Welcome to New Castle County parks!

We offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities to residents of all ages and interests from our flagship Rockwood, Glasgow and Carousel parks, to miles of trails in the Middle Run Valley Natural Area to athletic fields, dog parks and so much more in neighborhoods throughout our county.

Whether you are looking for a walking trail to explore the outdoors, a playground for your kids, or a pocket of scenic open space to reflect and unwind, you are just minutes away from one of the 247 parks in our county park system.

I invite you to visit www.ncdev.org/parks to learn more about our county parks, download park and trail maps and reserve a park facility for your next social gathering.

Matthew Meyer County Executive

Middle Run Valley Natural Area…

MRVNA is one of the most unique parks in the state. Hiking this picturesque preserve is a nature sensation. The forests of Middle Run Valley represent a vast sampling of tree species indigenous to the Piedmont region of Delaware, providing native habitat for an abundance of wildlife. Novice birdwatchers and ornithologists delight in observing the year-round bird life of the preserve. Over 170 different types of birds frequent the area. A walk through Middle Run can easily result in sightings of rabbits, turtles, raccoons, red fox or white-tailed deer.

Middle Run Trailhead

Near the centrally located parking lot is the Middle Run Trailhead. The markers are brown and there are brown information markers throughout the park.

Jonathan W. Hudspeth Trail

Beginning near Paper Mill Park, this trail, marked with purple, follows the Middle Run stream valley until meeting up with the Lenape Trail. It is named the "Jonathan W. Hudspeth Trail" in recognition of Mr. Hudspeth’s significant contributions to the County park system during his over 32 years of County service, including his development of Paper Mill Park and his stewardship of the Middle Run Valley Natural Area.

Possum Hollow Trail

Marked with lime green, the Possum Hollow trail follows Middle Run through shady woods and then up to rolling open fields. A small pond is circled by the trail. The purple marked Possum Hollow Connectors link the Possum Hollow to the Lenape and Snow Goose trails.

Possum Park Road Connector

This connector serves as an access from the development of Chapel Hill to the MRVNA at the St. Regis Drive intersection with Possum Park Road. Marked by purple, the trail follows rolling fields of soy and corn before connecting to the Possum Hollow Trail. As it crosses the agricultural fields, the trail parallels a decades-old hedgerow that delineated the fields during the early part of the century.

Snow Goose & Snow Goose Cut-Off Trail

Marked by orange, this undulating path is accessible from the Water Tower Spur, the Delaplane Manor Spur and the Lenape Trail. The Cut-Off passes through the middle of the loop, connecting to the Corkscrew, Mill Race, and Mountain Goat challenge trails.

The Tri-Valley Trail

The red and white rings mark the Tri-Valley Trail. This trail runs from the eastern portion of White Clay Creek State Park and the Judge Morris Estate, then across MRVNA following the northeast portion of the Lenape trail, and into White Clay Creek State Park.

New Castle County Department of Special Services

RULES AND REGULATIONS: SUMMARY

1. HOUSES - All New Castle County parks are open year-round. Hours of operation are dawn to dusk, except with permission of the Department.

2. TEMPORARY CLOSURE - The General Manager has the authority to temporarily close a museum or the grounds when required by Public Health, Safety and Welfare.

3. MOTOR VEHICLES - No motor vehicles shall be driven except in areas specifically designated for their use. All motor vehicle laws of the State of Delaware must be followed.

4. POSTING - No signs or markers can be put in place, except with written permission of the Department. Sales or solicitation are also generally prohibited.

5. ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND GAMBLING - Consumption, possession or sale of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs is prohibited. Gambling is also generally prohibited.

6. DAMAGE AND DUMPING - Vandalism of trees, shrubs, plants, turf, fences, structures, bridges, signs, stream water quality or any other natural or man-made object of the park is prohibited. Nothing may be dumped in the park.

7. FIRE - No fires shall be kindled.

8. SAFETY OF ANIMALS - No one shall trap, snare, shoot, poison, injure, annoy or disturb any wild animal or bird or damage any nest.

9. DISORDERLY CONDUCT - Threatening, abusive, insulting or indecent language, or indecent or immoral acts or behavior or indecent acts and fighting are prohibited.

10. WEAPONS - No one shall carry any knife having a blade three (3) inches or longer on the grounds. The possession or discharge of BB guns, air guns, firearms, bows and arrows or any lethal weapon is prohibited.

11. ACTIVITIES - Entertainers, demonstrations, or exhibitions are prohibited, except with the approval of the Department.

12. GROUP FUNCTIONS - Permits for group activities should be obtained in advance from the Department.

13. NOISE - Loud music is not permitted. Please be respectful of your neighbors.

14. DOGS - Dogs must be kept on a leash at all times. Please, pick up after your dog.

Hiking Trails

All of the trails in MRVNA are dirt-packed, multi-use trails for walkers, bikers, runners and bicycle use.

NO MOTOR BIKES.

Birding Trail

A one mile loop designed to showcase the diversity of birds found at Middle Run, the trail leads visitors through a variety of habitats. Early-successional forest, created by the Middle Run Reforestation Project, provides cover and nesting habitat for many colorful songbirds. Maritime woodlands, riparian (stream side) forest, and meadows are all featured on this unique trail dedicated to nature observation.

Hiking only – no biking, except on Lenape Trail portion.

Corkscrew, Mountain Goat, and Mill Race Trails

These challenge trails enjoyed by mountain bikers are marked in black.

Creekside Trail

Take a short detour off the Tri-Valley and Lenape Trail. It crosses two bridges and meanders along Middle Run.

Delaplane Manor Spur

This trail connects Delaplane Avenue to the MRVNA. Marked by purple, the path steeply descends into the valley from Delaplane Avenue. It then levels out and is easy to travel to its junction with the Snow Goose Trail.

Double Horsecshoe Trail

Marked by blue, this trail travels through rolling farmland, deciduous forests and across small stream tributaries. In order to make travel less steep and the elevation more gentle, the trail has several switchback areas. The Double Horsecshoe Trail acquired its name after volunteers constructing a footbridge discovered some old horseshoes in the stream.

Earth Day Trail

This trail, marked in green, provides a shortcut across the middle of the Lenape Trail loop. The lower portion descends into a steep valley and crosses over Muddy Run. It then winds through woods areas to connect with the Lenape Cut-Off.

Lenape Trail & Lenape Cut-Off

This 3/4 mile trail loop, marked with yellow, covers the central portion of MRVNA, crossing Muddy Run twice. The Lenape Cut-Off also marked in yellow, cuts through the middle of the loop and is accessible from the Day Use Parking Area.

Corkscrew, Mill Race, and Mountain Goat challenge trails.

The Delaware Trail Spinners, a mountain bike club, volunteer with trail maintenance. See their website at www.trailspinners.org for additional information on New Castle County’s park system.

Ring trail map is available at www.trailspinners.org.

Hiking Trail map is available at www.trailspinners.org.

Hiking Trail information is available at www.trailspinners.org.

Hiking Trail permits are also available for Carousel Park, Glasgow Park, Iron Hill Park, Middle Run Natural Area, and Rockwood Park & Museum.

To obtain a copy, visit your local library, or contact the NCC Special Services at 302-395-5700 or NCC Community Services at 302-395-5606.

Online maps and additional information on New Castle County’s park system is available at www.ncdev.org/parks.

Respect the Living Earth