

Hocking State Forest History

A visit to the Hocking State Forest can take you back to the past and provide a glimpse of the future.

The sandstone cliffs reveal a time 300 million years ago when rivers to the east flowed into a shallow sea covering what is now called Ohio. Over geologic time, the land rose and small streams cut through the rock leaving the spectacular cliffs and waterfalls present today.

Remnant communities of birch and hemlock tell of times when the climate was much colder and glaciers threatened (but were stopped by hills just to the north). Large diameter 400 to 500 year old trees tell of simpler times and primitive technology. Most recent changes are exhibited by old road beds, abandoned homesites, and stands of pine trees now growing in what were 19 century corn, wheat, and hay fields.

The Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, predecessor to the ODNR Division of Forestry, started buying Hocking County land in 1924. Timber harvests were regulated, parks were developed, erosion was controlled, abandoned fields were planted to trees, species like beaver and turkey were reintroduced, and Depression era people were given work. In 1949, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources was formed and the Hocking Hills State Park was separated from the Hocking State Forest. In 1976, three state nature preserves were also designated on the state forest.

Today, Hocking State Forest is managed for a variety of objectives, including as an example of sustainable forest management practices. Timber harvesting is closely monitored so it does not exceed the rate of growth. Erosion is actively controlled. Outdoor recreation is developed and encouraged. Habitat is provided and managed for game and non-game species. The ODNR Division of Forestry state forest system is dedicated to providing an example of sound multiple-use land stewardship.

Rockclimbing & Rappelling Area

The Hocking State Forest Rockclimbing and Rappelling Area, located off Big Pine Road in Spring Hollow, is the only facility



on state land in the county that permits rockclimbing and rappelling.

Nearly a mile-long cliff, ranging up to 100 feet high, along with numerous slump blocks, cracks, chimneys, and overhangs provides a variety of challenges to the rockclimber and rappeller.

Your safety is our main concern. Novices are encouraged to work with an experienced climber or rappeller who "knows the ropes." Because the area is comprised of soft sandstone, use of climbing aids such as pitons and chocks is strongly discouraged. It is much safer to top-rope.

The area closes at dark, and campfires are prohibited. Please dispose of your trash properly.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Location - Hocking State Forest
19275 State Route 374
Rockbridge, Ohio 43149-9749

Emergency Squad - Call 911
County Sheriff - Call 911
Division of Forestry - (877) 247-TREE

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Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry

Promoting and applying management for the sustainable use and protection of Ohio's private and public forest lands.



Division of Forestry . 2045 Morse Rd. Bld H1 . Columbus, Ohio 43229
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HOCKING STATE FOREST

ROCKCLIMBING/RAPPELLING



HOCKING

STATE FOREST

Climbing and Rappelling Areas

