



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Clarion-Little Toby Trail

Pennsylvania



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The Clarion-Little Toby Trail lets you venture on the wild side for 18 miles as it traverses remote state hunting grounds adjoining the Allegheny National Forest. You'll likely see deer and other wildlife as you follow the Clarion River and Little Toby Creek. There are ghost towns to explore and an off-trail swinging bridge you can cross.

The trail consists of well-packed, fine gravel and is flat with the exception of a short hill near Ridgway. Although motorized use is prohibited, motorized wheelchairs are allowed.

The crushed-stone trail connects Ridgway and Brockway, two towns with historic districts that grew out of the early 19th-century logging industry. Both towns offer restaurants and grocery stores to stock up for your

travels. The trail follows the former Ridgway and Clearfield Railroad, built in 1883 between Ridgway and Falls Creek to develop coal deposits in the area; the Pennsylvania Railroad acquired the line in 1911. The route fell into disuse between 1968 and 1972, and the Tricounty Rails to Trails Association completed the trail in 2003. Because the trail passes through state game lands (Nos. 44 and 54), it's a good idea to stay on the trail and wear brightly colored clothing during hunting season. At other times you might want to explore the sites of several ghost towns and other landmarks that are described by historical markers. Starting in Ridgway, the trail soon joins the Clarion River, which was used to transport lumber downstream in the 1800s. In 1996 the Clarion River was named a national wild and scenic river, quite an accomplishment considering that it was once known as the state's most polluted river due to acid-mine runoff and tannery pollution. At 2.5 miles, a 0.2-mile gap puts you on Portland Mills Road/PA 949. One of the first trailside attractions—at mile 4.1—is the ruins of a dam destroyed by a flood in 1936. Just 0.1 mile beyond this point, you'll find the ghost towns of Cherry Tree Flat and Mill Haven. At the 5-mile mark, you'll see the trestle for the Buffalo & Pittsburgh Railroad that crosses the river, and in another mile, you'll ride alongside those tracks for 1.8 miles. At 7.8 miles along the route, you'll veer away from the tracks and the Clarion River, as you follow a barely perceptible slope upstream along Little Toby Creek toward Brockway. For the next 9 miles, you travel through state game lands. Over the next 5 miles, you'll pass old railroad abutments, the site of a Depression-era public jobs camp, ruins of a quarry and rock crusher, and the ghost towns of Grove and Shorts Mill. The off-trail Blue Rock Swinging Bridge connects to another ghost town across Little Toby Creek at 12.2 miles. The footbridge, once the site of a road crossing between Blue Rock and Ellmont, has cables to steady yourself as you cross. You'll pass a couple more ghost town sites over the last 6 miles before you arrive in Brockway.



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States: Pennsylvania

Counties: Elk, Jefferson

Length: 18.4 miles

Trail end points: Water St. and Center St.
(Ridgway) to Seventh Ave. just south of
McCullough Ave. at Taylor Memorial Park
(Brockway)

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Fishing, Mountain
Biking, Walking, Cross Country Skiing

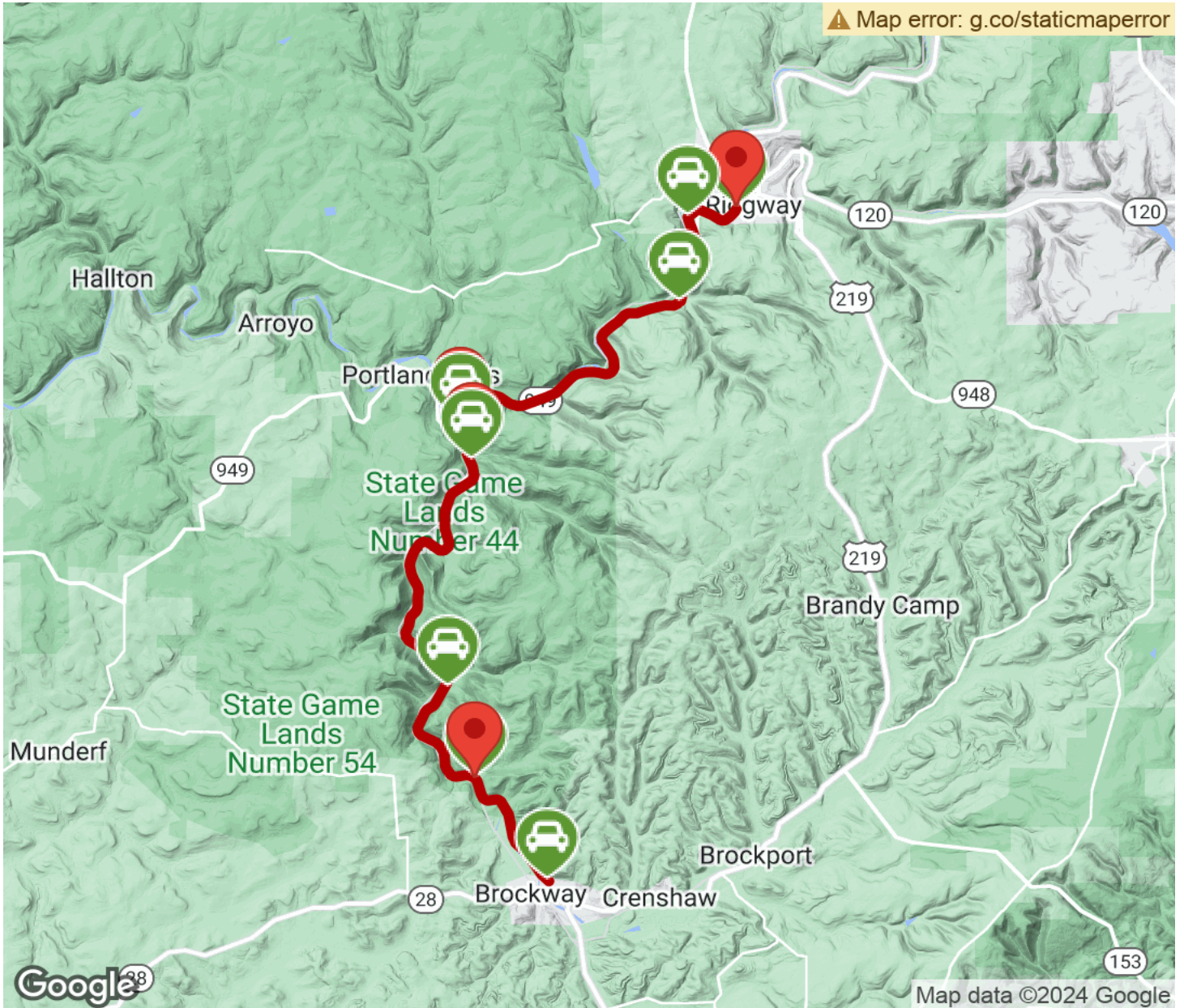
Parking & Trail Access

There are several parking locations available along the trailhead. See [TrailLink Map](#) for more information.



Clarion-Little Toby Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

TrailLink.com