

## ***M. R. Hyker's Latest Adventure***



**11/27/2010, French Creek SP-East/Hopewell Furnace Loop: I was joined by Hard Core, The Mad Hatter, Ted E. Bear and Younis. The weather was unsettled with high winds (fortunately above us) and dense clouds. Many of the trails are old woods roads connected by well cared for footpaths. Some of the roads were eroded but generally speaking they were in good shape. This area is a wildlife preserve so hunting is not allowed. Most of it is also supposed to be closed to biking but we saw several of them on the trail. We traversed the east side of the park using the Mill Run, Buzzard and Raccoon Trails. We gained about 1200 feet in elevation over 9 miles but most of it was barely noticeable except for perhaps a 300 foot climb towards the end of the trek. We thought we would get a nice view from Millers Point but after scrambling up it we were rewarded only with a blocked view of the valley below. Streams like the rocky Mill Run and Baptism Creek flowed through the hollows. A brief walk along Hopewell Road lead us to the Hopewell Furnace Historic Area. We checked out the inside of the Iron Master's house, barn and furnace with its water driven pistons that pumped air into the furnace. The furnace produced pig iron, cast iron stove parts and revolutionary war cannon in its hay day. On the way out we passed the workers' quarters, charcoal building and the ruins of an older furnace. We climbed the Collier Trail (A collier made charcoal for a living.) and then descended back to our vehicles on the Lenape Trail. All in all it was a pretty nice winter hike.**