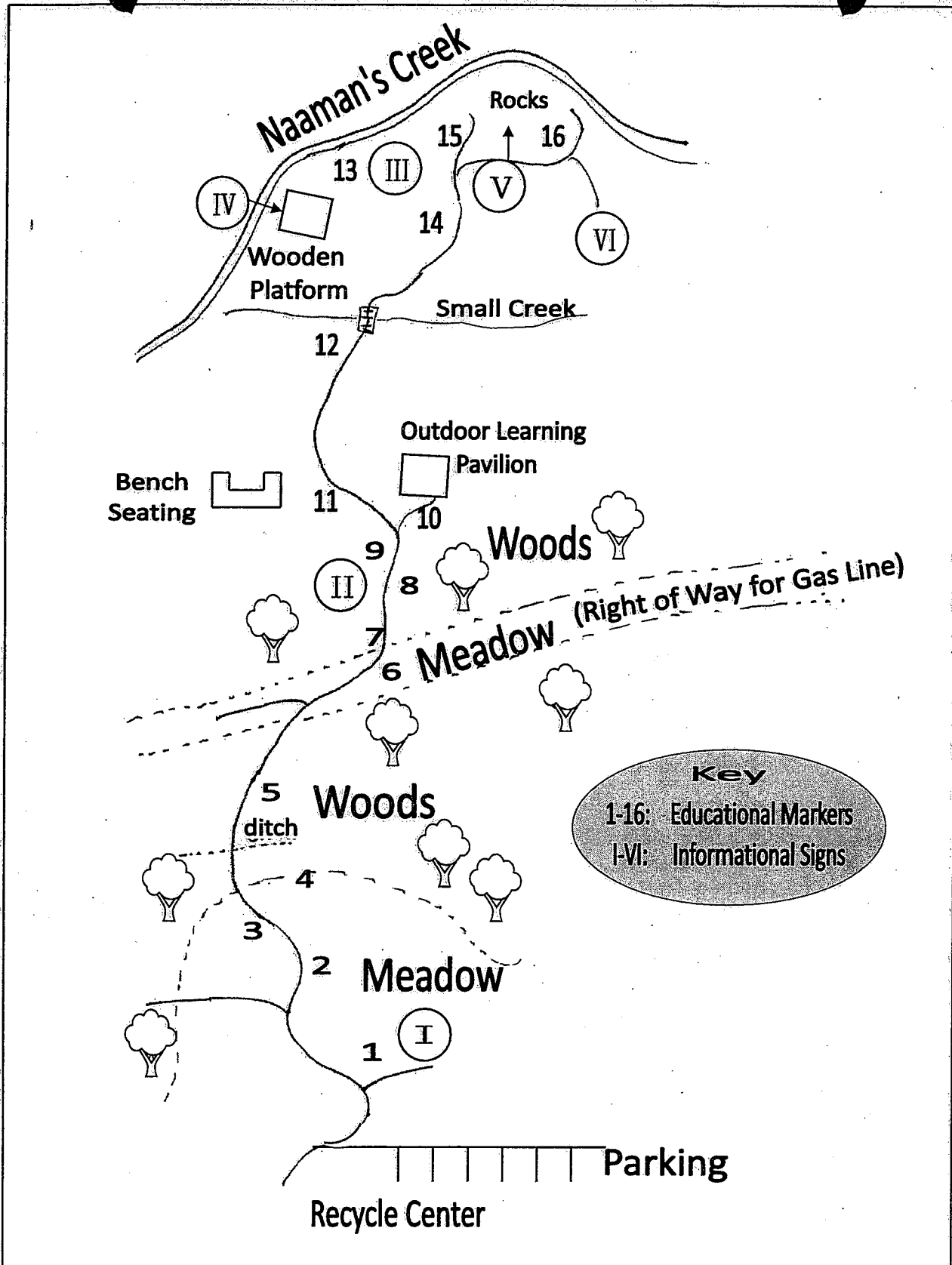


Bethel Springs Nature Trail

Self Guided Trail Brochure

1. Planted here are a variety of native plants. Native plants are good for the environment because they provide a home for local wildlife, are less sensitive to pests and disease, slow storm water runoff, filter pollutants, and reduce erosion. Can you identify any of the native plants in this area?
2. Many different types of plants and animals can be found in this area. Can you find three different types of plants, birds, mammals and insects?
3. Invasive plants are harmful, non-native plants that grow quickly out of control. Invasive plants often push native plants out of an area by winning the battle for nutrients and space. Do you see any vines in this area that look invasive?
4. A habitat is an area where a plant or animal normally lives. All plants and animals need food, water, shelter and space to survive. A habitat must provide all of these needs. What plants and animals do you think use this area as a habitat? Where do you think they find food, water, and shelter?
5. Leaves of plants and trees come in many different varieties. There are large leaves, small leaves, slender leaves, and wide leaves. Leaves can be soft, prickly, hairy, or hard. How many different types of leaves do you see in this area?
6. In this area, look and listen for birds. Look in the sky, at trees, and on the ground. Listen for bird calls as well as rustling sounds in trees, bushes and shrubs. How many birds can you find? Do you know any of their names?
7. Because of their long stems, Native Americans used bushes from this area to make arrows. Can you think of any other ways that Native Americans used plants?
8. Look at the trees in this area. You may notice that they are all about the same size and not as mature as trees in other parts of the woods. That's because these are young trees that were all purposely planted around the same time. Why might there have once been no trees here? How else could this land have been used?
9. Succession is the natural and gradual change in the types of plants and animals that live in an area. This is usually in response to changing environmental conditions. What do you think has changed in this area over time?
10. Temperate forests have five distinct layers. The tallest and most mature trees are in the canopy. Shorter trees and saplings make up the understory. Low growing woody plants with several stems are in the shrub layer and the small, non-woody stemmed plants are in the herb layer. The lowest layer is the forest floor. Can you see all five layers?
11. You may be surprised to learn that a Boy Scout camp once existed here. The foundation of one of the cabins is still visible. Look at the foundation of the outdoor classroom bench. Can you see it?
12. This area is a wetland. A wetland is a low area of land that is usually wet or covered with standing water. Wetland soil holds water and prevents flooding by slowing the flow of rushing water. How else can wetlands be beneficial to the environment?
13. Macroinvertebrates are animals that do not have a backbone and are large enough to be seen without a microscope. Since macroinvertebrates vary in their sensitivity to pollution, identifying the macroinvertebrates that live in a stream is a good way to test the water's quality. Do you see any macroinvertebrates in the stream?
14. Fallen logs may appear to be dying pieces nature, but if you look closely you will notice that fallen logs are full of activity. Decomposing logs supply nutrients for new plants to grow and provide homes for many animals and insects. Can you see any animals or insects on the fallen logs? What do you think they are doing?
15. This area is home to many Sweet Gum trees. Sweet Gum trees have star shaped leaves and woody, spiny, ball-like fruit commonly called "gumballs." The gumballs are not sweet, but Native Americans did scrape a resin-like solid from the tree's bark to produce a chewing gum. Look around. How many gumballs can you find?
16. The rock formation that you see here is made from a type of rock called Hornblende. Hornblende is a black rock that is made mostly of the mineral amphibole. Try to look for Hornblende fragments in this area. Hint: Look for light reflecting off the large, black amphibole crystals!

Trail Map



Trail enhancements were made through the hard work of the Bethel Springs Trail Committee and the Pennsylvania Resources Council so that you and others can learn about the local environment.
PLEASE RETURN THIS MAP WHEN FINISHED.