

## Kooser

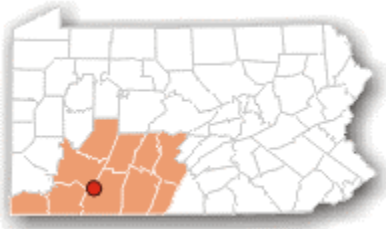
In the heart of the Laurel Highlands at an altitude of 2,600 feet, Kooser State Park attracts visitors year-round to its 250 acres of forest and the beautiful trout stream that flows the full length of the park. The park's original design character was stamped by the Civilian Conservation Corps projects of the 1930s that established the existing lake and most of its use areas, its architecture and site details. The park design stresses rustic values in site and building materials and in their application: native stone, rough sawn and stained wood surfaces, log and timber members.

### Park Advisories

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Kooser Winter Cabins Are Now Open. To rent a cabin for the winter season at Kooser State Park call the Winter Cabin Concessionaire at 412-720-4074 ask for Traci Holler Concession open from December 22, 2003 until March 19, 2004.

### Directions



Kooser State Park is on PA 31 midway between the Donegal and Somerset turnpike exits, at the eastern foothills of Laurel Mountain Summit. Kooser State Park is a one hour drive from Johnstown, Pa. or Pittsburgh, Pa.

### Reservations

To reserve a campsite, cabin, 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. Cabins, organized group tenting areas and picnic pavilions can be reserved from 11 months to two days in advance.

### Recreational Opportunities



**Cabins:** There are nine rustic rental cabins available for use year-round. A nearby modern showerhouse is available. Summer rentals are for one week only. The cabins have mattresses, refrigerator, stove and hot water. Renters must bring all cooking and sleeping supplies. One cabin is accessible. [Go to cabins](#) for more information.

**Cabin Map:** You must have Adobe Acrobat 4 or higher to view this map. [Go download a copy of Acrobat Reader.](#) [Go to the Kooser cabin map.](#) (96 kb)

**Cross-country Skiing:** The 1.5-mile Kooser Trail is very popular due to the heavy snowfalls of the area. It is a well-marked trail and classified as "easiest."

There is also a 20-mile cross-country ski touring concession adjacent to the PA 653 parking area of nearby Laurel Ridge State Park. **Fee required on this trail.** [View conditions and snow depth on the live Web cam.](#)

#### Hiking: 1 mile of trails

The Kincora Trail is a popular trail named in honor of an Irish priest. Many short trails are in the day use area and cross-country ski trails are also available for hiking.



#### Camping: modern sites, some with electric

There are 47 tent and trailer campsites open the second Friday in April through mid-December. Accessible sites and a sanitary dumping station are available. Fourteen (14) campsites have electric hookups.

**Campground Map:** You must have Adobe Acrobat to view this map. [Go download a copy of Acrobat Reader.](#) [Go to the campground map.](#) (264 kb)

[Go to camping](#) for more information.

**Hunting:** Because of the park's small size, hunting is not permitted in the park. Hunters frequently camp in the park and walk to the [Forbes State Forest](#) lands that are adjacent to the park. Common game species are deer, turkey and grouse.



**Swimming:** A 350-foot swimming beach is open from late-May to mid-September, 8 a.m. to sunset. Lifeguards are on duty from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day, unless otherwise posted. Please read and follow posted rules for swimming when lifeguards are off-duty. A soda and juice machine concession and a dressing area are near the beach. The pool has an accessible ramp to the lake and an accessible restroom.

**Organized Group Tenting:** Nonprofit organized adult and youth groups may use the 120-person capacity group tenting area from mid-April to mid-December. The area is named the Van Dyke Area after a salt wagon driver, Mr. George Van Dyke, who was killed in the late 1800s when his wagon overturned.

[Go to organized group tenting](#) for more information.

**Fishing:** The four-acre Kooser Lake provides good fishing for trout, bass and bluegill. No boating is permitted. Night fishing is not permitted. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission laws apply.

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

**Picnicking:** Many picnic tables and the Mighty Oak Picnic Pavilion are available for year-round picnics.

### Access for People with Disabilities

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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)

888-537-7294 (TTY)

711 (AT&T Relay Services)

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### History

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Kooser State Park derives its name from John Kooser, who in 1867, settled in the western end of the park near what is now known as Kooser Spring. The early settlers told of an American Indian battle that was fought nearby. A number of war arrows and spearheads have been found in the area. A contingent of Washington's Army, known as Coxes Army, crossed Laurel Summit near here during the Whiskey Rebellion.

The land for Kooser State Park was acquired by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1922. In the late 1920s, the Van Dyke Area was used for summer tenting by people who would camp from early spring until late fall. In 1933, a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp was established in the western end of the park. The "CCC Boys" built new roads, fireplaces, cabins and a lake. In 1945, a tornado hit the area and did a tremendous amount of damage to Kooser's wooded areas.

In 1955, the present tent and trailer area was developed. Water was piped from Kooser Spring throughout the park and the original dam was rebuilt with a modern earth and concrete breast and an all-sand beach.

In 2002, portions of the park closed for improvements. Growing Greener money was used to add modern restrooms to the campground and make improvements to the day use area.

### Nearby Attractions

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For more information on the many nearby attractions contact: Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau, 800-333-5661, [www.laurelhighlands.org](http://www.laurelhighlands.org) or

the Somerset Chamber of Commerce, 814-445-6431, [www.somersetbusinesspartnership.com](http://www.somersetbusinesspartnership.com).

**Forbes State Forest:** The 51,000-acre Forbes State Forest provides hunting, fishing, hiking, general recreation and the highest point in Pennsylvania, Mount Davis--3,213 feet. 724-238-1200.

**Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail:** This 70-mile backpacking trail goes from Ohiopyle to the Conemaugh River. The Route 31 parking area and shelter are near Kooser State Park. For more information contact: Laurel Ridge State Park, 1117 Jim Mountain Road, Rockwood, PA 15557, 724-455-3744.

### In an Emergency

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Contact a park employee or dial 911.

For directions to the nearest hospital, look on bulletin boards or at the park office.

**Nearest Hospital:**

Somerset Hospital  
225 South Center Avenue  
Somerset, PA 15501  
814-443-5000

**Important Links**

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

**For More Information Contact:**

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Kooser State Park  
943 Glades Pike  
Somerset, PA 15501-8509  
814-445-8673  
Manager: Robert J. Huffman



E-mail: [koosersp@state.pa.us](mailto:koosersp@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.**

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