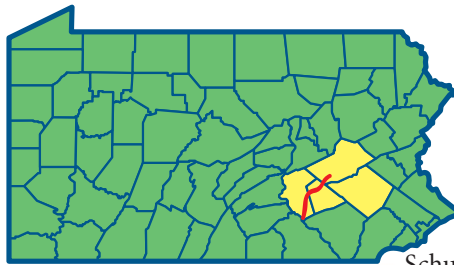




# The Swatara Creek Water Trail

Do you want to combine water, good food, recreation, open space, history, culture, scenic beauty, and geology into one day trip? We have you covered. Canoeing the “Swattie” is like exploring a wilderness. One of the only ways to tell where you are is by the bridges that cross the stream. “The Swattie” is an urban/suburban wilderness less than 50 minutes from Pennsylvania’s capital.



The Swatara Creek Water Trail is a 60-mile segment of Swatara Creek from Pine Grove, Schuylkill County,

to the PA Fish & Boat Commission’s Middletown Access, in Middletown, Dauphin County. You will see farms and bank barns, Union Canal locks, forested riparian buffers, the abandoned Lebanon to Tremont Railroad and Bridge, Harper’s Tavern, limestone outcrops, and the only lava deposits in the state. If you want to stay

in the area overnight, try the Swatara Creek Inn, Lickdale Campgrounds, Twin Grove Park, or Hershey Highmeadow Campground. Fort Indiantown Gap, the national cemetery, and historic Lindley Murray/Conrad Mill are a great hike from the water.

In central Pennsylvania, the Swatara Creek Watershed encompasses 570 square miles in Berks, Dauphin, Lebanon, and Schuylkill counties. Swatara Creek flows into the Susquehanna River, and eventually, the Chesapeake Bay. In addition to the four counties, there are 46 municipalities in the watershed with a total population of more than 800,000 people.

## Fishing Opportunities

Swatara Creek supports a diverse coolwater/warmwater fishery that includes smallmouth bass, tiger muskies, channel catfish, sunfish, and suckers. Most of these species occur in the lower portion of the creek near Middletown. The Lower Little Swatara Creek, Schuylkill County, and Quittapahilla Creek, Lebanon County, are approved trout waters. Check the current *Summary of Fishing Regulation and Laws* before fishing the creek. Review the *Summary* online at [www.fish.state.pa.us](http://www.fish.state.pa.us).

**LEGEND**

● Access Point	Interstates	County Boundaries
Caution	Roads	Fort Indiantown Gap
USGS Streamgauge <small>01572025</small>	Railroads	Weiser State Forest
Trailhead	Streams	Swatara State Park
Boats Keep Out Dam	Hiking Trail (Rail)	Gamelands
Stream Mile Marker	Appalachian Trail	Access Point
Canoe Livery	Horseshoe Trail	Access Point Trailhead

# Access Points

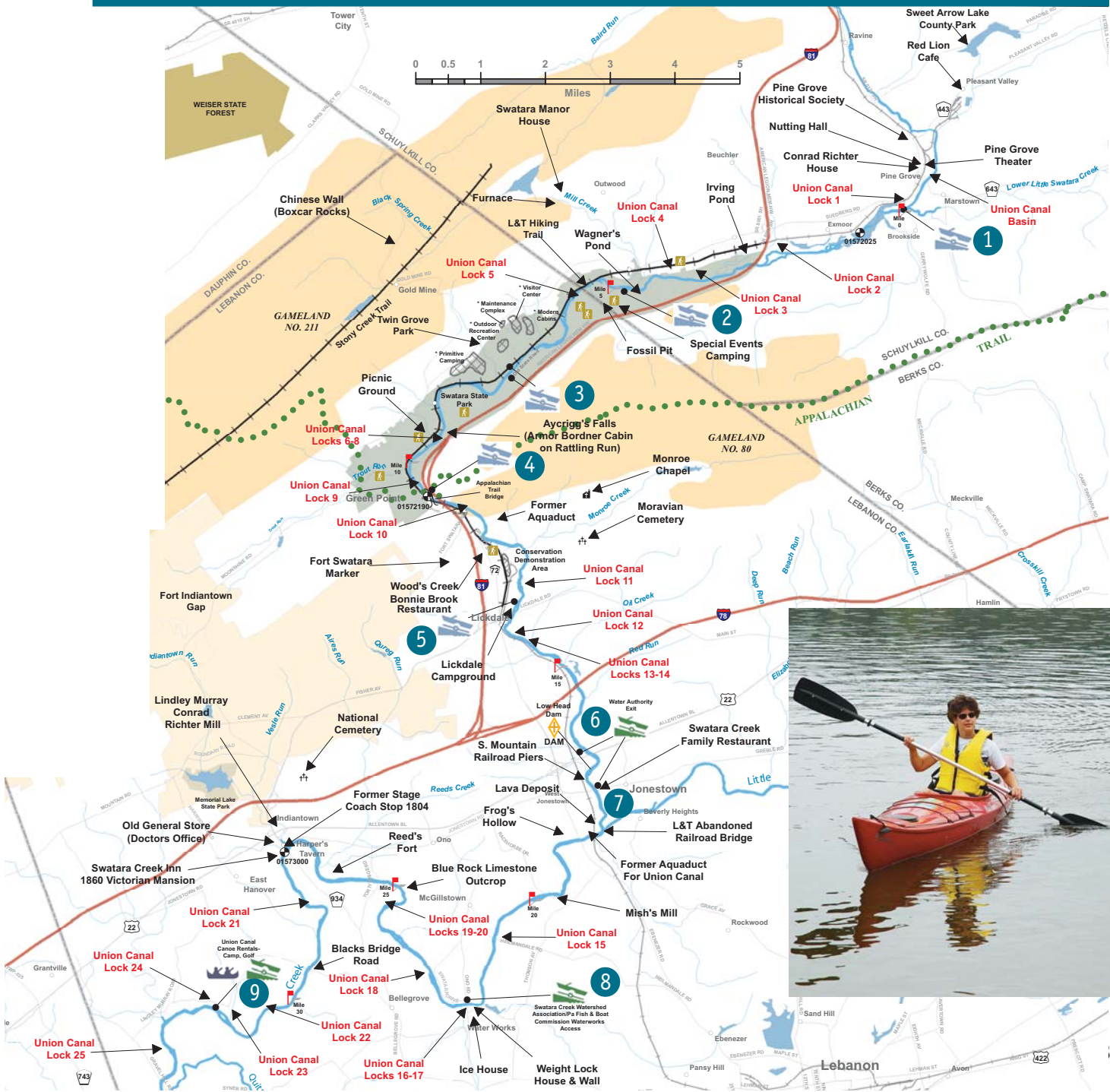
Access to the Swatara Creek Water Trail is provided at public and private access points identified on the map. Users must know their capabilities, their travel route, and their approximate float times. Prepare a float plan and always wear your life jacket. You can assume you will float at about 2 to 3 miles per hour with light paddling. For water depth/flow, check Swatara Creek Watershed Association's web site at [www.mbcomp.com/Swatara](http://www.mbcomp.com/Swatara).

## ACCESS

1. Access at Lower Little Swatara Creek
2. Swatara State Park Access
3. Swatara State Park Access
4. Access at Appalachian Trail Bridge
5. Access at Lickdale Campground
6. Access at Route 22
7. Swatara Creek Family Restaurant
8. Swatara Creek Watershed Association Waterworks Access
9. Union Canal Canoe Rentals, East Hanover Township

## OWNER

- |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|
| Heinbaugh Trailer Park              |
| DCNR                                |
| DCNR                                |
| DCNR                                |
| Kyle and Tammy Boltz                |
| Lebanon Water Authority             |
| Rick and Julie Bliesath             |
| Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission |
| Bill and Ruth Wise                  |



## ALONG THE WAY

**Pine Grove Historical Society** (formerly Pinegrove) is located in the southwest corner of Schuylkill County, just north of Blue Mountain. Originally part of Berks County, the area was first settled by German settlers exploring Swatara Creek. The town was incorporated in 1832 and became an important transportation hub of the Union Canal, and later of the railroads. For more information, visit [www.rootsweb.com/~papghs/about.htm](http://www.rootsweb.com/~papghs/about.htm).

**Pine Grove Theater** is a grand old theater of significant architecture.

**Conrad Richter House.** Author Conrad Richter wrote the novels *The Light in the Forest* and *Sea of Grass*. He was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for *The Town*, and he won a National Book Award for *The Waters of Kronos*.

**Nutting Hall** is a two-and-a-half-story wood structure with a gable roof. It is five bays across by three bays deep with a large section to the rear. The house was built between 1823 and 1825 by Peter Filbert for the family of Christian Ley (1762-1832), a son of Michael Ley who built Tulpehocken Manor.

**Red Lion Café** is on PA Route 443, five minutes east of Pine Grove.

**Sweet Arrow Lake** is just east of the Red Lion Café. Originally created in 1923 as a one-million-gallon-per-day water supply for the PP&L power plant (which closed March 28, 1962) in the Pleasant Valley section of Pine Grove, the lake has now become Schuylkill County's first county park.

**Union Canal Basin** in Pine Grove still exists. The siding for the Union

Canal Railroad was located on the west side of the basin. This was the first railroad chartered in Pennsylvania, in 1828.

**Tulpehocken Trail.** Indians used the Tulpehocken Trail, which followed Swatara Creek northward through Swatara Gap at Inwood to Suedburg.

**Swatara Furnace and Manor House** are located on Old Forge Road, east of the Lebanon Reservoir in Pine Grove Township, Suedburg, on 200 acres of land. Four buildings make up this significant architectural and engineering location, which was once part of a thriving industry between 1825 and 1874.

**Stony Creek Trail**, sometimes called St. Anthony's Wilderness, was once a railroad, and runs eastward 20 miles from the Susquehanna River, Dauphin County, to the Lebanon Reservoir, Schuylkill County. The trail surface of crushed stone is used for hiking, horses, and cross-country skiing.

**Box Car Rocks**, also known as High Rocks or Point of Rocks, are located in Stony Valley. A Pottsville Conglomerate, the rocks are steeped in Indian legend.

**State Game Lands 211** stretches from the Carbon/Schuylkill County line southwest to the Susquehanna River.

**Jacob's Lutheran Church** is on PA Route 443 just past the Interstate 81 interchange. It is the second-oldest church in Schuylkill County, and the first to be organized in the county west of the Schuylkill River, in 1780.

**Sattazahn Church and cemetery.** This Lutheran church was founded by German immigrants in 1729. The

church was served by traveling missionary John Casper Stover Jr. In 1756, the structure was made of logs. The current structure was built in 1872, and named in honor of Peter Sattazahn, a Revolutionary War soldier buried there.

**Twin Grove Park.** Visit [www.twingrovecampground.com/](http://www.twingrovecampground.com/) for more information.

**Swatara State Park.** For more information, visit [www.wordwork.com/pdfs/SwataraExplorer\\_SUM02.pdf](http://www.wordwork.com/pdfs/SwataraExplorer_SUM02.pdf).

**Fossil Pits** in Swatara State Park contain both Tuscarora Quartzite, which is 425 million years old from the Silurian Age, and Martinsburg Formation, which is 500 million years or Ordovician, which produced 235 feet of fossiliferous beds exposed in an open pit.

**Aycrigg's Falls** was an Indian lookout and smoke-signal station.

**The Appalachian Trail** is 2,100 miles long, stretching through 17 states from Maine to Georgia. Hikers cross the historic iron Waterville Bridge.

**Fort Swatara** was built to guard Swatara Gap. In 1756, Captain Frederick Smith built a stockade blockhouse.

**Woods Creek.** Bonnie Brook is a refurbished restaurant along PA Route 72 just south of Swatara State Park.

**The L&T Railroad**, an abandoned Lebanon and Tremont line, is now a foot and bike path through Swatara State Park.

**Lickdale Campground.** Call (877) 865-6411, (717) 865-6411, or visit [www.lickdalecampground.com/](http://www.lickdalecampground.com/) for more information.

**The Lebanon Water Authority** intake is just east of PA Route 72 and north of Jonestown, where water is drawn from a low-head dam on the Swatara. On closer inspection, you can see remnants of the South Mountain Railroad piers.

From PA Route 72 you can **access** the creek on the northeast corner of the bridge going toward Jonestown, at Swatara Creek Family Restaurant, (717) 865-7277.

**Frog's Hollow Complex.** Located on the creek's north bank, just past the PA Route 72 bridge. The complex sells motorcycles and hosts a flea market.



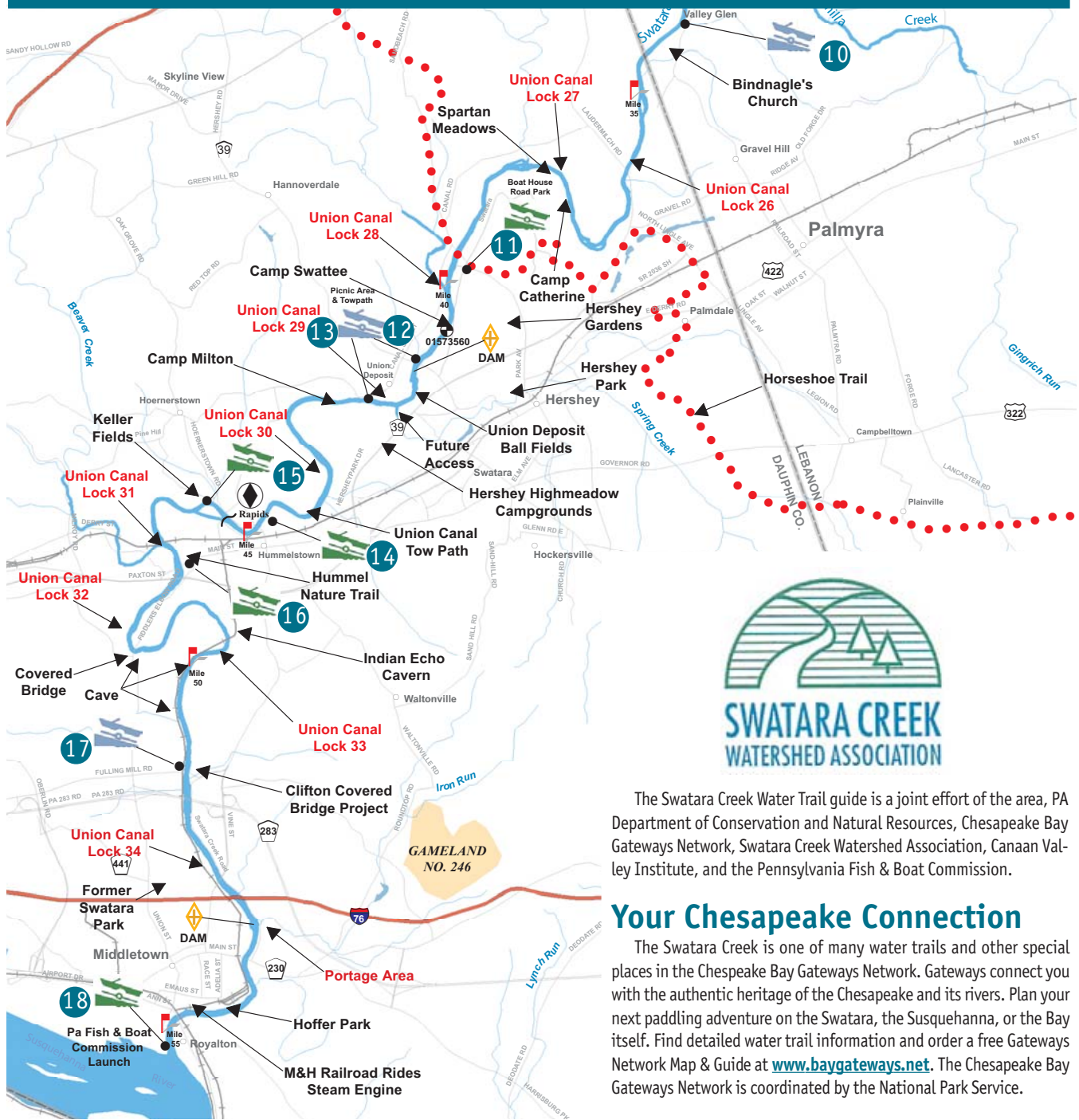
## Pennsylvania Official Water Trails

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission is the sole agency that designates official Pennsylvania water trails. However, individual trails and trail corridors are created and maintained by a network of volunteers, property owners, civic groups, and associations. If you or your organization would like to create a water trail, or if you'd like to nominate an existing water trail for recognition as an official Pennsylvania water trail, contact the Commission by calling 717-705-7800 or on the web at [http://sites.state.pa.us/PA\\_Exec/Fish\\_Boat/inform.htm](http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/Fish_Boat/inform.htm). To view the Commission's water trail pages, on the left side of the Commission web site's main page, [www.fish.state.pa.us](http://www.fish.state.pa.us), click on "Water Trails."

# Access Points

Access to the Swatara Creek Water Trail is provided at public and private access points identified on the map. Users must know their capabilities, their travel route, and their approximate float times. Prepare a float plan and always wear your life jacket. You can assume you will float at about 2 to 3 miles per hour with light paddling. For water depth/flow, check Swatara Creek Watershed Association's web site at [www.mbcomp.com/Swatara](http://www.mbcomp.com/Swatara).

ACCESS	OWNER
10. Access at Valley Glen	Private
11. Boat House Road Park	Derry Township
12. Access above Union Deposit	Private
13. Swatara Park, Union Deposit	South Hanover Township
14. Access at Hummelstown	Hummelstown Borough
15. Access at Keller Fields	Hummelstown Borough
16. Hanover St. Bridge and Hummel Nature Trail	Hummelstown Borough
17. Clifton Covered Bridge Project, Fulling Mill Road	Lower Swatara Township
18. Middletown Access	Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission



The Swatara Creek Water Trail guide is a joint effort of the area, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, Swatara Creek Watershed Association, Canaan Valley Institute, and the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission.

## Your Chesapeake Connection

The Swatara Creek is one of many water trails and other special places in the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network. Gateways connect you with the authentic heritage of the Chesapeake and its rivers. Plan your next paddling adventure on the Swatara, the Susquehanna, or the Bay itself. Find detailed water trail information and order a free Gateways Network Map & Guide at [www.baygateways.net](http://www.baygateways.net). The Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network is coordinated by the National Park Service.

**Union Canal.** Along the entire creek are remnants of the Union Canal, operated from 1828 to 1884. The canal once connected the Susquehanna River at Middletown with the Schuylkill River at Reading, following Swatara and Tulpehocken creeks. The old towpath is still visible in many areas. Suggested by William Penn, the canal was surveyed in 1762.

**Water Works.** Just east off of One Road, Water Works was a community built to support the canal. The weigh master's house was used as a headquarters for the Union Canal at Water Works. A "weigh wall" still stands where boats were tied for weighing their freight loads. An old icehouse that stored ice cut from a dam provided winter employment for canal workers.

**Blue Rock.** On the right bank, Blue Rock is a magnificent limestone outcrop. In early spring, wildflowers of many colors appear on the face.

**Reed's Fort,** the house of Adam Reed, Esquire, was turned into a fort in 1755. Here, with rangers from Hanover Township, Reed protected the people of the countryside against Indian raids.

**Harper's Tavern.** Near PA Route 934 north of Annville, Harper's Tavern, (717) 865-2584, was an 1804 stagecoach stop on old U.S. Route 22 between Allentown and Harrisburg.

**Conrad's Mill.** Located just north of Harper's Tavern is Conrad's Mill. On June 7, 1745, the site was the birthplace of Lindley Murray, a famous grammarian and author. Robert Murray, Lindley's father, owned the mill from 1745 to 1746. For a time, the site was known as Shuey's Mill.

**Fort Indiantown Gap National Guard Training Center** (FIG-NGTC) is currently the largest employer in Lebanon County. It is located just north of Swatara Creek. On April 10, 1931, Governor Gifford Pinchot ("Father of Conservation") authorized the creation of the training site for the PA National Guard.

FIG-NGTC is the largest landholding in the Swatara Creek Watershed (the headwaters of Trout Run, Indiantown Run, and Manada Creek originate on the

post). The PA National Guard won the Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence in 2001 (the first state agency) for environmental restoration and watershed management. FIG-NGTC is the only home to the regal fritillary butterfly in the state, and over 20 rare species share their habitat with PA National Guard soldiers and airmen. For more information, visit <http://www.dmva.state.pa.us/ftig/site/default.asp>.

**Indiantown Gap National Cemetery,** operated by the U.S. Veterans Affairs, is adjacent to Fort Indiantown Gap. For more information, visit [www.cem.va.gov/nchp/indiantowngap.htm](http://www.cem.va.gov/nchp/indiantowngap.htm).

**Memorial Lake State Park** was created in 1945 for Army amphibious training and is dedicated to the memory of the officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and Guardsmen of the Pennsylvania National Guard who served their state and nation during World War I and World War II. For more information, visit [www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/memorillake.aspx](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/memorillake.aspx).

**Swatara Creek Inn.** To the west of Harper's Tavern on old Route 22, the Swatara Creek Inn, (717) 865-3259, is a three-story Victorian mansion built in 1860 for Jacob Ulrich.

**Union Canal Canoe Rentals.** Along Black's Bridge Road you will find Union Canal Canoe Rentals, owned by Bill and Ruth Wise. As the business name suggests, you can rent canoes. Call (717) 838-9580 for more information.

**Valley Glen.** Until the 1930s, Valley Glen was a recreational park near Bindnagle's Church for swimming, boating and carousel rides. For more information, visit [www.palmyrapa.com/history/bindnagle.shtml](http://www.palmyrapa.com/history/bindnagle.shtml).

**Camp Catherine, Spartan Meadows, Camp Swattee and Camp Milton.** Owned by Milton Hershey Schools.

**Boat House Road Park** is a public access maintained by Derry Township, but it is owned by Milton Hershey Schools.

**Horseshoe Trail,** reached just before Sand Beach Road, crosses the Swatara

Creek Water Trail. For more information, visit <http://n99.com/hst>.

**Hershey facilities** are located along the Swatara Creek Water Trail. Hersheypark and Hershey Gardens are well-known tourist attractions. For more information, visit [www.hersheypa.com/attractions/hersheypark](http://www.hersheypa.com/attractions/hersheypark).

**Union Deposit** is a great access below the Hershey Dam. Indians lived in Union Deposit until the late 1700s. Later, farmers brought their grain and other produce from the Pennsylvania Dutch areas here for shipment to the market via the Union Canal.

**Hershey Highmeadow Campground.** Call (717) 566-0902 or visit [www.hersheypa.com/accommodations/hershey\\_highmeadow\\_campground](http://www.hersheypa.com/accommodations/hershey_highmeadow_campground) for more information.

**Keller Ball Fields** is a municipal park in Hummelstown.

**Hummel Nature Trail** is a municipal park in Hummelstown with creek access.

**Indian Echo Caverns.** Susquehannock Indians once lived and hunted there. For more information, visit [www.indianechocaverns.com](http://www.indianechocaverns.com).

**Clifton Covered Bridge Project.** Another river access is at a washed-out covered bridge location. Future plans include reproduction of the covered bridge at Clifton.

**Swatara Township Park** is a former amusement park.

**Hoffer Park** is a municipal park in Middletown.

**M&H (Middletown & Hummelstown) Railroad.** For more information, call (717) 944-4435, or visit [www.mhrrailroad.com](http://www.mhrrailroad.com).

**Middletown Access.** The water trail ends at the PA Fish & Boat Commission's Middletown Access. The Middletown Fire Company, 660 South Union Street, Middletown, has a water rescue team. For assistance, call (717) 948-3019. ☐