

# Beartown State Forest

## Oak 'n Spruce

### GUEST INFORMATION GUIDE TO BEARTOWN STATE FOREST

- Features of the Park
- Access Points
- Location
- Accessibility
- Open 365 Days
- Seasonal Activities

Use this insert in conjunction with the Beartown State Forest Trail Map.

Prepared by the Friends of Beartown which is solely responsible for content.

[Beartown.info](http://Beartown.info)

## **Beartown State Forest is a Treasure.**

It feels like a throwback to the semi wilderness rustic family parks of the 1940's and 50's. Facilities are maintained clean and current. It remains that way through visitor cooperation and the staff's attentive attention to detailed maintenance. The park ponds, trails and roads were originally constructed in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps where evidence of this still can be found maintained throughout the park.

Beartown State Forest is open all year and is two distinctly different worlds between the summer and winter. During the warm months the pristine 35 acre Benedict Pond attracts swimmers, boaters and fishermen. An extensive network of trails on over 12,000 acres offers visitors a chance to glimpse deer, bobcat, fisher and other wildlife, including the park's namesake, the Black Bear. (Black Bear are most likely going to run away if you make loud noises.) Brooks, beaver ponds, rich deciduous forest, flowering shrubs and wildflowers and fall foliage are plentiful. The 1.5 mile Benedict Pond Loop Trail is a must in any season. It is designated as a HeartHealthy Trail. The Appalachian Trail passes near Benedict Pond and offers spectacular stone cliff and wooded views.

The other half of the year the forest becomes a winter wonderland, where visitors hike, cross country ski, snowshoe or snowmobile to explore a snow covered wilderness.

Beartown Forest has handicap friendly facilities. Restrooms, swim changing areas, and special parking facilities are provided.

**PLEASE REVIEW THE SAFETY NOTES AND RULES ON THE BACK PAGE.**

## **Access points to the forest from Oak 'n Spruce Resort.**

**There are no direct access hiking trails from Oak 'n Spruce property into Beartown Forest.** Your park is about 5 miles in length with a very rough main road going south from South Lee, MA. The closest entrance is close by. But it is very rough road as you proceed through the park from this entrance. If you want to explore the nearer northern areas see the access instructions farther below\*.

**It is highly suggested to enter the park from the south in Monterey, MA.**

- From the resort head north .4 mile and cross over the iron bridge to Rt. 102.
- Turn left onto 102 and go 1.7 miles into Stockbridge, MA. Where Rt. 7 will merge into Rt. 102.
- Follow Rt 7 South and turn left by the Red Lion Inn and proceed on Rt 7.
- Go 6.1 miles into Great Barrington to a traffic signal intersection for Rt 23 East.
- Turn left and follow Rt 23 for 5.3 miles to Blue Hill Road. (There is a memorial park with flagpole on left at this corner.)
- Proceed 2.2 miles to Benedict Pond Road on the right to enter the park.

**\*Access to the park from the north in South Lee, MA is possible.** Leave the resort heading toward Rt 102. Just before the iron bridge turn left onto Pine St. and go .4 mile. At the "Y" merge left onto Beartown Mtn. Rd. Continue 1 mile to enter the park. After entering the park within a mile the surface becomes very rough as you proceed up hill heading south. From this point the road is not maintained in the winter season. There are small parking areas along this in-park mile. See the park trail map for hiking in this area.

**PARKING RULES AND FEES:** The forest is open from sunrise until sunset, year round. Feel free to drive through the forest during open hours. If you wish to park your vehicle from May through Labor Day there is a daily parking fee of \$8 for Mass vehicles and \$10 for nonMass vehicles. Parking is free for MA ParksPass holders, vehicles with handicapped, disabled veteran plates/placard, and seniors 62 and above with the Massachusetts Senior Pass.

**HIKING GUIDES:** Pick up the main trail map and printed guides for recommended trails (with difficulty notes) at the park office or kiosks. *It is critical to read the trail safety information.*

**DOWNLOADABLE MAPS** for use on mobile devices or printing are available at **Beartown.info**

**SPEED LIMIT:** 15 MPH throughout the park at all times.

#### **FACILITIES ARE HANDICAP**

**ACCESSIBLE:** Restrooms, swim changing areas, and special parking facilities are provided.

**CELL PHONE SERVICE:** Much of the forest does not have cell service. The picnic and beach area has reception by some providers. Check for reception.

**REMEMBER THIS IS YOUR FOREST. TAKE CARE OF IT. THIS IS A HAUL-IN HAUL-OUT FACILITY.** You are responsible for picking up and disposing of all litter and garbage. Place it into the dumpster provided in the boat launch area or take it out with you.