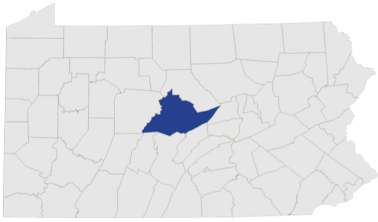


My Story



Recreation, Wildlife, and Nature Musser Gap Preserve

By Ben Vizzachero, Penn State Outings Club

“As an undergraduate student, I used to walk to Musser Gap from my dorm room on campus to spend a weekend or more backpacking.”

Though only recently opened up to the public, Musser Gap is a fantastic trailhead. From State College it is one of the most accessible trailheads, with a recently constructed bike path leading to it from downtown. As an undergraduate student, I used to walk to



Keystone Fund Investment: \$806,000

Total Public/Private Investment: \$1.2 million

Musser Gap from my dorm room on campus to spend a weekend or more backpacking. In the past few years, trails were created that connect Musser Gap to Shingletown Gap and the Mid-State Trail—one could start a hike at Musser Gap and hike for weeks without leaving the woods. These trails cover a variety of terrain and habitats, and are contiguous with many local landmarks throughout Rothrock State Forest such as the Little Flat Fire Tower, Alan Seeger Natural Area and Bear Meadows.

Musser Gap also offers recreation activities for

all types of people. The bike trail and wide gravel road are excellent for road bikers and mountain bikers alike, and the old farm fields are frequently used by dog walkers. Musser Gap offers abundant wildlife like deer and

turkey, and is used by small game hunters. Many local birdwatchers are also aware of the Gap's important conservation value: it provides habitat for a variety of declining grassland birds including Barn Owls, Short-eared Owls, and Bobolinks. Every spring, the Gap is inundated with an impressive diversity of singing warblers including the Louisiana Waterthrush and Nashville Warbler. In the fall, many rare migratory sparrows pass through. And each winter, it provides hunting grounds for rare raptors such as Peregrine Falcons and Great-Horned Owls.

Learn more at [KeystoneFund.org](https://www.KeystoneFund.org).