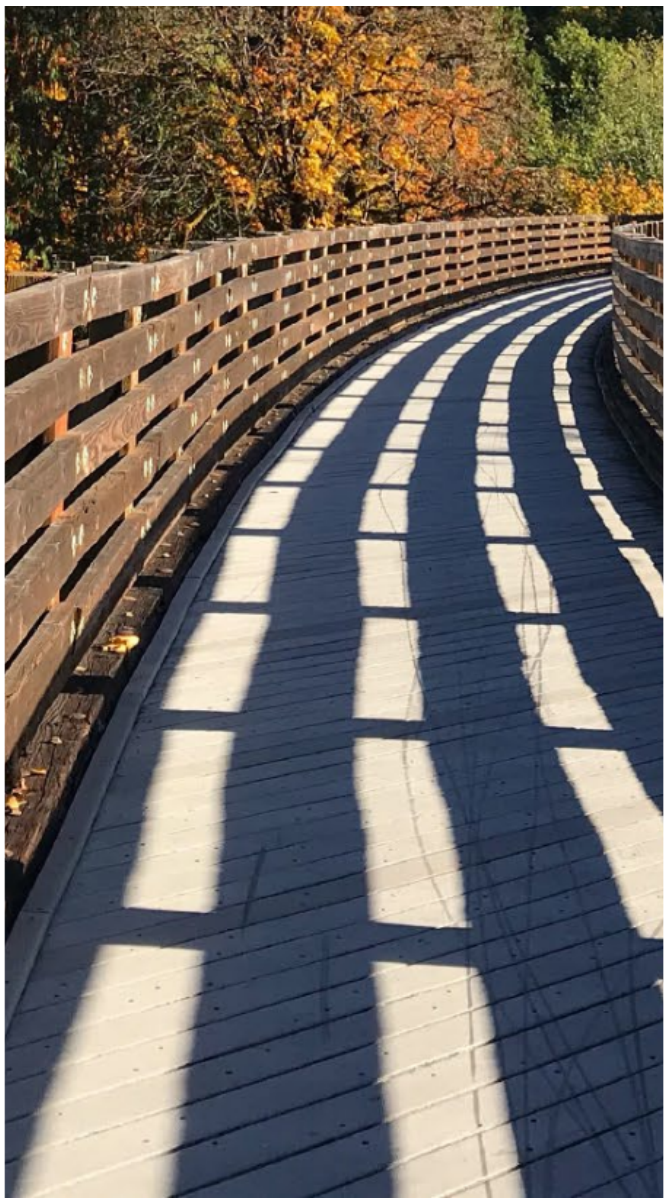
TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

2025

TrailLink Unlimited

Guides



Big Woods Trail (PA)

Pennsylvania

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Envisioned as a multi-use trail that will eventually connect the Thun Trail section of the Schuylkill River Trail in Union Township in southeast Berks County to the towns of Elverson and St. Peters in northwest Chester County, three disconnected segments of the Big Woods Trail have been completed and are currently opened to the public.

The northernmost, and longest, completed section of the trail, which will eventually extend 13 miles through the Hopewell Big Woods, connects the Thun Trail with Crusher Road. A meadow-like environment dominates on this 2-mile segment, which gently winds up a hill for most of its length.

The 1-mile middle section connects the historic Hopewell Iron Furnace National Historic site to nearby French Creek State Park. Despite its short length, this section of trail passes the historical buildings of the iron furnace complex, which used charcoal to smelt iron ore from nearby mines in the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as scenic French Creek Lake. It also connects to the Horseshoe Trail, a hiking and equestrian trail that extends from the Appalachian Trail northeast of Harrisburg, east through the PA Highlands to Valley Forge, as well as a network of hiking paths in French Creek State Park.

The southernmost segment of trail, which is only 0.3 miles long, is constructed along an old railroad grade in the borough of Elverson in northwest Chester County. This section begins at Route 23 (Main Street) and extends north to Park Ave., with a small branch to a nearby apartment complex. Highlights on this section include an old train station and bank building, and there are several other historical buildings located elsewhere in the town.

These segments will eventually be joined together, connecting the Thun and Horseshoe trails, as well as several parks and historical sites. It might also eventually be extended further south along an abandoned rail line toward Honey Brook and may ultimately link to an extended Struble Trail.

Big Woods Trail (PA)

Pennsylvania

States: Pennsylvania
Counties: Berks,Chester
Length: 3miles
Trail end points: Thun Trail, about 2 miles east of Birdsboro to Route 23 (Main Street) in Elverson
Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone
Trail category: Rail-Trail
Trail activities: Bike,Wheelchair Accessible,Horseback Riding,Mountain Biking,Walking

Parking & Trail Access

Parking is available for the northern segment off Center Road, the middle segment in Hopewell Furnace Historical Area and off Park Road in French Creek State Park and the southernmost section in the Hopewell Village Apartments in Elverson.

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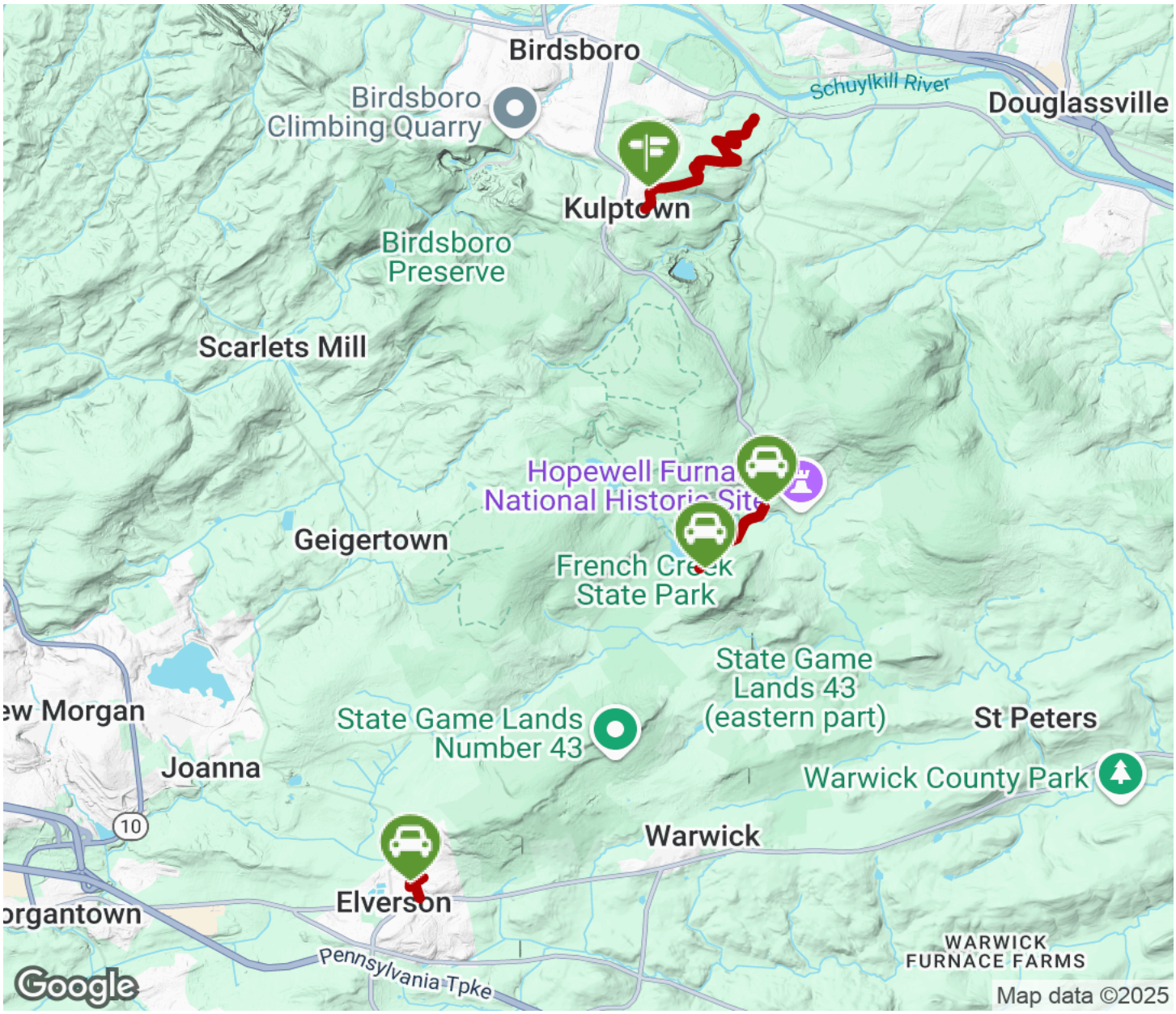

Trailhead Restroom Parking Water Fountain Tunnel

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