

Trail Guide

For The Pequest

Wildlife Management Area

The Pequest Wildlife Management Area (WMA) consists of more than 4,000 acres. This land is managed by the Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife. The Pequest WMA is available for everyone's use. Please be aware of other recreationists and respect their rights to share the area.

Watch out for poison ivy, wildlife burrows and rough, uneven ground as you hike the trails of the Pequest WMA. There are many animals that live in the habitats that you are walking through. Keep your eyes open and stay quiet to get the full enjoyment from your hike. Look for signs that wildlife has been there before you. Enjoy wildlife from a safe distance. Never try to approach or feed any wild animals. Ticks are a natural part of the Pequest Wildlife Management Area. Make sure that you check yourself and your children for them as soon as you get home.

Pack out what you packed in. Garbage in the woods is unsightly, ruins other visitors' enjoyment of our wild areas and is bad for wildlife, especially bears. Garbage bins and restrooms are located at the visitor center.

State of New Jersey
Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Fish and Wildlife



www.njfishandwildlife.com



Trails of the Pequest

There are three marked trails on the Pequest Wildlife Management Area. Please refer to the trails map when hiking on any of these trails.

The "RED" Trail
This is the "Natural Resource Interpretive Trail".

It begins in the picnic area and takes you on a 1.1 mile journey through various habitats. Numbered stops along the way detail some of our natural resources. The "RED" trail is used to reach the "YELLOW" and "BLUE" trails.

The "YELLOW" Trail

The "YELLOW" trail, a 0.9 mile hike, begins at the pond and climbs through mature woods. At the top is a clearing with a view of the surrounding region. The trail descends steeply beneath the powerline and turns sharply to the right at the bottom. After passing through old fields and young wooded areas, it rejoins the "RED" trail.

The "BLUE" Trail

The "BLUE" trail begins just before the pond area, heading up and through a glacial deposit of sand and gravel. The deposit was mined for fill during the

construction of the hatchery raceways. From the gravel pit, the trail leads to a rise with impressive views. The trail then heads steeply downhill through a field to a young wooded area and out to Pequest Road. The trail crosses the road, meandering through fields and a mixed growth forest toward the Pequest River before looping back and ending on the hatchery's entrance road after a 1.9 mile journey through multiple habitats.

Please stay on the trails. Do not pick flowers, destroy vegetation or disturb wildlife. Other people want the chance to see the same things you have.

"Take only pictures, leave only footprints."



The red oak, scientific name *Quercus rubra*, is New Jersey's state tree.

The Natural Resource Interpretive Trail

Trails Map

1. Natural Resources

What are natural resources? They are the things occurring in nature which we value and use. We rarely think about them, yet we depend on them for our basic needs, as well as our enjoyment. This requires that we manage them for our maximum benefit. The Division of Fish and Wildlife manages the natural resources on more than 276,000 acres in 118 wildlife management areas. As you enjoy your hike through our WMA, think about how you use New Jersey's natural resources every day.

2. Lime Kiln

Intensive grain farming had depleted this area's soils by the early 1800s. Limestone was mined from the area and fired in kilns like the one in front of you. Soil fertility was temporarily restored after limestone was spread on the fields. Today, sound agricultural practices are needed to keep the soil healthy and productive. Is soil a renewable or non-renewable resource?

3. Rocks

Can you find the rusty patches in the large rock across the trail? Minerals, such as the rusty iron found in this rock, are used in everything from cars to computers. Minerals are non-renewable resources, but they can be recycled. Do you recycle?

4. Farm Fields

Green plants use the sun's energy to form nutrients that animals, including humans, need. We get our nutrition from plants or animals that have fed on plants. Modern food plants, such as corn, were developed from wild plants.

5. Sunlight

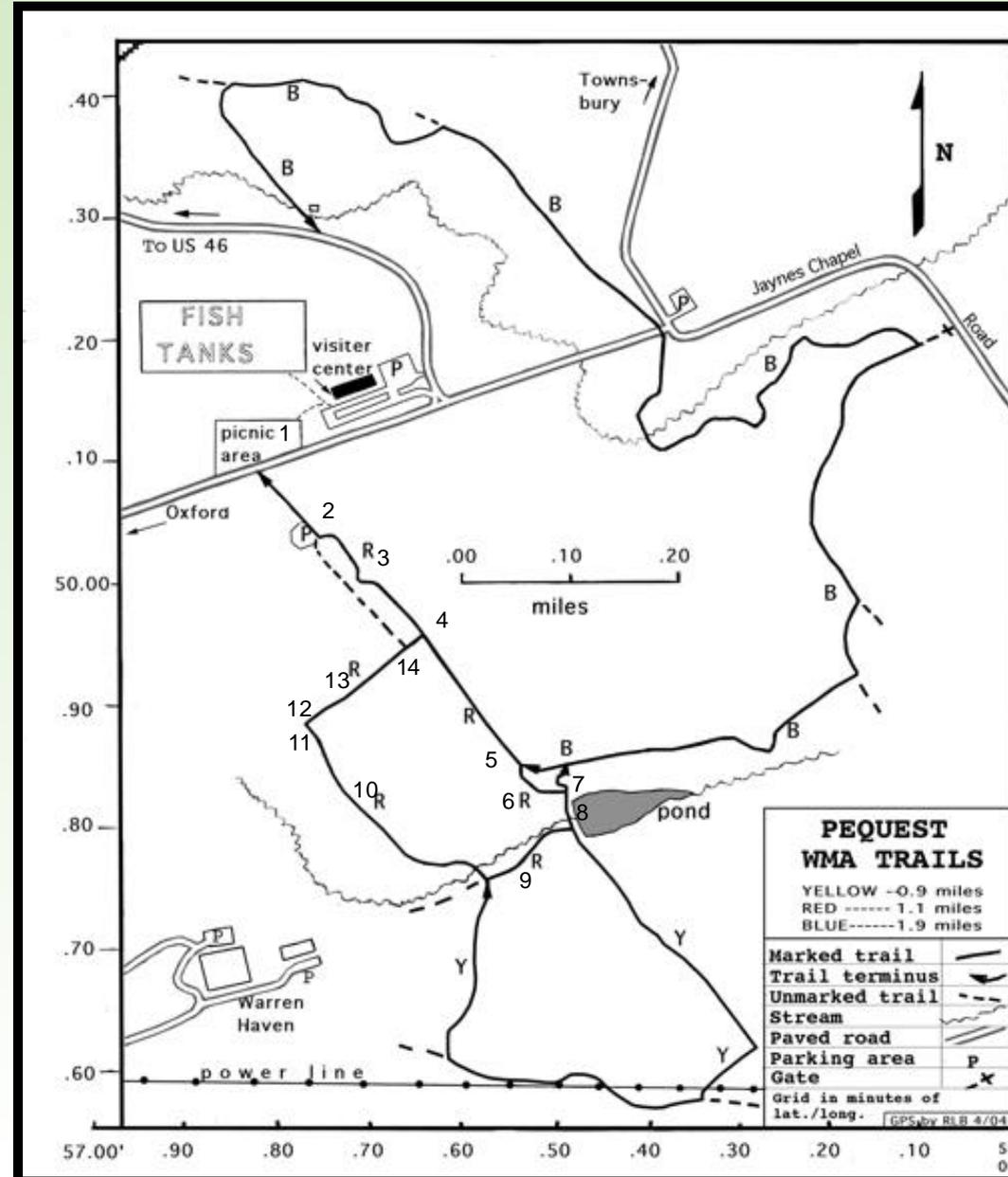
Is it sunny outside? The sun is the primary source of energy for life on earth. Besides supporting plant life, solar energy can be used to heat water and buildings. When plants, such as wood, are burned, stored energy is released. Fossil fuels (oil, coal and natural gas) contain the stored energy of the sun from millions of years ago.

6. Bat House

This bat house provides a place for bats to sleep and bear young. Each bat eats thousands of insects every night.

7. Wildlife

Have you noticed any signs of wildlife? Perhaps you've seen or heard deer, groundhogs, chipmunks, squirrels, turkeys or other animals. Tracks, droppings, burrows, nests and sounds are evidence of wildlife. The variety of habitats



on the Pequest WMA -- ponds, river, fields and woods -- support a variety of wildlife.

8. Pond

Water is a resource everybody needs. Wildlife benefits when we create ponds. The water cycle makes the amount of water appear unlimited, but it isn't. Once it is polluted, water may never be fit for wildlife or people to use.

9. Air

Take a deep breath and savor the smell of fresh air. If you are from an urban area, you have probably already noticed the difference in the air in this rural environment. Air is another natural resource that is taken for granted until it is so polluted, we can't help noticing it.

10. Brush Pile

Food, water, shelter and space are the four components of habitat. By changing the habitat, wildlife managers can attract or deter different animals. Brush piles provide shelter for a variety of small animals, which in turn attract predators, such as owls and foxes.

11. Woods

Trees are a renewable resource. They provide lumber and paper products, as well as shade, beauty and habitat. Soil is protected by trees which hold it in place with their roots and break the force of the rain. Trees also purify the air.

12. Field Succession

Notice the plant life on the slope to your left. When farmland is abandoned, a series of different plant communities grow and replace each other over time. This is called succession. As the vegetation changes, it provides new and different habitat for wildlife.

13. Nest Boxes

Providing nest boxes for bluebirds has resulted in an increasing population size after years of decline. Boxes are also used by other birds. Try placing one or more boxes around your home or schoolyard. You may get some visitors. **Please do not disturb the nest boxes!**

14. Conclusion

We hope you have enjoyed your hike on our "Natural Resource Interpretive Trail". We also hope you have thought about how you use our natural resources every day. How wisely we use these natural resources today will determine our quality of life in the future.