

■ TRACY RIDGE LOOP

NY I-86, Route 219, Route 321, Route 346



Follow **Route 219 South** from **Interstate 86** to Bradford for the start of the 39.5-mile loop through the highest and most remote land in the Allegheny National Forest. Drive this loop evenings or early mornings for the best opportunities to observe white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, porcupines or even black bears and coyotes.

Exit from **Route 219** at Bradford onto **Route 346 West**. Route markers will direct you along Main Street, Mechanic Street, then out of town on West Washington Street, past the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford campus.

About six miles off **Route 219**, you pass the Marilla Reservoir. This pretty little body of water features a covered bridge, a series of hiking trails and is a favorite fishing spot – it is generously stocked.

You enter the Allegheny National Forest about 8.5 miles into this drive. Turn left onto **Route 321** about 5.5 miles farther. If you were to stay on **Route 346**, it would take you to the Willow Bay Recreation Area on the shore of the Allegheny Reservoir. This area has cabins, a campground, a picnic area, boat rentals and a boat launch ramp.

Route 321 starts rising immediately toward the top of the plateau. After driving about three miles and climbing about 700 feet in elevation, you arrive at Tracy Ridge. A large meadow is an excellent place to watch for deer. Just past this meadow is the entrance to Tracy Ridge Recreation Area. Here you will find a campground and trailheads.

Past Tracy Ridge, **Route 321** drops to the head of Sugar Bay, then climbs again to a junction with **Route 59**. Turn left on **Route 59** toward Bradford. This part of the loop will give you the best view that the Allegheny Highlands is actually a plateau. In most other areas, the land is so deeply eroded that it has the appearance of hills.

The trailhead for Timberdoodle Flats is located along the right-hand side of **Route 59**. Timberdoodle Flats features two loop trails totaling 1.5 miles. There's the Woodcock Trail with 12 interpretive stops or the shorter gravel surfaced Bluebird Trail with six interpretive stops. The Bluebird Trail is suitable for wheelchairs or walking assistance equipment.

Turn left onto **Route 770**. Soon after passing Pine Acres Golf Course, the road goes into a long decline toward **Route 219** at Custer City. Turn left on **Route 219** to return to Bradford.

