

Trail Tips

1. For safety, hike with a companion. Disabling injuries are very dangerous when hiking alone.
2. The only drinking water supplies available are shown on the map. We suggest that visitors carry their own water. The supply is limited so please use water conservatively. Water may not be provided in winter when access roads are impassable.
3. Respect the solitude sought by other backpackers and practice good camping etiquette. Become familiar with backpacking techniques to ensure a successful and enjoyable outing.
4. The main trail is marked with orange blazes, and side trails are marked with white blazes. If hikers become lost, follow water courses downhill to a road, usually within a mile. Carry a map and a compass.
5. Beware of venomous snakes. High leather boots or heavy leggings afford good protection. People should watch where they sit or put their hands, especially in rocky areas. If bitten, seek medical aid immediately.
6. Select and pack food to have a minimum of awkward and disposable containers. A portable stove is recommended. Supplies of wood fuel may not be readily available.
7. Extinguish all smoking materials carefully. Scrape away all leaves and duff to mineral soil. Be especially careful with campground fires and smoking during March, April, May, October and November, the forest fire danger periods in Ohio.
8. If hikers discover a forest fire, hike the trail to the nearest road immediately and report it to the forest or park headquarters.
9. For the protection of our hikers, park vehicles only at the trailhead.
10. Stream crossings may be impassable due to runoff following a severe storm.
11. Winter backpackers should be experienced and prepared for the changing weather and conditions they may encounter.
12. Be aware of the various hunting seasons as public hunting is permitted on state forest land.

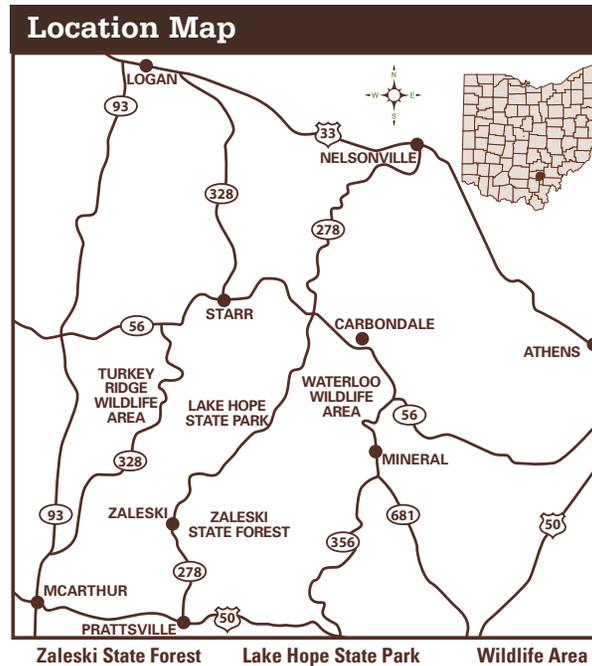
Emergency Phone Numbers

EMERGENCIES: 911

Forestry Office: 740-596-5781

Vinton County Sheriff's Office: 740-596-5242

Athens County Sheriff's Office: 740-593-6633



Additional Information

ZALESKI STATE FOREST

P.O. Box 330 State Route 278
Zaleski, Ohio 45698
877-247-8733

LAKE HOPE STATE PARK

27331 State Route 278
McArthur, Ohio 45651
Park Office: 740-596-4938

forestry.ohiodnr.gov

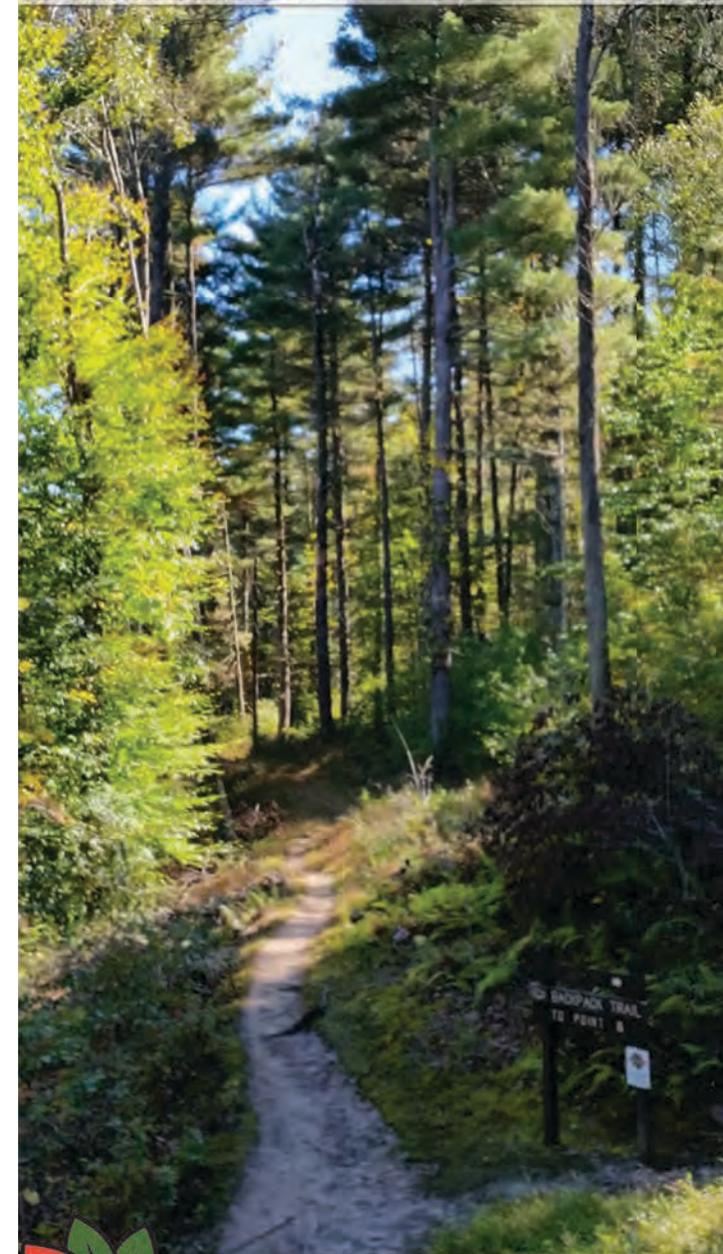
EMERGENCIES: Call 911



Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry
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ZALESKI STATE FOREST

BACKPACK TRAIL



Ohio Department of
NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FORESTRY

Welcome to the Zaleski State Forest Backpack Trail

This trail was established to provide backpacking opportunities and to introduce some scenic and historic aspects of the forest. For a 10-mile day trip, follow the southern loop (Waypoints: XYCDEFGHIJKYX) of the backpack trail. This is a rather lengthy and strenuous hike. Carry a canteen, lunch and energy-supplying snacks. The lettered posts along the trail correspond with the paragraphs that follow.

- A. Overnight trailhead parking.
- B. Intersection of main backpack trail and connector trail.
- C. Drinking water.
- D. Campsite No. 1.
- E. The west side of the trail burned in an accidental wildfire in 2012, and the east side burned during a prescribed fire in 2005. Prescribed fire is a tool foresters use to help reduce excess “fuel” such as leaves and woody debris, as well as to promote oak and hickory regeneration. While wildfires often become too hot and damage the forest, prescribed fires are set under conditions to limit damaging impacts.



- F. Located on the next hilltop from this overlook is a section of railroad track that is claimed to be haunted by a brakeman, known as the Moonville Ghost. He was killed while he was supposedly drunk and trying to stop a train near the Moonville Tunnel by waving his lantern. He was buried in the Moonville graveyard, but reportedly, he can still be seen waving his lantern trying to stop that train.
- G. Ohio's State Forests are managed for a variety of purposes, including timber production and wildlife habitat. Areas like these wetlands, which are adjacent to woodland cover, provide a unique and special habitat.
- H. The small, doughnut-shaped mound is a ceremonial ring that was built and used by the Native Americans of the Adena group.
- I. Campsite No. 2 and drinking water.
- J. This selective harvest was completed in 2012. The purpose of the harvest was to remove trees that were stressed, damaged or inhibiting the growth of better quality trees.
- K. The rock outcropping on the south side of the trail has vertical grooves cut into the face of the sandstone. These are drilling marks left from when this site was used as a stone quarry. The sandstone from this site was most likely used to build one of the local iron furnaces, railroad abutments or local structures.
- L. This area is part of the Ohio State University's research study that began in 2006. The goal of this study is to use a mix of prescribed fire and tree removal to find the best combination for increasing oak seedling development. Without any type of canopy opening or fire regimen, oak seedling growth falls behind shade tolerant maple trees. The type of harvest being used is called a shelterwood. This type of harvest is used to increase the oak component in the stand by allowing sunlight to reach the forest floor, retain mature oaks for seed and expose some mineral soil to serve as a seedbed.
- M. The 20 acres to the north were regenerated with a clearcut harvest in 1987. In this area, foresters have mimicked the natural disturbance cycle of the forest by creating an opening in the canopy, allowing sunlight to reach the forest floor. This encourages certain tree species, such as oaks and hickories, to thrive naturally. In 2003, a prescribed burn was conducted on this same site. Scientists have determined that Ohio is losing its young forests due to a lack of disturbances so this type of harvest is important to develop habitat for species such as ruffed grouse, which are dependent on immature forest conditions.

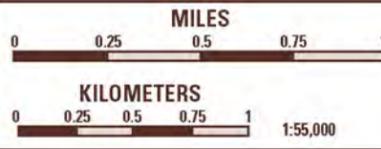


- N. Trail intersection with State Route 278.
- O. The harvest to the north is a deferment cut. This harvest took place in the summer of 2012. This type of “two-aged” cutting practice achieves the forest management goals of creating early successional habitat while retaining some mature trees. As the forest ages, large woody debris, hard mast and large snags become part of the ecology of the forest much sooner than they would in a forest regenerating from a clearcut.
- P. Campsite No. 3 and drinking water.
- Q. This is an old auger mine area. To the southeast, people can still see remnants of the trolley car railway that was used to haul coal mined from the site. The thickets of trees growing in this stream bottom are river birch, which can be identified year-round by its cinnamon-colored exfoliating bark.
- R. This area is part of a 59-acre selective timber harvest that was completed in 1993. This is the same type of harvest seen at Point J. Although the impact of the logging activity is not noticeable to the common eye, the remaining trees have benefited from additional growing space.
- S. This is a mixed pine stand generally known as the Doolittle Forest. It is composed of conifer plantings with an understory of woody and herbaceous plants. The planting started in 1906 and continued for nearly 30 years. More than 200 acres were planted, of which about 60 acres remain. It is the oldest example of professional forestry in Ohio and contains the largest eastern white pine trees in the state.
- T. This is a surveyor's monument designating a corner shared by three counties. The counties are Hocking to the northwest, Athens to the east and Vinton to the southwest.
- U. This is the beginning of the Zaleski Turkey Management Area. This area was originally established as a cooperative effort between the divisions of Forestry and Wildlife to provide suitable habitat for propagating wild turkey. Since turkeys were reintroduced to the state, their range has expanded to every county. Wildlife biologists now know their potential habitat is much broader than originally believed.
- V. This is an old township road, used until around 1920. It was during this period that the last of the farms, on what is now Zaleski State Forest, were being abandoned.
- W. Trail intersection with Irish Ridge Road.
- X. Day hiking trailhead parking.
- Y. Main trail intersection with side trail.

We hope our hikers enjoy their hike or backpacking trip. If people have any suggestions or questions about what they have seen on the trail, go to the Forest Headquarters or call 740-596-5781 to speak with the manager of Zaleski State Forest.

ZALESKI State Forest

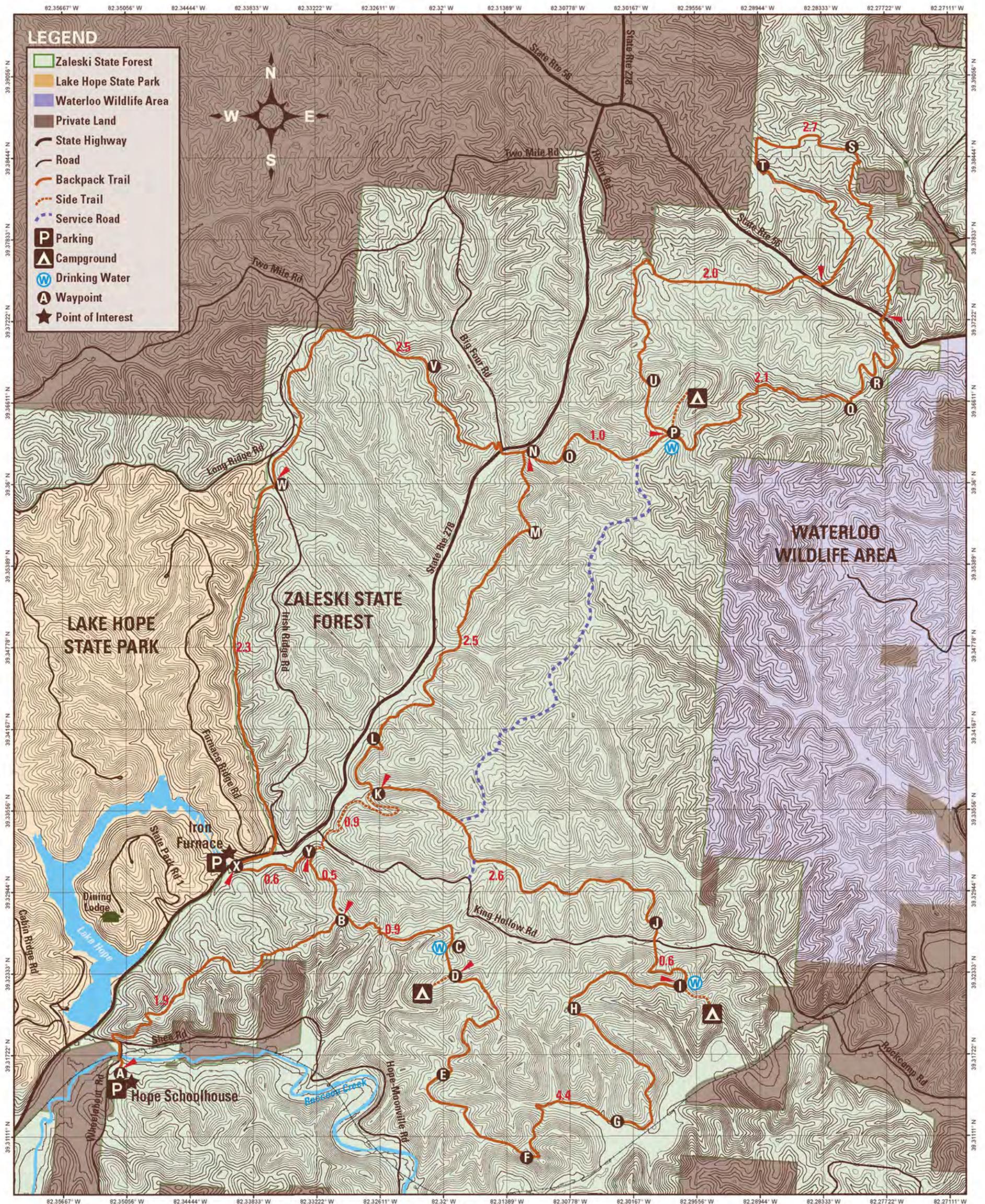
BACKPACK TRAIL



State forest boundaries shown are representative and believed to be correct but not warranted. State forest boundary lines on the ground are identified with signs and/or yellow paint marks on trees.

Map reviewed and approved by Daniel Balsler, Chief, ODNR Division of Forestry, 5/2020

Data provided by ODNR Forestry, ODNR GIMS, US Census Tiger, ODOT



APPROXIMATE DISTANCES

The distances between the tick marks (▲) are shown on the map in red ink.

The south loop is 9.3 miles long (Waypoints: BCDEFGHIJKYB).

The west loop is 8.7 miles long (Waypoints: XWVNMLKYX).

The north loop is 7 miles long (Waypoints: PQRSTUP).

The length of the entire backpack trail loop, to and from the Hope Schoolhouse, is 28.8 miles.

BACKPACK TRAIL RULES

- Camp only in the designated campground areas shown on the map.
- A self-registration permit (no fee) is required of all hikers. The permit must be filled out prior to entering the trail and is available at the trail parking area 24-hours a day (Point A and X). Place the completed permit in the registration box provided at the trailhead and carry the stub on the trail.
- No person is permitted to camp more than 14 days in any 30-day period. Camps must be moved to another backpack campground each day.
- Domestic dogs or cats are permitted in the backpack campgrounds and on the trail, provided they are leashed or under control at all times.
- Fires are prohibited except in designated fire rings or in portable stoves. Fires must be attended at all times. The cutting of trees is prohibited.
- Camps must be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner and condition. All refuse must be packed out for proper disposal.
- No person may disturb the peace and quiet of others in the campgrounds in any manner between the hours of 10 p.m. and 8 a.m.