

Conemaugh Gap 1/2 Day Trip

This is a nice scenic ride west of Ebensburg and down to Johnstown and back. Rather than the normal highway route, this route takes you down the west side of the Conemaugh Gap and brings you back along the east rim. This ride is only 78 miles long and takes just 2 hours.



The Conemaugh Gap

The Conemaugh Gap is known for being the deepest gorge east of the Mississippi River; 1,350 feet. The Gap can be viewed from the Conemaugh Gap Scenic Overlook, a pull-off on Haws Pike (Route 56 between Johnstown and Seward). The Conemaugh Gap runs for seven miles and was formed by the Conemaugh River cutting through the Laurel Ridge Mountain.



Looking West from Nicktown toward Alverda

So that you can avoid the need to use any of the major routes (22, 219, or 422), and to make the ride a bit longer and more scenic, you actually start the ride by heading north of Ebensburg on old Route #219. Turning left on Route #553 before Carrolltown will take you out along the Ridge Road toward Nicktown. Follow Route #553 through Nicktown and Alverda to Heilwood, where you head south on Route #403. Just past Heilwood, you will turn right onto Nolo Road and take that toward Route #422 and Yellow Creek State Park.

After only two miles on Route #422 you turn left on Route #259S into Yellow Creek State Park. In the small village of Brush Valley you finally reach Route #56. You will stay on Route #56S across Route #22, through Armagh and along the west rim of the Conemaugh Gap all the way into the west end of Johnstown. About 10 miles west of Seward there will be a scenic overlook.



Yellow Creek State Park



Conemaugh Gap Scenic Overlook on Rt. #56

After a short ride on city streets, you take the bridge across the Conemaugh River, pick up Route #403N, and ride back along the east rim of the Gap.

Follow Route #403 back up and across Route #22. About 1 mile north of Route #22 you come to the very small village of Dilltown, which serves as a trail head for the Ghost Town Trail. Stop at the Dillweed B&B and visit the Trailside Gift Shop. They also have a small café there where you can grab a sandwich, coffee, herb teas, desserts or pastries... and ice cream!



Dillweed B&B, Gift Shop & Cafe



Dillweed's Gift Shop



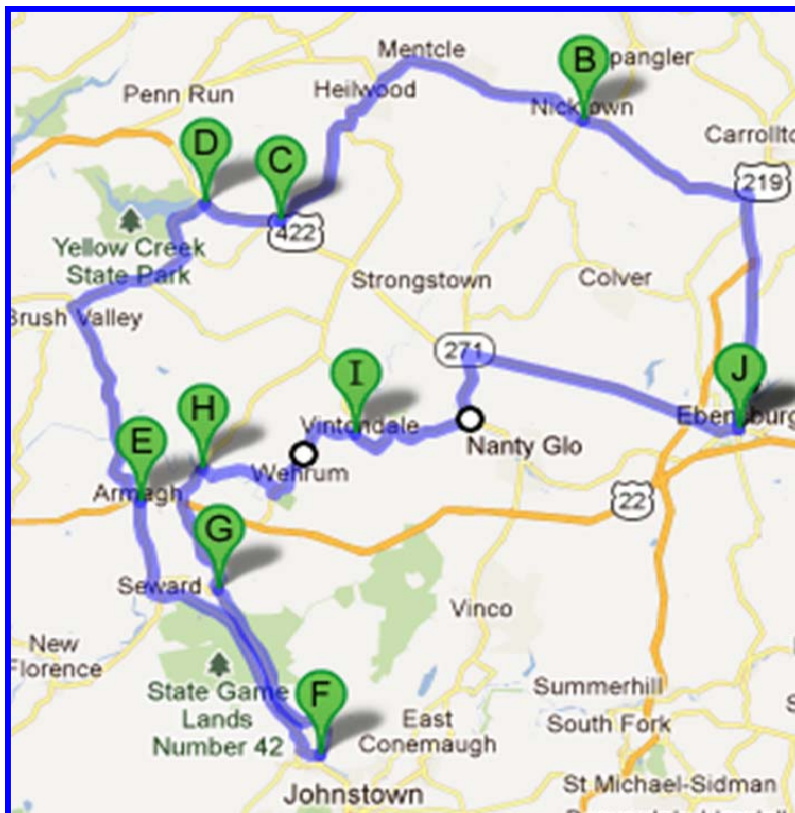
Dillweed's Cafe

Continue north on Route #403 for just one hundred yards and turn right onto River Road. This and Wehrum Road will take you to Vintondale. Near Vintondale's Main Street you will run into the Ghost Town Trail again. Watch for the Rexis Access Area on your right and stop for a visit to Eliza Furnace. From the parking area, walk about 200 yards across the creek toward Vintondale. Eliza Furnace is a National Historic Site regarded as one of the State's best preserved iron furnaces, dating from 1846.



Eliza Furnace

Continue through Vintondale and bear left at the end of town. It's only 14 miles back to Ebensburg on Route #271 and Route #422.



Conemaugh Gap Day Trip Route

Total ride time on this day trip for railroad buffs is 2:05, and we will have traveled 78 miles.

A = Ebensburg		
B = Nicktown	:20	12 mi.
C = Nolo	:15	12 mi.
D = Yellow Creek	:05	2 mi.
E = Armagh	:20	12 mi.
F = Coopersdale Bridge	:15	10 mi.
G = Cramer	:15	10 mi.
H = Dilltown	:05	2 mi.
I = Vintondale	:10	4 mi.
J = Ebensburg	:15	10 mi.

Directions

Conemaugh Gap 1/2 Day Trip

- ◆ From center of Ebensburg head north on North Center Street (Old Route 219). (8 miles).
- ◆ Turn left on Route #553. Follow Route #553 through Nicktown and Alverda. (11.5 miles)
- ◆ Continue straight on Route #403S. (2 miles)
- ◆ Turn right on Nolo Road (SR1011). (4 miles)
- ◆ Turn right on Route #422. (2 miles)
- ◆ Turn left on Route #259 through Yellow Creek State Park. (5.5 miles)
- ◆ In Brush Valley turn left on Route #56. Follow Route #56 past Route #22, through Armagh and Seward and into Johnstown. (16.5 miles)
- ◆ Cross the Coopersdale Bridge and head north on Route #403. Follow past Route #22 to the Village of Dilltown. (10 miles)
- ◆ Turn right on River Road. (2.5 miles)
- ◆ Turn left on Wehrum Road. (3.5 miles)
- ◆ Turn right on Main Street into Vintondale. Follow through Vintondale and bear left on Plank Road. (4 miles)
- ◆ Turn left on Station Road. (2 miles)
- ◆ Turn right on Route #422 toward Ebensburg. (8 miles)