



## **Fallingwater and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy**

Designed in 1935, Fallingwater is perhaps Frank Lloyd Wright's most widely acclaimed work. Fallingwater was created for the Edgar J. Kaufmann family, the owners of the former Pittsburgh department store chain, Kaufmann's. The site of the house was the Kaufmann family's mountain property at Bear Run, where they enjoyed weekend and summer vacations. Completed with the guest house and servants' quarters in 1939, Fallingwater was constructed of native sandstone quarried on the property and laid by local craftsmen.



Fallingwater is located on a 5,000-acre natural heritage area, Bear Run Nature Reserve, named for Bear Run, the stream that runs through the reserve. In 1963, Edgar Kaufmann jr., son of the house's patron, entrusted the house and approximately 1,500 acres surrounding it to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC). Over time, 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. Bear Run Nature Reserve is an area of great natural diversity with stunning

outcroppings of Pottsville sandstone. It has significant aquatic and animal life, such as 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.

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 in Fayette County. 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. 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 the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy:**

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) enhances the region by protecting and restoring exceptional places. A private nonprofit conservation organization founded in 1932, WPC has helped to establish 10 state parks, conserved more than a quarter million acres of natural lands and protected or restored more than 3,000 miles of rivers and streams. The Conservancy owns and operates Fallingwater, which symbolizes people living in harmony with nature. In addition, WPC enriches our region's cities and towns through 132 community gardens and other green spaces that are planted with the help of about 12,000 volunteers. The work of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is accomplished through the support of more than 10,000 members. For more information, visit [WaterLandLife.org](http://WaterLandLife.org) or [Fallingwater.org](http://Fallingwater.org).