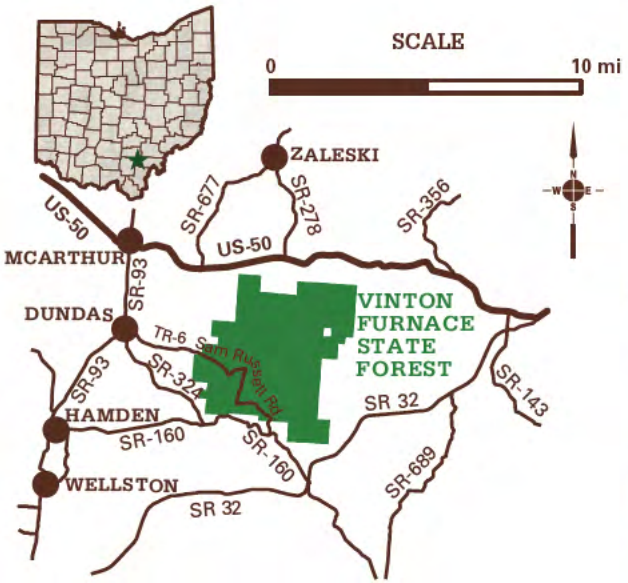
Forest Rules

1. Vinton Furnace State Forest is open to visitors between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. daily. Legal campers, hunters, and anglers may be present during other times.
2. Operation of motor vehicles is restricted to roads provided for such travel. Speed limit on state forest roads is 30 MPH unless otherwise posted. Vehicles may not be parked where traffic or access to division service roads or trails are obstructed.
3. Fires are not permitted except in grills or fire rings provided, or in portable stoves. Fires must be attended to at all times.
4. Trash must be disposed of in receptacles provided or removed from the forest.
5. Camping is not permitted on the forest except as provided in the "Hunter's Camp" section of this brochure.
6. Hunting and fishing are permitted in most state forests as regulated by the Division of Wildlife. Shooting is prohibited within 400 feet of any building, facility, or recreation area and from or across any road or driveway. Discharge of any firearm is not permitted except during lawful hunting season.
7. Public display or consumption of any alcoholic beverage is prohibited.
8. Disturbance, defacement, or destruction of any property, material, natural feature, or vegetation is prohibited. Berries, nuts, and mushrooms may be gathered and removed except from posted areas.
9. State forest boundaries are indicated with yellow blazes on the trees and/or posted signs.

Location Map



General Location of Vinton Furnace State Forest. Map does not include some local roadways.

Additional Information

Zaleski State Forest
Division of Forestry
P.O. Box 330
Zaleski, Ohio 45698
(740) 596-5781
(877) 247-8733

USDA Forest Service
Northern Research Station
359 Main Road
Delaware, OH 43015-8640
(740) 368-0101
(740) 596-4238 - Forest Office

Vinton County Convention
& Visitors' Bureau
104 West Main Street
McArthur, Ohio 45651
(800) 596-4459
vintoncountytravel.com

EMERGENCIES - Dial 911

1.877.247.8733
forestry.ohiodnr.gov

Ohio | Division of Forestry

Division of Forestry · 2045 Morse Rd., Bldg H-1 · Columbus, Ohio 43229
Equal Employment Opportunity Employer M/F/H

VINTON FURNACE

STATE FOREST

Welcome to Vinton Furnace State Forest

The 12,089-acre Vinton Furnace State Forest is located 75 miles southeast of Columbus, near McArthur, Ohio. The forest is home to the state's largest known population of bobcats, and is also home to timber rattlesnakes, cerulean warblers and several rare plant species.

The forest is one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in the United States and home to more than 50 years of ongoing forest research. Data collected at the forest has been cited in hundreds of scholarly papers on forest ecology, forest management, and wildlife.

The site is home to research dedicated to restoring oak trees to Ohio's forests. Oaks are some of Ohio's most important wildlife species and a valuable part of the state's multi-billion dollar wood industry.

Since 1952, land at the Vinton Furnace has been dedicated towards forest use and sustainability research; an agreement formalized between previous owner Mead Corporation and the USDA Forest Service in 1965. The USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station currently employs foresters at the Vinton Furnace to implement, maintain, and collect data from research sites and provide overall care and maintenance of the site. The Vinton Furnace State Forest is managed to protect ongoing and new research efforts, provide public access, promote native wildlife, and provide sustained timber production essential for the economy of southeastern Ohio.

The State of Ohio obtained private and federal funding assistance to purchase the Vinton Furnace Forest. American Electric Power, The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service, and The Conservation Fund assisted in the purchase, which was finalized in 2010. These lands are being conserved, in part, by funding and technical assistance made available as mitigation for impacts caused by the construction and maintenance of the Rockies Express Pipeline, LLC in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Hunting and Fishing

Hunting and fishing are permitted within Vinton Furnace State Forest, as well as on the adjacent 3,405 acres of State Wildlife Area, as regulated by the Division of Wildlife. Please see rule number 6 in the "Forest Rules" section for more information.

Hunter's Camp

The Ball Diamond Hunter's Camp is located on Experimental Forest Road (TR-6) just south of Sam Russell Road. Camping is permitted at this location during established hunting seasons. Campers must be legally licensed hunters and must complete a self-registration form on-site. The campground offers a latrine, picnic tables, and fire rings. Sites are available on a first-come-first-served basis. The Hunter's Camp is operational one day before the start of squirrel season until one day after the close of grouse season. It is operational again fourteen days before the start of spring wild turkey season, and closes the day after the season ends.

Iron Furnace

During the late 19th century, there were 69 iron furnaces in the Hanging Rock Iron Region of Ohio. Vinton Furnace, which operated from 1854 to 1883, was one of those furnaces. These iron furnaces were a type of blast furnace used to smelt iron ore into cast iron. The furnaces were built of local sandstone in the shape of a truncated pyramid, and lined with firebrick produced locally in kilns from clay mined in the area. They were generally charcoal fired, but many of these furnaces were later converted to use coal or coke. In 1875 the charcoal-fired Vinton Furnace was converted to use coke for fuel. A unique feature of the Vinton Furnace is the battery of 24 Belgian coke ovens that were used to process coal into the coke that was used to fire the furnace.

Wild Turkey

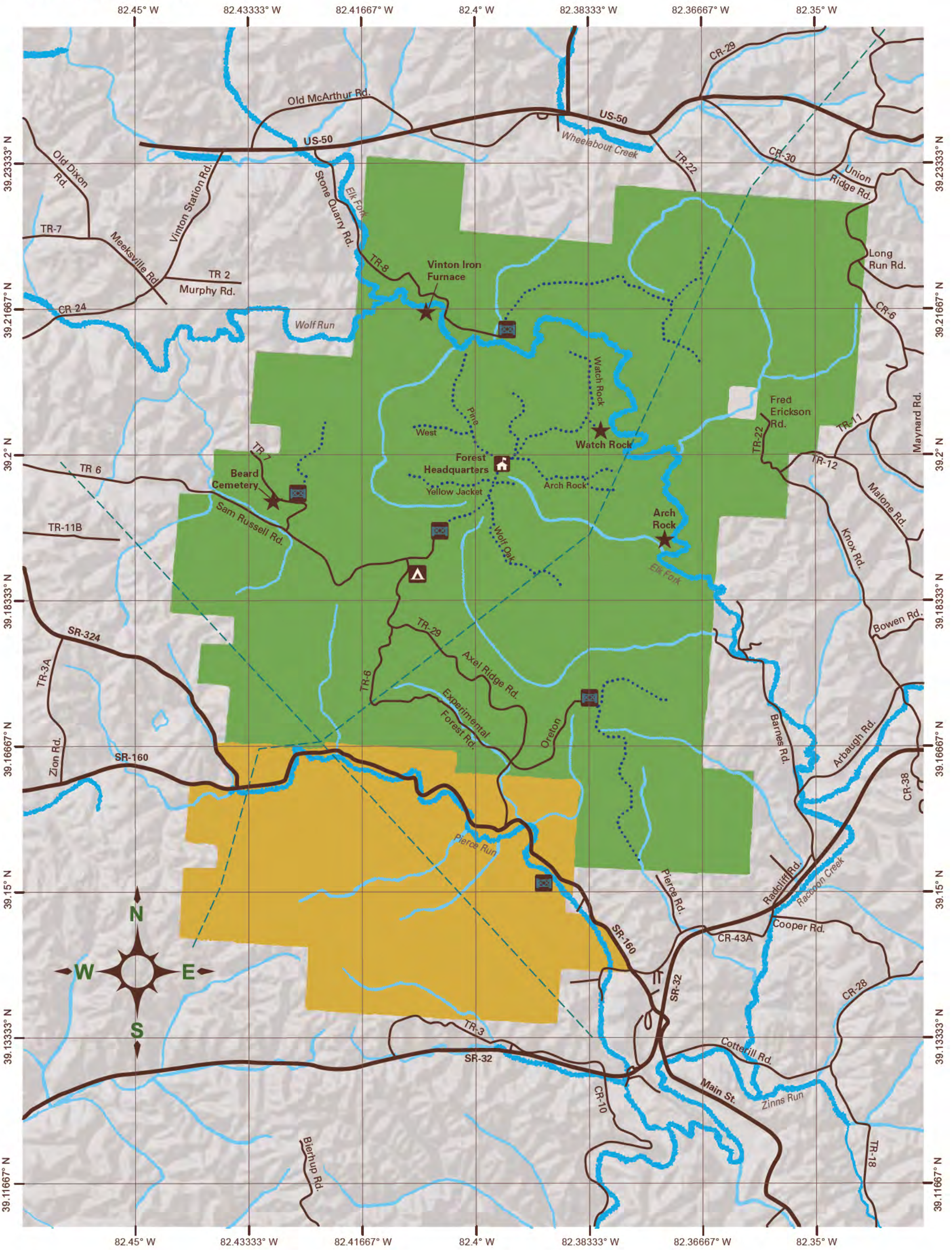
Since Vinton Furnace was managed as an experimental forest, a wide variety of timber management practices were demonstrated there, producing diverse habitats. Wild turkey require this diversity of habitat as the birds mature and the seasons change. Required habitats for wild turkey include open grassy areas, brushy areas, timber stands with brushy understories, and mature forests. The timber management practices of the Division of Forestry, including harvesting, timber stand improvement and prescribed fire, will continue to enhance this diversity.

Once common in Ohio, wild turkey was believed to be extirpated from the state by 1904. Between 1956 and 1963, the ODNR Division of Wildlife received 142 wild turkeys from seven other states to restore populations on various public lands in southeast Ohio. One of the early release sites was the area now known as Vinton Furnace State Forest. Ten birds were released there in 1956, and eight more were released there in 1957. The results were successful and Vinton Furnace State Forest remains one of Ohio's premier turkey hunting areas.

Photo: Remains of Belgian coke ovens.

"Promoting and applying management for the sustainable use and protection of Ohio's private and public forest lands."

VINTON FURNACE
STATE FOREST



MILES
0 0.5 1 1.5 2

KILOMETERS
0 0.5 1 1.5 2

1:60,000

State forest boundaries shown are representative and believed to be correct but not warranted. State forest boundary lines on the ground are identified with signs and/or yellow paint marks on trees.

Map reviewed and approved by Robert Boyles, Chief, ODNR Division of Forestry, 4/2015.

Data provided by ODNR Forestry, ODNR GIMS, US Census Tiger, ODOT.

LEGEND

- Vinton Furnace State Forest
- State Wildlife Area
- Trails
- Streams
- Intermittent Streams
- Roads
- Highways
- Power Lines
- Forest Headquarters
- Point of Interest
- Campground
- Gate