Forest Recreation

Zoar State Forest offers opportunities for hiking, wildlife watching, canoeing and fishing. The 2-mile Main Forest Trail is located on the southern parcel of the forest, with parking available at the Mount Zoar house. Restrooms are available in the house when the forestry office is open. The 1.4 mile Mattaponi Bluffs Nature Trail and the 0.4 mile Herring Creek Loop Nature Trail are located on the northern parcel of the forest. A canoe launch is located on Herring Creek, which quickly joins the Mattaponi River approximately 4 miles upstream of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries boat ramp at Aylett. A common parking area on the northern property serves both trails and the canoe launch. Visitors are asked to adopt a "leave no trace" ethic when visiting the forest, as there are no restrooms or trash receptacles outside the main office area.

A State Forest Use Permit is required for hunting, trapping, fishing, bike riding and horse riding on Virginia State Forests. Permits are required for individuals age 16 and older, and can be purchased online for $15.00 at http://secure01.virginiainteractive.org/horf/ or where hunting licenses are sold.

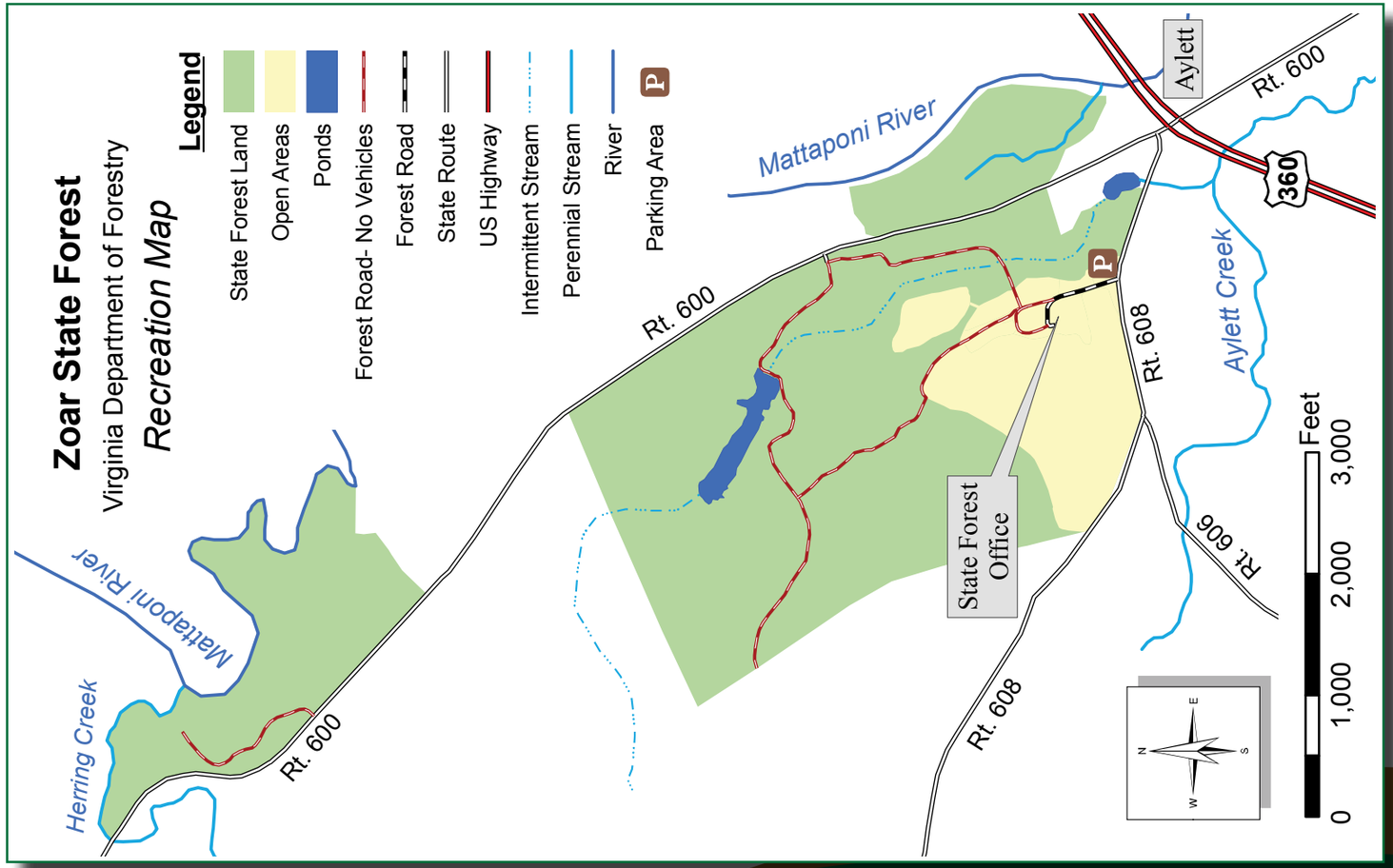
Zoar State Forest Features:
Trails: 1.5 miles
Vehicle Roads: 0.2 miles
Gated Vehicle Trails: 0.6 miles
Ponds/Lakes: 1
Hunting: No Fishing: No
Picnic Shelter: 0
Restrooms: No

State Forest Regulations

- Biking and horse riding in designated areas only with State Forest Use Permit.
- State Forest Use Permits required only for anyone age 16 and older.
- No removal of any tree, plant or mineral.
- Remove all trash.
- No camping, ATVs or public display of alcohol.
- No fireworks, campfires or open air fires of any type.
- Firearms are prohibited except for hunting purposes.
- Gasoline motorized boats are not permitted.
- Vehicular traffic on established roads only; not permitted on gated roads.

For a complete listing of State Forest Regulations, go to www.dof.virginia.gov.

Hunting and fishing is NOT permitted on Zoar State Forest.



Zoar State Forest

Zoar State Forest

Forest History

The Powhatan Indians of Virginia have resided on the upper reaches of the Mattaponi for centuries. When the British settled at Jamestown in 1607, there were at least eight Indian towns on the river, with one in the area of Zoar State Forest. This Mattaponi town was known as Passahunkack. In the late 1600s, land between the two Herring creeks was set aside as a reservation for the Chickahominy and Mattaponi Indians. The Chickahominy moved back to their lands in Charles City County several decades later, but the Mattaponi descendants remained in the area. Once known as the Adamstown Indians, their name today reflects their history on the river, the Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe.

When Robert Pollard acquired the land and built his home there in the late 1700s, the village of Aylett was a thriving commercial center with a racetrack, gambling and drinking, and Pollard thought of the town as a modern day Sodom and Gomorrah. He named his homeplace Mount Zoar, after the Biblical town spared upon the destruction of those two cities.

The original house was partially destroyed by fire in 1851 and completely destroyed by fire in 1890. The present house was completed in 1902, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Pollard's descendants lived at Zoar until the 1960s. In 1988, Albert Stoddard donated the 378-acre property to the Commonwealth of Virginia, to be managed as a State Forest.

Forest Management

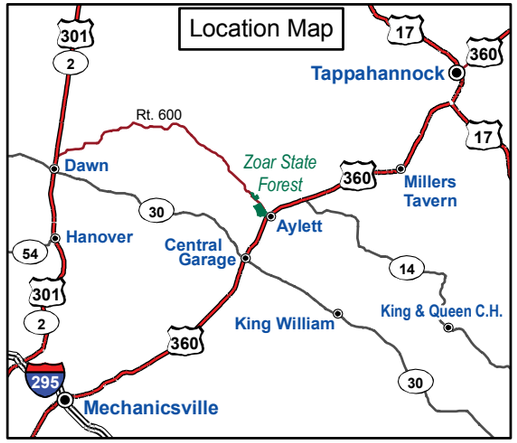
Zoar State Forest has a northern and a southern parcel, separated by private land holdings. The southern parcel contains managed hardwood and pine forest stands, agricultural fields and a pond, as well as the Mount Zoar house, outbuildings and cemetery. The northern section is in a mainly natural state and contains bottomland and upland hardwoods. Management activities demonstrate good forestry and conservation practices. Timber management is compatible with other forest uses, such as wildlife habitat, recreation and water quality protection. VDOF established longleaf pine plantings, a species that once dominated eastern Virginia but is now uncommon. The river, pond, open fields and different timber types provide habitat for diverse wildlife species.

About Your State Forests

The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) manages 19 State Forests and other state lands, totaling 57,685 acres. Virginia's State Forests are managed for multiple uses: water quality, recreation, forest products, wildlife and scenic beauty. The primary management goals of individual State Forests may vary, usually depending on the wishes of the donor of the land.

The State Forests of Virginia are self-supporting and receive no taxpayer funds for operation. Operating funds are generated from the sale of forest products. In addition, up to 25 percent of the revenue received from the sale of forest products is returned to the counties in which the forests are located. You can support educational programs on your State Forests by donating a portion of your state tax refund to Virginia's State Forests Fund.

Location



More Information

To learn more about what your state forests have to offer and to get directions to any state forest, visit **www.dof.virginia.gov**.

Contact Information

State Forest Main Office:

Phone: (804) 492-4121 ; FAX: (804) 492-9213
751 Oak Hill Road, Cumberland, VA 23040-2511

Zoar State Forest Office:

Phone: (804) 769-2962
4445 Upshaw Road, Aylett, VA 23009

Virginia Department of Forestry
Headquarters
900 Natural Resources Drive, Suite 800
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903
www.dof.virginia.gov
Phone: (434) 977-6555
Fax: (434) 296-2369

VDOF P00156; 06/2009

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Zoar State Forest

~ 378 Acres ~
King William County

Virginia Department of Forestry
www.dof.virginia.gov