



Fast Facts

NAME / Kittatinny, from the Lenni-Lenape meaning “endless mountain.”

LOCATION / 185 miles of land—including the Appalachian Trail—stretching from the Delaware River to the Mason-Dixon Line.

COUNTIES / Berks, Carbon, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Lebanon, Lehigh, Monroe, Northampton, Perry, and Schuylkill, including 136 municipalities.

LAND / 360,000 acres. 80% covered by forest and shrub. 34% protected through federal lands, state game lands, private land trusts, or conservation easements. 3 state forests. 5 state parks. Home to Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Lehigh Gap Nature Center, Cliff Jones Field Station at Waggoner’s Gap, Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge, and Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

WATER / Includes portions of Delaware, Lehigh, Schuylkill, and Susquehanna Rivers. 13 lakes and reservoirs. 3 Exceptional Value watersheds. Important source of clean and reliable drinking water for surrounding counties.

WILDLIFE / 7 Important Mammal Areas and Global Important Bird Area. Only home of the rare and endangered Regal Fritillary butterfly. Major bird and butterfly migration corridor and stopover site for neotropical migrants. Important habitat for several rare mammals and reptiles.

RECREATION / 160 miles of Appalachian Trail and 60 miles of Tuscarora Trail. International destination for birdwatching, including 7 hawk watch sites. Vast network of lands for hunting and numerous fishing hot spots.

ECONOMIC IMPACT / 5 million annual visitors to Delaware Water Gap. Walking, hiking, hunting, and fishing generate \$223 million in Berks County alone. Forests filter pollutants from rainwater and help control floods.

Threats

HOUSING + COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT / Nearly every part of the Ridge Corridor is vulnerable to future development, which can be a surprise to residents who assume the forested Ridge is protected.

INVASIVE SPECIES / The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is causing a severe decline in hemlock trees, and the Tree of Heaven is usurping native plant species.

OVERABUNDANT WHITE-TAILED DEER / Many years of an excessive white-tailed deer population have resulted in severe forest degradation throughout the Ridge Corridor.

ENERGY / Wind turbines cause dramatic fragmentation of habitat, and high-voltage power lines create wide deforested swaths across the Ridge.

POLLUTION / State forests and remote areas accessible by gravel roads are common targets of illegal dumping of furniture, tires, junked automobiles, appliances, construction debris, and general refuse.

CLIMATE CHANGE / The potential impacts of globally increasing greenhouse gases—including long-term drought, extreme weather events, and changes in the timing of the seasons—are an ongoing threat.

Challenges

- // Most people who live on or near the Ridge do not recognize the many natural, recreational, and historical resources of the Kittatinny Ridge and Corridor.
- // The Ridge does not look threatened, but most large areas of forest in Southeast Pennsylvania are privately owned. A common misconception is that the entire Ridge is state land protected from development.
- // Many municipalities do not have the resources to enforce conservation ordinances, and some communities and landowners are reluctant to support land use controls.
- // Nearly two-thirds of the Ridge's 500 square miles are privately owned by several thousand individual landowners, and contacting and engaging them in conservation activities requires investment from multiple partners.

Kittatinny Coalition

The Kittatinny Coalition is an alliance of organizations, agencies, and academic institutions working with municipal officials and private landowners to conserve the natural, scenic, cultural, and aesthetic resources of the Kittatinny Ridge and Corridor. The Coalition identifies and helps protect priority places, promotes collaborative science-based research along the Corridor to inform management practices and conservation recommendations, fosters effective local stewardship, promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, and increases public awareness and appreciation of the importance of the Kittatinny Ridge and Corridor.

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