



# *The Vista*

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*To conserve, support and protect the park's resources by promoting education, recreation, and stewardship.*

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*The color of springtime is in the flowers, the color of winter is in the imagination.* Terri Guillemets

The Friends of Worlds End State Park looked back at 2025 and ahead to 2026 at the annual meeting on November 18—see starting on page 3. As we end the year, we thank our members, patrons, local businesses and the surrounding community for their continued strong support! The current board of Directors and officers were all renominated and reelected—see the list at the left.

With the holiday season now upon us, if you are looking for a Christmas gift for a local hiking enthusiast – check out our hiking guides and maps - see page 9. In other holiday news, the Endless Mountains Heritage Region is partnering with Worlds End on a First Day Hike on New Years Day—see page 5.

Finally, celebrate winter while doing so safely, see starting on page 12, along with a story of a misadventure by a first-time park visitor and what can go wrong when you ignore safety rules—see starting on page 6.

Have a merry Christmas and a happy New Year 2026!





# The Annual Meeting— Looking Ahead to 2026



The Friends of Worlds State Park gathered on November 18 to review the accomplishments of the past year and make plans for 2026. Highlights of 2025 include:

A successful Worlds End Day 2025 on July 19 featuring local community organizations and presentations by Reptiland.

Continued strong sales of firewood and ice...thanks to our customers and members!

Continued strong participation in the summer archery program!

Provided funding for summer amphitheater programs.

Five issues of THE VISTA —available on our website at [www.friendsofworldsendsp.org](http://www.friendsofworldsendsp.org).

Purchases to improve the visitor experience at the park included a portable audio system for the park's amphitheater; a sun-sail cover for the visitor center patio; two life rescue rings for the beach; and a new concrete cornhole court (see the next edition of THE VISTA for more about this new recreation activity at the park)! .

## Plans for 2026 include:

Continue funding for summer amphitheater programs and summer archery classes.

Partnering with the park on America250 events this summer.

Preliminary work on a special commemorative book celebrating the park's centennial in 2032.

A 3-D map of the park for the visitors center.

**Look in future issues of THE VISTA throughout 2026 for further details!**





## Cabin Bridge Road Update

In November, the rebuilt Cabin Bridge Road bridge spanning Loyalsock Creek opened. This bridge provides access to the cabin colony at the park.



The old bridge deck (above) and the new bridge deck (below)



Photos of the bridge project underway during the autumn — and the completed project.





## FIREWOOD AVAILABLE THIS WINTER:

Firewood is available for sale in the cabin area this winter - \$8.00 per bundle. Look for the self-serve kiosk near the trash dumpsters on the right as you enter the cabin community on Cabin Bridge Road. Money from these sales funds the park improvement projects of the Friends of Worlds End State Park.



## NEW YEARS FIRST DAY HIKE AT WORLDS END:

The Endless Mountains Heritage Region (EMHR) is partnering with Worlds End State Park to host a "First Day Hike," to celebrate the New Year 2026!

The hike will include the Double Run Nature Trail, a roughly 2-mile hike with 350 feet of elevation gain. Hikers are asked to please bring appropriate hiking boots, along with spikes, in case of ice., and water and snacks for a duration of 2 hours and wear appropriate clothing for the winter weather.

Please register at:

<https://emheritage.org/event/emhrs-first-day-hike-at-worlds-end-state-park/>

and arrive at Worlds End State Park by 11 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 1, 2026. EMHR will meet participants at the Worlds End State Park office, at 82 Cabin Bridge Road, where we will hear about park improvements and upcoming events from DCNR's Park Ranger, William Young.

The backup plan in the event of ice will be walking the East Branch Trail halfway and looping back to the beginning of the trailhead. In the event of severe weather the hike will be canceled. Any questions or concerns can be directed to Program Development Associate Rachel Flad at [rflad@emheritage.org](mailto:rflad@emheritage.org).

*Cottonwood Falls  
along the Double Run  
Nature Trail*





# My First Time... *At Worlds End!*

Recently, while digging through some boxes filled with dusty old papers from long ago, I came across a 1985 calendar that triggered a memory—my first visit to Worlds End State Park—forty years ago this December.

It was Christmas week 1985, and I was home where I had grown up, outside of Salladasburg in Lycoming County, enjoying the holiday break during my junior year at Mansfield University. My dormitory roommate, Larry, was visiting for the holiday, and two days after Christmas, all the holiday commotion had faded, and the college bowl games being lackluster, we were admittedly bored and looking for something to do. And not surprisingly, a bit of cabin fever had set in.

So Larry and I decided that we had to get outside and get some fresh air. We wanted to go hiking, but being the “brash” young men we were at the time, a routine “walk in the woods” would not suffice—we wanted something out of the ordinary and challenging. No such place

came readily to mind, so I pulled out the official Pennsylvania transportation map and examined it, looking for something new and interesting within a reasonable driving distance.

My eyes landed on some place called “Worlds End State Park” about an hour away. We both agreed that with a name like “Worlds End” there had to be something challenging there!

So off we went to Worlds End. Looking back on this adventure, I find it ironic how many winter activity safety rules we totally ignored while I nowadays write newsletter articles about such (see “Wise Winter Ways” on page 12). For starters, we told no one where we were going or how long we would be away. We were also just wearing sneakers—but in our defense, we were poor college students who each only owned two pairs of footwear—a pair of dress shoes for church, weddings and funerals—and a pair of sneakers for everything else. Hiking boots were simply not in the budget!





Likewise, trekking poles were another luxury we could not afford. And we couldn't be bothered wearing hats—why would we want to cover up our youthful heads of hair—what if we ran into some ladies at the park? We also neglected to wear gloves—after all— we were young and tough enough as to not to bother with such things. We at least remembered to bring our winter coats.

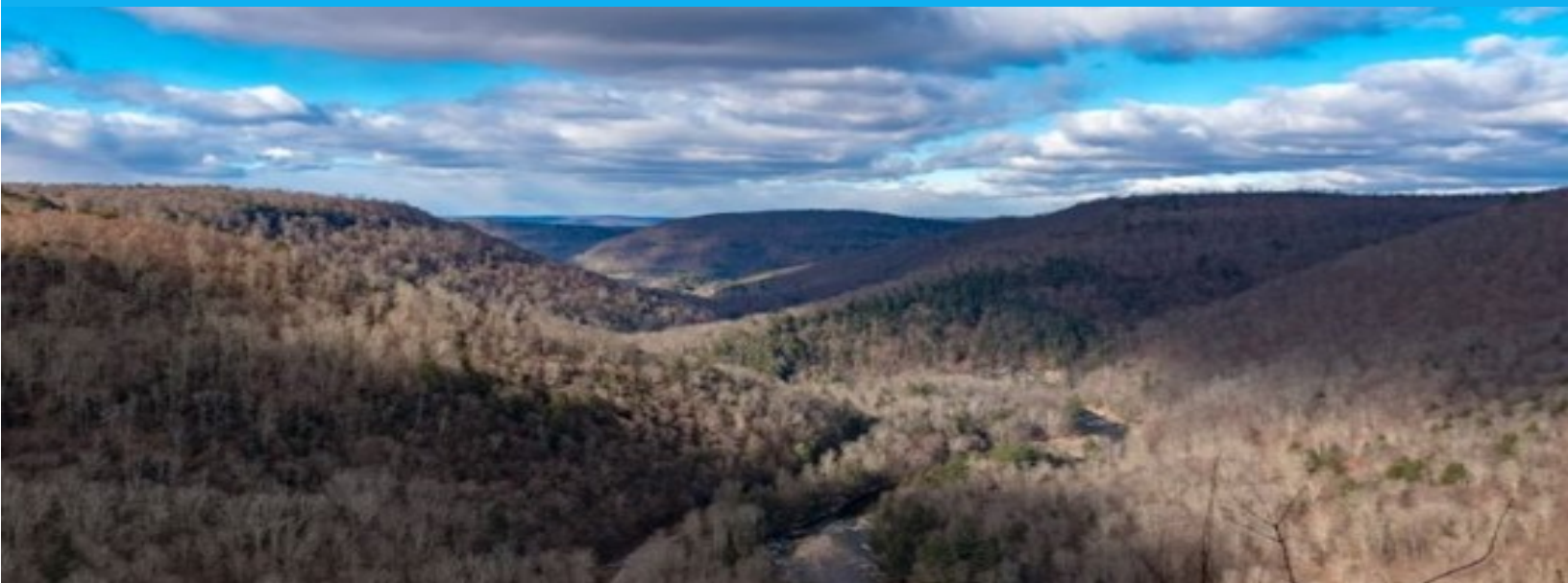
We arrived at a park that looked pretty deserted. It was chilly and breezy, but not outrageously so. We at least were smart enough to stop at the park office to get a map of the park (truthfully, we probably only got a map because I had been a map geek since childhood and could never pass up a free map—a quirk I still possess, as anyone who has seen my file cabinet stuffed full of maps can attest to).

We quickly identified the Loyalsock Canyon Vista Trail, with its steep ascent up the mountain and a vista as a “reward” at the top, as a challenging-looking option. We drove to the trailhead near the campground and set off. Fortunately for us, it had been a mild winter so far, with what little snow and ice that had

fallen having melted for the most part. So we were hiking on bare earth in our sneakers—so no problem!

As the trail took us up the mountain through the forest and past large rock formations, we found the level of interest and challenge satisfactory, although the wildlife sightings were limited to the occasional squirrel and snowbird. We eventually reached the vista, which we agreed was well worth the effort to get there. Even stripped of its greenery, the view of the rolling endless mountains as far as the eye could see, with the Loyalsock twisting through the canyon below, was enchanting. There was a basic, stark beauty to the scene, as the chilly breeze whistled through the surrounding hemlocks and with the weak winter sun warming our faces.

Having enjoyed the vista, it was time to descend the mountain. Instead of returning the way we came, we continued on the Loyalsock Canyon Vista Trail, which, in a loop, takes you back to the trailhead. It does this by taking you down the northern slope of the mountain.





As we started down, we noticed that the trail was getting snowier and icier. We had failed to appreciate that while snow and ice was not an issue on the hike up the southern and western exposure of the mountain, the northern exposure on the descent was indeed still covered in a layer of such. (Again, see “Wise Winter Ways” on page 12 for the hazards of north-facing slopes). By the time we realized what we were getting into, it was too late. As treacherous as the hike down the mountain appeared to be, it was now our only choice, because the snow and ice made reversing course back up the mountain impossible.

In our sneakers, we started sliding down the trail—from tree to tree—using the trees to halt ourselves. So yes, we were hugging trees (and occasionally each other) as we worked our way down the mountain. We found some branches to use as trekking poles to help brake us. In particularly slippery sections, we even resorted to descending on hands and knees, and sometimes on our behinds.

It seemed to take forever to reach the valley floor, and I was never so happy so get to the

bottom of a mountain. Having decided that we had faced sufficient challenges for the day, we headed back to the car.

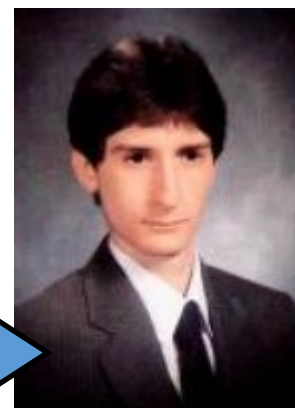
On the way, I gazed at the mountains towering above, the icy creek surging through what appeared to be an infinite number of rocks, and the dramatic cliffs. I was impressed by the park’s wild, almost primitive nature, and I knew I would have to return to this place. Admittedly I had no idea on that cold winter day of how much this place would one day become a central part of my life, where I would spend countless days hiking, swimming, and camping. In the forty years since, I have traveled to many parks across our state and country, but I still return “home” to Worlds End. And standing at Loyalsock Canyon Vista, I still feel the same magic that I felt that very first time so long ago.

Fortunately, our misadventure on that winter day did not discourage us from visiting the park in the future. In fact, the following Christmas in 1986, Larry and I would return. And yes, that would be a misadventure also. But that is a story for another day.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dan Mumford has served as Secretary to the Board of the Friends of Worlds End State Park since its inception in 2018 and is also the editor of it’s quarterly newsletter, *The Vista*. He lives in the Harrisburg area when he is not busy exploring the mountains of northern Pennsylvania.

*The author’s college yearbook photo, from around the time of his first (mis)adventure at Worlds End State Park. (Egad—was I really ever that young???)*





# For Under Your Favorite Hiker's Christmas Tree...



A great gift for local hiking enthusiasts is our newest and most comprehensive hiking guide that features Worlds End and the surrounding Loyalsock State Forest ***Falls & Views Loop: Exploring the Wildness of Worlds End State Park and Loyalsock State Forest***. This is a 70-page guide with 3 maps detailing over 77 miles of trails. The ***Falls & Views Loop*** passes more than 90 seasonal falls and 40 views. The first 18 pages provide general reference information concerning the park and forest – followed by over 50 pages of detailed turn-by-turn directions highlighting waterfalls, views, geological features, trail registers, water sources, and alternate routes. Shorter loop options are also provided for those unable to complete the entire trail in one outing – including day-hike and 2-day hiking options – or even an afternoon! Local history is also highlighted – learn about the history of coal mining, railroading and the Civilian Conservation Corps here in Sullivan County among many other things. Also available is the smaller ***Trails in and Around Worlds End State Park*** that features shorter hikes centered on the park and the forest immediately surrounding the park.

These maps and guides are available from:

- *The Worlds End State Park Office*
- *The Sullivan Review* (<https://thesullivanreview.com/maps/>)
- *Otto's Bookstore in Williamsport.*
- *Keystone Trails Association* (<https://www.kta-hike.org/>)

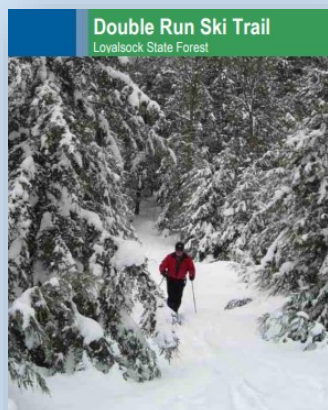
The Friends also sell, at the park office, Purple Lizard maps of the *Loyalsock State Forest* and *Pennsylvania Outdoor Recreation*. Also for sale is the newest edition of the *Guide to the Loyalsock Trail*.



# Winter Activities!

To help you plan your winter activities, there is a lot of information online, starting with the state parks Winter Report. The report is searchable by park and by recreation activity:

<https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks/WinterReport/Pages/default.aspx>



**Double Run Ski Trail**  
Loyalsock State Forest

## Information on the Double Run Ski Trail:

[elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=2858643&DocName=Double Run Ski Trail - Forestry Trail Guide 8-](http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=2858643&DocName=Double+Run+Ski+Trail+-+Forestry+Trail+Guide+8-)

## Cross-Country Skiing

Cross-country skiing is a great way to experience the outdoors in winter. Pennsylvania's state parks and forests offer some of the best places to ski.

Particularly tranquil and scenic during the winter months, these year-round facilities provide seemingly endless miles of snow-covered trails.

Many trail networks are specifically designed and maintained for cross-country skiing.



**Cross-country skiing information can also be found:**

<https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Recreation/WhatToDo/Cross-CountrySkiing/Pages/default.aspx>

## Old Loggers Path and Cross Country Ski Trails

Loyalsock State Forest




**...the Old Loggers Path Trail and nearby Ski Trails...**

[http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=1741648&DocName=sf-OldLoggersPathTrail\\_fd20.pdf](http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=1741648&DocName=sf-OldLoggersPathTrail_fd20.pdf)


## Loyalsock State Forest & Worlds End State Park Snowmobile Trails:

<https://trails.dcnr.pa.gov/trails/trail/trailview?trailkey=678>


An Official DCNR Website

Home

**Loyalsock State Forest & Worlds End State Park Snowmobile Trails**



Also Known As: Loyalsock State Forest, Worlds End State Park  
Difficulty: Unknown  
Length: 134.76 Miles



# Wise Winter Ways

The winter days are not only cooler – but also shorter. Make sure you plan your outings so that you are out of the woods well before the early sunsets.

The air temperature in the park and the mountains can be significantly colder and windier than in the towns and valleys. Check the local weather forecast before you head outside.

There is little if any cell service in the park nor in most of the surrounding forest. Make sure someone knows where you are and when you expect to return.

Dress in layers. As you move around and get warmer, you can always remove a layer – or add additional layers as needed. And wear a hat!

Warm, sturdy footwear and socks are essential if you are hiking.

Winter air can not only be cold – but also very dry. Stay hydrated!

Know the trails you are hiking – have a map (available at the park office) and/or a GPS device—keeping in mind that using your cell phone to navigate may not be possible. Maps are also available online:

[elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=1737190&DocName=WOEN\\_ParkMap.pdf](http://elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=1737190&DocName=WOEN_ParkMap.pdf)

<https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateForests/FindAForest/Loyalsock/Pages/Maps.aspx>

Before venturing out on ice on a creek or pond, make sure you know how thick the ice is and whether it can support your weight. Thickness of ice on creeks can vary widely from spot to spot.

Trails on the north side of mountains or in deep hollows can be snowier and icier than other trails. On snow and ice, boot spikes or crampons may be necessary. Hiking/trekking poles or ice axes can also help in such conditions. **However, sometimes such trails are impassable even with special equipment and need to be avoided.** Check with the park or forest office about trail conditions.





**DON'T GET STRANDED!** When setting out on your winter adventures, take some thought about how you are going to get to your destination and road conditions. Monitor local weather forecasts to ensure you do not end up driving in bad weather. You can check road and traffic conditions on [www.511pa.com](http://www.511pa.com).

Also, many state forest and game land roads are not maintained in the winter – meaning that they are not plowed, salted or treated. These roads can be impassable in snow and ice conditions, even for trucks and 4-wheel drive vehicles. Many of these roads are also used by snowmobiles – which can pack any snow so solid that other vehicles may not be able to safely use the road. In recent years, a number of vehicles have been stranded on such roads. Many towing operators will not take their tow trucks on these roads, out of fear of being stuck. As a result, your vehicle could be stranded until the next thaw! Also be aware that some vehicle navigation/GPS systems will sometimes direct you to use these roads, not knowing that they are unfit for travel. For the condition of state forest roads, contact the office for the state forest you plan on visiting. The Loyalsock State Forest office can be called at 570-946-4049 during their office hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.



**DECEMBER AND JANUARY ARE HUNTING MONTHS!  
...and HUNTING IS NOW ALLOWED ON SUNDAYS!**

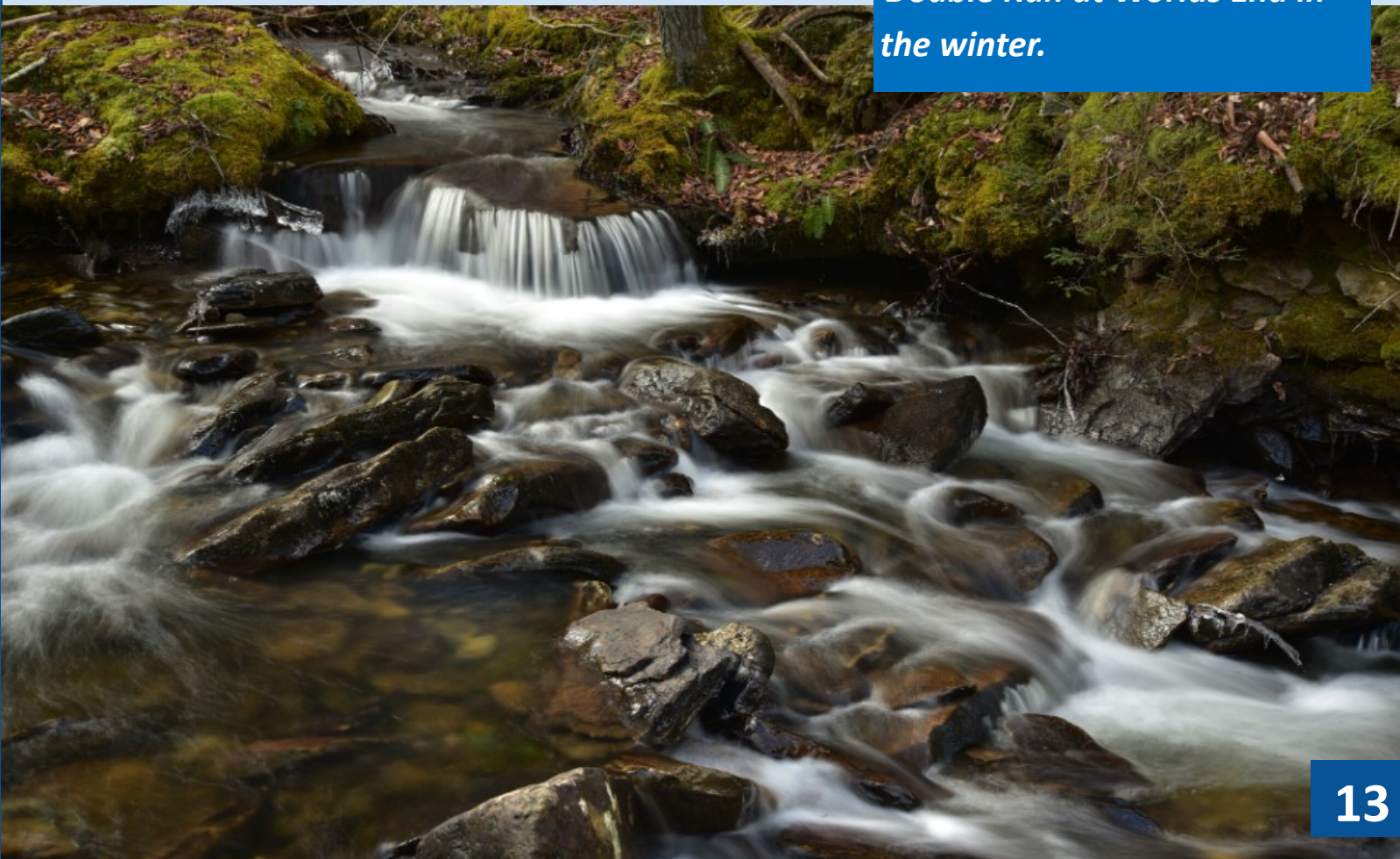
If you are planning any outings in the forests, keep in mind that December and January are rifle and archery hunting months—including the Christmas and New Years holiday weeks. Also, hunting is now allowed on all Sundays. Hikers and bikers should wear at least one piece of orange clothing that is visible from all directions, such as a hat, jacket, or vest. Also, consider covering your backpack with orange.

Don't forget your pets! Dogs should wear blaze orange or another highly visible colored vest, leash, collar, harness, or bandana. Horseback riders should also wear a blaze orange vest or hat and use an orange vest or rump sheet on your horse.



*Above: Friends of Worlds End State Park Board member Dave Kowalewski and Tuuk model the appropriate hiking apparel during hunting season. Leashing your dog will help prevent encounters with skunks, porcupines and snakes.*

***Double Run at Worlds End in the winter.***





# Wildlife and Bird Watching



## Be Mindful of Your Impacts

- Don't interfere with the natural behavior of birds or wildlife
- Practice Leave No Trace Principles
- Keep your distance
- Never feed wildlife



## Know Before You Go

Research the bird or wildlife you hope to see—learn about its habitats, habits, etc. Not only will this prepare you for the best opportunities, it helps you better understand the birds and wildlife which you view.



## Timing is Everything

Looking for owls during the middle of the day may prove challenging. Most wildlife is active at dawn and dusk, and some species, those that are nocturnal, may be most active during the night.

Ecotones—or edges of habitats—are often active places to observe wildlife.

## See, Don't be Seen

Blend in with your surroundings but remember to be visible during the hunting season. Included in this is sound—seek to be as quiet as possible to reduce disturbance and increase the likelihood of observing wildlife. Also, remember scent plays an important role for most wildlife—stand downwind and leave the body spray at home.



## Seek Cover

Many state parks and forests offer bird blinds for offering quiet observation points. If you are in an area without a blind, sit quietly in an unobtrusive area, but be aware if you are on a wildlife corridor or path.



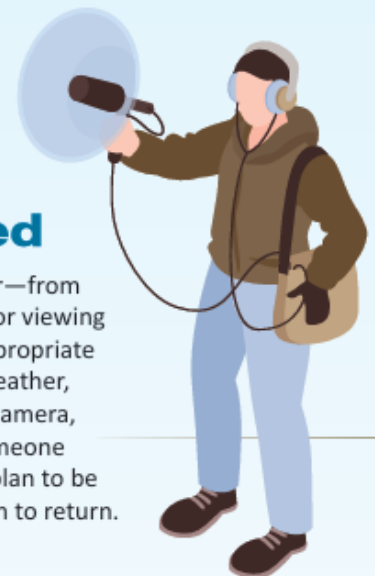
## Channel Your Inner Coyote - Be Stealthy

When we tromp through the forest or paddle loudly on the water, we diminish our chances of seeing wildlife. When you must move, move slowly and quietly.



## Be Prepared

Take the right gear—from assistive devices for viewing to food, water, appropriate clothing for the weather, a map, compass, camera, sunscreen. Let someone know where you plan to be and when you plan to return.





# Join the **Friends of Worlds End State Park** for **FREE!**

All we need is your email address so that we can email you the THE VISTA four times a year!

To get on our email list, see our website:

<https://www.friendsofworldsendsp.org/mailling-list>

Of course we always welcome contributions! To contribute, see our website: <https://www.friendsofworldsendsp.org/donate>

If you prefer to donate by mail, please make checks payable to the PPFF and include Friends of Worlds End on the memo line. Checks should be mailed to:

**Michelene Scott, Treasurer**  
**Friends of Worlds End State Park**  
**PO Box 62**  
**Forksville, PA 18616**



*The Friends of Worlds End State Park is a Chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation, which is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization—contributions to which are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. No goods or services were received in exchange for this contribution. The official registration of the Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*

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