

Take a Hike

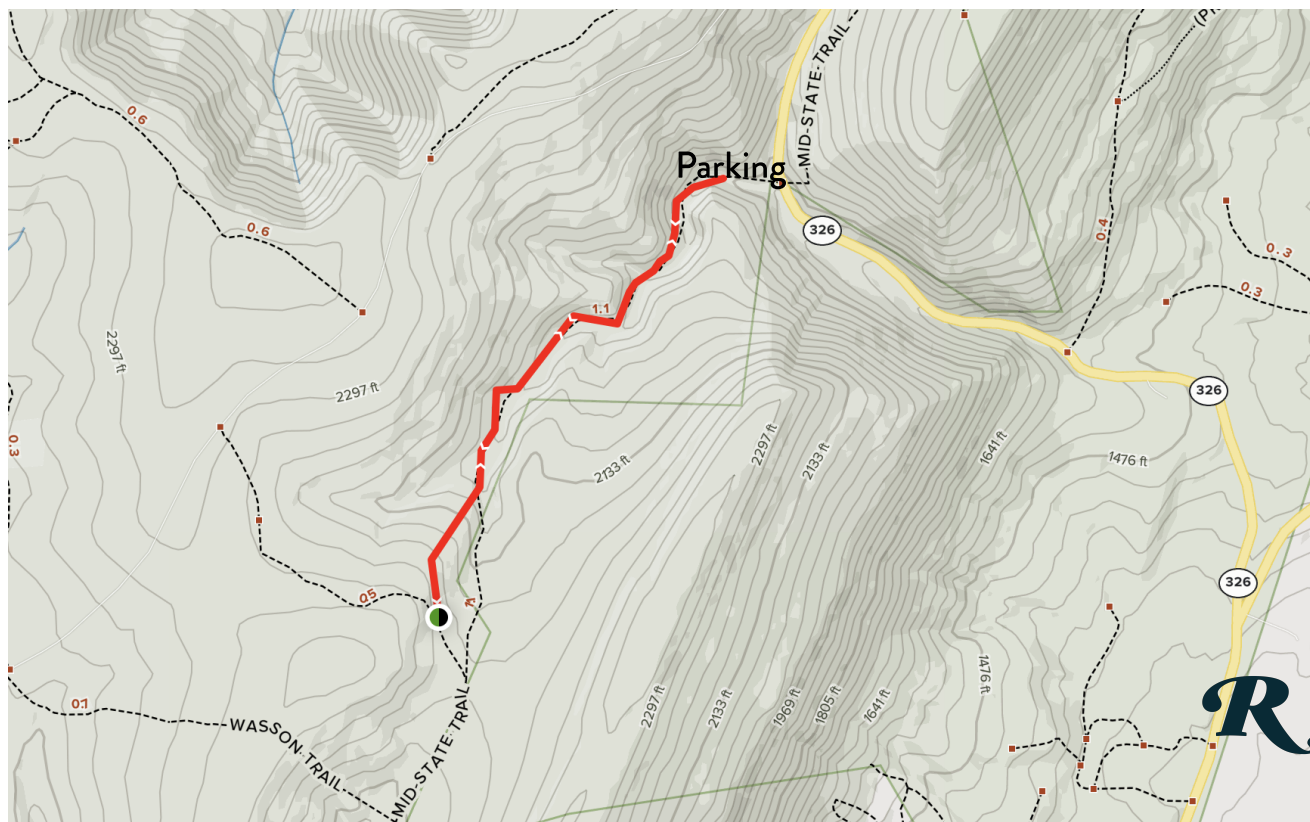
BUCHANAN STATE FOREST

GARLIC TRAIL

2.2 miles round-trip, out and back hike

Follow Garlic Trail 1.1 miles until the trail opens up into a grass road (you'll also see a Garlic Trail trail marker here). At this point, turn around and head back. Or to extend your hike a little further, walk the road until you want to turn around.

Parking is at the trail head, approximately 1.35 miles from River Mountain. Take a right out of the River Mountain driveway, then take a left at the split towards Rainsburg. Look for the trail head and a small parking lot on your left.



Share your adventures with us! Tag us on insta @RiverMountain

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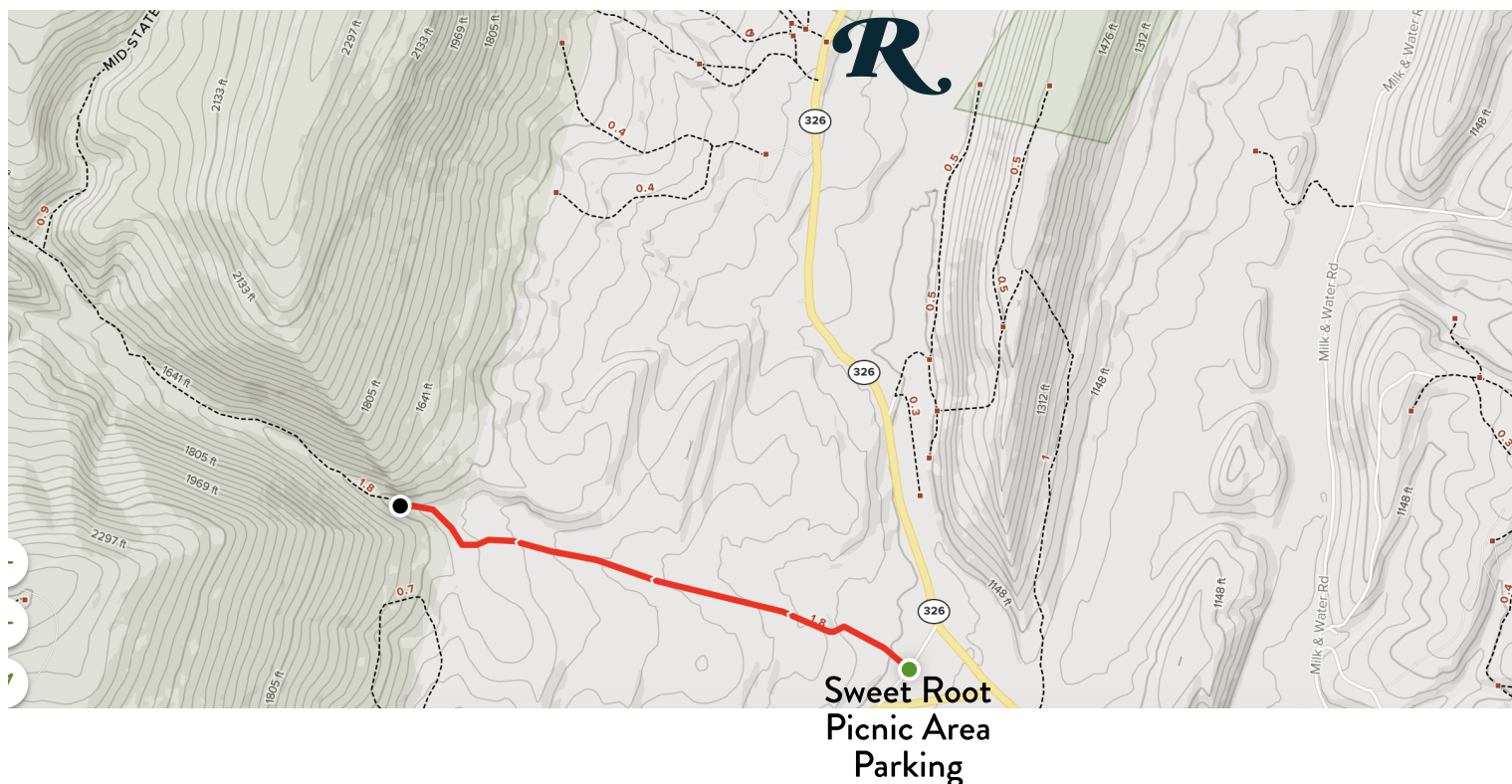
SWEET ROOT TRAIL

~2 mile hike

Out and back forest trail that meets up with Pennsylvania's Mid-State Trail and Tarklin Trail. After 1 mile, the trail crosses a creek a few times and begins to narrow as it enters Sweet Root Run. At this point, turn around and head back to the start. Or if you're feeling adventurous, continue on a little further!

Parking at Sweet Root Picnic Area

Turn left out of River Mountain, follow 326/Black Valley Road south for 1.7 miles. Sweet Root Picnic Area will be on your right, pull in and park.



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BUCHANAN STATE FOREST



HISTORY OF BUCHANAN STATE FOREST

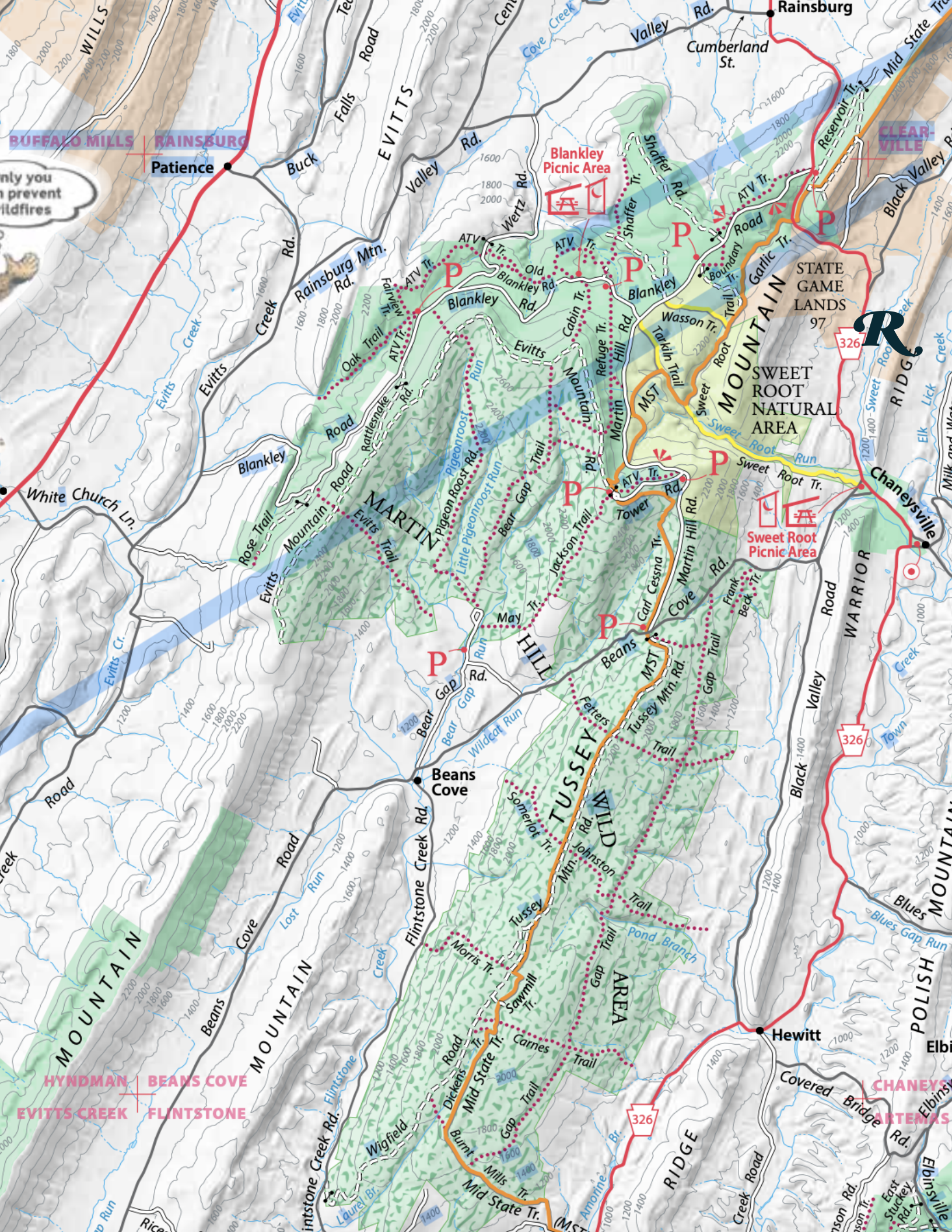
Nearly all of the five principle tracts of the Buchanan State Forest were purchased by the commonwealth between 1904 and the early 1930s when the logging companies were either letting their cut-over lands be sold for taxes or selling them to the state for approximately two dollars per acre. This is a region of historic interest and scenic beauty. In Bedford County, there is a cave where saltpeter had been produced for gunpowder before and during the American Revolution. Close by are the “Resettlement Lands” containing several old cemeteries that date back to pre-Civil Wars days. Resettlement lands were purchased by the federal government either through buying up marginal farms or purchasing at tax sales. The lands were eventually deeded to the commonwealth and became part of the state forest system. Winding through Allens Valley and westward over Sideling Hill in Fulton County are traces of an early military road known as the Forbes or Forbes-Burd Road built by General John Forbes and Colonel James Burd. This road allowed the British to move military forces west to attack the French at Fort Duquesne and later to supply Fort Pitt, now Pittsburgh. Cowans Gap, Fulton County, marks the home site of one of the earliest settlers, British Major Samuel Cowan who farmed the area which is now Cowans Gap State Park. Further south, near Cove Gap, is Buchanan’s Birthplace State Park -- the birthplace of President James Buchanan.

Civilian Conservation Corps

Four Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps were located in the Buchanan State Forest. During the Great Depression of the 1930’s, several hundred young men lived here and constructed forest roads and trails that still serve us today. Camp No. S-52 was built in 1933 near Oregon Creek. Many improvements to the area resulted from the hard work of these young men. During World War II the site was converted into a prisoner-of-war camp for German prisoners. It closed but was re-opened to serve as quarters for conscientious objectors. The other camp locations became picnic areas -- S-109 in Bear Valley, S-142 at Sweet Root, and S-154 at Blankley which was a camp for black CCC crewmembers.

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Buchanan State Forest at a Glance

District Office



Address:
25185 Great Cove Rd.
McConnellsburg, PA
17233-8204

Phone: (717) 485-3148

FAX: (717) 485-9283

Email: FD02@pa.gov

District Facts

- Named for 15th U.S. President James Buchanan
- Comprised of 71,638 acres
- Found in Franklin, Fulton, and Bedford counties
- Part of Ridge and Valley Region of Pa
- Predominantly mixed-oak forest type

Hiking



A hiker enjoying the Mid State Trail

- Over 206 miles of trails within forest district
- Mid-State and Tuscarora trails are designated hiking trails.
- Standing Stone Trail connects Mid-State and Tuscarora trails.
- Much of the trail network traverses picturesque Tuscarora and Tussey mountains.

Maps are available at district office.

Camping

- Primitive backpack camping (at undeveloped sites) is permitted throughout the state forest; a permit is required to camp for more than one night at one location (please follow Bureau of Forestry guidelines).
- Motorized camping is available at nearby Cowans Gap and Shawnee state parks.



Sightseeing

- Scenic vistas can be found on Blankley, Martin Hill, Bark, Tower, and Fisher roads; and along Route 915.
- Historical features like CCC camps, a saltpeter mine, and pre-Civil war era cemeteries are found in the district.
- Touring the district forest to observe brilliant fall foliage is annually popular.



Colorful fall foliage peaks in October.

Hunting

- Game opportunities include deer, bear, turkey, squirrels, rabbits, and grouse
- Hunting is permitted throughout state forest; please obey all regulations.
- 1,357 acres on Sideling Hill are designated for disabled hunter access.



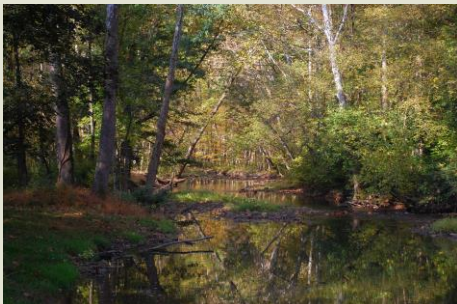
Fishing

- Excellent cold-water fishing opportunities can be found on Big Cove, Oregon, Little Aughwick, and Town creeks.
- A delayed harvest area is designated on Big Cove Creek.
- PA Fish and Boat Commission regulations apply.



Wild and Natural Areas

- Martin Hill Wild Area consists of 11,676 acres of explorable wilderness and features two natural ponds.
- Sweet Root Natural Area is 1,526 acres and features remnants of old-growth hemlock as well as second-growth oak.
- Pine Ridge Natural Area is a depression-era resettlement land featuring natural regeneration of Virginia pine and oak-hickory forest.



Big Cove Creek in Fulton County

Winter Activities

- 12 miles of trails are maintained for cross-country skiing.
- The district maintains 93 miles of snowmobile trails (for map, contact district office or download from web).



Riders enjoying snowmobile trail

Other Recreation

- Mountain biking and horseback riding are permitted on most forest roads and trails.
- Picnic facilities are offered at Bear Valley, Sideling Hill, Sweet Root, and Blankley picnic areas.
- Cowans Gap and Shawnee state parks offer boating, swimming, and fishing.



More Information

For more information on Buchanan State Forest contact:

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