



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Joseph M.  
McDade  
Recreational  
Trail**

*Pennsylvania*



## Joseph M. McDade Recreational Trail

Pennsylvania

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The Joseph M. McDade Recreational Trail runs nearly the length of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River across from New Jersey. The protected area preserves the flora and fauna, as well as historical and archaeological sites, in a steep gorge that the river carved through a ridge in the Appalachian Mountains. Several waterfalls crash off the cliffs.

The federal government acquired the land through which the trail runs in the 1950s to the 1970s for a flood-control dam. The government officially abandoned the dam

project in the 1990s, though it was voted down in 1975 due to opposition from scientists and displaced residents. The National Park Service then acquired the 40-mile-long corridor for the recreation area. It named the trail along the river for the late Joseph M. McDade, a congressman who represented the district.

The gravel path runs 31.3 miles along the river, except for a nearly mile-long section that climbs from the river to the visitor center on a ridge overlooking the southern section. Trailheads are less than 5 miles apart and are connected by a free bus shuttle that runs on weekends through the summer. A 2.5-mile section below the cliff face between the Conashaugh and Pittman Orchard trailheads (miles 26 to 28.5) is closed December 15–July 15 every year to avoid disturbing nesting eagles.

Starting at the Hialeah trailhead in East Stroudsburg, the trail runs along a fairly flat segment through the woods along the river for about 6 miles to the Owens trailhead, where it climbs a ridge on switchbacks for 0.7 mile to the park's visitor center. Observation platforms here allow visitors to see the river below and wildlife. This is the most difficult section of trail.

The next 3.5 miles cross rolling terrain into the Bushkill area, once a busy resort and farming community. Archaeological studies here also reveal American Indians once thrived in this area. The trail runs between US 209 and the Delaware River over the next several miles, arriving at the former site of the Egypt Mills.

The trail variously passes through cropland and forests to a good view of the river at Eshback Access, a boat launching site. The woods north of here teem with wildlife, and you may see bears and deer along with squirrels, chipmunks, and raccoons. The longest stretch between trailheads—5.3 miles—occurs between Jerry Lees trailhead and Schneider Farm trailhead at mile 21.4.



# Joseph M. McDade Recreational Trail

Pennsylvania

**States:** Pennsylvania

**Counties:** Pike

Length: 31.3miles

**Trail end points:** Hialeah Trailhead in Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (East Stroudsburg) to Milford Beach trailhead in Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (Milford)

**Trail surfaces:** Gravel

**Trail category:** Greenway/Non-RT

**Trail activities:** Fishing,Mountain

## Parking & Trail Access

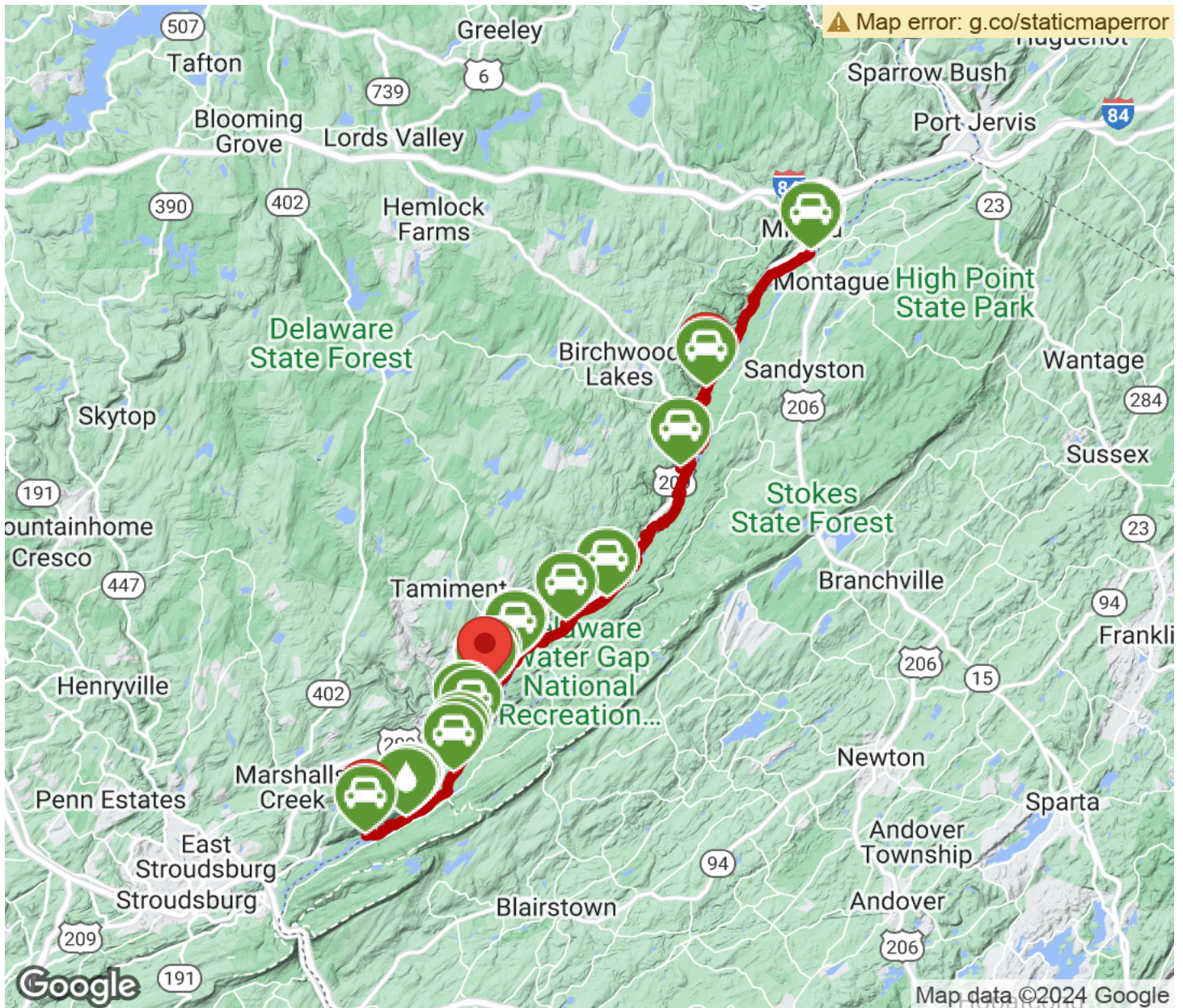
To reach the Hialeah trailhead from I-80, take Exit 310 for SR 611/Delaware Water Gap. If coming from I-80 W, continue on the ramp 0.5 mile and exit to the right to merge onto River Road. If coming from I-80 E, turn left onto River Road (part of this road is closed in winter). Go 4.0 miles, and turn right onto the access road for the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Go about 490 feet, and turn left onto another access road, and then go 0.1 mile to the trailhead.

To reach the northern endpoint at Milford Beach trailhead from I-84, take Exit 46 for US 6 toward Milford, and head southeast on US 6 E. Go 2.2 miles, and continue straight onto E. Hartford St. Go 0.5 mile, and turn left onto Milford Beach Road/SR 2013. Go 0.5 mile, and look for parking in the lot.



# Joseph M. McDade Recreational Trail

Pennsylvania



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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