



# Pine Creek Valley Early Action Recommendations



Prepared for the Pennsylvania  
Department of Conservation  
and Natural Resources

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**FERMATA**  
Prepared by FERMATA, Inc.  
of Austin, Texas





Ted Lee Eubanks/FERMATA, Inc.  
Front and back cover photos by Ted Lee Eubanks/FERMATA, Inc.

# Background

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**E**arly Implementation Projects allow DCNR to begin acting on exceptional recreational opportunities and bring new products and programs to the market before the completion of the overall DCNR Outdoor Recreation Plan. FERMATA staff toured the Pine Creek Valley with Joe Fiedor, Jeff Prowant, and Roy Siefert in August and October of 2004. Further information was gathered during interviews with the Tiadaghton and Tioga District Foresters and their staffs in September and October of 2004.

For the purposes of this report, we define the Pine Creek Valley as extending from the intersection of Pine Creek and US Route 6 at Ansonia, south to Route 220 and Jersey Shore. Although the Pine Creek Valley proper is limited to that area extending from rim to rim, we also included tributaries such as Slate Run in our considerations. The Pine Creek Gorge, also known as the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon, is defined for this report as extending from Ansonia south to Blackwell.

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We overwhelmingly heard that protection of the character of Pine Creek is critical. The people that live and work here want to keep it a special place, where small, charming businesses are more appropriate than large chain franchises.

During the month of March 2005, Ted Eubanks and Brenda Adams-Weyant met with recreation stakeholders, business owners, and local officials in the Pine Creek Valley to update them on the progress of the Pennsylvania Wilds Project and solicit their comments regarding the Pine Creek Early Implementation Project. The meetings were sponsored and hosted by DCNR and the Tourism Promotion Agencies (TPAs) from Tioga and Lycoming

counties. The meetings were held in Wellsboro, Slate Run, and Jersey Shore, and were well attended by a diversity of interests. We overwhelmingly heard that protection of the character of Pine Creek is critical. The people that live and work here want to keep it a special place, where small, charming businesses are more appropriate than large chain franchises. The comments received from these meetings informed the recommendations that follow.

# Inventory & Assessment

## **R**ecreation Resources

As stated above, the Pine Creek Valley extends from Ansonia at US Route 6 to Jersey Shore, where the creek empties into the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. In this 68-mile section of Pine Creek, a majority of the land is publicly owned and managed by the DCNR and the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

The first 17 miles of Pine Creek Valley is known as the “Pennsylvania Grand Canyon” and is contained within the Pine Creek Gorge State Natural Area (12,123 acres). A portion of the State Natural Area is designated as a National Natural Landmark (699 acres). The

gorge owes its character to glacial events that scoured and deepened Pine Creek. The canyon section is the most dramatic representation of these events, but the whole length was subjected to these forces. Leonard Harrison and Colton Point State Parks are located on the rim of the gorge and provide stunning overlooks, picnic areas, and campgrounds for area recreationists. The rest of the area is managed by the Tioga State Forest. Road access to this section is limited to each end (Ansonia and Blackwell) and to a primitive township road that ends at Pine Creek in the historic town of Tiadaghton (about halfway between Ansonia and Blackwell). Between Ansonia and the Tioga/



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**Table 1: Special Area Designations in the Pine Creek Valley**

Name	Designation	DCNR Unit Name	Miles	Acres
Algerine Swamp	State Natural Area & National Natural Landmark	Tiadaghton SF		84
Bark Cabin	State Natural Area	Tiadaghton SF		73
Lebo Red Pine	State Natural Area	Tiadaghton SF		124
Miller Run	State Natural Area	Tiadaghton SF		4987
Torbert Island	State Natural Area	Tiadaghton SF		18
Algerine	State Wild Area	Tiadaghton SF		3700
Wolf Run	State Wild Area	Tiadaghton SF		6900
Pine Creek Gorge Natural Area	Important Bird Area	State Forests, Parks*		12600
Pine Creek Gorge	National Natural Landmark	State Forests, Parks*		699
Pine Creek Gorge	State Natural Area	State Forests, Parks*		12163
Reynolds Spring	State Natural Area & National Natural Landmark	Tioga SF		1302
Pine Creek	State Scenic River	Tioga SF	23	

\* Tioga State Forest, Colton Point State Park, Leonard Harrison State Park

Lycoming county line, Pine Creek and portions of some of its larger tributaries have been designated as a state scenic river (23 miles).

South of Blackwell the Pine Creek Valley widens, yet still retains its deep valley character. A greater portion of this area is private land, which has a pastoral character and is dotted with several small communities along its length. Most public land in this area is managed by the Tiadaghton State Forest, with a smaller amount managed by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. The eight State Wild and Natural Areas located along this stretch of Pine Creek offer unique habitats and scenery (17,188 acres).

The Pine Creek Valley offers a variety of recreational experiences: canoeing and kayaking (mid-March thru May), bicycling, hiking, backpacking, quality trout fishing, camping, sightseeing, horseback riding, and picnicking. Little Pine, Leonard Harrison, and Colton Point State Parks provide a combined total of 159 campsites and 3 camping cottages. The rustic developed campgrounds offered at Tiadaghton, Hoffman, Black Walnut Bottom, and Bonnell Flats provide 46 campsites accessible by canoe, hike, or bike along Pine Creek. The Pine Creek Rail-Trail provides 54 miles (another 8.5 miles is still in development) of hiking, bicycling, and cross-country skiing. Eighteen access areas provide parking and direct access to the Pine Creek Rail-Trail and Pine Creek. Over 100 miles of hiking trails traverse the region, including the West Rim, Black Forest, and Mid-State Trails.



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The Pine Creek Valley has been recognized in many national publications. USA Today rated the Pine Creek Rail-Trail as one of the 10 Great Bike Tours in the world in 2001. Wellsboro was named the “Top Paddling Town” by Canoe & Kayak Magazine, and the “Best Sports Town” by Sports Afield Magazine. The West Rim Trail was named the “Top Hike in PA” by Outdoor Magazine.

*USA Today* voted the Rail Trail in the gorge as one of **top 10 places in the world to take a bike tour** in July 2001. Includes Lycoming Co. (Sandi Spencer)





Elk County Historical Society

### Community Resources

Limited visitor services are available in the Pine Creek Valley. A handful of small inns provide overnight rooms, and the same can be said of restaurants. A larger and wider variety of lodging and restaurants can be found in Wellsboro, and to a lesser degree Jersey Shore. Outfitters and guides in the Wellsboro and Jersey Shore areas provide rafting, canoeing, fishing, and equestrian experiences, equipment sales and rentals, and shuttle services.

### Cultural & Historic Resources

The Pine Creek Valley has a rich cultural heritage. The Pine Creek Indian Path linked the Genesee Valley in New York State with a web of other trails through Pennsylvania ultimately connecting Canada and Florida. These ancient routes penetrated the Pennsylvania Wilds area and provided routes for hunting, gathering of wild plants, trading, and military activities. The use of these trails continued into the lumber era when the first loggers arrived in the Pine Creek Valley.

In the mid-1800s loggers in the region floated large white pine logs down Pine Creek to Williamsport for use as ship masts. In the 1880s with the invention of the logging railroad, technology allowed woodhicks to reach farther into the "Black Forest" to harvest its rich resources.



By the 1920s most of this area had been cut over and the land sold at cut rate prices to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Heroic efforts were undertaken to arrest the conflagrations that raged over the tinderbox of slash and brush that covered the hillsides. In the 1930's, the Civilian Conservation Corps assisted in this fire fighting effort and helped reclaim the land by planting millions of trees, stabilizing soil erosion, and building many miles of roads and recreation areas.

## Interpretation

Seven low profile signs interpret different aspects of the Pine Creek Gorge at Leonard Harrison State Park. The signs cover the following subjects: Civilian Conservation Corps, Bald Eagles, Pine Creek geology, seasonal changes, Pine Creek landmarks, natural land-

scaping and picture taking tips. The Environmental Education Specialists at Little Pine and Leonard Harrison State Parks provide interpretive programs and impromptu interpretation at their parks and along the Pine Creek Rail-Trail. A PowerPoint presentation on Pine Creek is available for viewing at the Leonard Harrison State Park Visitor Center. Tioga State Forest rangers carry a wildlife-watching kit in their vehicles for impromptu interpretation. The visitor contact station at Darling Run displays some old photographs of Tiadaghton that date to the early 1900s.

## Visitation

Visitor attendance figures are not collected on State Forest land. Many access areas along Pine Creek are filled to capacity on summer weekends. Floating use on Pine



Jon Kohi/FERMATA, Inc.

**Table 2: 2003 Attendance Totals for Pine Creek Area State Parks**

	<b>Colton Point SP</b>	<b>Leonard Harrison SP</b>	<b>Little Pine SP</b>
Rustic Camping	1989	3511	16928
Camping Cottage			742
Group Tent Camping	1490		80
Picnicking	15379	29150	7786
Driving	78542	134209	33723
Beach			4204
Boating			4477
Fishing		2597	10195
Environmental Education			1244
Trail Use	18239	37775	6780
Bicycling		24407	1953
Hunting			827
Winter Sports	70	61	1985
Special Events			1400
Other	6392	5286	5784
<b>Total Visitors</b>	<b>87,423</b>	<b>142,716</b>	<b>87,418</b>

Creek peaks from mid-March through May and is heaviest on weekends. Trout fishing peaks mid-April through the first week of June. Attendance data for state parks is detailed in Table 2.

PennDOT collects traffic data on state highways. Average annual daily traffic on SR 414 at Blackwell is 300; SR 414 at Slate Run is 350; SR 44 at Waterville is 1300.



# Recreation Trends & Markets.....

## National Survey on Recreation and the Environment

The Pine Creek Valley provides a quality setting for many recreation activities that are in demand in the Pennsylvania Region (Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, and New York).

Table 3 lists the activities relevant and appropriate for the Pine Creek Valley. Backpacking, bicycling, canoeing, hunting, kayaking, cold water fishing, sightseeing, and viewing/photographing scenery are recreations that are well served in the Pine Creek Valley now. The rest of the activities have not been fully developed and represent growth potential.

**Table 3: Pennsylvania Market Region Trends and Participation (NSRE)**

Activity	1995-2004 PA Region Trend	PA Region Participation
Backpacking	+23%	3,674,726
Bicycling	+37%	16,831,151
Canoe	+24%	4,037,662
Kayak	+169%	1,406,377
Cross-Country Skiing	-0.7%	1,451,743
Day Hiking	+37%	13,337,893
Developed Camping	+33%	9,753,902
Cold Water Fishing	+24%	5,307,937
Hunting - Big Game	17.1%	3,410,000
Hunting - Small Game	8.2%	2,640,000
Sightseeing	-5%	23,137,162
View & Photo Birds	+27%	14,880,371
View & Photo Scenery	+21%	26,857,255
View & Photo Fish	+86%	10,162,204
View & Photo Plants	NA	19,916,106
View & Photo Wildlife	+47%	20,142,941
Visit a Beach or Waterside	-0.3%	10,434,406
Visit Historic Sites	+8%	21,050,281
Visit Prehistoric Sites	+18%	8,256,791
Visit Nature Centers	+8%	24,588,905
Visit a Wilderness or Primitive Area	NA	12,566,655

## Recreation Personalities

Ken Cordell in *Outdoor Recreation for 21st Century America* developed a market segmentation scheme for outdoor recreation personalities. Each segment represents a cluster of tastes and interests. Knowing the characteristics of each segment helps managers understand their visitors, tailor services to meet visitor needs, and target their

marketing to specific segments. FERMATA has chosen to work with this scheme, modified where appropriate for the needs of the Pennsylvania Wilds project.

We have identified eight outdoor recreation segments: Inactives, Passives, Nonconsumptive Moderates, Nature Lovers, Water Bugs, Backcountry Actives, Outdoor Avids and Motorized Consumptives. The Nature Lovers, Water Bugs, Backcountry Actives and Outdoor Avids participate in the more of the target recreations, and their rate of participation in each recreation is higher than the other segments. The demographic data presented in Table 4 defines each segment and can be used to target marketing efforts.



Brenda Adams-Weyant/  
FERMATA, Inc.

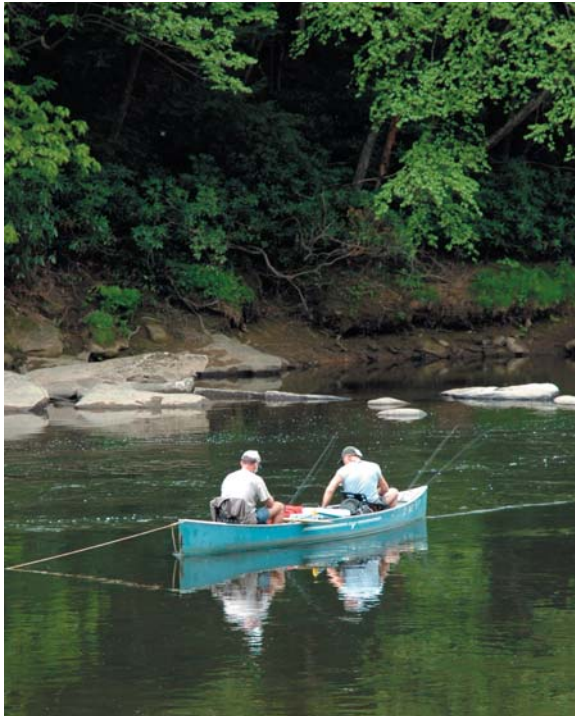


A preeminent concern voiced by many local interests is in retaining the “road less traveled” charm of the region. Tourism, in its most high impact form, stands to put that rural ambiance at risk. Therefore FERMATA recommends a “low impact, low volume, high yield” tourism model that, while attracting new visitors to the region, limits the impacts that accompanies mass travel. In other words, the goal is to construct a high yield model one traveler at a time. The market segments identified below are those that we have identified represent limited, discrete, and well-defined populations of recreationists that should serve as targets for future travel and tourism marketing efforts.



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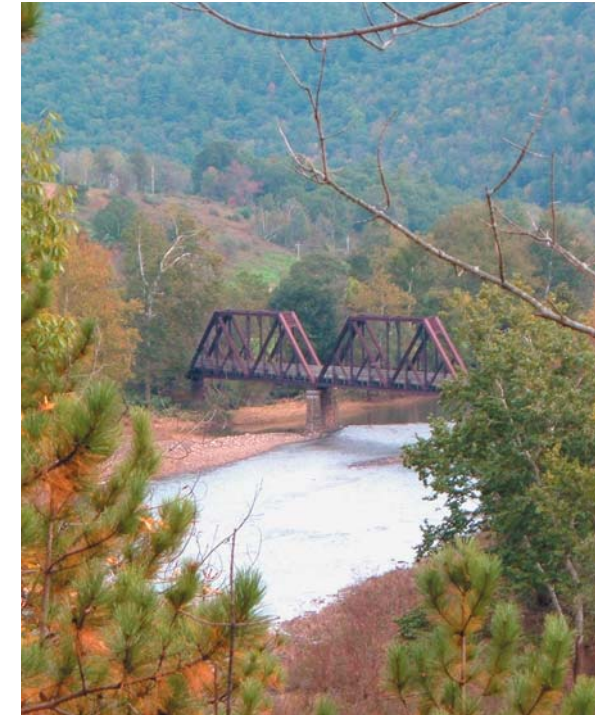
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**Table 4: Target Recreation Populations for the Pine Creek Gorge (Cordell 2004)**

Demographic Group	Nature Lovers (%)	Water Bugs (%)	Backcountry Actives (%)	Outdoor Avids (%)
% of NSRE Sample	12.5	13.3	8.6	7.5
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	38.4	37.2	54.8	62.2
Female	61.6	62.8	45.2	37.8
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
White, non-Hispanic	71.2	79.3	81.5	87.2
Black, non-Hispanic	11.1	8.6	4.4	2.7
American Indian, non-Hispanic	0.6	0.5	1.1	1.1
Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	2.8	3.7	2.3	2.2
Hispanic	14.3	7.9	10.7	6.7
<b>Age</b>				
16-24	10.5	14.1	19.5	33.9
25-34	11.2	16.7	19.1	20.7
35-44	17.4	25	26.8	25.6
45-54	19.5	20.4	18.9	13.1
55-64	16	11.6	9.4	4.4
65+	25.4	12.1	6.2	2.4
<b>Household Income</b>				
<\$15,000	12.3	5	8.9	5.8
\$15,000-\$24,999	16.7	9.6	11.3	6.9



Demographic Group	Nature Lovers (%)	Water Bugs (%)	Backcountry Actives (%)	Outdoor Avids (%)
\$25,000-\$49,999	33.1	32.9	34.4	29.1
\$50,000-\$74,999	20.4	24.4	24.4	24.1
\$75,000-\$99,999	8.8	13.2	11.2	13.9
\$100,000+	8.7	14.9	9.9	20.2
<b>Citizenship</b>				
U.S. citizen	91	95.5	95.6	98.1
Foreign born	9	4.5	4.4	1.9
<b>Metropolitan Status</b>				
Nonmetro resident	24.3	15.1	23.6	22.5
Metro area resident	75.7	84.9	76.4	77.5
<b>Region</b>				
New England	5.2	10	7.4	10
Middle Atlantic	11.6	13.1	9.7	8.6
East North Central	14.2	14	11.6	15.3
West North Central	10.4	6.7	8.9	9.3
South Atlantic	14.9	21.2	12.1	15.2
East South Central	7	6.1	5.4	5
West South Central	12.5	8.1	8.6	8.1
Mountain	10.4	5.8	17.6	12.3
Pacific	13.6	15	18.7	16.2



Brenda Adams-Weyant/  
FERMATA, Inc.

# Recommendations



Ted Lee Eubanks/FERMATA, Inc.

**D**CNR, through the considered use of its resources in Pine Creek, moves people to places, the masses to messages, and markets to merchandise. Therefore we have organized our recommendations under these three major headings.

## People to Places

**Develop improved informational and directional signage**

At present general directional and information signage within the Pine Creek Valley is lacking. Although residents originally stated

their concern about additional signage within Pine Creek Gorge due to traffic concerns, in practice travelers struggle to navigate and therefore increase traffic impacts by being forced to double-back in search of their destinations. Examples include as follows:

1. Signing along the state highways 6, 44, and 414 should give travelers advance notice of approaching DCNR sites (example: Black Walnut Bottom Access Area, 1/4 mile ahead).
2. Signing at the site entrance should identify the site name, list the trails accessible from this site, and use recreation symbols to indicate the major services at the site (left).



3. For sites that are not adjacent to the state highways in and around Pine Creek, wayfinding signs should be posted at intersections to help visitors find the more remote sites (such as Bradley Wales Picnic Area). The Elk Scenic Drive can serve as a model for this type of signing.

4. To reduce crowding in the Pine Creek Valley and help visitors find services, we recommend partnering with PennDOT and local tourism promotion agencies to erect Tourist Oriented Directional Signing (right). These signs should provide consistent and predictable travel information, and should diminish the need for additional billboards in the Pine Creek Valley.

5. Each access area should provide a bulletin board with the following information: name of access area, map that shows trail(s), major roads, streams, other access areas and distance between access areas, map of access area (if the area is large and all facilities are not visible from the parking area), regulations, emergency information, and descriptive information on trails (length, difficulty level, general scenery, accessibility). Provide a pay phone if service lines are nearby.



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**Develop clear linkage between the Pine Creek Valley and adjacent DCNR resources and recreational opportunities**

Visitors to the Pine Creek Rail-Trail often limit their journeys to the Pine Creek proper. Marketing has often focused on Pine Creek exclusively. Connections to adjacent trails such as the Black Forest and West Rim are often obscure and confusing.

We recommend developing clear connections that **lead recreationists from Pine Creek to these adjacent trails**. DCNR should quickly develop a comprehensive recreation map for the entire watershed.

1. We recommend developing clear connections that lead recreationists from Pine Creek to these adjacent trails. DCNR should quickly develop a comprehensive recreation map for the entire watershed. Use signing on trails and roads, display connections on maps, and describe in the written narrative about each trail.

2. Additionally, we recommend structural improvements to improve these connectors, such as replacing the bridge over Slate Run that once connected Pine Creek to the Black Forest Trail (see Appendix A for design recommendations).

3. We recommend shifting the focus from Pine Creek to watershed resources and recreational opportunities. The Pine Creek Valley is shouldered by expanses of state park and forest land. However, the communication and marketing efforts in the region have often focused on Pine Creek exclusively. Services in the Pine Creek vicinity support tourism in the valley and protect it from additional development. We recommend broadening these communication efforts to redirect visitors to adjacent DCNR lands as well. Additional recreational growth in the region is manage-

able if the additional impacts are spread through the region rather than concentrated in the valley.

4. In addition to shifting focus from the Pine Creek proper to the watershed as a whole, we recommend an expansion of the recreations promoted in the region. For example, the Pine Creek Rail-Trail offers excellent wildlife viewing opportunities, yet there is little mention of this resource in the valley itself. Interpretive signage, checklists, CDs of common bird songs, and real-time wildlife viewing information on the web would aid DCNR is diversifying its offerings.

## Masses to Messages

### Develop Pine Creek Interpretive Plan, Integrating the Lumber Heritage Interpretive Plan Recommendations

With the exception of a handful of interpretive signs at Leonard Harrison State Park, the Pine Creek Valley is presently bereft of interpretation. We recommend that a Pine Creek interpretive plan be developed **immediately**. The interpretive site plan should integrate the recommendations of the Lumber Heritage Interpretive Plan (LHIP), which recommends interpreting the Forest Life, Stewardship and Conservation, and Comings and Goings sub-themes. The interpretive site plan should identify the stories to tell in the Pine Creek Valley, the sites appropriate for telling these stories, and the personal and non-



Rob Tizard/FERMATA, Inc.



Ted Lee Eubanks/FERMATA, Inc.

personal media recommended for each site. The Leave No Trace ethic should be woven into all the interpretation to educate visitors about how they can reduce their impact on the environment.

As one piece of the interpretive site plan, FERMATA recommends interpretive signing along the Pine Creek Rail-Trail similar to what has been installed at Oil Creek State Park. The many natural and historic sites along Pine Creek could be brought alive with interpretation.

The interpretation recommended in the LHIP for Leonard Harrison and Colton

Point State Parks should be pursued in tandem to complement and support interpretation along

the rail-trail. Finally, the plan should provide instructions for the development of collateral materials such as maps and trail guides. A recurrent request from local business and residents is for more (and current) information for visitors. Maps, guides, and web sites are examples of informational venues that should be developed, expanded, and updated.

### **Continue with development of joint DCNR/TPA visitor center at Leonard Harrison State Park**

DCNR is planning for the development of a new visitor's center at Leonard Harrison State Park. We recommend that this effort be accelerated, for this visitor's center will serve as an important gateway to Pine Creek. In addition, the visitor's center should be



connected, in real-time, with other DCNR facilities being planned at S.B. Elliott State Park and Sinnemahoning State Park. The Tioga County Visitors Bureau has expressed an interest in relocating to the new facility at Leonard Harrison State Park, and we support that proposal. In addition, we urge DCNR to consider developing a joint management and staffing plan for the new facility with Tioga County, including cross-training TPA staff to handle a broad-range of resource and recreation requests.

**Provide additional interpretive staffing for DCNR lands, in particular for Tioga and Tiadaghton State Forests**

There is a decided (and demonstrable) absence of interpretive programming and staffing in the state forests of the Pennsylvania Wilds. We recommend that such staff be budgeted for both Tioga and Tiadaghton State Forests. However, we recommend that these positions be filled only after the establishment of the Pennsylvania Wilds Recreation and Interpretation Team. The new staff positions at the state forests will be responsible for implementing the plans developed by the new team, and therefore should only be added after the team has had the time to develop its programs for the Pennsylvania Wilds.



Ted Lee Eubanks/FERMATA, Inc.



Mary Jeanne Packer/FERMATA, Inc.

## **Markets to Merchandise** **Concentrate infrastructure in** **the gateway communities of** **Wellsboro and Jersey Shore**

FERMATA supports a “core and more” approach to tourism development within the Pine Creek Valley.

FERMATA defines the core

area as that which contains the natural, cultural, and historical resources that attract travelers to the region in the first place. The goal is to protect these resources from impacts associated with tourism and recreational development. The “more,” in this sense, is the peripheral lands and communities that may serve as gateways to the core resources. We prefer focusing extensive tour-

ism infrastructure in these gateways, allowing the “core” to remain protected.

In the Pine Creek Valley, such a strategy would discourage major tourism infrastructure development within the “core” of the Pine Creek Valley (US Route 6 to PA Route 220), and encourage extensive development in the gateway communities of Wellsboro and Jersey Shore. To that end, we recommend that the Pine Creek Rail-Trail be completed to its north and south trailheads, and that the communities be assisted in connecting to these trailheads. We also recommend inviting local planning and economic development interests to join in working with these local communities in preparing for these new travelers and recreationists.

## Develop DCNR revenue strategy for Pine Creek and watershed facilities

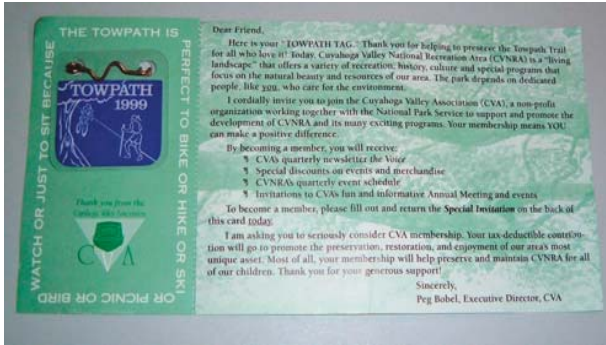
At present DCNR has little ability to support its investments in the Pine Creek Valley through revenue generated from users. We recommend the development of a revenue strategy for Pine Creek. Although we recognize that entrance fees for state parks and forests are not a viable option, we do favor fees for: 1) expanded services, such as expert or interpreter lead tours; 2) to control use where supply is limited or resources are sensitive; and 3) for consistency with other DCNR properties, such as developed campsites. Administrative agency boundaries or jurisdictions are not always apparent or of concern to recreation visitors. DCNR should operate seamlessly across agency boundaries where feasible.

In order to ensure the success of the fee program, it is critical that DCNR seek approval to keep fee revenues in state parks and forests. Visitors are more likely to accept a new fee when they know the fee will be used to support and improve the park or forest. This also creates an entrepreneurial spirit in management to improve service and visitation.

1. Charge for camping permits on the Tioga and Tiadaghton State Forest land within the Pine Creek Valley. FERMATA recommends that camping only be allowed in designated campgrounds and campsites (more detail in next section).







Towpath Tag from the Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Cleveland Ohio.

We recommend initiating a development effort that seeks additional grant and philanthropic funding for recreational and interpretive enhancements in Pine Creek.

3. Develop a Pine Creek annual pass that would prepay parking and camping fees in the valley. FERMATA recommends that the pass feature a different artist's rendering of a Pine Creek scene each year (such as is the case with the federal Duck Stamp). This may encourage frequent visitors or supporters to collect each year's pass. DCNR should encourage visitors to buy a pass as a way to support state parks and forests, even if they do not use them regularly. The Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Cleveland, for example,

2. Charge for parking at all improved parking areas in the valley. Provide free parking at the Wellsboro and Jersey Shore Trailheads to encourage visitors to park outside the valley and ride or walk in.

has a pass that has become a tool to show local support and is an attractive pin that has become a collectible to many users.

4. We recommend initiating a development effort that seeks additional grant and philanthropic funding for recreational and interpretive enhancements in Pine Creek. One way to accomplish this goal would be to encourage the Pennsylvania State Parks and Forest Foundation to adopt Pine Creek as a priority project.

5. While DCNR may have the authority to establish fees on state forest land for commercial operators, we recommend that DCNR seek approval to retain these funds within the Bureau of Forestry.

## Stewardship

### Develop quality standards and programs for Pine Creek recreations

Pine Creek is a world-class resource that deserves and demands world-class recreational opportunities. We specifically recommend that the DCNR work with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission to expand Special Regulation Waters Designations in Pine Creek and its tributaries. These expanded designations would encourage catch-and-release practices until later in the fishing season. We additionally recommend that the DCNR regional recreation team expand recreational opportunities in the region by developing additional programs on DCNR land, particularly those programs that are appropriate for entry-level recreationists.



Joel Flewelling/FERMATA, Inc.

We recommend that DCNR, through the establishment of a region recreational team, develop quality and design standards for the provision of appropriate recreations such as camping, trails, canoeing/kayaking, and fishing. The standards should cover all aspects



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of recreation program delivery such as information, interpretation, signing, facility design, operations and maintenance.

Although state parks and forests have different missions, opportunities to share resources, develop similar standards, and blur the unit boundaries should be pursued.

### **Protect Pine Creek through the proactive management of recreation use**

Pine Creek is, by any measurement, one of Pennsylvania's crown jewels. The region stands at the cusp of either becoming something greater, or being loved to death by uncontrolled use. The proactive management of recreation use will be necessary to protect what is unique and special about Pine Creek. Recreation facilities serve to enhance experiences and to protect natural resources. Simply put, recreation management is the act of preserving these resources for future use.



1. FERMATA recommends that additional parking not be added to the Pine Creek Valley, with the exception of modest municipal parking in the gateway communities and strategic additions to existing parking facilities that will focus parking in designated areas. Road access in the Valley is limited. There is a question about whether or not Route 414 exceeds its physical carrying capacity on summer weekends and holidays. However, there is a perception among some that the social carrying capacity is near its limit during peak use periods. Efforts to shift use to weekdays and shoulder seasons will help sustain local businesses, protect

recreation experiences, and will allow for increased recreation use. DCNR and the TPAs should encourage businesses to charge a lower fee during off-peak periods, and use the internet, pamphlets, and marketing efforts to communicate when areas are less crowded.

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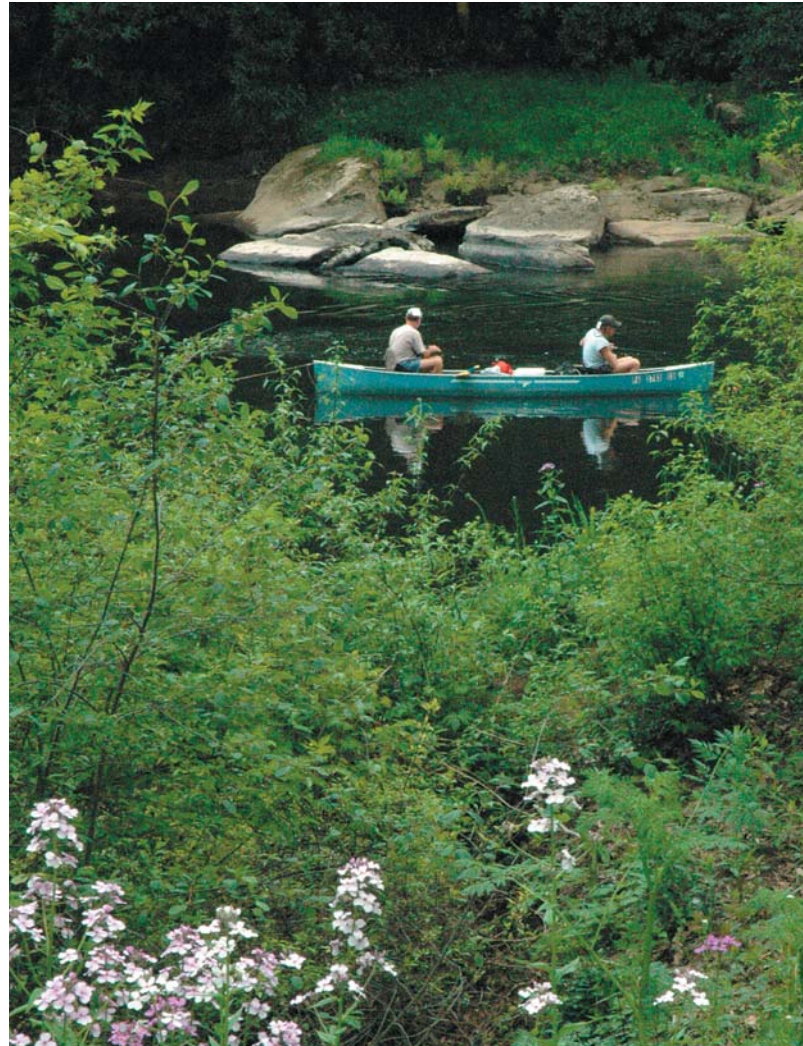
2. FERMATA recommends that DCNR work with local municipalities and PennDOT to institute parking restrictions outside of designated parking areas. When a hotel is full, visitors are not encouraged to sleep in the lobby, and this same rationale needs to be instilled in visitors to Pine Creek.

Modest signing to inform visitors of this regulation should be posted at places prone to such acts. Use this opportunity to educate visitors about low impact use and help them understand the rationale so that they become advocates. Provide detailed information in print and on websites so that visitors are informed before they arrive.

3. The canoe launches along Pine Creek are an example of where the resource has not been protected from recreation use. The launches are constructed on unimproved bare ground and many are eroded and gullied. Some are not useable because of streambank erosion. FERMATA recommends the stabilization and improvement of all of the launches that serve Pine Creek. This National Park Service publication provides design solutions: <http://www.nps.gov/rtca/helpfultools/launchguide.pdf>.

4. Along Pine Creek, we recommend allowing camping only in designated campgrounds. This will protect areas not suited to camping and will concentrate use where impacts can be managed. Allowing visitors to disperse across the landscape is appropriate when

demand is low, when resources are abundant, and where the land is suited. On Pine Creek recreation use is concentrated and places to camp along the creek are restricted by topography or land ownership. The existing state forest campgrounds along Pine Creek offer camping to hikers, bikers, and floaters and are well distributed. The campgrounds should continue not to be accessible by vehicle. FERMATA does not recommend adding additional campgrounds, but the capacity of each site should be increased by about 20-30% (currently 46 campsites). Permits should only be issued for the number of campsites available.



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# Priorities for Implementation.....



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**G**iven the importance placed by DCNR and its Secretary on developing a broader constituency supporting DCNR's mission, FERMATA recommends that immediate attention be given to developing the messages for the masses that are attracted to the Pine Creek Valley. There-

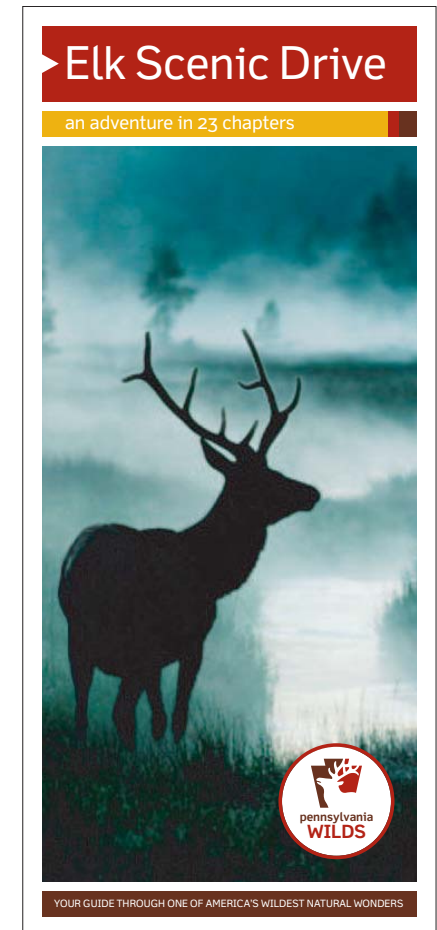
fore we recommend that DCNR immediately begin the development of a Pine Creek Interpretive Plan, and initiate the development of interpretive signage and collaterals for distributions in the Pine Creek region. In addition, FERMATA recommends that DCNR begin to field test the revenue strategies recommended in this report.

The following are preliminary estimates of general costs associated with the improvements and enhancements being recommended in this report. We again urge caution when considering these numbers, as conditions and qualifications may significantly alter the end cost. However, these estimates should provide sufficient information as to allow DCNR to prioritize its investments.

**Table 5: Priorities and Estimated Costs for Recommendations**

Recommendation	Priority	Estimated Cost
<b>People to Places</b>		
Improve informational and directional signage	Moderate	\$270,000
Advance notice signs		
Site entrance signs		
Wayfinding signs		
Attraction signs		
Site bulletin boards		
Develop clear linkage between Pine Creek and adjacent DCNR resources	Moderate	\$300,000
Clear connections between Pine Creek and adjacent trails		
Replace Black Forest Trail bridge over Slate Run		
Shift from Pine Creek to a watershed focus		
<b>Masses to Messages</b>		
Develop Pine Creek Interpretive Plan	High (!)	\$30,000
Continue with development of joint DCNR/TPA visitor's center at Leonard Harrison State Park	Moderate	
New interpretive and recreational staff for state forests	Moderate	
Collateral materials (including maps and trail guides)	Moderate	\$50,000

(continued on p. 32)





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**Table 5: Priorities and Estimated Costs for Recommendations (continued)**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
<b>Markets to Merchandise</b>		
Concentrate infrastructure in the gateway communities of Wellsboro and Jersey Shore	Moderate	
Complete Pine Creek Rail-Trail to Jersey Shore and construct access area		\$1,000,000
Complete Pine Creek Rail-Trail to Wellsboro Junction and construct access area		\$1,500,000
Develop DCNR revenue strategy for Pine Creek and watershed facilities	High	
Institute camping fees on State Forest in Pine Creek Valley		
Institute parking fees for Pine Creek access outside of gateways		
Develop annual Pine Creek pass		
Develop fee structure for commercial outfitter-guides, approach legislature about retaining revenues		
Initiate development organization		
<b>Stewardship</b>		
Develop quality standards and programs for Pine Creek recreations	Moderate	
Protect Pine Creek through the proactive management of recreation use	Moderate	\$120,000
Provide information and incentives for off-peak use		
Restrict parking		
Improve canoe/kayak launches		
Restrict camping to campgrounds, expand campgrounds		



# Appendix A

*Design Considerations for the Black Forest Trail Bridge over Slate Run*  
Brenda Adams-Weyant, FERMATA, Inc.  
May 11, 2005

## Slate Run Crossing

In the hiking guide to the Black Forest Trail, the Slate Run water crossing is noted as being unsafe during high water. Several factors make this a challenging water crossing: the crossing is near the mouth of Slate Run, the steep gradient of the stream, and the narrow V-shaped valley. It is likely that any significant rain event will result in high waters in this location. The Black Forest Trail is one of the most popular hiking destinations in the Pennsylvania Wilds due to its outstanding scenery, the multiple options to hike shorter

loops, and because it is a loop trail. On a trail of this quality and use level, it is important that potentially unsafe crossings be bridged for user safety.

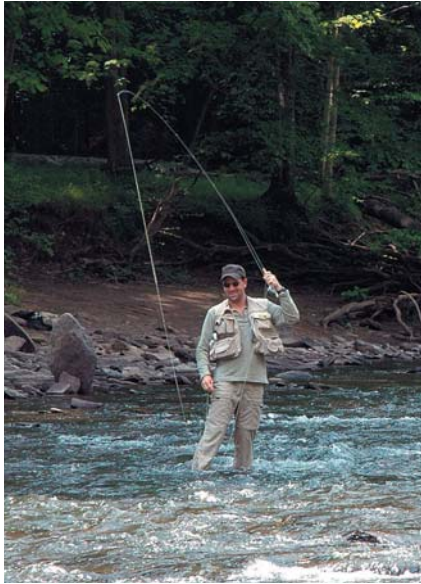
## Trail Grade

This topography of the Slate Run valley makes finding a suitable bridge location challenging. An important factor in locating the bridge is the ability to route the trail to the bridge on a sustainable grade. Modern trail building techniques recommend maintaining a grade at less than 10%, but do allow for grades up to 30% for short stretches. Trails with grades above 10% will move more soil and will require more fre-



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The Black Forest Trail is one of the most popular hiking destinations in the Pennsylvania Wilds due to its outstanding scenery, the multiple options to hike shorter loops, and because it is a loop trail.



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This section of trail will be used by more than just avid hikers. The easy access and scenic nature of Slate Run will attract families and casual hikers, so an easier trail difficulty is warranted.

quent maintenance. The grades on the Black Forest Trail, especially where the trail travels through the stream valleys, exceed 10%. FERMATA recommends the Black Forest Trail from the Slate Run Road to the bridge crossing be redesigned to a grade not to exceed 15%. This section of trail will be used by more than just avid hikers. The easy access and scenic nature of Slate Run will attract families and casual hikers, so an easier trail difficulty is warranted.

Right now the trail follows a fall line location, which results in natural and user-created erosion. Designing a more sustainable trail to the bridge would protect Slate Run from trail induced soil erosion. Finding a suitable grade may require the use of switchbacks and/or lengthening the trail. The International Mountain Biking Association recommends this design rule: to build trails that last,

use the Half Rule: trail grade, or steepness, shouldn't exceed half the grade, or steepness, of the hillside; and the 10 Percent Rule: overall trail grade should be 10 percent or less. All aspects of this trail's design should meet the highest trail standards.

### Trailhead

One of the primary access points for the Black Forest Trail is Slate Run, and yet hikers are forced to park in town or pull off along the road to access the trail. A suitable location for a trailhead is located along Slate Run Road approximately 2000 feet from the Hotel Manor. In this location, the stream side of the road has a gentle slope and could be inexpensively improved as a parking area. A parking area for pull-in style parking for about 10-15 vehicles is recommended. A kiosk should be constructed near where the trail joins the parking lot. The following informa-

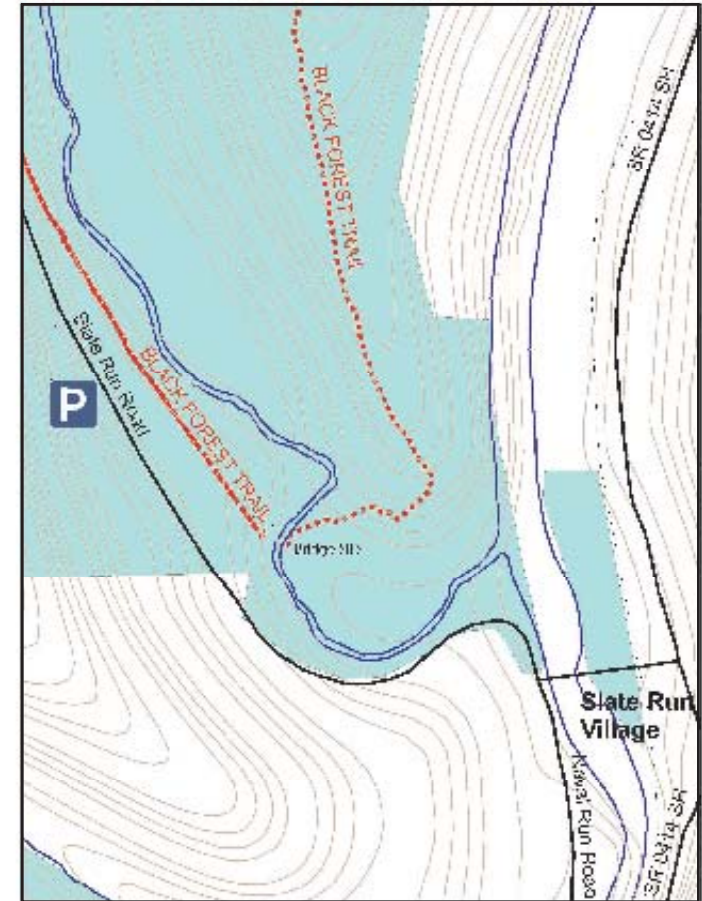
tion should be presented on the kiosk: trail difficulty level, trail length, trail map, allowable uses, emergency information, trail description (scenic vistas, waterfalls, history or area, etc.). In designing the size of the kiosk, plan space for an interpretive panel or two.

### Bridge Design Considerations

1. Designed for a minimum 20 year life span.
2. To protect the high quality fishery, the bridge does not impede stream flow (no piers in stream).
3. Bridge is useable during flood events. How often does water exceed the banks at the crossing location? If this is a regular occurrence during the hiking season (April through November), the bridge should be built at a height where it will remain above typical high waters.

4. A location near the village of Slate Run is desirable because it connects the Black Forest Trail with the Pine Creek Trail, but not directly in Slate Run because parking space is at a premium. The recreation facilities in the Pine Creek Valley need to take into consideration their effect on congestion in the small villages.

5. Bridge location is selected based on being able to layout a properly designed trail to and from the bridge.





# Appendix B

## Inventory of DCNR Assets in the Pine Creek Valley

Unit Name	Site Type	Total Amount	ADA	Remarks
Colton Point SP	Canoe/Kayak			Pine Creek, no launches
Colton Point SP	CCC Sites			CCC built, National Historic District
Colton Point SP	Developed Overlooks	4.00	Yes	CCC built
Colton Point SP	Fall Foliage			
Colton Point SP	Geocaching			
Colton Point SP	Group Camping	3.00	Yes	30 person capacity each
Colton Point SP	Hiking Trails	2.00		Rim Trail, Turkey Path
Colton Point SP	Hunting Big Game			
Colton Point SP	Hunting Small Game			
Colton Point SP	Interpretive Programs - Guided			Infrequent
Colton Point SP	Mtn Laurel, Rhododendron			Mtn laurel
Colton Point SP	Photo Subjects			Pine Creek Gorge, CCC Structures
Colton Point SP	Picnic Family			
Colton Point SP	Picnic Group		Yes	Weddings, reunions
Colton Point SP	Picnic Pavilion	5.00	Yes	CCC built, reservable
Colton Point SP	Rafting			Pine Creek
Colton Point SP	Rock Outcrops			Barbour Rocks
Colton Point SP	Rustic Camping	25.00	Yes	
Colton Point SP	Scenic Vistas			
Colton Point SP	Snowmobile Trails			Entrance road not plowed in winter
Colton Point SP	Viewing Birds			Bald eagle, osprey, red-tailed hawks

Unit Name	Site Type	Total Amount	ADA	Remarks
Colton Point SP	Viewing Wildflowers			Good wildflower variety, pink lady slippers
Colton Point SP	Viewing Wildlife			Otters
Leonard Harrison SP	Biking Rail-Trail	1.43		Pine Creek Trail
Leonard Harrison SP	Canoe/Kayak			Pine Creek, no launches
Leonard Harrison SP	CCC Sites			CCC built, CCC statue
Leonard Harrison SP	Developed Overlooks	5.00	Yes	Pine Creek Gorge, CCC built
Leonard Harrison SP	Environmental Education			
Leonard Harrison SP	Equine Trails	1.43		Pine Creek Trail
Leonard Harrison SP	Fall Foliage			Heaviest use season, tour buses
Leonard Harrison SP	Fishing Cold Water			Pine Creek
Leonard Harrison SP	Fishing Warm Water			Few bass in Pine Creek
Leonard Harrison SP	Hiking Trails	3.53		Turkey Path
Leonard Harrison SP	Hunting Big Game			
Leonard Harrison SP	Hunting Small Game			
Leonard Harrison SP	Interpretive Programs - Guided			
Leonard Harrison SP	Modern Camping w/hookups	9.00	Yes	Electric hookups
Leonard Harrison SP	Nature Center			
Leonard Harrison SP	Old Growth Forest			Pine Creek hillsides
Leonard Harrison SP	Photo Subjects			Pine Creek Gorge
Leonard Harrison SP	Picnic Family			
Leonard Harrison SP	Picnic Pavilion	1.00	Yes	Reservable
Leonard Harrison SP	Playgrounds			
Leonard Harrison SP	Prehistoric Sites			Pine Creek
Leonard Harrison SP	Rafting			Pine Creek
Leonard Harrison SP	Rustic Camping	21.00	Yes	
Leonard Harrison SP	Scenic Vistas			Pine Creek Gorge
Leonard Harrison SP	Viewing Birds			Bald eagles

Unit Name	Site Type	Total Amount	ADA	Remarks
Leonard Harrison SP	Viewing Wildflowers			Good wildflower variety, lady slippers
Leonard Harrison SP	Viewing Wildlife			Otter, Fisher
Leonard Harrison SP	Waterfalls			Little Fourmile Run
Leonard Harrison SP	XC Ski Trails	1.43		Pine Creek Trail
Little Pine SP	Backpacking Trails	2.15		Mid-state Trail
Little Pine SP	Basketball Courts			
Little Pine SP	Biking Competitive	1.00		Moto-cross track
Little Pine SP	Biking Road			
Little Pine SP	Biking Single Track	5.00		Lakeshore Trail
Little Pine SP	Camping Cottages	3.00	Yes	
Little Pine SP	Canoe/Kayak			
Little Pine SP	CCC Sites			CCC camp in park
Little Pine SP	Developed Overlooks	1.00	Yes	At the dam
Little Pine SP	Driving for Pleasure			
Little Pine SP	Environmental Education			
Little Pine SP	Fall Foliage			
Little Pine SP	Fishing Cold Water			Stocked trout, Delayed harvest artificial lure only special regulation area includes flyfishing
Little Pine SP	Fishing Ice			
Little Pine SP	Fishing Piers/Platforms	1.00	Yes	Platform
Little Pine SP	Fishing Warm Water			Little fish structure in lake
Little Pine SP	Geocaching			
Little Pine SP	Group Camping	4.00	Yes	2 sites @ 40 people, 2 sites @ 20 people
Little Pine SP	Hiking Trails	16.32		Nice vistas, waterfalls on Spike Buck, Love Run & Panther Hollow Trails
Little Pine SP	Historic Sites			Old cemeteries, CCC monument
Little Pine SP	Horseshoe Courts			
Little Pine SP	Hunting Big Game			



Unit Name	Site Type	Total Amount	ADA	Remarks
Little Pine SP	Hunting Migratory Bird			
Little Pine SP	Hunting Small Game			
Little Pine SP	Ice Skating			
Little Pine SP	Interpretive Programs - Amphitheater			
Little Pine SP	Interpretive Programs - Guided			
Little Pine SP	Marsh, Swamp, Bogs			Lake headwaters
Little Pine SP	Modern Camping	37.00		
Little Pine SP	Modern Camping w/hookups	67.00	Yes	Electric hookups
Little Pine SP	Motor Boat			Electric motors only, mooring spaces, boat rentals
Little Pine SP	Nature Center			
Little Pine SP	Photo Subjects			Bald eagle nest, dam, floods, landscape
Little Pine SP	Picnic Family			Use is declining
Little Pine SP	Picnic Group		Yes	Low use
Little Pine SP	Picnic Pavilion	4.00	Yes	Reservable, electric service
Little Pine SP	Playgrounds			
Little Pine SP	Ponds, Lakes			94 acre lake, flood control
Little Pine SP	Rock Outcrops			Panther Trail
Little Pine SP	Sailing			Low use
Little Pine SP	Scenic Vistas			
Little Pine SP	Shooting Range	1.00		
Little Pine SP	Sledding			
Little Pine SP	Snowmobile Trails			Park serves as a trailhead for SF trails
Little Pine SP	Swimming Natural Water Body	1.00		Lake, open swim
Little Pine SP	Viewing Birds			Bald eagle, osprey, migratory waterfowl, common loons
Little Pine SP	Viewing Wildflowers			
Little Pine SP	Viewing Wildlife			Fisher sighting
Little Pine SP	Volleyball Courts			

Unit Name	Site Type	Total Amount	ADA	Remarks
Little Pine SP	XC Ski Trails	5.00		
Tiadaghton SF	Backpacking Trails	98.00		Black Forest Trail, Mid-state Trail
Tiadaghton SF	Biking Rail-Trail	35.40		Pine Creek Trail
Tiadaghton SF	Biking Road			
Tiadaghton SF	Biking Single Track	106.57		Low use
Tiadaghton SF	Canoe/Kayak			Pine Creek, Slate Run, Cedar Run,
Tiadaghton SF	CCC Sites			8 CCC Camps
Tiadaghton SF	Collecting Fruit/Berries			Blueberry, cranberry
Tiadaghton SF	Collecting Mushrooms			
Tiadaghton SF	Dispersed Camping-User Created			No detailed inventory
Tiadaghton SF	Driving for Pleasure			
Tiadaghton SF	Fall Foliage			SR 44, SR 414, Little Pine Creek, SR 287, US 15, state forest roads
Tiadaghton SF	Fishing Cold Water			Flyfishing: Pine Creek, Cedar Run, Slate Run, Little Pine
Tiadaghton SF	Fishing Warm Water			Lower Pine Creek
Tiadaghton SF	Geocaching			
Tiadaghton SF	Hiking Trails	234.65		Golden Eagle Trail noted as one of best day hikes in PA
Tiadaghton SF	Historic Sites			Cemeteries, Slate Run Logging era, Antes Fork
Tiadaghton SF	Hunting Big Game			Bear is biggest draw
Tiadaghton SF	Hunting Small Game			Grouse
Tiadaghton SF	Interpretive Programs - Guided			
Tiadaghton SF	Marsh, Swamp, Bogs			Algerine Swamp, Clay Mine Bog
Tiadaghton SF	Mtn Laurel, Rhododendron			Lower Pine Bottom, Trout Run, lower railroad trail
Tiadaghton SF	Old Growth Forest			Bark Cabin Natural Area
Tiadaghton SF	Photo Subjects			Pine Creek, vistas
Tiadaghton SF	Prairie, Savannah, Meadow			Black Forest Trail
Tiadaghton SF	Prehistoric Sites			Pine Creek
Tiadaghton SF	Rock Outcrops			Red Run, Algerine Wild Area, Black Forest Trail

Unit Name	Site Type	Total Amount	ADA	Remarks
Tiadaghton SF	Rustic Camping	21.00		Bonnell Flats, Black Walnut Bottom, access via Pine Creek
Tiadaghton SF	Scenic Vistas	13.00		
Tiadaghton SF	Snowmobile Trails	304.00		State Forest grooms trails
Tiadaghton SF	Snowshoeing			
Tiadaghton SF	Viewing Birds			Bald eagle nesting
Tiadaghton SF	Viewing Dark Skies			
Tiadaghton SF	Viewing Fish			Slate Run
Tiadaghton SF	Viewing Wildflowers			
Tiadaghton SF	Viewing Wildlife			Algerine Swamp good variety. Timber rattlesnakes
Tiadaghton SF	Waterfalls			Miners, Hounds, Dutchman's Runs, Jacoby Hollow
Tiadaghton SF	XC Ski Trails	85.12		
Tioga SF	Backpacking Trails	37.51		West Rim Trail
Tioga SF	Biking Rail-Trail	17.57		Pine Creek Trail
Tioga SF	Biking Single Track	26.00		
Tioga SF	Canoe/Kayak			Pine Creek, Babbs Creek, Cedar Run
Tioga SF	CCC Sites			4 CCC camps
Tioga SF	Collecting Fruit/Berries			Blueberry
Tioga SF	Collecting Mushrooms			
Tioga SF	Collecting Rocks, Minerals, Fossils			Fossils, field stone
Tioga SF	Dispersed Camping-User Created			No detailed inventory
Tioga SF	Driving for Pleasure			
Tioga SF	Equine Trails	39.32		Only 8.9 miles of Pine Creek Trail open to equines
Tioga SF	Fall Foliage			
Tioga SF	Fishing Cold Water			Flyfishing: Cedar Run, Pine Creek. Stony Fork, Asaph Run
Tioga SF	Geocaching			
Tioga SF	Hiking Trails	96.77		
Tioga SF	Hunters w/Disabilities			Road with permission



Unit Name	Site Type	Total Amount	ADA	Remarks
Tioga SF	Hunting Big Game			
Tioga SF	Hunting Small Game			
Tioga SF	Interpretive Programs - Guided			
Tioga SF	Marsh, Swamp, Bogs			Arnot, endangered species
Tioga SF	Mtn Laurel, Rhododendron			Driving tour, West Rim Road, Mill Run, Wilson Point
Tioga SF	Old Growth Forest			Fourmile Run, Pinafore Hollow
Tioga SF	Photo Subjects			Pine Creek Gorge, waterfalls along gorge: Sand Run falls, Campbell Falls; local photo club
Tioga SF	Picnic Family			
Tioga SF	Picnic Pavilion	2.00		Bradley Wales, Asaph Park
Tioga SF	Prairie, Savannah, Meadow			
Tioga SF	Prehistoric Sites			Pine Creek
Tioga SF	Rafting			Pine Creek
Tioga SF	Rock Outcrops			Rock climbing, Blue Rocks, Rattler, Clay Mine Road
Tioga SF	Rustic Camping	3.00		Hoffman, Tiadaghton, Bear Run
Tioga SF	Rustic Camping	10.00		Asaph Park
Tioga SF	Scenic Vistas			
Tioga SF	Snowmobile Trails	175.00		Mostly on roads
Tioga SF	Snowshoeing			
Tioga SF	Viewing Birds			Pine Creek Gorge IBA, The Muck IBA
Tioga SF	Viewing Fish			Pine Creek Trail
Tioga SF	Viewing Wildflowers			Algerine Wild Area, Bohem Run, Arnot
Tioga SF	Viewing Wildlife			Snakes, river otter
Tioga SF	Waterfalls			Sand Run Falls, Campbell Falls
Tioga SF	XC Ski Trails	35.71		Pine Creek Trail groomed, Darling Run



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