

Suggested Hikes, Rides and Paddles!

Pittsfield State Forest

1041 Cascade Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201, (413) 442-8992

To help you plan your visit to DCR's Pittsfield State Forest, we offer the following suggested experiences that we think you might enjoy.

- **“Introductory”** are short and appropriate for most users, including families with children.
- **“Signature”** are recommended trail experiences. These may be longer or more difficult but highlight some of the best park features.

For a safe and enjoyable park experience please review the **Things to Know Before You Go** section at the end of this document. Download a map before you go:
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/pittsfield-sf-trail-map/download>

Introductory Hike Tranquility Trail

Trailhead: Park at the CCC Ski Lodge parking lot. Trailhead is across the road and over the footbridge. Keep right after crossing the footbridge. **Lat/Long:** 42.485071, -73.302493

Distance: 0.6 miles **Difficulty:** Easy

Brief Description: The Tranquility Trail is an easy, universally accessible hard-surfaced path. The route takes you through pine and mixed hardwood forests. Self-guided nature brochure at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/pittsfield-state-forest-tranquility-trail/download>

Introductory Bike Ride Whirlpool Wander

Trailhead: Park at the CCC Ski Lodge parking lot **Lat/Long:** 42.484644, -73.302288

Distance: Varies **Difficulty:** Moderate

Brief Description: The rustic Ski Lodge was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937, was once a busy hub of winter recreation is your launch site today. Begin your ride from the south end of the parking lot. Head east on single track trails. Look for Bearclaw and follow this trail. Keep right at most junctions. Wind your way up and over a small hill. Keep right, a short stretch of Fugawi trail brings you to Whirlpool trail. The eastern edge of this route on Whirlpool trail runs along Lulu Brook. Look for the whirlpool and the disappearing brook, sinking into the subterranean limestone bedrock!

At the beaver pond cross the stream, and circle around the pond on the Beaver Tail Trail. Find your way back to the parking lot however you choose; Fox Trot is the most direct route. These trails offer a relatively flat and fun introductory single-track experience. There are more mountain bike trails to explore at Pittfield State Forest!

Signature Hike Shaker Trail

Trailhead: Trailhead is on U.S. Route 20 located across from Hancock Shaker Village
Lat/Long: 42.431570, -73.339691

Distance: Various **Difficulty:** Difficult

Brief Description: Hike to the Hancock Shaker North Family site, then on the Shaker Trail to Shaker Mountain holy site. Return, or continue along the Shaker Trail to the Holy Mount Trail and return via a loop. The trail and historic sites are described here: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dcr/parks/trails/shaker.pdf>

Signature Bike Ride Ride from Pittsfield Ski Lodge to the Taconic Ridge and Return

Trailhead: Park at the CCC Ski Lodge Parking **Lat/Long:** 42.484644, -73.302288

Distance: About 13 miles **Difficulty:** Difficult

Brief Description: Make sure you have a map or guide. Begin your ride heading east on the "Family Trails." Look for the Whirlpool and Beaver Pond trails. Find your way to Honwee Ridge single track trail from near the Lulu Brook parking area. Climb gradually up the ridge, over 1,200 ft. of ascent. From the top go down TappanZee to the Taconic Skyline Trail, turn left, and then right onto the paved Circuit Road. On your right you'll find Wm Berry Way. Take that up to the Taconic Crest Trail for scenic lookouts. From the Azalea Field, Berkshire Ramble takes you to the Turner Trail. This descends back to the parking lot.

Things to Know Before You Go

- **Time, distance, difficulty.** The average hiker pace is estimated at 1.5 miles per hour. Most distances are round-trip. Plan conservatively, start early. Be aware of weather and sunset. Trail difficulty ratings based on ruggedness and gradient are **easy**, **moderate**, or **difficult**.
- **Wear weather appropriate clothing**, layer for temperature changes. Bring sunblock. Wear appropriate and sturdy footwear.

- **Parking at trailheads.** [Parking fees](#) may apply. Space may be limited. Be courteous to avoid blocking in others. Do not leave valuables in your car.
- **Bring a map and share your plans with someone.**
- **Drinking water** may not be available on site. Bring plenty!
- **Stay on designated trails.** Follow painted blazes and signs if available. Generally, double blazes indicate an intersection or direction change.
- **Pace & group size.** Keep your group together; hike only as fast as your group's slowest hiker or rider. Limit your group size to 12 people or fewer to lessen impacts.
- **Carry-in, carry-out all trash and personal belongings.** Follow the Leave No Trace outdoor ethics. [More information here.](#)
- **Know which parks are pet friendly.** Dogs are not permitted in DCR Water Supply Protection areas (such as Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs) and certain state parks. Always keep your dog leashed, 10-foot maximum. Always pick up after your dog and dispose of waste properly. [Complete guidelines here.](#)
- **Be aware of hunting seasons.** Wear blaze orange when appropriate. [More information here.](#)
- **Wear a bicycle helmet** while biking. Riders age 16 and under must wear a helmet. It is the law. [More information here.](#)
- **Wear your PFD** while boating. A Personal Flotation Device (PFD), or life preserver, must be worn by boaters age 12 and under; and canoeists/kayakers from Sept. 15-May 15. [More information here.](#)
- **Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers.** Prevent the transport of nuisance species. Clean all recreational equipment. It is the law. [More information here.](#)
- **Be aware some trails may not be well marked, and some may not be identified on a trail map.**

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) oversees over 450,000 acres of state parks, forests, beaches, bike trails, parkways, watershed lands, and dams across the Commonwealth. DCR's mission is to: *Protect, promote and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources for the well-being of all.*