Each time a hunter buys a hunting license, the money he spends goes toward many facets of wildlife management. Since 1920, close to a million and a half acres of State Game Lands have been acquired with these funds. Each year nearly $70,000,000 is spent to improve wildlife habitat. Habitat improvements enhance living conditions for non-game birds and mammals as well as those species which are hunted. Pennsylvania hunters willingly share these lands with the non-hunting public, and with few exceptions, State Game Lands are open for general use year round. Surveys indicate that hunting accounts for only thirty-five percent of game land usage. The remaining sixty-five percent is used by the general public for non-hunting purposes.

“Working Together for Wildlife” is a Game Commission program providing everyone an opportunity to help support wildlife management in the areas for endangered and non-game animals. Monies derived from the “Working Together for Wildlife” Program are being used in Pennsylvania to re-introduce the osprey, river otter, bald eagle, peregrine falcon and provide habitat for other birds and mammals indigenous to the Commonwealth.

Construction placement of blue bird houses on State Game Lands provide habitat for other birds as well as those species which are hunted. Islands in the Susquehanna River and a section of the Susquehanna Highlands have been set aside as propagation areas for non-game animals. Numerous other projects are planned for State Game Lands and other public lands.

State Game Lands 224 is located in the Pennsylvania Game Commission’s (PGC) Northeast Region. It is in central Luzerne County. It lies within Union, Hunlock, and Plymouth Townships. The Game Lands lie on three separated tracts. The larger tract borrows on the Susquehanna River Valley. SGL 224 is predominately forested. Dry oak heath and dry oak mixed hardwood forest types represent 571.3 acres (89% of total area). Red, chestnut, white, scarlet, and black oak dominate, with a lesser component of red maple, yellow-poplar, black birch, and sassafras. The majority of SGL 224’s forestland is 70-90 years old. Much of the larger parcel is 90 years old. Stands 3, the reverting field, is in the 20 – 40 year age class. Stand 8 is a younger cohort (40 years), resulting from a past timber harvest. The only early successional habitat is found within the pole line right of ways. The entirety of the smaller parcel is 75 years old.

Hunting opportunities on both parcels exist primarily for whitetail deer, wild turkey, cottontail rabbit, gray squirrel, and ruffed grouse. Coyotes, bobcat, and grey fox may also provide furtaking opportunities on this game lands. No pheasant stocking occurs on this game lands.

There are two designated SGL parking areas that facilitate access to the smaller parcel. They are located along Jesse Road. There are no maintained parking areas on the larger tract, but parking is available in a state owned rest stop adjacent to the boundary. The only infrastructure that exists on this parcel is a gated 4x4 trail that connects to the power line. This power line provides adequate foot access to the entire parcel.

SGL 224 is split between two wildlife management units (WMU). The larger parcel lies in WMU 4E. The smaller parcel is in WMU 3B. Hunting opportunities on both parcels exist primarily for whitetail deer, wild turkey, cottontail rabbit, gray squirrel, and ruffed grouse. Coyotes, bobcat, and grey fox may also provide furtaking opportunities on this game lands. No pheasant stocking opportunities exist on this game lands.

Hiking, bird watching, and berry picking are other lawful activities that occur on this game lands. This game lands is relatively small in size and is not a major attraction for these activities. No mountain bike, snowmobile, or horseback trails are located on either parcel of SGL 224.