

THE HIKING TRAILS

Good day everyone...it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

Lucky is the citizen of Pennsylvania who enjoys hiking--the most healthful of all physical pursuits; certainly the most gratifying. Nowhere is the hiker closer to nature; to the glories of the Almighty than in Pennsylvania. One can hike through Penn's Woods; through more than two million acres of State forest and park lands, through over one million acres of game lands and wildlife refuges and through the history of America. There are nine major hiking trails that cross Pennsylvania. The most famed is Appalachian Trail which traverses fourteen states along its course from Maine to Georgia. North to south it crosses Pennsylvania entering at Matamoras in the Delaware Water Gap Region and leaving fifteen miles southwest of Gettysburg. Horse Shoe Trail, beginning at Valley Forge State Park is a walker's delight of 116 miles. From this point in the east it travels westward almost to the Susquehanna River. Darlington Trail crosses that river at Clarks Ferry, starting at Sterret's Gap and recrosses the Appalachian at Darlington Spring, running east to the Horseshoe. In the west, the Kittanning Trail follows the route of Col. John Armstrong and his militia during the French and Indian war summer of 1756. It runs for 130 miles, passes near Cresson, Indiana and the Crooked Creek State Park into Armstrong County.

Baker Trail is good hiking from north of Pittsburgh where it begins to Cooksburg, which is the seat of Cook Forest State Park, and plans are to extend it to the Allegheny National Forest in our northwest. There is a 5,000 year old Indian Path that leaves West Virginia and continues 55 miles north to Greensboro on the Monongahela River. You can see the site of the 1850 Gold Rush here at Warrior Trail, as it runs toward the Laurel Mountains. Loyalsock Trail is a fifty-mile hiking route winding through Wyoming and Tiadaghton State Forests in the Endless Mountains and goes through Eagles Mere. Old Traders Path is another, a 33-miler near Kittanning Trail on the Allegheny River. And in the southeast, Brandywine Trail intersects with the Horse Shoe Trail just west of Devault, Pennsylvania. It runs for 28 miles south into Delaware, through DuPont territory and the Andrew Wyeth Chadds Ford area. All nine of these hiking trails have lean-tos, shelters, hostels somewhere enroute --many run through Pennsylvania's 70-plus State Parks; through meadowland and hills. No state is so endowed with famous hiking trails, nor prettier mountain-and-valley terrain for those who walk God's wonderland--in Penn's Woods.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.