

## Pine Tree Trail

The Pine Tree Trail is part of the Pine Tree Natural Area. This trail received its name from the stand of white pine located on the upper portion of the trail. The stand of pines is not virgin nor old growth timber, but is very large in size.

When the first settlers entered this area, the forest was mostly hemlock and white pine with a scattering of oaks and other hardwoods like cherry, white ash, maple, beech and chestnut. The harvesting of the white pine and hemlock, and later, the hardwoods, had a profound influence on the composition of the forest of today. Faster growing hardwoods that survived wildfires thrive and are dominant today.

In the mid 1800's the area now growing in large white pine trees was cleared by settlers for farming. The small stream bed you will cross provided a source of water. The trail up the slope was a wagon road to the settlers dwelling. Traces of the stone foundation can be seen along the trail.

After the clearing was abandoned, seed from adjacent pine trees was carried by the wind to the fields. White pine is a pioneer species and grows well in full sun. In the abandoned fields the pines became established and grew rapidly, eventually dominating the site and shading out all sunlight. Other species were unable to become established in the deep shade. Thus the old field is now pure white pine.

The white pine stand occupies about twelve acres and averages over fourteen thousand board feet of timber per acre. Most of the trees have between 5 and 6 sixteen foot logs.

Through the efforts of the Bureau of Forestry and the Youth Conservation Corps crews of 1977 and 1979 this area was converted to an interpretive trail.

## Directions

To access the trail from RT555 turn onto Hicks Run Road and then turn left onto West Hicks Run Road and turn left into the Hicks Run Campground - park at the designated trail parking.

## Trail Information

The trail is a hiking only trail and marked in yellow.

From the main trailhead of the interpretative trail (at the campground) around the loop and returning is 1.75 miles.

The East Hicks Run section of the interpretative trail is 0.45 miles. The elevation difference between the trailhead at Hicks Run Campground and the highest point on the interpretative trail is 500 feet.

## Care for the Land

State forests belong to all Pennsylvanians. Take time to enjoy them, but know the rules and regulations designed to protect the forests and you. Please be careful with fire, keep our forests litter free and don't damage trees and other plants.

## Certified "Well Managed"

Pennsylvania state forests are certified to FSC® standards. The Forest Stewardship Council® is an independent organization supporting environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.



## iConservePA

To learn more about the state's natural resources and what you can do to help protect and enjoy them, log onto [iConservePA.org](http://iConservePA.org).



## For more information

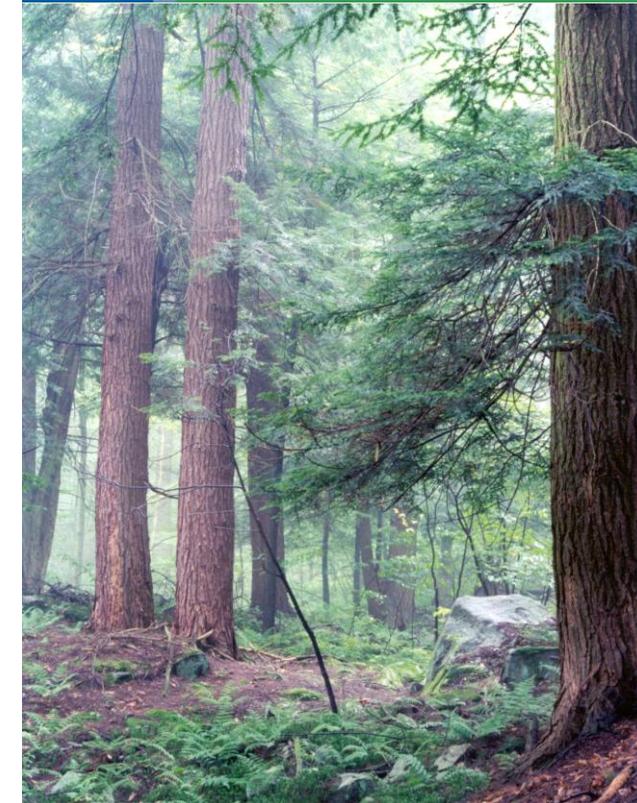
Elk State Forest  
Forest District #13

258 Sizerville Road  
Emporium, PA 15834  
(814) 486-3353



## Pine Tree Trail

Elk State Forest



Pennsylvania's vast state forest system comprises 2.2 million acres for you to use, enjoy and explore. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Bureau of Forestry manages these forests to ensure their long-term health and to conserve native wild plants.

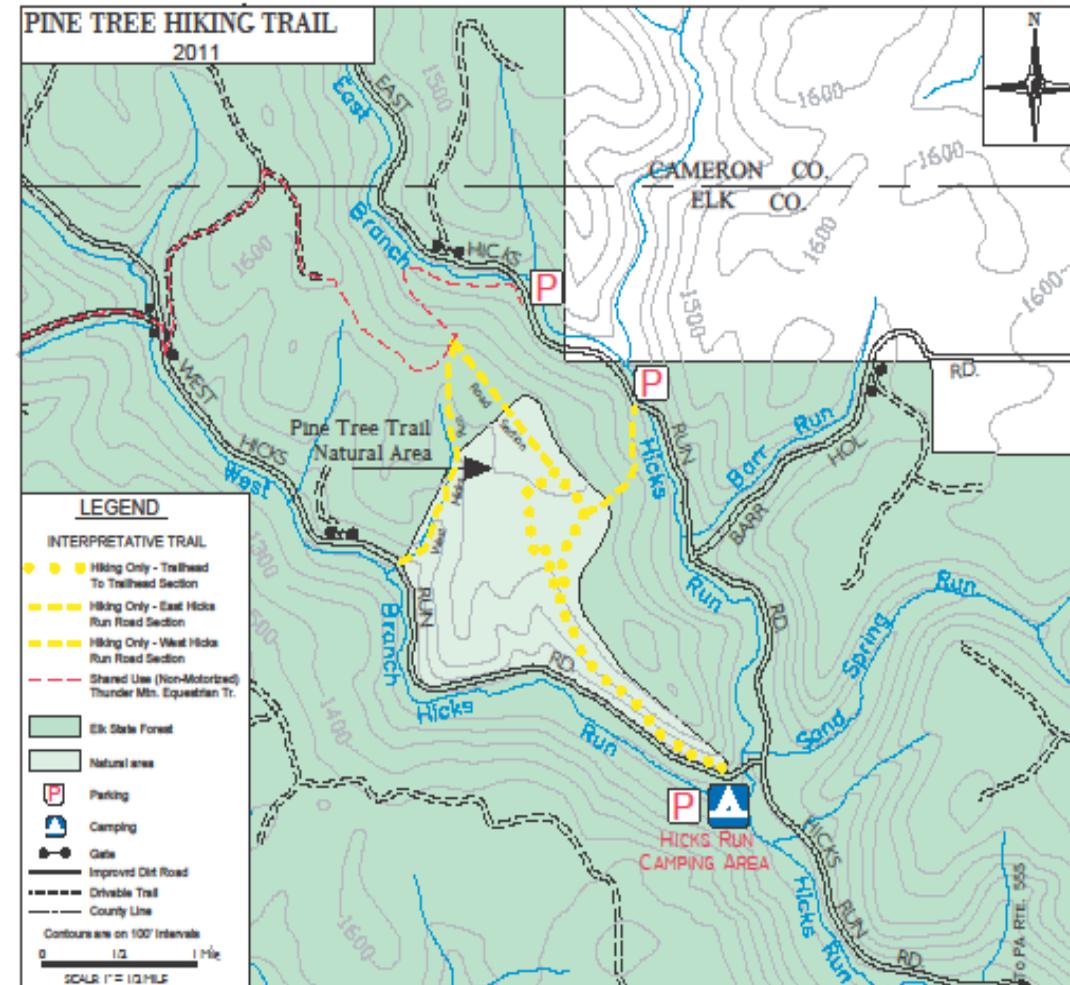
Elk State Forest comprises 200,000 acres in Cameron, Elk, Potter, McKean, Clinton, and Clearfield Counties.



1. **Eastern Hemlock** — The official state tree of Pennsylvania.
2. **Eastern White Pine** — Its needles are in groups of five, which is characteristic of its five letter name “WHITE”. The high demand for white pine logs for sailing ship masts in the middle and late 1800’s created a market for logs from this area. Cutting trees changed the pine-hemlock forest to the northern hardwood and oak forest that exists today. The settlement of this area is a result of the large scale logging activity of that era.
3. **Hornbeam** — This tree is known as muscle wood. Can you see why?
4. **Bigtooth Aspen** — This is a relatively short-lived tree that is of value to wildlife and is used commercially in paper making.
5. **Northern Red Oak** — This species is quite valuable because of the high quality lumber it provides. Also, the acorns from the red oak are one of the most valuable wildlife foods.
6. **A Fire in the Fall of 1975** burned in this area. The evidence can still be found on the scarred and damaged trunks of the larger trees. Fires consume the forest litter and organic layer, exposing the soil to wind and water, resulting in erosion.
7. **Slippery Elm** — This and American Elm were once common trees throughout Pennsylvania but because of the Dutch Elm Disease, these trees are relatively rare.
8. **Chestnut Oak** — Known locally as rock oak, this tree is frequently found on dry, rocky ridges where growing conditions are too poor for many other species. These trees are slow growing and poorly formed but produce acorns which are valuable to wildlife.
9. **White Oak** — The lumber from this tree is valuable. Wildlife prefer white oak acorns over any other variety.
10. **Quaking Aspen** — This is normally a short-lived tree that grows rapidly and is often one of the first trees to become established on disturbed sites. Aspen bark and branches are favored as food by beavers and elk, and the twigs of this species are browsed by deer. Buds on aspen twigs are eaten by ruffed grouse. Since dead aspen trees decay rapidly, standing dead aspens provide many cavities for cavity nesting birds such as chickadees, titmice and woodpeckers.
11. **Black Birch** — This is a common tree of the forests of northern Pennsylvania. If you scrape the bark off of a small twig you will be able to sample the delightful aroma and taste of sweet birch. The bark and twigs produces oil of wintergreen, a flavoring used in making birch beer.
12. **Black Birch** — See number 11.
13. **Red Maple** — Also called soft maple, this tree species is probably the most common tree in the forests of Pennsylvania. The stem or petiole of the leaf is red, the buds and flowers are red in the spring and the leaves turn various shades of red in autumn.
14. **White Oak** — See number 9.
15. **Red Maple** — See number 13.
16. **Chestnut Oak** — See number 8.
17. **Red Oak** — Also notice the hollow Black Gum tree which is growing behind this large red oak. Black Gum is of minimal value as a timber species but because of its tendency to produce cavities it is valuable as a wildlife tree.

*\* Bear to the left about fifty yards up the trail at the tree marked with two orange blazes.*

18. **Cucumber Tree** — This tree produces a cucumber shaped seed pod that turns a deep red color in the fall. The seeds are excellent wildlife food.
  19. **Cucumber Tree** — See number 18.
  20. **Juneberry** — This is one of the first trees to flower in the spring, it is also known as shadbush because early settlers noticed that this tree bloomed about the same time that the American shad began their up-river migrations. Juneberry bears an edible red fruit in mid-June that is favored by bears, songbirds, grouse and turkeys. You can still see scars in the bark where a bear climbed in search of ripe berries.
  21. **Black Cherry** — One of Pennsylvania’s most valuable hardwood trees, lumber and veneer from this tree are prized for the manufacture of fine furniture and cabinets. This species is unique in that its commercial range is essentially restricted to the Allegheny Plateau. The fruit of this tree is another valuable wildlife food.
  22. **This small spring-fed stream** may have been the source of drinking water for early settlers. It flows into the West Branch of Hicks Run.
  23. **White Pine** — This group of white pine trees was the inspiration for which the trail was named. Before continuing on the trail, walk through these pines and enjoy their coolness.
  24. **Red Maple** — See number 13.
  25. **Red Oak** — See number 17.
  26. **Juneberry** — See number 20.
- \* Red Circle with a White Arrow — 50 yards to the right is the foundation of an old dwelling. Look close to see the entry way, root cellar and chimney remains.*
- \*Trail Intersection. If you continue in the same direction you will return to the trailhead. If you turn left you will come to East Hicks Road (see map). The following items are along this branch trail.*
27. **White Oak** — See number 9.
  28. **Black Cherry** — See number 21.
  29. **Sugar Maple** — Also known as hard maple, this species supplies the best sap for making maple syrup and sugar. The wood is hard and durable, and is used for bowling lanes, furniture, and flooring. The brilliant fall foliage is well known.
  30. **Red Maple** — See number 13.
  31. **Black Birch** — See number 11.
  32. **White Ash** — Ash is another valuable hardwood. It is best known for being used for baseball bats, and tool handles. The seeds are a favorite food for turkeys.
  33. **Black Locust** — This medium-sized tree with deeply furrowed bark and fern-like leaves is not a normal component of the northern hardwood forest. Its wood is excellent for fence posts, railroad ties, poles, and mine timbers because it is resistant to rotting and disease.



34. **Grapevine Thicket** — These thickets are usually found on moist and shady sites. They make excellent wildlife food and cover.
  35. **Cucumber Tree** — See number 18.
  36. **Tulip Tree** — Also known as yellow poplar, this tree gets its name from the tulip-like flowers it bears in late spring. Mature trees are majestic, generally among the tallest trees in our forests.
  37. **Black Birch** — See number 11.
  38. **Yellow Birch** — This is a medium sized tree which grows best on moist, rich soil and can often be found as a small tree because it can grow even under a dense canopy. Notice the brass-colored curly bark that seems to peel. The wood is used to make furniture, gun stocks, interior finishing and paneling.
- \* You are at the East Hicks Road. Turning right will take you to the campground and trailhead.*