**Cartographic Methods for Recreational Trail Maps: Blue Marsh Lake**

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**1990s Version**

*maps shown to-scale in their 11x17 inch format*

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**2017 Update**

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**Purpose**

The trail map from the 1990s was designed poorly. Many design choices in this version are misleading and not geospatially accurate. The 2017 updated map attempts to effectively display the most helpful information for trail users—in a format that looks good either in the back pocket of a hiker or on a wall hanging in the ranger station. Newly included features include:

- Horse bypass trails
- Additional roads and streams
- Hill shade relief for spatial depth
- Trail alert for the parks steepest climb
- More location labels and directions to surrounding towns/routes

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**History**

Blue Marsh Lake is an Army Corp of Engineers project located in Berks County, PA. As a man-made lake, its dam was constructed primarily for flood control for the downstream cities of Reading, Birdsboro, Pottstown, Conshohocken, and sections of Philadelphia. This lake is open for public recreational use—currently with three boat ramps. In fact, it is one of the few public lakes in the region to allow motorized vessels in designated wake-zones. Additionally, 5,000 acres of federal land accommodate picnic areas, a visitors center, a small beach, and numerous hiking trails. Alongside Blue Marsh Lake’s federal land jurisdiction, state game land #280 borders a considerable expanse of the park. Adjacent directly downstream from Blue Marsh Lake is Gring’s Mill County Park. This park maintains the former Union Canal, among other features and facilities, which is now known for its gravel graded walking path leading into downtown Reading. Blue Marsh Lake receives over one million visitors each year.