

Visit Smyth County and the Hungry Mother State Park



Hungry Mother State Park in southwestern Virginia is noted for its woodlands and lake. Easily accessible from Interstate 81, this park has folklore and history, swimming, camping, cabin rentals, boat rentals, hiking and the park system's first conference center, Hemlock Haven.

Much of the land for Hungry Mother State Park was donated by local landowners to develop a new state park in Smyth County on Hungry Mother Creek. The park is one of the six original CCC parks that opened in June 1936. The park was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2007.

Legend has it that when the Native Americans destroyed several settlements on the New River south of the park, Molly Marley and her small child were among the survivors taken to the raiders' base north of the park. They eventually escaped, wandering through the wilderness eating berries. Molly finally collapsed, and her child wandered down a creek until the child found help. The only words the child could utter were "Hungry Mother." The search party arrived at the foot of the mountain where Molly collapsed to find the child's mother dead. Today that mountain is Molly's Knob, and the stream is Hungry Mother Creek.

For more information, visit www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/hun.shtml

