

Giant City – First Day Hike - Check in at the Visitor Center

Self-Guided Hikes

Arrow-Wood Nature Trail – easy short trail offers visitors a self guided experience. Follow the path into a beautiful woodland environment, with many of the tree species labeled for easy identification. The Arrowwood trail offers a first hand look at forest succession, the way woodlands change over time

[Arrow Wood Trail Brochure](#)

Devil’s Standtable – 1/3 mile moderate trail. 30 min walking time. The Devil’s Standtable Trail leads to a unique geologic formation that has dominated the bluff line landscape here for thousands of years. Called by many “the mushroom rock,” this large free-standing pillar of sandstone must have seemed more like a pulpit for the devil to many local folks. Their name for it has stuck, and it remains one of the most interesting geologic features of Giant City State Park. Leading up to the Devil’s Standtable are many other interesting features.

[Devil’s Standtable Trail Brochure](#)

Indian Creek Nature Trail – ¾ mile moderate trail. 45 min walking time. As you enter this enchanting creek bottomland and walk along Indian Creek Trail, you will see many different species of plants and evidence of animals that inhabit this area. The forest comes alive as you walk deeper into an area that the Late Woodland Native Americans (400-900 A.D.) called home many moons ago. An abundance of food and shelter allowed the Native Americans to live well. Try to find the many trees, shrubs, nuts, berries, and animals that these early peoples would eat and use to build.

[Indian Creek Nature Trail Brochure](#)

The Giant City Nature Trail – 1 mile moderate trail. 1 hour walking time. As you walk through the rich Oak-Hickory woodland, try to imagine the daunting task that the pioneers had to make the massive timber disappear. Some of the larger trees that once stood here had girths of up to eight feet and stood to heights of 150 feet. At the end of the long wooden walkway you will catch your first glimpse of the park’s namesake. You have reached the “giant city streets.” Pioneers had not seen skyscrapers, so these sheer bluffs seemed like the “streets of a giant city” to them.

[Giant City Nature Trail Brochure](#)

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The Post Oak Nature Trail – 1/3 mile easy trail. 30 minute walking time. Built in 1978, this trail was designed to accommodate our guests with mobility constraints and is wide enough for wheelchairs or strollers but has some uneven surfaces. The trail is equipped with several benches and observation platforms that will allow you to take your time and enjoy the beautiful southern Illinois scenery.

[The Post Oak Nature Trail Brochure](#)

Red Cedar Hiking Trail – 12 miles. Please note that this trail is very rugged and meant for the person wanting a more rustic hiking/ camping experience. The Red Cedar is not maintained or walked as frequently as most of the other designated trails at Giant City State Park. The trail begins at the back of the Family Camping Area. Fast hikers can cover the 12 mile trail in seven hours. Leisurely hikers should allow two days. It is recommended that hikers be on the trail early morning. Camping permits for this trail are issued at the Visitors Center or received from Site Security, if present, at the main campground. Please place the permit in your car on the driver's side front window. If no vehicle is left behind, please carry the permit with you. Day hikers may wish to inform park staff that they are on the trail in case of accident.

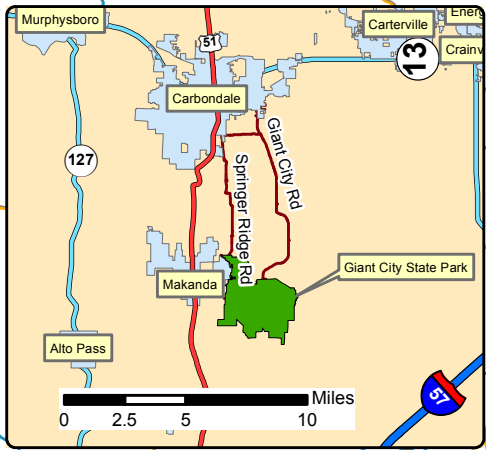
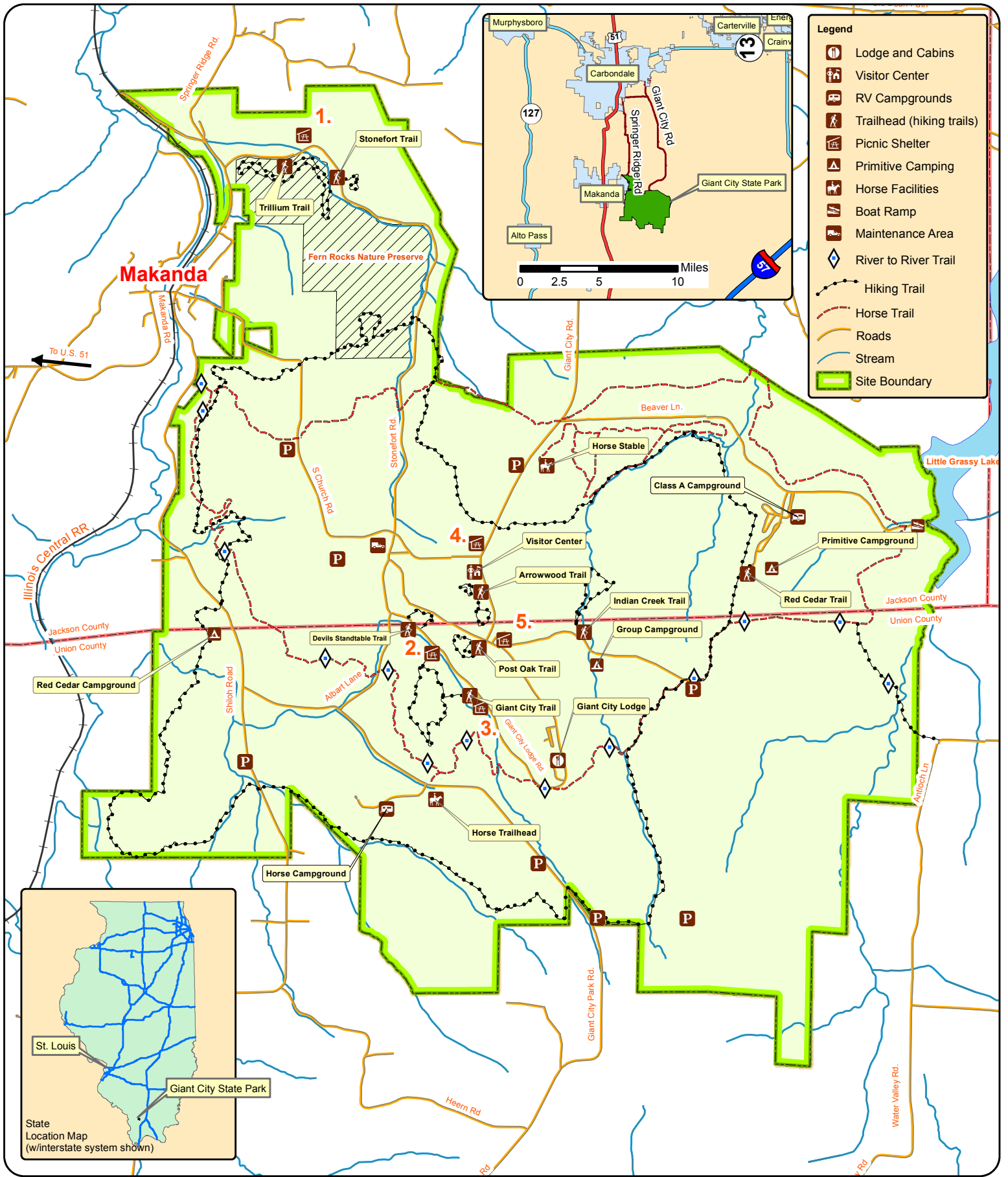
[Red Cedar Hiking Trail Brochure](#)

Stone Fort Nature Trail – 1/3 mile moderate hike. 30 minute walking time. The short, but steep, climb up to the stone wall contains large sandstone boulders in the trail, so please use caution when walking. The steepness of the slope and the large number of visitors to the trail are causing a great deal of erosion. The small tributary creek lying next to the trail offers spectacular water falls during rain events, and unique ice formations in the winter. However, this creek is considered intermittent – flowing only during and after a storm event.

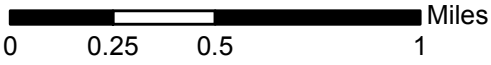
[Stone Fort Nature Trail Brochure](#)

Trillium Trail – 2 miles rugged hike. 1 hour walking time. Each season on Trillium Trail offers something different. In winter, many of the bluffs become visible and unique ice formations appear. The natural area is 110 acres of bluffs and forest designated as very high quality. Fern Rocks Nature Preserves is an area containing outstanding and relatively undisturbed natural characteristics. In particular, the primary objectives of preserving this area were to protect the sandstone bluff and forest communities; and to protect two Illinois-endangered plant species – the large white-flowered mint (*Synandra hispidula*) and grove bluegrass (*Poa alsodes*).

[Trillium Trail Brochure](#)



- Legend**
- Lodge and Cabins
 - Visitor Center
 - RV Campgrounds
 - Trailhead (hiking trails)
 - Picnic Shelter
 - Primitive Camping
 - Horse Facilities
 - Boat Ramp
 - Maintenance Area
 - River to River Trail
 - Hiking Trail
 - Horse Trail
 - Roads
 - Stream
 - Site Boundary

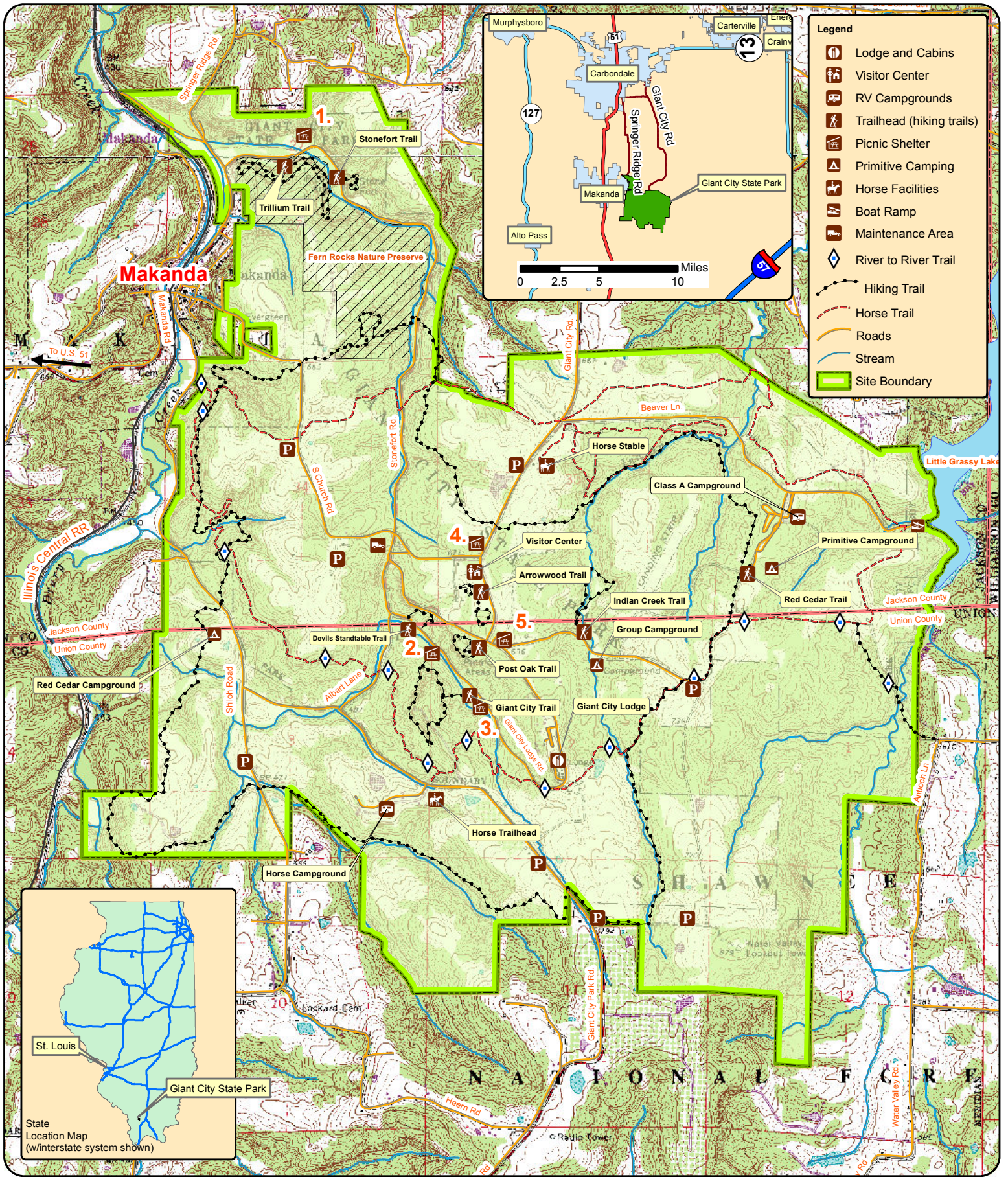


Giant City State Park
Makanda, Illinois

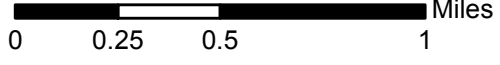
Visitor Map

Date: 1/30/2014





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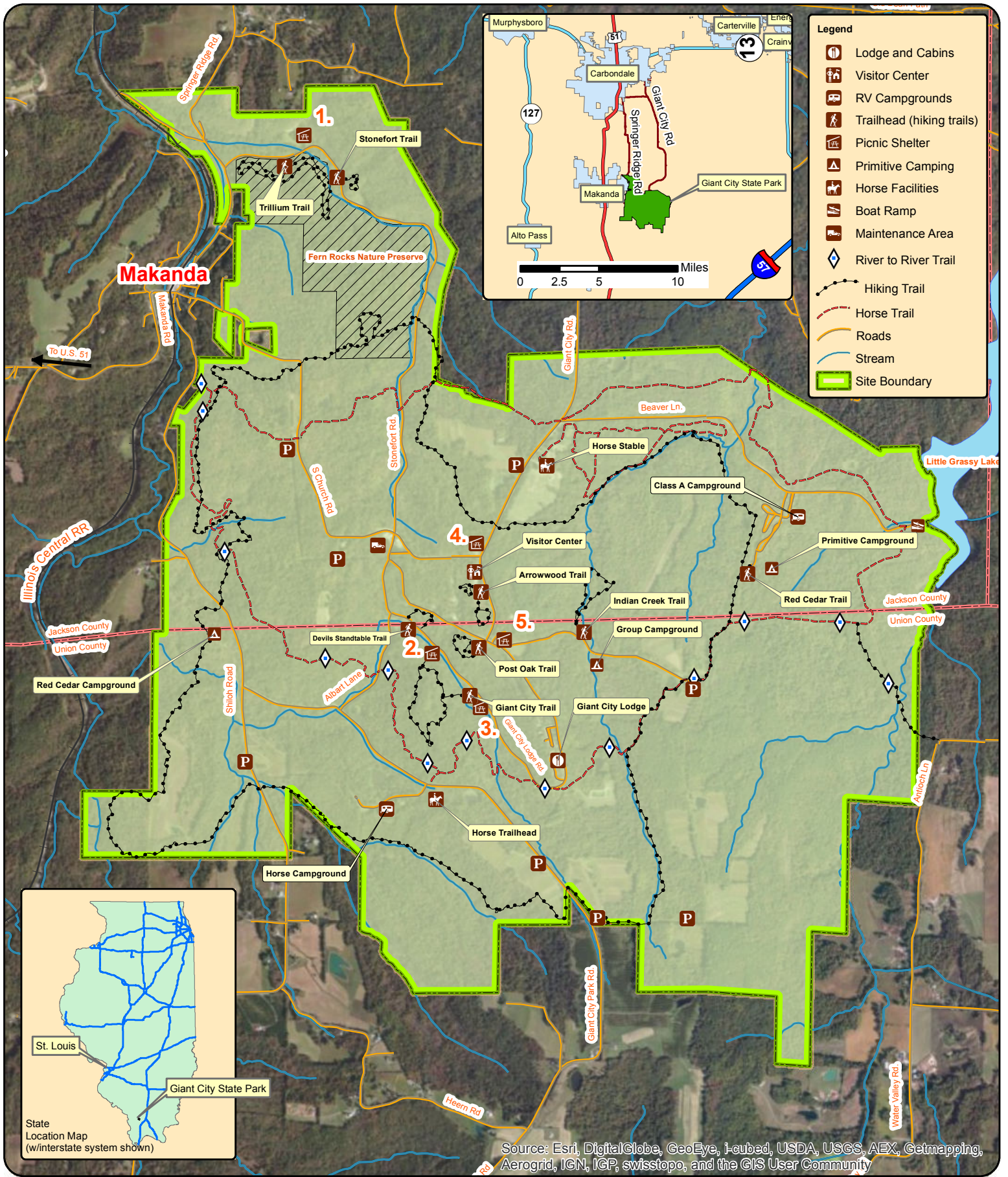


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Makanda, Illinois

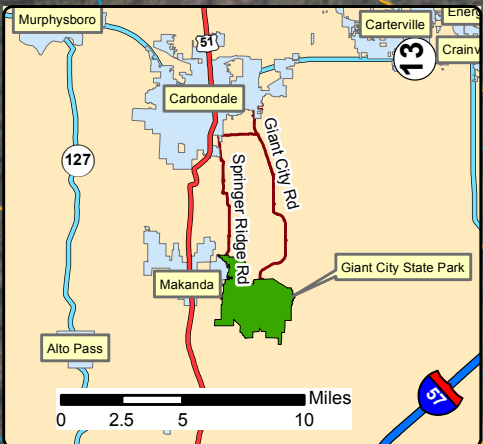
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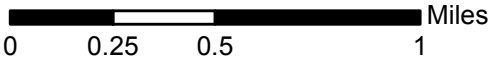




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Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



Giant City State Park
Makanda, Illinois

Visitor Map

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Cold Weather Hiking — tips from the American Hiking Society

<https://americanhiking.org/resources/cold-weather-hiking/>

Hiking during the winter can be fun as long as you prepare with these tips. In addition to these tips and hints, remember to follow normal safety practices as well when hiking in the winter. Be sure of the gear you take with you and if you have any specific questions, ask a local outdoor expert so you can stay safe.

Just because the temperature has fallen like the leaves of a tree doesn't mean you can't have an enjoyable hike outside. With a little extra preparation, hiking in the winter can be every bit as enjoyable as hiking during the warmer months. If you have the gear for a warm-weather hike, you can easily modify it for the cold. Before you go, be sure to follow a few of these guidelines to stay safe and warm. Winter can be one of the most peaceful seasons to enjoy some solitude on the trail, but it also comes with increased risks that hikers need to prepare for.

Check the conditions

Trail and road crews aren't as active in the winter, so it's always a good idea to check trip reports to get a sense of conditions on the trail and access to the trailhead before you hit the road.

Dress in layers

While it is perhaps nice to have a huge, fluffy parka on the ski slopes, it really isn't practical for the trail. Instead, take several layers you can peel off or put on when you stop and go on the trail. Your base layer should be a wicking fabric that will pull your sweat away from the skin. Pack layers for every part of your body, not just your torso. Overheating is a dangerous threat since excessive moisture that isn't allowed to escape can freeze and cause hypothermia. If you ever wondered why some of your jackets have zippers under the armpits, they help vent sweat vapor and prevent your clothes from getting wet.

Pack extra layers for when you take breaks and in case you are delayed due to an injury or unforeseen situation. Could you survive the night if you had to? Check the forecasted low temperatures to be prepared for the unexpected. Carrying all of the 10 Essentials of Hiking is especially important in the winter.

Wear a hat

Our heads are filled with oxygen-carrying capillaries which fuel our brains and consume one-third of the body's energy. During the colder months, it is important to keep your head covered to maintain function and not lose precious body heat. You may want to bring a warmer/heavier hat for rest periods.

Keep the breeze out

An often overlooked jacket feature—a hooded jacket—helps seal out frigid air from around the neck and shoulders. Hoods also help with layering the head. When you stop for a break, throwing on a hood can help regulate your temperature during breaks.

Keep your water bottle warm

Staying hydrated in cooler temps is just as important as it is in the summer. Take extra precautions to keep your water from freezing.

- A foam sleeve like a koozie will increase the time it takes water to freeze in a bottle. In very frigid temps, some hikers will even add an active hand warmer inside the insulative sleeve.
- Water tends to freeze at the top of a water bottle, so carry the bottle cap down to prevent the opening from freezing first. Ensure the bottle properly seals to prevent leaks.
- Start your hike with warm water instead of cold tap water to slow down the freezing process.

...Keep your water bottle warm

- Nothing warms your body or your spirits like warm liquid on the trail or by a campfire. Vacuum-sealed water bottles and thermoses can help keep warm drinks steamy for hours, and they can also be used as standard water bottles.
- Sip water often to stay hydrated and also to check the state of your water. Is it starting to freeze?
- Do you hike with a hydration reservoir? Manufacturers make special hose, bite valve, and reservoir sleeves to slow down the water from freezing, but in many cases, reservoirs will freeze faster than traditional water bottles.
- Store soft-sided flasks or slim water bottles on the inside of your jacket – properly sealed, of course.

Watch your step

Snow and ice are often synonymous with cold-weather hiking. Adequate footwear and traction are part of the 10 Essentials of Hiking, and snow and ice present various hazards in the winter. The conditions should influence what traction and flotation devices are used. In deep snow, snowshoes reduce how much a hiker sinks into the powder. On packed snow and ice, micro-spikes and other traction devices provide additional traction for better footing. Many brands design traction that can slip over shoes and boots, and different designs are suitable for different conditions, terrain, and activities.

Trekking poles are also highly recommended, especially in snowy and icy conditions. Poles provide more points of contact with the ground, which increases balance and traction.

Keep batteries warm

Batteries in most electronics lose effectiveness in cooler temperatures. Pack batteries and electronics in interior pockets so body heat can keep them warm. This is especially important if you use any electronic devices as a primary form of navigation. American Hiking recommends hikers carry paper maps and a compass (and know how to use them) in the event a navigation device malfunctions.

Don't toss the sunscreen

While this is most important if you are hiking in a snowy region, winter hikers often forget about the sun's glare reflecting off of white snow.

Protect your eyes

UV-rated snow goggles or sunglasses that provide adequate protection from bitter wind and the sun's harsh rays should be used even when it's cloudy and not super bright at the beginning of a hike.

Pack freeze-resistant snacks

It can be discouraging to take a snack break only to find your favorite snack hard as a rock and uneatable in cold temps. Chewy and gooey snacks often become hard to eat in winter conditions. Either keep these snacks in an interior pocket or pack snacks that are less affected by cold temps. You can test which snacks work best by putting various snacks in your freezer to see what gets too hard to enjoy out on the trail. Crackers, nuts, and solid chocolate typically work well. Warm snacks are even more appetizing when it's cold outside so consider stashing your next snack in an interior pocket to warm it up a little before your next snack break.

Be prepared for shorter days

As early as October, dusk settles earlier and more quickly than in the summer. Have a good idea of the usable daylight hours before going hiking. Always carry a headlamp or flashlight with extra batteries.