



WELCOME

Gentle mountain slopes that stretch for miles, gardens of magenta rhododendron and salt marshes that connect to the sea: These are just some features on North Carolina's four national forests, the Nantahala, Pisgah, Uwharrie and Croatan. Every year 8.6 million people visit the forests to camp, hike, mountain bike, fish, take scenic drives or enjoy the forest's solitude.

DISCOVER the beauty of BALDS

BY JULIE TRZECIAK

Waves of tall grasses bend to howling winds. Patches of orange azalea and pink rhododendron adorn the landscape. A few Fraser firs and gigantic rocks stand out in a sea of wispy grass. These are features found at North Carolina's national forest balds—open expanses of treeless land that offer hikers a panorama of mountain vistas.

Appalachian Trail hikers in North Carolina are bound to cross a few balds. The 2,175-mile Appalachian Trail runs across mountain crests and gaps from Maine to Georgia and travels through Pisgah and Nantahala national forests for more than 200 miles.

Located in Pisgah National Forest, Roan Highlands boasts five



PHOTO BY MATTHEW CROMER

Sunset row: The sun casts a glow on Jane Bald while Round Bald and Roan Mountain sit in the distance.

balds: Round Bald and Hump Mountain—the most spectacular—Grassy Ridge, Little Hump Mountain and Jane Bald. Appalachian Trail hikers also pass Max Patch's bald and the Nantahala National Forest's Wayah Bald.

ROUND BALD: From Carver's Gap, hikers follow the Appalachian Trail to Round Bald at 5,826 feet. A relocated trail replaces the steep "stairway to heaven" section, so hikers have a more gentle climb. On their way to the crest, hikers pass through a dense spruce-fir forest.

Except for a few Fraser firs, long sweeping grasses, sedges and wildflowers prevail at this bald. Scattered across the bald are mammoth rocks that serve as perches for vista gazers.

HUMP MOUNTAIN: From Round Bald, the Appalachian Trail traverses Jane Bald to Hump Mountain, an eight-mile trek. Hikers will pass Overmountain Shelter, the biggest

AT shelter. Sitting in a meadow, this barn can accommodate 40 travelers.

Hump Mountain offers one of the most magnificent summits along the trail. The crest is completely bare, offering a range of panoramic views. Although trees aren't present, the reddish-orange Gray's lily and flame azalea grow in clumps across the mountain. Another unique feature is the African Watusi cattle that wander the area. The cows' long horns may startle hikers, but this harmless herd stays busy browsing blackberry thickets and shrubs.

MAX PATCH: In another part of the Pisgah National Forest, Max Patch sits next to the Tennessee state line in the Harmon Den area.

At 4,629 feet, this low-elevation bald offers 360-degree vistas of Mount Mitchell to the east and Great Smoky Mountains to the southwest.

An abundance of ferns and grasses blanket the bald, making it perfect for picnics. Fishing is offered at

the pond past the main parking lot. Appalachian Trail hikers pass through this bald on their way to camping off the mountain. Camping is prohibited at the bald.

WAYAH BALD: The Nantahala National Forest is home to Wayah Bald, categorized as a heath bald. Unlike other balds that are mainly covered with lush grasses and sedges, heath balds are enveloped by thickets of rhododendron or azalea.

The Appalachian Trail runs through this dense shrubbery and next to a stone tower used by fire lookouts in the 1940s.

The tower, a national historic landmark, offers great views of the Smoky, Balsam, Cowee and Tusquitee mountain ranges.

HOW TO FIND THESE BALDS:

Appalachian Trail Official Map, Tenn.-N.C., Maps 1&2. National Geographic Map, Cherokee and Pisgah National Forests (783).

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Enjoy your forest visit, use caution and **BE SAFE**



PHOTO BY PAT MOMICH

Hikers traveling in groups are much safer.

With almost nine million visitors a year, North Carolina's national forests rank as some of the most popular national forests in the country. Unfortunately, with this many visitors, accidents happen, and crimes do occur.

The following common sense tips can help make your visits to the national forest safe.

Prepare Ahead of Time

- Obtain a map and become familiar with the area you plan to visit.
- Make sure your vehicle is in good running condition and has plenty of fuel.
- Always tell a friend or family member where you are going and when you expect to return.
- If possible, don't go into the forest alone. In case of an accident or other trouble, it's much safer to be in pairs or a group.

- Make sure your equipment, food and clothing are appropriate for the trip. Be prepared for weather conditions that can change rapidly in mountainous terrain.
- When hiking, know your limits and plan the trip to accommodate the slowest and most out-of-shape group member.
- Bring a cell phone or GPS unit. However, realize cell phones don't work in remote areas, and a GPS unit won't help you if its batteries go dead or you're under thick tree cover.
- Be prepared if you get stranded; take extra food and warm clothing and a first-aid kit.
- Carry identification with you.

Stay Safe in the Woods

- Lock your valuables in the trunk or other locations where they can't be seen.
- Leave unnecessary valuable items at home.
- If you get lost, it's generally a good idea to stay on the trail. If you take a short cut, it's easy to become disoriented in the deep woods.
- Be aware of the risk of accidents, especially in steep terrain. Avoid climbing near waterfalls, since the wet, slippery rocks make these places especially dangerous.
- Be alert and aware of your surroundings and of other people in the area.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable in a place or situation, leave immediately and get help if necessary.
- Carry a noisemaker, such as a whistle.
- The Forest Service neither encourages nor discourages carrying a gun. However, be aware that specific state gameland restrictions on firearms apply to national forest lands.
- If you encounter suspicious individuals or illegal activity in the forest, do not approach the individuals. Instead, immediately leave the area and report the activity to local or Forest Service law enforcement.

Two new rangers take district posts



Tina Tilley
Appalachian District Ranger

Tina Tilley became the ranger at Pisgah National Forest's Appalachian Ranger District. She advanced from deputy district ranger at Georgia's Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests, Blue Ridge District, to her new position.

Tilley administers more than 150,000 acres of national forest land in Mitchell, Avery, Yancey, Haywood, Madison and Buncombe counties.

The ranger said she is getting acquainted with the people who live within or near the the district. "I want to build partnerships, so we can work together and improve the management of the area's resources," said the 21-year Forest Service veteran.



Steve Lohr
Ranger for Tusquitee and Cheoah districts

Steve Lohr is the new ranger at the Nantahala National Forest's Tusquitee and Cheoah districts. He oversees 280,000 acres of national forest land in Cherokee, Clay, Graham and Swain counties.

Before moving to North Carolina, Lohr served as a wildlife biologist for the Tonto National Forest in Phoenix, Ariz. A native of Beaufort, S.C., he worked as a wildlife biologist for the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. "I look forward to the challenges of being a decision maker, where I can do good things for the land," said Lohr. "My career goal is to restore the integrity of native ecosystems and ensure my children have the same opportunities to enjoy our country's natural resources."

A window to past, present and future forestry



Biltmore Forest school students examine plants in botany lab. The school operated 1898-1913.

Historic cabins, a logging locomotive, a fire-fighting helicopter and more attractions await visitors to the Cradle of Forestry in America near Brevard.

Home of America's first forestry school, the Cradle sits in the Pisgah National Forest's scenic Pink Beds valley, land once owned by George Vanderbilt.

In the Forest Discovery Center, visitors view a film that reenacts the story behind this historic site. An exhibit hall offers hands-on ways to learn about the environment. Crawl through a "burrow," "ride" a helicopter that

simulates flying over a forest fire, play the habitat matching game or manage land through a computer game. Suitable for wheelchairs, two paved trails put the forest at visitors' fingertips while meandering past wayside exhibits.

On the one-mile Biltmore Campus Trail is a one-room schoolhouse, a general store and a Black Forest Lodge. Visitors may see a blacksmith or a weaver working.

The 1.3-mile Forest Festival Trail commemorates the Biltmore Forest Fair in 1908, planned and led by Biltmore Forester Dr. Carl Alwin Schenck. When forestry was a new idea,

this outdoor fair promoted forestry to elected officials, educators and lumbermen. A hundred years later, the trail interprets past, present and future forestry and land stewardship.

The Cradle of Forestry is open daily from April 12 to Nov. 9, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults; ages 15 and under are admitted free. For updates on guided programs, events, exhibits and craft demonstrations, call 828-877-3130 or go online to www.cradleofforestry.org.

2008 CRADLE EVENTS

- April 12 Plowing Day & Heritage Celebration
- May 10 International Migratory Bird Day
- June 14 Get Outdoors Day
- June 14 ♦Firefly Twilight Tour
- June 22-28.. National Pollinator Week activities
- June 28 Bug Day
- July 6 ♦Songcatchers Music Series
- July 13 ♦Songcatchers Music Series
- July 20 ♦Songcatchers Music Series
- July 26 Train History Day
- July 27 ♦Songcatchers Music Series
- Aug. 9 ♦Smokey Bear's Birthday Party
- Sept 27 National Public Lands Day
- Oct. 4 Forest Festival Day & Woodsmen's Meet
- Oct. 10-12 .. Camping in the Old Style
- Oct. 24-25 .. ♦The Legend of Tommy Hodges
- ♦Fee for these special events: \$6 for adults, \$3 for youth ages 4-15.

CAMPING IN THE MOUNTAINS



Fees subject to change

MAP NUMBER
RESERVATIONS *
DUMP STATION
PICNIC AREA
RESTROOMS
AMPHITHEATER
SHOWERS
DRINKING WATER
BOAT RAMP
SWIMMING
FISHING
TRAILS
FEE (\$)
NUMBER OF SITES

NANTAHALA NATIONAL FOREST

COMMENTS

AMMONS BRANCH All year. From HIGHLANDS, follow Main St. east out of town about 4.5 miles through Horse Cove. When pavement ends, bear right on Bull Pen Rd. and go 1.5 miles.	27					V										no fee	4	Primitive camp on Ammons Branch. No drinking water. Nantahala District: 828-524-6441
BLUE VALLEY All year. From HIGHLANDS, follow NC 28S 5.5 miles. Turn right at sign.	26					V										no fee	*	Dispersed sites on road, some near toilet. No water. Nantahala District: 828-524-6441.
BRISTOL HORSE CAMP All year. From HAYESVILLE, take SR 1307 for 3 miles to SR 1300, go 5.7 miles to SR 1344 (FR 340). Follow signs.	4					V										\$5	7	On Fires Creek. Offers horse camping. Tusquitee District: 828-837-5152.
CABLE COVE Apr. 15-Oct. 31. From FONTANA VILLAGE, take NC 28S, 4.7 miles, turn left on FR 520 for 1.4 miles.	21					F										\$10	26	Near Fontana Lake. One-mile nature trail. Cheoah District: 828-479-6431.
CHEOAH POINT CAMPGROUND Apr. 15-Oct. 31. From ROBBINSVILLE, take NC 129N, 6 miles to FR 520 for 1.4 miles.	20	*				F										\$15 \$20	26	Sites 1-18: \$15, first-come first served. *Sites 19-21, \$20, RV sites, electricity. *Cabins, \$35 per night.
HANGING DOG Apr. 1-Sept. 15. From MURPHY, take NC 1326W for 5 miles.	2					F V										\$8	51	On Hiwassee Lake. Tusquitee District: 828-837-5152.
HORSE COVE Apr. 15-Oct. 31. From ROBBINSVILLE, take US 129N for 1 mile, left on NC 143W, right onto SR 1127 to FR 416.	19					F V										\$10	18	In winter, no water with \$5 fee, five sites all year. Cheoah District: 828-479-6431.
HURRICANE CREEK Mar. 15-Jan. 1 (depending on weather) Go south from Standing Indian on FR 67 (gravel) for 2 miles.	6					V F										\$6	*	No water. Nantahala District: 828-524-6441.
JACKRABBIT May 2-Sept. 30. From HAYESVILLE, take US 64E for 6.2 miles, turn left on NC 175 for 3 miles, turn right on SR 1115.	5	*				F V										\$16	100	On Chatuge Lake Lakefront sites ; swimming. Tusquitee District: 828-837-5152.
STANDING INDIAN ♦ Mar. 31-Nov. 27. From FRANKLIN, take US 64W for 9 miles, turn left on old U.S. 64 and follow signs.	8					F										\$14	84	On Nantahala River. Nantahala District: 828-524-6441.
TSALI Apr. 15-Oct. 31. From BRYSON CITY, take US 19S for 9 miles, turn right on NC 28W for 5.5 miles, turn right FR 521 for 1.5 miles.	22					F V										\$16	42	On Fontana Lake. Mecca for mountain bikers. Cheoah District: 828-479-6431.
VAN HOOK GLADE ♦ March 30-Nov. 5. From HIGHLANDS, take US 64W for 4 miles, turn right at sign.	23	*				F V										\$15	19	Campers may use lake and hot showers. Nantahala District: 828-524-6441

PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST

COMMENTS

BLACK MOUNTAIN ♦ Apr. 14-Oct. 31. From BURNSVILLE, take US 19E for 5 miles, turn right on NC 80 for 12 miles, right on FR 472.	54					F										\$15	48	On South Toe River. Guided activities in-season. Campground office: 828-675-5616.
BOONE FORK CLOSED TEMPORARILY. For current status, call Grandfather District at 828-652-2144.	67					V										\$3	15	On Boone Fork. Grandfather District: 828-652-2144.
CAROLINA HEMLOCKS ♦ Apr. 14-Oct. 31. From BURNSVILLE, take US 19E for 5 miles, turn right on NC 80 for 9 miles.	57					F										\$15	36	On South Toe River. Appalachian/Burnsville Unit: 828-682-6146.
CURTIS CREEK Apr. 2-Nov. 31. From OLD FORT, take US 70E for 1.7 miles, turn left on FR 482.	52					V										\$5	*	RV and tent camping. Free dispersed camping nearby. Grandfather District: 828-652-2144.
DAVIDSON RIVER ♦ All year. From BREVARD, take US 64E to US 276, turn left. Follow US 276 for 1.5 miles.	34	*				F										\$18	161	\$2 extra for riverside sites. Pisgah District. Campground office: 828-862-5960.
LAKE POWHATAN ♦ Apr. 1-Oct. 31. From ASHEVILLE, take I-26E to exit 33, turn left on NC 191S for 4 miles, turn right on Bent Creek Ranch Rd., go 3.5 miles to entrance on left.	43	*				F										\$17	98	Lifeguard and interpretive programs in-season. Pisgah District. Campground office: 828-667-0391.
MORTIMER Apr. 1 -Nov. 30. From LENOIR, take NC 90W to Collettsville. Turn right on SR 1328 (turns to gravel), go 8.5 miles. At NC 90, turn left.	65					F										\$10	19	Next to Thorpe Creek. Picnic shelter. Grandfather District: 828-652-2144.
NORTH MILLS RIVER ♦ All year. From ASHEVILLE, take I-26E to exit 40, turn right on 280W, go 4 miles, turn right on SR1345, go 5 miles.	41	*				F V										\$11	32	\$3 extra for riverside sites. In winter, half price. Pisgah District. Campground mgr: 828-890-3284.
ROCKY BLUFF May 1-Oct. 31. From HOT SPRINGS, take NC 209S, go 3.3 miles, turn left into campground.	47					F										\$8	30	On Spring Creek. Appalachian/Hot Springs Unit: 828-622-3202.
SUNBURST ♦ Apr. 1-Oct. 31. From WAYNESVILLE, take US 276S for 7 miles, turn right on NC 215S, go 8 miles.	31					F										\$10	10	Pisgah District. Campground Manager: 828-648-7841.

♦ : Operated by private concessionaire.

*: Reservations available at 877-444-6777 or TDD:877-833-6777 or go online to recreation.gov.

*: Primitive camp, undesignated sites.

FOREST SERVICE RECREATION SYMBOLS

	restrooms; V=vault; F=flush		drinking water		hiking trails
	picnic area		shower		horseback riding
	partial accessibility, may not meet ADA standards		mountain bike trails		dump station
	swimming		fishing		boat ramp
					amphitheater

GROUP CAMPGROUNDS

Group campgrounds are designed for organized groups of 25 to 100 people per site. Some group camps have established tent pads, tables, fire rings, flush toilets and showers, while others have a large grassy field and chemical toilets.

Group camps are available only by reservation through district offices where the site is located (phone numbers on page 16) or by the National Recreation Reservation Service.

★ **FOR NRRS RESERVATIONS:** Call the National Recreation Reservation Service toll free at 877-444-6777 at least 10 days in advance, but do not call more than 360 days in advance for group camping.

Reserve no more than 240 days in advance for family camping. Visit the web site: recreation.gov. TDD customers: 877-833-6777. A \$9 service fee is charged.

Pass opens door to recreation

Visitors who frequently visit federal public land to view scenery and enjoy outdoor recreation can benefit from a new pass program.

The America the Beautiful Pass combines into one pass the benefits of visiting land managed by five federal agencies, such as the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service.

Four different interagency passes are offered.

- **An \$80 Annual Interagency Pass** for those who visit multiple federal sites. Offers unlimited coverage of entrance and day-use fees for a year, which begins when the card is first used.
- **A free Annual Volunteer Pass** for volunteers giving 500 hours of service on a cumulative basis.
- **A \$10 Lifetime Senior Pass** for U.S. citizens 62 years old or over.
- **A free Lifetime Access Pass** for citizens with permanent disabilities.

All passes are valid for one year from month of purchase.

Where a per-vehicle fee is charged the Annual Pass covers the pass holder and passengers in a single, private, non-commercial vehicle.

Where a per-person fee is charged, the Annual Pass covers a pass holder and three accompanying adults age 16 and older. Children 15 and younger are fee exempt. In North Carolina's national forests, all passes are honored at Roan Mountain, Whiteside Mountain, Whitewater Falls and the Cradle of Forestry in America.

Lifetime Senior and Lifetime Access passes offer pass holders a 50-percent discount on camping fees at Forest Service operated campgrounds.

To purchase passes, visit any federal land office, call 888-ASK-USGS (ext.1) or go online at www.recreation.gov. Please see page 16 for more contact information.

GROUP CAMPING IN THE MOUNTAINS

GROUP CAMP	MAP NO.	RANGER DISTRICT	CALL TO RESERVE	ACTIVITIES	FACILITIES	MAX. GRP. SIZE	SEASON	FEE/SITE
Appletree	13	Nantahala	828-524-6441			2 sites for 25; 2 for 50	March 31-Oct. 30	\$50-\$100
Briar Bottom ♦	53	Appalachian	★877-444-6777			6 sites: 50/site	April 14-Oct. 31	\$50-\$100
Cove Creek ♦	36	Pisgah	★877-444-6777			2 sites; 100/site	Year-round	\$80
Harmon Den Horse Camp	45	Appalachian Hot Springs	★877-444-6777			10 sites; 8 people 4 horses/site	May 1-Oct. 31	\$15
Kimsey Creek	7	Nantahala	828-524-6441			3 sites; 25/site	Apr. 1-Dec. 1	\$50
Kuykendall ♦	32	Pisgah	★877-444-6777			1 site for 100	Year-round	\$80
Rattler Ford	17	Cheoah	★877-444-6777			4 sites; 25/site	Apr. 1-Oct. 31	\$50
Silvermine	48	Appalachian	★877-444-6777			1 site for 50	May 1-Oct. 31	1-25: \$25 26-50: \$40
Wash Creek	71	Pisgah	828-877-3265			1 site, 35 people 15 vehicles	Year-round	\$35
White Pines ♦	38	Pisgah	★877-444-6777			2 sites; 25/site	Year-round	\$40

★:Reservation Service web site: recreation.gov

♦:Private concessionaire operates

FEES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

3 ways to order maps from CFAIA

The following maps are available from the Cradle of Forestry Interpretive Association by mail, phone or on-line. Write: send your name, address and phone number with a check or money order payable to: CFIA, 100 South Broad Street, Brevard, NC 28712; call (800) 660-0671 (ext. 17); web site: www.cradleofforestry.org. Mastercard and VISA accepted.

(ALL PRICES INCLUDE TAX AND SHIPPING.)

NATIONAL FOREST (NF) MAPS

Croatan NF.....	\$11.00
Nantahala NF	\$11.00
Pisgah NF (Grandfather and Appalachian Ranger District)	\$11.00
Pisgah NF (Pisgah Ranger District).....	\$11.00
Uwharrie NF	\$11.00

TRAIL MAPS

Appalachian Trail—Pisgah/Cherokee NF's (2 maps).....	\$14.95
Appalachian Trail—North Carolina/Georgia.....	\$14.95
Bartram Trail (1-7) sections)	\$4 each
Bent Creek (waterproof)	\$10.00
Harmon Den/Hot Springs (waterproof)	\$8 each
South Toe/Mt. Mitchell/Big Ivy (waterproof).....	\$8.00

TRAILS ILLUSTRATED MAPS (WATERPROOF)

Nantahala NF: Fontana & Hiwassee Lakes (784), Nantahala & Cullasaja Gorges (785), Pisgah Ranger District (780), Cherokee & Pisgah NFs: Linville Gorge & Mt. Mitchell (779), French Broad & Nolichucky

Rivers (782), Great Smoky Mountains National Park (229), South Holston & Watauga Lakes (783)	\$11.95
Upper Tellico & Brown Mtn. Off-Highway Vehicle	\$7 each
Wilson Creek & Snowbird.....	\$6 each

WILDERNESS & OTHER MAPS

Birkhead Mtn., Ellicott Rock, Linville Gorge, Shining Rock/Middle Prong, Southern Nantahala/ Standing Indian, Chattooga River.....	\$8 each
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The Cradle of Forestry Interpretive Association (CFIA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting educational and interpretive activities, which further understanding of our forests.

MEMBERSHIP OFFER: Sign up on-line at www.cradleofforestry.org and enjoy these benefits;

- 15% discount on all CFIA merchandise
- Free passes to the Cradle of Forestry
- CFIA newsletter
- Discounts on CFIA special events

For more information, call 1-800-660-0671 (Ext. 14).



PHOTO BY BILL LEA

Silver Run Waterfall, a 30-foot fall, drops into a aqua-green pool. A 0.4 mile level trail travels to the falls. **DIRECTIONS:** From Cashiers, go south on NC 107 for 4.1 miles to the fall's parking on the left.

THE MAGIC OF WATERFALLS

There's something magical about watching the crystal clear water of a mountain stream dancing over rocks. The sense of awe magnifies as the water tumbles faster and wilder, until it plunges over a cliff.

Perhaps you're drawn to waterfalls because you can't see them just anywhere, or maybe there's something enticing about being near the awesome power of falling water.

STAY ON TRAIL: Getting too close to the falls is a real danger. Wet rocks are often slick, and a slip above a waterfall can be fatal. Stay on the trail to safely experience the sights and sounds of these spectacular waterfalls:

HIGHLANDS AREA

Whitewater Falls: At 411 feet, highest falls east of the Rockies. From Cashiers, take NC 107 south 10 miles to NC-SC line. Go a mile and take first road to left. Turn left on SC 130. (fee site; D-6 on map)

Silver Run Falls: A 30-foot falls spilling into a pool of water. Off NC 107, 4.1 miles south of

Glen Falls Trail leads to 3 waterfalls

The one-mile Glen Falls Trail offers spur trails that lead to three 60-foot tiers that make up Glen Falls. The steep trail traces the East Fork of Overflow Creek and drops 700 feet in a mile, making an arduous exit route.

But this tough hike is worth the great views of Rabun Bald, Blue Valley and three spectacular falls. Towering white pines line the ridge above the falls while rhododendron and

Cashiers. Park in pull-off on left and take a short, easy trail to base of falls. (D-6 on map)

Bridal Veil Falls: This 120-foot waterfall is off U.S. 64, 2.5 miles west of Highlands in Cullasaja Gorge. Built in the 1920s, U.S. 64 originally passed under Bridal Veil Falls. (C-6 on map)

Dry Falls: Walk behind the 75-foot falls and just feel the mist of the water's spray. Located off U.S. 64, 3.5 miles west of Highlands, 16.5 miles east of Franklin in Cullasaja Gorge. (C-6 on map)

Lower Cullasaja Falls: A cascading waterfall about 250 feet high. Off U.S. 64, 11 miles east of Franklin, nine miles west of Highlands. Visible from car. Do not stop your car in the road. (D-6 on map)

Glen Falls: A steep, rough one-mile trail leads to the falls. Three large waterfalls make up Glen Falls, and each drops about 60 feet. From Highlands, go three miles south on NC 106. Turn left on gravel forest road at the sign. (D-6 on map)

Lower Satulah Falls: A high, narrow waterfall, visible from an overlook. Off U.S. 28, 2.5 miles south of Highlands. (D-6 on map)

BREVARD AREA

Looking Glass Falls: Visible from U.S. 276, steps lead down to Looking Glass Creek, where you often feel the mist from the 60-foot falls. From Brevard, take U.S. 276 north. (D-5 on map)

NEAR THE PARKWAY

Douglas Falls: Three-mile hike to narrow 50-foot waterfall that sprays over the rockface. Towering hemlocks surround the falls. The trail begins at Craggy Gardens parking lot, which is off the parkway. Strenuous trail to waterfall, six miles roundtrip.

FRANKLIN AREA

Big Laurel Falls: pretty waterfall, located five miles past Standing Indian Campground. Easy, 0.5-mile trail to the base of Big Laurel Falls. The path of an old logging railroad. (C-6 on map)

hemlock grow along side. Only 10 minutes into the hike at the first platform, the view appears to be one waterfall. Down the trail, two other vantage points reveal the true view.

Directions: From Highlands, go south on NC 106 for 1.8 miles. Turn left on SR 1618 for 1.1 miles to the parking area and trailhead. For more details, call the Nantahala Ranger District at (828) 524-6441.

FISHING & HUNTING: popular forest sports

Fishing and hunting—traditional recreation—are still popular today. Many game animals, such as deer, black bear and wild turkey thrive in North Carolina's national forests.

Miles of streams and dozens of lakes offer warm-water and cold-water fishing. Some waters are stocked, and others support wild fish.

While the Forest Service manages the habitat and protects water quality in the national forests, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission regulates hunting and fishing. Any lands open to public hunting, such as national forests, the commission calls "game lands."

Every hunter and angler should get the annual Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Regulations Digest by calling 929-662-4381; write North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, 512 N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27604; or visit www.wildlife.state.nc.us and select "regulations."

SHOOTING RANGES

NANTAHALA NATIONAL FOREST

Atoah: This 100-yard range offers six shooting stations and is open year-round. Any target is allowed, except clay pigeons. No fee is charged. (Cheoah District: 828-479-6431)

Moss Gap: No fee is charged at this 150-yard range that offers four firing lanes and is open year-round. A four-car parking lot is available. (Nantahala District: 828-524-6441)

Panther Top: Open year-round, this range offers a covered shooting pad for six 100-yard firing lines for rifles and four 25-yard firing lines for pistols. The cost: \$2 user fee or \$25 season pass. (Tusquitee District: 828-837-5152)

Dirty John: Offering a 100-yard range with target frames set at 25 yards, 50 yards and 100 yards; this range has six stations that are open year-round. The cost: \$3 user fee or \$7 season pass. (Nantahala District: 828-524-6441.)

UWHARRIE NATIONAL FOREST

Flintlock Valley: Open year-round, this shooting range provides 50-yard pistol and 100-yard rifle ranges. Two shelters offer six shooting benches. The cost: a \$3 per-person-per-day fee and a \$30 season pass. (Uwharrie National Forest: 910-576-6391)

FOREST LODGING

Balsam Lake Lodge

Surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains on the Nantahala District, Balsam Lake Lodge offers a special getaway for groups who reserve the whole facility for \$170 to \$200 per night. The lodge includes 16 twin beds with all linens, a kitchen with utensils, and three bathrooms. All facilities are fully accessible to people with disabilities. The lodge overlooks a small lake where trails and fishing piers are fully accessible. To reserve the lodge, call 877-444-6777 or go online to recreation.gov.

Swan Cabin

For a primitive cabin experience, rent the Swan Cabin on the Cheoah District for \$25 per night. This 1931 three-room log cabin has one and a half stories and includes a loft, wood stove, and nine rope-strung bed frames suitable for sleeping bags. Water is from a spring a quarter-mile away; a privy is out back. Make reservations after Jan. 1 each year through the reservation service at 877-444-6777 or visit: www.recreation.com.

SPECIAL DAY-USE AREAS



Prices subject to change

operated by private concessionaire

MAP NUMBER

PICNIC AREA

RESTROOMS

DRINKING WATER

TRAILS

OTHER ACTIVITIES

FEE (\$)

*one day-use or season pass valid



NANTAHALA NATIONAL FOREST											COMMENTS	
BALSAM LAKE From TUCKASEGEE, take NC 281S for 8.75 miles. Turn left on SR 1756, go about 6 miles (1 mile past lodge).	30	♿	♿	F	♻️	🚶	🚰				No fee	Open all year. Walk or fish along Wolf Creek. No water or restrooms in winter. Picnic shelter. Near Balsam Lake Lodge. By reservation only at 877-444-6777.
CHEOAH POINT BEACH From ROBBINSVILLE, take U.S. 129N for 7 miles. Turn left at sign, go 0.8 mile.	20	♿	♿	V				🏊	🚰		No fee.	Open April to November. Swimming beach on Santeetlah Lake, boat ramp, picnic shelter, RV sites, flush toilets. Cheoah District: 828-479-6431.
CHEROHALA SKYWAY From ROBBINSVILLE, take U.S. 129N for 1 mile, turn left on NC 143W, and follow signs for 10 miles.		♿	♿	V		🚶	🚰				No fee	Open all year. Drive 30 miles on crest of North Carolina mountains. Scenic overlooks, picnic spots, trails. Cheoah District: 828-479-6431.
CLIFFSIDE LAKE ♦ From HIGHLANDS, take U.S. 64W for 4.5 miles. Turn right at sign.	24	♿	♿	F	♻️	🚶	🚰	🏊			\$3/car. 2 shelters by reservation: 828-877-4023	March 30-Nov. 5. Bathhouse with showers, seven short trails: 0.5 to 1.5 miles. No fee in winter. Site manager (Apr.1-Oct. 31): 828-526-5912.
DRY FALLS From HIGHLANDS, take U.S. 64W for 3.5 miles, falls on left.		♿	♿	V		🚶	🚰				No fee	Under construction. Opens later summer. Walk under waterfall without getting wet. Nantahala District:
FIRES CREEK From HAYESVILLE, go 5 miles on U.S. 64W. Turn right on NC 175 for 2.5 miles and left on Fires Creek Rd. (SR 1344).	3					🚶	🚰				Under construction.	Open all year. Hike 0.7-mile loop to Leatherwood Falls or 53 miles of trail open to hikers and horses. Tusquitee District: 828-837-5152.
JACKRABBIT From HAYESVILLE, take U.S. 64E for 6.2 miles. Turn right on NC 175 for 2.5 miles. Turn right on SR 1155.	5	♿	♿	F	♻️			🏊	🚰		\$3/car.	May 2-Sept. 30. Swimming beach on Chatuge Lake. Popular for watersports. Hot showers, picnic shelter. Tusquitee District: 828-837-5152.
JOYCE KILMER From ROBBINSVILLE, take NC 129N for 1 mile. Turn left on NC 143W, right on SR 1134, go 2 miles.	18	♿	♿	V		🚶	🚰	?			No fee	Open all year. Walk through this rare, outstanding example of an old growth forest on two two-mile loop trails. Flush toilet. Cheoah District: 828-479-6431.
CHEROKEE LAKE From MURPHY, take U.S. 64W for 8 miles. Turn right on NC 294, go 3 miles.	1	♿	♿	F	♻️	🚶	🚰				No fee.	Apr. 1-Oct. 30. Accessible fishing pier on Lake Cherokee. Picnic shelter. Tusquitee District: 828-837-5152.
NANTAHALA GORGE Take U.S. 19 between ALMOND and TOPTON. Travel through gorge.	14/15	♿	♿	F	♻️	🚴	🚰				Use fee: \$1/person \$5/person/season	Open all year. Popular rafting on 8.5 miles of white-water. Picnicking at Ferebee Memorial. Nantahala District: 828-524-6441.
STANDING INDIAN PICNIC AREA ♦ From FRANKLIN, take U.S. 64W for 9 miles. Turn left on old U.S. 64, follow signs.	8	♿	♿	F	♻️	🚶	🚰				\$2/car for day use	March 30-Nov. 27. Picnic shelter can be reserved for \$30 by calling Nantahala District, 828-524-6441.
TSALI From BRYSON CITY, take U.S. 19S for 9 miles. Turn right on NC 28 for 5.5 miles, turn right at the sign, go 1.5 miles.	22	♿	♿	F	♻️	🚴	🚰	🚶			\$2/trail user \$15 trail user season pass	Closed in winter. Trails open year-round. Near Fontana Lake. 40 miles of bike and horse trails. Bike-wash rack.. Cheoah District: 828-479-6431.
WAYAH BALD From FRANKLIN, take U.S. 64W. Turn right on old US 64 to SR 1310 (Wayah Rd.). Turn right on FR 69 for 4.5 miles.	10	♿	♿	V			🚰				No fee	Open all year. Enjoy panoramic views from historic fire tower. Crossed by Appalachian and Bartram trails. Nantahala District: 828-524-6441.
WHITESIDE MOUNTAIN From HIGHLANDS, take U.S. 64E about 5 miles. Turn right on SR 1680. Follow signs.	28		♿	V		🚶	🚰				\$2/car \$15/season ♦	Open all year. Hike two-mile-loop trail to 4,930-foot summit for outstanding views. Nantahala District: 828-524-6441.
WHITEWATER FALLS From CASHIERS, take NC 107S for 10 miles to NC-SC line. Drive 1 mile, take first road to left. Follow signs.	29	♿	♿	F	♻️	🚶	🚰				\$2/car \$15/season ♦	Open all year. The East's highest waterfall at 411 feet. Two picnic shelters. Nantahala District: 828-524-6441.

Log cabins added to Cheoah Point Campground

Log-cabin camping is a new adventure offered at Cheoah Point Campground next to Santeetlah Lake in the Nantahala National Forest.

Instead of pitching a tent or sleeping inside a trailer, log-cabin camping combines a rustic atmosphere with some home amenities. Electricity provides porch and indoor lights and a ceiling fan. Guests can hook an electric grill to a front porch outlet.

Inside each one-room cabin is a log frame bed. Guests will need to bring a single-bed air mattress and folding chairs.

A picnic table, fire ring and grill are near each cabin. A paved trail leads to accessible flush toilets and showers. These facilities are 50 or 300 feet away, depending on the cabin rented.

The cabins sit 50 to 75 feet from Santeetlah Lake, a drawing card for anglers who drop their lines for largemouth bass, catfish, trout and walleye. Near each cabin is a wooden stairway that leads down to the lake's border, where guests can cast their fishing lines.

At Cheoah Point's boat ramp, cabin guests can launch their boats or rent canoes or pontoons from several locations on the lake.

Whether fishing, paddling or waterskiing, visitors are bound to enjoy the Santeetlah Lake scenery. The placid, bluish-green lake extends 76



PHOTO BY LISA COMAN

This lakeside log cabin offers great views of Santeetlah Lake and the surrounding mountains.

miles and is bordered by thick pine forest. A dam regulates Santeetlah lake water levels.

In addition to boating, Cheoah Point Beach offers a sandy shore where sunbathers can soak up the sun and go for a swim. Nearby are five picnic tables with grills and a picnic shelter with four picnic tables for family reunions.

Hikers can travel six miles of the Wauchecha

Trail, which runs from Cheoah Point to Wauchecha Bald, where it connects to the Appalachian Trail. Mountain bikers can ride several Forest Service roads that meander through the nearby forest or take a trip to Tsali Recreation Area.

The cost to rent a cabin is \$35 per night. Call 877-444-6777;TDD: 877-833-6777; or go online to recreation.gov.

SYCAMORE FLATS: Picnic where the river bends

Tucked within a horseshoe bend of Davidson River lies Sycamore Flats Picnic Area, a popular place for groups and families who want to enjoy a riverside setting.

Picnicking is a favorite activity at Sycamore Flats. Forty picnic tables with grills, some offering wheelchair access, are scattered among the trees. In addition, a picnic shelter with four picnic tables and two grills and two wheelchair-accessible bathrooms with flush toilets are available. Tables are available on a first-come first-served basis.

Known nationally as one of the top 100 wild trout streams, Davidson River draws plenty of anglers to Sycamore Flats. The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission stocks the river with rainbow, brook and brown trout.

River tubing is another popular sport here in the summer. Tubers can access the river through four openings in split-rail fencing near the river.

Hurricanes in 2004 heavily damaged Sycamore Flats. Since that time, the Forest Service replaced restrooms, built a wheelchair-accessible path and began stream restoration. Walkers now enjoy a newly paved quarter of a mile wheelchair-accessible path that travels along the Davidson River.

In a cooperative effort, the Forest Service, North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and the Pisgah Chapter of Trout Unlimited worked to restore Sycamore Flats' stream section.

Trout Unlimited built a split-rail fence to protect plants along the river. The fence also provides four river-access points for anglers,



PHOTO BY BILL LEA

Flyfishermen get ready to cast their lines into Davidson River, one of the nation's top trout streams.

waders and tubers. Visitors may notice the river's rock vanes—structures built to move currents into the river channel's center. This prevents riverbank erosion and protects aquatic-life habitat.



Another unique structure at Sycamore Flats is a rain garden. The rain garden collects and holds runoff from the parking lot. This causes water to slowly percolate into the ground and prevents erosion during heavy rains.

Open daily year-round from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sycamore Flats is off U.S. 276 just past the

Pisgah National Forest entrance near Brevard. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited and dogs must be on leashes in this picnic area.

Please protect the river by using the provided access points. Avoid scurrying up and down the river banks.

SPECIAL DAY-USE AREAS

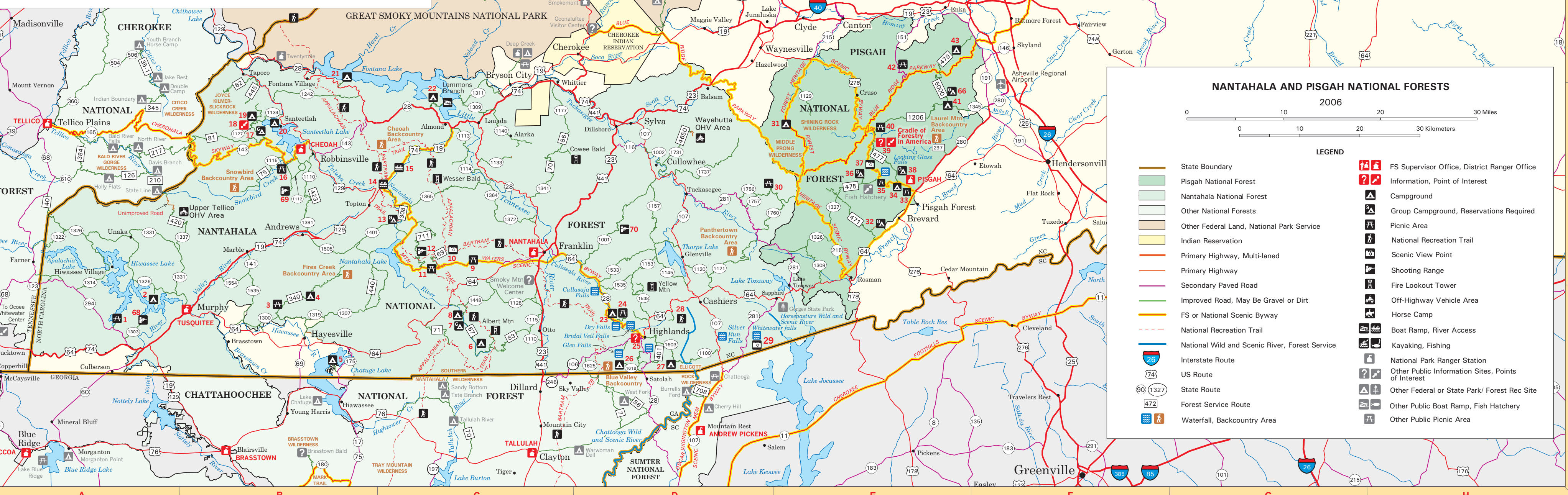
 Prices subject to change	<small>operated by private concessionaire</small> MAP NUMBER PICNIC AREA RESTROOMS DRINKING WATER TRAILS OTHER ACTIVITIES FEE (\$)							<small>one day-use or season pass valid</small> <small>* A \$35-per-half-day or \$50 charged for reserving picnic shelters. Call 877-444-6777 or visit www.recreation.gov.</small> 	
	COMMENTS								
PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST									
CAROLINA HEMLOCKS ♦ From BURNSVILLE, take U.S. 19E for 5 miles. Turn right on NC 80 for 9 miles.	56							\$3/car for day use	April 20-Oct. 30. On South Toe River. Popular for swimming and tubing. For picnic shelter reservations, call 877-444-6777.
COLD SPRING From I-40, west of CANTON, take Harmon Den exit. Travel northeast on FR 148 for 3.7 miles.	44							No fee	Open all year. Pretty picnic spot in heart of Harmon Den. Fish in Cold Spring Creek. Appalachian/Hot Springs Unit: 828-622-3202.
CRADLE OF FORESTRY IN AMERICA From BREVARD, take U.S. 64E to U.S. 276. Turn left and follow U.S. 276N for 11 miles.	39							\$5/adult; free: 15 & under; \$30/year family pass	April 14-Nov. 4. Forest Discovery Center has exhibits & movie. Explore two 1-mile trails. Pink Beds Picnic Area next door. Cradle of Forestry: 828-877-3130.
LAKE POWHATAN ♦ From ASHEVILLE, take I-26E to exit 33. Turn left NC 191S for 4 miles. Turn right on Bent Creek Ranch Rd., go 3.5 miles.	43							\$5/car for day use; \$20/season pass	April 1-Oct. 31. Swimming beach with lifeguards in summer. Accessible fishing pier. Season pass is also good for North Mills River. Pisgah District: 828-877-3265.
MAX PATCH From HOT SPRINGS, take NC 209S for 7.3 miles to SR 1175. Go south on SR 1175 for 5.3 miles. Take SR 1181 about 3.5 miles to end. Turn right on SR 1182 for 1.5 miles.	46							No fee	Open all year. Two loop trails. (1.4 & 2.4 miles) to grassy summit. Crossed by Appalachian Trail. Fishing pond. Appalachian/Hot Springs Unit: 828-622-3202.
MURRAY BRANCH From HOT SPRINGS, take U.S. 25/70W across bridge, turn left at end of bridge, then right on SR 1304. Go 4 miles.	49							* Starting May 1, fee to reserve picnic shelter.	Open all year. Picnic, fish along French Broad River. Walk the short River Ridge Loop Trail. Picnic shelter. Appalachian/Hot Springs Unit: 828-622-3202.
NORTH MILLS RIVER ♦ From ASHEVILLE, take I-26E to exit 40. turn right on NC 280W for 4 miles. Turn right on SR 1345, go 5 miles.	41							\$3/car for day use; \$20/season pass	April 1-Oct. 31. Trails nearby for hikers, bikers and horses. Season pass is also good for Lake Powhatan. Pisgah District: 828-877-3265.
ROAN MOUNTAIN From BAKERSVILLE, Take NC 261N for 13 miles.	59							\$3/car; \$15/season pass	May-Sept. Renowned for rhododendron gardens, grassy balds, spruce-fir forests. Short trails and Appalachian Trail. Appalachian/Burnsville Unit: 828-682-6146.
ROCKY BLUFF From HOT SPRINGS, take NC 209S for 3.3 miles. Rocky Bluff is on left.	47							No fee for day use	May 1-Oct. 31. Walk the 1.2-mile Spring Creek Loop Trail that leads to Spring Creek, a trout-fishing creek. Appalachian/Hot Springs Unit: 828-622-3202.
SLIDING ROCK From BREVARD, take U.S. 64E to US 276. Turn left and follow US 276N for 8 miles.	37							\$1/person; free: 6 & under	Open all year for viewing. Restrooms open Memorial Day-Labor Day. No alcohol or picnicking. Lifeguards on duty in season. Pisgah District: 828-877-3265.
TABLE ROCK From MORGANTON, take NC 181N. Turn left onto Ginger-cake Acres Rd., which becomes FR 210. Turn right on FR 99.	63							No fee	April 1-Dec. 31. Short trails travel rim of Linville Gorge to Table Rock's summit and to the Chimneys. Grandfather District: 828-652-2144.
WISEMANS VIEW From the town of LINVILLE FALLS, turn right on NC 183. Go 1 mile to SR 1238, Kistler Memorial Hwy. (gravel).	62							No fee	Open all year. Spectacular view of Linville Gorge. Drive slowly on rough gravel road. Grandfather District: 828-652-2144.

NANTAHALA NATIONAL FOREST		
Site Number and Name	Facilities	Comments
1	Cherokee Lake	Accessible fishing pier
2	Hanging Dog	On Hiwassee Lake
3	Fires Creek	30 miles of trails
4	Bristol Horse Camp	On Fires Creek, many trails
5	Jackrabbit Mtn	On Chatuge Lake
6	Hurricane Primitive	No water
7	Kimsey Creek	Group camp, by reservation
8	Standing Indian	On Kimsey Creek
9	Arrowood Glade	Swimming pool across road
10	Wayah Bald	Scenic overlook
11	Wayah Crest	Appalachian Trail nearby
12	Dirty John	Accessible shooting platform
13	Appletree	Group camp, by reservation
14	Nantahala Gorge	Rafting and kayaking
15	Ferebee Memorial	Limited picnicking
16	Snowbird	On Snowbird Creek
17	Rattler Ford	Group camp, by reservation
18	Joyce Kilmer	Memorial Forest
19	Horse Cove	In winter no water or fee
20	Cheoah Point	On Santeetlah Lake
21	Cable Cove	Near Fontana Lake
22	Tsali	Near Fontana Lake
23	Van Hook Glade	Campers may use Cliffside facilities
24	Cliffside Lake	2 picnic shelters by reservation
25	Highlands Vis Cen	Information, exhibits
26	Blue Valley Primitive	Primitive, no water
27	Ammons Branch	Primitive, no water
28	Whiteside Mtn	2 mile trail to vista
29	Whitewater Falls	Highest falls in east
30	Balsam Lake	Accessible trails and fishing
68	Panther Top	Near site #1
69	Atoah	Near site #16
70	Moss Knob	Northeast of Franklin

PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST		
Site Number and Name	Facilities	Comments
31	Sunburst	On site of early logging town
32	Kuykendall	Group camp, by reservation
33	Sycamore Flats	Picnic shelter available
34	Davidson River	Guided activities in season
35	Coontree	Accessible fishing platform
36	Cove Creek	Group camp, by reservation
37	Sliding Rock	Lifeguard on duty in season
38	White Pines	Group camp, by reservation
39	Cradle of Forestry	Exhibits, movie, guided tours
40	Pink Beds	Picnic shelter available
41	North Mills River	On North Mills River
42	Stony Fork	Picnic shelter available

PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST		
Site Number and Name	Facilities	Comments
43	Lake Powhatan	Lifeguard, guided activities in season
44	Cold Springs	Restrooms nearby
45	Harmon Den Horse Camp	By Reservation
46	Max Patch	Panoramic view, pond
47	Rocky Bluff	On Spring Creek
48	Silvermine	Group camp, by reservation
49	Murray Branch	On French Broad River
50	Corner Rock	On Corner Rock Creek
51	Old Fort	Picnic Shelter
52	Curtis Creek	Tents only, no water
53	Briar Bottom	Group camp, by reservation
54	Black Mountain	On South Toe River, guided activities
55	Neals Creek	Former fish hatchery
56	Lost Cove	On South Toe River
57	Carolina Hemlock	Picnic shelter, by reservation
58	Roan Mtn	Road closed in winter; Rhododendrons
59	Linville Gorge Info	Information, maps
61	Table Rock	Views of Linville Gorge
62	Barkhouse	In mountains, off NC Hwy 181
63	Mortimer	In winter no water or fee
64	Mulberry	On Mulberry Creek
65	Boone Fork	Group camp, by reservation
66	Wash Creek	Group camp, call 828-877-3265

RECREATION BOX FACILITIES LEGEND					
	Camping		Boat Ramp		Bicycle Trail
	Group Camping		Canoeing		Horse Trail
	Camping Trailer		Kayaking		Scenic View
	Trailer Dump Station		Tubing		Information
	Picnicking		Swimming		Winter Recreation
	Restrooms		Fishing		Amphitheater
	Showers		Hiking		Accessible
	Drinking Water		Interpretive Trail		Fee Site



NANTAHALA AND PISGAH NATIONAL FORESTS
2006

0 10 20 30 Miles
0 10 20 30 Kilometers

LEGEND

- State Boundary
- Pisgah National Forest
- Nantahala National Forest
- Other National Forests
- Other Federal Land, National Park Service
- Indian Reservation
- Primary Highway, Multi-laned
- Primary Highway
- Secondary Paved Road
- Improved Road, May Be Gravel or Dirt
- FS or National Scenic Byway
- National Recreation Trail
- National Wild and Scenic River, Forest Service
- Interstate Route
- US Route
- State Route
- Forest Service Route
- Waterfall, Backcountry Area
- FS Supervisor Office, District Ranger Office
- Information, Point of Interest
- Campground
- Group Campground, Reservations Required
- Picnic Area
- National Recreation Trail
- Scenic View Point
- Shooting Range
- Fire Lookout Tower
- Off-Highway Vehicle Area
- Horse Camp
- Boat Ramp, River Access
- Kayaking, Fishing
- National Park Ranger Station
- Other Public Information Sites, Points of Interest
- Other Federal or State Park/Forest Rec Site
- Other Public Boat Ramp, Fish Hatchery
- Other Public Picnic Area

EXPLORE YOUR FOREST TRAILS

For many, the best way to enjoy the national forests is from a trail. With more than 1,700 miles of trails, a variety of opportunities await you—from short, easy walks to long-distance backpacking adventures. While all trails are open to hiking, some trails are also designed for horses, mountain bikes and off-highway vehicles. You can also ride horses or bikes on roads blocked by gates, unless restrictions are posted. Five trail systems are designated for off-highway vehicles. Trailhead signs are posted with symbols showing who can use the trail.

Whether you are looking for a stroll with small children or a long hike, each district offers a variety of trails. Visit or call the district offices for detailed information, maps and current regulations. Please see back page.

Trail climbs 3,720 feet to Mt. Mitchell summit

Mount Mitchell Trail's tough six-mile trek is a challenge for backpackers with stamina.

The steep, strenuous trail climbs Mount Mitchell, the East's highest peak. This 6,684-foot mountain is named after Dr. Elisha Mitchell, who died in 1857 while trying to verify his claim that the mount was the East's highest peak.

To eliminate backtracking and cut hiking time in half, most hikers choose to leave a vehicle at the top of Mount Mitchell and park another car below at Black Mountain Campground.

For the most challenging route up Mount Mitchell, hikers enter the trailhead at Black Mountain Campground. When leaving the campground, the trail crosses a bridge over the South Toe River and enters a hardwood and evergreen forest. After many tight switchbacks up steep terrain, the trail crosses Higgins Bald Trail at 1.5 miles.

After four miles, the trail passes remaining foundations of the 1920 Camp Alice logging camp. The trail then joins the Balsam Trail at mile 5.2 at the observation tower on Mount Mitchell. Just 0.3 mile farther is the parking lot. For trailhead directions, see the Trails Illustrated Map, Linville Gorge and Mt. Mitchell.

TRAIL DIFFICULTY



EASY

Route: Easy to find and follow.

Steepness: Entire trail less than 8 percent grade.

Length: Less than three miles.

Surface: Mostly flat; a few rocks and roots.



MODERATE

Route: May or may not be blazed.

Steepness: Most of trail, less than 20-percent grade.

Length: Two to eight miles.

Surface: Usually rocky; may have stream crossings.



DIFFICULT

Route: Requires pathfinding skills.

Steepness: Most of trail, 20 percent grade or steeper.

Length: Usually more than eight miles; may have steep sections.

Surface: Rocky, uneven footing; may include stream crossings.

Take a hike on the...

L—O—N—G SIDE



PHOTO BY BILL LEA

The Appalachian Trail crosses Round Bald's furrows of long grass and offers Blue Ridge Mountain views.

Long distance trails cross every national forest and offer many miles for hikers and backpackers.

Appalachian National Scenic Trail: This trail follows the mountain crest from Maine to Georgia and passes through Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests for more than 200 miles. Open to hikers only, the trail boasts a chain of shelters about 10 miles apart.

Detailed guidebooks for the Appalachian Trail are available at national forest offices or from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, P.O. Box 807, Harpers Ferry, W.Va. 25425. For more information,

call toll-free at (888) AT-STORE 287-8673 or visit the Appalachian Trail web site at www.appalachiantrail.org.

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail: This trail covers 220 miles from Abingdon, Va., over the mountains of North Carolina in Pisgah National Forest to Kings Mountain National Military Park in South Carolina. Much of this trail follows paved highways as it traces the route of the Patriot army who decisively defeated the Loyalists in the battle at Kings Mountain.

Mountains-to-the-Sea Trail: This 216-mile trail crosses mountainous national forests from Blowing Rock on the Blue Ridge Parkway south to Balsam Gap, where the parkway crosses U.S. 19. Blazed in white dots, the trail heads east with the goal of reaching the coast.



PHOTO BY BILL LEA

These Appalachian Trail hikers marvel at the width of the Wasilik Poplar, the East's second largest tree. The Wasilik Poplar Trail crosses the Appalachian Trail and descends 0.7 mile to the poplar.

Bartram Trail: This national recreation trail runs across the mountains of South Carolina, Georgia and North Carolina. It stretches nearly 80 miles from Highlands to Cheoah Bald, east of Robbinsville. Blazed in yellow in Nantahala National Forest, the trail is named after William Bartram, a naturalist who roamed the Southern woods in 1775.

Uwharrie Trail: This trail winds over the Piedmont's highest ridgetops for 21 miles through the Uwharrie National Forest. The white-blazed trail crosses three state roads, where trailheads provide access.

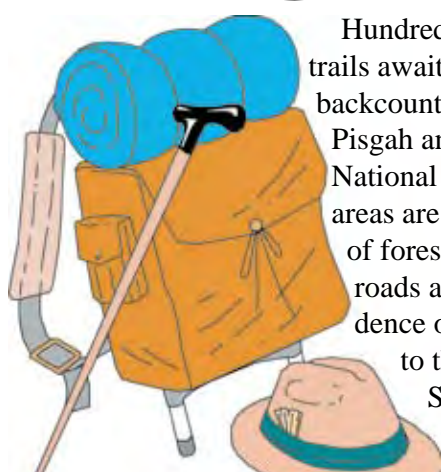
Neusiok Trail: This trail travels 21 miles through the east side of the Croatan National Forest. The Neusiok Trail goes from a cypress-lined beach at Pine Cliff on the Neuse River, south through hardwoods and thick pocosin, to the Newport River at Oyster Point.

MTN. BACKCOUNTRY AREAS

AREA	RANGER DISTRICT/ Closest Town	DESCRIPTION	TRAIL MILEAGE	POSSIBLE USES	TRAILS	TRAIL MAP
Black Mountain	APPALACHIAN Burnsville 828-682-6146	Significant elevation change up to spruce-fir forest; steep, rugged, rocky trails	43		8 trails, many loops	South Toe/Mt. Mitchell/ Big Ivy
Blue Valley	NANTAHALA Highlands 828-524-6441	Through side slopes of Blue Valley, crosses small streams and Glen Falls.	8		5 trails, including Bartram Trail	Bartram Trail 1 ROG**
Cheoah Bald	CHEOAH Robbinsville 828-479-6431	High elevation view, steep trails, grassy bald, cascades, shelter	18		2 trails, including the Appalachian and Bartram Trails	Appalachian Trail, FSQ*: Hewitt, Topton
Fires Creek	TUSQUITEE Hayesville 828-837-5152	Remote, high elevation, some primitive trails;	19		4 trails	FSQ*: Andrews, Topton Shooting Creek, Hayesville
Laurel Mountain	PISGAH Brevard 828-877-3265	Streamside & ridgeline trails, some views, high use	13		5 trails, part outside backcountry area	Pisgah District Trails
Mackey Mountain	GRANDFATHER Old Fort 828-652-2144	Primitive ridgetop trails, low use, few signs or blazes	17		5 trails	FSQ*: Old Fort, Marion West
Panthertown	NANTAHALA Cashiers 828-524-6441	Stream valley, views, rock outcrops, waterfalls	30		numerous trails	FSQ*: Big Ridge, Lake Toxaway
Shelton Laurel	APPALACHIAN Hot Springs 828-622-3202	Remote, steep, rugged trails, some waterfalls low use, shelters	33		6 trails, including the Appalachian	Good ROG** FSQ*: Greystone, White Rock, Flag Pond, Hot Springs
Snowbird	CHEOAH Robbinsville	Remote, steep, rugged trails, some waterfalls	50		8 trails	Snowbird Backcountry Trail Map

*FSQ: USGS quad with national forest lands and trails **ROG: Recreational Opportunity Guide

BACKCOUNTRY



Hundreds of miles of trails await you in the backcountry areas of Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests. These areas are large blocks of forest with no open roads and little evidence of disturbance to the land. Some trails begin outside the backcountry area and travel through some evidence of resource management, such as wildlife openings, old roads and timber harvest sites.

As in designated wildernesses, motorized vehicles are not allowed in backcountry areas. However, unlike wilderness trails, some backcountry trails are open to mountain bikers. Trailhead signs show who can use the trail.

Most trails are signed and blazed, and the size of the hiking group is not limited, although groups no larger than 15 are recommended. In wilderness, group size is limited to 10.

Backcountry areas offer a vast array of scenic beauty and recreation opportunities. So get a trail map, your daypack or backpack, and explore the backcountry!

To order maps, see Page 4. For more information about a backcountry area, see the above chart for the related district phone number.

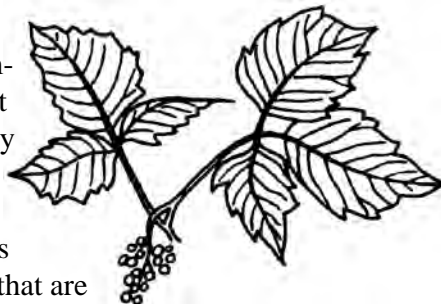
Look out for these bugs, snakes, plants

TICKS & CHIGGERS are present in the mountains and common on the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain. Chiggers cause an itchy welt, especially in warm, tight places, such as under waistbands and elastic. Ticks can transmit diseases. Wear insect repellent in the summer and check for ticks after every trip to the woods.

SNAKES that are poisonous are rarely seen, but rattlesnakes and copperheads do live in North Carolina. Cottonmouths live along coastal rivers and in the swamps.

To be safe, leave snakes alone—don't try to catch, antagonize or kill them. Also, avoid putting your hands or feet near rocks or logs where snakes aren't easily seen.

POISON IVY is a common plant that causes an itchy rash and should be avoided. It has white berries that are eaten by many birds, especially in the winter when food is scarce. Poison ivy grows as a vine or shrub, but always has three leaflets. Remember: LEAVES OF THREE, LET IT BE.



WILDERNESS: a primitive experience

Our forests have 11 designated wildernesses, with at least one in each national forest. Because wildernesses are managed to protect their primeval character, signs and blazes are minimal. Wilderness hikers, expected to be self-reliant, should carry a compass and topographic map and know how to use them.

Most trails are open only to hikers. However, the Southern Nantahala and Shining Rock Wildernesses have some trails that are open to horses.

To maintain the wilderness quality, special regulations are enforced.

- Campfires are not allowed in Shining Rock or Middle Prong Wildernesses. If you wish to cook, use a backpack stove.
- In any wilderness, no motorized equipment and no bicycles, wagons or carts are allowed.
- Only primitive recreation activities, such as backpacking and camping, are allowed.
- Group size is limited to a maximum of 10.
- Visitors may not remove plants, stones or moss, but berries or nuts can be collected for personal use.
- In Linville Gorge Wilderness from May 1 to Oct. 31, permits are required for camping on weekends and holidays. For permits or more information, contact the Grandfather District at 828-652-2144.

TAKE A RIDE ON THE FOREST TRAILS

MOUNTAIN BIKING

Mountain bikes are allowed on more than 257 miles of trails. Trails open to mountain bikes are designated with the bike symbol. Most roads closed to motor vehicles are signed to show they are open to cyclists. Wilderness is off limits to mountain bikes.

Bikers can discover great mountain trails at **Tsali Recreation Area**, west of Bryson City. This area offers 42 miles of challenging single-track trails overlooking Fontana Lake and the Great Smoky Mountains. Tsali has a daily \$2-trail-use fee per bike or \$15 annual pass that is sold at the Cheoah Ranger Station.

The **Appalachian Ranger District** near Hot Springs offers three trails—an old railroad grade for 3.6 miles beside Laurel River, the 7.5-mile Golden Ridge Trail on Rich Mountain with several overlooks, and the Mill Ridge Trail that offers good views on its four-mile loop.

The **Uwharrie National Forest** near Troy offers 22 miles of bike trails in the Wood Mountain Trail System. Currently, the system has no trail-use fee, but a daily \$3-trail-use fee per rider and \$20 annual pass is proposed.



Hikers yield to horses. Bikers yield to hikers and horses.

HORSEBACK RIDING

Standing Indian Basin is a good area for horseback riding in Nantahala National Forest. South of Franklin, Hurricane Creek Campground is open to horses March 15-Jan. 1. The camping fee is \$6 per night. The Bristol Horse Camp, north of Hayesville, adjoins 19 miles of trail in the Tusquitee District. The camping fee is \$5.

In the Appalachian District of Pisgah National Forest, east of Great Smoky Mountains

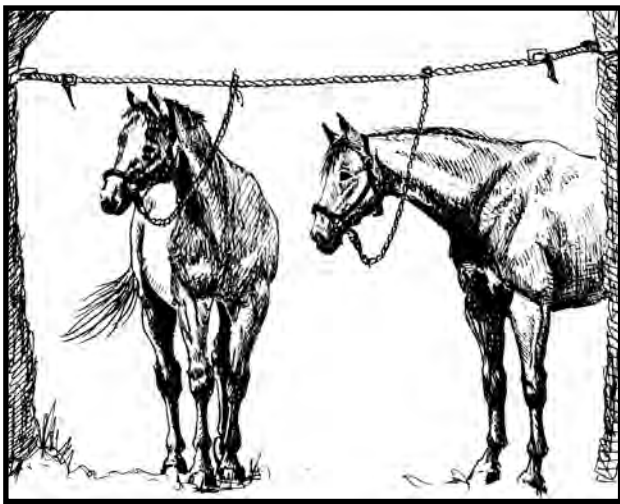
National Park, the **Harmon Den area** offers 14 miles of trails and miles of roads for horseback riding. The Harmon Den Group Camp has 10 sites with stalls and a manger for four horses, water and vault toilets. The camping fee is \$15 per night. To reserve a site, call 877-444-6777 or go online to recreation.gov.

In the Pisgah District of the Pisgah National Forest, five miles northeast of North Mills River Campground, the **Wash Creek Group Camp** offers a site for 35 people and 15 vehicles. Open year-round, the site's fee is \$35. For reservations, call the Pisgah Ranger Station at 828-877-3265.

In the **Uwharrie National Forest** near Troy, horses may use a 32-mile trail system near Badin Lake. Currently, no trail-use fee is charged, but a daily \$5 trail-use fee per rider and an annual \$30 pass is proposed.

Open year-round, the Canebrake Horse Camp offers 29 sites with parking spurs, flush toilets and showers. The camping fee is \$12 per night. To reserve a campsite, call 877-444-6777 (toll-free) or go online to recreation.gov.

Riders can get a free brochure that includes a map of Badin Lake horse trails. Brochures are available at the Uwharrie Ranger Station.



HORSE SENSE

Horses can be hard on the trails, trees and land. Here are some simple ways to reduce your impact in the forest and have a safe, enjoyable ride.

- To protect water quality, keep horses at least 100 feet from water.
- Stay on designated horse trails. To prevent erosion, don't shortcut trails.
- To tether your horse, use a tree-saver strap tied between two trees. If no trees are near, picket or hobble your horse.
- Use weed-free feed. Scatter manure, pick up trash and fill in pawed holes. Ensure campfires are dead out.
- Share the trail. Riders should yield to motorized vehicles, but hikers and bikers should yield to you. Say hello, and give them instructions about where to wait while you pass.
- A horse crossing a state line is required to have a negative Coggins test within the last year.
- Before leaving, clean campsites and hitching-post areas, throw away all trash in receptacles, and make sure all fires are dead out.

OHVs-----TRAIL RULES



North Carolina's national forests offer five trail systems for riding off-highway vehicles, including all-terrain vehicles, 4-wheel-drive and trail bikes.



Within these areas, you must stay on signed routes marked with symbols showing the kind of vehicle you're driving. Some routes are badly eroded and are closed. Help nature restore these trails by not riding on them. For



the most fun, choose trails that match operating limitations of you and your vehicle. Most areas have maps that show trail difficulty.

Please follow these enforced forest regulations for treading lightly on the land:

- ATV and motorcycle operators must wear DOT-approved helmets and eye protection.
- Children under 8 may not operate ATVs or motorcycles. An operator under 16 must have constant supervision by adult over the age of 18.
- No passengers are allowed on ATVs, unless vehicles are designed to carry passengers.
- Unlicensed vehicles are not allowed on designated Forest Service roads.
- Spark arresters, mufflers and brakes are required for motorized vehicles.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on all trail systems or in recreation areas.
- Travel only on OHV designated routes. Cross-country travel is prohibited.

WHERE TO RIDE OHVs

AREA	DISTRICT CLOSEST TOWN	USER TYPE	DAILY FEE	SEASON PASS	TRAIL MILES	SEASON
Upper Tellico	TUSQUITEE/ Murphy	All: ATV, trail bike, 4WD	\$10	\$60	40	April 1-Dec. 31
Wayehutta	HIGHLANDS/ Sylva	ATV, trail bike	\$5 ★	\$30 ★	22	April 1-Dec. 15 Daytime only
Brown Mountain	GRANDFATHER Lenoir	Mostly ATV and trail bike	\$5 ★	\$30 ★	33.5	April 1-Jan. 1
Badin Lake	UWHARRIE/ Troy	All: ATV, trail bike, 4WD	\$5 ★	\$30 ★	16	April 1-Dec. 15
Black Swamp	CROATAN/ New Bern	50-inch-wheel-base ATV, 4WD, trail bike	\$5 ★	\$30 ★	8	Year-round

★ No passes at trailhead; purchase in advance from district office or local stores.



These views of saltmarsh and the White Oak River are offered along the Tidelands Trail, one of the Saltwater Adventure Trail's points of interest.



A comical blue crab feeds along the tidelands.

PHOTOS BY BILL LEA

variety of birds, fish and crabs can be spotted.

For a change of pace, hunt for shells and other ocean remnants along the Neuse River at Cherry Point or relax on the cypress-lined beach at Pine Cliff Picnic Area. View the local maritime ecosystem while visiting the North Carolina Aquarium. The Bogue Sound boardwalk offers birding scopes and exhibits.

Along the White Oak River is the two-mile Cedar Point Tidelands Trail. The trail's boardwalk travels through a salt marsh. Wayside exhibits explain natural history and trail travelers can view a variety of wildlife.

The Saltwater Adventure Trail passes a variety of historical features like the city of New Bern. Founded in 1710, the city was the colonial capital of North Carolina from 1766 to 1776. New Bern offers historic sites for paddlers who dock at the riverfront for a leg stretch. On Neuse River's banks is Fishers Landing, the site of the Battle of New Bern in 1862 and a Civilian Conservation Corps camp.

To the south by the Atlantic Ocean sits the historic city of Beaufort, home to the North Carolina Maritime Museum and headquarters of Blackbeard, the notorious pirate. On the west side of the trail, paddlers can visit an old sawmill site at Hadnot Creek.

Camping along the Saltwater Adventure Trail is primitive, providing no water or facilities. Fishing opportunities abound, but proper licenses are required from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.

For more details on planning a Saltwater Adventure Trail trip, call the Croatan National Forest office at 252-638-5628.

A 110-mile trip on saltwater

by Cindy Carpenter

Circling the Croatan National Forest is the nation's only trail over saltwater. The 110-mile Saltwater Adventure Trail offers sightseeing and adventure to paddlers.

From cypress swamps to sandy blue-water beaches, paddlers can plan a 110-mile seven-day trip and visit every point of interest or take a one-day adventure and visit just a few. Whatever the choice, the trail offers many activities, from fishing to viewing displays to beach combing.

The Saltwater Adventure Trail starts at Brice Creek boat launch in still blackwater tinted by cypress trees. A new put-in for canoes and several picnic tables are recent additions.

The route runs down the wide Neuse River with its ocean-going vessels, follows the historic Harlowe Canal to the Newport River and loops west past barrier islands along



Alligators roam the Croatan National Forest swamps.

Bogue Sound. The trail ends at Dixon Fields by the scenic White Oak River.

Wildlife viewing opportunities abound from the boat or on land when docking for an overnight stay or a break from paddling. Iridescent dragonflies, sun-basking turtles, statuesque ospreys and egrets or an occasional alligator can be viewed along the route, especially in the cypress swamps. Turkey, deer and wood ducks also inhabit these swamps. In the tidelands, a

Features added at Uwharrie recreation hot spots

Recreation hot spots at Uwharrie National Forest's Badin Lake Recreation Area recently received major additions and improvements.

King's Mountain Point day-use area has a definitely new look and added features. Located on King's Mountain Point—a peninsula jutting into Badin Lake—the day-use area offers lake views, one picnic shelter, 34 picnic sites, parking for 50 cars, four accessible fishing piers and an accessible paved trail.

A picnic pavilion was recently added to the King's Mountain Point. Including power, water and three grills, the pavilion accommodates 50 people and is perfect for family reunions. Groups can also play football or volleyball in the large field nearby.

Call 877-444-6777 or go online to www.recreation.gov to reserve the picnic pavilion. The cost is \$35 for half a day and \$50 for a full day.

Freshly paved last October, a one-mile walking trail circles King's Mountain Point. From the trail, visitors can view Badin Lake. In addition, visitors can access the 5.6-mile Badin Lake Hiking Trail.

The Flintlock Valley Shooting Range, located 0.5 mile from Wolf Den trailhead in Badin Lake Recreation Area, is a popular place for rifle-range enthusiasts. All types of guns are allowed at the range. Skeet shooting is prohibited. Open year-round from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., the range offers two



PHOTO BY BILL LEA

Anglers enjoy casting their lines from this 76-foot floating fishing pier at King's Mountain Point.

shelters with six shooting benches. A vault toilet was recently installed.

The cost: a \$3 daily use fee or \$30 for an annual pass. Daily and season passes for the shooting range are sold at the Uwharrie National Forest office or local stores.

In addition to Badin Lake's 16 miles of off-highway-vehicle trails, riders can enjoy three new one-acre parking lots off Falls Dam Trail. Trail-use fees are \$5 per day and \$30 for a season pass, which are sold at the Uwharrie National Forest office and local stores.

CAMPING IN THE PIEDMONT & COAST



Fees subject to change

RESERVATIONS *
DUMP STATION
PICNIC AREA
RESTROOMS
AMPHITHEATER
SHOWERS
DRINKING WATER
BOAT RAMP
SWIMMING
FISHING
TRAILS
FEE (\$)
NUMBER OF SITES

UWHARRIE NATIONAL FOREST															COMMENTS
ARROWHEAD Open all year. From TROY, take NC 109-N for 11 miles. Turn left on Mullinix Rd. (SR 1154) Go 2 miles to "T" intersection, turn right. Go 2 more miles to "T," follow signs.	*		F										\$12* \$24	50	*\$3 extra for electricity at single sites, \$6 for double sites. 33 sites with electricity. Near lake. Uwharrie National Forest: 910-576-6391.
BADIN LAKE UPPER & LOWER LOOPS Open all year. Same directions as above.	*		F										\$12 \$24	39	Many sites on lake's shore. Near Badin Lake Trail. Uwharrie National Forest: 910-576-6391.
BADIN LAKE GROUP Open all year. Save directions as ARROWHEAD.	*		V										\$40	3	By reservation only. Call toll free at 877-444-6777, or go online to recreation.gov.
BADIN LAKE HORSE CAMP Open all year. From TROY, take NC 109N for 11 miles. turn left on Mullinix Rd., go 1.5 miles to camp on right.													no fee	*	Open field with access to 15 horse trails. Uwharrie National Forest: 910-576-6391.
CANEBRAKE HORSE CAMP Open all year. Same directions as ARROWHEAD. After turning right at first intersection, go 0.25 mile.	*		F V										\$12 \$24	29	Fully accessible facilities, access to trails. Uwharrie National Forest: 910-576-6391.
EAST MORRIS MTN. Sept.-Dec. From TROY, take NC 109 for 4 miles. Turn right on SR 1134 and go 4 miles.													no fee	*	No water. Uwharrie National Forest: 910-576-6391.
UWHARRIE HUNT CAMP Open all year. From TROY, take NC 109-N for 10 miles. turn left at Badin Lake signs. Camp on right.			V										\$5	29	No water. Camp in open field. Uwharrie National Forest: 910-576-6391.
WEST MORRIS MTN. Open all year. From TROY, take NC 109-N for 8 miles. Turn right on SR 1303. Go 1.5 miles. Camp is on right.			V										\$5		No water. Uwharrie National Forest: 910-576-6391.
YATES PLACE Open all year. From TROY, take NC 109-N for 4 miles. Turn left on SR 1134. Turn right on SR 1146 and go 2 miles.			V										no fee	*	No water. Uwharrie National Forest: 910-576-6391.
CROATAN NATIONAL FOREST															COMMENTS
CATFISH LAKE Open all year. From MAYSVILLE, take NC 58E. Turn left on SR 1105 (turns to dirt) to FR 158, turn left.													no fee	*	No facilities. Croatan National Forest: 252-638-5628.
CEDAR POINT Open all year. From MAYSVILLE, off NC 58, 1 mile north of the junction of NC 24 and NC 58.			F										\$15*	40	*\$5 extra for electricity, offered at all sites. Boat ramp, fishing pier. Croatan National Forest: 252-638-5628.
FISHERS LANDING Open all year. From NEW BERN, take U.S. 70E about 10 miles. Turn left at sign, 0.5 mile north of office.			V										no fee	*	TENTS only. Croatan National Forest: 252-638-5628.
GREAT LAKE Open all year. From MAYSVILLE, take NC 58E. Turn left on SR 110 (turns to gravel). Continue to FR 126.			V										no fee	*	Paved boat ramp. Croatan National Forest: 252-638-5628.
LONG POINT Open all year. From MAYSVILLE, take NC 58E. Turn right on FR 120.			V										\$5	2	On the White Oak River. Picnic tables, accessible pier. Croatan National Forest: 252-638-5628.
NEUSE RIVER (Also called Flanners Beach) March 1-Dec. 1. From NEW BERN, take US 70E about 12 miles. About 2 miles south of Croatan District office, turn left on SR 1107 and go 1.5 miles.			F										\$15*	45	*\$5 extra for electricity, 14 sites with electricity. Croatan National Forest: 252-638-5628.
OYSTER POINT Open all year. From NEWPORT, take SR 1154 to FR 181 and turn right.			V										\$8	15	Neusiok Trailhead. Shallow water at ramp. Croatan National Forest: 252-638-5628.
SIDDIE FIELDS Open all year. From HAVELOCK, take NC 101 for 4.7 miles to Ferry Rd., turn left. Go 3.2 miles to Pine Cliff Rd. (gravel), turn right. At FR 167, turn left and bear left.													no fee	*	No facilities. Croatan National Forest: 252-638-5628.

Electricity available at Uwharrie, Croatan NFs

The Uwharrie and Croatan National Forests offer a range of camping experiences, from primitive camping with no facilities to highly developed campgrounds.

Arrowhead Campground, near Badin Lake in Uwharrie National Forest, offers electric hookups at 35 sites. Campsites are \$12 without electricity and \$3 extra for campsites with electricity.

On the Croatan National Forest, Cedar Point Campground has electricity at all campsites. Neuse River Campground has 14 sites with electricity. Campsites are \$15 without electricity. Sites with electricity are \$5 extra.

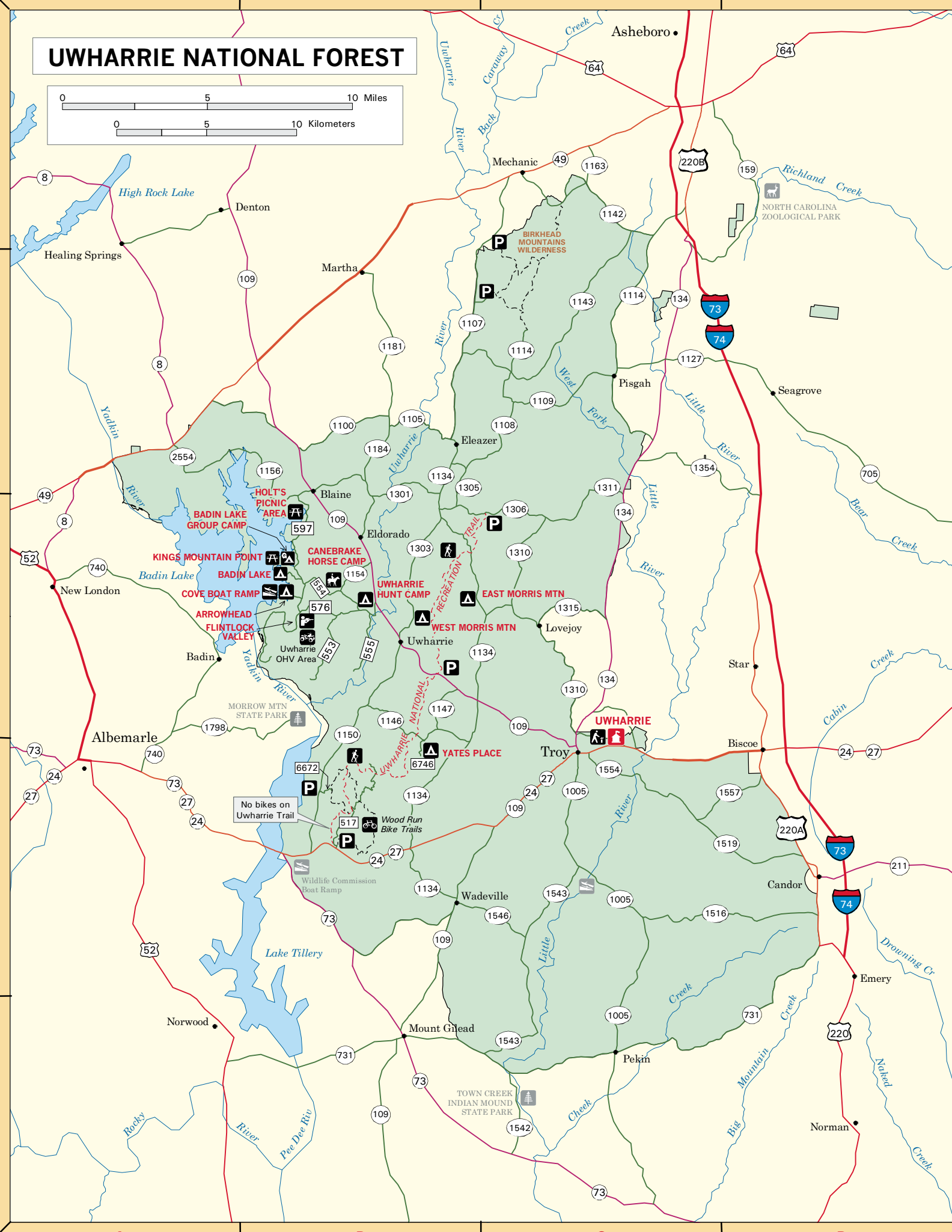
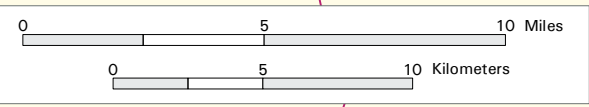


- ◆ : Operated by private concessionaire.
- *: Reservations available at 877-444-6777 (toll free) TDD: 877-833-6777 or web site: recreation.gov. Service fee is charged.
- ★: Primitive camp, undesignated sites.
- ▲: This amount includes a proposed fee increase subject to review and approval.

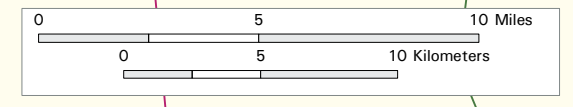
FOREST SERVICE RECREATION SYMBOLS

restrooms; V=vault; F=flush	drinking water	hiking trails
picnic area	shower	horseback riding
partial accessibility, may not meet ADA standards	mountain bike trails	dump station
swimming	fishing	boat ramp
		amphitheater

UWHARRIE NATIONAL FOREST



CROATAN NATIONAL FOREST



CROATAN AND UWHARRIE NATIONAL FORESTS

2006

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| National Forest | Off-highway Vehicle Area | Primary Highway, Multi-Laned |
| Military Reservation | Horse Camp | Primary Highway |
| District Ranger Office | Shooting Range | Secondary Paved Road |
| FS Campground, Group Campground | Non-FS Recreation Sites | Improved Road, May Be Paved or Gravel |
| Hiking, Interpretive Trail, Bike Trail | Interstate Route | National Recreation Trail |
| Boat Ramp, Canoe Launch | US Route | Hiking or Interpretive Trail |
| Picnic Area, Parking | State Route | Gate |
| Fishing Area | Forest Service Route | |

Restoring the highland balds

by Terry Seyden

The Roan Mountain balds are unique grassy habitats—home to literally dozens of rare plant species. These incredibly scenic ecosystems are slowly being lost to encroaching blackberry briars, shrubs and trees.

“Our primary goal is to restore and maintain these ecologically important grassy bald communities,” said Gary Kauffman, Forest Service botanist. “Rare plants associated with these balds, such as Gray’s lily and Schweinitz’s ragwort, prefer more open habitat to thrive and reproduce.”

What created balds in the past?

Most scientists agree that many of Roan’s grassy balds pre-date the arrival of European settlers. They speculate that these alpine grassy meadows—so rare in the Southern Appalachians—were created by natural causes like ice storms, high winds, insect outbreaks and changing climates. Prehistoric herbivores, such as mastodon and more recently, elk and bison, probably helped keep the balds open.

From the late 1700s through the early 1900s, settlers kept the balds open by clearing trees and shrubs and grazing livestock on the Roan.

How are balds cleared today?

Currently, Forest Service employees and volunteers are using track mowers and weed whackers to cut back intruding shrubs and trees.

The Forest Service plans to work with volunteers to reintroduce livestock grazing. Goats may soon be seen chewing on blackberry thickets east of Jane Bald. Watusi cattle, which can live on limited amounts of food and water, may also browse shrubs at Hump Mountain.

The Forest Service works with The Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Appalachian Trail Conservancy and other federal, state and non-profit organizations to maintain these valuable ecosystems. A volunteer group called Harvey’s Briar Bashers is also working to clear Roan Bald invaders. To volunteer, go to <http://www.appalachian.org/involve/vol.htm>.

Time will tell if these efforts will be enough to save Roan’s spectacular views and sustain these rare grassy bald ecosystems.



PHOTO BY D.M. BROWN

This late 1930s photo shows Round Bald’s immense grassy opening. In the 1930s, grazing sheep kept invading shrubs and spruce and fir trees from gaining ground on the balds.



PHOTO FROM CHARLES WARDEN & JAMEY DONALDSON COLLECTION

In a closer view of Round Bald, this 2007 photo shows conifer and brush invaders making their advance on the bald. Forest Service employees and volunteers are using track mowers and weed whackers to remove blackberry thickets from the bald.

NATIONAL FORESTS IN NORTH CAROLINA

Supervisor’s Office
160A Zillicoa Street
Asheville, NC 28801
828-257-4200

(Take UNCA exit 25 off I-26, go toward UNCA to first right)
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST

**Appalachian Ranger District
Hot Springs Unit**
88 Bridge Street
Hot Springs, NC 28743
828-622-3202

(On U.S. 25/70 in Hot Springs)
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Appalachian Ranger District Burnsville Unit

30 East Hwy., 19 Bypass
Burnsville, NC 28714
828-682-6146

(On U.S. 19-E bypass in Burnsville)
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Grandfather Ranger District

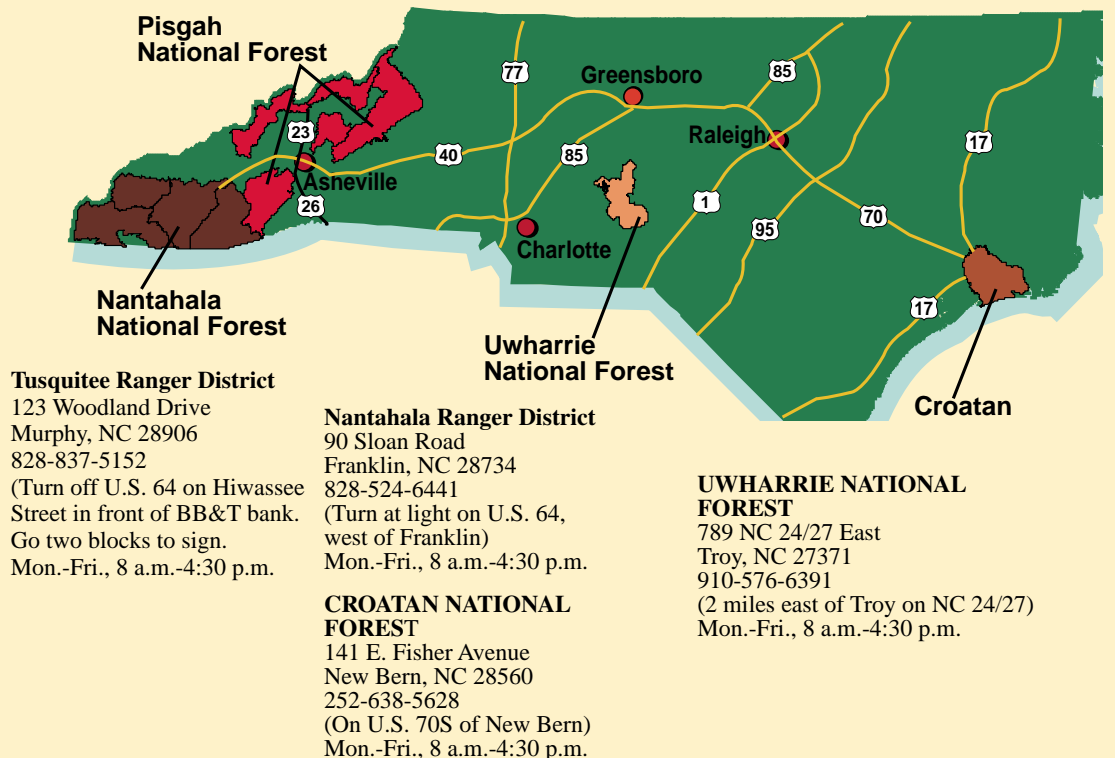
109 East Lawing Drive
Nebo, NC 28761
828-652-2144
(Off I-40, Nebo/Lake James Exit)
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Pisgah Ranger District

1001 Pisgah Highway
Pisgah Forest, NC 28768
828-877-3265
(On U.S. 276 north of Brevard)
Nov.-May 23: Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
May 24 -Oct: Mon.-Fri.,
8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat. & holidays,
9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sun., 1-5 p.m.

NANTAHALA NATIONAL FOREST

Cheoah Ranger District
1070 Massey Branch Road
Robbinsville, NC 28771
828-479-6431
(Take U.S. 129 north of
Robbinsville to NC 143, turn left
& go about one mile)
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.



Tusquitee Ranger District

123 Woodland Drive
Murphy, NC 28906
828-837-5152
(Turn off U.S. 64 on Hiwassee
Street in front of BB&T bank.
Go two blocks to sign.
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Nantahala Ranger District

90 Sloan Road
Franklin, NC 28734
828-524-6441
(Turn at light on U.S. 64,
west of Franklin)
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

CROATAN NATIONAL FOREST

141 E. Fisher Avenue
New Bern, NC 28560
252-638-5628
(On U.S. 70S of New Bern)
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

UWHARRIE NATIONAL FOREST

789 NC 24/27 East
Troy, NC 27371
910-576-6391
(2 miles east of Troy on NC 24/27)
Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

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