



Fallingwater/Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Fallingwater is located on a 4,935 acre natural heritage area, Bear Run Nature Reserve; so named for Bear Run, the stream that runs through the Reserve and carries two of Pennsylvania's highest state designations: *wild and scenic river* and *exceptional value stream*. In 1963, Edgar Kaufmann jr., son of the house's patron, entrusted the house and approximately 1500 acres surrounding it to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC). Over time the WPC assembled enough parcels of land to create a 20-mile trail system on the Reserve that traverses nearly the entire Bear Run watershed. Nearly 10 acres of the Reserve directly surround the house; PA State Route 381, a major two-lane transportation route through the mountainous Laurel Highlands, divides most of the remaining acreage from the Fallingwater side. The Reserve is an area of great natural diversity with stunning outcroppings of Pottsville sandstone. It has significant aquatic and animal life (native trout, numerous birds, black bears, and bobcats). The flora includes extensive stands of wildflowers, rhododendron and trees including mature oaks, maples, poplars, dogwoods and hemlocks. Bear Run Nature Reserve has been recognized as having an extraordinary variety of warblers and it was voted one of the top ten wilderness camping areas in the nation by *Outside* magazine.

Fallingwater and Bear Run Nature Reserve are located on the western most ridge of the Appalachian chain and at the edge of the depleted coal and coke fields of southwest Pennsylvania. Located in an isolated Appalachian community with a population of 750 that is considered 100 percent rural, the site is 30 miles from the nearest town and 75 miles from Pittsburgh. Fayette County is relatively impoverished; the 2000 Census revealed that the county is the third poorest in the state, with 18 percent of its residents living below the federal poverty level. At one time the watershed's rich natural resources (timber, coal, and agriculture) supported a tiny village also known as Bear Run. All that remains of this village today are a former schoolhouse and a one-room church, on property that is now part of the Reserve.

About Fallingwater and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy:

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) has been entrusted with preserving Fallingwater, the masterpiece home built by Frank Lloyd Wright, in Mill Run, Pennsylvania. The WPC protects, conserves and restores land and water for the diversity of the region's plants, animals and their ecosystems. Through science-based strategies, collaboration, leadership and recognition of the relationship between humankind and nature, WPC achieves tangible conservation outcomes for present and future generations. For information, visit www.fallingwater.org and www.paconserve.org.