The Boyd Big Tree Preserve Conservation Area boasts an extensive trail system, which will please almost any level of hiking enthusiast.

1. **LOWER SPRING TRAIL**: 1.1 miles, lavender blues, easiest hiking. This trail skirts the spring-fed pond. It is a haven for a number of amphibians during the early spring and summer months and is also a popular watering hole for wildlife.

2. **CREEK TRAIL**: 0.8 mile, medium blue blaze, more difficult hiking. This trail winds down to the creek near an American beech grove and then angles up the slope near the western edge of the park.

3. **JANIE TRAIL**: 2.8 miles, red blazes, difficult hiking. This is the longest and most challenging trail in the conservation area. It follows the ridge top and comes down the mountain on a steep slope. A red-blazed spur leads to a parking lot on the Blue Mountain Parkway.

4. **UPPER SPRING TRAIL**: 2 miles, beige blazes, more difficult hiking. This trail provides the hiker with a nice cross-sectional view of the conservation area. This is an excellent trail to see some of the largest trees in the area. These large second growth oaks, large hardwood trees. This large block of nearly unbroken forest is a haven for wildlife like forest warblers and other deep-woods animals. A main attraction to the conservation area is the elaborate trail system. Contact the Little Buffalo State Park Complex office at 717-567-0255.

**HUNTING AND FIREARMS**: 800 acres are open to hunting, trapping, and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are black bear, deer, turkey, grouse, rabbit and squirrel.

Wildlife Watching

There are many opportunities to see wildlife, but please observe from a safe distance and do not feed wildlife. The conservation area's many trails offer good opportunities for seeing white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, squirrels, grouse, black bears and a variety of songbirds depending on the season. Eastern bluebird boxes are around the main parking lot. Please enjoy viewing the bluebirds but do not disturb the boxes.

**Environmental Education and Interpretation**

The Boyd Big Tree Preserve Conservation Area offers a wide variety of environmental education and interpretive 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. Curriculum-based environmental education programs are available to schools and youth groups. Group programs must be arranged in advance and may be scheduled by calling the Little Buffalo State Park Complex office.

Programs are offered from April through October. Many programs feature the abundant wildlife and forest management practices that can be seen in the conservation area. For more detailed information on programs, contact the Little Buffalo State Park Complex office or visit the calendar of events at www.visitPaParks.com.

**What is a Restrictive Covenant?**

A restrictive covenant is a condition that is written into a deed, either by the seller or person donating the property, that must be adhered to by the person or organization that assumes possession of the property. Some of the restrictive covenants placed on the transfer of this property include:

- The land is intended for use, enjoyment and education of all citizens of the Commonwealth. Environmental, outdoor and forest resources management education will be emphasized.
- Only passive outdoor recreational activities will be allowed. Horseback riding, hunting, and other activities, with the exception of official use equipment and accommodations for disabled people, are prohibited.
- Acceptable forestry practices will govern resource management. Generally, only dead and downed trees should be harvested, except on forest demonstration areas.

Research and educational programs such as warm season grass, butterfly trails, sugar maple plantation, and aspen management have been suggested for consideration in the field portion of the preserve.

**History**

Mr. Alexander Boyd donated the conservation area to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in September of 1999. Mr. Boyd was president of the Union Deposit Corporation. The stated purpose of this donation was to set aside the area for the perpetual management and protection of big trees. He received a Conservation Landowner of the Year award for 2001 from the Pennsylvania Wildlife Federation and Audubon Pennsylvania for his donation of the conservation area.

**Nearby Attractions**

Information on nearby attractions is available from the Hershey Harrisburg Regional Visitor Bureau, 877-727-8773. www.visithersheyharrisburg.org

Fort Hunter Mansion and Park: Along PA 443 north of Harrisburg, this 40-acre Dauphin County park was a settlement fort in the 1750s during the French and Indian War. The park has playgrounds, picnic areas and tours of the mansion. 717-599-2751

Joseph E. Ibberson Conservation Area: Straddling Peters Mountain, the 1,023-acre conservation area is dominated by large hardwood trees. This large block of nearly unbroken forest is a haven for wildlife like forest warblers and other deep-woods animals. A main attraction to the conservation area is the elaborate trail system. Contact the Little Buffalo State Park Complex office at 717-567-0255.

City of Harrisburg: The historic capital of Pennsylvania has many attractions, including: PA State Museum, State Capitol, Governor’s Mansion, Whittaker Center for Science and the Arts, National Civil War Museum and much more.

**Access for People with Disabilities**

This symbol indicates facilities and activities that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible for people with disabilities. This publication text is available in alternative formats.

If you need an accommodation to participate in park activities due to a disability, please contact the park you plan to visit.

Contact a park employee or dial 911. For directions to the nearest hospital, look on bulletin boards or at the park office.

**For More Information Contact:**

Boyd Big Tree Preserve Conservation Area
Harrisburg, PA 17101
1707-9426
717-567-9255
email: littlebuffsp@pa.gov

**Directions**

Hiking: 12 miles of trails

**Recreational Opportunities**

The field and the ridge top of the conservation area can be great places to watch the annual hawk migration as these magnificent birds of prey ride the thermals along Blue Mountain. Their migration begins in mid-October and runs through early December with the peak in early November. American Chestnuts were planted in the field near the entrance as part of a program to create blight resistant trees.

**What is a Conservation Area?**

This designation is for land donated to the Bureau of State Parks and managed for the purposes of preserving open space, conserving natural resources, and providing opportunities for passive, non-motorized, low density outdoor recreation and environmental education activities.

A conservation area is characterized as a large area with few improvements and no through roads. Recreational facilities and development are minimal. Conservation areas are used for low impact recreation and serve as outdoor classrooms. Conservation areas serve as examples of proper stewardship and resource management.

**Wildlife Watching**

There are many opportunities to see wildlife, but please observe from a safe distance and do not feed wildlife. The conservation area's many trails offer good opportunities for seeing white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, squirrels, grouse, black bears and a variety of songbirds depending on the season. Eastern bluebird boxes are around the main parking lot. Please enjoy viewing the bluebirds but do not disturb the boxes.