

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 aces of State Game Lands have been acquired with these funds. Each year nearly \$7,000,000 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 sixtyfive percent is used by the general public for nonhunting 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 provides needed homes for this beautiful songbird. Islands in the Susquehanna River have been set aside as propagations areas for nongame shore birds. Numerous other projects are planned on State Game Lands and other public

## SPORTSMEN'S RECREATION MAP



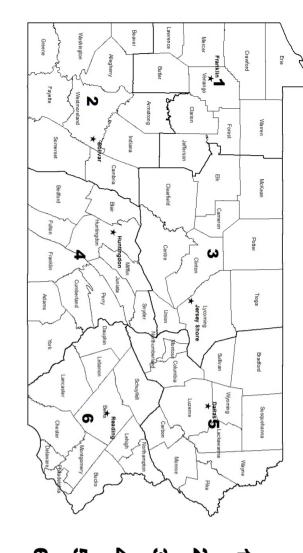
**STATE GAME LANDS** No. 296 **FAYETTE COUNTY** 

State game land (SGL) 296 is located in Lower Tyrone and Perry Townships, Fayette County and South Huntingdon Township, Westmoreland County. It consists of four (4) compartments and has a deeded acreage of 2421.8.

The Game Commission currently maintains five (5) public parking areas on this game land, all located in the large central tract (Compartment 1). The farthest point on SGL 296 by foot from a parking area or public road is approximately 1.1 miles (Figure 3). There are no parking lots on the other three compartments. There are 10.7 miles of maintained administrative roads throughout the game land providing public access to this area by foot. Roads are currently closed year-round to public motor vehicle traffic and access is controlled with locked gates, with the exception of the gate at the parking area off Township Road (TR) 317. Since 2001, this gate has been opened for the first day of the fall archery season until the end of the flintlock season, allowing access to a parking area at the power line running through the center of this SGL. Gated roads, gas line, and power line rights-of-way provide access for hunters and trappers as well as avenues for hiking, and other outdoor activities. There are no designated routes for horseback riding, mountain biking, or snowmobiling.

State game land 296 is made up of a river valley and various drainages that make it somewhat hilly with steep ravines. Elevations within SGL 296 range from 800 feet at Jacobs Creek to over 1,400 feet on several of the hilltops.

Hunting opportunities on SGL 296 include white-tailed deer, black bear, turkey, ruffed grouse, eastern cottontail rabbit, and several species of squirrel. Furtaking opportunities include raccoon, red and gray fox, coyote, and mink. No stocking of ring-necked pheasant occurs on this SGL. Hunting opportunities are impacted by this SGL's relatively small and easily accessible nature. Species such as whitetailed deer, bear, and turkey move readily on and off this SGL and adjacent private land based on levels of hunting pressure and food availability. Habitat practices encouraging mixed successional stages of forest regeneration and edge will improve the availability of food and cover for white-tailed deer, black bear, turkey, ruffed grouse, and rabbit. Consequently, this habitat improvement will increase the time these game species remain on the game land portion of their home range. Other lawful recreation - Hiking, bird watching, recreational boating, and mushroom and berry collection are other lawful recreational activities compatible with this SGL. Horseback riding and bicycling opportunities exist on public roadways running through this SGL. No designated trails currently exist for these activities on SGL 296.



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