

About Melick's Bridge Section

Melick's Bridge is named after the family who owned the 1880s double truss Pony bridge and surrounding land. George E. Melick (1897-1971) and his wife Helen purchased the property in 1930, and established a 127-acre dairy operation known as "River Bottom Farm." They also raised pigs, chickens, and horses, and operated a small peach orchard. Over the years, they acquired a total of 200 acres of property. In 1977, Helen sold 151 acres to the county as a measure to protect the watershed of the South Branch of the Raritan River, and all 151 acres are included in the South Branch Reservation. Today, 62 acres of this property are considered the Melick's Bridge Section.

The South Branch Reservation totals over 1000 acres. Besides providing recreational opportunities, the reservation helps preserve the South Branch of the Raritan River Watershed and provides wildlife habitat.



Old bridge. Photo courtesy of June Quick.

With the exception of park properties with reservable facilities, all properties are "carry in / carry out" and trash/recycling receptacles are not provided. Please plan accordingly and do not leave any trash/recyclables behind.

It is the policy of the County to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities upon advance notice of need. Persons requiring accommodations should make a request at least two weeks prior to program attendance.

Melick's Bridge Section

Location: Melick's Bridge Section is located at 245 Hamden Road, Annandale 08801 (Clinton and Franklin Townships). The park area is open from sunrise to sunset. No restroom facilities are available.

Directions from the Flemington Area: Travel Route 31 north to the jug handle at Allerton Road. Use the jug handle and cross over Route 31. Proceed from Allerton Road straight to Wellington Drive. Turn left off Wellington onto Hamden Road. Parking is on the left before the bridge or on the left immediately the bridge.

Directions from the Clinton Area: Take Route 31 south to Allerton Road. Turn right onto Allerton Road and proceed as above.

Fishing

Adjacent to the South Branch of the Raritan River, Melick's Bridge offers two short trails for access to the river's edge for fishing. The river is seasonally stocked with trout. New Jersey State Fish and Wildlife laws apply, and a state fishing license with a trout stamp must be displayed.

Hunting

In order to control the population of deer on park property, hunting is permitted. Hunters must obtain a special permit issued by the Division to be able to hunt on the preserve. Visitors between September and February are strongly encouraged to wear blaze orange or confine visits to Sundays.

(Revised 5/2017)

Canoeing

The area just beyond the parking lot could be used as river access for canoes. Canoeing the South Branch of the Raritan River is a wonderful way to view wildlife. The river corridor provides an excellent habitat for waterfowl, which can be viewed all along the river. Aquatic reptiles, such as Painted Turtles, are regularly observed perched on the stone and tree outcroppings along the banks of the river.



Canoe trip on the South Branch River

Other South Branch Areas

Landsdown Trail: Located on Lower Landsdown Road, this area offers an easy 1.5 mile hike into the center of Clinton. The trail crosses the Coopalong Creek.

Pine Hill Trail: At the end of Hamden Road is a fisherman's trail along the South Branch of the Raritan River. The Round Valley Pumping Station is also located at the end and is a good location for waterfowl.

See the guides for these locations for more information about the sites.

The Hunterdon County Division of Parks & Recreation is dedicated to preserving open space and natural resources, providing safe parks and facilities, and offering educational and recreational opportunities, all contributing to an enhanced quality of life for present and future generations.

Melick's Bridge Section of the South Branch Reservation Trail Map and Guide



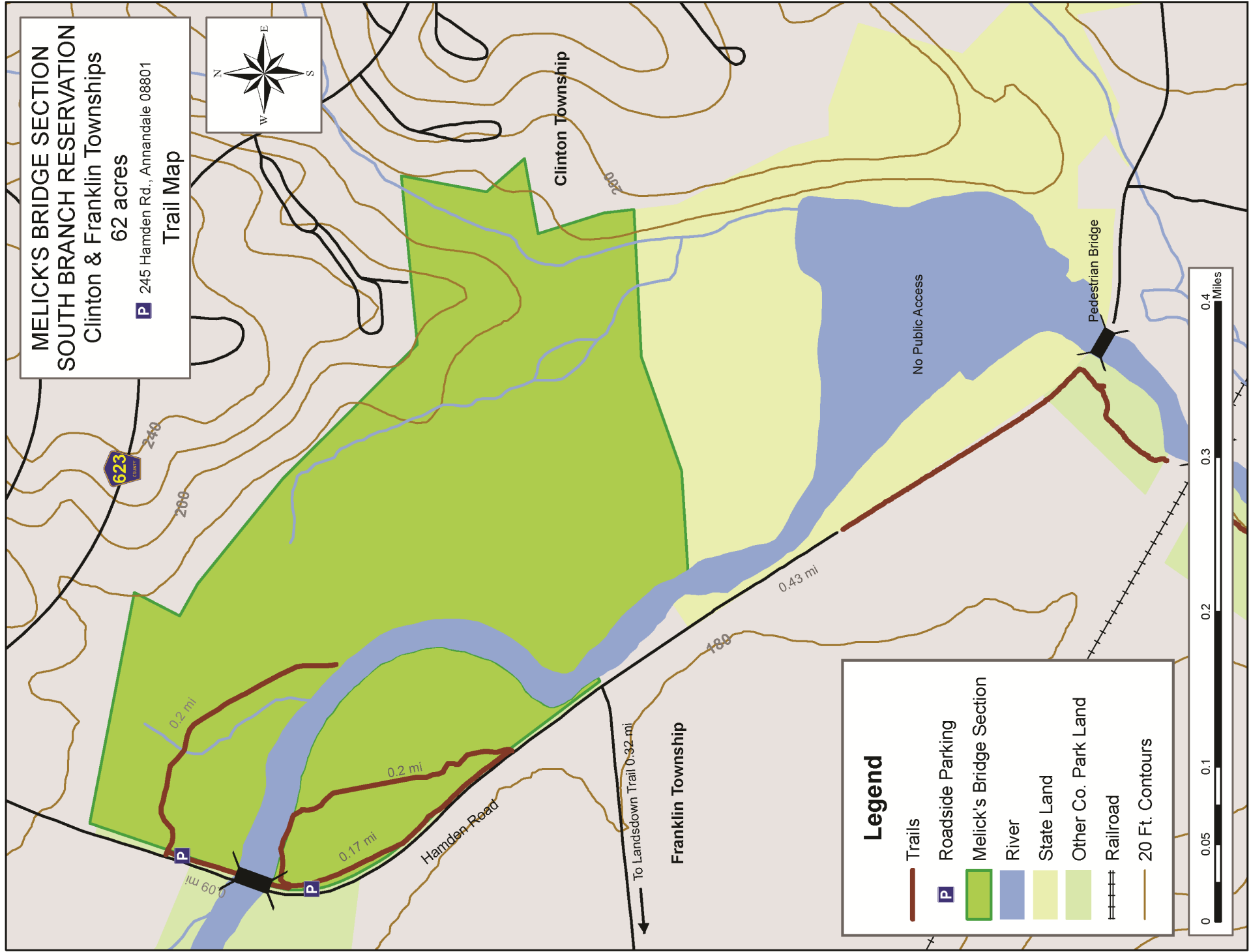
Osprey. Photo by Brigitte Segmuller.



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SUMMARY OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

The rules and regulations governing use of facilities or properties administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation are promulgated in accordance with provisions of the N.J. Statutes Title 40:32-7.12, which reads as follows:

"The Board of Chosen Freeholders may by resolution make, alter, amend, and repeal rules and regulations for the supervision, regulation and control of all activities carried on, conducted, sponsored, arranged, or provided for in connection with a public golf course or other county recreational, playground, or public entertainment facility, and for the protection of property, and may prescribe and enforce fines and penalties for the violation of any such rule or regulation."

These rules and regulations have been promulgated for the protection of our patrons and for the facilities and natural resources administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks and Recreation.

Permits: A fully executed Facility Use Permit, issued by the County of Hunterdon for any activity, shall authorize the activity only insofar as it may be performed in strict accordance with the terms and conditions thereof. The State of NJ, County of Hunterdon, or the local municipality may require additional permits.

Prohibited Acts: The violation of any Municipal, State, or Federal law. Advertising, solicitation, ice skating, ice fishing, any other on-ice activities, downhill skiing, bathing, fuel-powered modeled aircraft, the release of any animal, explosives of any kind, poisons of any kind, after-hours use, alcohol without a permit in a non-designated area, controlled dangerous substances, weapons, posting of signage, inappropriate attire, and climbing on, or rappelling from any cliff, rock face, or boulder, with, or without the use of specialized equipment.

Regulated Activity: The sale of merchandise, aviation, boating, cross-country skiing, bicycling, and sledding. Battery-powered modeled aircraft and horses must be in designated areas, dogs must be restrained with a leash not exceeding six feet, pet waste must be removed, camping/fires are by permit only. All groups of 15 or more must obtain a permit for use of any Park area.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of Property: No person shall make, excavate on, destroy, paint, fill in, cut, remove or tamper with any property, organic or inorganic.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of Natural Resources: No person shall disturb wildlife or vegetation in any manner. No person shall pollute waters, litter, dump debris, or release helium balloons in any property. It is illegal to remove any natural resource from, or introduce any plant material, bulbs, or seeds to any property without a proper permit or license.

Prohibited Acts for the Protection of People: No person shall obstruct a county employee/official, interfere with a visitor, conduct any unsafe act, or cause a hazardous condition.

Vehicles: All the provisions of the NJ State Motor Vehicle Act apply. Vehicles are not allowed in unauthorized areas. Parking is allowed in designated areas only. **ATVs, dirt bikes, and snowmobiles are prohibited on County Park lands.**

Enforcement: The rules and regulations of the County shall be enforced by duly authorized Rangers or representatives of the County under the provision of N.J.S.A. 40:32-2, thru 40:32-7.13. Any person who enters into a County Park for any purpose whatsoever has a duty and is presumed to be aware of the provisions of these rules and regulations governing the use of the facilities and properties administered by the Hunterdon County Division of Parks & Recreation.

Penalties: Any person violating any of the provisions of these regulations shall, upon conviction before a court or other adjudicative body of jurisdiction, be liable for the replacement, repair or restoration of damaged property, if any, and shall pay a penalty of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or other amount in the discretion of the court or other adjudicative body, or may be sentenced to imprisonment in the County jail for the term not exceeding ninety (90) days, or both, provided that this section shall not supersede any applicable penalty provision for specific offenses, which may be set forth in the New Jersey Code of Criminal Justice, N.J.S.A. 2C:1-1, et seq., or in any other applicable state or federal law.

NOTE: County Park Rangers of the Division of Parks and Recreation have the authority to issue summons and make arrests for violations of rules and regulations governing the use of facilities and properties administered by the Division of Parks and Recreation. This is only a summary of the rules and regulations. Rules applying to special conditions, activities, or situations may be supplemental to these rules and regulations. When special rules apply, they will be posted at affected areas. The complete text of regulations is available for inspection at the Park administration office in Clinton Township during regular business hours.