



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Penn's Creek  
Path (Mid  
State Trail)**  
*Pennsylvania*



## Penn's Creek Path (Mid State Trail)

Pennsylvania

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A renovated former railroad tunnel that features a separate entrance for bats is a highlight of the Penn's Creek Path. The path is a relatively flat segment of the 328-mile Mid State Trail that runs across the ridge and valley section of Central Pennsylvania. Visitors can easily traverse the 2.7-mile trail through hardwood forest overlooking Penn's Creek by bicycle, on horseback, or on foot.

The Lewisburg, Centre and Spruce Creek Railroad left behind the railroad grade that the trail follows. Pitched as an east-west route across the mountains in the late 1850s to link with larger rail lines and to haul lumber out of the mountains, the railroad had difficulties building across the mountains and didn't finish the Penn's Creek section until 1877. It became the Lewisburg and Tyrone Railroad

after bankruptcy in 1879, and the Pennsylvania Railroad acquired it in 1915. Trains stopped using it in 1968.

You won't find towns or services along the trail, although pit toilets and drinking water are available at campgrounds in Poe Paddy State Park near the western trailhead. A state project to renovate the previously closed almost-300-foot tunnel in 2015 had the side benefits of shoring up the eastern 2 miles of trail for construction traffic, as well as redecking a pedestrian bridge over Penn's Creek. While birding is a popular pastime along the trail, you might encounter other wildlife on the trail, such as black bears, bobcats, and timber rattlers. It's best to review the proper options for dealing with these wildlife before setting out in their habitat.

Heading east from the Tunnel Spur Road trailhead at Poe Paddy State Park, named for an old lumbering town here, you'll soon come to a pedestrian bridge crossing Penn's Creek. If you're here in late May or June, you'll likely see fly-fishers hoping to catch brown trout with green drake flies.

Soon after crossing the bridge you'll encounter the entrance to a tunnel blasted through West Paddy Mountain. Closed because of safety concerns for two years, the tunnel reopened in 2016 with a new wall lining and trail surface. Take a flashlight, because a curve prevents light from passing through the tunnel. Above the east entrance, you'll see a bat gate where winged mammals can come and go. The bats generally find other places to roost in the spring and summer and retire here in the winter to hibernate.

Exiting the tunnel, you'll experience a pleasant trek through the designated 6,000-acre Penn's Creek Wild Area for the next 2.4 miles to the Cherry Run parking lot, with about 50ft along Cherry Run Road. From the parking lot, the Mid State Trail curves north and leaves the old rail bed. From the end of Penn's Creek Path, a 3-foot-wide hardpacked-dirt path with a nice tree canopy continues for a little less than half-a-mile and terminates where the former railroad corridor



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**States:** Pennsylvania

**Counties:** Centre, Mifflin, Union

Length: 2.7 miles

**Trail end points:** Tunnel Spur Rd between Poe Paddy Dr & Stewart Ln at Poe Paddy State Park (Woodward) to Fish Commission parking lot, 0.5 mile west of Cherry Run Rd/SR 3002 & Weikert Rd (Cherry Run)

**Trail surfaces:** Crushed Stone

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Fishing, Horseback

## Parking & Trail Access

Parking is available at a number of locations along the trail. View the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions. Parking locations include a parking lot off Tunnel Spur Road (look for the trailhead parking lot on the right) and a parking lot off Cherry Run Road/SR 3002 (look for the parking on the left).



# Penn's Creek Path (Mid State Trail)

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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