



Wolf Creek Narrows Natural Area

Location: Slippery Rock Township, Butler County

Dates acquired: 1979 - 1982

Size: approximately 115 acres

Notable features: mature northern hardwood forest, spring wildflowers, floodplain, streambank

Recreation activities (see below for details):
hiking, wildflower observation, fishing, hunting



Directions:

From the Slippery Rock exit off Interstate I-79, proceed east on Pa. Rt. 108 to Slippery Rock. At the light in town, turn left on Rt. 258. Go one block, turn left on W. Water Street, and follow it for approximately 2.0 miles (W. Water St. becomes Miller Rd.) until it crosses a bridge over Wolf Creek. Cross the bridge and look for a small parking area at the head of a dirt lane on the left. Do not block the lane or park along the paved road. Walk back across the bridge (**please use caution and watch for traffic along the public road**). The trailhead is on the left side of the road just past the bridge.

For directions using Google maps, click [Here](#).

Delorme Pennsylvania Atlas and Gazetteer Map 43, D-5

The parking area for Wolf Creek Narrows is located on the Miller Woods tract, which is owned and managed by the Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania as an outdoor classroom and laboratory. This 42-acre site is widely known for its beautiful spring wildflower display and great variety of birds. Miller Woods also is an important archaeological and historical site. The property became a Certified Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary in 2005.

Description: Wolf Creek Narrows is particularly known for its spectacular display of **spring wildflowers**, which includes Virginia bluebell, spring-beauty, trout-lily, and white trillium. Later in the summer, water willow, a low, shrubby plant with violet and white flowers, grows in thick beds within the shallow, rock-bottomed stream. Turks-cap lily adds color to the open floodplain at the southeastern corner of the property. The unusual walking fern, a small calcium-loving species, can be found growing on some of the limestone boulders. The uncommon crepis rattlesnake root is found along the floodplain. Periodic flooding and ice scouring maintain the open conditions required by this species.

It is believed that the steep, narrow gorge of Wolf Creek originally formed when the ceiling of an

ice-age cave eroded and collapsed due to runoff from the melting glacier. The site now consists of a high-quality stream meandering through towering 50-foot cliffs. Numerous springs pour from cracks in the steep walls, creating small waterfalls that flow into Wolf Creek. Restricted land-use and limited logging by the previous owners have resulted in mature stands of sugar maple and black cherry on the upper slopes, and a mixed hemlock-northern hardwood forest along the banks of Wolf Creek.

Hiking and wildlife watching: From the trailhead and kiosk, a **1.5-mile loop footpath** begins by leading upstream over level terrain to the point where the creek is pinched between rocky bluffs. The trail then climbs steeply along the sloping shoulder of the gorge's eastern flank, meanders through a mature, upland deciduous forest, and then descends back to Wolf Creek just upstream from the starting point. This trail is moderately-difficult, but suitable for families with children.

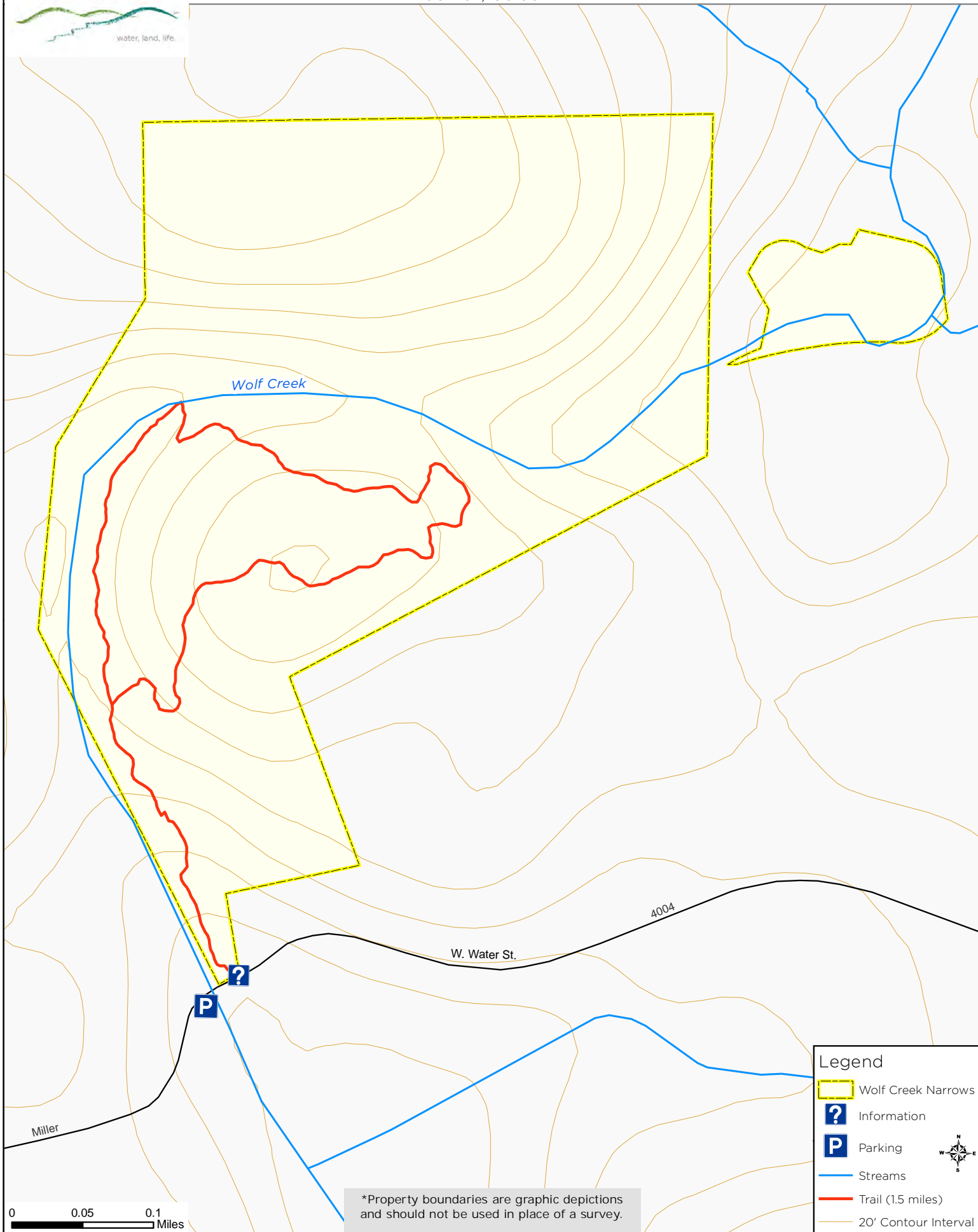
The mixture of riparian and upland areas provides habitat features for a variety of **wildlife**. Birds include belted kingfisher, Louisiana waterthrush, red-eyed vireo, and wood thrush. Ospreys and bald eagles have even been observed along the creek. Small, isolated pockets of water along the floodplain of Wolf Creek provide breeding habitat for wood frogs and other amphibians. Abundant logs on the forest floor offer cover for several types of salamanders and some snakes.

Hunting and fishing: Hunting and fishing are permitted on Wolf Creek Narrows in accordance with state regulations. Please exercise caution and wear blaze orange during hunting season.

Background: WPC acquired the key parcels comprising Wolf Creek Narrows in 1979 and 1982. The main tract originally had been part of a land grant given to a Revolutionary War veteran, and remained in the possession of only three families until the Conservancy acquired it in 1979.

For more information, please contact:

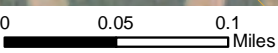
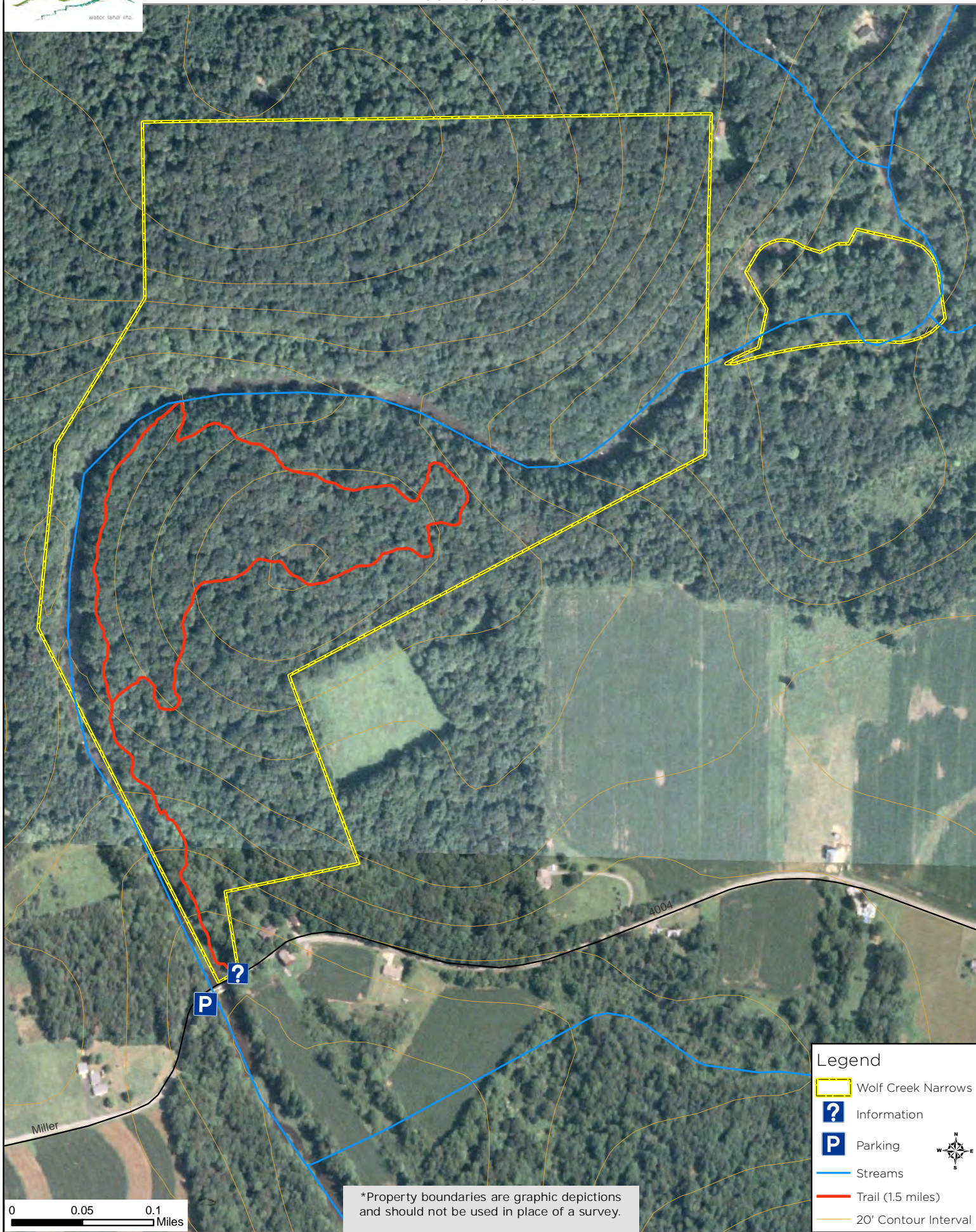
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*Property boundaries are graphic depictions and should not be used in place of a survey.

Legend

- Wolf Creek Narrows
- Information
- Parking
- Streams
- Trail (1.5 miles)
- 20' Contour Interval



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