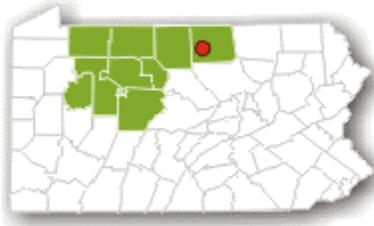


Colton Point

On the west rim of the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania, the 368-acre Colton Point State Park resonates with the rustic charm of the Civilian Conservation Corps era of the 1930s. The rugged overlooks offer great views of the canyon.

Directions



The 368-acre Colton Point State Park is five miles south of US 6 at Ansonia.

Reservations

To reserve a campsite, organized group tenting area or a picnic pavilion, call 888-PA-PARKS, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon. - Sat. Campsites can be reserved from 11 months up to noon of the day of arrival. Organized group tenting areas and picnic pavilions can be reserved from 11 months to two days in advance.

Recreation

Camping: rustic sites

The campground is open from the second Friday in April until the third Sunday in October. Rustic toilets, tables, fire rings and a sanitary dump station are provided. Campsites at Colton Point are not reservable but are available first-come, first-served.

Campground Map: You must have Adobe Acrobat 4.0 or higher to view this map. [Go download a copy of Acrobat Reader.](#) [Go to the campground map.](#) (267 kb) [Go to camping](#) for more information.

Picnicking: About 100 picnic tables are available for year-round use. There are also five, reservable pavilions located throughout the park.

Organized Group Tenting: Qualified adult and youth groups may use this 90-person capacity area equipped with picnic tables from the second Friday in April to the third Sunday in October, weather permitting. Advance reservations are recommended. This area is rustic in nature and so no vehicles are permitted in the camping area. [Go to organized group tenting](#) for more information.

Hiking: 4 miles of trails

The trails traverse very rugged terrain, passing close to many steep cliffs, and may have slippery surfaces. Stay on designated trail surfaces and wear appropriate footwear.

Do not overestimate your ability or stamina; think "Safety First" and take your time to enjoy your experience. Avoid the temptation to get on rock overhangs for a better view. Stay behind the railings and fences.

Rim Trail: 1 mile - Not to be confused with the West Rim Trail, Rim Trail follows the perimeter of the 'point' and links all of the overlook view areas together into a wonderfully and mostly flat hike.

Turkey Path: 3 miles, down and back - This trail descends 1.5 miles to the floor of the canyon. The highlight is a 70-foot cascading waterfall less than 0.5-mile down. It is a down and back trail. There is no bridge across Pine Creek at the bottom.

Pine Creek Trail: The 42-mile Pine Creek Trail is a multi-use trail for hiking, bicycling, and cross-country skiing. Located at the bottom of the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon, one mile of this trail is in Leonard Harrison and Colton Point state parks. Horseback riding is only permitted on the dirt access road immediately beside the Pine Creek Trail for a nine-mile length from Ansonia to Tiadaghton. Horseback riding is not permitted on the limestone gravel trail. The Horseback trailhead is along Marsh Creek Road near the junction of US 6 and PA 362 at Ansonia.

The opportunities for sightseeing are endless. Trail users can view dramatic rock outcrops, waterfalls, and wildlife like, eagle, osprey, coyote, deer, wild turkey, heron, river otter, black bear and many others. Diverse plant life, scattered old growth timber, historic pine and spruce plantations, and several foundations from the Civilian Conservation Corps era can be found along the trail.

Snowmobiling: Registered snowmobiles may use the 20-mile trail network on state forest land daily after the close of the deer season in December. The park provides parking, picnic tables and restrooms. ATVs are not considered snowmobiles.



Hunting and Firearms: About 250 acres of Leonard Harrison and 100 acres of Colton Point are open to hunting, trapping and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are deer, turkey, rabbit, pheasant and squirrel. Hunting is also available in adjacent [Tioga State Forest](#).

Hunting woodchucks, also known as groundhogs, is prohibited. Dog training is only permitted from the day following Labor Day through March 31 in designated hunting areas. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission rules and regulations apply. Contact the park office for accessible hunting information.

Use extreme caution with firearms at all times. The park is used by other visitors during hunting seasons. Firearms and archery equipment may be uncased and ready for use only in authorized hunting areas during hunting seasons. In areas not open to hunting or during non-hunting seasons, firearms and archery equipment shall be kept in the owner's car, trailer or camp.

For complete information on hunting rules and regulations in Pennsylvania, [visit the Pennsylvania Game Commission Web site](#).

Fishing: Fishing is available to those visitors who wish to make the long, steep hike to the bottom of the canyon to Pine Creek. Species include trout, smallmouth bass and panfish. Nearby trout streams include Marsh Creek, Stoney Fork Creek, Asaph Run, Straight Run and Four-Mile Run, which is along the Turkey Path Trail. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission regulations apply. For complete information on fishing rules and regulations in Pennsylvania, [visit the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Web site](#).

Environmental Education and Interpretation

An environmental interpretor presents resource-oriented programs and interpretive walks April through October. Major topics and seasonal programs include: Watershed Education, astronomy, fall color, old fashioned cider squeezing and summer campfire programs. Educational information is available at the visitor center or park office.

The environmental interpretive center, at the Leonard Harrison main overlook entrance, is open during the summer season through the fall foliage season. A video and educational displays interpret the area and its wildlife. Call the park office for visitor center hours or to schedule an appointment for your group tour. [Go to environmental education and interpretation](#) for more information.

Access for People with Disabilities



If you need an accommodation to participate in park activities due to a disability, please contact the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks:
888-PA-PARKS (voice)
717-558-2710 (local or international voice)
888-537-7294 (TTY)
717-558-2711 (local or international TTY)
711 (AT&T Relay Services)

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[Colton Point/Leonard Harrison large print version \(.rtf\)](#)
[Colton Point/Leonard Harrison text version \(.txt\)](#)

The Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania

Leonard Harrison and Colton Point state parks are on opposite sides of the Pine Creek Gorge, called the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania. Many scenic vistas offer spectacular views into the 800-foot deep, glacially carved canyon. The scenery at these parks is superb in every season of the year and is especially stunning in late September through mid-October. The large abundance of deciduous hardwood trees display beautiful autumn shades of yellow, orange, red and purple. Pockets of evergreen trees provide a dash of green year-round.

The "Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania" begins just south of Ansonia, along US 6 and continues south for about 47 miles. At its deepest point, Pine Creek Gorge is 1450 feet deep and nearly one mile wide. At Leonard Harrison and Colton Point state parks, the depth of the canyon is about 800 feet and these parks have the most

spectacular scenic overlooks.

Many recreational opportunities are available in the Canyon. Some of these activities are regulated by the Bureau of State Parks or by the Bureau of Forestry, which have slightly different rules and regulations. Visitors can hike, mountain bike, horseback ride, fish, seasonally whitewater boat, hunt, primitive camp and birdwatch.

Formation of the Canyon

Until about 20,000 years ago, Pine Creek flowed northeasterly. Then, the Laurentide Continental Glacier, which covered most of northern North America, moved into the area, pushing rocks, soil and other debris, which dammed Pine Creek, forming a lake near Ansonia.

The abundant glacial meltwater eventually overflowed the debris dam, reversing the flow of Pine Creek to its current southerly flow. The abundant meltwater of the glacier swiftly carved a deep channel. Thousands of years of erosion by Pine Creek has carved the spectacular Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania.

Fall Foliage

Leonard Harrison and Colton Point State Parks offer outstanding opportunities for fall leaf viewing. Shortening days, cool nights and warm days, wind, and adequate moisture through the preceding seasons, play a factor in the brilliance of the fall foliage. These factors also determine when the leaves will change in the Canyon. Droughts, wind, and cold temperatures can cause leaves to drop early in the fall. Each year varies on when the leaves change, however a guideline is the first three weeks in October provide a spectrum of fall foliage. Leonard Harrison overlooks offer the best view of the full canyon. The drive up Colton Road to Colton Point State Park and the four overlooks offer spectacular fall foliage viewing opportunities.

General Fall Foliage Colors of Trees

Red: red maple, red oak, black cherry, sumac sassafras.

Yellow/Orange: sugar maple, hickories, sycamore, basswood, aspen, tulip poplar, birches, chestnut oak, serviceberry, black walnut.

Brown: white oak, black oak, beech.

Human Influence on the Canyon

American Indians used the Pine Creek Gorge as a major travel route. Pine Creek Trail follows the same general route as the original path. Just north of the park at Ansonia, an American Indian word that means "big meadow," was a seasonal hunting camp.

The lumbering of the native white pine and later, the hemlock and assorted hardwoods, led to the settlement of this area. Logs were floated in huge rafts each spring to mills at Williamsport. Lumber from this area helped to make Williamsport the lumber capital of the world in the 1880s. Hemlock bark was peeled and hauled to several local tanneries to turn hides into leather. By the 1900s, only a few small areas of native forest were untouched in all of Pennsylvania.

Due to the mass deforestation, massive forest fires, and unregulated hunting and trapping, the wildlife populations declined greatly in the Commonwealth. White-tailed deer, beaver, and elk were reintroduced to the state in the early 1900s. More recent additions to the canyon include the reintroduction of river otters in 1983 and the reintroduction of fishers in the mid 1990s. Bald eagles, once an endangered species, began nesting in the gorge in the late 1980s.

Prior to being a world-class multi-use trail, Pine Creek Trail was an active railroad. The Jersey Shore, Pine Creek and Buffalo Railroad began in 1883 by carrying timber to the sawmills in Tiadaghton, Cammal, and Slate Run. The railroad also transported coal north to New York State and vast amounts of hemlock bark to several local tanneries for use in the leather industry. By 1896, the railroad was carrying seven million tons of freight and three passenger trains on daily runs between Wellsboro Junction and Williamsport.

The railroad changed hands several times and was eventually taken over by Conrail. The last train passed through the canyon on October 7, 1988. Today, the rail line has taken on a new life as a part of the state's extensive network of railtrails.

In 1968, 12 miles of the canyon were designated a National Natural Landmark by the U. S. Department of the Interior. In 1993, the Canyon became a State Park Natural Area, which will protect it in a natural state for future generations. In 1992, Pine Creek was designated a Pennsylvania Scenic River. [Go to natural areas](#) for more information.

Park History

Colton Point was named in the late 1800s for Henry Colton, a lumberman who supervised harvesting of trees in the area. Logs were floated down Pine Creek to sawmills in Williamsport. The park was established from state forest lands purchased in the early 1900s.

Colton Point State Park was developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) from 1933 to 1936 and opened

to the public in 1936. The CCC's contributions are still visible today through the five stone and timber pavilions in the park. Three of the five pavilions have fireplaces. In 1988, the CCC built facilities were added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Nearby Attractions

For information on nearby attractions and accommodations, please contact the Tioga County Visitor's Bureau, 888-TIOGA-28, www.visittiogapa.com, or the Wellsboro Area Chamber of Commerce, 570-724-1926.

[Colton Point State Park](#): Just across the canyon lies Colton Point which has camping, hiking and scenic views.

[Tioga State Forest](#): The 159,466-acre Tioga State Forest provides timber products, wildlife habitat and recreation. 570-724-2868.

Other Attractions: Horseback trail rides, covered wagon rides, mountain biking, road bicycling, seasonal whitewater rafting, canoeing and kayaking, as well as airplane rides are available from private sources in the area.

In an Emergency

No phone service is available at Colton Point. A pay telephone at the entrance to Colton Point Road off US 6 is the nearest service available.

Nearest Hospital:

Soldiers and Sailors Hospital
32-36 Central Avenue
Wellsboro, PA 16901
570-723-7764

Important Links

[Pennsylvania State Parks Mission](#)
[Protect and Preserve Our Parks](#)
[Volunteer Opportunities](#)

For More Information Contact

Colton Point State Park
c/o Leonard Harrison
Wellsboro, PA 16901-8970
570-724-3061
Manager: Harry "Chip" Harrison



E-mail: leonardharrisonsp@state.pa.us
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For general state park information or to reserve a campsite, cabin, picnic pavilion or an organized group tenting area, call toll-free 888-PA-PARKS, Mon. to Sat. 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A public service of Pennsylvania State Parks and <http://www.pa-conservation.org>