



# Yellow Breeches Creek Water Trail

## A PADDLERS MAP & GUIDE TO BOATING



Photo: Jim Leslie

Development and promotion of the Yellow Breeches Creek Water Trail Map & Guide is a cooperative effort of the following organizations:



**Cumberland County Planning Department**  
310 Allen Road, Suite 101  
Carlisle, PA 17013  
717.240.5362  
ccplanet@waterfalls



**Cumberland Valley Visitors Center**  
33 W. High Street  
Carlisle, PA 17013  
888.513.5130  
visitcumberlandvalley.com



**Yellow Breeches Watershed Association**  
P.O. Box 5  
Grantville, PA 17027  
ybwa.org

Version 3, 2015

### BOATING REGULATIONS

- A U.S. Coast Guard-approved wearable personal flotation device (PFD or life jacket) is required for each person on board. In addition, one throwable device (seat cushion or ring buoy) is required on boats 16 feet in length or longer. Canoes and kayaks, regardless of length, are not required to carry a throwable device.
- From November 1 through April 30, boaters must wear a life jacket on boats less than 16 feet in length or any canoe or kayak during these cold weather months.
- Life jackets must be the appropriate size for the person intended and must be in good, serviceable condition.
- Life jackets must be worn by all children 12 years old and younger on all boats 20 feet or less in length while under way, and on all canoes and kayaks. Others are strongly encouraged to wear a PFD at all times on the water.
- Operators of unpowered boats (canoes, kayaks, rowboats, paddleboards) are required to carry a device capable of sounding a prolonged blast for 4-6 seconds that can be heard by another boat operator in time to avoid a collision. An athletic coach's whistle is acceptable.
- Operating watercraft, including canoes and kayaks, under the influence of alcohol or drugs is illegal. This law is strongly enforced for user safety.
- The Yellow Breeches Creek is unsuitable for power boating.
- For further information on boating regulations, contact the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com).



### TOURISM INFORMATION

Seeking one place to find all your outdoor adventures in Cumberland Valley?



Explore trip ideas for hiking, biking, birdwatching, kayaking and fishing. Find your next journey today.

Visit [CumberlandValley.com/outdoors](http://CumberlandValley.com/outdoors)

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### IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

**Fire, Police & Medical Assistance**  
**Emergency Dial 911**

### Non-Emergency Calls

Carlisle Area .....(717) 243-4121  
West Shore Area .....(717) 238-9676  
York County .....(717) 840-2971

### Carlisle Regional Medical Center

361 Alexander Spring Road,  
Carlisle, PA 17015  
(717) 249-1212

### Holy Spirit Hospital

503 North 21st Street,  
Camp Hill, PA 17011  
(717) 763-2100

### STEWARDSHIP



Photo: Stuart Leask

The Yellow Breeches Watershed Association (YBWA), formed in 2001, is committed to cooperatively foster public understanding and sound management of environmental resources in the Yellow Breeches Watershed. The YBWA is a solution-oriented organization, providing technically sound information, education, leadership and coordination in the field of watershed management. The YBWA advances environmental stewardship through support of practical management of watershed resources for the protection and enhancement of environmental quality. The YBWA has completed a Watershed Assessment and Rivers Conservation Plan to more effectively manage the water resources of the Yellow Breeches. The Yellow Breeches Creek is also listed on the Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Registry. To learn more about YBWA or to join the organization, visit the Association online at [www.ybwa.org](http://www.ybwa.org).

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cumberland County coordinated the development and design of this publication in partnership with the Yellow Breeches Watershed Association. Financial support to print the guide was provided by the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau and the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners.

Great effort was expended collecting and verifying the information in this publication. However, we realize that conditions change on our waterways, and that some of the information may not be accurate. Users noting errors or omissions on this map are urged to report them. Questions, comments or errors regarding the trail guide should be directed to the:



**Cumberland County Planning Department at**  
[planning@ccpa.net](mailto:planning@ccpa.net) or  
717.240.5362



Photo: Stuart Leask

### PENNSYLVANIA WATER TRAIL PROGRAM



Long before airports, highways or even trains, Pennsylvania's streams, rivers and lakes provided a means of transportation for native inhabitants. As European explorers ventured into "Penn's Woods," these waters became important trading routes. Later, as demand for logs, coal and other goods

soared, the Commonwealth's waterways became commercial highways. Today, you can travel these same routes, enjoying the state's natural resources while getting glimpses of rich history and tradition on an official Pennsylvania Water Trail.

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission has designated the Yellow Breeches Creek Water Trail an official Pennsylvania Water Trail. The goal of the Yellow Breeches Creek Water Trail is to highlight existing public recreation facilities and to encourage stewardship and recreation of the creek.

### YELLOW BREECHES CREEK WATER TRAIL

The Yellow Breeches Creek originates on South Mountain, in Michaux State Forest, Cumberland County, near Walnut Bottom. From there, the Yellow Breeches flows through the limestone-rich Cumberland Valley and joins the Susquehanna River near New Cumberland.

The main stem of the Yellow Breeches is roughly 49 miles long and drains 219 square miles of forested areas, farmland and suburbs. Most of the developed land is currently concentrated in the eastern portion of the watershed, with forested areas in the headwaters and on the hillsides. Agriculture dominates the fertile valley areas, lending a pastoral setting to the middle reach of the stream. In 1992, the Yellow Breeches was designated as a "Pennsylvania Scenic River." The portion of the main stem encompassed by this water trail is characterized mainly by long, shady pools with occasional dams and riffle areas.

### HERITAGE



Like much of the lower Susquehanna River, the Susquehannock and Shawnee Indians were the first known inhabitants of the Yellow Breeches Watershed. In the mid-1730s, the area was legally opened to settlers who focused on agriculture and operated as many as 60 grist and saw mills along the banks of the Yellow Breeches. Many of these mills were associated with dams to improve water flow through the mill. Many of the old mill buildings are currently used as residences or warehouses.

The Yellow Breeches Watershed was also used as an important shelter and checkpoint on the Underground Railroad, in particular the Boiling Springs area, as well as serving as an essential source of water, food and lumber for the early settlers. Today, water suppliers, including two large ones in the eastern portion of the watershed, use the abundant water resources of the Yellow Breeches.

### WILDLIFE

The Yellow Breeches Creek Watershed supports an abundance of wildlife. There are a variety of nongame species of birds, amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals. Game species include white-tailed deer, gray squirrel, cottontail rabbit, turkey, ruffed grouse, ring-necked pheasant, woodcock, mourning dove, and various waterfowl. There are also red and gray fox, mink, muskrat, raccoon, weasel, opossum, black bear, bobcat, and beaver.

Several threatened and endangered species occur in the watershed. Endangered bog turtles make their home in several wetlands in the Yellow Breeches, while the eastern mud salamander has been found in Michaux State Forest on South Mountain, Cumberland County. Threatened sedge wrens also live and potentially breed in the watershed's wet meadows and marshes. Portions of the Michaux State Forest have been designated as Important Bird Areas, providing critical habitat for interior bird species, while the abundant water resources harbor many species of waterfowl.

### FISHING



Photo: The White Wolf Group

The Yellow Breeches Watershed is world-famous for its trout fishing opportunities, attracting local and state residents, as well as fishermen from throughout the surrounding states. Most of the stream and its tributaries are designated as Cold-Water or High-Quality Cold-Water Fisheries. Trout thrive in its cool, limestone waters. Brown and rainbow trout are more prevalent in the lower portion of the basin, while brook trout can be found in the smaller, headwater areas and tributaries around South Mountain. Trout are stocked extensively in the Yellow Breeches, both by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission and local fishing clubs. Fly-fishing, in particular, is very popular, and a portion of the stream near Boiling Springs is regulated as a year-round "Catch-and-Release" Area.

Each year the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission publishes the Pennsylvania Fishing Summary. Before planning a fishing outing, refer to this guide. The Summary is available online at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com) or at local license-issuing agents.

All persons age 16 and over must obtain a license to fish or angler for any fish species and to take fishbait, baitfish, frogs and turtles from Commonwealth waters. Casting and/or retrieving, whether by rod, reel and line, or by handline, for oneself or another person, requires a current license unless specifically exempted by law. While fishing, the license must be clearly displayed to allow waterways conservation officers to verify quickly and easily that anglers are legally licensed. Anglers are also required to carry another means of positive identification, such as a valid driver's license, to establish their identity if requested by a waterways conservation officer.

### "LEAVE NO TRACE" PRINCIPLES

Pennsylvania Water Trails embrace the Leave No Trace code of outdoor ethics that promotes the responsible use and enjoyment of the outdoors. For more information about the Leave No Trace principles, visit [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org).

#### Plan and prepare

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards and emergencies.
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint or flagging.

#### Dispose of waste properly

- Repackage food to minimize waste.
- Pack it in, pack it out. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter.

#### Leave what you find

- Preserve the past: Examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- Observe and leave flowers, they contain seeds for future flowers.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Do not build structures or furniture, and do not dig trenches.

#### Respect wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach wildlife.
- Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times. When they are mating, nesting or raising young, or during winter.

#### Be considerate of other visitors

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and music.

#### Respect private property

- Most of the land adjacent to the creek is private property.
- Approved public access points are designated on the map.

### HAZARDS ON THE WATER



Photo: Jim Leslie

**Dams:** Water going over a dam creates a back current, or undertow, that can pull a boat into the turbulence and capsize it. This hydraulic can often trap and hold a person or a boat. Hazards include the areas above and below the dam. Paddlers can spot dams by looking downstream for a horizontal line across the water.

**Strainers:** Trees are typical strainers that can trap and flood boats. Water flows through these obstructions, but solid objects do not. Strainers can pin victims underwater.

**Current:** Never underestimate the power of moving water. Boaters who are not sure that their boat or their ability is up to the prevailing conditions should stay off the water.

**Cold water:** Sudden immersion in cold water can lead to cardiac arrest or can cause a person to inhale water. If you fall into cold water, immediately cover your mouth and nose with your hands. Dress properly for the cold by wearing a hat, several layers of clothing and warm boots. Wool, pile and polypropylene provide warmth even when wet. Avoid cotton fabrics.

**Hypothermia:** Hypothermia is the lowering of the body's core temperature. It begins with shivering. Judgment then becomes clouded and unconsciousness sets in. Death can occur if hypothermia is not treated. Remove a hypothermic person from the water and replace wet clothes with warm, dry clothing and/or a blanket. Do not massage the extremities or give the victim alcohol or caffeine.

**Heat exhaustion and sunburn:** When it's hot, wear sunglasses, a hat, and lightweight, light-colored clothing. Apply sunblock with a high SPF rating and drink lots of fluids.

**Flooding:** Beware of changing hazards after flood events.

ACCESS

- The guide provides boating and recreation information for approximately 22 miles of the Yellow Breeches Creek.
- The trail includes two float trips: Trip A – approximately 2 miles and Trip B – approximately 20 miles.
- The guide is divided into two trips due to the existence of several hazardous dams and the lack of approved access and/or portage. Do not attempt to navigate over these dams!
- Please respect private property rights. Do not enter property not designated for public use.
- Camping is prohibited at all access points with the exception of Lower Allen Community Park (B4).
- Trail use is limited to daylight hours.



Label	Access Points	Distance to Next Access Point (miles)	Latitude / Longitude
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A1	South Middleton Township Park	1.3	40.136765, -77.147445
NA	Wittlinger Preserve	0.5	40.140026, -77.127641
A2	Boiling Springs	Take-out only	40.146954, -77.123939

B1	Messiah College	2.5	40.154706, -76.99012
B2	Simpson Park	1.1	40.164576, -76.975579
B3	McCormick Park	3.6	40.165067, -76.957636
B4	Lower Allen Community Park	0.5	40.172466, -76.914861
B5	Liberty Forge	1.9	40.176809, -76.924002
B6	Yellow Breeches Park	2.8	40.184621, -76.913048
B7	United Water Pennsylvania, Inc.	2.2	40.201712, -76.927511
B8	Spangler's Mill	3.6	40.211256, -76.907236
B9	Creekwood Park	1.5	40.215305, -76.884684
B10	New Cumberland Borough Park & Dam	Take-out only	40.219395, -76.862528

TRIP A

**A1 - South Middleton Township Park:** This 40-acre park, located at 534 Park Drive, Boiling Springs, is owned by South Middleton Township. The site provides creek access for boating and fishing with ample parking. Other amenities at this park include nature trails, picnicking, restrooms, benches, baseball/softball, soccer, tennis, basketball, volleyball and playground equipment. For more information, contact South Middleton Township Parks and Recreation at (717) 258-4441, or visit [www.smiddletown.com](http://www.smiddletown.com).

**Wittlinger Nature Preserve:** The Donald L. Wittlinger Nature Preserve is a 50-acre nature preserve owned by South Middletown Township that features creek access, opportunities for nature exploration and hiking trails. Access to the Preserve can be obtained from the Boiling Springs Pool or from Tanger Road. For more information, contact South Middleton Township Parks and Recreation at (717) 258-4441, or visit [www.smiddletown.com](http://www.smiddletown.com).

**A2 - Boiling Springs: TAKE-OUT ONLY.** Boiling Springs is the end point of Trip A. All boaters should exit the creek on the left before the stone bridge near the swimming pool. Parking is available behind the Boiling Springs Pool at Race Street. Additional parking is available at Children's Lake (Front Street) and the Historic Iron Works Park (Bucher Hill Road). For more information, contact Boiling Springs Pool at (717) 258-4121, or visit [www.bspool.com](http://www.bspool.com).

TRIP B

**B1 - Messiah College:** Messiah College is a privately owned educational facility in Grantham and is the starting point of Trip B. The public may access the creek at the historic covered bridge on campus. Parking is available at Starry Field. For more information on the college, visit [www.messiah.edu](http://www.messiah.edu).

**B2 - Simpson Park:** Simpson Park is a 20-acre park owned by Upper Allen Township and located at 2701 South Market Street (Route 114), Bowmansdale. The park features creek access for boating and fishing with parking and composting toilets. The park also features a nature trail, sand volleyball, picnic tables, grills and pavilions. For more information, contact Upper Allen Township at (717) 766-0756.

**B3 - McCormick Park:** McCormick Park is a linear park owned by Upper Allen Township and located at 500 McCormick Road, Mechanicsburg. The site provides creek access for fishing and boating. Limited parking is available along the road. For more information, contact Upper Allen Township at (717) 766-0756.

**B4 - Lower Allen Community Park:** Lower Allen Community Park is a 110-acre park owned by Lower Allen Township. This facility is located at 4075 Lisburn Road, Mechanicsburg. The park provides creek access for boating and fishing with ample parking and restrooms. The park also features nature trails, a dog park, picnic tables/pavilions, baseball/softball, soccer, basketball, tennis, playground equipment, volleyball and a driving range. Camping is available by reservation. For more information, contact Lower Allen Township at (717) 975-7575, or visit [www.lawtp.org](http://www.lawtp.org).

**B5 - Liberty Forge:** Liberty Forge is a golf resort located at 3804 Lisburn Road, Mechanicsburg, which features an 18-hole public golf course, lighted golf practice range and miniature golf course. The Creek Side Café, located at the miniature golf course, is open seasonally and sells snacks, ice cream, sandwiches and drinks. The public may access the creek for boating at the bridge at Old Forge Road and fishing along the miniature golf course. Parking is available at the miniature golf course along the White Barn near Old Forge Road. Please limit parking to individuals and small groups only. Parking may be limited on occasion because of large events held at Liberty Forge. Please observe and follow access rules on all posted signs. For more information, contact Liberty Forge at (717) 795-9880 or visit [www.LibertyForge.net](http://www.LibertyForge.net).

TRIP B

**B6 - Yellow Breeches Park:** Yellow Breeches Park, located on 2050 Sheepford Road, Mechanicsburg, is a 14-acre undeveloped park owned by Lower Allen Township. The park provides creek access for boating and fishing. Informal parking is available along the road. For more information, contact Lower Allen Township at (717) 975-7575, or visit [www.lawtp.org](http://www.lawtp.org).

**B7 - United Water Pennsylvania, Inc. (UWPA) & DAM:** UWPA operates its Rabold Water Treatment Plant at 1081 Limekiln Road, New Cumberland. UWPA has granted water trail access to the general public for the purposes of portaging around its dam structure and to put in below or take out above the dam. All access and parking is located on, and restricted to the Lower Allen Township portion of the property, which is marked with water trail signs. Access to portions of the UWPA property not designated for water trail use will be considered trespassing, which is subject to prosecution.

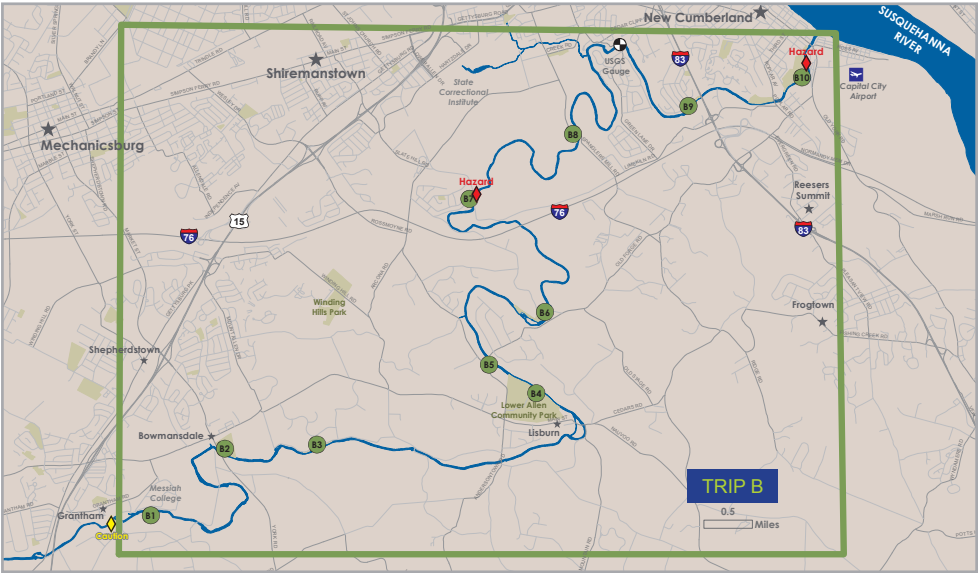
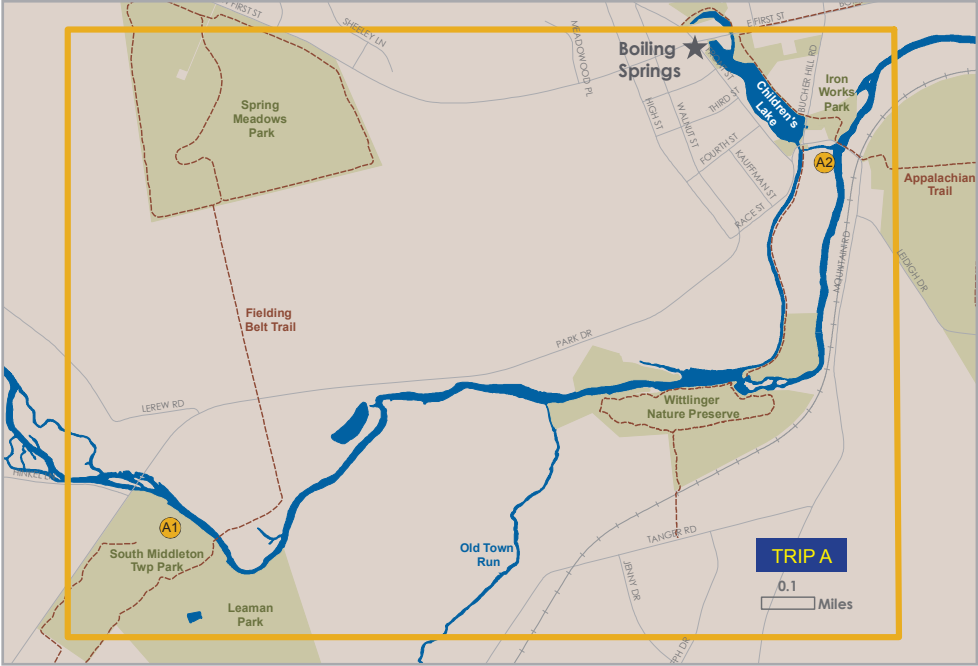
The public is cautioned to strictly obey access, use and dam safety regulations posted on the property. Camping, grilling and campfires are not permitted. Visitors must stay off the dam, and must remove any canoe, boat, kayak or floating device from the creek and carry it around the dam. When traveling downstream, approach the dam from the left bank, where takeout signage is posted, and follow the posted trail to Valley Road, where a small gravel parking lot is provided. Put-in below the dam where water trail signage is posted at the Slate Hill Road parking lot.

UWPA provides water service to a population of approximately 166,000 people in portions of eight counties encompassing 40 municipalities in southcentral and northcentral Pennsylvania. Environmental preservation is at the heart of UWPA's business philosophy. UWPA has facilitated environmental preservation projects within each of the company's four operating regions and supports human service organizations that provide flood recovery assistance. Employees also work with at-risk youths in partnership with youth development organizations. For more information, contact (717) 737-1475.

**B8 - Spangler's Mill:** Spangler's Mill Access is owned by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC). The site is located in the 1400 block of Spangler's Mill Road, Camp Hill, and provides creek access for boating and shore fishing, including handicapped fishing access. Boating is limited to unpowered boats and users must obtain a launch permit or boat registration from the PFBC. For more boating and fishing information or to obtain a PFBC launch permit or boat registration, visit [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com).

**B9 - Creekwood Park:** Creekwood Park is a 5-acre undeveloped park owned by Lower Allen Township. The site is located at 150 Creekwood Drive, Camp Hill. The park provides creek access for boating and fishing with limited parking. The park also contains a portion of the mile-long creekside trail that connects the neighborhoods of Allendale and Beacon Hill. For more information, contact Lower Allen Township at (717) 975-7575, or visit [www.lawtp.org](http://www.lawtp.org).

**B10 - New Cumberland Borough Park & Dam: TAKE OUT ONLY.** New Cumberland Borough Park is the end point of Trip B. All boaters should exit the creek on the left immediately upon entering the park. Do not attempt to navigate over the dam! This 29-acre park is owned by New Cumberland Borough. The entrance to the site is located on Front Street. Amenities at the park include creek access for fishing and take-out only, baseball/softball, playground equipment, restrooms, picnic tables/pavilions, benches and a drinking fountain. Camping and boat mooring are strictly prohibited. For more information, contact New Cumberland Borough at (717) 774-0404.



STREAM CONDITIONS

The Yellow Breeches Creek is designated a Class I-II stream on the International Whitewater Rating System. A Class I stream is characterized by easy moving water with few riffles and/or small waves while a Class II stream contains some obvious obstacles to maneuver around. These stream classes are great for beginners or for more experienced paddlers who would like a relaxing trip. Travel times can vary greatly depending on stream flow, type of watercraft, physical condition, etc.

Be sure to check stream conditions just before embarking on a float trip. Water levels change frequently, sometimes drastically! The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) monitors current water conditions from selected surface water sites and publishes the data for the public.

To check water levels on the Yellow Breeches near Camp Hill, visit the USGS online for real-time data at <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/pa/nwis/uv/701571500>. The USGS gauge height near Camp Hill should read at least 1.4 feet to navigate the stream successfully. Action stage on the Yellow Breeches near Camp Hill is 6 feet, flood stage is 7 feet.

EXPLORE CUMBERLAND VALLEY

The beautiful Cumberland Valley offers residents and visitors a collection of unique experiences. Enjoy the Yellow Breeches Creek Water Trail and the other recreational and cultural activities which abound.

- Hike the Top 10 Trails in the Valley.
- Explore the birding spots found in the South Mountain Birding Guide.
- Buy fresh, local produce at a farmers market or roadside stand.
- Hunt for treasure on the South Mountain GeoTrail.
- Travel the Gettysburg Fruit & Wine Trail.
- Attend a fair, festival or car show.

For more information on these activities or other trip ideas, go to [VisitCumberlandValley.com](http://VisitCumberlandValley.com)