Driving Directions: From southeast portion of I-275 in Ohio, option 1 is to exit on Route 125 (Beechmont Avenue). Go west (toward Cincinnati), then left on Nordyke Rd. Look for the park entrance on the right. Option 2: Exit I-275 on US-52 eastbound, toward New Richmond. After about 3 miles, exit left on Eight Mile Rd, turn right on Old Kellogg Rd. Park entrance is on the left.

Entrance Fee: An annual Motor Vehicle Pass costs \$10 and will give access to all the Hamilton County Parks for the year in which it was purchased; a one-time daily pass costs \$3.

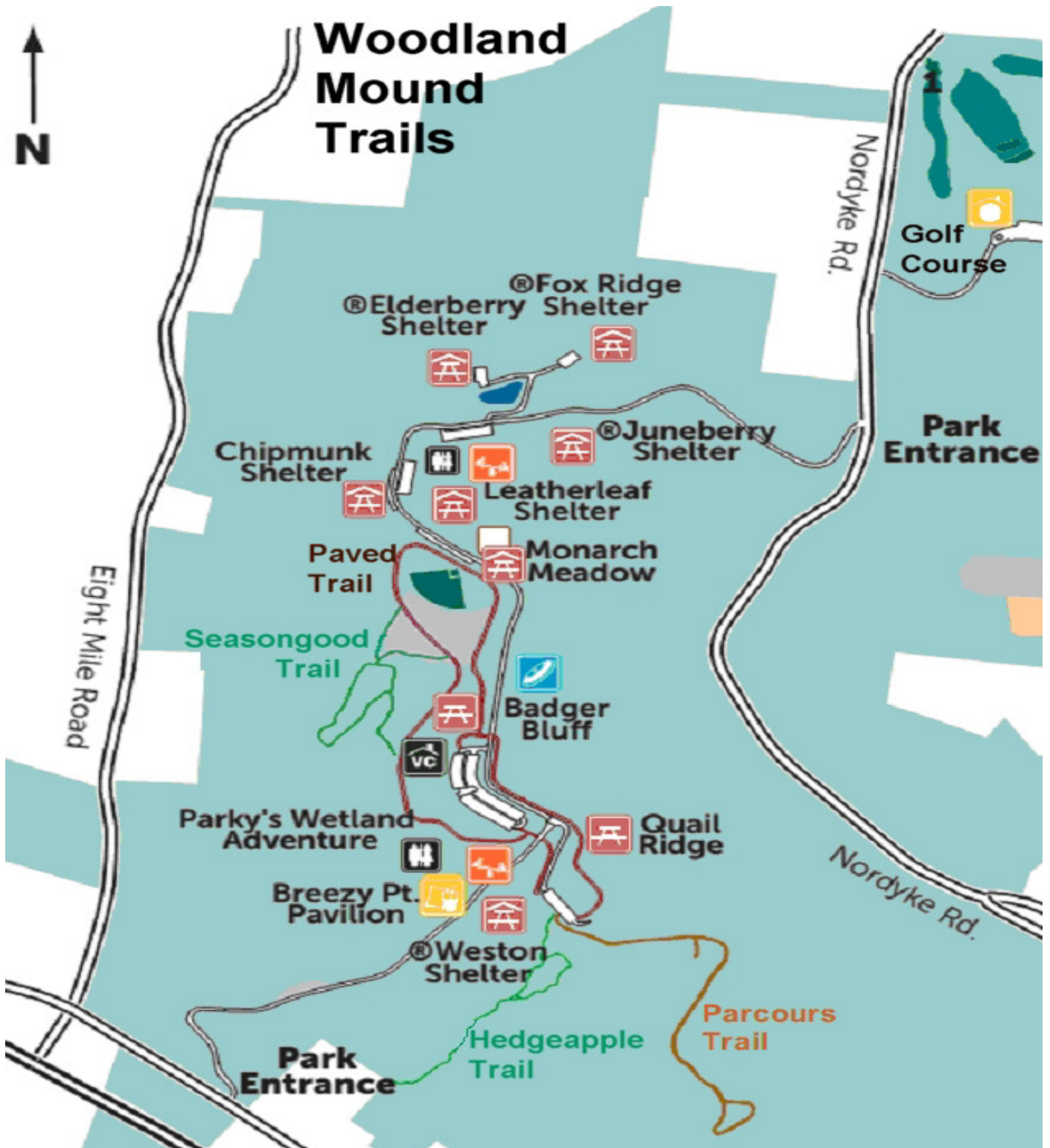
Hiking Trail Miles: There are multiple trails, including a paved trail (an approximately one mile loop which connects the nature trails, play areas, and disc golf course), a 0.9 mile Parcours trail, the 0.6 mile Hedgeapple nature trail and the 0.8 mile Seasongood nature trail.

Trail Features: The paved trails are relatively flat. The nature trails have definite elevation changes and numerous steps and water boards.

Dogs: Dogs are allowed on leashes but owners must provide their own baggies to clean up after pets. There are containers to store baggies if you have extras you would like to leave behind for others who have forgotten theirs.

Other Activities: One of the “Great Parks of Hamilton County” Ohio, Woodland Mound Park’s visitor center features wildlife exhibits and a gift shop. Breezy Point Pavilion is home to Parky’s Wetland Adventure playground and snack bar, a regular playground and picnic areas. There are benches facing the Ohio River that provide beautiful spots to watch the sunset. Woodland Mound

also has an 18-hole disc golf course and a boat launch ramp to the Ohio River. Daily and annual boat launch permits may be purchased at the visitor center. Park is open daily, dawn to dusk.





Contact Information for Sierra Club in Greater Cincinnati Tri-State

Northern Kentucky Group

Website: www.sierraclub.org/kentucky/northern-kentucky

2020 Group Chair: Bill Thoeny

2020 Outings Chair: John Robbins

Email for more information: nky-info@kentucky.sierraclub.org

Direct Comments & Questions About this Guide To:

John Robbins, Hikers Guide Committee

859-363-0376 - john@johnfrobbins.com

Miami Group (Southwest Ohio)

Website: <https://miamigroup.org/>

Hoosier (Indiana) Chapter

Website: <http://hoosier2.sierraclub.org>

