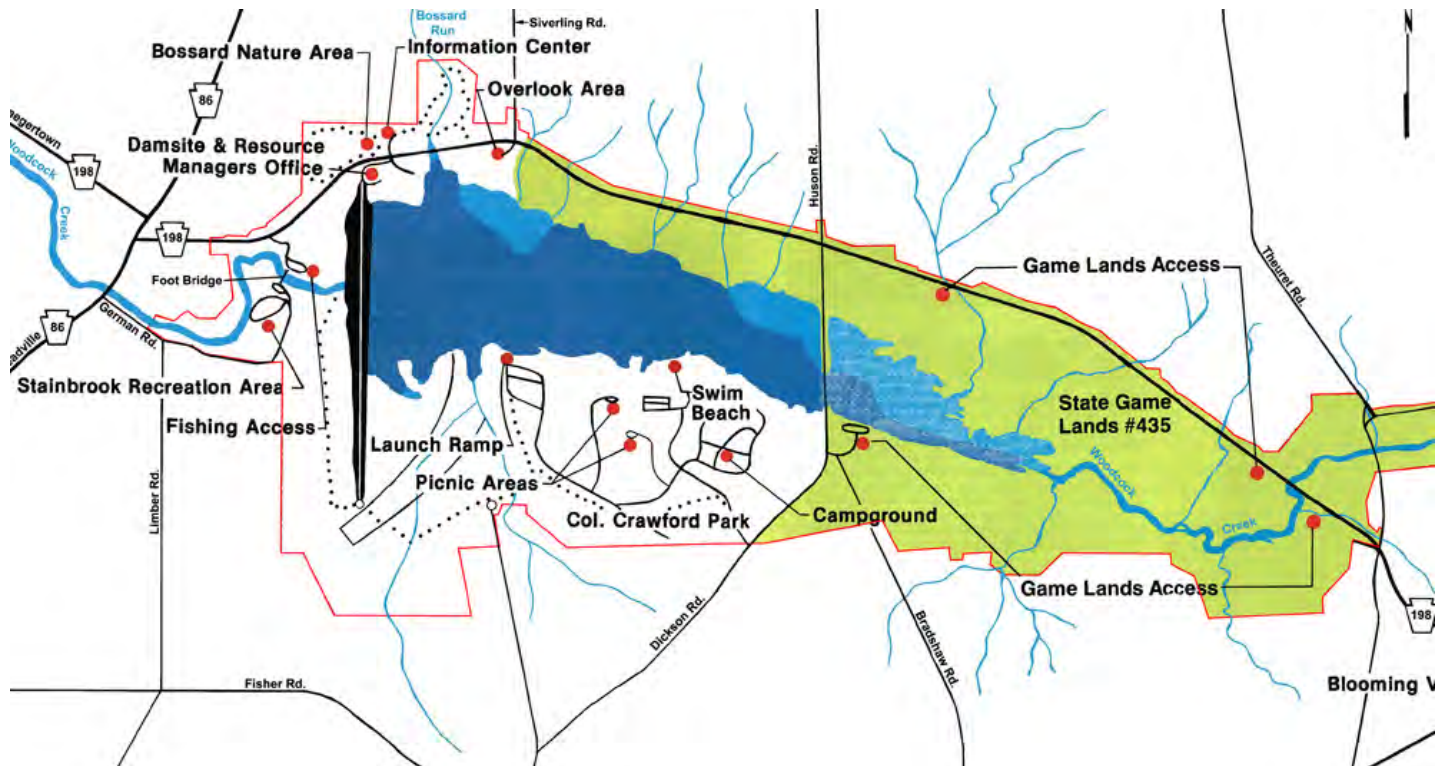


# Colonel Crawford County Park Peer-to-Peer Study



August 2012

Peer Consultant  
Robert M. Good  
Pashek Associates, Ltd



**Report Prepared for:  
Crawford County, PA**

**Acknowledgements**

**Peer-to-Peer Study Committee**

**2012 Crawford County Commissioners**

Francis F. Weiderspahn, Jr  
Jack P. Lynch  
C. Sherman Allen

**2011 Crawford County Commissioners**

Morris Wade  
Jack Preston  
C. Sherman Allen

**Crawford County Planning Commission Staff**

Amy Schmidt, County Grants Administrator  
Arlene Rodriguez, Assistant Director  
Marissa Gerkey, Former Assistant Director

**Crawford County Public Works Department**

Steve Scott, Director  
John Kaspick, Park Maintenance

**PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**

Mark Palerino  
Adam Mattis

**Key Person Interviewees**

Lynn Sandieson, Crawford County Conservation District Manager  
Debra Frawley, Regional Greenways Coordinator  
Pete Houghton, Pymatuning State Park Manager  
Richard Mihalic, Two Mile Run County Park Manager  
Scott Bollinger, PA Fish and Boat Commission  
Terry Creacraft, PA Fish and Boat Commission  
Joe Arnett, Woodcock Lake Resource Manager, USACE  
Juanita Hampton, Crawford County Convention and Visitor Bureau, Executive Director  
Mike Fisher, Meadville Area Recreation Complex, Executive Director

**Grant Acknowledgment**

*This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.*

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	1
Table of Contents .....	2
Introduction .....	3
The Study Process .....	4
Public Input Opportunities .....	6
Recreation Opportunity Inventories.....	8
Colonel Crawford County Park .....	9
Woodcock Creek Nature Center and Stainbrook Park.....	11
Brossard Nature Trail .....	11
Dam Site .....	12
Overlook Area and Fishing Access.....	12
PA State Gamelands .....	12
Description of Comparative Recreation Facilities.....	12
Canadohta Lake, Crawford County.....	12
Conneaut Lake, Crawford County .....	13
Two Mile Run County Park, Venango County .....	13
Curwensville Lake, Clearfield County .....	15
Pymatuning and Shawnee State Parks.....	16
Summary of Issues .....	18
Working Relationship among Stakeholders .....	18
Publicity and Public Relations .....	18
Administration, Programming and Maintenance/Facilities .....	20
Administration.....	20
Park Usage.....	20
Financial Analysis.....	21
Programming.....	22
Facilities And Maintenance .....	22
Recommendations .....	23
Summary of Key Improvements.....	23
Publicity/Public Relations.....	24
Administration, Programming, Maintenance .....	25
Park Improvements .....	25
Appendices.....	28
Appendix A .....	29
Appendix B .....	31
Appendix C .....	35

## Introduction

Woodcock Creek Lake was created by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in 1973 upon the completion of a flood control dam on Woodcock Creek. Soon after its completion, the USACE entered into a lease agreement with Crawford County for the management and operation of 311 acres that was developed as public park and recreation land. The leased land is known as Colonel Crawford County Park, and it is under the legal jurisdiction of the Crawford County Commissioners. Included in the original lease were a number of recreational facilities built as part of the original dam construction project. They include a concrete boat launch with parking facilities, picnic shelters, a swim beach, a campground, and infrastructure to support these facilities.

In 1999, the USACE and Crawford County Commissioners renewed their lease for an additional 25 years through 2024.

### 2012 Colonel Crawford County Park Facilities

Swim beach with concession stand  
111 campsites  
Four picnic shelters  
Boat launch ramp  
Hiking trails  
Sand volleyball courts  
Basketball court

In addition to Colonel Crawford County Park, the USACE has a number of recreational facilities that it operates. They include the Bossard Nature Center and area, and numerous trails including a paved surface 1.5 miles out-and-back trail across the top of the dam. This trail is popular with local walkers, disabled persons, and others who prefer a hard surface trail.

The Crawford County Conservation District operates its own Woodcock Creek Nature Center as well as Stainbrook Park. Stainbrook Park is located on the east side of the dam within the USACE boundaries. It is adjacent to the Nature Center. The Park includes picnic shelters, stream access, woodlands, and recreation areas.

Colonel Crawford County Park is a beautiful park with brilliant views of the lake and surrounding woodlands, exceptional fishing opportunities, and remarkable recreation facilities. All of this is nestled in the quiet Crawford County countryside just outside of Meadville, Saegertown, and Blooming Valley. Unfortunately, as many of the facilities in the Colonel Crawford County Park



are now nearly forty years old, many are beginning show the signs of age. It is remarkable to think that these facilities have been maintained in a good useable condition for so many years. The time has come to address the issues of deteriorating infrastructure and outdated facilities by improving the park

to meet current building codes and safety standards and to provide more modern facilities that better meet the recreational needs of Crawford County residents and visitors.

The Crawford County Commissioners recognized this need as they sought a grant from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to analyze the needs of the park and make recommendations for the future. In June 2011, the County was awarded the grant, selected the consultant and began the study.

## The Study Process

The project began with a **four-day event** that focused on gathering the majority of the background information needed to proceed. The event was held June 27<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>th</sup>.

### Day One

Day one began with a morning meeting with the Consultant, Crawford County Board of Commissioners, County Planning Commission and maintenance staff, and DCNR representatives. During this meeting the group shared about the background of the park, identified issues and concerns and discussed opportunities. The Committee suggested that the goals for this study should be to identify ways to:

1. increase revenues and decrease expenses
2. enhance visitation in both quantity and quality
3. extend the season by attracting visitors in the early spring, late fall, and during the winter
4. improve marketing of the park

The morning meeting was followed by an in-depth tour of the park during which staff and Commissioners showed and described their concerns and hopes for the future of the park. Finally, the consultant met with park maintenance staff to gain an understanding of the day-to-day operations, maintenance, and upkeep of the park as well as their descriptions of problems, needs, and recommendations. Finally, the consultant began a detailed analysis of park facilities.

### Day Two

The morning of day two brought together representatives of the PA State Park system, PA Fish and Boat Commission, Two-Mile Run County Park (Venango County) with the consultant and staff to tour the park discussing issues and ideas for how to improve the park and its operations. Plenty of good ideas were offered. Among them were:

- Creating better access from the campground to the beach area
- Removal of the fence surrounding the beach area
- Enhancing the existing beach area with picnic shelters, active recreation courts, shoreline fishing access, and other amenities that would draw campers and encourage non-campers to better utilize the park
- Upgrading the electric system for campers
- Creating canoe and kayak access to the lake at the east end of the swim beach
- Installing outside canoe/kayak storage near the proposed launch area
- Enhancing opportunities for shoreline fishing in the campground
- Providing boat moorings for camper use
- Campground
  - Improving camper pads at sites; leveling them where possible
  - Installing lantern holders at each site
  - Upgrading restroom/shower facilities

- Adding rental cottages
- Upgrading the playgrounds
- Continuing to add electricity to other sites
- All facilities need to be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

In the afternoon, the Consultant conducted interviews with four stakeholders who have a vested interest in the future of the Park.

- **Mike Fisher** of the Meadville Area Recreation Complex discussed maintenance issues and opportunities. Mike offered two key recommendations. The first was that with ever increasing costs for fuel and manpower, the County could significantly lower costs by reducing the amount of grass mowing by as much as a third. Secondly, he pointed out that the picnic shelters are scattered throughout the park with few recreational amenities nearby. He supported the idea of centralizing them with access to the beach.
- **Debra Frawley**, Regional Greenways Coordinator for the Oil Region, talked about ways to tie the park into conservation and trail efforts supported by the Regional Greenway Plan. She pointed out that the Parks is cited in the plan as a significant site the regional greenways system. She suggested reviewing the County Greenway Plan along with the Regional Plan to understand how the Park fits in. Debra offered her help as plans move ahead.
- **Lynne Sandieson**, Crawford County Conservation District Manager, described the purpose of the Conservation District and shared about their wide-ranging programs that use various parks and facilities around the lake. In particular, they make extensive use of Stainbrook Recreation area. A full description of the Conservation District is provided later in this report. Lynne spoke very directly about the need for all stakeholders on the Lake to better partner together in the management, operation, and provision of programming. Each group tends to do its own thing without working closely with others. The Conservation District is willing to strengthen their role in the partnership. She also felt strongly that publicity for the Lake is very poor and that by working together, the efforts of each organization would be enhanced.
- **Juanita Hampton**, Executive Director of the Crawford County Convention and Visitor Bureau spoke about the need to improve publicity for the park. She described the multiple efforts of the Bureau towards drawing visitors to the Park. The Park is included in their publicity for accommodations, campsites, fishing and boating opportunities, and special events. Juanita indicated that they can only provide written information for potential visitors, and the Park does not have its own website. She felt the development of a website would be extremely beneficial to the Park. The Park needs to be proactive in working with the Visitor Bureau to ensure it is included in all appropriate publicity. Colonel Crawford County Park and Woodcock Creek Lake sometimes are treated as different entities by the Bureau, which can lead to confusion by potential visitors who do not know the connection between the two. Juanita suggested finding a way to always tie the two together for marketing purposes.

## Day Three

On Day three, Consultant Bob Good and Planning Commission representative Amy Schmidt met with USACE Woodcock Lake Resource Manager Joe Arnett. Joe described the lake in great detail explaining its role in flood control and recreation. Using a flood map, he described the difficulties of building facilities within the projected flood boundaries around the lake. He also said that this particular lake has experienced several quick and varied levels of flooding throughout the years. Water levels can rise quickly, leaving little time to protect buildings and facilities that lie within the flood zone. As the County looks to expand its recreational offerings, they must be aware of USACE restrictions within that zone. He reminded us that according to the lease, all plans for maintenance, upgrades, and expansions must be approved by the USACE. The Consultant discussed many of the improvements being considered and

asked if there was anything that suggested there would be an immediate concern. While not wanting to offer approval based on a simple discussion, he said there did not see any immediate concerns.

He said the USACE is extremely pleased with their partnership with Crawford County explaining that the County has done a nice job of managing the park. He concurred with discussions that there needs to be better communication among the properties' stakeholders and that a more collaborative effort could increase use of the lake and its facilities. He reminded us that it is not just the County and the Conservation District that are partners but the PA Fish and Boat Commission and the Game Commission as well. The USACE would be open to regular meetings among the stakeholders to improve management, recreation opportunities, and programming.

In the afternoon of day three the consultant continued his analysis of park facilities and evaluating potential opportunities for growth and improvements in the park. Included in this evaluation were:

- Identifying opportunities to better connect the campground to the swimming area
- Evaluating ways to upgrade the restroom and playground facilities in the campground
- Considering potential locations for cabins
- Analyzing ways to redevelop the large fenced-in beach area as a more broad-based recreation facility
- Identifying potential locations for a kayak/canoe launch, shoreline fishing, boat mooring for campers, cabin areas with views of the lake
- Evaluating the site that was proposed for seasonal campers

## Day Four

This day was reserved for the consultant to conduct additional interviews if necessary and to visit other lakes and parks as a comparison to Colonel Crawford County Park. It turned out that no additional interviews were needed. Part of the day was spent at Conneaut Lake and conducting research for Lake Canadohta. On other days, the consultant also visited Two Mile Run County Park, Pymatuning State Park, Curwensville Lake, and Shawnee State Park in Bedford County. A description of each is found later in this report.

## Public Input Opportunities

In addition to conducting the key person interviews during the first days of the Study, the County had asked that the Consultant conduct a focus group meeting with the Township Supervisors. As the project got underway, the Study Committee felt that better input could be gathered by conducting a survey of campers at the park. In conjunction with County Commissioners and Planning staff, the consultant developed a brief questionnaire to gather feedback from the park's primary user group. The survey was distributed for approximately ten days during the peak season in July 2012.

The following seven questions were asked:

1. Do you live in Crawford County?
2. How often do you camp here?
3. When you camp, which do you usually bring (tent, pop-up, camper, boat, kayak/canoe)?
4. What attracts you to Colonel Crawford County Park?
5. How can we improve your stay?
6. Would or your friends be likely to rent cabins (if they were provided)? If so, which is the better location, in the campground or another part of the park?
7. Please provide any additional comments about the improvements that are needed to the park.



Thirty-eight questionnaires were completed. Sixty percent of the respondents indicated that they live in Crawford County. Fifty-seven percent visit the campground once or twice each year while 22% visit three to five times per year and about 11% stay at the campground more than five times a year. Another 11% said this was their first visit.

Most visitors bring a camper (58%) followed by tents (34%) and pop-ups (32%). Sixteen percent also bring a canoe or kayak and 5% bring their own boat. The top reasons campers are attracted to the park are: 1) it is close to home and it has a family-friendly environment (80%), 2) there is a reasonable price structure (69%), and, 3) because of the lake (69%). Other reasons include good campground amenities (49%), the quietness of the campground (46%), the swimming beach (37%), fishing (34%), good restroom facilities (23%), kayaking and canoeing (20%), and boating opportunities (11%).

#### Top Attractions for Campers

- Close to home
- Family-friendly
- Reasonable prices
- The lake

When asked how the County could improve the campers stay in the park, three improvements stood out above all others: add a camp store (74%), provide rentals of recreational equipment such as kayaks, canoes, sports, equipment, and bicycles (63%), and upgrade the restrooms (57%). A second tier of desired improvements included providing additional recreation facilities near the campground (34%), improving shoreline fishing (31%), expanding the trail system (23%), and build a nice playground (17%). Others were providing a kayak/canoe launch near the beach and building a picnic shelter for camper use (both 14%), add overnight mooring near the campground (11%), add a disc golf course (9%), and install fitness stations along the trail (6%).

#### Most Desired Improvements

- Small camp store
- Recreational equipment rentals
- Restroom upgrades

#### Second Tier of Improvements

- Additional recreation facilities
- Improved shoreline fishing
- Expanding the trail system
- Building a nice playground

A little over half of the respondents ((51%) said they or their friends would be likely to rent cabins in the park. Most (80%) said the cabins should be located in an area other than the campground.

Several respondents offered the following comments as well.

1. Keep camping fees at a minimum. Add small camp store with penny candy for the kids.
2. 1. Bathrooms need blowers for hands instead of paper towels. 2. Update showers. 3. Sell fishing bait (avoid having to drive and leave campground) 4. Have water connections to 15 lots for larger RV's that cannot be refilled without pressure and too large to close up everything to take up to office to fill water tank.
3. Electric at the remaining campsites would be great. These are nice shaded sites.
4. I think improvements to the bathrooms are needed. Better mirrors and shower curtains.
5. Great camping!
6. Restrooms are much better than last year.
7. Water hookups
8. Improve camp sites that are here by making some of them more level to help set up a camper. Fix some camp sites at the end of them so that water would run off and not stay there. Add more electric sites too. Don't reserve sites during holidays. First come, first serve. Reserving is not fair to regular campers that live here.
9. Add water and sewage to each site. Give senior citizens discounts!!

10. Enforce quiet time/respect (in other words loud radios; loud talking) -Staff be more conservative conscientious. Fix water leaks in the restrooms. -Walk or motorcycle to inspect campsites. Truck driving misses a lot.
11. Some of our family members would stay in cabins but we would not because we have a camper.
12. I have been coming here since I was a kid and I don't think the bathrooms are any different than when I started coming. Bigger updated restrooms with changing areas separated from the toilets/doors opening would be nice. Some toilets always get backed up and need fixed too. Other than that I love this area and how perfect it is. Thanks for all your work!
13. We might rent cabins. Shower area needs improvement.
14. I'd only rent the cabins if they have bathrooms in them. Bathrooms not clean, not even after they have been cleaned. Trash not emptied, toilet not cleaned, only thing done was refill toilet paper and paper towels. Other campers kept us up until after 3AM.
15. I would like to have more seclusion from other campsites. I usually camp at site 49 which is totally surrounded by trees and I love it. It has easy access to the lake through the woods and the kids can do some swimming there and fish there. Would love to see canoe rentals also. Otherwise we have a pleasant stay here. Would like to be able to reserve sites.
16. The staff here is very nice. Best campground ever!
17. Water hookup with electric sites. Nice campground!!
18. Placements of fire rings need to be adjusted in some lots. Make upper row (hillside) of sites electric sites. Make a better ditch system behind 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, etc. to help keep water from running off hill into those sites (dangerous to walk through hillside when very wet). Restroom facilities near hiking trails that are open similar to times campground restrooms are open.
19. Bathrooms need to be cleaned more regularly and restocked. Some sort of table at the sink in the bathroom for washing dishes. Separate shower curtains on shower in men's restroom (like in the women's)
20. Wi-Fi service
21. Cabins would be a waste of money
22. Sites with electric and water--more electric sites around perimeter. Provide a website--with campground map--and reservations online. Improve shower heads so that the water does not spray into the "dressing/drying off area"--or put a shower curtain there to keep water from spraying out onto the dry clothes.

## Recreation Opportunity Inventories

Recreation opportunities abound at Woodcock Creek Dam. The US Army Corps of Engineers controls 1,734 acres of land surrounding much of the approximately 333 acre Woodcock Creek Lake. The property features six recreation areas that are managed by three different agencies. The USACE manages the dam site, the overlook area, Brossard Nature Center, and the fishing access below the dam. The Crawford County Conservation District oversees Stainbrook Park and Crawford County Commissioners lease the Colonel Crawford County Park portion of the property.



In addition to the USACE property and management triad, the PA Fish and Boat Commission manages all fishing aspects of the lake and the PA

Game Commission owns State Game Lands #435 that borders the north, east, and southeast shorelines of the lake.

The chart below summarizes the recreational opportunities of the Lake area. It is followed by a more detailed description of each location.

	Colonel Crawford Park	Stainbrook Park	Brossard Nature Center	Damsite	Overlook Area	Fishing Access Below the Dam	Gamelands
Campground	X						
Nature Center		X*	X				
Boat Launch Ramp	X						
Picnic area	X	X			X	X	
Picnic Shelter	X	X					
Playground	X					X	
Restroom Facilities	X	X	X		X		
Swim Beach	X						
Basketball Court	X						
Volleyball Court	X						
Hunting							X
Fishing	X	X	X			X	X
Hiking Trails	X		X	X		X	X
Biking Trails (some are share the road)	X	X		X			
Concession Stand	X						

\*located immediately adjacent to the Stainbrook Park property

### Colonel Crawford County Park

Colonel Crawford County Park consists of 311 acres of land that is located on the southwest shore of Woodcock Creek Lake. The park has a multitude of facilities and amenities.

#### Campground

- 111 campsites
- 60+ have electricity. Electric is being added at additional sites.
- Three restroom/shower facilities
- Three playgrounds
- Bituminous camping pads
- Each campsite has a picnic table and



- charcoal grill
- Basketball court
- Dump and water station

In addition to the amenities within the campground, all the facilities surrounding the lake are available to campers.

The camping season runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day with some sites available into the hunting season. Campers can reserve sites for the Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day weekends.

Camping rates are \$18 per night for non-electric sites and \$20 for electric sites.

Four picnic shelters are available for rental of for use on a first come, first served basis.



## Swim Beach

The park has a 250' sand beach with a nine-acre, fenced grassy recreation area surrounding it. Included in the recreation area are sand volleyball courts, a concession stand, restroom facilities, picnic areas, and open spaces. The beach is open Memorial Day to Labor Day from 11:00 am to 7:00 pm. The beach is unguarded. There is no fee to swim.

## Picnic Areas and Shelters

Four picnic shelters are located throughout the park and are free to visitors. If a visitor would like to reserve a shelter for their use, there is a \$45 fee.

## Boating

A seventy foot wide paved launch ramp is located at the western end of the park. The ramp provides access to the lake for trailer drawn boats. Above the launch ramp is plenty of available parking for vehicles with trailers. The boat ramp is not particularly conducive to canoes or kayaks. The lake is limited to boat motors of less than 10 horsepower and the portion of the lake east of the causeway has additional speed regulations.



## Fishing

The 333 acre lake is well-known for its exceptional fishing. The lake is known for its muskellunge, walleye, large and small mouth bass, perch, crappie, and other pan fish. In addition to boat fishing, there are a number of shoreline fishing areas available within Colonel Crawford County Park. Perhaps the most well-used is a site located just east of the Park on PA Game Commission Gamelands.

## Trails

While there are few hiking trails located within the Park, there is a trailhead at the boat launch that leads to hiking trails that connect the park to the Dam site and Stainbrook Park. The trails are easily accessible for both hikers and bicyclists. For bicyclists, the roads throughout the park offer great opportunities for riding. They connect to the trailhead at the boat launch and then to the trail across the breast of the Dam. Riders can cross Route 198 to Bossard Nature Trail to extend their ride.



## Programs in the Park

While the County does not offer programming in the Park, over the years, several other outside organizations hold a number of programs. Most notable in recent years is the Dam Triathlon with an adult event as well as Junioe division. In its fourth year, the Triathlon was held June 24, 2012. The race was offered in two distances: Olympic, with a 1.5 mile swim, 40 mile bike ride, and 10 k run; and a Sprint with a ¼ mile swim, 11.3 mile bike ride, and 5k run.

## Woodcock Creek Nature Center and Stainbrook Park

Although the Woodcock Creek Nature Center is not located on USACE property, it is included here because it is located immediately adjacent to Stainbrook Park, and the Crawford County Conservation District offers a host of programs at both the Center and the Park. The Center is an important part of the Districts operation, as is the Park.



The Nature Center houses the offices of the Crawford County Conservation District, a meeting room, a number of interactive displays including an indoor/outdoor, visible enclosed beehive. Also found on the Nature Center property are a number of outdoor displays, the Peter Yeager Memorial Trail, and a bird and wildlife viewing blind.

Just a quarter mile down the hill from the Nature Center on the downstream side of the dam is Stainbrook Park. The park features large picnic shelters that are available for rent, access to Woodcock Creek, a playground, woodlands, and trails. There is a self-guided tree identification trail that crosses both properties.

The Crawford County Conservation District uses the Park, in conjunction with its own property, for environmental education programming. As many as fifty programs for all ages are offered year-round. These programs have included hikes, explorations, instruction, and education. Recent topics include backyard sugaring, snowshoeing, nature journaling, composting, ice fishing, dragonflies and damselflies, wildflowers, and much more. A children's nature camp began in 2010.

## Brossard Nature Trail

The Bossard Nature Trail is designated as a National Recreation Trail in the National Trails System. The trail offers a self-guided that includes two wildlife observation blinds. Approximately 1000 feet of the trail's pathway is paved and is easily accessible.

On weekends and holidays from Memorial Day through Labor Day, visitors can stop at Woodcock's Visitor Information Center. A variety of interesting displays are exhibited at the center with interpretive programs and slide shows.

### ***Dam Site***

The Damsite offers a number of walking in hiking trails. The most popular is the paved trail across the breast of the dam. It is handicap accessible and an easy out and back walk for persons of any ability. Additional trails are located in the woodlands and meadows between the Dam and Colonel Crawford Park. There is plenty of parking available off of Route 198 at the north end of the dam. Creek access is available on the downstream side of the dam.

### ***Overlook Area and Fishing Access***

An overlook on the north shore provides visitors with a scenic area to take photographs or just to relax and enjoy the day. A picnic area located downstream of the dam also offers a beautiful setting for picnicking, fishing, playground fun and relaxation.

### ***PA State Gamelands***

State Game Land #435 surrounds the eastern end of Woodcock Creek Lake. The Game Land provides public hunting and fishing access to both the lake and to Woodcock Creek east of the lake. There are four access points to the lake and creek, two on the north side and two on the south side. The most developed access point is located just east of the causeway. It includes a parking area and shoreline fishing.



## **Description of Comparative Recreation Facilities**

As part of the analysis for this project, the consultant visited or reviewed information for other similar parks in Pennsylvania. This information provides a valuable comparison of Colonel Crawford Park with other lake parks in the region. The following is a description of each.

### ***Canadohta Lake, Crawford County***

Canadohta Lake is one of the largest natural lakes in Pennsylvania. At 168 acres, it is about half the size of Woodcock Creek Lake. There about 900 homes and cottages that surround the lake. There is limited public access to the lake. Most access points are on private properties. The PA Fish and Boat Commission has a public boat launch on the lake.

Recreation abounds on and around the lake with opportunities for sailing, swimming, camping, hiking, biking, canoeing, kayaking, and fishing. Swimming is permitted anywhere on the lake and a public swim beach is available at Elmwood Park. There are also several private swim beaches. The lake is known for its great fishing for pan fish, bluegill, perch, sunfish, northern pike, muskellunge, walleye, smallmouth bass, and



largemouth bass. There is a 10hp limit for all boats on the lake. A host of other private recreational opportunities are available including kayak, canoe, and boat rentals; amusements; a waterpark; roller rink; golfing; and much more.

Lake Canadohta is very different than Woodcock Creek Lake in that it is quite commercialized. As a natural lake, they do not have to deal with the issues of water level fluctuations that are found at Woodcock Creek. Canadohta is surrounded by plenty of cottages, cabins, campsites, and even houses for rent to seasonal, daily, and weekly users. An abundance of restaurants and attractions provide plenty of things to keep guests busy. The Canadohta Lake Business Association promotes businesses and activities to attract tourists. Some of the activities include Independence Day fireworks, the Canadohta Lake Pageant, canoe and boat races, Light-up Night at the Lake, and others.

### ***Conneaut Lake, Crawford County***

Conneaut Lake is well known to Crawford County residents. It is located about 15 miles from Colonel Crawford County Park. Similar to Canadohta Lake, Conneaut Lake is quite commercialized. Most of the lake shore is privately owned as residences and businesses including many vacation and permanent homes. Conneaut Lake is the largest natural lake in Pennsylvania at 947 acres.

Conneaut Lake is known for its many vacation homes and for the historic Conneaut Lake Park, a lakeside amusement park that was built in 1892.



Conneaut Lake is well known as a recreational lake. With no horsepower limit for boating, water skiing is one of its top activities along with pontoon boating, jet skiing, and other types of recreational boating. The only public swimming area is located at Firemen's Park in Conneaut Lake Borough along with the only public boat launch. Immediately adjacent to the Park is the recently built Ice House Park, which has the only public docks and mooring area on the lake.

Conneaut Lake is a steelhead fishery; other popular game fish include stocked trout, smallmouth bass, walleye, muskellunge, and pike.

Because of the commercial nature of Conneaut Lake, it is very different than Woodcock Creek. Similarly to Canadohta, Conneaut does not have concerns of significant water level fluctuations that are found at Woodcock Creek. This allows for much more commercial development. The size of the lake gives opportunity for the higher engine horsepower that is not found at Woodcock Creek Lake. At the same time, the extensive commercial development and the faster boats make it a very different recreational atmosphere than the secluded natural environment found at Woodcock Creek Lake.

### ***Two Mile Run County Park, Venango County***

Two Mile Run Park encompasses 2,695 acres located in the north-central part of Venango County. It features the 144-acre Justus Lake, complete with a 350' beach. Twenty-eight miles of hiking trails, 15 miles of bike trails, and 8 miles of equestrian trails crisscross the park property. Facilities also include 13

pavilions, 53 camp-sites, a softball field and 2 multi-purpose fields, and a community-use building. Venango County manages all aspects of the Park and subsidizes its operations.

As a county park with a small lake, the park has many similarities with Colonel Crawford County Park. Both have lakes, a swim beach, a campground, hiking trails, biking opportunities, picnic shelters, and a number of other recreational amenities. Both are operated by their respective county governments.

Colonel Crawford Park is significantly smaller than Two Mile Run at about 12% its size, however, the lake associated with Colonel Crawford Park is more than twice the size at Justus Lake at Two Mile Run.



The family campground at Two Mile Run contains 72 secluded campsites. Full hookups are available in twelve sites. Electrical hookups are available in 28 sites. Thirty two sites are primitive with no hookups, and seven of those are walk-in tent sites only. Campground facilities include modern showers, restrooms, and waste station. Pets are permitted in campsites but must be on a leash at all times. A campground host is on-site at most times.

Camp rates range from \$13 for primitive sites to \$17 for electric sites and \$21 for sites with full hook-ups. A premium is charged for waterfront sites. Discounted weekly rates are also available. Reservations can be made as much as a year in advance.

There are two cottages available to rent at Two Mile Run County Park. Both are equipped with kitchen, bath, washer and dryer, gas burning fireplace and air conditioning and bed linens and towels are provided. The cottages have a minimum stay of two consecutive nights throughout the year. The larger cottage, known as the Farmhouse, sleeps up to 10 people and rents for \$132 nightly or \$594 for the week. The smaller cottage sleeps five and rents for \$105 nightly and \$470 weekly.



A full schedule of their rates, rules and regulations for both the campsites and the cottages is included in the appendix.

Crosby Beach is open Monday - Saturday 12 noon to 6:00 PM & 1:00 PM until 6:00 PM Sunday weather permitting. The beach house contains the "Snack Shack" food concession, sundeck, restrooms, shower facilities, and a first aid station. The area also features a grass or sand sunning area as well as trees which provide shade. There is a guarded swimming area, volleyball court, and an inflatable iceberg to climb.



**Admission prices are:**

General Admission  
Ages less than 2: Free  
Ages 2 & Up: \$4

Camper Admission  
Ages less than 2: Free  
Ages 2 & Up: \$2

Additional information about Two Mile Run County Park is available at [www.twomilerun.net](http://www.twomilerun.net).

***Curwensville Lake, Clearfield County***

Curwensville Lake Park is also very similar in nature to Colonel Crawford County Park. Like Woodcock Creek Lake, Curwensville Lake is an Army Corp of Engineers flood control lake. It encompasses nearly 2900 acres of land and water. Clearfield County leases three hundred sixty-two of the land acres for recreational purposes. The County recreation area is managed by the Clearfield County.



Fishing, boating, swimming, and camping are the highlights of recreational opportunities at the lake. Picnicking, hiking, athletic games, and many other outdoor activities provide a balance of recreational activities for park users. Hunting is permitted on land outside the recreation area that is leased by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. The Lake is a high quality fishery offering some of the most unique, challenging, and exciting opportunities in the Commonwealth. There is no horsepower restriction on the lake.

Recreational opportunities managed by the County include:

- 2 three-lane boat launches on the main body of the lake
- 88 shoreline boat mooring spaces
- Courtesy docks
- Car and trailer parking
- Dry boat storage area
- Swimming beach with both sand and turf beaches
- Changing rooms, restrooms, and concessions at the beach
- Five miles of marked hiking trails
- Picnic sites and tables
- 5 picnic pavilions



- Soccer fields
- Volleyball courts
- Softball field
- Playgrounds
- Campground
- Campground concessions, restrooms, shower facility, potable water supply, and dump station

Its similarities with Colonel Crawford County Park are evident in this description. The comparison is shown in the following chart.

	Colonel Crawford Park	Curwensville Lake
USACE lease to the County	331 acres	365 acres
Boat launch	Yes	Yes
Car and trailer parking	Yes	Yes
Shoreline moorings	None	88
Dry boat storage	No	Yes
Campground	111 sites (60 w electric)	57 sites (52 w electric)
Restrooms with showers	Yes	Yes
Potable water supply and dump station	Yes	Yes
Concession stand	Yes	Yes
Swim beach	Yes	Yes
Picnic shelters	4	5
Hiking trails	Yes	Yes
Playgrounds	Yes	Yes
Volleyball courts	Yes	Yes
Basketball court	Yes	No
Adjacent PA Gamelands	Yes	Yes
Admission fee to Park	None	Yes

### Park Fees

- The Park charges a daily admission fee of \$2 per vehicle and \$5 for each Boat. Season passes can be purchased for \$60 for a vehicle and \$80 for a vehicle with a boat.
- Camping fees range from \$16 per night for primitive sites to \$26 per night for electric sites.
- Picnic shelters can be reserved for \$65.

The full fee schedule is in the appendix of this report.

The park hosts a number of recreational events and activities including fishing contests, the Upper West Branch Triathlon, the Dam Scramble Trail Challenge (race), fireworks, a craft show, car and bike show, and others.

More information about Curwensville Lake can be found at [www.curwensvillelake.com](http://www.curwensvillelake.com).

### *Pymatuning and Shawnee State Parks*

These two state parks were considered because the PA State Park system has shown itself to be at the forefront of park design, management, and meeting visitor needs. In each of the parks the consultant looked at specific facilities that demonstrate better ways to provide for the visitors.

At **Pymatuning State Park**, we considered their Jamestown Campground. It is among the best of state

park campgrounds across the Commonwealth. Open from mid-April through mid-October the campground has over 300 campsites. The sites offer a mixture of amenities that will meet the needs of most any camper. Sites range in length from 29' to 65'. Over half of the sites have either 30 amp or 50 amp electric hook-ups and potable water is available near all campsites. The campground provides modern, heated restrooms with hot showers and laundry facilities. A small camp store sells basic food items, camping supplies, and firewood.

Among the recreational amenities in the campground are a boat launch, a canoe/kayak launch, swim beach, outdoor amphitheater, playground, hiking trails, and shoreline fishing. A multitude of other opportunities are available through the remainder of the Park. Boat mooring and boat rentals are available at the marina and an 18-hole disc golf course opened recently. There are also opportunities for biking, hunting, boating, and fishing. The park hosts a number of programs throughout the years including environmental education, movie nights, and others.

According to Park Director Pete Houghton, in its continuing effort to keep up with the camping needs of its users, the Park has extended the length of some of the camp pads to better accommodate larger recreational vehicles; ensured that wherever possible, the camp pads are level, and most recently added lantern holders at each site.

Twenty modern rental cabins near the campground are available for year-round use. Cabins have a furnished living area, kitchen/dining area, toilet/shower room and two or three bedrooms. Occupants must bring linens, towels, cookware and tableware.



Cabin rates vary depending on the time of year and the day of the week. During the peak summer season, cabins are only available to rent by the week. Depending on its size, cabins rent for between \$397 and \$521 per week for PA residents. During the non-peak season they range from \$361 to \$473 weekly and \$53 to \$117 nightly. Pymatuning no longer has rustic cabins although they are available at other State parks.

Rustic cabins are historic typically older cabins that have sparse furnishings. Running water and restrooms are in a nearby washhouse. These would be more in line with the ones proposed for Colonel Crawford Park. Their rates range from \$131 to \$211 weekly during the peak season and from \$118 to \$192 during the off-season. Daily rates, for the off-season only, range from \$18 to \$28 nightly.

The visit to **Shawnee State Park**, Bedford County, was to look at their lake operations. The one item in particular that is of interest for Colonel Crawford County Park is the canoe/kayak launch point and storage area. This photo shows the area with multiple personal canoes and kayaks stored and locked at lakeside. A similar system is proposed for Colonel Crawford Park.



The take-away lessons to be learned from these site visits and park analyses are:

- Work with what you have – find your market niche
- Be user conscious – consider what the camper needs are and strive to meet them
- Keep the park fresh and interesting by continually adding new features – lantern poles, modern playgrounds, improved restrooms, improved boat access in the campground and to the lake
- Campers come with many interests. Try to address as many as possible.
- Maintain the park well
- Market yourself well
- Lakes can provide significant economic benefit to the surrounding communities

## **Summary of Issues**

### ***Working Relationship among Stakeholders***

Throughout the analysis the Consultant heard from many of the various stakeholders about the need to work together. Most said that while the organizations have worked well together over the years, much more can be done. The lake is the focal point that brings the organizations together. While each of them plays a specific role in the operation and management of its individual facility and programs, the general public necessarily doesn't see or understand the multi-faceted management. What they see is the lake and its recreational amenities.

There is an apparent disconnect, even among the individual stakeholders, when it comes to knowing and understanding what the others are doing. This disconnect makes it difficult for the visitor to get the full impact of the facilities associated with the lake. Each organization needs to have a full understanding of what the others are doing to develop a strong synergy among themselves. This synergy will certainly improve the visitor experience at any or all of the facilities.

To strengthen this cooperation and synergy we propose that one or two representatives of each organization should meet together on a semi-annual basis to discuss what is happening with their respective facilities and programs. The purpose of the meetings should be to:

- improve programs, facilities, and management of all stakeholders
- foster a spirit of cooperation
- share information about facilities and programs
- discuss ongoing and future planning efforts
- identify problems that might be best solved jointly
- discuss opportunities for joint programs
- consider ways to offer better experiences for visitors
- resolve facility, management or programs issues that may affect multiple organizations
- create an action plan or task list to take from the meeting

### ***Publicity and Public Relations***

Even as the Consultant began investigation and analysis of Colonel Crawford County Park, it was very difficult to find basic information of the internet. Typical internet search engines did not provide any information specific to the Park. It did lead to the USACE website, where, after some digging, basic information was located about the Park. Other information was eventually located on the Crawford County Convention and Visitor Bureau (CCCVB) website, but once again this took some looking. Most visitors would not be willing to take that amount of time to search for information. They would simply move on to somewhere else where information was available.

Even when information was found, it was confusing about what was Colonel Crawford Park as opposed to facilities of the USACE. More confusing was how Stainbrook Park and Brossard Nature Center fit into the picture.

This is not intended to be an indictment on any of the individual organizations involved but rather an indication that it is difficult to find information about the Park and equally difficult to understand how all of the facilities fit together.

In discussions with the CCCVB Executive Director, she too indicated the difficulty in promoting the Park because it has no website to which they can direct people. They provide a contact phone number and address but many who are searching the web will choose not to follow-up in that way.

As Executive Director of the CCCVB, she suggested that the Lake needs to be promoted as a single attraction describing all the features and opportunities available through all of the organizations involved. This includes USACE facilities, Colonel Crawford Park, Stainbrook Park, the Conservation District Nature Center and programming, Bossard Visitor Center and nature trails, the State Gamelands, and the trails, fishing and boating opportunities. Promoting these as a larger attraction shows the visitor that there is good reason to come to Woodcock Creek Lake. It gives the CCCVB a stronger means of promoting the facilities and will likely draw more visitors from both within and outside the County.

Once visitors are there, they need a single point of information to direct them to the various recreational opportunities around the lake and the region. An informational brochure should be developed that describes the facilities and activities of each facility yet promotes them as one. This brochure should be available at locations throughout the Lake area – at the Nature Center, Colonel Crawford Park, the Corps of Engineers parking lot, the Brossard Visitor Center, and other similar locations. Advertising for local businesses should be sold as a way of paying for the brochure and giving the businesses an opportunity to attract these visitors.

Part of developing the Lake as a single attraction is to create an identity that incorporates all of the opportunities offered by stakeholder. These will include fishing, boating, camping, environmental education, hunting, biking, hiking, programs, and activities. To set itself apart from other lakes in the area, it needs to target its market niche. Words and phrases that come to mind for marketing the Lake are:

- family-friendly
- natural areas
- no residential or commercial development on the lake
- quiet campground
- easy access to the lake
- limited horsepower boating
- canoe and kayak friendly
- secluded
- quiet
- lots of wildlife
- nature center and trails
- bike trails
- environmental programs

While developing the region as a single attraction may be one of the first tasks in marketing, there are

many other marketing considerations to be addressed. A number of these are provided in the recommendations section of this report.

## **Administration, Programming and Maintenance/Facilities**

### **Administration**

The current administration of the Park works well. Most of the daily tasks are supervised by the director of public works. The entrance booth is staffed appropriately and during the peak season security persons are on duty throughout much of the day and night.

Financial administration comes from the County offices where the budget is controlled. They and public works oversee the collection of funds at the front gate and the concession stand.

As some of the recommendations of this Plan are implemented, it will likely be necessary to allocate more staff time to general management of the Park. Some of the proposed facilities, programs, and publicity efforts will require a more direct day-to-day work, especially during the peak season. These tasks will either need to be assigned to an existing staff person or a part-time, seasonal person will need to be hired.

### **Park Usage**

One of the primary reasons to keep attendance records for a park is to be able to justify to the funding body that the facilities are worthy of the investment to keep them operating. In the case of Colonel Crawford Park, there is no simple way to track the attendance of the individual facilities within the park except for the campground. At the campground, campers must register so there is a record of the number of campers that use the facility.



All other facilities including the boat launch, swim beach, trails, sport courts, and picnic shelters are mostly open for use by anyone who uses the park. There is not a reasonable method of tracking their individual use. Perhaps the best way to track usage would be simply to count the number of vehicles that come through the park entrance. Since there is only one entrance, a fairly accurate count could be gathered by using a simple electronic vehicle counter. A multiplier could be developed to approximate the average number of people in each vehicle thus giving a reasonable estimate of the park's total annual usage.

Campground use statistics were made available to the Consultant for the year 2011. The data shows that there were 1,351 registrations for one or more nights' rental of a campsite. Multiplying the number of registrations by the number of nights each one stayed shows that there were 3,190 camping nights at the park. If we make the assumption that each camper registration had an

Number of Registrations	Number of Nights Stayed	Total Camping Nights
379	1	379
436	2	872
325	3	975
133	4	532
52	5	260
14	6	84
8	7	56
4	8	32
<b>1,351</b>		<b>3,190</b>

average of four people at the campsite we see that approximately 5,404 individual campers visited the campground. Taking that a step further, if we say that there were an average of four people per camping night, it means there were a total of 12,760 people nights at the campground.

Further, the analysis shows that the most people stay at the campground for two to four nights while only a few stay for more than five nights.

Of the 1,352 registrations, 62% were residents of Crawford County. Other nearby registrations came from Venango, Erie, Mercer, Beaver, Lawrence, and Warren Counties. In addition to visitors from Pennsylvania, others came from Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, Florida, Alabama, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Idaho, and California.

### **Financial Analysis**

The County tracks both revenue and expenses for the park based on typical municipal accounting practices using the standard municipal chart of accounts. Because the park is just a part of the county's public works department, there is some overlap among the general costs of the department. The County has assigned to the park a certain percentage of some of the expenses that are shared among multiple segments of the department. For instance, only a portion of the Public Works Director's salary package is assigned to the Park.

The County provided the Consultant with the Park's revenue and expense records for 2009-2011. The financial chart on this page shows total revenue and expenses for each of those three years. It also shows the amount of expenses in excess revenue for each year.

<b>Colonel Crawford County Park Annual Revenue vs. Expenses</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Parks and Recreation Expenses</b>	<b>Parks and Recreation Revenue</b>	<b>Net Expense</b>	<b>Percent of Cost Recovery through Fees</b>
2009	\$132,201	\$85,407	\$46,794	64.60%
2010	\$136,016	\$88,215	\$47,801	64.86%
2011	\$138,464	\$98,065	\$40,399	70.82%
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$135,560</b>	<b>\$90,562</b>	<b>\$44,998</b>	<b>66.76%</b>

Source: Crawford County Year-end Financial Reports

This record shows that the cost recovery rate for the Park averages nearly 67% annually. This is a very good return on investment in comparison to many other parks across the Commonwealth. Municipal parks such as this are generally not able to cover all costs with revenues produced. The County's contribution has averages just about \$45,000 annually. This is much less that many counties and municipalities invest in their local parks systems. Crawford County has done a good job of keeping revenues flowing even in difficult economic times.

The primary revenue source for the park is camper fees. They account for about 85% to 95% of total revenues. Other income categories include concession stand sales, interest earnings, and grants. Average total income over the previous three years was \$90,562.

On the expense side, payroll and related expenses account for the largest amount while utility costs come in second. All costs appear to be reasonable in relation to the size of the park and the type of facilities.

## ***Programming***

Currently the Park does not offer programming of its own. One way to stimulate additional use of the Park is to offer programs. The Dam Triathlon, operated by an outside group, has been held in the Park for the past four years. This has attracted many visitors to the park. It would be nice to use the Park as a location for a number of additional programs throughout the year. The County would not necessarily need to run the programs but could recruit outside organizations to do so. Such programs, if held in the “fringe” seasons could extend usage of the Park beyond the normal season. A fall craft, pioneer, or music festival could be offered. The spring may be a good time for a bike race or a 5K run. Canoe or kayak competitions have been very successful on other lakes and could work out well here. Fireworks always draw a crowd. They could be held as part of a festival or for Independence or Labor Day.

The Crawford County Conservation District offers many great programs. Perhaps they could be invited to hold a number of programs at the Park.

## ***Facilities and Maintenance***

Most of the facilities in Colonel Crawford County Park were part of the original construction of the park in the early 1970’s. As federally designed and built projects, they were well constructed and have provided many years of excellent service. It is now some 40 years later and while much of the infrastructure still stands, most of the facilities are showing signs of wear and tear. However, over those 40 years, Crawford County has done a remarkable job of maintaining facilities and infrastructure to keep them operational and safe. The following lists the major facilities and their conditions or issues.

**Boat Ramp** – Made of concrete and to withstand the ongoing fluctuations of water levels at the lake. It is still in very good condition and requires no upgrades at this time.

**Sanitation Plant** – This facility was not specifically evaluated as part of this study but the park maintenance director has indicated that it is in need of major upgrades or replacement. The County should be cautious in moving too quickly toward major improvements. Sanitary systems have much stricter regulations now than when this one was built. It may be more cost effective to continue repairs on the existing system and wait as long as possible before replacing it. We are not recommending the County side-step the regulations or laws but that it allow time to run its course before taking major steps. In the meantime, it would be wise to plan for this as a future expenditure.

**Picnic shelters** – Most are in fair to good condition. Some upgrades are needed but these should fit within the regular maintenance budget. One of the recommendations of this plan is to remove two of the shelters in favor of building cabins in those areas. It would therefore be wise to not invest too much money in the shelters if they are to be removed soon. At the same time, this plan calls for the construction of new shelters in the proposed recreation area near the beach.

**Roads and Parking lots** – These are in various conditions throughout the park. While this plan does not make specific recommendations for an individual road or parking area, the County should continue its on-going maintenance of this infrastructure, repairing and replacing it as needed.

**Beach Area** – At one time the beach area was one of the prime locations in the park, drawing hundreds of swimmers daily. Now, on a good day, the beach attracts 50 to 150 swimmers. There is no longer an admission fee charged, and lifeguards are not provided. This plan proposes that the fenced in beach area be opened up by removing the fencing and that the area be developed as the recreational hub of the park. The location offers great parking for recreational users and can provide new opportunities for campers in the park. The construction of new picnic shelters, a canoe/kayak launch, shoreline fishing,



sport courts, and a shaded plaza area between the existing concession stand and changing rooms will create recreational opportunities for those already using the park and will attract new visitors.

**Campground** – The County has done a very good job of maintaining and improving the campground over the years. They have continually increased the number of sites with electricity, improved the camping pads, and maintained the restrooms, playgrounds, and other amenities. Overall, the campground is in very good condition. The restrooms and the playgrounds need major upgrades to improve their safety and usability and to bring them into compliance with current standards. The three playgrounds need to be replaced with a single large playground that meets current playground safety requirements. A number of other upgrades and additions are recommended to better meet user needs and desires. These will enhance the facility to keep promote return campers and to draw new ones.

During this study process, there has been discussion of constructing primitive cabins both within the campground and in other areas of the park to provide another type of overnight accommodation to potential users. There was also discussion of the development of a camping area to accommodate campers who would like to set up for the entire season. An area east of the existing campground was identified as the likely location for this facility. It would require construction of the infrastructure to support the campers.

**Hiking/Biking Trails** – Most of these trails are not on Park property, although the trailhead is located at the top of the boat launch. The trails offer a nice amenity for the Park. County officials should work with the other organizations on the lake to ensure proper maintenance of existing trails and expansion of the trail system.

**ADA Compliance** - All facilities need to become ADA compliant.

## Recommendations

### *Summary of Key Recommendations*

- Enrich the user experience
- Develop the swimming area as the recreational hub of the park
- Improve the camping area
- Construct various types of rental cabins
- Enhance the park’s trail system
- Bring all facilities into compliance with ADA standards
- Upgrade and improve all restroom facilities throughout the park
- Strengthen partnerships with USACE, Crawford County Conservation District, PA Fish and Boat Commission, and the PA Game Commission
- Improve publicity

### **Plan Goals**

1. Increase revenues and decrease expenses
2. Enhance visitation in both quantity and quality
3. Extend the season by attracting visitors in the early spring, late fall, and during the winter
4. Improve marketing of the park

## Publicity/Public Relations

1. Promote the Lake as a single attraction with all its facilities and amenities. Potential visitors need to know about everything the Lake has to offer. Described in more detail on pages 18 and 19.
2. Develop an identity for the lake and the park – what it's all about – fishing, boating, canoeing, kayaking, camping, cabins, family reunions, picnic shelter rentals, bike trail, programs, plenty of recreational amenities
3. Create a Col. Crawford County Park logo.
4. Re-landscape main entrance sign at Shutz Rd. Remove trees and shrubs that interfere with visibility of the sign from both directions. See the Curwensville Lake signs on this page.
5. Identify and publish a street address and/or GPS coordinates for key locations in the park i.e. main entrance, campground, boat launch, swim beach
6. Develop a website specifically for the Park
7. Utilize electronic media to promote the Park – Facebook, Blog, Foursquare, webpage, geocache websites, links on park related websites



8. Jointly (County, USACE, Conservation District, Fish and Boat Commission, Game Commission) develop an attractive, informative brochure
9. Work with the Crawford County Convention and Visitor Bureau to promote the park
10. Post a billboard advertising the park along Interstate 79 and Rout 6

11. Post directional signage along major roadways and at key intersections leading to the Park
12. Improve directional signs within the Park
13. Add geocaches in the park and join a regional geocache website through the Oil Region Alliance.

## Administration, Programming, Maintenance

1. **Strengthen the cooperation among the County, Conservation District, US Army Corps of Engineers, PA Fish and Boat Commission, and the PA Game Commission**
2. **Establish seasonal meetings with key staff of the three organizations to discuss planning, seasonal issues, programming, etc. Described in more detail on page 18**
3. Identify a County staff person to be responsible for all non-maintenance relate functions - management, campsite/cabin rentals, financial administration, programming
4. Hold three to five special events each year in the Park i.e. Dam Triathlon, bike ride throughout Crawford County, Fall arts festival, Independence Day fireworks. The park is a great location with good infrastructure already in place for an arts or historic festival.
5. Identify an area in the Park for sled riding
6. Provide outdoor programming for campers – movies, interpretive, instructional (i.e. learn to kayak), geocache. This may be done through the Conservation District.
7. Strengthen cooperative efforts with the County business community – Stoneycrick Kayak and Canoe, pizza delivery, restaurants, etc.
8. Offer commercial advertising opportunities within the park – brochures, ads in county publications, sponsorship of facilities or programs, signs



## Park Improvements

1. Re-landscape around park sign for clear visibility.

2. Upgrade the existing entrance booth
3. Develop a seasonal camping area.
4. Create a direct access from the campground to the recreation area
5. Re-create swim beach area as the primary multi-use recreation area.

- a. Create a direct access from campground (near campsite 32).
- b. Remove perimeter fencing.
- c. Develop canoe/kayak access to lake at near the fence line at both the east and west ends of the swimming area. Install canoe and kayak racks for temporary storage at water's edge.
- d. In the future, install access road from east parking lot along the east fence line to the kayak launch area for drop off only...no parking.
- e. Construct 2 or 3 picnic shelters for rental.
- f. Install horseshoe courts.
- g. Build a sizeable playground.
- h. Re-design the concession/changing room area as a passive gathering plaza with landscaping, benches, tables
- i. Re-design the concession stand to also serve as a camp store and recreational equipment rental. Consider options to lease to a private concessionaire.



6. Campground improvements
  - a. Provide ADA access to all restrooms
  - b. Remove existing playgrounds and build one or two larger ones
  - c. Develop and designate at least 10% of the campsites to meet ADA guidelines.
  - d. Create an access sidewalk or trail from the campground to the beach area.
  - e. Construct a partially enclosed large shelter for rental by campers.
  - f. Increase the number of campsites that have electricity
  - g. Provide 6-10 campsites with 50 amp electrical service

- h. Enhance access to the lake for campers.
  - i. Develop boat mooring for campsites.
  - j. Provide a camp stores and equipment rentals at the recreation area concession stand
7. Convert 5 campsites to primitive style cabins – three that sleep 4 and 2 that sleep 6, with electricity, bunk beds, a dining table, and a porch.
  8. Construct 4-6 upgraded but still primitive cabins with bunk beds that sleep 4 to 6 people.
  9. Create walking paths from cabin areas to the central recreation area.
  10. Reduce mowing in the park by about 30%. This will reduce staff, fuel, and equipment costs while improving the environment. There will be little impact on park users.
  11. Enhance the bike trail system around the lake
    - a. Expand the trail system to 8-12 miles
    - b. Post the roads in the park as part of the trail system
    - c. Install proper signage
  12. Install a Disc Golf course
  13. Install two handicapped accessible fishing docks – one near the boat ramp and one near the swimming area



## Appendices

## *Appendix A*

### Scope of Work

### **Scope of Services**

Per the stated goals and objectives included in Crawford County's grant application for the Colonel Crawford Park Peer-to-Peer Study, the following scope of services outline and budget is proposed.

#### **Project activities**

1. Collect background data of the Park, lake, local area, and the County
2. Meet with County officials and staff to understand current operations, deficiencies, and expectations
3. Conduct an analysis of the park and existing facilities
4. Review and analyze financial data related to the Park
5. Interview key persons identified by the consultant, County, and DCNR (see list below)
6. Visit/review up to five similar facilities
7. Facilitate up to two focus groups
8. Conduct a user survey
9. Compile findings into a written report
10. Develop recommendations
11. Develop an Action Plan for implementation of the recommendations
12. Provide supplementary information that will assist in the implementation process
13. Present findings and recommendations to the Crawford County Commissioners and staff

#### **Anticipated Schedule**

##### **May 2011**

Meet with the County's Project Manager to finalize project details  
Collect and analyze background data

##### **June/July 2011**

Conduct inventory and analysis  
Hold a four-day on-site analysis (see schedule below); proposed dates are June 20-23  
Conduct user survey

##### **July 2011**

Visit other lake parks  
Compile findings and write report

##### **August 2011**

Develop the action plan  
Finalize the report and present it to County officials

## *Suggested Participants*

Crawford County Commissioners  
Crawford County Planning Staff  
Colonel Crawford County Park Staff  
Crawford County Maintenance Staff  
Crawford County Conservation District representative  
Debra Frawley, Regional Greenway Coordinator – personal interview  
Pete Houghton, Pymatuning State Park Manager – on-site tour and interview  
Richard Mihalic, Two Mile Run County Park Director (Venango County) – on-site tour and interview  
Directors of other County parks in PA that have similar lakes – phone or personal interviews  
Representative, PA Fish and Boat Commission – on site interview  
Representative, USACE Pittsburgh District – on-site interview  
Juanita Hampton, Executive Director, Crawford County Convention and Visitor Bureau – on-site interview  
Mike Fisher, Executive Director, Meadville Area Recreation Complex – on-site interview  
Elected Officials from local municipalities – Focus group  
Park users - survey

**The project will kick off with a four days of focused site analysis and interviews. The following schedule describes the happenings of these four days.**

### **Day One**

#### **Morning**

Workshop with County Commissioners and County staff (3 hours in the morning)

- Background
- Issues and concerns
- Opportunities
- Goals for the Study

#### **Afternoon**

Tour of Colonel Crawford County Park with staff

Interviews with Park staff

Consultant on-site analysis of facilities

### **Day Two**

#### **Morning**

Pete Houghton and Rich Mahalic, PA Fish Commission – Joint on-site in tour and interview

#### **Afternoon**

Juanita Hampton – On-site interview

Deb Frawley – On-site interview

Mike Fisher – On-site interview

Crawford County Conservation District – On-site interview

### **Day Three**

#### **Morning**

On-site meeting with USACE staff

#### **Afternoon**

Time available for other interviews

### **Day Four**

Tour other County and near-by lake facilities – Conneaut Lake, Lake Canadohta, Pymatuning Lake, and others



*Appendix B*

**Two Mile Run Supporting Documents**



## TWO MILE RUN COUNTY PARK

471 BEACH ROAD

FRANKLIN, PA 16323

814-676-6116 / 1-877-896-6453

### Farmhouse/Cottage Rental Agreement

<u>FACILITY:</u>	<u>SLEEPING CAPACITY:</u>	<u>DAILY:</u>	<u>WEEKLY:</u>
Cottage	5	*\$ 105	* \$470
Farmhouse	10	*\$ 132	*\$594

\*Plus 9% tax

**Each Facility Contains:** Complete Kitchen, Bathroom, Linens, Washer/Dryer, Gas Fireplace & Air Conditioning.

**Procedures:** Reservations can be made up to one year in advance for a minimum two-night stay. A 50% deposit is due within 15 business days of receiving this agreement to confirm and guarantee your reservation. This copy must be sent along with your payment to the address shown above. Make checks payable to **“Two Mile Run County Park”**. Refunds will only be granted for cancellations made a minimum of 30 days prior to your arrival date. No refunds will be made for failure to show. Cancellations due to “extenuating” circumstances will be evaluated prior to any refund. Note: ***Please enclose a self-addressed stamp if you would like a receipt.***

**Security/Clean-up:** Renters using the facilities are responsible for all damages. All trash shall be placed in the appropriate containers. All beds used are to be stripped and linens are to be placed in the laundry room. The facility must be left in the same condition as it was found. Firewood is provided for outdoor fires. Please do not import/export firewood.

**Check In/Out Times:** Check In time is 4:00pm. Check out time is noon. If you plan to extend your stay, please re-register as early as possible to ensure that the facility will be available. Extensions are only granted if the facility is available.

**If you have any suggestions for improving the facilities or the Park in general, please write them on the back of this sheet.**

---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Drivers License #: \_\_\_\_\_

Cabin Requested: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Persons: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Of Nights: \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_, # of Weeks: \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_, 9% tax: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Due: \_\_\_\_\_

***I understand the rules and regulations of Two Mile Run County Park and do hereby agree to abide by them.***

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Official Use Only:** Deposit Payment by: Ck # \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Balance Due: \_\_\_\_\_ Reservation#: \_\_\_\_\_

Paid in Full: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

Issued By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## TWO MILE RUN COUNTY PARK

471 BEACH ROAD

FRANKLIN, PA 16323

814-676-6116 / 1-877-896-6453

### TWO MILE RUN COUNTY PARK CAMPING AGREEMENT

**Procedures:** Reservations can be made up to one year in advance for a minimum two-night stay only. **A 50% deposit is due within 15 business days of receiving this agreement to confirm and guarantee your reservation. This copy must be sent along with your payment to the address shown above. Make checks payable to "TWO MILE RUN COUNTY PARK".** Refunds will only be made for cancellations a minimum of 30 days prior to the reservation date. There are no weather related refunds and no refunds for failure to show. Note: **Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope if you would like a receipt.**

**Check-In/Check-out Times:** Check-in time is 4:00 pm. Check-out Time is noon on the day you are leaving, if you would like to stay an extra day you must check with the Park Office before noon.

**Rules and Regulations:** A full list of rules and regulations is available at the Park Office in the Nature Lodge and also posted throughout the campground. **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES PERMITTED!** Quiet time is from 10 pm till 8 am. No excessive noise (loud music, yelling, etc). Absolutely **NO FIREWORKS** of any kind. Campfires are permitted only in the fire ring provided. **NO CHAINSAWS PERMITTED. FIREWOOD** is available for sale at the Nature Lodge. Free starter wood is in the shed beside the restroom facility. Please do not import/export firewood. Running a generator between 10 pm and 8 am is strictly prohibited. **Camp Host:** The camp host is located in site B-1.

	CAMPING	MAX 30 DAYS	DAILY	WKLY	SR RATES	DAILY	WKLY
A & C Sections	Electric sites		\$ 17	\$99		\$17	\$83
B & D Sections	Electric Sites		13	79		13	66
E Section	Primitive Site		15	92		15	77
F Section	Waters Edge		20	119		20	99
R Section	Full Hook-up		21	125		21	105

**If you have any suggestions for how we operate the Cabins or the Park in general, please write them on the back of this sheet.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Booking Date: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Drivers License # \_\_\_\_\_

Site \_\_\_\_\_ Your first night of stay is: \_\_\_\_\_ Check in time: 4:00 PM

Your last night of stay is: \_\_\_\_\_ Check out: 12 noon of the following day.

Total days \_\_\_\_\_ Weeks \_\_\_\_\_ Total Due: \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand the rules and regulations of Two Mile Run County Park and do hereby agree to abide by them.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

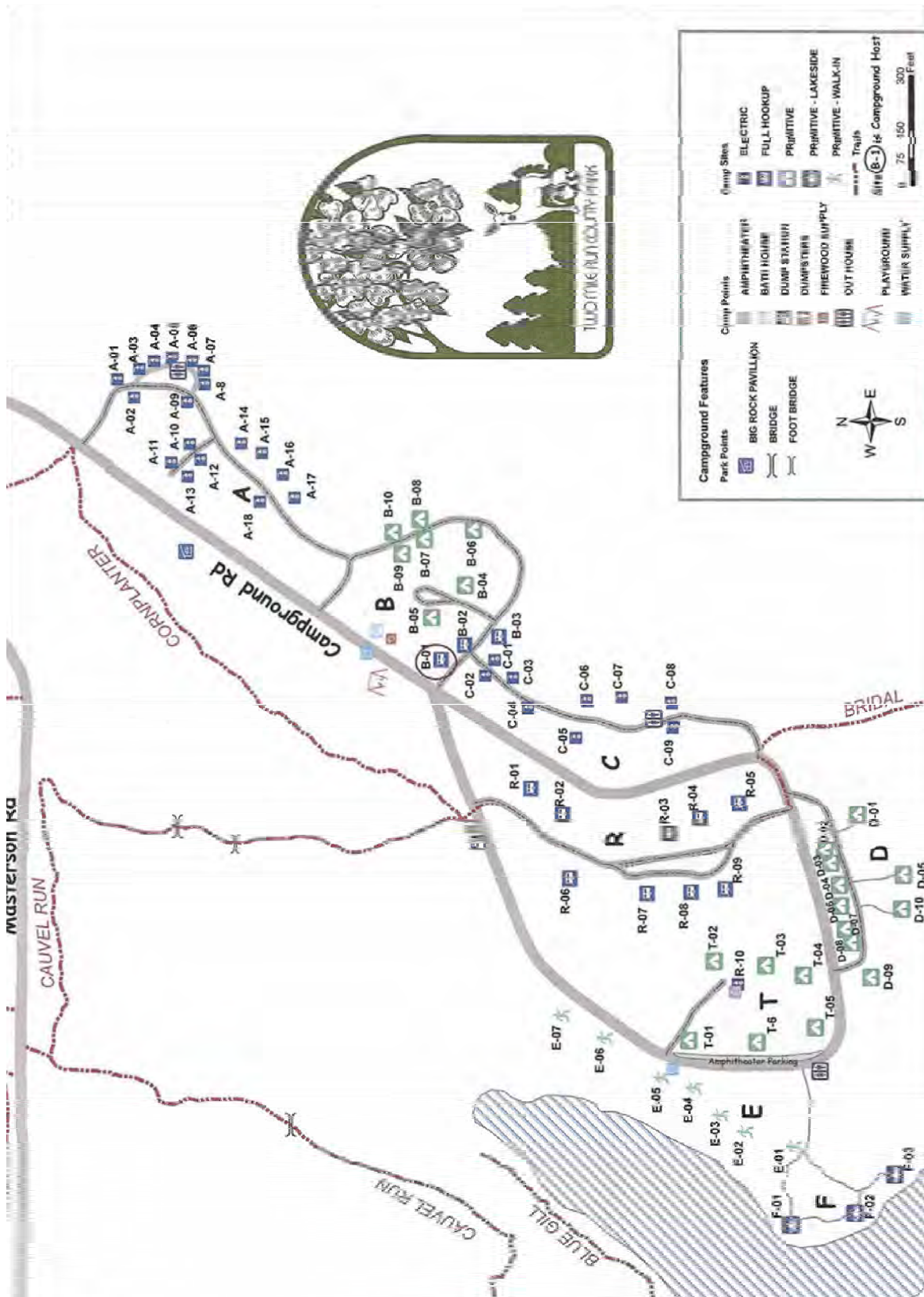
**Official use:**

Payment by: Ck # \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Deposit Amt: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Balance Due: \_\_\_\_\_

Paid In Full: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Reservation#: \_\_\_\_\_

# Campground Map



*Appendix C*

**Curwensville Lake Supporting Information**

## Curwensville Lake Fee Schedule

### Fee Schedule

#### Entrance Fees (Daily)

\$2.00 per car

\$5.00 per boat

#### Electric Camp Site

\$3.00 Reservation fee.

Regular Rate – \$26.00 per. Night

Senior Rate – \$19.00 per. Night.

Stay from Sunday to Sunday for \$144.00

*Stay Monday and Tuesday, get Wednesday Free.*

#### Primitive Camping

Regular Rate – \$16.00 per Night

Senior Rate – \$16.00 per Night (no discount)

*Stay Monday and Tuesday, get Wednesday Free.*

*(Valid only if you stay Monday and Tuesday)*

#### Overflow Camping

Regular Rate – \$16.00 per Night

Senior Rate – \$16.00 per Night (no discount)

*Stay Monday and Tuesday, get Wednesday Free.*

*(Valid only if you stay Monday and Tuesday)*

#### Firewood

\$5.00 for 16 pieces if picked up at the office.

\$6.00 for 16 pieces if delivered by us.

#### Group Camping

(Must have at least 6 or more units to reserve)

\$15.00 Reservation Fee

\$22.00 per Night

(No Senior Rates)

#### Pavilion Rentals

\$65.00 a day. When you reserve a pavilion it is yours all day long.

The \$65.00 charge does not include the entrance fee.

There is a \$2.00 entrance fee per car (\$5.00 with watercraft) for Pavilions unless other arrangements have been made.

#### Boat Mooring

\$285.00 for the first year. (From April 25<sup>th</sup>-November 1<sup>st</sup>)

\$235.00 second yr

#### Overnight Mooring

\$3.00 per day. (Must be registered in the campground to participate)

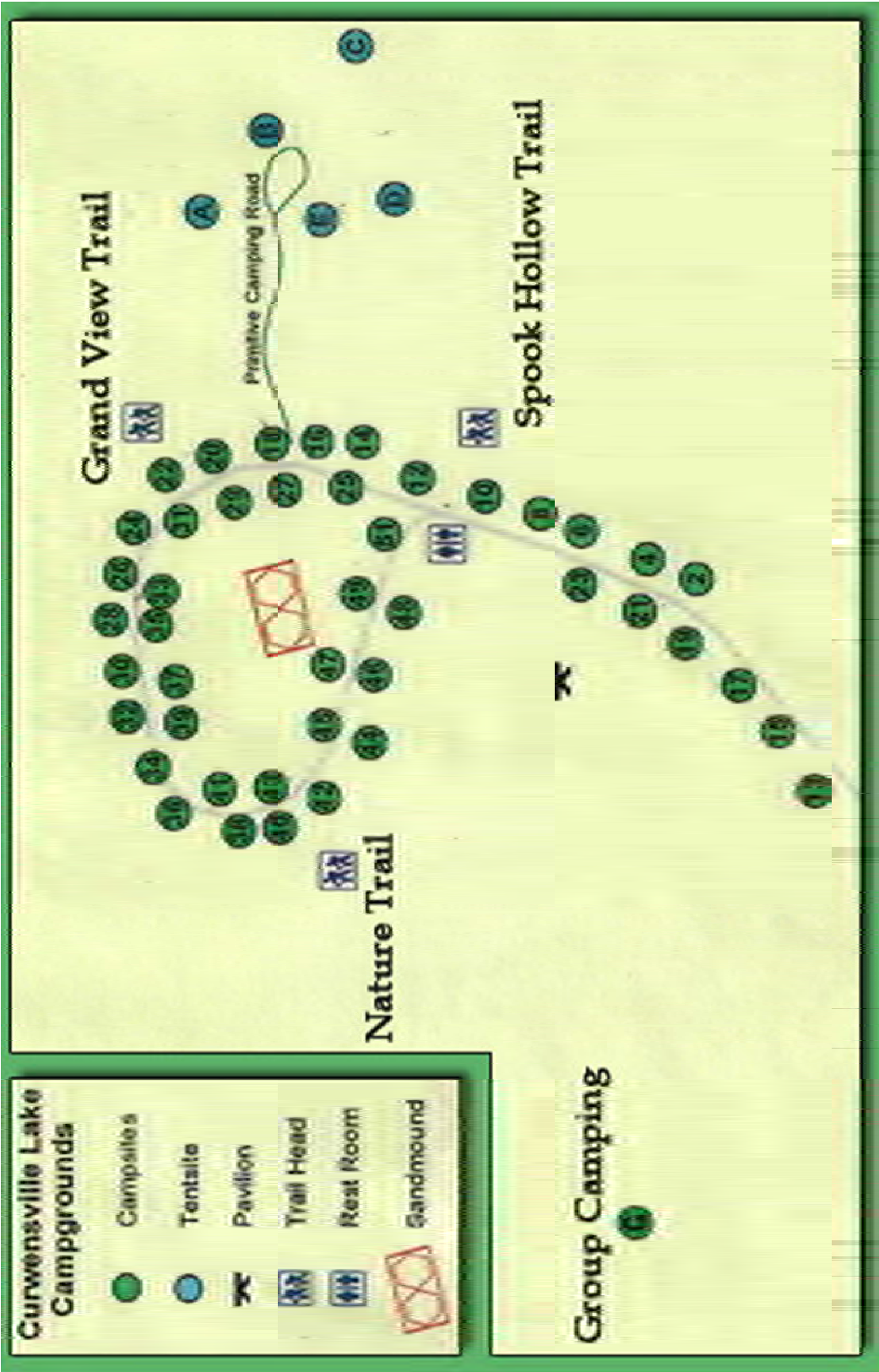
#### Season Passes

Regular Season Pass.....\$60.00

Senior Season Pass.....\$40.00

Season Pass w/watercraft.....\$80.00 (No senior discount)

# Curwensville Lake Campground Map



## Campground Rules

1. Check-In time is 3:00PM and Check-Out time is 2:00PM. All campers should stop at the Park office to check availability of sites and to complete proper check-in paperwork.
2. Campers may arrive in the morning of their stay and pay for one campsite if a site is available.
3. Quiet hours are from 10:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. excessive noise (defined as any noise which unreasonably disturbs campers) is prohibited. Campsite holders will be held responsible for this violation by others on their site.
4. Only two vehicles per site; a watercraft is considered a vehicle. All other vehicles must park in overflow parking area.
5. Sites are assigned to responsible adults only. (18 years and older)
6. All electric sites and primitive sites can be reserved. Overflow sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis.
7. Sites 8 and 10 are reserved only for handicapped use.
8. Camping can occur only at designated campsites. Permits must be displayed on number posts and are non-transferable to other persons, units, or sites. No camping at "overflow parking area".
9. Only campers and their registered visitors may utilize the camp area. Visitor hours are from 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM. To keep up with rising costs for campground facilities (water & sewage), any visitors (non-registered guests) coming to visit you in the campground will have to pay a fee of \$1.00 per person at the entrance booth.
10. No camping at the Beach Area.
11. Camping is limited to 14 consecutive days. At least 24 hours must pass between 14 consecutive day periods at the end of one month and the beginning of the next. Campers will remove all equipment from the campground at the time of departure.
12. The camping fee includes occupancy of one (1) campsite for a "Family Unit" (living under one household) or a "Non-Family Unit" consisting of up to five (5) persons. If a campsite is occupied by more than one "Family Unit" or "Non-Family Unit", an additional camping fee is required.
13. All camping and reservation fees are non-refundable.
14. Checkout time is 2:00 p.m. Campers re-registered must do so by 12:00 Noon or earlier on the day of expiration of the permit.
15. Campsite changes are discouraged. Approval must be secured at the Park Office from the Park Manager or his designated representative.
16. Showers are for campers only.
17. Group Camping is available for Camping Units of six (6) or more (tents, RV's, etc.)
18. Use of chain saws in the Curwensville Lake Recreation Area by campers or any patron or visitor is prohibited.
19. Seasonal site must notify office if you are leaving for more than 4 days at which time that site may be rented out for the period camper is gone.

### **\*\* Violation of Rules and Regulations \*\***

1. Any violation of these regulations or any posted regulations may result in eviction and/or a fine.







619 East Ohio Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212  
Phone 412.321.6362  
[www.pashekla.com](http://www.pashekla.com)