

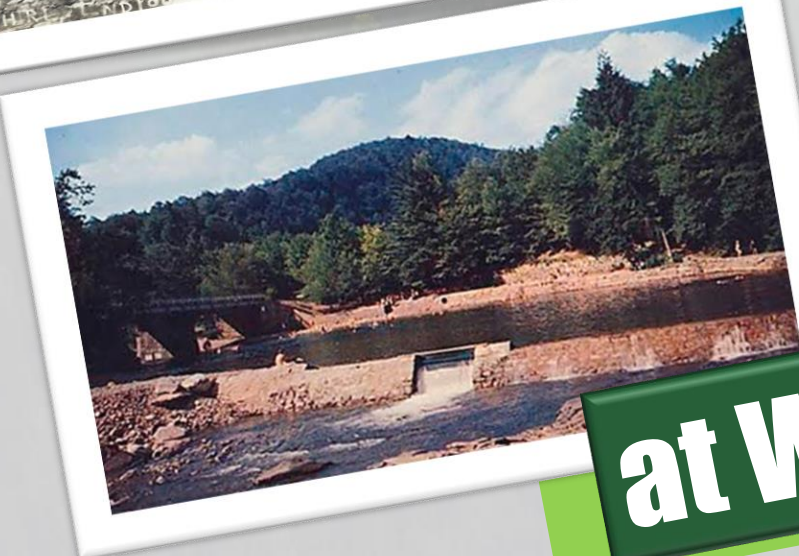
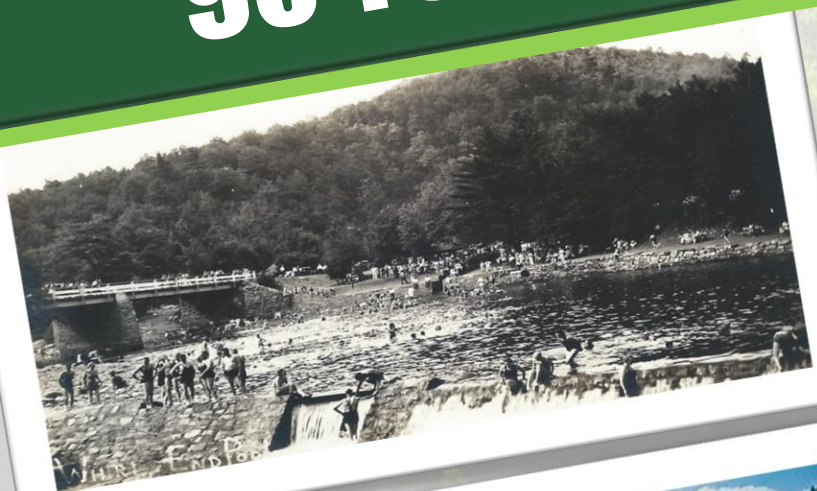
SPECIAL 90TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

The Newsletter of the Friends
of Worlds End State Park

Vol. 4 No. 6
December 2022

The Vista

90 Years of History



at Worlds End!

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



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90th
Anniversary
Worlds End
State Park
1932 – 2022

CELEBRATING 90 YEARS OF HISTORY AT WORLDS END!

Throughout 2022 in *The Vista*, as part of the park's 90th anniversary celebration, we have been highlighting the history of the park in a series of articles and photographs. With this special edition, we have taken those articles, added some new information and photos, and placed them into this single-issue history of the park. We start with how it all began in 1932 in the depths of the Great Depression and the Civilian Conservation Corps – who built so much of what we still enjoy. We then highlight the work of others since in building and maintaining this special place. We also look back at some of the not-so-good times... the weather disasters that have plagued the park and Sullivan County over the years. Finally, we review with photos the celebrations of this past year.

Anniversaries are a time for looking back – and giving thanks to those that have preceded us in creating and maintaining what we sometimes take for granted. When looking at the photos of the CCC camps (pages 3-5) I wonder if the men in the pictures had any idea that 90 years later, people would be looking at these pictures? Did they know people would still be enjoying the results of their labors 90 years later? Did they know they were building history? It is a time to take inspiration from those people as we look forward in the hopes of building upon their accomplishments. With this anniversary celebration, we thank those that have come before us for their great deeds and for bequeathing to us this beautiful place. We hope you enjoy this special edition as we honor them.

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The First Camp



"First Day" on the "Sock"

Worlds Ends End State Park started modestly in 1932 – with \$50 spent on four picnic tables. What was then called the Department of Forest and Waters purchased the park land and surrounding forest area from the Central Pennsylvania Lumber Company and the Randall family. But it was not until the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) got up and running in 1933 that most of the park facilities we continue to use and enjoy today were built. The CCC was a New Deal program initiated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to ease the widespread unemployment of the Great Depression by placing young men at work on forest reclamation and public work projects. In Pennsylvania, 113 camps were set up (second only to California in number) and around 194,500 men from this state participated. Through the course of its nine years in operation, three million men across the country participated in the CCC who were paid a wage of approximately \$30 (the men could keep \$5 for themselves; \$25 was sent back home). Many of the men came to the camps hungry and poorly clothed. They received 3 meals a day – and most of the young men gained around 40 pounds while in the CCC. The CCC men planted trees, built parks, created roads and trails, and performed other conservation work.

ABOVE: Photos of CCC Camp 95 in its earliest days in 1933 – before “permanent” buildings were constructed. The men of Camp 95 built many of the facilities that we still enjoy today here at Worlds End.
BELOW: location of local CCC camps.



Photos to the right: CCC Camp 95 – the camp that built many of the facilities at Worlds End. On the far right, this photo shows some of the officers in charge of Camp 95 - with camp Captain Etz on the right.



The men were housed in camps that were scattered across the state and the country and that also provided them with food and clothing. The five local camps were:

Camp 95: near Laporte, on Rock Run Road next to Loyalsock Creek. Opened May 30, 1933; closed late 1941. *Photo on bottom right shows the sign marking the location of this camp off of Rock Run Road.*

Camp 96: on Dry Run Road, near where the Hills Grove Forest Maintenance Headquarters is today. Opened on May 6, 1933; closed January 1936. This camp assisted Camp 95 with projects at Worlds End and also constructed the Dry Run picnic area and the road to the High Knob Overlook. This camp was unusual in that the dormitories were two-story buildings – see picture middle right.

Camp 104: Near Elk Grove and Emmons. Opened June 5, 1933; closed December 15, 1937.

Camp 128: On Mill Creek Road, near where it intersects with Bear Wallow Road. Opened on July 10, 1933; closed October 31, 1935.

Camp 145: Sand Spring / Little Bear Road. Opened July 17, 1935; closed October 1, 1937.



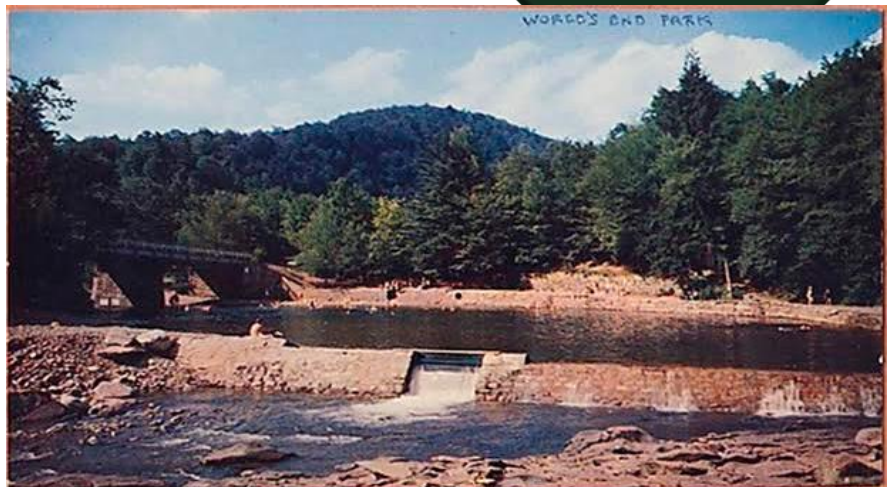
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On the Left: Men from CCC Camp 96. While working in the field, the men were under the authority of the Forestry Department. But the camps themselves were structured along military lines with military-style lines of authority and discipline. This military-style experience would serve the CCC men well years later as they entered the service to fight in the Second World War.

On the right middle: Among the facilities in the park built by the CCC are the beach area and dam. This photo shows what was to become the swimming area before the dam was built.

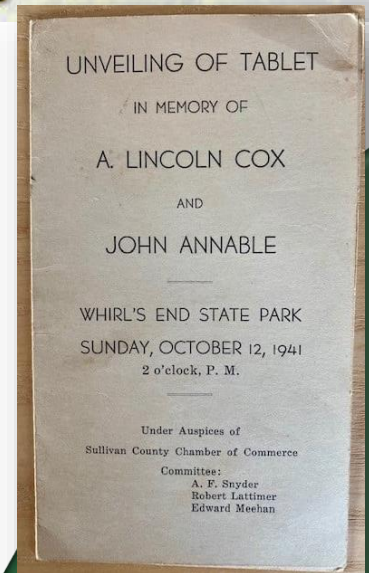
On the right, below: This postcard shows the CCC-built dam. This dam lasted until June 1972, when the Agnes flood destroyed it. It was replaced by the current structure – but that has been modified a few times since the 1970's – most recently in 2021.



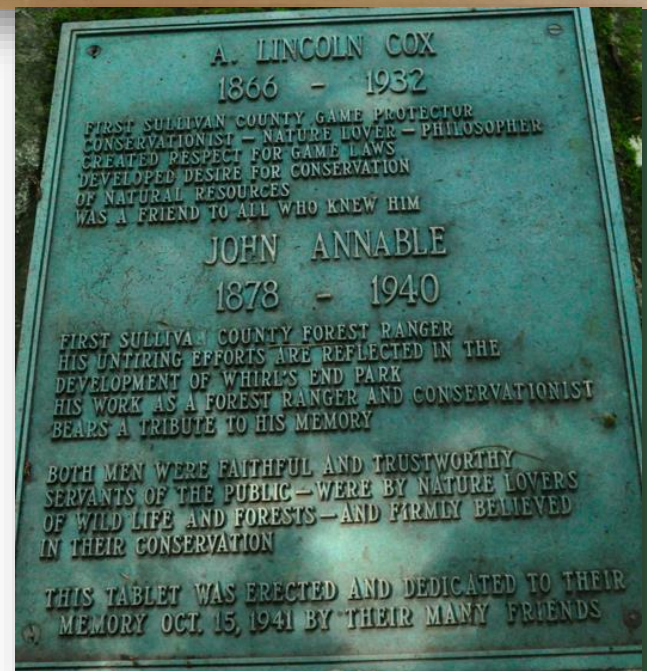
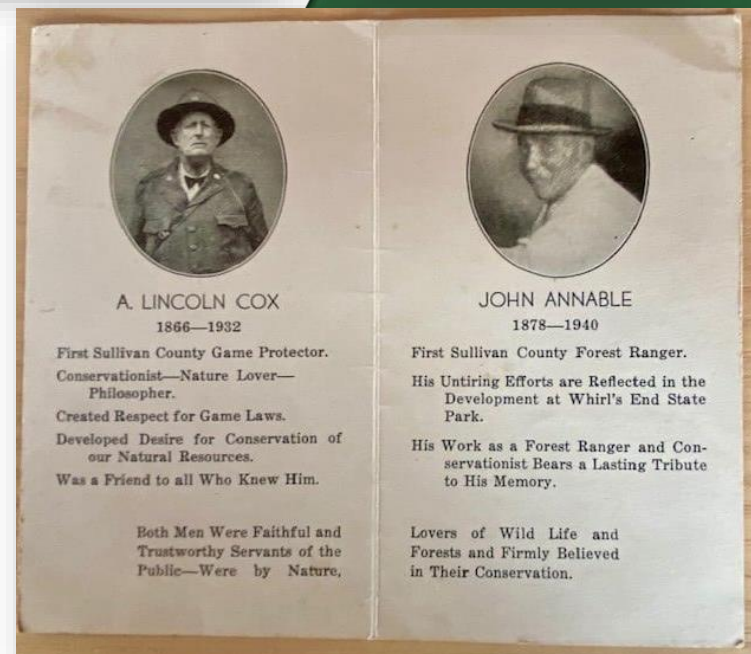
For more information, check out the CCC webpage on DCNR's website:

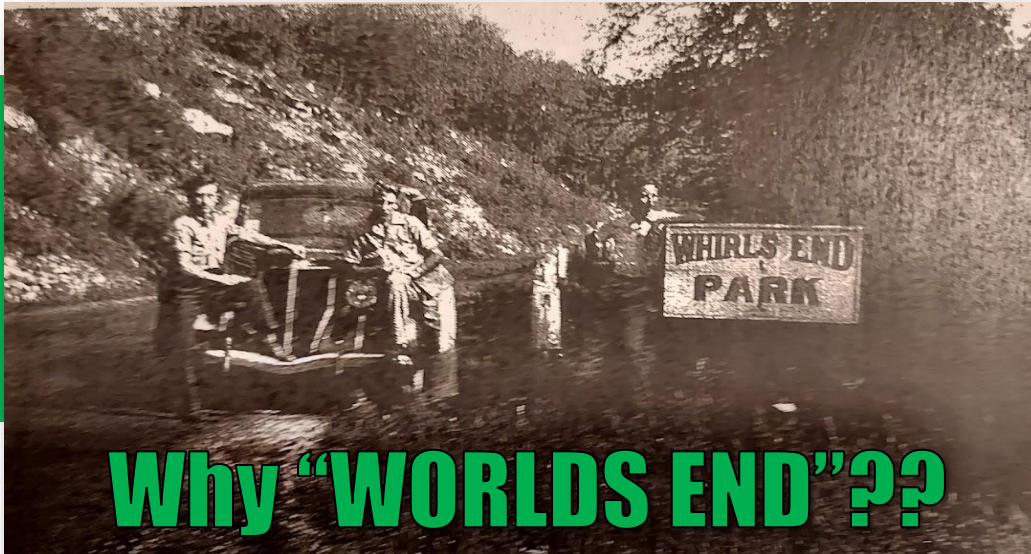
<https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks/History/CCCYears/Pages/default.aspx>

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Many men and women followed the CCC in building what we enjoy today. As part of the park's anniversary celebration, on Saturday, September 18, 2021 representatives of the Pa Game Commission, the Department of Forestry, Worlds End State Park, and the Friends of Worlds End State Park gathered (see picture above) to re-dedicate a monument to two of these pioneers - A. Lincoln Cox, the first Game Protector in Sullivan County and John Annable, the first Forest Ranger in Sullivan County (and an early manager of Worlds End State Park). This monument was originally dedicated in 1941 (see the original program to the right) and placed in a prominent location in the park near the Cliff Pavilion. However, over the years, as foot traffic patterns in the park changed, the monument was rarely noticed in its increasingly obscure location. Given that these two men were instrumental in preserving Sullivan County's natural resources for future generations, Deputy Game Warden (and Vice Chairman of the Friends of Worlds End State Park) Michael Scott worked with park management and staff to have the monument moved to its new, more prominent location as you enter the parking lot for the park office.





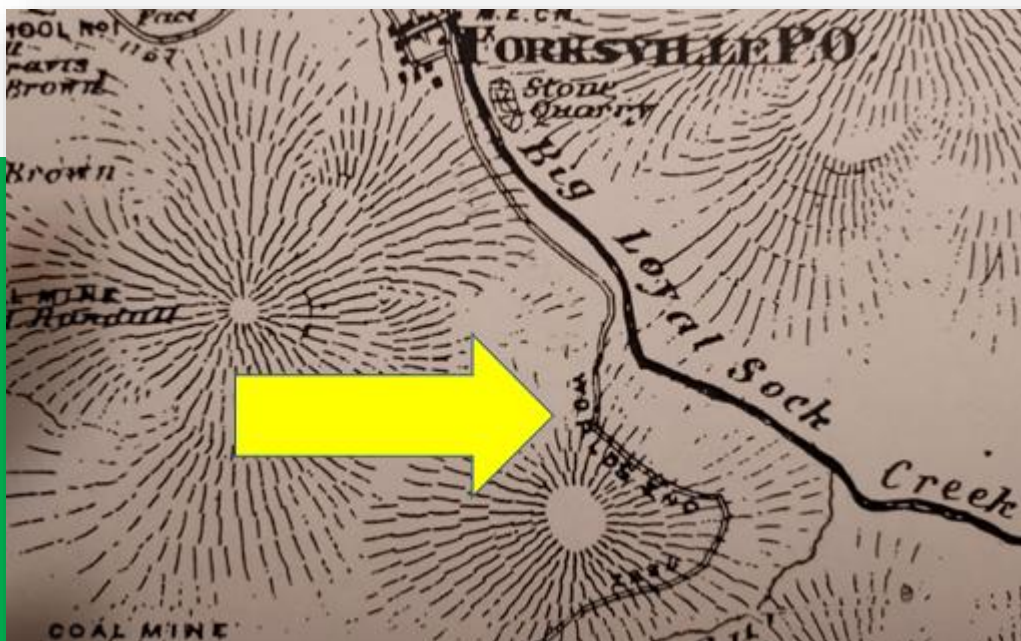
On the left – this picture apparently was taken some time during the years that the park was known as “Whirls End.”

Why “WORLDS END”??

A question many ask when they first hear of or visit the park is – WHY WORLDS END? Where did that name come from? It does sound rather exotic, even ominous! It is a question without a simple answer, and a surprisingly controversial history.

It is generally believed that the name originated with the early pioneers in the region, as they traveled through the area that is now the park. There was no road in the canyon valley – instead the only perilous wagon road hugged the steep mountainsides above the valley floor. The PIONEER ROAD trail on the park map is this old, narrow, one-lane road (back then it was called the Corson Road – built about 1810 to connect Forksville, home of a woolen mill, to what is now the Glen Mawr/Route 220 area). Even today if you walk this trail clinging to the mountain 300+ feet above the current park swimming area, a dizzying feeling of vertigo can seize you. Imagine navigating this 200 + years ago – they can be forgiven for thinking they were nearing their end – or the world’s end! The nickname for the area stuck – and appears

on maps from the 1800s.



This map from 1872 shows the area described as WORLDS END along what was then called the Corson Road – high on the mountain overlooking BIG LOYALSOCK CREEK...the future location of the park.



On the left: Sign at the entrance to the park during the years that the park was known as “Whirls End.”

A contemporary described it...

“Six miles northwest of Lewis Lake [now known as Eagles Mere Lake] and two miles southeast of Forksville is the ever to be dreaded World’s End. It is grand and picturesque beyond description. Here hills peep o’er hills and alps o’er alps arise. The serpentine course of the Loyalsock is here due south. It then rounds a point or prominence of red shale rocks and scuds away due north for some distance, gradually winding in a northwestern direction till it reaches Forksville where it forms a junction with its more northern branch [the “Little Loyalsock”].

The road passing the Worlds End is on the south side, and, strange as it may seem, is constructed on the narrow gauge principle, without a single turnout for passing vehicles. Three hundred feet below, nearly perpendicular, bubbles and boils the sable waters of the Loyalsock. On the other side are steep banks of earth or solid rock. Happy is he who runs this gauntlet without encountering a traveler going in the opposite direction.”

However, when the park was established in the 1930’s, the name became WHIRLS END instead. Why? One explanation is that the name came from a “whirl” in the Loyalsock Creek in the park. Even today in the swimming area, if you look carefully, you can sometimes see a counter-clockwise whirl in the flow of the water. And supposedly raftsmen navigating the stream referred to this section of creek as whirls end because it was the last of the whirls in the stream. There was even another variation of the name – WHIRLS GLEN – appearing to combine the whirl of the stream along with the canyon the stream flows through (a glen being a narrow valley or gorge).



Above: the Worlds End Vista along the Worlds End Trail, is the approximate location of the dreaded “Worlds End” section of the old pioneer road – where travelers feared that the end was near!

It did not please the locals to see the name that had been used for generations discarded and replaced by these new variations – as apparent by letters to local newspapers, such as this one from 1942...

“...When the Whirl’s End signs were being placed at the park, I asked John Annabel, who was then in charge of the Park, if he knew who was responsible for the change. I remember that he answered that he had no idea but that it was all wrong. He said the change was made by some people in Harrisburg and his boss simply ordered him to take down all old signs and the new signs placed. The strange name of “Whirl’s End,” I never heard mentioned by any of the old residents in this section and I was born here in 1869 and have lived here all my life...” (Excerpt from a 1942 letter by Fred M. Rogers of Forksville)

However, “Whirls End” did have its defenders – including a Shakesperean argument from a letter printed in the WILLIAMSPORT SUN in July of 1935:

“...When Shakespeare asked “What’s in a name”; adding the observation “that which we call a rose, by any other name would smell as sweet,” he supplied the world with a familiar quotation but he didn’t establish a complete truth.

That which we call a rose would beyond argument, smell as sweet by any other name, but, being accustomed to calling it a rose, there is no reason to call it otherwise. It is a rose and there is no reason for it to be any other thing.

Names are important. Men place a value upon their names, as the newspaper learns. They resent it if their names appear other than in the form they desire.

Further, place names are important. In their correct form they reveal the history of their origin. Used incorrectly, they lose all their significance.

Thus, when the Pennsylvania Geographic Board devoted much research to settling disputes as to the names of various communities or physical features of the Commonwealth and sought to restore to use old names which had been so distorted as to lose the significance of the original, it was performing a service to history.

All this introductory to a defense of The Sun’s contention that the name of a popular recreation spot up the Loyalsock, beyond Forkesville, however the Department of Forests and Waters be convinced otherwise should be Whirl’s End and not, as the publicity director the Bureau of Park says, World’s End.

Obviously, (beware of the obvious, Ed.) however much argument may be produced to

sustain the contention that it should be World's End – as, for instance, the impression upon one approaching it that he is coming to a dead-end among the hills - there is no escaping the fact that the distinguishing characteristic of the spot is a mighty whirl in Loyalsock Creek. It is from this whirl that the place takes its name..."

However, the defenders of "Worlds End" would have the final word, as in this letter to the editor of the WILLIAMSPORT SUN from July 1943...

"The question of the name given in recent years to the State Park on Loyalsock Creek, to wit, "Whirls End Park" has resulted in much comment and considerable discussion in Sullivan County and also in this part of the state generally.

The only name by which this beautiful and picturesque place has been known for more than a century is "Worlds End," not "Whirls End."

All old maps and ancient records in Sullivan County refer to the spot as "Worlds End." It is regrettable that an examination was not made locally before the original name was discarded.

At the regular monthly meeting of the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce held in Dushore on May 12, 1943, the following resolution, after full consideration, was unanimously adopted:

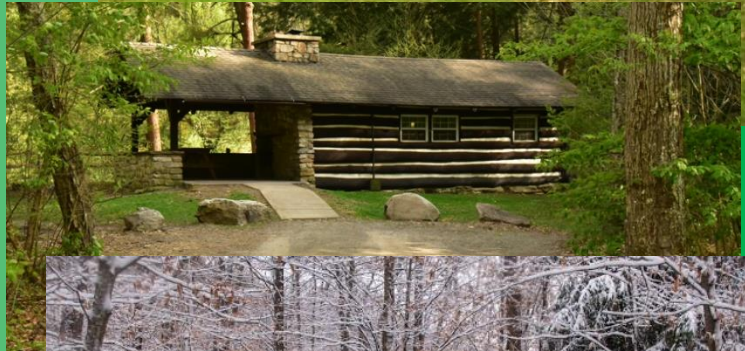
WHEREAS the State Park located on Loyalsock Creek in Sullivan County, has been arbitrarily named "Whirls End Park." This name is a rank misnomer and has been given without any historical authority or foundation whatever, and the same is distasteful to all citizens in this section of the State. Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that this Chamber of Commerce, representing in membership the County of Sullivan, respectfully but earnestly urge the proper authorities to restore the original name by which the place has been known for more than a century, to wit, 'Worlds End.'

The Sullivan County Historical Society, of which the writer is President, has also gone on record in the matter and most emphatically urges the restoration of the original name. Surely the sentiments of citizens who reside in this part of the state, as expressed by the Chamber of Commerce and the County Historical Society, the two best representatives of our citizenry, should receive consideration in this matter.

*Respectfully submitted,
F.W. Meylert, Laporte, PA"*

The adverse public reaction, reflected in many letters to local media and state government officials like the one above, led to the name being officially changed back to WORLDS END STATE PARK in 1943!

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One of the most enduring legacies of the CCC is the cabin colony at Worlds End. To this day, visitors enjoy their stay in a Worlds End cabin for many reasons – the rustic charm, the peace and quiet, the sound of the Loyalsock a short reach away, the solitude of “getting off the grid” and living simply. But many visitors do not realize that they are also living in history when they stay in a Worlds End cabin – they are spending their time in a place on the National Register of Historic Places. The **Worlds End State Park Family Cabin District** was added to the National Register on May 18, 1987 (# 87000742 on the register) as a place of historic architecture and engineering significance. The Cabin District represents one of the few intact remaining examples of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) cabin construction from the 1930’s in Pennsylvania. CCC Camp S-95, located along Rock Run Road where it crosses Loyalsock Creek, built the cabins along with many other of the park’s facilities. They were assisted by men from CCC Camp 96 in Hills Grove. The cabins are numbered in the order in which they were built.



The original pit toilets constructed by the CCC are still in place – though closed (left). They were replaced in the 1990s by modern shower-houses, part of the Growing Greener park improvements (right).



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On the left: These classic photos from the 1930's show several of the cabins when relatively "new."

Below: This photo shows the first "cabin" built at the park by the men of CCC Camp 95 in 1934. It served as the park headquarters and superintendent's residence. Today, it continues to provide housing for park managers.



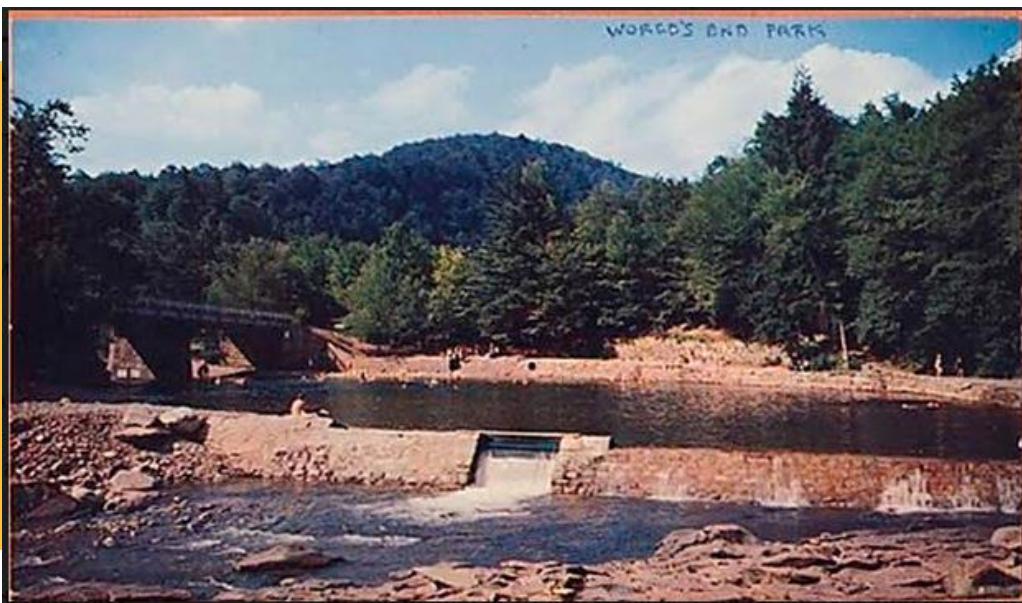
Bottom right: This photo from the 1930's showing some of the CCC-built facilities in the park – including, picnic tables, pavilions and fireplaces. Many of these structures remain in service today.



The Beach



Another enduring legacy of the CCC is the park's beach and swimming area – one of the most unique and beautiful swim spots in the Commonwealth! Though the water is usually crystal clear, it can be a bit on the chilly side at times – but so refreshing – especially after a hike in the mountains. The above picture, likely from the 1930's or 1940's when the park was relatively new and called "Whirls End," shows a large number of people enjoying the water. In the days before air conditioning, people would flee the summer heat by going to the mountains to their favorite swimming and picnicking spot to keep cool – Worlds End being one of those spots for people in this part of state.

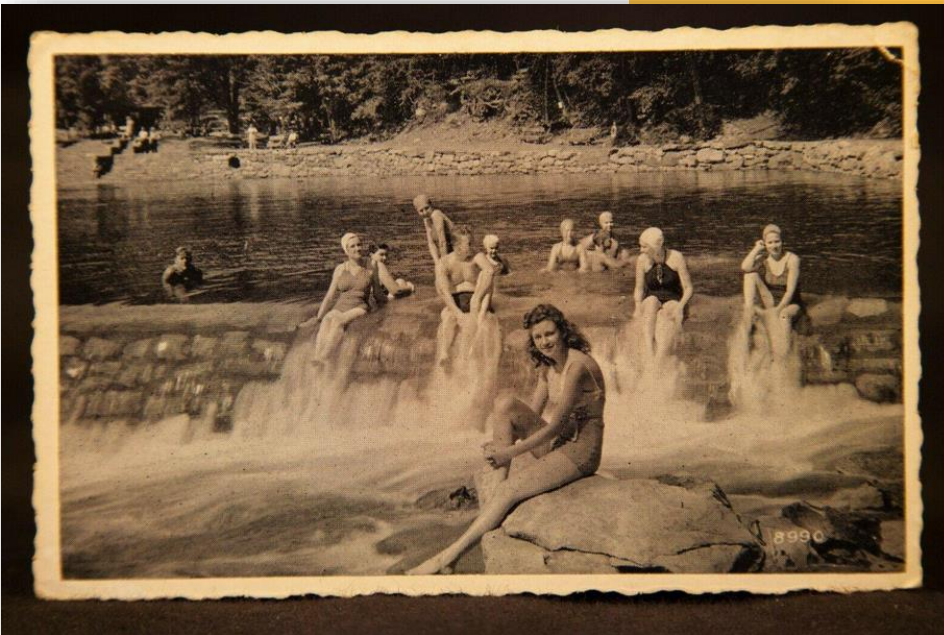


This old post card shows the original CCC-built dam and swimming area. This dam was destroyed in the 1972 Agnes flood.

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These classic postcards show sun bathers and swimmers over the years. Some of these pictures show lifeguards in their chairs. Lifeguards were removed from the beach (and almost all state park beaches) around 15 years ago – and it is now an open-swim policy done at your own risk.



Sources for the history articles in this issue of THE VISTA includes issues of *The Sullivan Review* from November 21, 1996, August 13, 1981, September 3, 1981, September 17, 1981 and September 24, 1981; and “Now and Then” vol. 7. Our thanks also for the information, photos and history provided by Worlds End State Park management and staff, including former Manager Bill Kocher, current Manager Chad McKenrick, and Environmental Educator Jane Swift. Finally, our thanks to Ruth Rode and her extensive knowledge of Sullivan County history and her historical archives, especially concerning the CCC.

Historical weather info: National Weather Service and NOAA:

<https://www.weather.gov/ctp/TSLeeFlooding>

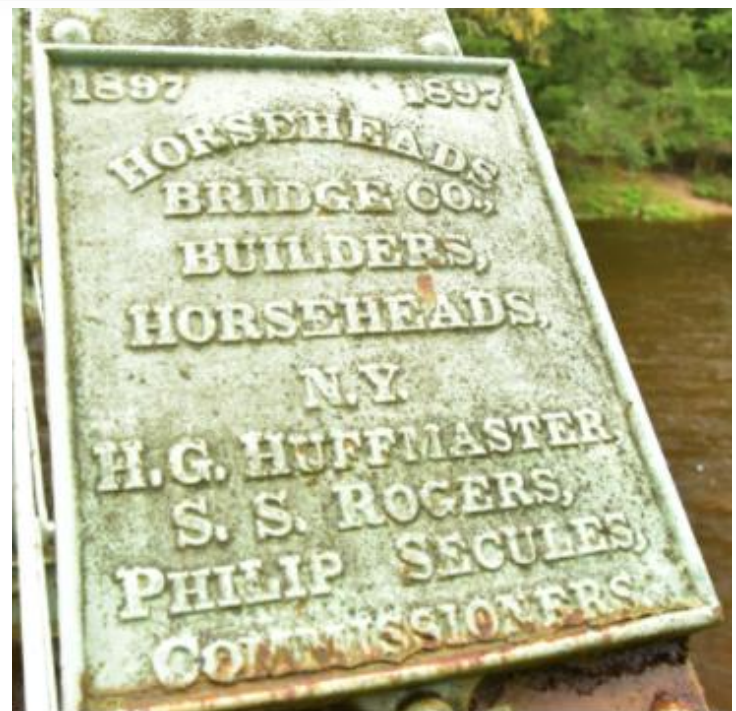
<https://water.weather.gov/ahps/region.php?state=pa>

https://www.nrcc.cornell.edu/services/blog/2011/09/02_irene/index.html

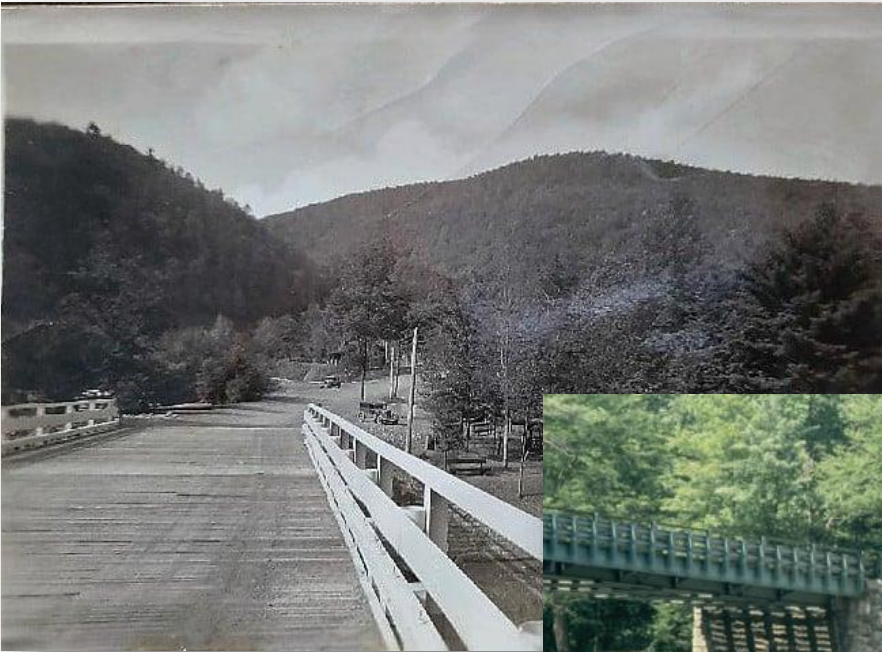
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State Park
1932 – 2022



This picture (top of page) shows what is commonly referred to as the “Iron Bridge” on Rock Run Road where it crosses the Loyalsock Creek. Across this bridge was the site of CCC Camp 95. However, most people are not aware that this is not the bridge’s original location. This bridge was built in 1897 at what was to become Worlds End State Park. It was the first bridge built across the Loyalsock near what is now the park’s beach area (the black and white picture above shows the bridge in this location). The bridge was replaced 90 years ago at the same time the park was established in 1932 and rebuilt in its current location.



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These pictures show the second bridge across the creek and the early years of the beach area – including the retaining wall built by the CCC.



The current bridge (left) replaced an open-grate bridge (above) in the 1990's. This bridge won PennDOT's 1995 Excellence in Transportation Design/Construction Award (<https://www.larsondesigngroup.com/projects/worlds-end-state-park/>)



The original bridge on Cabin Bridge Road (left), was narrow and not very high – and supported by four piers. In 1983 this bridge was replaced by the current bridge located just upstream – which is higher above the water and has no piers (below). This photo shows the new bridge nearing completion – with the old bridge still visible “underneath” it.



Over the years, the twisting turning highway through the park could lead to problems, as apparent from this 1956 newsletter of what was then called the Wyoming State Forest...

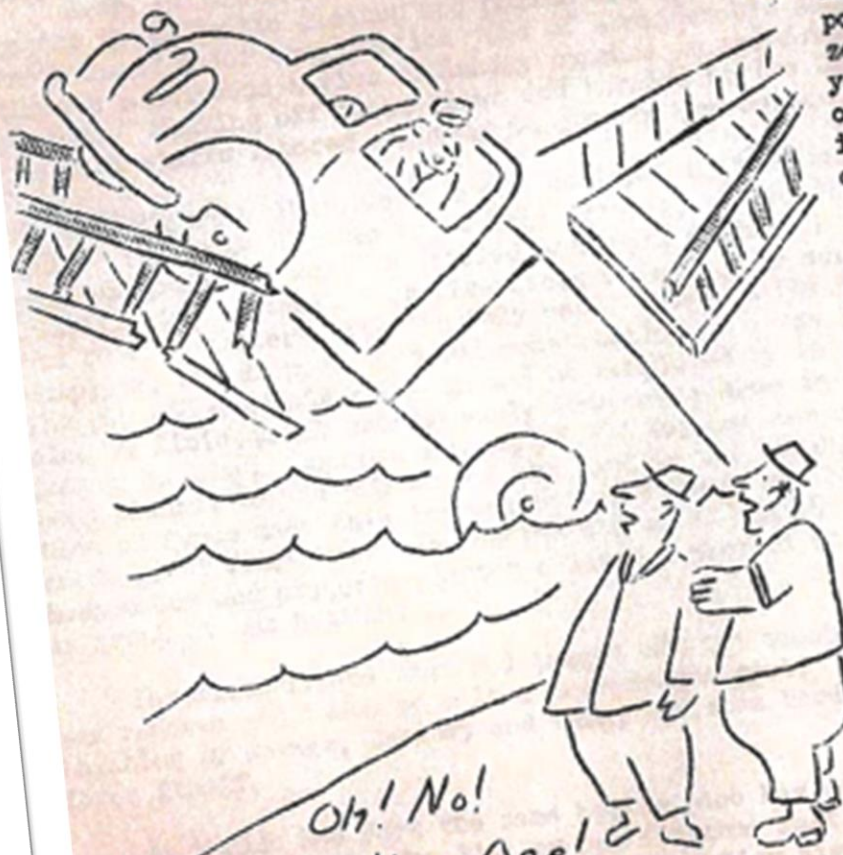
News and Views of the Wyoming District

June 1956

Volume 8 No. 6

CALAMITY CURVE

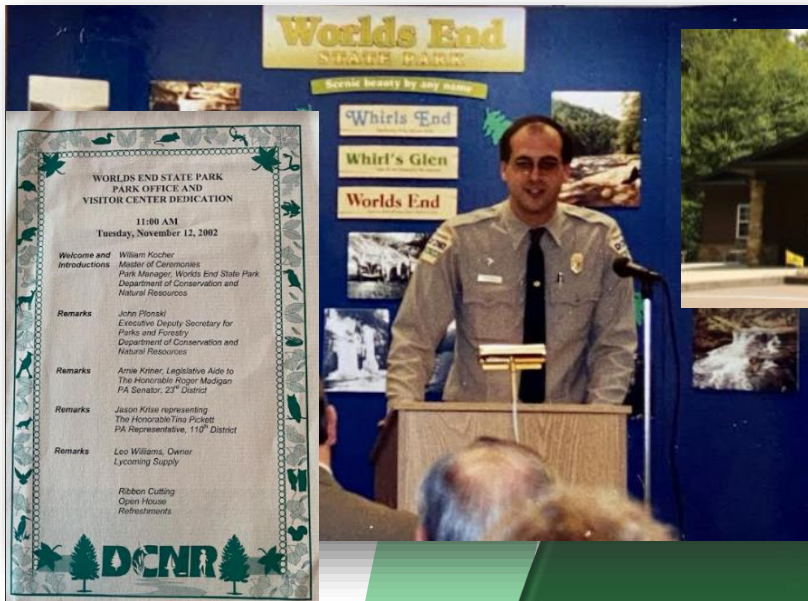
For years the sharp curve on the Forksville side of the bridge across the Loyalsock Creek at Worlds End Park has been a bugaboo for motorists. Readers familiar with the Park will remember the bridge as the one that crosses high above the upper end of the swimming pool. Recently the District Forester contacted the Highway Department in an effort to have a stretch of Route #154 through the Park posted as a reduced speed zone. Over the past several years there have been a series of accidents involving motorists who failed to make the curve.



About mid-May a trucker, traveling up from Forksville empty, failed to make the curve. His truck vaulted the stone retainer wall, shot into space, dropped about twenty feet and landed in the swimming pool. Men working on the new bathhouse, on the opposite side of the bridge heard the crash and splash. Hurrying to the pool, they arrived in time to see the driver crawl through the window of the almost submerged cab. He huddled atop the cab until the Park crew loaded up the boat, got it to the pool and rescued him. Using the small bulldozer which had been working on the new parking lot, they then extracted the truck from the pool. The driver was uninjured except for a small cut.

they then extracted the truck from the pool. The driver was uninjured except for a small cut.

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Above: Former Park Manager Bill Kocher presided over the dedication of the current park office in 2002.



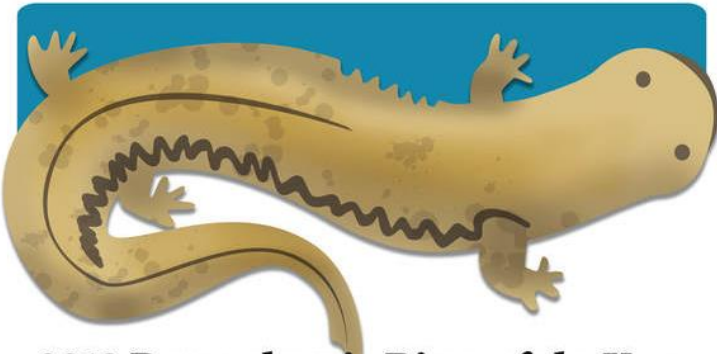
Left: kayak racing at Worlds End – starting at the beach and exiting through the dam spillway.



Below: this park map from 1990 shows a smaller park – before the private lands to the north of the park were acquired at auction. The map also shows the park surrounded by what was then called the “Wyoming State Forest.” This was not reorganized and renamed the “Loyalsock State Forest” until the 21st century.



LOYAL *to the* SOCK



2018 Pennsylvania River of the Year
Loyalsock Creek

Thanks to the efforts of the Middle Susquehanna Riverkeepers and the Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association, (and many voters), the Loyalsock Creek was 2018's Pennsylvania River of the Year – an occasion celebrated by a day-long celebration in August at the park. For more about "River of the Year" – see their website:

<https://pawatersheds.org/river-of-the-year/>

Also in 2018, the Friends of Worlds End State Park, a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation, was founded "...to conserve, support and protect the park's resources by promoting education, recreation, and stewardship."



Trail racing has become an increasingly popular sport at the park in recent years – with events in early June and late September. For more about these races, see their websites at: <https://worldsendultra.com/>

<https://worldsendfallclassic.com/>

Left: runners set off in the pre-dawn darkness in the 2019 Ultramarathon.

NATURE'S FURY!

Above: A January 2010 flood inundates the bridge going back to the park cabins.

While we all enjoy the beautiful summer days at the park, unfortunately, it seems like Worlds End and Sullivan County receives more than its share of the bad weather as well. Blizzards, fierce thunderstorms, floods and even the occasional tornado have afflicted the park over the decades.

Right: The park's 50th anniversary year in 1982 started with a January ice jam – flood on the Loyalsock. Here you can see the bridge on the way to the cabins encased in ice.



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2011 saw not one – but two – major floods within two weeks of each other. First, in late August, the remains of Hurricane Irene dumped 3-7 inches of rain over Sullivan County.

Top right The Loyalsock covers the beach area.



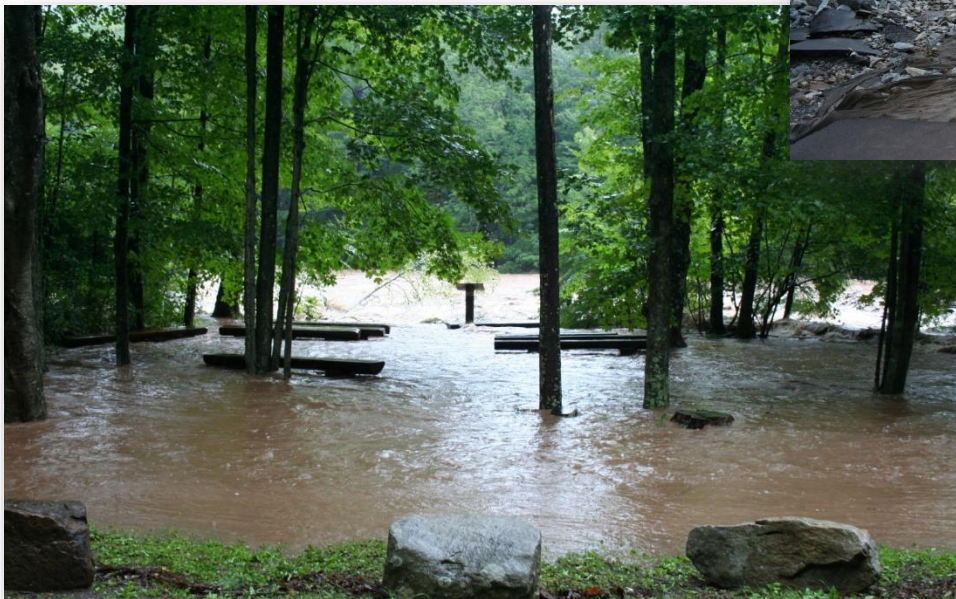
Middle right: Flood damage to the railing on the Route 154 bridge at the beach area as you enter the park from Forksville.



Lower right: the road leading back to the park cabins was damaged.



Below: the old park chapel, located next to the Loyalsock, was inundated. Two weeks later, the flooding from Tropical Storm Lee would wash away the chapel in its entirety. The chapel was then rebuilt in its new, current location along Double Run.



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Everyone breathed a sigh of relief as the flood waters from Hurricane Irene receded. But no one could imagine that in less than two weeks later, even worse was to come. The remains of Tropical Storm Lee moved over the state in early September 2011 dumping 6 to 10 additional inches of rain on already saturated soil.



Left: 3-4 feet of flood waters cover the parking area and surround the snack shop. Below: the road and bridge to the park cabins submerged by the Loyalsock.



Below: Flood waters surge under the bridge as you enter the park on Route 154 – causing additional damage to the railing.



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As flood waters receded, the damage became apparent.

Left: picnic tables tossed about in the day-use area.

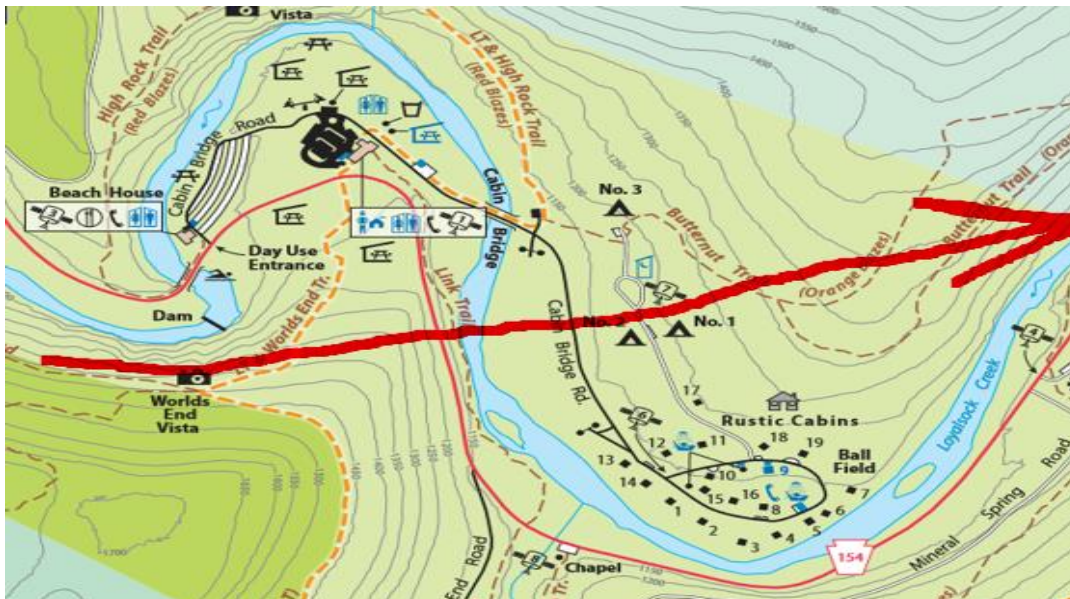
Below Left: damage to the bridge going back to the park cabins.

Below Right: a landslide looking upstream from the Route 154 bridge.

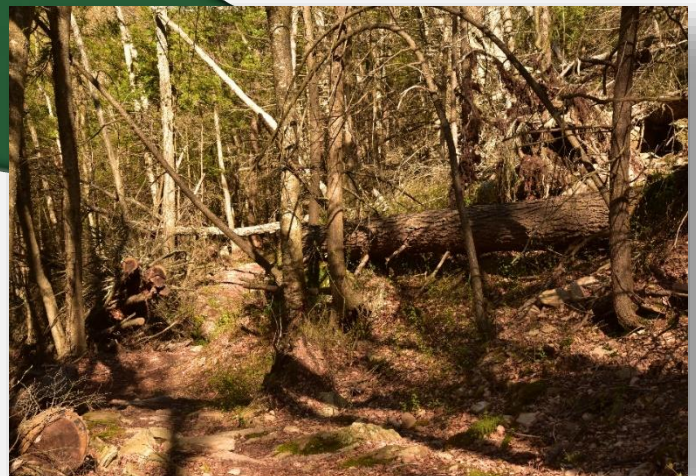


In April 2019, a tornado tore through the park in the middle of the night during the first weekend of fishing season. Fortunately, it missed the occupied cabins and campgrounds – with damage mostly consisting of fallen trees – such as the hemlocks pictured above along the Loyalsock.

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This map shows the path of the tornado. It entered the park near the Worlds End Vista, crossed the creek and the group camping area (fortunately empty that night) and then climbed the hillside along the Butternut Trail.



Above: damage to the mountainside above the swimming beach... and hemlocks fallen into the creek.

Right: damage from the tornado is still apparent today along the Worlds End and Butternut trails.

The Celebration This Year...



Crowd watching a presentation by REPTILAND
– Worlds End Day – July 30, 2022



A Kestrel Falcon presented by the Pocono
Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center –
Worlds End Day – July 30, 2022



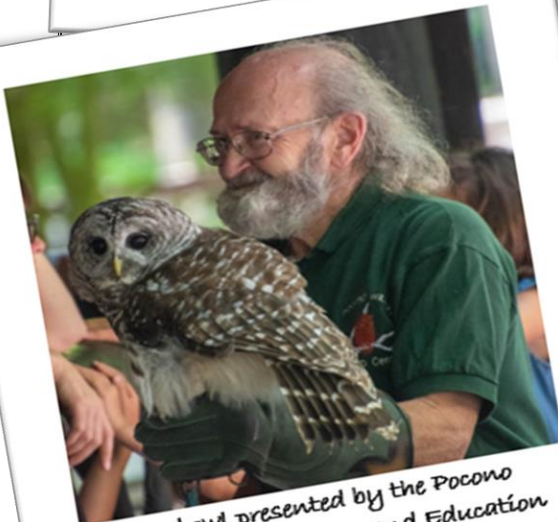
Michael Kuriga discussing falconry – Worlds End Day –
July 30, 2022



A saw-whet owl presented by the
Pocono Wildlife Rehabilitation and
Education Center – Worlds End
Day – July 30, 2022



Musician / historian Van
Wagner – Worlds End Day
July 30, 2022



A barred owl presented by the Pocono
Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education
Center – Worlds End Day – July 30, 2022



The new park amphitheater dedication ceremony – June 25, 2022.



Park Environmental Educator Jane Swift helps serve ice cream topped with the park's award-winning maple syrup at the dedication ceremony on June 25.



Park Manager Chad McKenrick speaks at the dedication ceremony on June 25.

The Celebration 40 Years Ago...

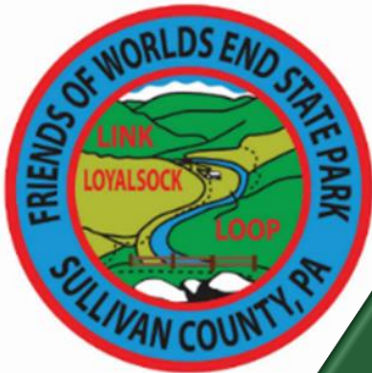


Forty years ago – 1982 – the park's 50th anniversary celebration featured several events, including a bull roast! The park superintendent at the time, Gary Smith, served as master of ceremonies for the celebration, that in addition the bull roast, included:

- An open-house in all of the park's cabins.
- A guided walk through the park.
- A concert in the park amphitheater.
- A worship service in the park chapel.
- A Smokey Bear program in the park amphitheater.
- A hike around the park guided by the Alpine Club of Williamsport.
- A map-race through the park.

...and the celebration in 10 years...

WORLDS END STATE PARK CENTENNIAL 1932 – 2032



To support the **Friends of Worlds End State Park**, check out the SUPPORT section of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation website and designate your gift to the - **FRIENDS OF WORLDS END STATE PARK!**
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Or go to our website:
<https://www.friendsofworldsendsp.org/join-or-donate>

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