

## ACCESS TO THE STANDING STONE TRAIL

The nearly 80-mile long Standing Stone Trail passes through Fulton, Huntingdon and Mifflin Counties in south central Pennsylvania. Its southern terminus is at Cowans Gap State Park, where it meets the Tuscarora Trail, while its northern terminus is within Rothrock State Forest at Detweiler Run Natural Area, where it meets the Mid State Trail.

The trail passes through only two towns, both small and both designated as hiker-friendly *Trail Towns*: Three Springs and Mapleton. Services in both towns are very limited, and neither town has overnight lodging accommodations. For **overnight accommodations, grocery stores or restaurants**, there are three suggested towns: **McConnellsburg** in the south; **Huntingdon** in the center; **State College** in the north.

For **day hikers**, there are at least 28 access points along the length of the trail, most having pull-offs or designated parking areas. These are marked on the downloadable Website maps, and the new 1:50,000 scale map soon to be made available to the public.

For overnight or through hikers needing **long-term parking**, there are two secure areas: **Cowans Gap State Park** and **Greenwood Furnace State Park**. There is no parking fee, but hikers must contact park managers ahead of time to ascertain their vehicle is identified and accounted for. A third secure site at the riverside park in Mapleton is expected to be completed in 2015 or 2016.

### Getting there

**Southern portions** are a little over an hour drive west of Harrisburg via the Pennsylvania Turnpike (I-76) taking the Fort Littleton exit 180. The trail is also about a 30-minute drive east of Interstate 70 and its junction with the Pennsylvania Turnpike at Breezewood. Cowans Gap State Park is also about two hours from the Washington, DC metro area.

**Central portions** are easily accessed by US 22, which passes through Huntingdon and Mount Union. SR 522 runs parallel to most of the southern half of the trail. Two miles west of the junction of US 22 and SR 522 at Mount Union, a wide spot along US 22 is a good point to hike the Thousand Steps. It is also about the mid-point on the trail.

SR 655 can be used to access the southern end of Stone Mountain or the northern end of Jacks Mountain. The trail crosses SR 655 about 3 miles north of the town of Mill Creek, at the cement bridge that crosses over Saddler Creek.

**Northern portions** can be accessed from Harrisburg by taking US 322W to the Reedsville exit at SR 655W, then through Belleville to take SR 305W to Greenwood Furnace State Park. From State College, Greenwood Furnace State Park is located about 20 minutes away, four miles southeast of McAlevy's Fort.

The northern terminus is about a 4-hour drive from Philadelphia or Scranton and is 3 hours from Pittsburgh.

### Maps

To help traverse local roads along the length of the trail, the Buchanan State Forest and Rothrock State Forest maps cover the area well. These are available by contacting the individual Websites or they can be purchased for a nominal fee in retail hiking supply stores. Purple Lizard Maps in State College provide excellent weather resistant maps as well. The *Guide to Hiking Trails in Pennsylvania* is available free from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.