

1 **Cabin Area** - Located at the entrance to the Preserve are three 1800s vintage log cabins, the Raine, Stovall and Atcher cabins.



2 **Cabin Quilt** – located beside the Raine cabin at the Preserve's entrance, it is one of about 50 8' X 8' painted quilts located within Hardin County.

3 **The Cabin Trails** - Two 900 foot long trails link the Cabin Area to the Wilderness Trail/Canyon Trail intersection near the entrance overlook.

4 **Entrance Overlook** - Located off to the left about 1000 feet after you enter the Preserve. There is a 100 foot vertical drop from the overlook to the canyon floor below. Several springs/small caves directly below the overlook provide water to the reservoir which begins here.

5 **Welcome Center** – to be located across from the entrance overlook, the center will have complete information about the Preserve and Annex areas.

6 **Annex Area** – this 73 acre area is adjacent to the Preserve and contains eight named hiking/biking/running trails.

7 **Wilderness Trail** - This 3,500 foot long trail starts across from the Entrance Overlook and generally follows the Preserve access road to the bottom area of the preserve ending near the KY Native Plants Garden. This trail rises/falls some 150 feet in elevation along its path and contains about 100 steps.

8 **The Canyon Trail** - This 1,200 foot trail starts at the entrance overlook, follows the canyon rim to the east and then descends down 165 steps offering a great view of the canyon and lake below.

9 **Upper Pavilion Area** - The pavilion located here can host meetings of 60 or more people. Seven picnic tables most with BBQ grills and restrooms are located nearby. The small brick building located here was once the garage used by the water plant foreman.

10 **Eagle Trail** - This 500 foot long steep trail starts near the upper Pavilion and descends to the Reservoir/Stream some 120 feet below. There are more than 160 steps built into this trail. About halfway down/up the Eagle Trail is an overlook/sitting area which offers a great view of

the Saunders Springs Lake and Tranquility Trail.

11 **Scout Camping Area / Scout Trail** - Located to the left as you descend to the lower area of the Preserve. The 500 foot long Scout Trail connects the camping area to the Fern Trail.

12 **Lower Pavilion Area** - The pavilion here can host meetings of up to 40 people and is located directly alongside one of the streams which run through the Preserve. Separate picnic tables with BBQ grills are also available here.

13 **KY Native Plants Garden** - this garden contains KY native plants that are not indigenous to the Preserve. More than 100 different plant species are located here with informational signs about each plant.



14 **Saunders Springs Dam** - This 40' tall earthen, rock, and concrete structure is 140' wide and was built to retain water for use at the water plant. A spillway exists near the dam to control the release of any excess water which might flow into the Reservoir as a result of a heavy rain.

15 **Reservoir Cascade & Cascade Trail** - After periods of rain, runoff water from the lake cascades down some 40 feet to the stream below. The 300 foot long Cascade Trail has two bridges and 60 steps and starts across the road from the lower pavilion leading up to the lake.

16 **Saunders Springs Stream** - This spring-fed stream starts from the mouth of the Saunders Springs Cave with part of its water going into the Water Plant Holding Pond and the remainder flowing down the cascading stream.

17 **The Stream Trail** - This 500 foot long semi-circular trail with 45 steps built into it follows both sides of the stream from near the start of the Tranquility Trail down to the bus/vehicle parking area.



18 **The Old Water Plant** - Originally built in the 1920s to provide water to Camp Knox (now Fort Knox), the plant was expanded in the 1950s by the local water district to service Radcliff. The water plant was last used in 1978. Two large storage tanks and a water processing "pump house" building are all that remain from the

former water plant.

19 **The Saunders Springs Cave** - Located near the pedestrian bridge which starts the Tranquility Trail and the Holding Pond. Access to the cave is restricted. The majority of the water which flows through the Preserve comes from the mouth of the cave.

20 **The Holding Pond** - Located between the cave and water plant, this small lake (pond) held the water that was processed through the water plant. This pond and the lake are connected via pipes to provide a greater volume of water for the water plant.

21 **The Fern Trail** - This somewhat circular trail featuring upper and lower portions is about 1,500 feet in length and is located near the holding pond and water plant buildings. At least seven different types of native ferns are located along this trail. There are 70 steps built into this trail which rise/falls some 50 feet along its length.



22 **Tranquility Trail** - This short (less than a 600 feet in length), handicap-accessible trail begins at the pedestrian bridge near the Water Plant and ends at the Reservoir. This trail follows the cascading Saunders Springs Stream for most of its route.

23 **The Saunders Springs Lake** - This 3 - 4 acre lake was built to hold 80,000,000 gallons of water for use/processing at the Water Plant. The Lake Trail encircles the reservoir, which is stocked with fish. Numerous types of turtles, snakes, frogs, birds and other animals live in or near the lake.

24 **The Lake Trail** - This half mile long trail follows the edge of the Reservoir with a shorter "inner" trail and a longer, steeper "outer" trail which has 100 steps built into it. It starts/stops at the intersection of the Eagle Trail and Tranquility Trail. There are four bridges along this trail.

25 **The Wetlands Area** - Located toward the rear of the reservoir; this area is home to some trees, plants and wildlife that exist only in areas that remain wet / moist for most of the year.

26 **The Saunders Springs Canyon**- Located at the far end of the reservoir/lake, the canyon rises more than 100 feet on three sides from the stream bed which feeds into the reservoir.



Several features make Saunders Springs quite unique. Although relatively small in size, the Preserve has a terrain elevation variance of about 200 feet. Water cascades from several of the caves/springs which once provided the water used in the water processing plant that was in operation there from 1920–1968. Both union and confederate forces are believed to have camped in the area of the Preserve during the Civil War.

Until the early 1990s, the local water district owned the land on which the Preserve now sits and operated a water processing plant there. The water plant was placed on standby status in 1968. The property was deeded to the City of Radcliff in 1992. After the establishment of the Forestry and Conservation Board in 1996, work of developing the area into a Nature Preserve began. With the construction of a paved access road into the Preserve and the building of a pavilion and permanent restroom facilities, the Preserve was opened to the public in 2002. Since then, a number of walking/hiking nature trails have been developed, a second pavilion built, three log cabins added and many other improvements made.

Preserve upkeep and facilities maintenance is overseen by the City's Public Works Department. The Forestry and Conservation Board coordinates the development actions for the Preserve and the educational programs conducted there.

The pavilions can be reserved for use by calling the Colvin Community Center at (270) 351-4079.

Key Features of the Preserve are:

Open Year around Weather Permitting

No Charge for Admission

3 1800's Vintage Log Cabins

10 Preserve-Area Nature Trails
(About three miles in total length)

8 Annex-Area Hiking/Biking Trails
(About seven miles in total length)

Relatively Small in Size
(26 acres)

Two Ponds / Lakes
(With fishing permitted in one)

Diverse Terrain and Ecosystems

A Welcome Center
(Now being developed)

Cascading Streams

Two Pavilions and Many Picnic Tables

Remains of the Former Water Plant

KY Native Plants Garden

Numerous Educational Opportunities



Saunders Springs Nature Preserve

Radcliff, KY

Visitor's Guide

What to See While Visiting the Preserve



The Saunders Springs Nature Preserve which was established in the early 1990s provides a unique opportunity to experience a bit of local history, see an abundance of native KY flora and fauna and get some great exercise in so doing. The Preserve is conveniently located in Radcliff off N. Wilson Road with the entrance to the Preserve just a quarter mile from US 31W. Three 1800s vintage log cabins are located at the entrance. The 26 acre Preserve is located within the confines of the Fort Knox Military Reservation but is owned by the City of Radcliff. There are about three miles of nature trails located within the Preserve.

In 2011, Fort Knox leased the 73 acres adjoining the Preserve to Radcliff. This area known as the Saunders Springs Annex now has about seven additional miles of hiking/biking trails within it.