

West Creek Rail Trail Bike Event – Cameron and/or Elk Counties, PA

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Emergency Phone Number: 911; Event Assistance: Lorraine Jackson @ 240-298-1278

Start Location, for starting in Emporium: Emporium Community Park at 613 E Allegheny Ave, Emporium, PA 15834

Driving Directions to get to the Start Location in

Emporium: Take PA-120W to Emporium. After you enter Emporium and cross the railroad tracks, turn LEFT onto E. Second St. (This is near the Rite-Aid store which is on your right. After you turn, there will be a caboose on your right on E. Second St.) There is a small parking area on the right after you turn onto E. Second St, near the caboose. Park here.

If you would rather start at a different location along the trail, please refer to the trail map and the event directions.

Bike Description: The West Creek Rail Trail is a 19.5-mile trail that connects Emporium, PA to the city of St. Marys, PA. The four-season trail features a surface of crushed limestone.

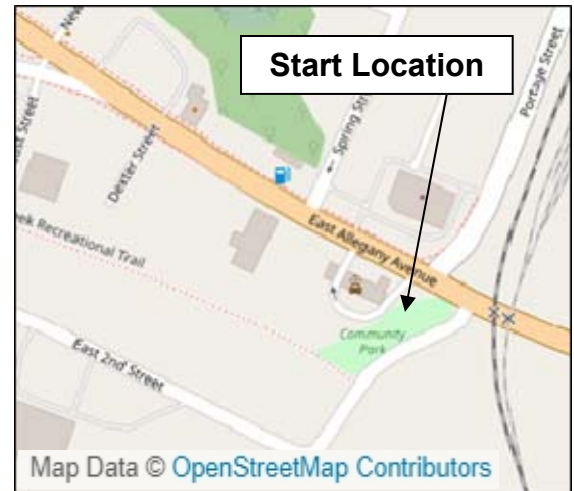
There are no official portajohns or restroom facilities along this trail. There is also no drinking water. There is limited cell phone coverage on parts of this trail. Therefore, you should carry water, a snack and some TP with you while you bicycle this trail. Know how to change a flat tire. Bring a spare inner tube and the required tools. Consider bringing a bicycling buddy.

AVA Special Programs:

- Par for the Course (if passing through Emporium)
- Rails-to-Trails
- KSVA Counties Program (Cameron County, Elk County)

Restrooms: There are no restrooms at the Start/Finish location where you will park your car. However, there is a restroom close to the start.

Bike Completion and Credit: Be sure to log back into the OSB system to finish/complete your online registration after doing the event. The OSB system does not deduct any event fee from a participant's Event Bank until they have submitted event completion info including the date the event was biked, the distance biked, and the selection of applicable special programs that person is participating in. Nevertheless, a fee of \$2 for a downloaded PDF is deducted from the user's Event Bank when the PDF is downloaded. Later, any PDF fees are credited back to a user's Event Bank when he/she submits the event completion info as a paying for credit participant. Note, however, the \$2 coupon for the downloaded PDF will expire in 60 days.



These maps and directions may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.

West Creek Rail Trail Bike Event – Cameron and/or Elk Counties, PA

10K- 63K Volksbike Route

Rated 1B

Emergency Contact: Call 911



The West Creek Rail Trail is a 19.5-mile trail that connects Emporium, PA to the city of St. Marys, PA. The four-season trail features a surface of crushed limestone. Biking, hiking, running, cross country skiing and snowmobiling all permitted. The trail cuts through the center of Emporium, the county seat of Cameron County. Amenities are located within one block of the trail in Emporium, and offer easy access to lodging, fuel, restaurants, library, shopping and historical sites. The trail's website is: <https://www.cameroncountychamber.org/trails>. When we did this bike ride, we saw an elk just ahead of us on the trail. You might also see bear. The wildflowers along the trail put on a nice display!

From <https://www.traillink.com/trail/west-creek-recreational-trail> :

The West Creek Recreational Trail connects St. Marys and Emporium in a forested area of northern Pennsylvania fondly referred to as "Elk Country". The 19.5-mile trail follows the route of the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad that began serving the area in the 1860s. It was later acquired by the Pennsylvania Railroad and then became one of the many short-line railroads: The Allegheny and Eastern Railroad, owned by Genesee & Wyoming. In 2008 that company hammered out an agreement to deed the corridor to the West Creek Recreational Trail Association. Work on the trail proceeded in stages over the years until it was completed in 2017.

The crushed-stone trail loses about 600 feet from St. Marys to Emporium. Emporium's motto is Land of the Endless Mountains, but the trail only takes the one long grade along West Creek. Round-trip bicyclists like to start in Emporium to enjoy the long downhill on the return trip. In the wintertime, snowmobilers flock to the trail, groomed by the St. Marys Snowmobile Association.

In the west, the trail starts approximately 0.6 miles east of the West Creek Wetland Learning Center. Future plans call for the trail to be extended westward to the Wetland Center and beyond into the town of St Marys. Currently, this section of the trail is undeveloped where its surface is comprised of the original railroad ballast.

Elk and Cameron Counties are populated with elk, reintroduced in the early 20th century after native herds were hunted to oblivion by the 1870s. You might see them on your travels, although the prime viewing areas are the hills and valleys south of the trail. During the summer, the best viewing times are early morning and evening as the elk spend the days in the shade.

Following the meandering West Creek, you'll pick up the northern boundary of State Game Land No. 293 in 3 miles. Deer, turkeys, bears, beavers, bobcats, and coyotes inhabit the area. You'll leave the vicinity of the state game area about 4 miles down the trail as you cross West Creek Road.

In another 2.5 miles, you'll come to SR 120, which accompanies the trail for about 7 miles into Emporium. Use caution at occasional cross streets and driveways along this section. In 4.8 miles, you'll pass a valley on the right called Hercules Hollow, named for one of the seven dynamite factories based in the Emporium area that operated from the late 1800s to the 1950s.

As the trail approaches Emporium, you'll see more reminders of the manufacturing that once flourished here as you pass the old Sylvania plant, where incandescent light bulbs and radio tubes were once manufactured. The town, which serves as the county seat, is surrounded by hills. Trailside signs direct you to some of the restaurants, cafés, taverns, and ice cream shops that make this a good destination. An old red caboose marks the trail's end.

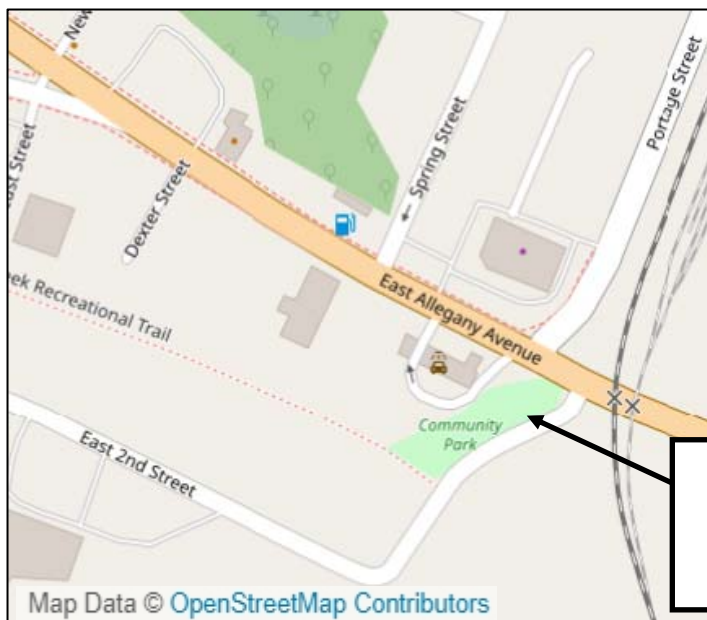
You could do this bike ride as an approximately 40-mile bike ride, or break it up into two smaller approximately 20-mile (or less) rides. There is a noticeable grade in the trail, going slightly uphill from Emporium / downhill from St. Marys. Therefore, we recommend that you start your ride in Emporium and ride west toward St. Marys so that you can enjoy the downgrade ride on the way back. If you want to start in the middle of the trail, we give directions for a State Game Lands parking lot at roughly the halfway point on the trail. From there, we strongly suggest that you cycle the upgrade west to St. Marys, and enjoy the downgrade on your return trip.

There is some grass growing over some parts of the trail, but when we cycled the trail, the grass was short, we had no problems getting through, and the gravel part resumed.

The eastern part of the trail is in Cameron County. The western part of the trail is in Elk County. The county line is roughly in Rathbun (see the map of the West Creek Rail Trail).

There are no official portajohns or restroom facilities along this trail. There is also no drinking water. There is also limited cell phone coverage on parts of this trail. Therefore, you should carry water, a snack and some TP with you while you bicycle this trail and consider bringing a bicycling buddy.

1. **FOR THE TRAILHEAD IN EMPORIUM:** Drive to Emporium Community Park at 613 E Allegheny Ave, Emporium, PA 15834. This is at the intersection of East Allegheny Ave and E Second St, across from Rite Aid. There will be a Pennsylvania Railroad Caboose at this park. There is a small parking lot that will hold about 6 cars along E Second St that is for the park – across from a large gravel parking lot next to the train tracks. Park your car in the small lot along E Second St.



**Start Point:
Emporium Community Park
613 E Allegheny Ave
Emporium, PA**

There is no portajohn or facility at the trailhead in Emporium. RESTROOMS are available in Rite Aid, straight back when you enter the store. You have to ask an associate to let you in, because they are kept locked.

2. From the little parking lot, turn with your back to Allegheny Ave, looking down Second St. You will see the sign for the WEST CREEK TRAIL at the split-rail fence. Ride to the trailhead, turn RIGHT and start riding! Be careful at road crossings.
3. After crossing Pine St (no sign, it is less than 0.5K from the trailhead), notice on the right a playground with basketball courts. This is a qualifier for the PAR FOR THE COURSE SPECIAL PROGRAM.
4. Cross Hercules Hollow Rd (5.8K). Cross a driveway (6K). Cross another driveway (6.5K). Turn around here for a 13K bike ride.
5. Cross Moon Hill Rd (9.5K). Turn around at Highway 120 for a 25K bike ride.
6. Or - cycle to your heart's content but leave enough energy in your legs to return.
7. Turn around, and return to the trailhead.



1. **TO GET ON THE TRAIL AT ABOUT THE HALFWAY**

POINT: Drive to the parking lot for State Game Lands #293, which is located at the intersection of Beechwood Rd and Reed Hollow Ln, Shippen, PA.



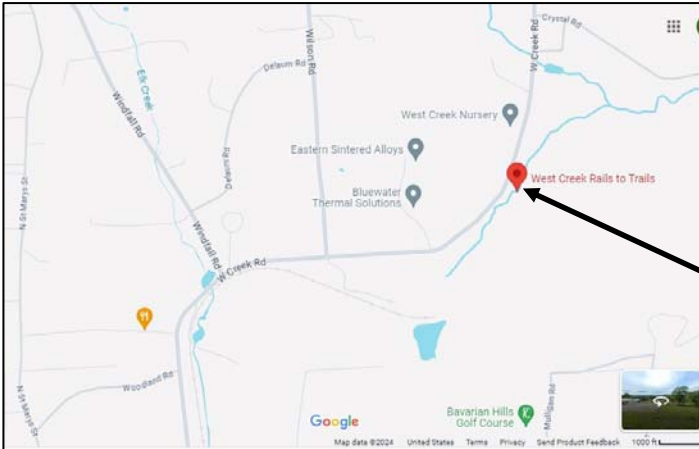
**Start Point:
Parking Lot of
State Game Lands #293
Beechwood Rd & Reed Hollow Ln
Shippen, PA**



2. Turn **RIGHT** onto Reed Hollow Ln, a gravel road. Follow the road to a gravel parking lot. Park here.
3. On your bike, follow Reed Hollow Ln back to Beechwood Rd and turn **RIGHT**. Follow Beechwood Rd a very short distance to the West Creek Rail Trail and turn **RIGHT** on the trail. (We **STRONGLY** recommend you turn **RIGHT** on the trail toward St Marys, rather than turning left toward Emporium. It is easier to ride the slight upgrade toward St Marys first, so that when you turn around to return, you can enjoy the downgrade back to your car.)
4. Cycle to your heart's content but leave enough energy in your legs to return.
5. Turn around, and return to the trailhead. Be alert at road crossings, and be ready as you cross Beechwood Rd so you can get back to your car. As you cross Beechwood Rd, look for the State Game Lands sign. Turn there onto Reed Hollow Ln to and follow the gravel road back to your car.

1. **TO GET ON THE TRAIL IN ST MARYS: A NOTE OF CAUTION: WE REALLY RECOMMEND YOU DO NOT START AT THE TRAILHEAD IN ST. MARY'S.** The trail is slightly downhill from St. Marys in the direction of Emporium, so if you start here, you'll be cycling downhill for the first part of your ride. Then, after you turn around, you will be cycling uphill – when you're TIRED. But if you insist on starting in St Marys, here's how to get to the trailhead:

5. After you park your car, hop on the trail and start riding. Turn around when you wish, but leave enough energy in your legs to climb back up to the parking lot in St. Marys.
6. Don't forget to check in with on the Online Start Box! And thank you very much for supporting the Cumberland Valley LEAD Foot Club for our Volksbike event! We hope you enjoyed it! 😊



Special Programs for this bike:

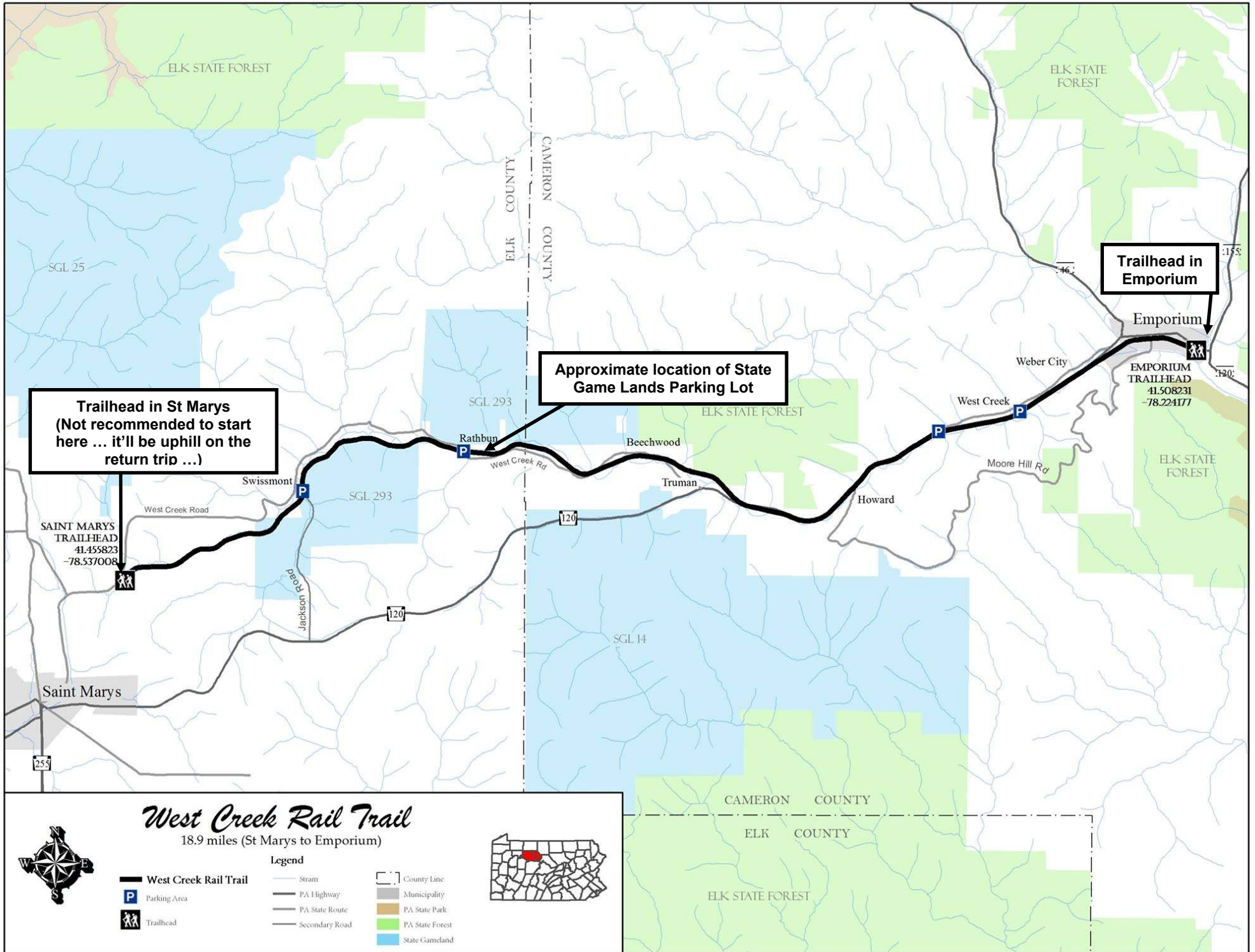
- Rails-to-Trails
- Par for the Course (in Emporium)
- KSVa Counties Program (Cameron and/or Elk County)

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**Start Point:
Trailhead behind the
St Marys Snowmobile Association Clubhouse
264 W Creek Rd
St Marys, PA**

2. The trailhead is about 2.8 miles from The Diamond in downtown St. Marys. The trailhead is behind the St Marys Snowmobile Association Clubhouse, and the address is 264 W Creek Rd, St Marys, PA 15857.
3. From The Diamond, take Washington St out of St. Marys. After passing Woodland Road on your left, Washington St changes to West Creek Road. From Woodland Road, it is about 1.2 miles to the road to the trailhead. You'll pass Wilson Road on the left. From Wilson Road, it is about 0.6 miles to the road to the trailhead. Look for a sign on the right that says "West Creek Trail Parking Area", at a driveway on the right. The St Marys Snowmobile Association Clubhouse is also at this driveway.
4. Turn RIGHT into the driveway. Cross the little bridge and go up the slight hill. There is a parking lot before a split rail fence.





**Trailhead in St Marys
(Not recommended to start here ... it'll be uphill on the return trip ...)**

Approximate location of State Game Lands Parking Lot

Trailhead in Emporium

SAINT MARYS TRAILHEAD
41.455823
-78.537008

EMPORIUM TRAILHEAD
41.508231
-78.221177

West Creek Rail Trail

18.9 miles (St Marys to Emporium)



- West Creek Rail Trail
- Parking Area
- Trailhead

Legend

- Stram
- PA Highway
- PA State Route
- Secondary Road
- County Line
- Municipality
- PA State Park
- PA State Forest
- State Gameland

