



Department of Conservation
& Natural Resources



For More Information Contact:

Big Pocono State Park
c/o Tobyhanna State Park
P.O. Box 387
Tobyhanna, PA 18466-0387
570-894-8336
e-mail: tobyhannasp@state.pa.us
An Equal Opportunity Employer
www.visitPAParks.com

Information and Reservations

Make online reservations at:
www.visitPAParks.com or call toll-free
888-PA-PARKS, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to
Saturday, for state park information and
reservations.

Big Pocono State Park

Big Pocono State Park is in Monroe County in northeastern Pennsylvania. The park consists of 1,306 acres of rugged terrain on the summit and slopes of Camelback Mountain. From the summit, visitors can enjoy a magnificent view of a vast portion of eastern Pennsylvania and portions of New Jersey and New York.

The park closes the day after the end of deer season in December and reopens as conditions permit in the spring. The park is open sunrise to sunset.

Big Pocono State Park facilities are maintained in cooperation with the Camelback Ski Corporation. The trails of Big Pocono State Park are maintained in cooperation with the Pocono Outdoor Club.

Directions

Entrance to the park is from PA 715 and Exit 299 of I-80 at Tannersville.

CAUTION: Steep grades. Visitors should not attempt this drive in vehicles with trailers in tow. Municipal road maintenance is not provided and seasonal closures of the access roadway will occur.

Scenic View

From the summit, visitors can enjoy a magnificent view of a vast portion of eastern Pennsylvania and portions of New Jersey and New York. A paved, scenic drive, 1.4 miles in length, encircles the mountaintop, permitting visitors to enjoy the beautiful view in all directions.

Recreational Opportunities

The park is open from sunrise to sunset.



PICNICKING: There are three picnic areas with plenty of picnic tables and charcoal grills. Most areas provide “a picnic with a view” high atop Camelback Mountain at an elevation of 2100 feet above sea level. Parking spaces in Parking Lot 4 are designated for people with disabilities. In Parking Lot 2, parking spaces, the restroom, and some picnic tables are designated for people with disabilities.

HIKING: 8.5 miles of trails

Since Big Pocono State Park is a mountaintop, most of the trails have steep grades. Some trails are extremely steep with rough grades. Inexperienced hikers might want to contact the Tobyhanna State Park office before hiking some of the trails.

The trails are marked with different colored blazes (see map). Trails marked with blue are no longer maintained or shown on the map. **South Trail** and the **North Trail** Lower Loop are open to mountain bikes and horses.

North and South trails extend down the east side of the mountain. They are steep and rugged, offering experienced hikers a challenging 600-foot elevation change in under a mile.

For an easier hike, try the upper loop of South Trail along the south face of the mountain and Indian Trail, which forms a 1.3-mile loop from Rim Road.

North Trail Lower Loop connects the lower end of South Trail back to the North Trail via a portion of the old railroad grade, which is fairly flat.

Indian Trail offers a great vista from the eastern cliffs, visible from I-80 and points in Tannersville and Scotrun. Visitors may also connect to South Trail midway across the south face section from Parking Lot 3 using the Vista Trail for a shorter loop.

HORSEBACK RIDING: Horses are permitted on all of the hard surface roads shared by vehicles, and also South Trail and North Trail Lower Loop. Horses are prohibited on Indian and North trails.

BICYCLING: Bicycles are permitted on all hard surface roads shared by vehicles. Trail biking is permitted on South Trail and North Trail Lower Loop. Bikes are prohibited on the connecting trails from the parking lots and on Indian and North trails.

HUNTING AND FIREARMS: About 800 acres are open to hunting, trapping and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are deer, bear, cottontail rabbit, squirrel, turkey and ruffed grouse. Furbearers include fox, raccoon and coyote. Adjacent to the park are 3,943 acres of State Game Land 38, which are open to public hunting, trapping, dog training and hiking.

Hunting woodchucks, also known as groundhogs, is prohibited. Dog training is only permitted from the day following Labor Day through March 31 in designated hunting areas. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission rules and regulations apply. Contact Tobyhanna State Park office for accessible hunting information.

Use extreme caution with firearms at all times. Other visitors use the park during hunting seasons. Firearms and archery equipment may be uncased and ready for use only in authorized hunting areas during hunting seasons. In areas not open to hunting or during non-hunting seasons, firearms and archery equipment must be kept in the owner’s car.

Cameltop Restaurant

Cameltop, a restaurant near the summit of Camelback Mountain, is operated by Camelback Ski Area and provides refreshment for park visitors. The restaurant may be reached by the park road or by ascending the mountain on the ski area chair lift and is open daily Memorial Day to Columbus Day.

Downhill Skiing

Camelback Ski Area is the biggest and best ski, snowboard and snowtubing area in the Poconos. You’ll find 33 trails, 13 lifts including two high-speed, detachable quads, two half-pipes, two terrain parks, night skiing and 100% snowmaking. 570-629-1661, snow conditions: 800-233-8100. www.skicamelback.com

Big Pocono Wildlife

The top of Camelback Mountain is a unique forest called a scrub oak shrubland. Wind-dwarfed gray birch, quaking aspen, red pine and scrub oak cover the mountaintop, with no tree over twenty feet tall. Lowbush blueberry, sweet fern and mountain laurel grow under the short trees. Down slope, the forest offers more shade with mixed hardwoods including oak, maple, and hickory trees.

Portions of South Trail are lined with blueberry and mountain laurel, which bloom in mid-June. On the north side of the mountain, North Trail Lower Loop Trail on the old railroad grade passes through a rock cut and offers hikers a glimpse of a hemlock and rhododendron glen, which is surprisingly cool on hot summer days. Rhododendron blooms in late July.

History

Big Pocono State Park is on land which was owned by Henry S. Cattell near the turn of the 20th century. Mr. Cattell, being very fond of the view from the summit of Camelback Mountain, and knowing that many others shared his love for the area, constructed a stone cabin on the summit in 1908. The Cattell Cabin was left unlocked for many years to be used as a shelter by anyone who wished.

Since 1921, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry has maintained Big Pocono Fire Tower on the mountain for the purpose of detecting forest fires in the surrounding private and state forest lands. The tower is staffed only during the spring and fall seasons and has been dedicated by the National Fire Tower Association as a historical structure.

In 1928, 12 years after Mr. Cattell’s death, the Pennsylvania Game Commission purchased the area. In 1950, a portion of the state land on the steep north slope of the mountain was leased to Big Pocono Skiing, Inc., for commercial ski development. Later named Camelback Ski Corporation, the facility has been developed into a major ski resort.

In 1953, a 1,306-acre portion of the state game lands, including the ski area lease, was acquired by the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Waters (now the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources) for the purpose of developing a state park at the mountain’s summit.

In 1954, after the construction of restrooms, parking areas, picnic sites, fireplaces and a scenic drive around the summit, the area was opened to the public as Big Pocono State Park. The Cattell Cabin (pictured below) served for many years as a park office and nature museum.



Nearby Attractions

For information on nearby attractions, contact the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau, 800-POCONOS, www.800poconos.com. Big Pocono State Park is in the famous Pocono Mountains resort area. Nearby attractions include State Game Lands 38 and 127, Gouldsboro State Park, Tobyhanna State Park, Hickory Run State Park and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

Protect and Preserve Our Parks

Please make your visit safe and enjoyable. Obey all posted rules and regulations and respect fellow visitors and the resources of the park.

- Be prepared and bring the proper equipment. Natural areas may possess hazards. Your personal safety and that of your family is your responsibility.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Uncontrolled pets may chase wildlife or frighten visitors. Pets must be controlled and attended at all times and on a leash or otherwise safely restrained.
- Do your part to keep wildlife wild! Enjoy wildlife from a safe distance and do not feed or approach wild animals.
- Prevent forest fires by having a fire in proper facilities and properly disposing of hot coals. Do not leave a fire unattended.
- Please park only in designated areas and obey all traffic regulations.
- Please recycle. Place trash accumulated during your stay in proper receptacles, or take it home with you.

Access for People with Disabilities

This symbol indicates facilities and activities that are accessible. This publication text is available in alternative formats.

If you need an accommodation to participate in park activities due to a disability, please contact the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks:

888-PA-PARKS (voice)
711 (AT&T Relay Services)

In an Emergency

Contact a park employee or dial 911.

Directions to Pocono Medical Center

Take I-80 east to Exit 308 (East Stroudsburg). At the first traffic light, turn right to the hospital.

NEAREST HOSPITAL:

Pocono Medical Center
206 East Brown Street
East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-421-4000