



MCCONNELLS MILL STATE PARK

Kildoo Trail/North Country National Scenic Trail

PORTERSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

Hiking Time: 2-5 hours



The ancient 400-foot deep Slippery Rock Gorge was carved so rapidly by glacial meltwater that it left rocky outcrops and massive boulders scattered in the swift waters across the canyon floor that remain to this day. The rocks were once "slippery" because of the oil seeps in the area that triggered America's first rush for black gold. In 1974 the 930-acre Slippery Rock Gorge was designated a National Natural Landmark.

All of your dog's hiking day at McConnells Mill will be spent in the six-mile Slippery Rock Gorge. Luckily for those without a car shuttle or a hankering for retracing pawprints, there are two bridges, one open to traffic and one not, that allow a hiking loop on both sides of the turbulent waters. This two-mile loop begins at the namesake 19th century mill and welds the *Kildoo Trail* on the east bank to the *North Country National Scenic Trail* on the west. **There is plenty of rock-hopping in store for Seaman - more on the east side - and yes, those stoen surfaces can still be slippery.** But with the heart-stopping scenery in the gorge no one will be in any hurry to be moving at an unsafe speed.

Seaman is seldom more than a few bounds from Slippery Rock Creek that does calm down enough in places for safe dog-paddling - those life preservers provided along the trail are not for show. Pockets of inviting sandy beach usually indicate it is time to allow your dog into the water.



NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER

Kaymoor Miners Trail

FAYETTEVILLE, WEST VIRGINIA

Hiking Time: 2 hours



When your dog hears "821 steps" do his ears perk up or do those ears cover his eyes? If it is the former the Kaymoor Miners Trail is calling your name.

Like Greenland, the New River as a geographic name is an oxymoron. This may be the oldest river in North America, flowing in its present course for at least 65 million years. The sandstone it flows through is very hard and so the wide, wooded gorge the New River has cut in that time is only 1/3 as deep as the Grand Canyon.

It is deep nonetheless and you can get a feel for what you are in for by starting at the New River Gorge Bridge, the longest steel span in the western hemisphere and the second highest in the United States. Now head for the Kaymoor parking lot upstream.

This canine hike begins like many others - on a rough woods path descending towards the river. In short order, you reach the overgrown remnants of an abandoned coal mine opened in 1899. The coal and coke was transported for processing at the river's edge 1,000 feet down the slope by incline railroad.

That is your destination down the 821 wooden steps. The structures of the mining community burned to the ground in 1960 but Seaman can still sniff around mining machinery and coke ovens. The New River is renowned for its world-class rapids but the waters here are fine for a refreshing doggie dip in preparation for the climb back up those 821 steps.