



# WEST PENN TRAIL

at

## BOW TUNNEL EAST



Ground level here is approximately 917 feet above sea level. The top of the spillway on the Conemaugh Dam is at elevation 970 feet, fifty-three feet higher than where you are standing.

When the reservoir is filled to its maximum capacity, lake level is almost to the top of the bluff here. At such times, this tunnel portal is under water, which means that water could escape from the lake, through this hole in the wall of the reservoir, and bypass the dam that was built to hold back the flood.

To prevent that disaster, this tunnel is plugged with a concrete "stopper" 20 feet thick, located near the west portal of the tunnel.

A similar plug was installed in each of the other two tunnels that pass through this ridge: the 1828 canal tunnel and, next to it, the 1864 West Penn Railroad tunnel. Both of those openings are below lake level, at times, so those tunnels, too, had to be plugged, in 1950, when the Conemaugh Dam was being built.

The West Penn Trail is a project of the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy