

Troop 2
Venture Backpacking Crew



50 Mile Hike
Allegheny National Forest
Aug 20 to 28, 1991

The 50-Miler Award

The 50-Miler Award is presented to each qualifying individual for satisfactory participation in an approved trip. In order to qualify for the award the group of which the individual is a member must fulfill all of the following requirements.

1. Make complete and satisfactory plans for the trip, including the possibilities of advancement. A Tour Permit must be obtained before the trip.
2. Cover the trail or canoe or boat route of not less than 50 consecutive miles (a maximum of no more than 10 miles per day); take a minimum of 5 consecutive days to complete the trip without the aid of motors. (In some areas pack animals may be used.)
3. During the time on the trail or waterway, complete a minimum of 10 hours each of group work on projects to improve the trail, springs, campsite, portage, or other area. If, after checking with recognized authorities, it is not possible to complete 10 each of group work on the trail, a similar project may be done in the unit's home area. (There should be not unauthorized cutting of brush or timber.)
4. Unit or tour leader must then file the 50-Miler Award Application with local council service center.

Backpacking

1. Do the following:
 - a. List 10 items which are essential to be carried on any overnight backpacking trek and explain why each item is necessary.
 - b. Describe 10 ways you can limit the weight and bulk to be carried in your pack without jeopardizing your health or safety.
2. Do the following:
 - a. Define limits on the number of backpackers who should be in a backpacking crew.
 - b. Explain the reason for the upper limit and the lower limit in a backpacking crew.
3. Tell environmental considerations that are important for backpackers and describe five ways to lessen their impact on the environment. Describe proper methods for disposing of solid and liquid wastes.

4. Demonstrate two ways to purify water and tell why water purification is essential.
5. Demonstrate that you can read topographic maps. While on a hike, use a map and compass to establish your position on the terrain at random times and places.
6. Tell how to prepare properly for and deal with inclement weather while on a backpacking trek.
7. Do the following:
 - a. Describe prevention, symptoms, and treatment for first aid situations that are most likely to occur on a backpacking trek.
 - b. Tell first aid considerations for cold, hot, wet, and dry weather traveling.
8. Do the Following:
 - a. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of three different types of backpacking stoves using at least three different types of fuel.
 - b. Demonstrate that you know how to operate a backpacking stove safely and to handle liquid fuel safely.
 - c. Prepare at least three meals using a stove and fuel you can carry in a backpack.
9. Do the following:
 - a. Plan a patrol backpacking hike.
 - b. Properly pack your own gear and your share of the crew equipment and food. Protect it against inclement weather. Show that your pack allows you to get quickly to items you may need on the trail and provides for comfort, balance, and neatness. Show how to use effectively a pack frame and hip strap to distribute the weight on your body.
 - c. Conduct a pre-hike inspection of the patrol and its equipment.
 - d. Carrying your pack, complete a hike of at least 2 miles.
10. Take three backpacking treks. Each must consist of at least three days duration with two different overnight campsites, and each cover at least 15 miles. Carry everything you will need throughout the trek.
11. Do the following:

- a. In addition, assist in planning and take a backpacking trek of at least 5 days with at least three different campsites, covering at least 30 miles. Your written plan submitted to your counselor must include route, food and menus, equipment, and emergency notification. Prepare lightweight, reasonably priced trail menus. Carry everything you need throughout the entire trek.
- b. On returning, tell what you did to get in shape for this trek and how you might do it differently again.

Hiking

1. Explain and show, where possible, the main points of good hiking practices.
2. Make a written plan for a 10 mile hike. Include map routes, a clothing and equipment list, and a list of things for a trail lunch.
3. Take five hikes of 10 continuous miles each, on 5 days.
4. Take a hike of 20 continuous miles in 1 day.
5. Within a month of the last hike and after taking all six, make a short report of each of the six hikes. Give dates, routes covered, weather, and any interesting things you saw.

Hiking Equipment

Proper equipment is necessary for a safe and comfortable hike. What is proper? That depends on the particular hike, of course, but certain items have been found to be essential. Two obvious considerations should be kept in mind when purchasing backpacking equipment. The first is the quality of the equipment and the second is its weight. Quality equipment is important as we depend on it for our comfort while out of doors and sometimes we depend on it for our lives.

There are two aspects to backpacking weight. Take as little as you can get by with and still have an adequate margin of safety. Take the lightest equipment you can find that is substantial enough to stand up to the beating it will get. Always keep in mind the "Golden Rule" of backpacking: "EVERY OUNCE COUNTS." No backpacker can enjoy the hike if he is overburdened.

THE ESSENTIALS

All the items listed below have been found to be necessary, at one time or another, and are included in the "Ten Essentials" as listed by the Mountaineers Club of Seattle, WA.

These items should be carried with you at all times, should you become lost or injured:

- Map, compass and guidebook
- Matches in a waterproof case
- Canteen and cup
- First aid kit
- Small flashlight
- Pocket Knife
- Toilet Paper
- Extra food
- Extra clothing
- Emergency Shelter

Footwear: The trails we will be hiking are both rugged and damp, and footwear such as sneakers provide inadequate support and protection. Sturdy, waterproof shoes or ankle-high boots are best. The most important consideration of footwear is that boots should provide a good fit and be properly broken in BEFORE any hike is undertaken. Many a hiker has had their hike cut short because of improperly fitted footwear. Extra heavy or padded hiking boots provide more support and protection by weigh but take longer to break in. A boot higher than the ankle is not usually desirable because of its extra weight and upper stiffness. Proper care of the feet is important. Two pairs of socks should be worn, even in summer. Many hikers find that a thin, smooth pair worn next to the foot combined with a heavy, wool pair provides cushioning and helps prevent blisters due to heat buildup and chafing. Spare socks (as well as moleskin) should be carried in the knapsack.

Packs: The selection of packs available today is vast. You must determine your needs to fit the choice of your pack. Today there are packs available for day hiking, climbing, school, long-distance hiking and packs designed to carry large heavy loads and equipment to remote corners of the world. Your choice will depend on your trip considerations. The quality of materials and workmanship should be the major concern of any pack purchase. Cost and weight are the next considerations. For long-distance hiking or shorter weekend trips, the packframe and bag has proven to be the best choice because it allows greater loads to be carried in comfort. The packframe should be of tubular metal, usually made of aluminum, and should be slightly S-shaped to conform to the shape of the body. It should be of the best possible quality, especially for use on extended trips, as carrying a broken packframe and bag in one's arm is difficult. To insure comfort, the proper fit is important. A padded hip-belt is a MUST, because it allows the transfer of most of the weight from the shoulders to the hips.

Tents and Tarps: Many people feel that they need to take a tent with them when they hike. But the need for a tent is usually outweighed by how much it weighs. A much better shelter for long term hikes is a tarp. Tarps can be made into a wide variety of shelters depending on the weather conditions and the environment. Here are just a few shelters that can be made with a tarp:

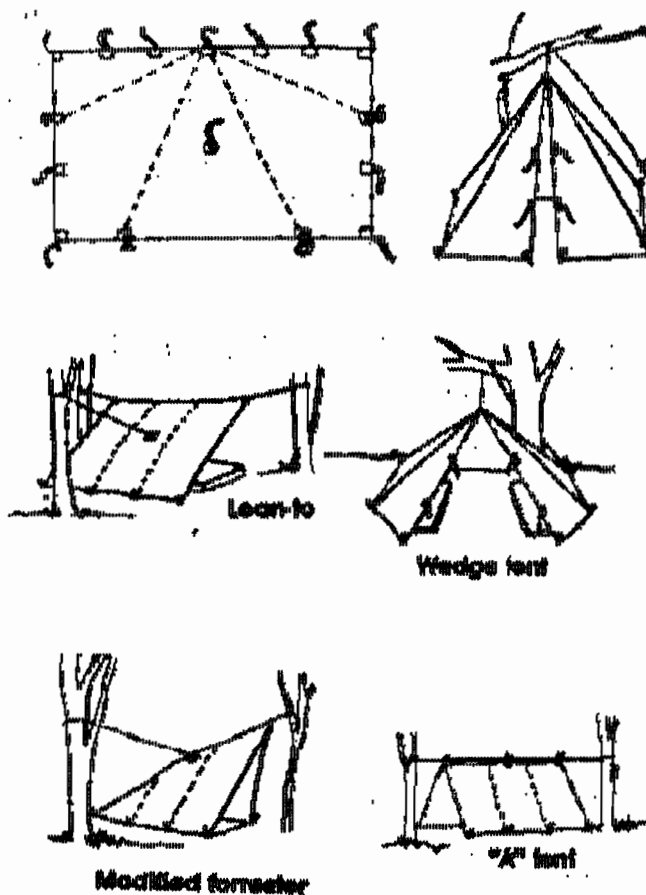
Stoves or Campfires: For generations, most camp cooking was done over an open fire. While it is still important to know how to kindle a blaze, a majority of backpackers now prefer to cook over lightweight stoves. The reasons have as much to do with protecting the land as with convenience. In some areas open fires are prohibited.

When you carry a stove, you become more self-sufficient. No longer limited to sites near plentiful supplies of firewood, you can camp high above the tree line, in the deep snows of winter, or at the edge of an arid sandstone canyon. And you can prepare your meals quickly and neatly no matter what the weather.

Best of all, a stove does not scorch the earth, as does an open fire. It leaves no ashes, no charred logs, and no blackened stones to mar the wilderness. With a stove, you can more easily camp without leaving a trace.

Remember, though, that while a stove is a wonderful tool, it must be handled intelligently. Misused, it can be dangerous. Operate camping stoves only with experienced adult supervision, and practice using them before and outing.

On our hike we will be using two types of backpacking stoves, both of which use white gas. You will be shown how to operate both types during our preliminary hikes. No hiker is to light a stove without an adult present, these stoves can be VERY DANGEROUS IF USED OR REFUELED IMPROPERLY.



Sleeping Bags: The two most common fillers today for backpacking sleeping bags are goose down and synthetic fibers. The features which govern these are their weight, compactness when stuffed, and relative warmth. Synthetics are the same warmth as down. However, such bags are easier to clean and dry and the cost is very attractive compared to the cost of a down bag. A sleeping bag, especially down, must be kept dry as a wet sleeping bag is a heavy useless piece of equipment. To insure that the bag stays dry, it should be carried in a waterproof stuffbag.

Blankets: Since we will be hiking in the summertime, even a light sleeping bag might be too warm. Instead you might want to consider taking a blanket or two.

Groundsheet and Pad: A waterproof groundsheet, plastic or coated nylon, keeps a sleeping bag from contacting the ground and a foam pad provides insulation and some comfort.

Clothing: There are two things to keep in mind when considering what cloths to take on a hike. The first is comfort. The clothing you select must take into account the weather conditions that could be experienced so that you remain cool and dry. The second is the type of material. Remember that since you cannot carry a weeks worth of clothing (due to weight and size restriction of your pack) you will have to wash your cloths along the trail. Heavy materials like denim will not dry quickly.

Loading your pack: Properly packing your gear can make the difference between drudgery and enjoyment when you're on the trail. A simple principle, often overlooked, should be kept in mind:

Your body's natural center of gravity is located directly over the ankles. Normally there is very little forward lean of the body. However, placing a loaded pack on the back changes your body weight distribution, and your body will lean forward to bring the new center of gravity over your ankles. Consequently, it's advantageous to keep the pack's center of gravity as close to your own as possible. This prevents unnecessary forward lean.

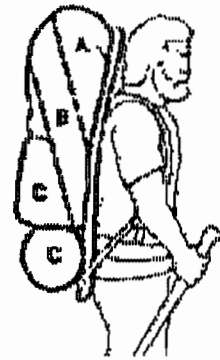
The "Zone Method" of loading a pack was designed to place gear weight where it is most appropriate for the terrain and the activity the pack is being used for. By combining a comfort-engineered suspension system with proper gear placement, you will be rewarded with comfort and enjoyment during your hike.

External Frame Packs

Zone A: This area should carry the heaviest equipment, like the stove, shelter ect. There is a benefit in placing the weight high in the pack as it will be more directly over the center of gravity.

Zone B: Medium wight items should be in this area of the pack.

Zone C: The area farthest away from the body's center of gravity should be filled with the lightest equipment. Your sleeping bag can be placed in a stuff bag to keep it clean...then utilize the area under the packbag to lash it to the frame.

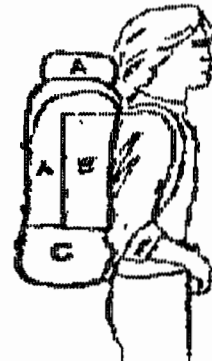


Internal Frame Packs

Zone A: Lightest gear should be packed in this section.

Zone B: Pack the heaviest gear as close the back as possible and away from the extreme top. This will give you better balance.

Zone C: The bottom portion of an internal frame pack should be used for carrying your sleeping bag.



Other Packing tips

Outside pockets provide you with a perfect location for small, frequently used items or things you will need quickly. For example: Water, G.O.R.P. (or any trail snack), flashlight, repair kit, Moleskin (and other first aid supplies).

All clothing **MUST** be in waterproof bags (Zip-locks are the best for this). Even though most backpacks are water resistant they will not keep your cloths and sleeping bag dry in a heavy downpour or if you fall into a stream.

Also keep in mind that a poncho, or other rain gear, should be at ready. Pack it **LAST** or in an outside pocket. Some packs have a pocket at the very top of the pack that you can get to even when you are hiking.

First Aid Along the Trail

While hiking, you can meet a wide variety of terrain and climatic conditions. In planning the safe trip, prepare for the possibility of injuries - as well as the joys. "BE Prepared" for accidents to self or friends.

First, Think about communications. Have you informed your relatives and friends about your expedition - where, when and time of return? Has all your equipment been carefully checked out? (See Section on Equipment). Considering the season, have you made provisions for water, food, heat and shelter? Emergency situations can develop. ANALYSIS OF SERIOUS ACCIDENTS HAS SHOWN THAT A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF THEM HAVE THEIR ORIGIN "BACK HOME" IN THE PLANNING STAGE OF THE TRIP.

Now to the Trail! While hiking, set your own comfortable pace with good trail discipline for the party.

If a hiker is injured, or lost, or a storm strikes, S T O P

Stop
Think
Observe
Plan

REMEMBER, THE BRAIN IS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT SURVIVAL TOOL.

If an accident occurs, TREAT THE INJURED FIRST. Lack of attention may start a chain of events leading to a major disaster. If outside help is needed at least one person should stay with the injured hiker, two people should go for help and carry with them written notes of exact location of the accident, what has been done to aid the injured, and what help is needed.

The Injured will need encouragement, assurance of help and promotion of confidence by demonstration of your competency. Treat him gently. Keep the victim lying down and quiet. Protect him from the weather with insulation, below and above him.

Shock: Any injury can cause shock. The symptoms of shock are: paleness, trembling, cool skin, sweating and rapid pulse. Lie the hiker flat on his back, raise his feet slightly or position him, if he can be safely moved, so his head is down the slope; protect him from the wind and keep him as warm as possible. Alleviate pain as much as possible.

Wounds: (except eye wounds) should be cleaned with soap and water. If possible, apply a clean dressing to protect the wound from the air and further contamination from any object in the environment. Eye wounds should be thoroughly cleaned with water and the eye covered with a sterile patch.

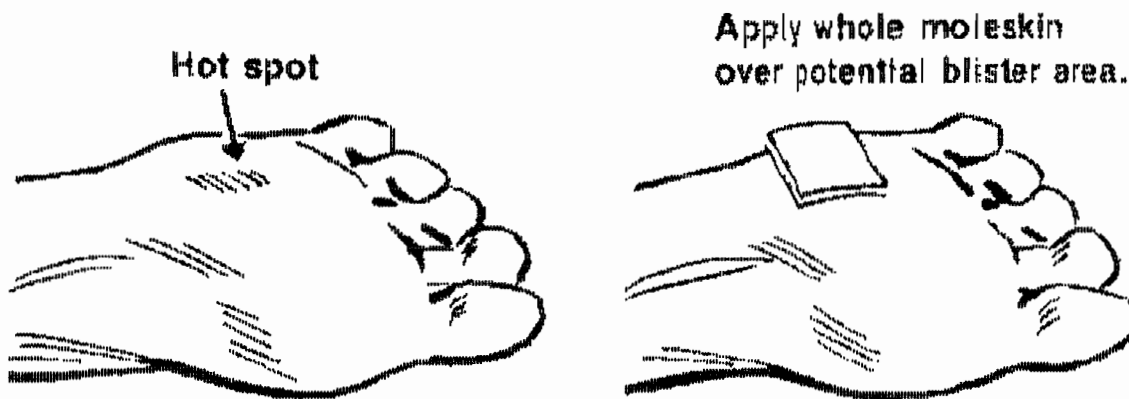
Bone fractures of legs, ankles or arms that are determined by inspection or suspected, must be splinted before moving the victim. After treating wounds, use any available material that will offer firm support such as tree branches or boards. Pad each side of the arm or leg with soft material and have the joints supported and immobilized above and below the injury. Use strips of cloth or clothing to bind the splints together. Attempt to keep acute fractures elevated as much as possible to minimize swelling; also apply ice or cold cloths.

Sprains: An overstretching of muscles or supporting structures around the joint is a sprain. The joint, most commonly injured by hikers, is the ankle, which becomes swollen and tender. Treat with ice, or cold cloths, rest, elevation, and an elastic wrap. A severe sprain will have to be splinted like a fracture.

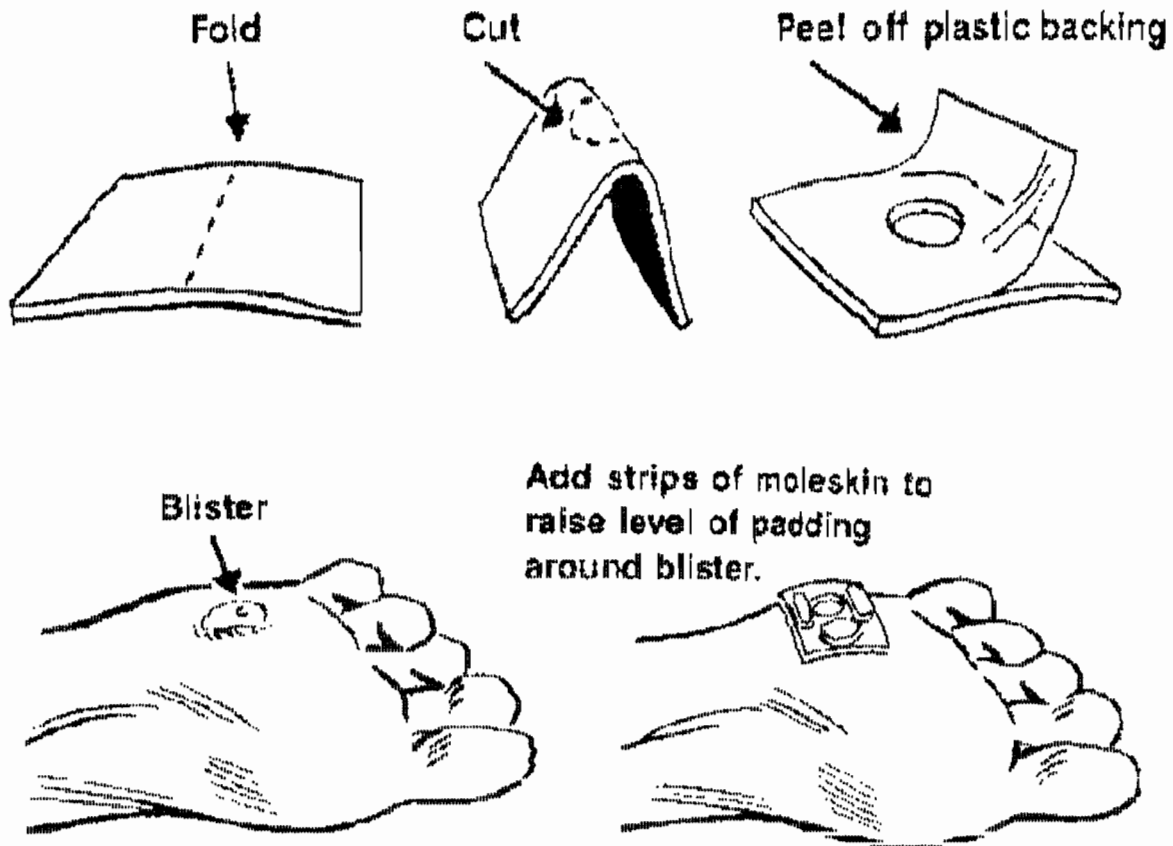
Blisters occur when skin is irritated, usually by heat or by friction. For backpackers, blisters on the feet are the most common and the most troublesome problem encountered.

Prevention is much better than cure, keep your feet clean and dry. Wear boots that fit properly and are well broken-in. Change your socks frequently. Toughen your feet with short hikes before embarking on an extended trek.

A "hot spot" on your foot signals the beginning of a blister. STOP IMMEDIATELY and reinforce the tender area with moleskin.



Put on dry socks. If a blister does form, you may need to drain it. Clean your foot with soap and water, then prick the edge of the blister with a sterilized needle. Protect the wound by cutting a hole the size of the blister in a piece of moleskin, and use it to encircle the blister. Several layers may be necessary to take the pressure of the boot off the tender skin.



Dislocation of a leg or arm joint is usually extremely painful. DO NOT try to put it back in place. Splint the limb in the position it is found. Immobilize the entire limb. You will probably need to use great ingenuity with supports, bandaging and in transportation. Remember treatment for shock.

Sunburn causes redness, swelling and pain. Prevent with a good sunscreen. Keep nose, and ears covered with a brimmed hat, and back of neck covered with a bandanna. If sunburn occurs treat with cold wet dressings or sunburn cream.

Dehydration: While backpacking you will probably sweat more than usual. Sun and wind also will remove large quantities of moisture from your skin. Symptoms of dehydration are light-headedness, dizziness, nausea, general weakness, and muscle cramps. For mild and moderate cases the patient should drink liquids and rest in the shade. In the case of Dehydration, Prevention is better. While hiking you should drink more water than normal in small sips (DO NOT GULP or stomach cramps will occur).

Heat cramps: Symptoms are severe, spasmodic contractions of leg or abdominal muscles. Treat by immediately stretching the affected muscles, and then by resting. Prevent by maintaining an adequate salt intake and lots of fluids (taken in small sips).

Heat Exhaustion is caused by physical exercise during prolonged exposure to heat. It can involve even those in excellent physical condition. There is an overall breakdown of the body's heat regulating system. The circulatory system is disrupted, causing and insufficient supply of blood to reach vital areas such as the brain, heart and lungs. Symptoms: The victim initially feels faint, and is aware of pounding heart. He may complain of a headache and dizziness. He may vomit, become delirious, or become unconscious. Skin is moist and cool, with a flushed face which becomes pale later. The treatment is to rest the person in shade and give plenty of fluids. Also loosen or remove his clothing and apply cold cloths.

Heat stroke and sun stroke. This is caused by the failure of the heat regulatory system to cool the body by sweating. This is an emergency situation and threatens life. Body temperature may go to 106 degrees or higher. Symptoms; the onset is very rapid with the initial symptoms of weakness, nausea, and heat cramps. But the temperature rises rapidly and the sweat glands cease to function. The skin is dry and the pulse pounding. The victim becomes delirious or unconscious. Treatment must be immediate or fatal brain damage will occur. If possible immerse the victim in lukewarm (not cold) water. Otherwise, remove clothing, and cover him with cool cloths; fan him to promote evaporation. Meanwhile, massage the extremities. Vigorous cooling efforts can cease when body temperature reaches 102F, but carefully watch for a recurrence.

Trail Users Code

- Hike only along marked routes, do NOT take short cuts.
- Be courteous to other hikers.
- Leave the trail cleaner than you found it - carry out all litter.
- Leave flowers and plants for others to enjoy.
- Do not damage live trees or strip off bark.
- Protect and do not disturb wildlife.
- Leave only your thanks and take only photographs and memories.

While On The Trail

- Wear two pair of socks. This will help prevent blisters. Remember that blisters are a hikers worst enemy!
- Keep water, trail snacks, first aid kit, map/compass and poncho were you can get to them quickly. Also keep your trail lunch close at hand.
- Hiking is not a race. Don't tire yourself out at the beginning of the day, pace yourself and stay with the group. A Scout should keep the pace of the slowest hiker!

Preliminary Hike #2

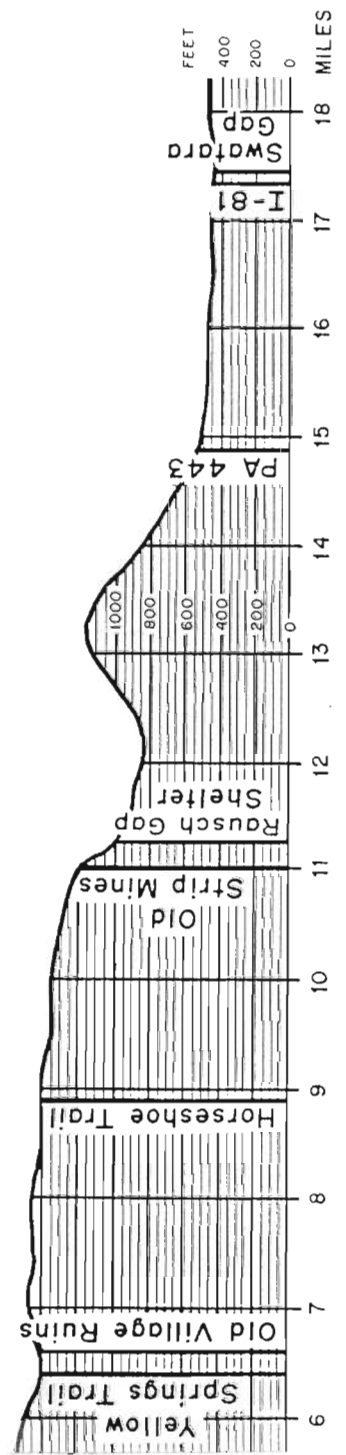
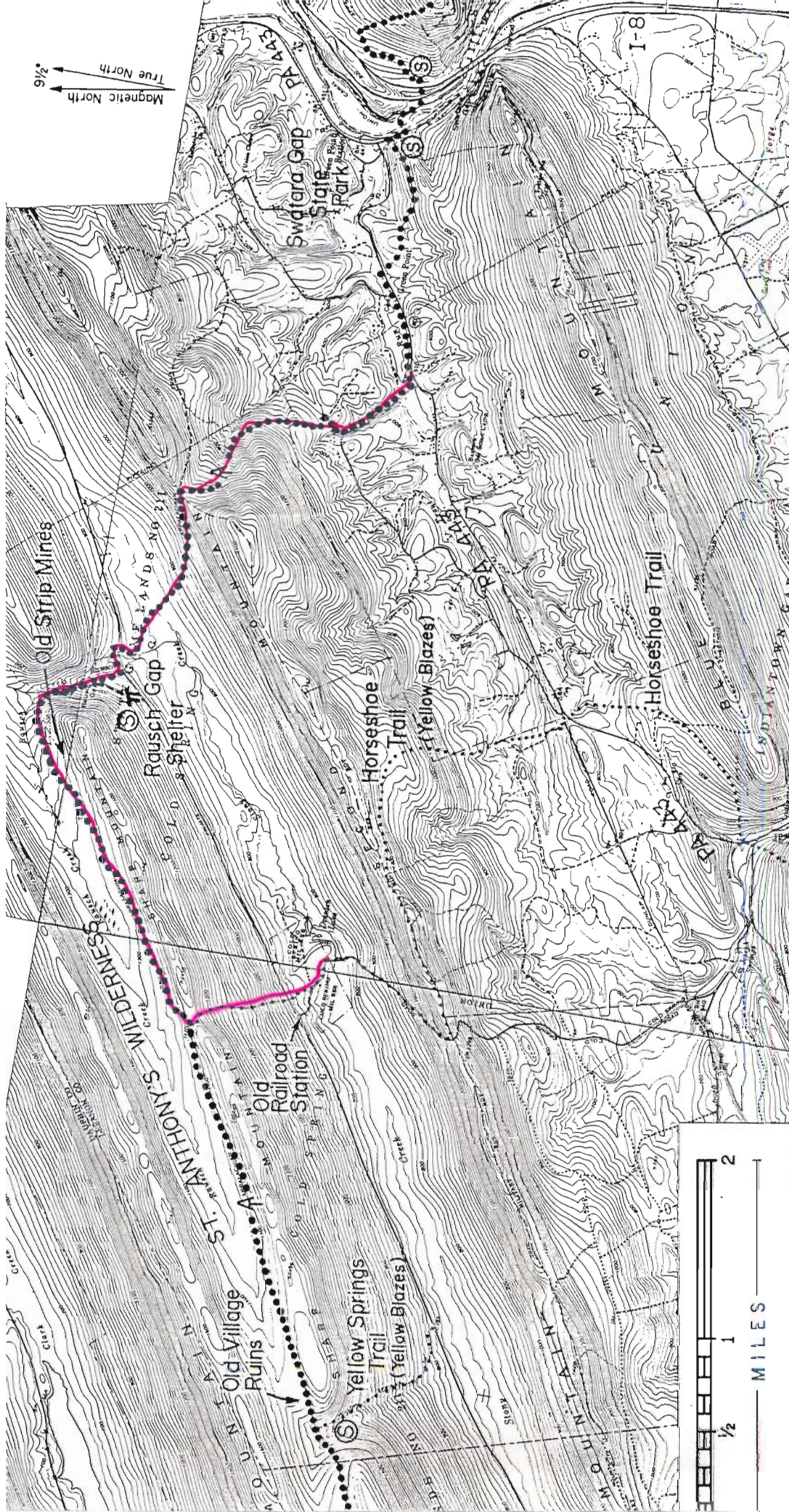
Horseshoe/Appalachian Trail

- 0.0 Cold Spring Parking Lot. A Gate across the road prevents any further driving. Continue on the road for a short distance, then pick up a trail to the Right
- 0.2 cross an abandoned railroad bed. Old train station is 0.1 miles to the Left. This last stretch is interesting because it is an old stagecoach route. Some steep stretches and very rocky, difficult for horses. At times cutting through dense forest. Usually dry, but not always.
- 0.8 Crest of Sharp Mountain and its junction with the Appalachian Trail. Trail turns right, leaving the old stage road. Pass a large open-cut strip mine on the right, with Rausch Creek on the left.
- 3.1 Blue-blazed trail to the right leads to the Rausch Gap Shelter and Spring.
- 3.7 Trail turns left onto the cinder administrative road of the Game Commission. This road is the former road bed of the Susquehanna and Schuylkill Railroad, which ceased operations in the 1940's.
- 3.9 Cross Rausch Creek on an old stone arch railroad bridge. Directly after crossing the creek, turn right onto a woods road. The Game Commission road continues 3.8 miles to the Gold Mine Road and Game Commission Parking lot. An old turntable pit is 150 ft ahead to the right of the road. Across the road from the turntable pit is the site of the old Rausch Gap Station.

- 4.0 Pass through the ruins of the old Rausch Gap Village. No Camping or fires is permitted except as authorized.
- 4.2 Trail bears right where road forks.
- 4.3 Cross Haystack Creek and begin ascending Second Mountain.
- 5.1 Reach the crest of Second Mountain and turn right, descending.
- 5.5 Pass Spring on left of trail and then turn right on old woods road.
- 5.6 pass road coming in from right.
- 5.8 Leave PA Game Lands and enter private property.
- 6.1 Turn right onto a well used road. Descend hill; cross small stream. Stay on road. (Blue-blazes lead straight ahead 600ft. to future hostel).
- 6.3 Turn left onto road.
- 6.8 Turn left onto PA Rt 443 (grocery on the left).

Notes of Interest

Historic Rausch Gap Village is directly on the trail. An exploration of this area will reveal building foundations, a cemetery, old hand dug wells, abandoned railroad beds, railroad facilities, and other remains of a once thriving industrial community.



Conestoga Trail

Time allowed: 2 days, 1 night

Total distance: 15 miles

Vertical rise: 2,200 feet

Maps: USGS 7½' Conestoga, USGS 7½' Holtwood;

Conestoga Trail map

The rugged 15-mile Conestoga Trail built by the Lancaster Hiking Club in southern Lancaster County follows the eastern rim of the cliffs overlooking the Susquehanna River, often 300 feet above water level. Views of the mile-wide river and its forested shoreline are spectacular and almost continuous. For most of the hike you'll be far removed from the nearest road, high above feeding waterfowl below you on rocky outcroppings in the Susquehanna.

If you're in excellent condition, you might be able to hike the Conestoga Trail in a single day, but two days will give you time to take note of your surroundings. You won't have to get an early start your first day out because the only campsite is just 5.7 miles into the hike. Camping is not permitted elsewhere along the trail, which is primarily on Pennsylvania Power and Light Company land. Spring and fall are ideal seasons for this hike, avoiding the heat of the summer as well as snakes and ticks. One short section of the trail crosses Slate Game Lands 288 where hunting is permitted. Maps are available from George Aukamp, Lake Aldred Supt., Pennsylvania Power and Light Co., Holtwood, PA 17532 (717-284-2278).

The Conestoga Trail is not a loop, so

you will need to spot cars at both ends of the hike: one at Lock 12 Historic Area 25 miles southeast of York, a second car at the north end of the trail at Martic Forge in southern Lancaster County. The hike described runs from north to south, but there is no reason why you couldn't hike the other direction depending on your easiest access. The main consideration is the campsite 5.7 miles from the north trailhead, whether to hike the shorter distance the first day or the second.

If you are driving from York, you can easily spot the first car at Lock 12, a canal lock on the now abandoned Susquehanna Canal in York County. Drive southeast from York 22 miles on PA 74 until you reach PA 372, turn left, and in 2 miles reach the Susquehanna River. Turn left just before the Norman Wood Bridge and reach the Lock 12 Historic Area parking lot in .1 mile.

To spot a second car at the northern end of the hike at Martic Forge, head back out to PA 372, turn left across the Susquehanna, and continue 2 miles to Bethesda. Turn left on River Road, north toward Martic Forge. In 4 miles the River Road passes Mount Nebo Cemetery on the left. Here, bear right, then left in .5 mile, reaching Martic Forge 2.5 miles

beyond. Park in a pulloff on the left where the road ends.

From Lancaster you can reach Martic Forge by driving south 14 miles on PA 324. From Martic Forge, the rest of your driving directions will be reversed—continue to Holtwood on River Road before joining PA 372 to spot the second car at Lock 12.

Day 1

Martic Forge to Reed Run

Total distance: 5.7 miles

Hiking time: 3 hours

Vertical rise: 700 feet

The orange-blazed Conestoga Trail heads south on the paved River Road for .1 mile, beginning at Martic Forge. Where the road bends left, follow the trail to the right, along the edge of Pequea

(pronounced Peck-way) Creek to where it empties into the Susquehanna, a total of 3.7 miles. For the first 1.5 miles you'll follow the edge of State Game Lands 288, through thick woods of oak and tulip poplar, with hemlocks and pines hugging the creek banks. Hunting is permitted here, except on Sundays, so you should either avoid hiking during hunting season altogether, or wear a protective orange cap, especially on the first day of small game or deer season. You also might want to avoid hiking on the opening day of trout season, when large numbers of anglers arrive at the creek.

From here to the Susquehanna River your trail is wide and flat—the old abandoned Pequea trolley bed. At 1.3 miles the trail crosses a road, edging the Pequea Creek Recreation Area on the left until 2.6 miles. This year-round campground (water and toilets available), or the Otter Creek Recreation Area on the York County side of the Susquehanna, would make a good base for hiking in this area (see Hikes 17, 18, and 19), but the campground fills with hunters or

fishermen during the early days of those seasons.

The trail soon swings south in a wide arc along the creek. Squirrels and chipmunks dart back and forth scolding a group of hikers or a blue jay, cardinal, or chickadee that ventures too close. Beginning at 2.6 miles pass several trail intersections on the left, part of the nature recreation area. These interesting side trails head uphill away from the creek, then loop back to the Conestoga Trail in less than 1 mile. Just beyond the trail intersections, you'll cross a 1-mile-long section of privately owned forest outside the town of Pequea. As Pequea Creek turns toward the Susquehanna, the trail bends to the right (west) through a large stand of mature oaks.

At 3.7 miles reach Pequea, a Susquehanna river town on the south side of Pequea Creek. The trail heads west on a town street for .1 mile, then turns south again, paralleling another road for a short distance before beginning an uphill pull to the top of the bluffs. You climb steadily but slowly, soon with river views on the right. Upriver is Weise Island; across are high, rocky Urey Lookout and the Urey Islands just offshore. The opposite bank is the Otter Creek Recreation Area, with steep, rocky cliffs and forested hills straight down to the river's edge. The sheer cliffs, along with the threat of floods, have kept development of the river shore at a minimum, although you'll be able to see a few summer homes.

At 4.1 miles the trail heads off the hill temporarily, dropping 300 feet in .2 mile. At the bottom cross three roads, all within .1 mile of each other. You won't cross another road until tomorrow when you reach Holtwood, about 6 miles south. At 4.1 miles reach Wind Cave, a rock outcropping with another spectacular river view. Bair Island and several islands to the south are gathering points for waterfowl: Canada geese, herring gulls

that fly up from Chesapeake Bay to feed, herons and egrets in summer. During the spring and fall migrations you can see flocks of whistling swans and snow geese heading up or down the river.

Beyond Wind Cave lookout the leaves of summer may obscure the view somewhat, but you're rarely out of sight of the river. Cross narrow, rocky House Rock Run at 5 miles, then turn first right, then left uphill to House Rock at 5.1 miles. The low, rocky outcrop islands, Duncan Island south and Bair Island across the river, are populated only by river birds.

Continue past House Rock on top of the bluffs, crossing Brubaker Run at 5.3 miles and narrow, boulder-filled Reed Run at 5.5 miles. The trail heads uphill and turns right (west) to reach the primitive campsite where you will spend the night. Although it looks lovely and clear, the water from Reed Run should be boiled if you don't carry in your own.

Day 2

Reed Run to Lock 12

Total distance: 9.3 miles

Hiking time: 5 hours

Vertical rise: 1,500 feet

Most of today's hike follows the very edge of the river, off the top of the bluffs. There is a definite wilderness feeling here as you hike to several rocky overlooks with excellent views, then descend through small stream glens filled with magnificent trees and large boulders. This morning you follow Reed Run downstream (southwest) .2 mile through large hemlocks with little underbrush. When you reach the Susquehanna, turn left (southeast) with the bluffs above you on the left.

Railroad tracks line the very edge of the river, a good place to drop your backpack and head down to the shoreline to explore. The edge of the river is rocky, lined with

almost perfectly rounded small stones. Before the Civil War, the river was used for running logs. Later, coal barges plied the waters, but the Susquehanna was never deep enough to be considered navigable. Now dams regulate water levels up and down its length, some of them part of a hydroelectric system, like the one you'll see further south. Although the river is usually only several feet deep, during flooding it sometimes triples its depth and runs well over its banks.

Leave the riverbank and continue southeast on the Conestoga Trail. At 1.2 miles the trail crosses Tucquan Creek, leaves the river's edge, and climbs again to the bluffs, gaining 300 feet in .2 mile. From an unnamed rocky overlook, another tiny island—Hartman Island—is directly ahead. Further out toward the western shore is Reed Island. South is Lake Aldred Gorge, a narrow section of the Susquehanna deepened to 190 feet at a bend by Holtwood Dam 3.5 miles to the south.

Beyond the overlook head back toward the river again, losing the 300 feet of elevation less rapidly than the ascent. At 2.2 miles reach Pinnacle Overlook, one of the most panoramic views on the Conestoga Trail (water and toilets available). From this point you'll follow part of the route described as a day hike in Kellys Run Natural Area (see Hike 17). At 2.4 miles the trail heads downhill from an overlook at a power-line cut. To the south are the Holtwood power plant and dam. At Kellys Run turn left upstream away from the river, reaching Holtwood Recreation Area at 4.4 miles (about 1.5 miles east of the Susquehanna).

The trail bends southwest from here to return to the river. Cross a road at 4.9 miles along a power-line cut, passing just east of the town of Holtwood at 5.6 miles, where you cross another road. The trail loses altitude steadily now, paralleling a road. At 6.2 miles cross a series of power lines

and reach Face Rock Overlook with views of Piney Island just ahead, and Brushy, Wildcat, and Crow Islands, and the Norman Wood Bridge on PA 372 to the south. The difference in the river below the dam can be dramatic: in some seasons most of the river channel is exposed and dry with just a few inches to a foot of water trickling between the rocks.

From the overlook the trail continues downhill, then more directly south, still above river level. Just before reaching PA

372, at 7.2 miles the trail heads sharply downhill again. Turn right on PA 372 across the Norman Wood Bridge, reaching the opposite bank at 8.9 miles. Here the trail proceeds downhill to the right, turning right again at 9.1 miles, then left, ending at 9.3 miles total at your car. The Lock 12 Historic Area is located here, and you can visit what remains of the old lock on the now fragmented Susquehanna Canal.

Section I. Willow Bay to Sugar Bay

Topo - Cornplanter Run. Maps 1 and 2.

- 0.0 * The white blazes of the trail start on the south side of Route 346 just at the bridge over Willow Creek (1380'). Parking is possible along the road. At the top of a short climb the main trail is joined by a side trail leading up from Willow Bay Campground. Gradual climb, heading W, then turn S and pass through the westernmost saddle in ridge * (1685'). Gentle descent towards the reservoir, with old logging road traces and small stream crossings. Head SE to North Branch and briefly follow an old road downstream until cross North Branch and Tracy Run * (1340'). Hook around the bay after Tracy Run, meeting the Tracy Ridge Trail * descending from the campground. Continue S along the steep hillside strewn with large boulders, the reservoir visible below. Cross Whiskey Run. Some moderate blocks of rock in the woods. Pass along eastern edge of old clearing shown on topo, with planted pines. Proceed SE across several ravines, and intersect Johnnycake Trail * coming down from Tracy Ridge, before crossing Johnnycake Run. Gradual climb away from reservoir, turn SE and cross unnamed run. A right turn downstream will quickly bring one to the old hardtop road which provides access to Handsome Lake Campground on the reservoir shore. The trail climbs through nice hemlocks and out of the stream valley along old wood road shown on topo. About 20 yards beyond the 1800' crest the trail turns left (E) * up onto spur ridge. Continuing S down old road leads to Hopewell Campground. Travel SE along ridge and pass over saddle (1940') /Map 2/. Drop down into side stream valley. Pick up grassy logging road on south bank of stream, and continue descent through some nice hemlock and pine. Reach main valley of Nelse Run and turn left (E) across run just short of reservoir, then head NE away from Nelse Run and climb up spur trail (SE) to reach Rte 321 *.

Section II. Sugar Bay to Chappel Bay

Topos - Cornplanter Run, Stickney, Westline, Cornplanter Bridge. Maps 2 and 3.

Trail Access. Trail sign on west side of Rte 321, 0.6 mi. north of North Branch, Sugar Run. Car parking. Spur trail leads downhill 30 yds. NW to main trail.

- 9.9 * Follow shoreline (S) of Sugar Bay through open woods until 10.7 till climbs up to Route 321. * Trail sign at this point. Follow highway guardrail across North Branch of Sugar Run. 11.0 Leave highway *, and head S through swamp area and across old highway towards Sugar Run, then SE along river until 11.9 reach a new bridge across stream *. Follow stream on 12.6 south bank to Hammond Run *. There are some pretty hemlocks, fern and tall grass along the trail. There is access to trail from Rte 321 at the junction of Sugar Run and Hammond Run. Trail starts up west bank of Hammond Run on an open, grassy logging road that angles gradually uphill (S). Watch for turn to left (NE) off the grassy path (1640'). From here on the trail is through pretty, open woods, close to the Hammond Run stream bed. The water is apparently drinkable, and there are numerous sites for small-group, primitive camping. Cross Hammond Run and head North. Eventually, near a dirt road not shown on topo, the trail switchbacks east up to the crest of a small ridge, passing a giant hemlock. Follow this uphill ridge S to "Hemlock Trail", a dirt road in good condition. Proceed westward along Hemlock Trail to where it comes within a few yards of Rte 59. The trail crosses Rte 59 here at a point marked by a trail sign (2085') *. This point is about 2 mi. west of the USFS ranger station at the junction of Routes 59 and 321. Cars may be parked on Hemlock Trail. The trail leaves Rte 59 through a broad meadow with scattered trees and large expanses of ferns. An abandoned building, shown on the topo about 0.4 mi. below Rte. 59, can be seen through the trees. The trail crosses a dirt road not shown on the topo. Continue through the meadow for about 0.5 mi. before descending into the Hemlock Run valley. The trail crosses this very pretty stream and stays close to it through open woods, "deep and dark" - no views but very pleasant. Trail occasionally follows an old RR grade/Map 3/. Near Chappel Bay a clearcut can be seen through the trees on the west side of Hemlock Run. No other works of man are evident. Primitive camping for small groups is readily possible at numerous spots along Hemlock Run. At Chappel Bay follow the shoreline eastwards to emerge via dirt road onto Rte 321 *. Turn right (W) and follow trail close to Rte 321 for 0.4 mi.
- 15.6
- 22.0

New Notes: Camp along Hammond Run only above 1600 ft.

Section III. Chappel Bay to Route 6

Topos - Cornplanter Bridge, Westline, Ludlow, Kane, Maps 3 and 4.

Trail Access. Trail sign on south side of Rte. 321 near Chappel Bay, just E of powerline crossing. Not much room for parking in the immediate area. Can park cars on dirt road 0.4 mi. further east on north side of Rte. 321.

22.4 * Follow dirt road ESE for 100 yds, then proceed uphill along ravine. Cross three dirt roads and continue to climb. Reach hill top (2065') amid old wood roads and nice hemlocks, pass a clearcut and cross a new dirt road. Turn south and cross upper branch of Root Run. Follow downstream along a good woods road, with a very attractive stream bottom on the right (N). Cross the stream, and continue along north bank past several openings suitable for primitive camping. Where the valley widens, climb to 1600' and stay on the contour until you find yourself heading North.

26.7 Then drop down to Rte. 321 *. There should be a trail sign here. Some parking can be found between

here and Red Bridge Campsite north on Rte. 321. Follow Rte. 321 south over bridge crossing Kinzua Creek. Trail goes right (SW) into woods where road turns off to boat ramp. No sign on highway *. Soon cross FR 262, signed, no parking.

27.2 Begin climbing steadily uphill above road past large blocks of rock. Then climb steeply toward ridgetop, join a good road running NE along the ridge. Reach a fine viewpoint

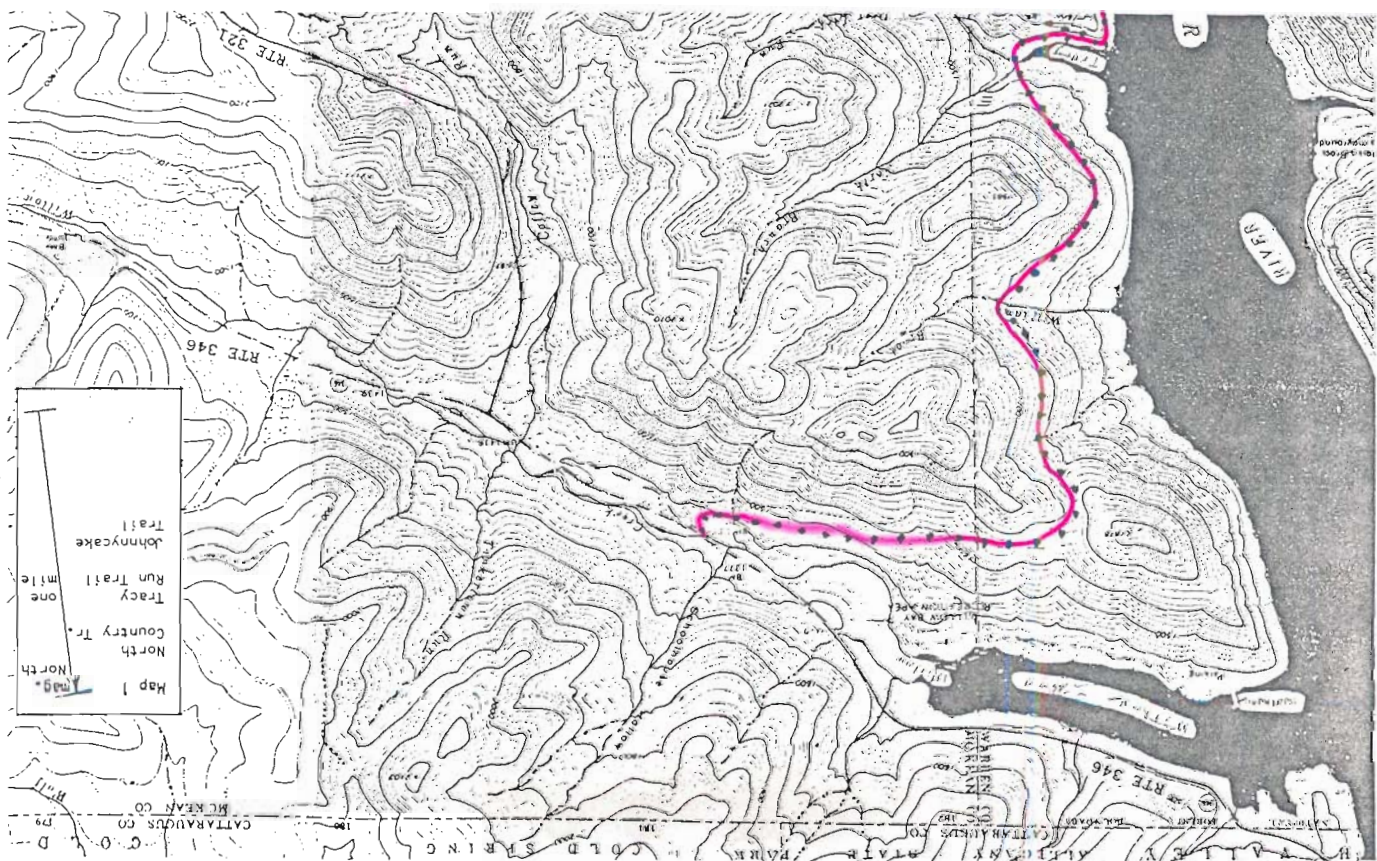
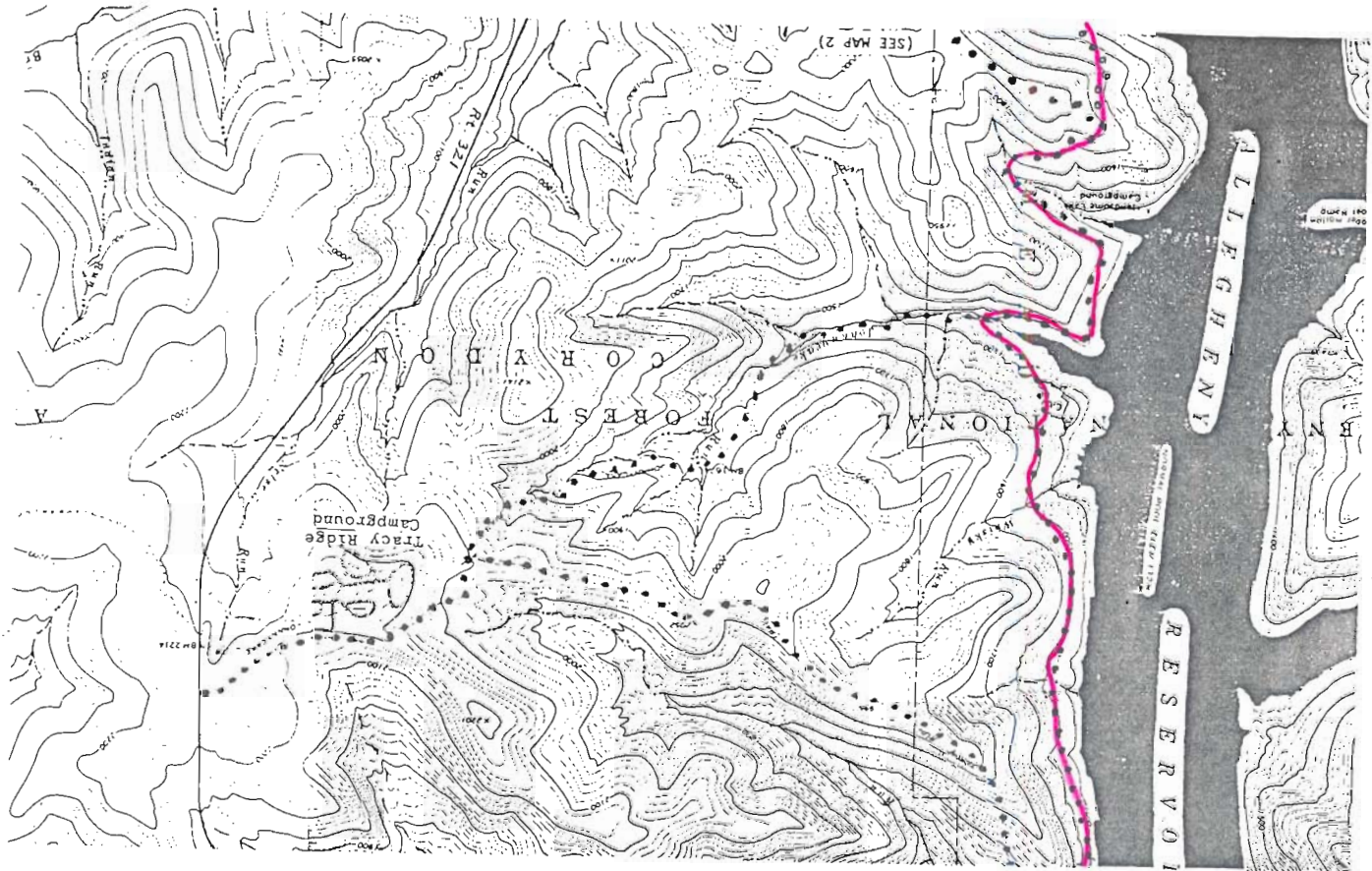
28.2 (2005') at end of ridge * and then double back (S) over summit. Follow hillside westwards, crossing small ravines, before reaching old R.R. grade. After 700 yds., turn left (E) and proceed steeply downhill, cross stream, and climb

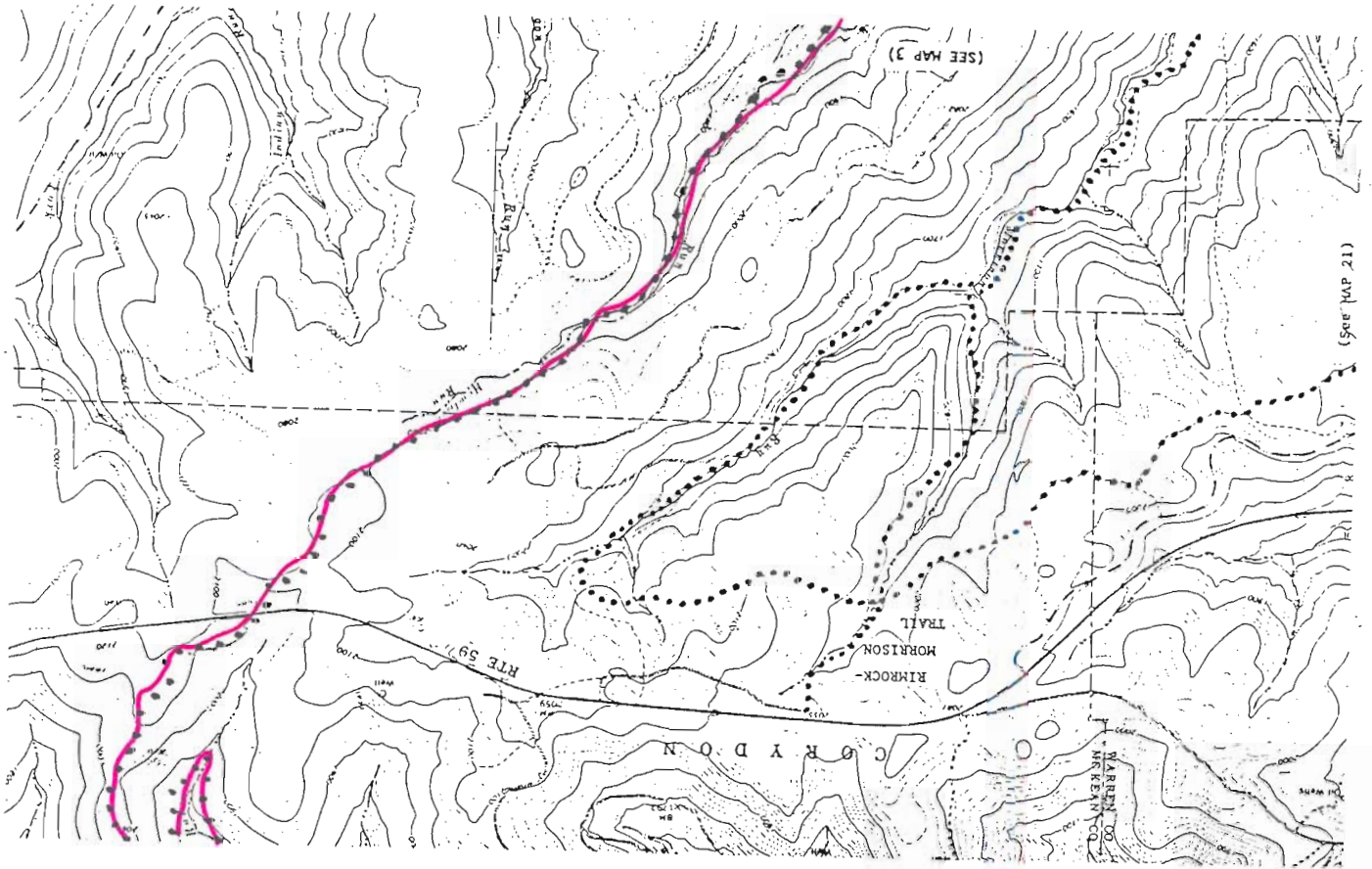
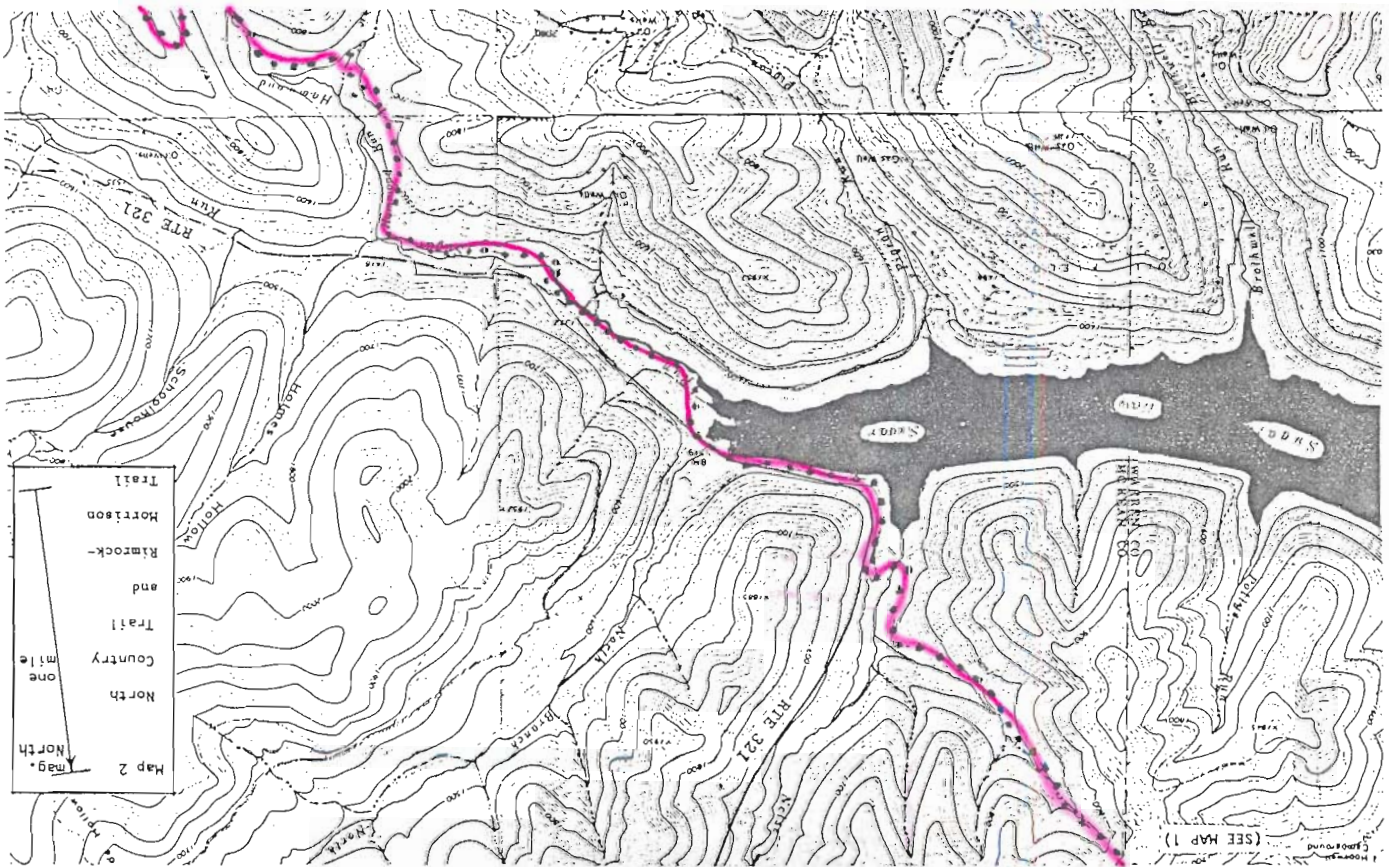
29.8 to paved Gibbs Hill Road * where trail is signed and some parking is possible (1784'). There is supposed to be a dedication marker just before Gibbs Hill Rd. Cross road and climb up to ridge top with very large clearcut below,

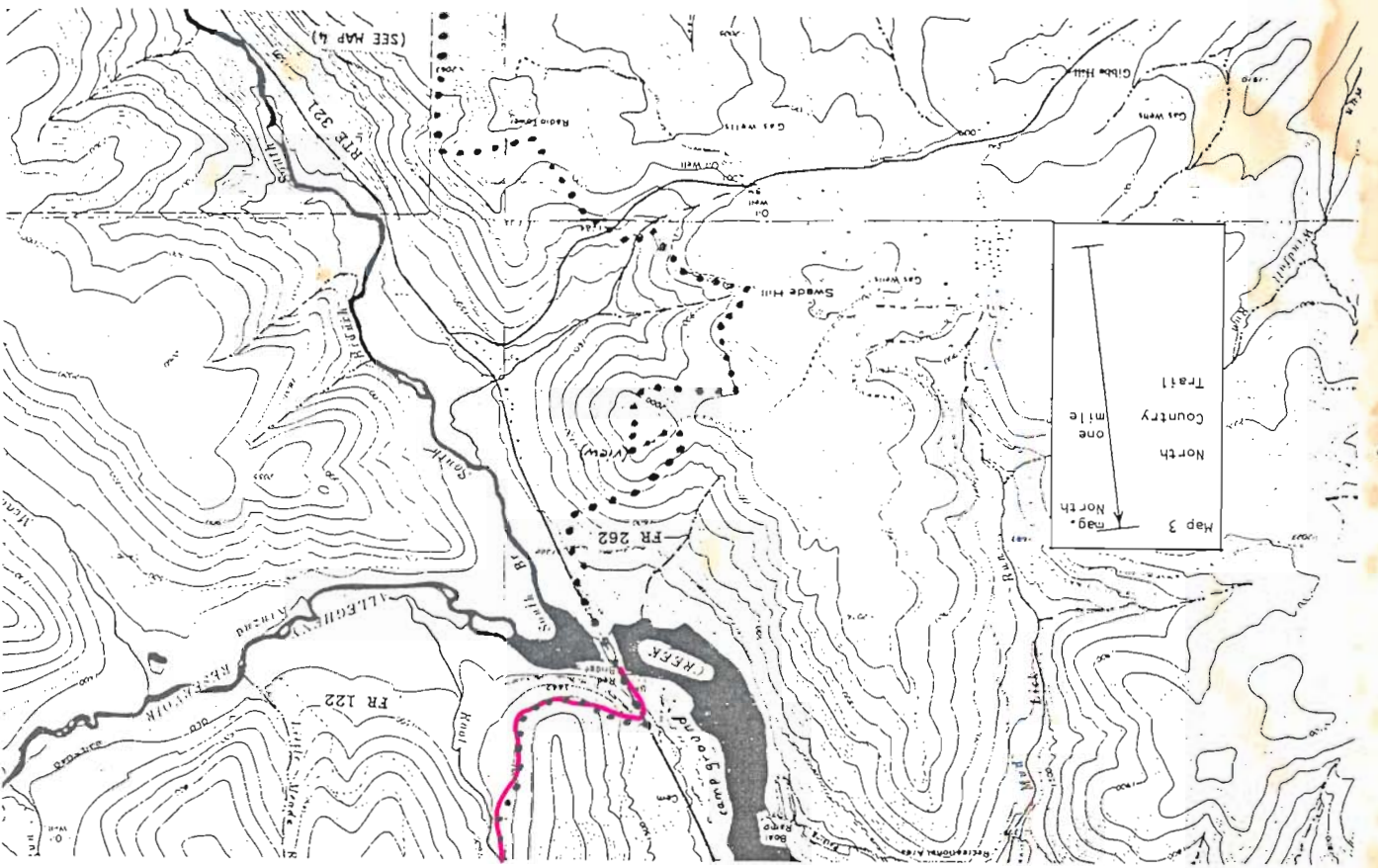
30.6 providing good views. Cross end of ridge, and then * head almost due south at USFS boundary markers. With logging road and clearcut below, good views across the valley of the South Branch of Kinzua Creek valley are available on the left (E). Trail eventually leads into level, open woods /Map 4/. Cross good woods road, continue along flat ridge top, cross another good woods road. Old oil pipes, flat

32.6 woods. Pine woods, old wood roads. Turn west *, gradually dropping. Cross minor streams. Pass gas well site. Drop 34.6 off hill to Rte. 6 (1690') *.

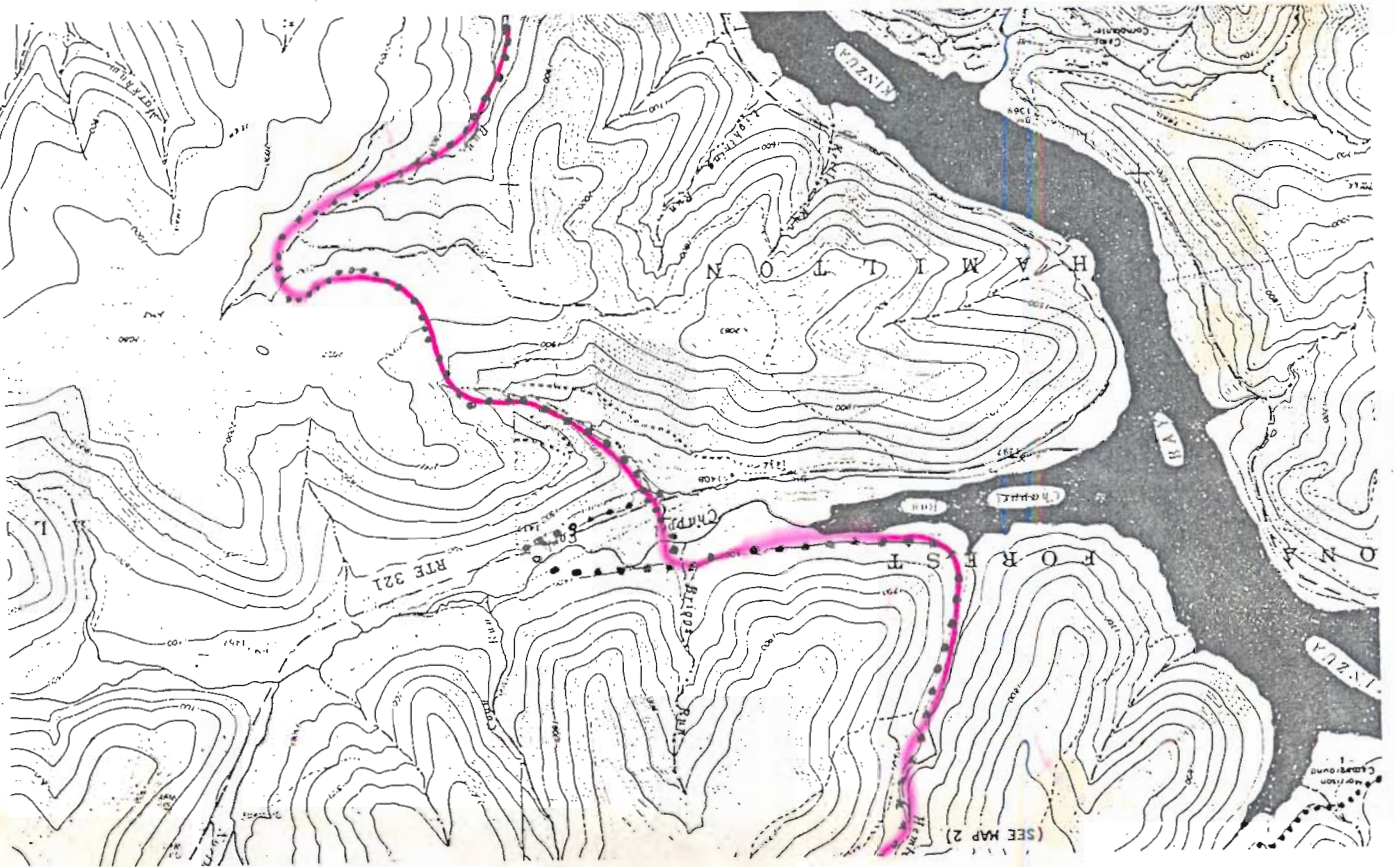
New Notes: There are no good campsites between Red Bridge and Rt. 6. There are campsites between Miles 36.4 and 37.1.







58



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