Pine Creek Valley History

Long before the first roads and tracks were laid through this valley, people looked for rugged homesites and soft waters of Pine Creek for logging of pine trees and farms. The Seneca Indians lived along the upper reaches of Pine Creek near what is now the state Forest Park. Long before the Senecas, the Honesela and the Onondagas were also present in the area.

In 1668, English settlers began to arrive in what is now Pennsylvania. The first settlers were mostly farmers who settled along the Susquehanna River. They were followed by traders and hunters who came to this area for fur. The most famous of these was John English, who arrived in 1730. He built a cabin on “English Island,” the largest of the three islands in Pine Creek below its confluence with Little Pine Creek. The native peoples respected his ability to produce a tea substitute, and lived in harmony with him. His descendants still live in the area.

The conversion of the railway to a public recreation trail from Ansonia south to Rattlesnake Rock, opened August 27, 1996. The second segment, which continues south from Waterville and the segment from Ansonia north to Wellsboro Junction was completed in the spring of 2007. The third segment north to Jersey Shore is no bridge across Pine Creek at the bottom of Pine Creek Gorge. The lower half of Pine Creek Gorge can only be crossed by a footbridge from the railroad. A 140-foot-wide gorge north of Waterville is also no bridge. The pine trees and other vegetation, and the changing seasons of the year make this an ideal retreat for people of all ages.

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