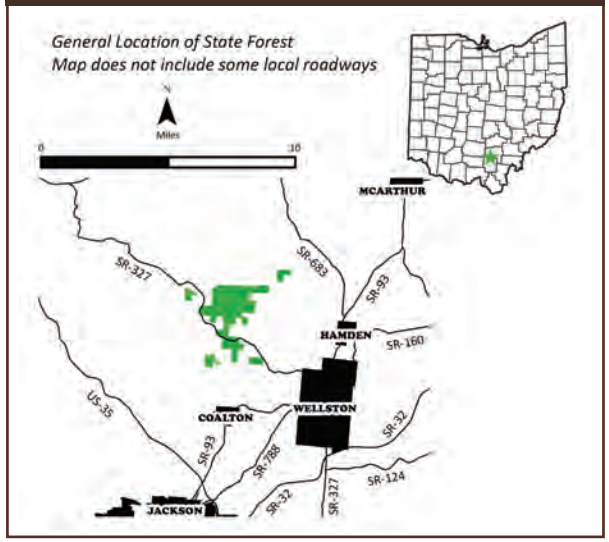
Richland Furnace State Forest
APV Area Rules

1. Vehicles permitted in the all-purpose vehicle area are off highway motorcycles, all purpose vehicles (four wheelers), and utility vehicles (side-by-side) with APV registration pursuant 4519.04. Dual sport motorcycles may be operated if they display a current highway registration. Bicycles are also permitted and excluded from any registration requirements. You should bring a copy of your registration with you.
2. Permitted vehicles shall be operated only on the designated trails within the designated area. The designated trails are marked with orange colored paint.
3. No person shall operate a vehicle having a width greater than 62 inches.
4. The APV area is open for riding from one-half hour before sunrise until one-half hour after sunset.
5. The APV area at Richland Furnace State Forest is subject to seasonal closure in compliance with OAC 1501:3 – 4 - 15.
6. All transport vehicles and trailers should be parked in the designated parking area for safety concerns.
7. Maximum speed limits are 5 mph in the parking area. At no time shall permitted vehicles be operated at a speed greater than that necessary to stop the vehicle in the assured clear distance.
8. All operators shall wear protective headgear and eye protection in compliance with OAC 1501:3 – 4 - 14.
9. All operators shall have a valid, current motor vehicle operator's license, except that minors less than 16 years of age may operate permitted vehicles if they are accompanied by a licensed parent or guardian 18 years of age or older.
10. All vehicles shall be equipped with adequate brakes, mufflers, and spark arrestors.
11. No person who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs of abuse shall operate any vehicle.
12. No person shall operate any vehicle in such a manner as to willfully damage or destroy vegetation and trails, or for the purpose of chasing, capturing, or killing wildlife.
13. Operators of permitted vehicles are not to carry or transport any firearms or other weapons that are not unloaded and securely encased except as permitted in ORC 2923.16 - Improperly handling firearms in a motor vehicle.
14. No vehicle shall be used to carry more passengers than the vehicle was designed to carry. Contact your manufacturer for ride capacity.
15. No races or contests are permitted in the APV area.
16. Operators must report any accidents to the forest headquarters within 24 hours. For accidents at Richland Furnace State Forest, please call the Pike State Forest Office at (740) 493-2441. This is in addition to the reports necessary to be made to the local law enforcement authorities. Call 911 in an emergency.
17. For more information on titling and registering your APV, visit bmv.ohio.gov and choose "Vehicle Registrations>Other Types"

LOCATION MAP



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

DIVISION OF FORESTRY
RICHLAND FURNACE STATE FOREST
Pike State Forest Office
334 Lapperell Rd.
Latham, OH 45646
740-493-2441

Jackson County Sheriff's Office
740-286-6464

ohiodnr.gov

877-247-8733

EMERGENCIES: Call 911

ODNR DIVISION OF FORESTRY MISSION:
Promoting and applying management for the sustainable use and protection of Ohio's private and public forest lands.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Division of Forestry
Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry
2045 Morse Road, Building H-1
Columbus, OH 43229 - 6693
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RICHLAND FURNACE

STATE FOREST

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FORESTRY

Welcome to Richland Furnace State Forest

Acquisition of the first state forests began in 1916, originally to be used as testing grounds for reforestation of tree species. Land acquisition later broadened to include land of scenic and recreational values and to restore forest cover to land that had been abandoned and abused. Today, Ohio's 24 state forests cover more than 200,000 acres and provide an abundance of benefits for everyone to enjoy. With the advantage of decades of management, Ohio's foresters are enhancing nature's growth cycle and continuing to produce some of the finest hardwood trees in the world on state forest lands. Forest management activities such as timber stand improvement, prescribed fire, and harvesting are employed to enhance the health, vigor, and natural regeneration of the forest. But foresters' concerns go well beyond the trees. Evaluations of water, soil, wildlife habitat, age and condition of the vegetation, recreational opportunities, and aesthetics are considered in preparation of area management plans. This process ensures that visitors may enjoy many outdoor activities including camping, hiking, horseback riding, wildlife watching, hunting, and scenic touring.

History of the Forest

The earliest acquisition of land for Richland Furnace State Forest was a purchase of 1,908 acres made in 1948. Richland Furnace State Forest is a reflection of days gone by. Located in the wooded hills of northern Jackson and southern Vinton counties, this state forest is evidence of two past eras in the history of Ohio. The oldest is the existence of flint outcrops that were used by the Native Americans prior to the Europeans' arrival to the area. If you explore and look closely, one can find these outcrops. The more recent reflection of the past is the evidence of the industrial revolution of the mid-1800s. During the 19th century, the Hanging Rock Iron Region was the second largest producer of iron for our young nation.

The Richland furnace was one of the 69 iron furnaces in the Hanging Rock Iron Region of Ohio. The stone remnant of the old Richland iron furnace still stands on the Superior Wildlife Area just north of Richland Furnace State Forest, and it is adjacent to Vinton Township Road 6. The town of Richland, which is still listed on most maps, is gone, but a keen eye can detect where many of the homes once stood. Furnaces of this era usually employed 100 to 500 people and most lived in the small crossroads "company" towns such as Richland. These furnaces were built with resources from the surrounding area. Oxen were used to help mine the iron ore from the underlying sandstone and limestone. The furnaces were constructed of local sandstone, and they were lined with firebrick produced locally in kilns from clay mined in the area. The trees were cut and burned to produce charcoal to fire the furnace. Many of these furnaces were later converted to use coal which was also mined in the area. The old ore pits are still quite noticeable near the ridges throughout the state forest.

The construction of railroads and canals, and the production of iron were largely responsible for the settlement of this part of Ohio. Roads, canals, and railroads were constructed to haul iron ore, charcoal, and coal to the furnaces, and then, in turn, haul the cast iron to manufacturers during the Industrial Revolution. With the development of the ore fields in Missouri and the Lake Superior region at the end of the 19th century, the Hanging Rock iron industry quickly faded away. Even though the furnaces are no longer operational, their impact on the resources of the area will remain for many years to come.

Forest Management

The Division of Forestry manages the Richland Furnace State Forest under a multiple-use concept. This means the forest is being managed for wildlife habitat improvement, recreation, watershed protection, forest products, and aesthetics.

The oak-hickory forest vegetation that currently exists on Richland Furnace State Forest is a direct result of the past land use. During the iron era all the vegetation was removed (clearcut) for the production of charcoal. This allowed for direct sunlight to reach the forest floor and regenerate species that require full sunlight to reproduce, such as the oaks. After areas were logged for charcoal, the remaining slash was allowed to burn repeatedly. Wildfires were common and were not of concern unless they threatened human health or safety. Because of this, the thinly barked trees were eliminated from the regenerating forests, which allowed the present day thicker barked oak-hickory stands to develop.

The railroad on the north and east sides of the forest also played a significant role in the present-day composition and condition of the forest. Before the 1950s railroad engines did not have spark arrestors. As a result, during the spring and fall, railroad-ignited forest fires were very common and damaged many of the trees that are currently growing there. Today, many of the taller trees at Richland Furnace State Forest are of poor health or low vigor. The Division of Forestry is nurturing these stands back to health. Silvicultural treatments employed range from prescribed fire, removal of unhealthy individual trees through selective harvests, to the reestablishment of an entire stand through regeneration harvests. The result is a healthier forest for future generations.

Hunting

Hunting is permitted within Richland Furnace State Forest as regulated by the Division of Wildlife. Shooting is prohibited on, from, or across any road or driveway. Discharge of any firearm except during lawful hunting is also not permitted. The all purpose vehicle (APV) trails remain open through regular deer gun season each year to provide access for hunters who wish to utilize APVs.

Trail and Boundary Marks

Depending on the work that is being conducted throughout the forest, different colors of paint may be found. Yellow spots indicate the boundary between state and private land. Orange spots designate the APV trail system. In past years, the APV trails were marked with white paint, some of the old white spots may still exist in certain areas, and they should be disregarded. Some other colors may also be present on trees due to forest management activities.

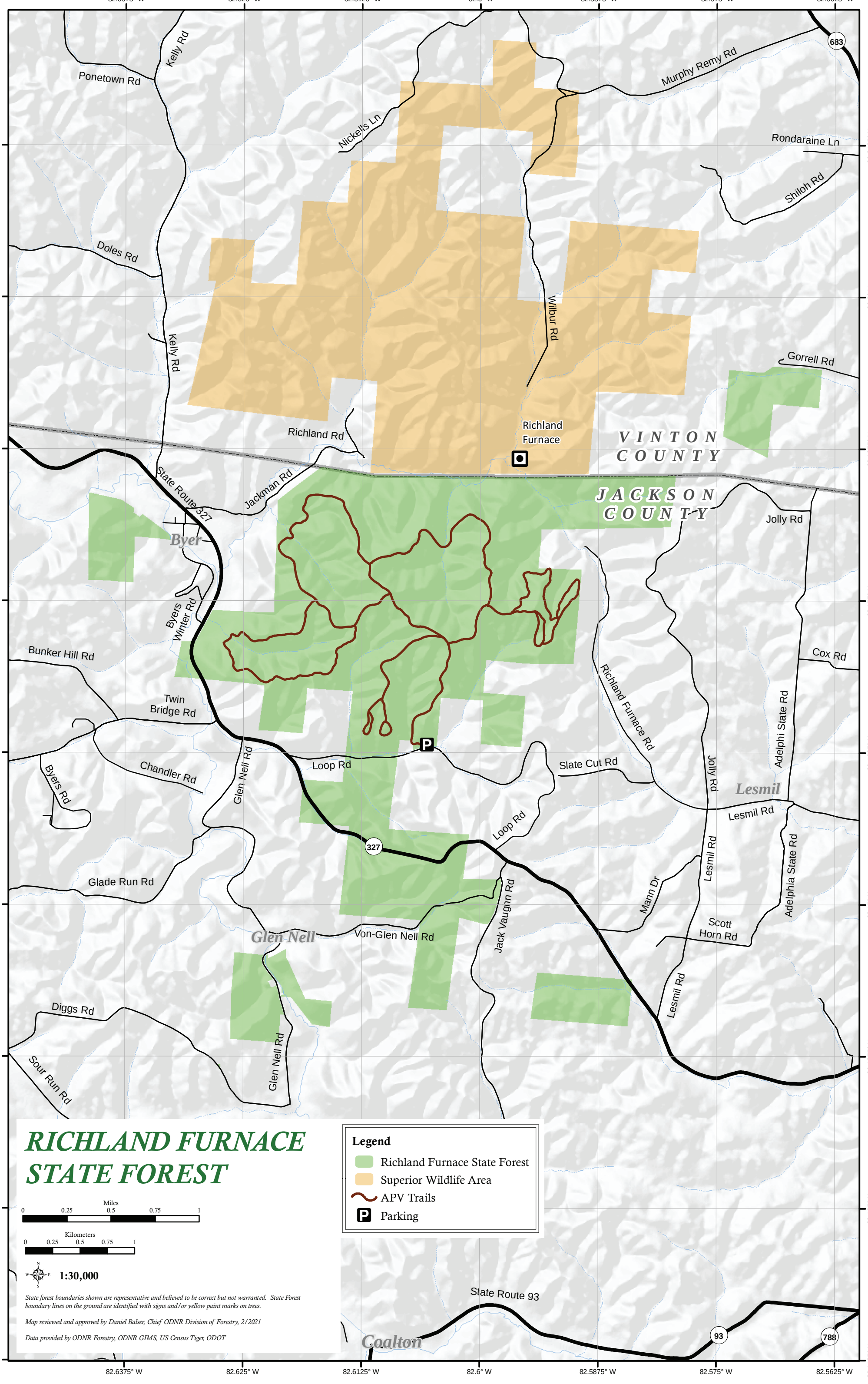
Richland Furnace State Forest Rules

1. Richland Furnace State Forest is open daily to visitors between the hours of 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. Hunters and fishermen may be present during other hours.
2. Operation of motor vehicles is restricted to roads provided for such travel, except as permitted in the APV area. The speed limit on state forest roads is 30 mph unless otherwise posted.
3. Vehicles may not be parked where traffic or access to division service roads or trails will be obstructed.
4. Fires are not permitted, except in grills or fire rings provided or in portable stoves. Fires must be attended at all times.
5. Trash may be disposed of only in receptacles provided or "pack-it-in/pack-it-out."
6. Camping is not permitted on Richland Furnace State Forest.
7. Public display or consumption of any alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
8. Disturbance, defacement, or destruction of any structure, property, natural feature, tree, shrub or wildflower is prohibited. Berries, nuts, and mushrooms may be gathered and removed, except from tree seed orchards or posted areas.
9. The use of bait to attract or hunt wild birds or deer on state forest land is prohibited.
10. At all times, deer stands and game cameras must have a waterproof tag or be stamped with the user's name and mailing address in legible English letters, or bear the user's State Hunter Identification Number.
11. State forest boundaries are indicated with yellow blazes on the trees and/or posted signs.

Complete rules for state forests are found in the Ohio Administrative Code Section 1501:3.

Richland Furnace APV Area

The Richland Furnace APV area is one of four state forest APV areas in Ohio. It was established in 1972. Richland Furnace State Forest boasts nearly 11 miles of marked APV trails. The APV area is a "ride at your own risk" area. Riders are urged to use caution and to not exceed their riding capabilities. The Richland Furnace APV area is a popular public riding area in Ohio. Picnic tables and latrines are provided at the parking area. Off trail riding is not permitted, and violators will receive citation from law enforcement.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82.625° W
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82.6° W
82.5875° W
82.575° W
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39.1875° N
39.175° N
39.1625° N
39.15° N
39.1375° N
39.125° N
39.1125° N
Kelly Rd
Ponetown Rd
Nickells Ln
Murphy Remy Rd
683
Rondaraine Ln
Shiloh Rd
Doles Rd
Wilbur Rd
Gorrell Rd
Richland Rd
Richland Furnace
VINTON COUNTY
JACKSON COUNTY
State Route 327
Jackman Rd
Jolly Rd
Byer
Byers Winter Rd
Bunker Hill Rd
Cox Rd
Richland Furnace Rd
Twin Bridge Rd
Adelphi State Rd
Chandler Rd
Byers Rd
Glen Nell Rd
Loop Rd
Slate Cut Rd
Lesmil
Lesmil Rd
327
Glade Run Rd
Mann Dr
Jack Vaughn Rd
Scott Horn Rd
Glen Nell
Von-Glen Nell Rd
Diggs Rd
Sour Run Rd
State Route 93
Coalton
93
788
RICHLAND FURNACE STATE FOREST
Miles
0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1
Kilometers
0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1
1:30,000
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 Balser, Chief ODNR Division of Forestry, 2/2021
Data provided by ODNR Forestry, ODNR GIMS, US Census Tiger, ODOT
Legend
Richland Furnace State Forest
Superior Wildlife Area
APV Trails
Parking