

## **Camp Columbia State Forest - Timber Harvest and Trail Closures**

December 2017

The DEEP Forestry Division has begun a timber harvest at Camp Columbia State Forest in Morris. The work, being performed by Maple Ridge Lawn LLC out of Litchfield, is a thinning and demonstration of “crop-tree management” that was prescribed in the 2009 approved forest management plan for the property. ***As a result, most hiking trails on the property are now closed to the public until further notice.***

In the thinning, trees of poorer quality and defect, or health issues that are not likely survivable another 10-20 years, are removed in favor of the healthiest trees and those trees of most value to wildlife, or as a future “parent” tree and seed source in regeneration cutting years away.

Contractors bid on state timber sales such as this one based on the estimated value of the timber on the site, and high bidder is usually awarded the contract. Harvests are performed by a variety of operators, from older-fashioned hand-felling and skidding to a completely mechanized operation utilizing feller bunchers that cut and lay down trees and measure them to log length right in the woods by computer. Like foresters, loggers in Connecticut are licensed by the state, as either a Certified Forest Products Harvester or Certified Supervising Forest Products Harvester. Timber harvested is marketed to make lumber, pallets, railroad ties, quality veneers, mulch, firewood and pulp. Forest products from sales may get sawn and used here in New England, or it may be exported to Canada or as far away as Asia.

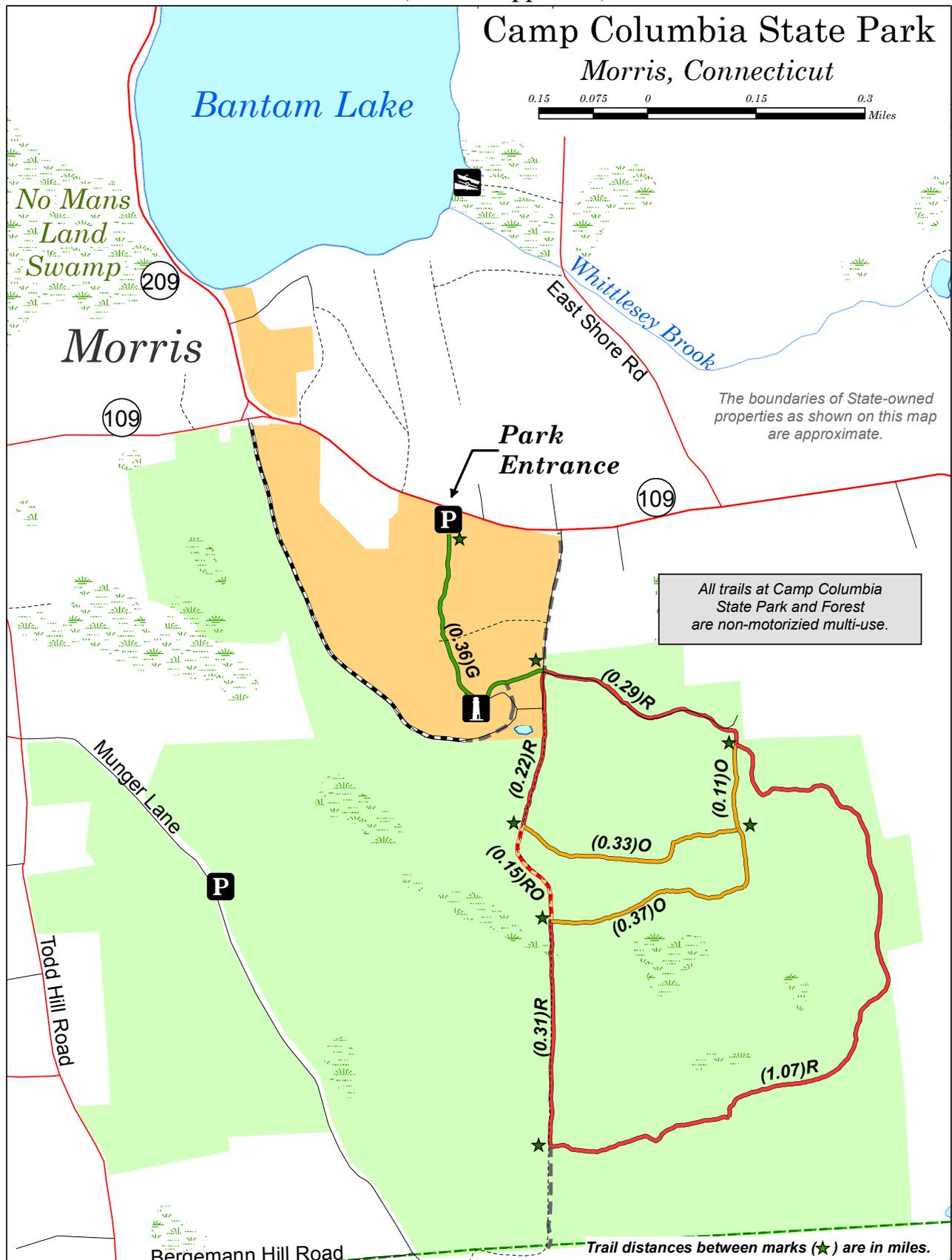
Camp Columbia is a mix of State Historic Park and State Forest in designation, with the majority of the acreage in State Forest. It is a smaller property at 599 acres and one of the newest DEEP properties, acquired only in 2000 from Columbia University. One hundred years ago, the property was used for World War I era officer training, and Columbia operated a field campus for decades to train future engineers and surveyors on skills that couldn’t be learned as well in the city. At one point, the football team also practiced on the grounds.

***The main public parking area is still open to the public on Route 109, as is the green-blazed trail to the stone observation tower.*** This tower has become the iconic symbol of the property and was just reopened to the public in 2017. Visitors can enter inside the tower at ground level, but the upper half of the structure contains a water tank. At that point the staircase exits and spirals around the outside of the stone tower and ascends to an observation deck. But visitors are asked to not explore the forest trails beyond the tower, which are presently closed for safety during the logging.

For questions, contact David Irvin, DEEP Forester, at the Pleasant Valley Field Office at 860-379-7085.

# Camp Columbia State Park

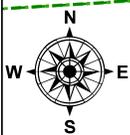
## Morris, Connecticut



The boundaries of State-owned properties as shown on this map are approximate.

All trails at Camp Columbia State Park and Forest are non-motorized multi-use.

Trail distances between marks (★) are in miles.



**Bethlehem**  
Map Date - February 19, 2015



Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection  
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation  
State Parks Division

### Explanation

- Green (G)
- Orange (O)
- Red - R
- - - Red/Orange (RO)
- Gravel Park Road
- Paved Park Road
- Bantam Lake Boat Launch (Residents Only)
- Parking Area
- Tower
- Camp Columbia State Park
- Camp Columbia State Forest

