

= Nescopeck Mountain =

Nescopeck Mountain (also known as Nescopeck Mountain) is a ridge in Columbia County and Luzerne County , in Pennsylvania , in the United States . Its elevation is 1 @, @ 594 feet (486 m) above sea level . The ridge is a forested ridge , with at least two types of forest and two systems of vernal pools . It is a very long and unbroken ridge with two water gaps : one carved by Catawissa Creek and one carved by Nescopeck Creek . Rock formations in the ridge include the Lower Helderberg Formation , the Onondaga Formation , the Spechty Kopf Formation , the Trimmers Rock Formation , and the Mauch Chunk Formation . In the most recent ice age , it was affected by glaciation .

Native Americans historically settled in the vicinity of Nescopeck Mountain . It was visited by Europeans as early as 1755 . The ridge 's name most likely means " dirty waters " or " black waters " . Two Pennsylvania State Game Lands and one state park are situated partially on it . The ridge spans numerous townships in Columbia County and Luzerne County .

= = Geography = =

The elevation of Nescopeck Mountain is 1 @, @ 594 feet (486 m) above sea level , making it the highest ridge in Columbia County . Townships that Nescopeck Mountain occupies include Beaver Township , Mifflin Township , and Main Township in Columbia County . The ridge extends into several townships in Luzerne County , including Nescopeck Township , and reaches at least as far east as Nescopeck State Park .

Nescopeck Mountain is an unbroken ridge , being described as " regular and almost unbroken " in Thomas Francis Gordon 's 1832 book A Gazetteer of the State of Pennsylvania . John Gosse Freeze 's 1888 book A History of Columbia County , Pennsylvania : From the Earliest Times described the ridge as " beautiful and regular in its formation " . It stretches from near the Susquehanna River almost to the Lehigh River and has a length of nearly 20 miles (32 km) . It is considerably steeper and higher on its northern side , at least in the United States Geological Survey quadrangle of Berwick . The ridge is too rocky for agriculture , with large boulders being abundant on it .

Nescopeck Mountain is part of a long chain of continuously forested mountains and ridges that stretches from Moosic Mountain to the Susquehanna River . It is considered to be an extension of Catawissa Mountain . The ridge is similar in height to mountains in the vicinity of the Wyoming Valley . The ridge has a topographic prominence of up to approximately 850 feet (260 m) in places and up to 900 feet (270 m) at the Nescopeck Creek water gap . However , it is only 400 to 500 feet (120 to 150 m) high near its western end at Mainville .

Interstate 80 crosses through the water gap carved by Nescopeck Creek in Nescopeck Mountain . The Susquehanna River Lowlands are in the vicinity of the ridge . Large groups of small kettle holes are found along the base of the ridge .

Nescopeck Mountain occupies the United States Geological Survey quadrangles of Shumans , Nuremberg , Berwick , Sybertsville , Freeland , and White Haven .

= = Streams and valleys = =

A creek known as Nescopeck Creek is in the vicinity of Nescopeck Mountain . Additionally , Black Creek , a major tributary of Nescopeck Creek , empties into the larger creek at the base of the ridge . The ridge is north of the creek for a portion of its length . There is a valley known as the Nescopeck Valley which is between Nescopeck Mountain and Buck Mountain . Nescopeck Creek flows through this valley . The valley is 20 miles (32 km) long and 5 miles (8 @. @ 0 km) wide . Some streams on the ridge are part of the Lehigh River watershed .

A stream known as Scotch Run flows through a valley with Nescopeck Mountain on its northern edge .

Nescopeck Mountain forms a water gap with Catawissa Mountain . Catawissa Creek cuts through

this water gap . There is also a water gap carved by Nescopeck Creek through Nescopeck Mountain . Both of these water gaps are relatively narrow . The mountain serves as part of the dividing line between the Susquehanna River and the Lehigh River watersheds . For some distance , the ridge runs parallel to the Susquehanna River at a distance of 2 @. @ 5 to 3 miles (4 @. @ 0 to 4 @. @ 8 km) .

= = Geology = =

Nescopeck Mountain is mainly formed by hard , upturned conglomerates belonging to the Pocono Formation . There are a total of three rock formations on Nescopeck Mountain in the Berwick Quadrangle , which is in Columbia County and Luzerne County . From north to south , these rock formations are the Trimmers Rock Formation (from the Devonian Period) , the Spechty Kopf Formation (from the Devonian Period and the Mississippian Period) , and the Onondaga Formation (from the Devonian Period) . All three of these formations occur in bands that are at an angle relative to the surface . The Spechty Kopf Formation occurs at the peak of the ridge and extends to a depth of approximately 1 @, @ 500 feet (460 m) below sea level . The Onondaga Formation runs from near the ridge 's peak to 1 @, @ 000 feet (300 m) below sea level . The Trimmers Rock Formation runs from the middle elevations of the ridge to more than 2 @, @ 000 feet (610 m) below sea level . Additionally , the Mauch Chunk Formation is found on the ridge . The summit of the ridge consists of hard Pocono Formation rock . A plain of the Catskill Formation occurs to the north of the ridge .

There are coal basins to the south of Nescopeck Mountain .

During an ice age , glaciers pressed against Nescopeck Mountain and eventually moved over it , carrying gravel from the Susquehanna River . The ridge was near the southern edge of the most recent period of glaciation .

= = History and etymology = =

Nescopeck Mountain was entered into the Geographic Names Information System on August 2 , 1979 . Its identifier in the Geographic Names Information System is 1190986 . The ridge is also known as Nescopeck Mountain . This variant name appears in Israel C. White 's 1883 book The geology of the North Branch Susquehanna River Region in the six counties of Wyoming , Lackawanna , Luzerne , Columbia , Montour and Northumberland . Nescopeck Mountain is most likely named for a Native American village called Nescopeck . The word nescopeck itself is a corruption of neskchoppeck , which may mean " dirty waters " or " black waters " .

Historically , there was a Native American village in the vicinity of Nescopeck Mountain , where the borough of Nescopeck is in modern times . Additionally , the Forks Indians arrived at the ridge in 1740 after being evicted from their lands in the Lehigh Valley . As early as 1755 , a pair of Moravian missionaries , Christian Seidel and Henry Frey , descended the ridge while visiting Native Americans .

In 1838 , a man named Mr. Butler requested permission of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to construct a tunnel or through cut through Nescopeck Mountain for the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company . In the late 1800s and early 1900s , the Glen Summit Springs Hotel operated on top of Nescopeck Mountain . It was constructed by the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company . During its most active use , it attracted visitors from the Wyoming Valley and from the East Coast of the United States . The Lehigh Valley Railroad historically passed over the ridge . In the late 1800s , the ridge was prospected for coal .

The top of Nescopeck Mountain was devoid of trees by the middle of the 1800s . Logging has been done on the ridge in the early 2000s and plans have been made to construct communication towers on the ridge . Local produce is sometimes traded over Nescopeck Mountain . The mountain is almost completely undeveloped .

A gypsy moth infestation began on Nescopeck Mountain in the summer of 2014 , causing hundreds of trees to be defoliated . The Bureau of Forestry expects to begin spraying the area in May 2015

and June 2015 .

= = Biology = =

Nescopeck Mountain is one of several mountains in Columbia County to contain undisturbed oak / mixed hardwood forests . This forest is also an Appalachian Oak Forest . Specific tree species on the ridge in Columbia County include red oak , chestnut oak , scarlet oak , black birch , American chestnut , pitch pine , red maple , and serviceberry . Other plants on the ridge include black huckleberry , lowbush blueberry , mountain laurel , sheep 's laurel , bracken fern , wild sarsaparilla , and Virginia creeper .

An ephemeral / fluctuating pool natural community known as the Edgewood Vernal Pools is located on and near Nescopeck Mountain . It consists of dozens of vernal pools created by glaciation . Numerous amphibian species breed in the pools and hardwood trees and hemlock are present on the southern edge of the pool system . A globally rare species of invertebrate was observed in the pools in 1990 . Another system of vernal pools known as the Briggsville Vernal Pools are found north of the ridge .

The Nescopeck Mountain Barrens are a ridgetop dwarf @-@ tree forest natural community . The barrens consist of scrub oaks , hairgrass , pitch pines , little bluestems , and blueberries .

= = Recreation = =

A portion of the Pennsylvania State Game Lands Number 58 is on Nescopeck Mountain . Additionally , the Pennsylvania State Game Lands Number 187 contain the Nescopeck Mountain Barrens . The ridge is on the northern border of the 3550 @-@ acre Nescopeck State Park . Historically , there were trails leading up to the top of Nescopeck Mountain . There is high visibility from the top of the ridge and the town of Bloomsburg can be seen .

The water gap where Catawissa Creek flows between Nescopeck Mountain and Catawissa Mountain was described as " attractive " by I. W. Hartman in 1912 . The water gap where Nescopeck Creek flows through Nescopeck Mountain is described as " impressive " in Jeff Mitchell 's book Paddling Pennsylvania .