



**The Mon Valley Trailblazers Club of SW Pennsylvania
Welcomes You to the
Ohiopyle State Park, Ohiopyle, PA Year Round Walk**

The Ferncliff Peninsula Loop and Town/GAP 5k and 10K are rated 2B-1A walks are composed of two 5km loops both starting/finishing from the same location. The first 5km walk, the Ferncliff Peninsula Loop walk, passes by numerous historic sites before returning to the walk start point at The Visitor's Center. The second 5km walk, the Town/GAP Walk passes through the old Visitor Center near the GAP and passes historic sites, shops and restaurants.

Walk Registration:

Please use the online start box provided by AVA at website (<https://my.ava.org>). Follow the 'Online Start Box', and the instructions provided to sign a waiver and register for this event. Follow directions to make payments for event credit and directions. The directions and insert cards are PDFs that you can download and print as needed. The POC does not provide event directions or accept alternate payment methods. The entire online process should take less than 10 minutes for a first time user. There are bathrooms at various locations throughout the town.

Walk Completion and Walk Credit:

Once you have physically completed the walk, please login to your Online Start Box account and select the "Maps / Finish" tab. Use the displayed entry form to submit the date and distance of your walk as well as select applicable AVA Special Programs to generate stamped "virtual" insert cards that you may later choose to print out.

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Driving Directions:

From the PA Turnpike: Take Exit 91, Donegal, turn left onto PA 31 east, travel about two miles, turn right onto PA 711 and PA 381 south, travel ten miles to Normalville, turn left onto PA 381 south, drive for 11 miles to Ohiopyle State Park Visitor Center at 124 Main Street, Ohiopyle, PA.

From the South (DC, MD, VA): Take I-270 north to Frederick, MD, take I-70 west to Hancock, MD, take Rt. 40 and I-68 through Cumberland, take Exit 14 (Keyzers Ridge) to Rt. 40 west to Farmington, PA, turn right onto PA 381 north for eight miles to Ohiopyle State Park Visitor Center at 124 Main Street, Ohiopyle, PA.

From the West: Take I-70 to I-51, take PA 40 west to Farmington, turn right only PA 381 north to Ohiopyle State Park Visitor's Center at 124 Main Street, Ohiopyle, PA.

Below are the directions and map for a 5 km walk around the Ferncliff Peninsula Loop. Those wishing to do a 10 km walk will continue to follow the 5 km directions and map of the Town/GAP walk. You will return to 124 Main Street, Visitor Center.

The Ferncliff Peninsula Loop Walking Directions

Driving Directions to the Start point: See the above directions.


Start Point:

Visitor Center, 124 Main Street, Ohiopyle, PA 15470 (724-329-8591) Hours: Due to Covid19 the Center is closed. Call for hours.

Restrooms:

Restrooms are available throughout the town.

Emergency Numbers:

	<p>In case of Emergency: Dial 911</p> <p>Help: Steve Edson (757) 642-4350</p>
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These walk directions and maps may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.

Caution: Please be advised that hunting season is open and permitted in designated areas within state parks. For your protection, all visitors should take proper precautions such as wearing a fluorescent orange vest and hat while recreating in areas of the park that are open to hunting during your visit. If you have questions please contact the park office.

Ohiopyle State Park

Located on the southern reaches of the Laurel Ridge, Ohiopyle State Park encompasses approximately 20,500 acres of rugged natural beauty and serves as the gateway to the Laurel Highlands. Close to major metropolitan areas and offering vast choices of activities, Ohiopyle State Park attracts millions of visitors annually.

Passing through the heart of the park, the rushing waters of the Youghiogheny [yawki-gay-nee] River Gorge are the centerpiece for Ohiopyle. The "Yough" [yawk] provides some of the best whitewater boating in the eastern United States, as well as spectacular scenery.

Ohiopyle is the southern gateway into the Laurel Highlands and represents the beautiful natural resources and unique sense of community that visitors can find throughout the region.

Top 10 Activities to do at Ohiopyle

1. View Ohiopyle Falls and stroll through the borough of Ohiopyle.
2. Explore rare plants and fossils on Ferncliff Peninsula.
3. See the deepest gorge in Pennsylvania from Baughman Rocks.
4. Brave the river with a trip on the Middle or Lower 'Yough.'
5. Have a picnic with a view at Tharp Knob.
6. Spend the night under the stars at Kentuck Campground.
7. Start your backpacking trip on Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail.
8. Bike the Great Allegheny Passage to a nearby trail town.
9. Ride the sledding hill when the snow falls.
10. View the falling waters at Cucumber Run.

Waterslides

Sit in the creek bed and ride the water through two natural waterslides in Meadow Run. Caution must be used at all times as natural hazards exist.

Parking is available adjacent to the SR 381 bridge crossing Meadow Run. Follow the signs to Meadow Run Trail or follow the path at the back of the parking lot.

This activity or structure is ADA accessible. An ADA accessible observation deck is easily reached from the parking area.

Learn, Experience, Connect

The park offers a wide variety of environmental education and recreation programs.

Through hands-on activities, guided walks, and evening programs, participants gain appreciation, understanding, and develop a sense of stewardship toward natural and cultural resources.

Programs focus on the Youghiogheny River, its gorge, and the natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the Ohiopyle area.

Curriculum-based environmental education programs are available to schools and youth groups. Teacher workshops are available.

Group programs must be arranged in advance and may be scheduled by calling the Ohiopyle State Park Office and Laurel Highlands Falls Area Visitor Center at 724-329-0986.

Restaurants: Many throughout the town.

Walking Instructions:

Begin Ferncliff Peninsula Loop 5km

- 1) **Ohiopyle 5K West Trail (rated 2+ – not suitable for strollers and wheel chairs)**
- 2) ***You should anticipate that this trail will take longer to walk than normal. If you normally walk 5K in 60 minutes, it will probably take you 80 minutes to walk this trail.***
- 3) **From the Start Point/Registration located at the Visitor's Center go up to the sidewalk on Main Street and turn Left. Follow the sidewalk and cross the street using the crosswalk at Main Street and Sheridan Street. Walk up Sheridan Street to the old Train Station Visitor's Center. Go up the steps and enter the Center. Here you will find restrooms and lots of information.**

- 4) Exit the Center at Great Allegheny Passage trail (GAP) on the other side of the Center and turn left on the bike trail.
- 5) Cross first wooden bridge.
- 6) *This is the "Low Bridge" and is a bowstring truss structure. It was built in 1999 at a cost of \$2.1 million. This was Western Maryland Railway Bridge No. 237.5, as this is the distance from Baltimore, and is 621 feet long.*
- 7) Ignore the trail to the left immediately at the end of the bridge.
- 8) Go about fifty yards and turn left at the sign for the Ferncliff Natural Area.
- 9) **TAKE SOME TIME AND STUDY THE LARGE MAP.**
Note that the Ferncliff Trail goes around the perimeter of the peninsula. The map shows a number of vistas from the trail but the undergrowth is thick and the views are limited. Note that where the Ferncliff Trail intersects with the Buffalo Nut Trail there is a vista with a good view of the river.
- 10) *Note there is a Fernwood Trail. You will not be walking on the trail but the similarity in trail names may be confusing.*
- 11) *Note the Oakwoods Trail goes the length of the peninsula.*
- 12) Follow the trail from the sign into the Peninsula to a large, triangular shaped rock with a brass plaque indicating that The Fern Cliff Peninsula has been designated a National Natural Historic Landmark.
- 13) *The peninsula is a mini-ecosystems as the steep bank, rapids, and Ohiopyle Waterfall create a mini-climate that moderates the temperature extremes.. The Yough River flows north and it brought seeds up from southern Maryland and deposited them along the bank. Southern plant species are able to grow here.*

- 14) *The peninsula was last logged in 1911, but many of the original old growth oaks and poplars were left standing. Edgar Kaufmann purchased the peninsula in 1951 and donated it to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. Kaufmann was heir to the Pittsburgh department store that bears his name and was the original owner and builder of nearby Fallingwater, the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed home.*
- 15) Turn right on the Fern Cliff Trail (vertical black marks) as it circles counter clockwise the perimeter of the Fern Cliff Peninsula.
- 16) Go about three fourths of the way around the peninsula. The first really good vista that you come to is where the Buffalo Nut Trail intersects with the Ferncliff Trail. There are large flat rocks at the vista.
- 17) *The trails in the park are well marked; however when this trail was laid out in March 2008, there was no sign for the Buffalo Nut Trail at this intersection. However the vista with the large flat rocks is very obvious. There is a large evergreen tree (probably a Hemlock) that partially obscures the Buffalo Nut Trail.*
- 18) Continue on the Ferncliff Trail. There will be two short sections where you will be walking along the edge of a cliff and there is a wooden rail fence on your right.
- 19) You will come to a wooden sign pointing to stone steps leading down to an overlook of the waterfall.
- 20) *There is a large area at the bottom of the steps and the view of the Ohiopyle Falls is spectacular. However there is no guard rail at the overlook, so if you are walking with small children, recommend an adult be the first person to go down the steps.*
- 21) After you have viewed the falls, climb the steps, turn left on the Ferncliff Trail and retrace your steps back to the vista at the intersection with the Buffalo Nut Trail.

22) Turn right on the Buffalo Nut Trail as it goes up hill to the center of the peninsula.

23) Turn right on the Oakwoods Trail (marked with two horizontal black marks). Ignore the side trails. You will be hiking the center of the peninsula back to the triangular shape rock with the brass plaque.

24) Return to the bike trail and turn left

25) Cross second wooden bridge.

26) *This is the "High Bridge" and was decked for trail use in 1989 and again in 1999. This was Western Maryland Railway Bridge No. 237.9. It is 663 feet long.*

27) Pass sign for Great Gorge Trail

28) Turn around at sign for trail to Kentuck Campground and return on the bike trail back to the Start Point near the new Visitors Center. Do not reenter Ferncliff Peninsula.

Hope you enjoyed the walk.

Town/GAP 5k WALK

Begin Town/GAP 5k walk or continue for a 10k walk.

Ohiopyle 5K East Trail (rated 1C)

- 1) From the Start Point/Registration located in front of the Visitor's Center go up to the sidewalk on Main Street and turn Left. Follow the sidewalk and cross the street using the crosswalk at Main Street and Sheridan Street. Walk up Sheridan Street to the old Train Station Visitor's Center. Go up the steps and enter the Center. Here you will find restrooms and lots of information.
- 2) Exit the old Train Station Visitor's Center and cross Sheridan Street and continue on Sherman St.
- 3) Pass Ohiopyle United Methodist Church.
- 4) Pass Ohiopyle-Stewart Volunteer Fire Co.

5) Turn around at Ohiopyle Veterans Memorial.

6) Return to the back of the old Train Station Visitor's Center and turn right on the bike trail (GAP).

7) Pass Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) Mile Marker 71 on your left.

8) Pass a bench on your right.

9) Pass two concrete foundations on your left.

10) Pass a bench on your right.

11) Turn around at a "waterfall" and return to the old Train Station Visitor's Center.

Railroad ties were used here in the construction of the culvert going under the bike trail. The "waterfall" is probably from a small creek going over a cliff. This trail was laid out in the Spring, the day after a heavy rain, and the description was clearly as a "waterfall". During a drought, the appearance of the water flow may not be that noticeable. However, you cannot miss the railroad ties.

12) Walk down Sheridan Street, cross Main Street at crosswalk and return to the Start/Finish Point.

Thank you for walking our Event trail.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Walking the USA A-Z

Mon Valley Trailblazers 2021 YRE/Seasonal Events

Pittsburgh, PA #Y2291

Three Rivers Heritage Trails-start at REI Sports Store
ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Washington, PA #Y2279

Hampton Inn. 5 & 10K walks. WASHINGTON COUNTY
West Newton, PA Walk & Bike West Newton Bicycle Shop. Walk the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) & West Newton, WESTMORELAND COUNTY; and bike along the

GAP from Pittsburgh to Cumberland, MD. Multiple Counties.

Zelienople/Harmony Walk OSB- Y2309, 5 & 10k, BUTLER COUNTY.

Ernst Trail Meadville, PA Y2724. 5 & 10k, CRAWFORD COUNTY

Pymatuning Spillway, Linesville, PA OSB Y2725, 5 & 10k, CRAWFORD COUNTY.

Mingo Creek Park, Finleyville, PA OSB Y2727, 5 & 10K, WASHINGTON COUNTY

Confluence, PA, Y2275, 5 & 10K, FAYETTE & SOMERSET COUNTIES

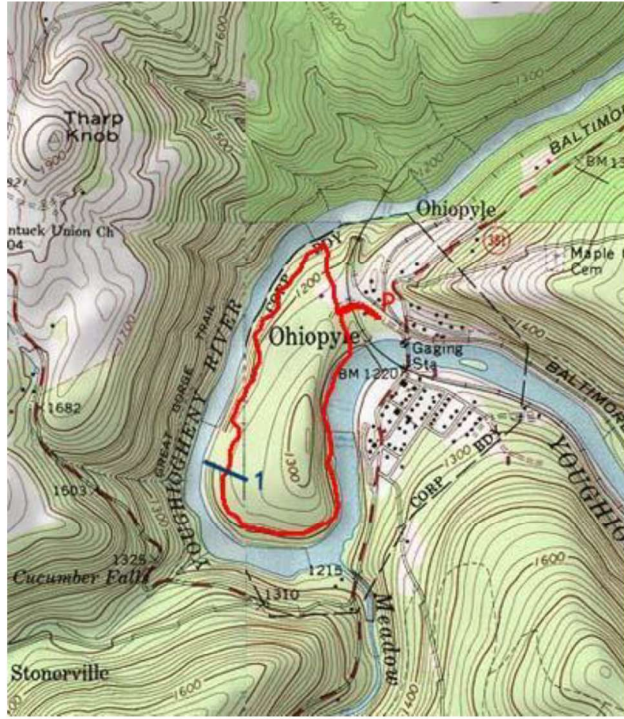
Ligonier, PA, Y2277, 5 & 10k, WESTMORELAND COUNTY

Raccoon Creek State Park, Clinton, PA Wildflower Reserve, Y2332, 5 & 10k, BEAVER COUNTY

Presque Isle Park, Erie, PA Y1537, 5 & 10k, ERIE COUNTY

Flight 93 Memorial, Stoystown, PA OSB Y2350, 5 & 10k, SOMERSET COUNTY

On behalf of the Mon Valley Trailblazers, we hope you have enjoyed the walk. Please log back into the OSB system to "finish/complete" your online registration by entering your participation date, distances, and any special programs after doing the event



Fernclyff Peninsula Loop 5k Map

Town/Gap 5K Map

