



Explore the Outdoors!

The Official Visitor's Guide to the Big South Fork

Welcome to Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. We know that you are going to have a great time spending your spring and summer in the park.

This news guide is designed to help you discover, plan your stay, and enjoy everything your Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area has to offer. Everyone who comes will be seeking their own connection to their park so we have designed the 2014 summer/spring paper around some of the recreational activities available to you.

Winter has ended and we are here to help you shake off the cabin fever. Recreation is our last name so dust off your camping gear, hiking boots, climbing gear, and mountain bikes. It is time to get outdoors. You can tent camp at one of our campgrounds, bring your horse to one of the two equestrian campgrounds, bring your RV and take hot showers at the Bandy Creek or Blue Heron campgrounds, or rough it with your tent in one of the smaller campgrounds or in the backcountry. While you are here, hike some of the more than 400 miles of trails, or you can bring your horse or mountain bike to enjoy your journey through the forest. You can also bring your fishing pole, raft or kayak to enjoy some time on the river.

If you would like to learn more about the park, its resources, and its recreational opportunities, talk to a ranger at one of our visitor centers or join us on one of our ranger-led programs. Take the opportunity to read this guide so you can make the best use of your time while in this special place called Big South Fork.



6 Park Map

This map shows how to get to the most popular points of interest in our park.

8 Walks and Talks Schedule

Find out when the next ranger program will take place and join us.

10 Hey Ranger!

See what the commonly asked questions are for the park. See if your questions are answered here.

Welcome to the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area!

Although every one of the National Park Service's 401 sites are beautiful and unique, Big South Fork offers visitors the opportunity to experience a majestic jewel that is preserved and protected unimpaired for generations yet to come and allows for recreational opportunities and experiences that are not always available at other national park sites.

The Big South Fork is 125,000 acres of the rugged scenic Cumberland Plateau surrounding the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River. The area boasts miles of scenic gorges and sandstone bluffs, is rich with natural and historic features and has been developed to provide visitors with a wide range of outdoor recreational activities. Fishing, kayaking, whitewater canoeing, rafting, hiking, mountain biking, hunting, horseback riding, and camping are some of the activities that are enjoyed at here.

Big South Fork offers diverse camping choices from sites with full hookups and hot showers to primitive and backcountry camping. No matter what your experience or physical ability, a memorable experience awaits you at Big South Fork. Quietly fish along the river; take a slow stroll along a short nature trail; hike a long trail in search for a glimpse of a bear, waterfall, or sandstone arch; ride your horse into the backcountry; mountain bike on some of the extensive biking trails; paddle down the river; rough it on a back country camping trip, or end your day with a hot shower and some smores at Bandy Creek, Blue Heron, or Alum Ford campground.

My favorite way to relax is to take a walk with my dog Nyssa along the Angel Falls trail in the early morning. I am sure you will love the park as much as I do, and the experience will bring you back for more. I encourage you to join us on one of the many ranger-led programs listed in this guide and stop at one of our visitor centers and let our staff help you plan your visit.

Niki Stephanie Nicholas
Superintendent



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area

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STAY CONNECTED WITH US

Follow us on Twitter **@BigSouthForkNRR**

Like us on Facebook as **Big South Fork NRRRA**

Visit our website at www.nps.gov/biso

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



Events Calendar

All events are Eastern Time. All interpretive programs are subject to change.

Contact Bandy Creek Visitor Center at (423) 286-7275 (PARK) or the Blue Heron Interpretive Center at (606) 376-3787 or (606) 376-5073 for program details.

SPRING PLANTING FESTIVAL - APRIL 26

Bandy Creek Area 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Join in a celebration of spring at a 1920s era farm. Demonstrations of horse and mule drawn equipment, plowing, planting, dulcimer music, farm animals and tasks of the homemaker will be presented throughout the day at Bandy Creek and the Lora Blevins homeplace. Craft demonstrations and sales items will also be available.

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY - JUNE 1

Volunteers will be working throughout the park on hiking, biking, horse and multiple-use trails. National Trails Day is held each year throughout the United States on the first Saturday in June. Thousands of volunteers participate in work projects in national areas, parks and forests. If you would like to volunteer, contact Wally Linder for information at (423) 569-2404, ext. 321 or online at www.americanhiking.org.

ASTRONOMY PROGRAMS

Paul Lewis from the University of Tennessee will be presenting astronomy programs with the help of astronomy volunteers (weather permitting).

May 24 Solar Viewing - Bandy Creek - 3:00 p.m.

May 24 Astronomy - Bandy Creek - 9:00 p.m.

July 26 Astronomy - Bandy Creek - 9:30 p.m.

August 30 - Astronomy - Bandy Creek - 9:30 p.m.

October 4 - Solar Viewing - Bandy Creek - 3:00 p.m.

October 4 - Astronomy - Bandy Creek - 8:30 p.m.

BLUE HERON GHOST TRAIN - SEPTEMBER 6

Blue Heron Mining Community

The Third Annual Blue Heron Ghost Train is sponsored by Big South Fork in cooperation with the Big South Fork Scenic Railway, McCreary County Library and the McCreary County Performing Arts Council.

STORYTELLING FESTIVAL - SEPTEMBER 20

Bandy Creek Area starting at 10:00 a.m.

--Dulcimer Workshop

Bring your own dulcimer and learn to play a tune. Beginners' sessions will be held on the hour beginning at 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. and again at 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. A limited number of dulcimers will be on hand for the public's use. Please sign up the day of the classes.

--Craft Workshops

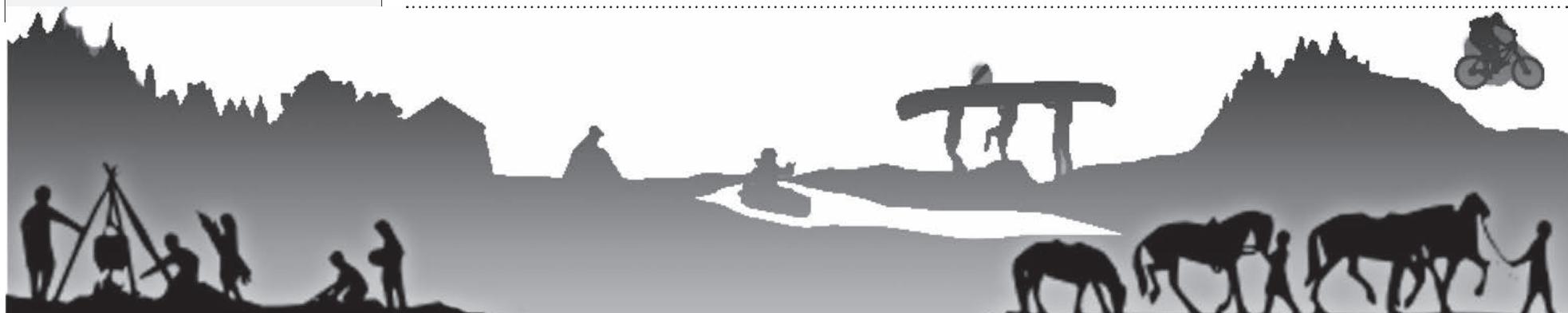
Learn about some old time crafts of the region through classes, demonstrations and sales. Crafts offered may include candlewicking, wood carving, needle felting, survival skills and basket making. Classes will be scheduled throughout the day beginning at 10:00 a.m. and ending at 5:00 p.m. Some classes are up to four hours in length. To check on classes that will be offered call Bandy Creek Visitor Center at (423) 286 -7275.

--Storytelling Presentations

Presentations such as family-oriented stories and special local tellers will take place throughout the day. Concerts by the Knoxville Area Dulcimer Club as well as Great Day in the Morning will be performing during the day. Check event flyer for times and locations.

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY - SEPTEMBER 27

Volunteers will be working on hiking, biking, horse and multiple-use trails. Public Lands Day is an annual event traditionally held on the last Saturday in September. Thousands of volunteers participate in work projects in national areas, parks and forests. If you would like to volunteer, contact Wally Linder for further information at (423) 569-2404, ext. 321 or online at www.publiclandsday.org.



Fee Free Days at Big South Fork

Rough economic times call for economical fun, and you can't beat America's 401 national parks for family time, fresh air, and opportunities to learn about our great country. Every day there are more than 200 national parks that never charge an entrance fee. Find one close to you at www.nps.gov.

Although Big South Fork does not collect entrance fees, we do have use fees. The park will have fee free days for backcountry camping and camping at Alum Ford Campground. Permits will still be required, but there will be no charge. The following dates are the official fee free days of 2014:

April 19-20 -- National Park Week's opening weekend
 August 25 -- National Park Service's 98th Birthday
 September 27 -- National Public Lands Day
 November 11 -- Veterans Day



CONCESSIONAIRES	PERMITTED OUTFITTERS
Bandy Creek Stables Horse Boarding, Camp Store and Wifi (423) 286-7433 www.bandycreekstables.net	Sheltowee Trace Outfitters River Trips P.O. Box 1060 Whitley City, Kentucky 42653 1-800-541-RAFT or (606) 376-5567 www.ky-rafting.com
Big South Fork Scenic Railway Ride the Train to Blue Heron (800)-462-5664 www.bsfsry.com	Big South Fork Outdoor Adventures Wagon Rides 6170 Grave Hill Rd Oneida, Tennessee 37841 (423) 286-3902 www.facebook.com/BSFOA
Charit Creek Lodge Overnight Lodging in the Backcountry (931) 879-2776 www.charitcreeklodge.com	Southeast Pack Trips Horse rides 299 Dewey Burke Rd Jamestown, TN 38556 931-879-2260
Eastern National - (423) 286-7275 www.eparks.com/store	GRAB A SNACK AT THE BLUE HERON CONCESSION STAND-OPEN EVERY DAY THE BIG SOUTH FORK TRAIN RUNS.
Station Camp and Bear Creek Horse Camps - (423)569-3321 www.bigsouthforkhorsecamps.com	

Weddings in the Park



Special events such as weddings, foot races, and endurance rides require a special use permit. If you need more information about how to obtain a special use permit, contact the Fee Program Manager, Letitia Neal at 423-569-2404 ext. 267 or by email at tish_neal@nps.gov. Information can also be found on our website at www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/permits.htm.

User Fees of Big South Fork NRA

CAMPING FEES

BANDY CREEK CAMPGROUND		
ELECTRIC HOOK-UPS	96 SITES	\$22.00-NIGHT (6 PERSON MAX.)*
NON-HOOK UPS	49 SITES	\$19.00-NIGHT (6 PERSON MAX.)*
GROUP CAMP	2 SITES	\$125.00-NIGHT (25 PERSONS)* (\$3.00 additional per person per night)

BLUE HERON CAMPGROUND		
ALL SITES	45 SITES	\$17.00-NIGHT (6 PERSON MAX.)*
ALUM FORD CAMPGROUND		
ALL SITES	6 SITES	\$5.00-NIGHT (6 PERSON MAX.)*

BANDY CREEK POOL FEES

ADULT	\$3.00 – PERSON*
CHILD (6 to 12 Y/O)	\$2.00 – PERSON
CHILD (5 Y/O and UNDER)	FREE
INDIVIDUAL SEASON POOL PASS*	\$25.00
AFTERHOURS RENTAL	\$25.00 - ONE HOUR up to 25 persons \$40.00 - TWO HOURS up to 25 persons

CAMPGROUND FACILITY USE BY NON-CAMPERS

DUMP STATION	\$5.00 – VEHICLE*
SHOWERS	\$2.00 – PERSON*
F-LOOP SHELTER (DAY USE ONLY)	\$10.00-DAY (non-refundable fee)
POOL SHELTER (DAY USE ONLY)	\$20.00-DAY (non-refundable fee) special use permit required

PERMITS

BACKCOUNTRY CAMPING PERMITS	
1 to 6 person(s)	\$5.00*
7 to 12 persons	\$10.00*
13 to 18 persons	\$15.00*
19 to 24 persons	\$20.00*

HOG PERMITS	\$5.00*/PERSON
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PASSES

INTERAGENCY SENIOR PASS	\$10.00 ONE TIME FEE
INTERAGENCY ACCESS PASS	FREE WITH PROOF OF DISABILITY
INTERAGENCY PARK PASS	\$80.00
INTERAGENCY MILITARY PASS	FREE WITH PROOF OF ACTIVE MILITARY DUTY

GET YOUR INTERAGENCY PASS ONLINE AT store.usgs.gov/pass/index.html or at one of our visitor centers.

*Holders of the Interagency Golden Age/Access Passports pay only half the fee.



Campgrounds in our Park

Experience all that Big South Fork has to offer by staying a while. There are plenty of overnight lodging options to choose from. Whether you're camping with a big rig, RV, conversion van, fifth wheel, trailer or tent, we have the campsites to accommodate you. Most have hot water showers, restrooms, water hook-ups, electric hook-ups, and dump stations. Bandy Creek Campground and the Station Camp Horse Camps are located in the Tennessee portion of the park. Blue Heron Campground, Alum Ford Campground and Bear Creek Horse Camp are located on the Kentucky side of the park.



BANDY CREEK CAMPGROUND-TN

98 hook-up sites - \$22.00 per night
 49 tent sites - \$19.00 per night
 Open year round
 Reservation system period - April - October
 Honor system period - November - March
 Phone number: (423) 286-8368
 Reservations: (877) 444-6777

Amenities:

- Hot water showers
- Playgrounds
- After Hours Registration
- 30/50 amp Electric Hook-Ups
- Dump Station
- Food Storage Lockers
- Clean Restrooms
- Picnic Pavilions
- Volleyball Court
- Recycling Bins
- Dishwashing Facilities
- Camp Store
- Parking Area
- Trails
- Visitor Center
- Credit Cards Accepted
- Vending Machines
- Swimming Pool

Area A offers 49 tent sites. Areas B, C and D offer 98 sites which have electric/water hookups. Restroom/bathhouse facilities are located in areas A, C and D which have hot showers and are handicapped accessible. There are three accessible campsites in area A and four campsites in area D.

Although Area A has no electric hook-ups on each site, RVs, pop-ups, and horse trailers are permitted in sites A1 – A12. Sites A13 – A49 are restricted for tents only.

Horseback riders staying at Bandy Creek Campground need to make separate reservations for their horses at Bandy Creek Stables. The stables are located a short distance across the road from the campground. Paddocks and stalls are available for rent. For more information about Bandy Creek Stables, please call (423) 286-7433.

BLUE HERON CAMPGROUND-KY

45 hook-up sites - \$17.00 per night
 Open April to November
 Phone number: (423) 286-7275
 Reservations: (877) 444-6777

Amenities:

- Hot water showers
- Playground
- Self Registration
- 30 amp Electric Hook-Ups
- Dump Station
- Food Storage Lockers
- Clean Restrooms
- Dishwashing Facility
- Trails
- Wildlife Viewing

Blue Heron offers 45 sites, with one site designated as accessible to mobility impaired individuals. Restroom facilities are also handicapped accessible. There is a fire ring and a dump station provided. Although a reservation system is in place, campers are still welcome on a first-come, first-served basis for unreserved campsites.

ALUM FORD CAMPGROUND-KY

6 primitive sites - \$5.00 per night
 Open year round
 Phone number: (423) 286-7275

Amenities:

- Boat Ramp
- Self Registration
- Food Storage Lockers
- Parking Area
- Trails
- Wildlife Viewing

Alum Ford is a primitive campground and offers six campsites with a vault toilet facility. No drinking water is located at this area. Alum Ford also has a boat ramp. There are no fees to use the ramp.



BANDY CREEK GROUP CAMPS-TN

2 sites - \$75.00 per night for up to 25 persons, plus \$3.00 for each additional person.
 Open April to November
 Phone number: (423) 286-8368
 Reservations: (877) 444-6777

Amenities:

- Hot water showers
- Playgrounds
- After Hours Registration
- 30/50 amp Electric Hook-Ups
- Dump Station
- Food Storage Lockers
- Campfire Circle
- Clean Restrooms
- Picnic Pavilions
- Volleyball Court
- Recycling Bins
- Dishwashing Facilities
- Camp Store
- Parking Area
- Trails
- Visitor Center
- Credit Cards Accepted
- Vending Machines
- Swimming Pool

Group Area E-1 and E-2 are for large groups. E-1 offers 19 campsites and E-2 offers 16 campsites. Each area has one accessible site. There are no electric/water hookups on each site. The group areas offer a covered pavilion with electric/water and a cooking area. A fire ring for campfires is available. Separate bathhouses for each area offer hot showers and dishwashing facilities. Reservations can be made for the group camp up to one year in advance by calling 1-877-444-6777 or by going online at www.recreation.gov.

STATION CAMP (TN) AND BEAR CREEK (KY) HORSE CAMPS

Station Camp - 24 sites
 Bear Creek - 23 sites
 Reservations: (423) 569-3321

Amenities:

- Hot water showers
- Electric Hook-Ups
- Dump Station
- Amphitheater
- Food Storage Lockers
- Clean Restrooms
- Trails
- Wildlife Viewing

Both Station Camp and Bear Creek are operated by a concessionaire. There are water and electric hookups plus a tie out area for four horses at each site. The bathhouses have hot water showers.



Catching Memories

by Dave Carney, Chief of Interpretation and Education

I can't speak for everyone, but my desire to go fishing springs from memories from my past. As soon as I see a lake, pond, ocean, or river, my grandfather comes to mind. He was a short statured man that had a white high and tight hair cut that was so perfectly flat on the top that it looked like you could balance a drink there without spilling it, and he had the deep creased leathery skin of a many that spent a lot of time out in the weather.

The reason that my grandfather comes to mind when I see a body of water is that he was a fisherman. I don't mean that he made his living at it, but he made his memories from fishing. My earliest memories of my grandfather are of him waking me up before sunrise and packing me into his truck while I was still in my pajamas. He would have a tackle box and a few poles in the bed of the truck and we would head to the river.

I remember sitting quietly along the side of the river watching the sun rise while he and I fished a pool. My grandfather had a scratchy gruff voice, but he was a quiet man. From the time that he woke me up until the time that we would pack up to go home, I am sure that he said less than a dozen words. When I would talk to him sitting there waiting for the fish to bite, he would simply say "quiet now, you're gonna scare the fish".

The funny thing is that I don't remember ever catching a fish during these trips with my grandfather. What I do remember is sitting on the damp ground in the quiet and listening to the birds and the water while the sun came up. My grandfather passed away ten years ago, but is still with me when I stand on the banks of the river today. My grandfather did not take me out to catch fish. He took me fishing where we caught memories.

Grab your tackle and visit these places with the person that you would like to take fishing for memories.

- Leatherwood Ford
- The Brewster Bridge
- Peters Bridge
- Station Camp
- Blue Heron
- Yamacraw Bridge
- Alum Ford

For more information you can contact the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at (423) 286-7275 or visit the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency <http://www.state.tn.us/twra/fish/fishmain.html>.

In Kentucky you can call the Stearns Depot Visitor Center at (606) 376-5073 or visit the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife <http://fw.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>.

Tennessee and Kentucky have reciprocal licensing agreements on boat fishing from Leatherwood Ford (TN Hwy. 297) to Yamacraw Bridge (KY Hwy. 92). Creel limits and other regulations of the state where the license was issued apply.

Buy your fishing license online for at <https://app.fw.ky.gov/license/waonlinefront.aspx> Kentucky and <http://www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/fishing.htm> Tennessee.



Be a part of our team... Become a Volunteer

For information on how you can become a National Park Service Volunteer, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (423) 569-9778 or email us at biso_information@nps.gov. Visit us online at www.nps.gov/biso/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm to see all of the wonderful opportunities that are available.



Fat Tires and Dirt Trails

by Joe Cross



Increasing numbers of outdoor recreationists are discovering the pure and simple joy of riding bicycles on dirt trails.

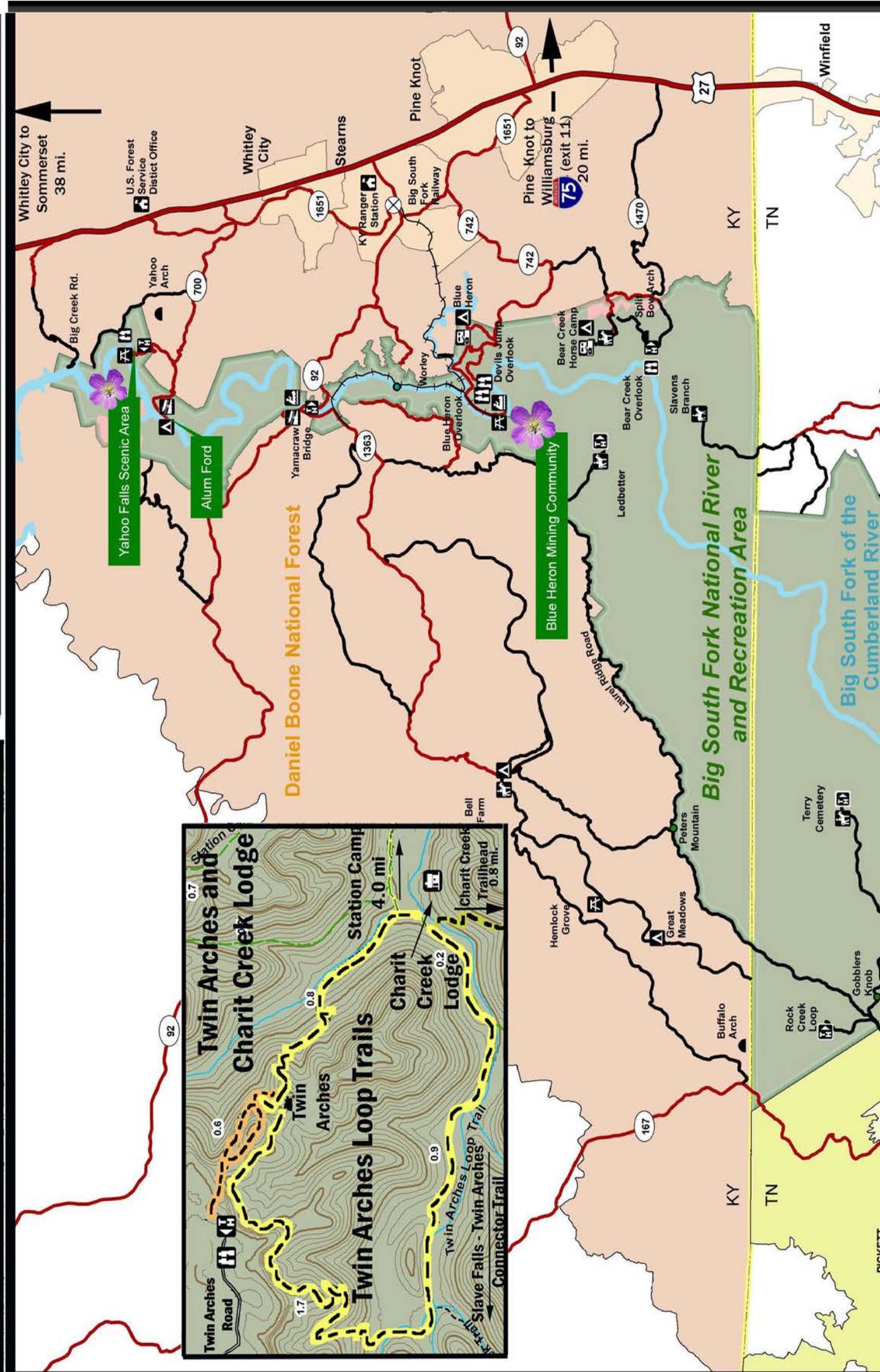
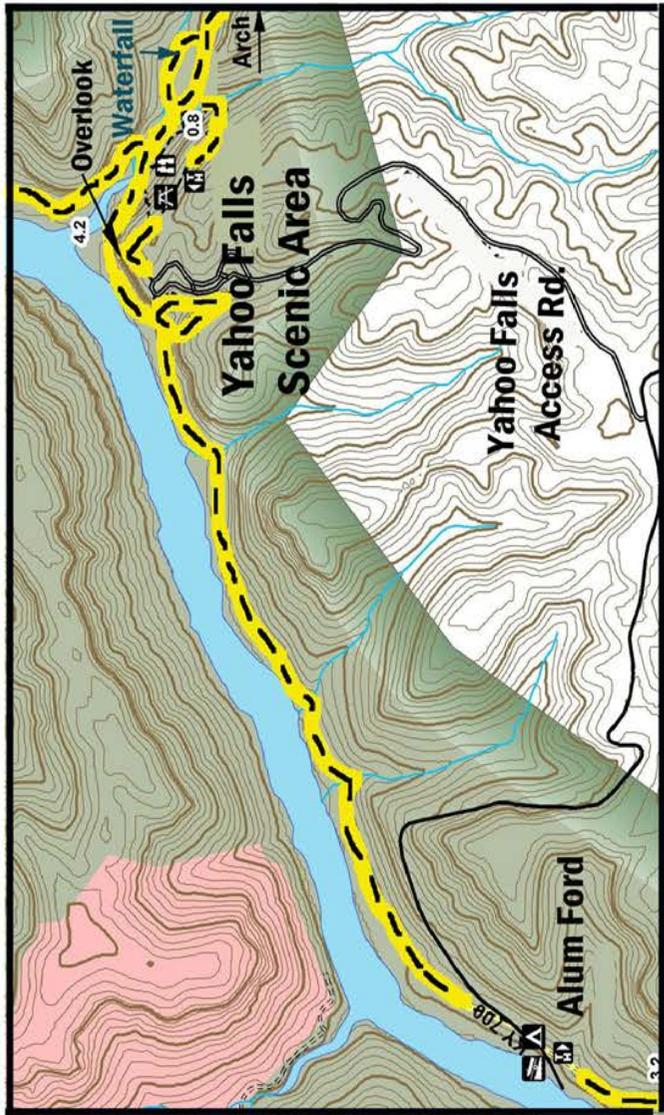
Mountain bikes are specifically designed for trail riding. The fat, knobby tires and the upright posture allows riders of all ages to easily navigate backcountry areas. This environmentally friendly sport does minimal impact to the forest environment while allowing health-minded individuals a fun way to enjoy outdoor exercise.

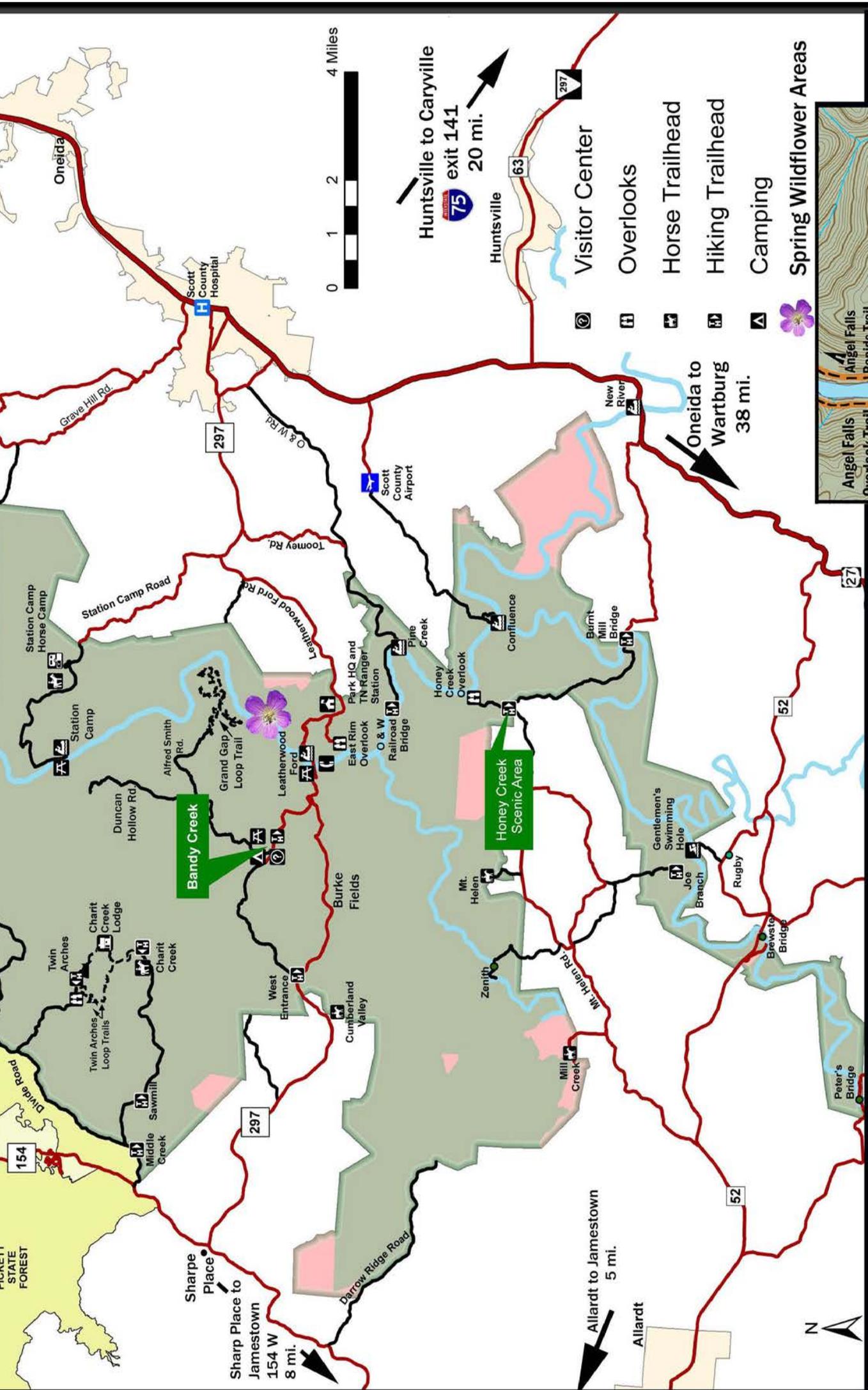
Baby boomers are largely responsible for starting the mountain bike movement in the late 1980s, but the latest group to discover the fun are the teenagers. High schools all across the country now have mountain bike racing teams. Tennessee is one of the newest states to have high school racing. For those teens not into competitiveness, mountain biking provides them a stimulating activity to defeat the boredom they so often complain about. Mountain biking also allows teens to fight the obesity epidemic that is sweeping our nation as well as a condition commonly called Nature Deficit Disorder. The end result: teens are not bored, they become healthier, and they become happier due to their new, active lifestyle that will enable them to be active and productive adults.

The Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area offers a number of bicycle friendly trails. Many of the trails are beginner friendly to specifically allow new-to-the-sport riders a chance to hone their skills and improve their fitness. Other trails provide a bit more of a challenge for the more experienced riders. The International Mountain Bicycle Association (IMBA) recently awarded the trail system at Big South Fork their prestigious EPIC award—announcing to the world that our area is a destination to be added to the Must Ride list of mountain bikers everywhere. Big South Fork is the first unit of the National Park System to receive the IMBA Epic Award.

The best advice ever given: Go outside and play. You can do that on a bicycle at Big South Fork.





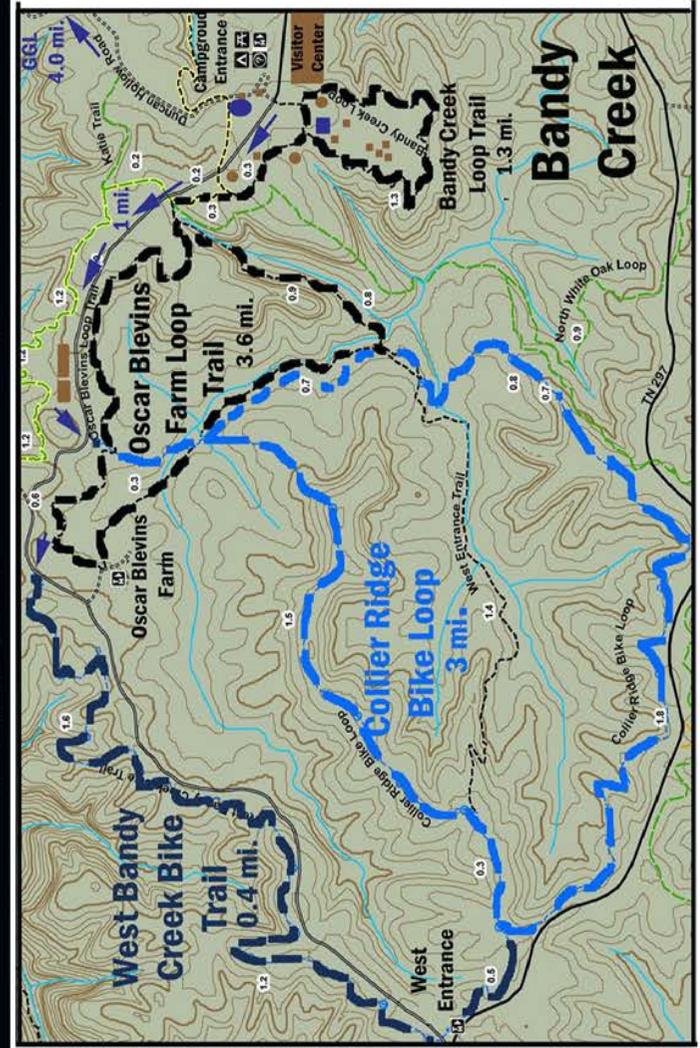
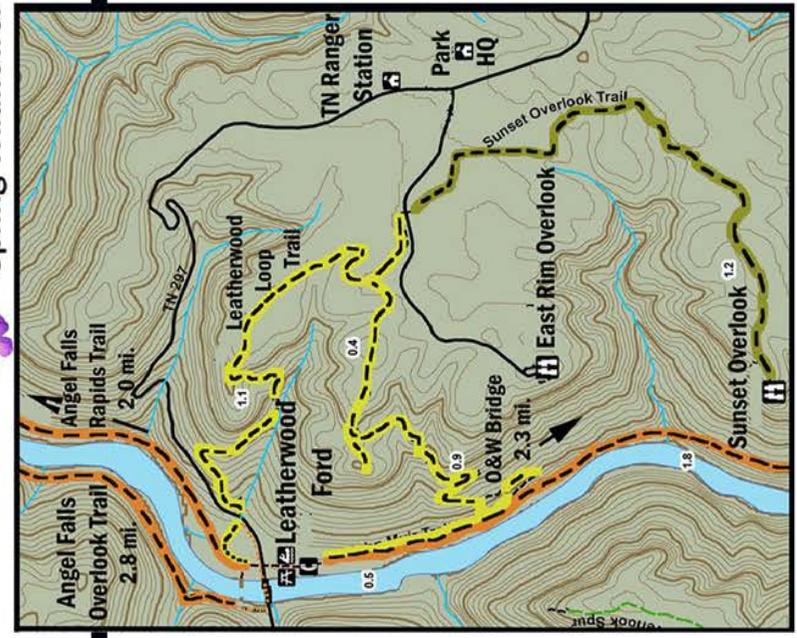


Huntsville to Caryville
 exit 141
 20 mi.

- Visitor Center
- Overlooks
- Horse Trailhead
- Hiking Trailhead
- Camping
- Spring Wildflower Areas

Oneida to Wartburg
 38 mi.

Allardt to Jamestown
 5 mi.



Guided Walks and Talks

Schedules are effective from Memorial Day Weekend until Labor Day 2014.

TENNESSEE

PROGRAM TITLE	LOCATION	DURATION	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Back Porch Talk Learn about a special feature of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. 	<i>Bandy Creek Visitor Center</i>	<i>20 minutes</i>	9:30 AM	10:30 AM	9:30 AM				
Leatherwood Ford Trails Hike Enjoy an easy to moderate walk along the river through the Big South Fork Gorge. All ranger-led hikes begin at Leatherwood Ford River Access and will follow trails up or down river to O & W Bridge or Angel Falls rapids respectively.	<i>Leatherwood Ford Gazebo</i>	<i>2 - 3 hours</i>	1:00 PM						
Hike to Twin Arches Join a ranger for this 1.5 mile easy hike around the Twin Arches upper loop trail. At the Arches, sit atop large boulders and enjoy a short ranger-led geology program. Look across the treetops as you learn about the forces of nature that deposited and continue to sculpture the layers of sandstone on the Cumberland Plateau. Afterwards, visitors may choose to enhance this outdoor experience by continuing their journey around the 4.3 mile lower loop.	<i>Twin Arches Trailhead</i>	<i>2 - 3 hours</i>		1:00 PM					
Oscar Blevins Loop Hike Walk one mile with a ranger to the Oscar Blevins Farm where you will hear stories about the authentic farm and the people who lived there. Afterwards attendees may either continue along the loop trail (2 ½ mi.) or back-track (1.0 m.) to Bandy Creek Visitor Center.	<i>Bandy Creek Visitor Center</i>	<i>2 - 3 hours</i>			1:00 PM				
East Rim Overlook Walk Enhance your understanding and enjoyment of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area by taking the short, easy 0.1 mi. walk down to this gorge overlook. There you can relax and enjoy the view of the breathtaking sandstone cliffs and the scenic river below. 	<i>East Rim Overlook</i>	<i>30 minutes</i>				1:00 PM			
Stroll to Sunset Overlook Join a ranger for an easy 1.0 mile stroll through the woods, past an old farm pond to Sunset Overlook. This hike rewards the participant with a great view of the gorge and the Leatherwood Ford of the Big South Fork River, located hundreds of feet below the rim. Please note: Parents will need to watch their young children at this overlook since there are no railings or platforms.	<i>Sunset Overlook Trailhead</i>	<i>1 - 1 1/2 hours</i>					1:00 PM		
Bandy Creek Loop Hike Magnolias, sourwoods, mountain laurels and more. Join a ranger for an easy stroll around the 1.3 mi. Bandy Creek Loop Trail. This ranger-led activity provides visitors with an introduction to some of the often seen, but overlooked trees and bushes growing near the Bandy Creek Visitor Center and Campground.	<i>Bandy Creek Visitor Center</i>	<i>1 - 1 1/2 hours</i>						1:00 PM	
Charit Creek Trail Hike Descend the Charit Creek Trail under the canopy of large American Beech trees to Charit Creek Lodge. There you can relax and enjoy a ranger-led program about the cultural history of this log cabin lodge and its surroundings.	<i>Charit Creek Trailhead</i>	<i>2 - 3 hours</i>							1:00 PM
Bandy Creek Evening Campfire Program Come join a ranger enjoy to an evening program about the natural and cultural history of the land that became Big South Fork. 	<i>Check posted program announcements</i>	<i>45 minutes</i>							7:00 PM





RUGBY

PROGRAM TITLE		DURATION	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Gentleman's Swimming Hole Hike Join a ranger to enjoy on a short, moderately difficult hike to the river. This guided hike offers park visitors with a great opportunity to experience the spectacular scenery.	<i>Gentleman's Swimming Hole Trailhead</i>	<i>20 minutes</i>	1:00 PM						
Meeting of the Waters Programs Park rangers offer a variety of interpretive evening programs. Park-related topics vary week to week and may range from general natural and cultural history to special topics of concern.	<i>Check posted program announcements</i>	<i>45-60 minutes</i>							1:00 PM



KENTUCKY

PROGRAM TITLE		DURATION	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Blue Heron Depot Talks Blue Heron Depot Talks provide park visitors with a unique opportunity to gain insight into the cultural heritage of Blue Heron Mining Community.	 <i>Blue Heron Depot</i>	<i>20 minutes</i>	12:30 PM	HOLIDAY TRAINS ONLY 12:30 PM		12:30 PM	12:30 PM	12:30 PM	12:30 PM 3:30 PM
Yahoo Falls Nature Hikes Join a ranger at the Yahoo Falls Scenic Area to enjoy on a short, moderately difficult hike to Yahoo Falls. This guided hike offers park visitors with a great opportunity to experience the spectacular scenery provided by 113 foot tall Yahoo falls, towering sandstone cliffs, and a huge rock shelter.	<i>Yahoo Falls Parking Area</i>	<i>1 hour</i>	10:00 AM						
Blue Heron Campground Evening Programs Park rangers offer a variety of interpretive evening programs. Park-related topics vary week to week and may range from general natural and cultural history to special topics of concern.	 <i>Blue Heron Campground</i>	<i>45-60 minutes</i>							7:00 PM



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

All programs are free. Programs schedules are effective from Memorial Day Weekend until Labor Day.

Wear sturdy walking shoes for hikes. You may also want to bring along bug spray and drinking water.

All children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times.

Programs may be cancelled due to high winds or lightning.

Black bears and other wildlife frequent the area; visitors must follow food and garbage storage regulations.

Pets must be restrained on a leash at all times. Owners are expected to clean up pet waste and dispose of it properly.

NOTICE: There will be no WALKS & TALKS scheduled for **June 10 and 11** due to training.

Hey Ranger!

Most commonly asked questions at Big South Fork....



What should I do if I see a fawn curled up in the grass?

Leave it alone. Its mother is probably nearby.

When is the park open?

The park is open 24 hours daily. Sometimes a road is closed due to snow or ice. Hours of operations for visitor centers within the park are listed in this paper.

What are the trees with the big leaves?

Big Leaf Magnolias

Do I need a backcountry permit to camp in the woods?

Yes. A permit can be acquired at Bandy Creek Visitor Center, Park Headquarters (weekdays only), Blue Heron Visitor Center, Kentucky visitor Center (weekends only), Rugby Visitor Center (weekends only), Crossville Visitor Center (weekends only) or online at www.nps.gov/biso.

How many bears are in the park?

The most recent scientific study indicates there are approximately 300 bears living in Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area and Daniel Boone National Forest.

Can I drink water out of the streams or river?

Yes, but you need to filter the water.

Is Big South Fork a National Park?

Yes. Big South Fork NRRRA is one of over 400 park lands managed by the National Park Service.

Where can I buy passes and permits?

You can purchase any of the Interagency passes or a backcountry permit at one of the visitor centers (see page 12 for locations and operational hours).

What kinds of poisonous snakes live in the park?

Timber rattlesnakes and copperheads.

Does the park operate in Central or Eastern Time zone?

All business hours and interpretive program schedules are set to Eastern Time.

Where does the Big South Fork River go?

The river flows North from Tennessee to Kentucky into Lake Cumberland.

Can I bring my dog with me on the hiking and horse trails?

Yes. It needs to be leashed at all times.

Can I pick flowers in the park?

No. Please leave them for other people to enjoy.

Can I camp in a rockshelter or historical buildings?

No. Park regulations have been established to protect the cultural and historical significance of these structures.

How big is this park!

It encompasses over 125,000 acres across 2 states.

How can I get across the river at Leatherwood Ford with the low water bridge closed?

Park your vehicle at Leatherwood Ford and walk across the highway bridge. Then take the steps down to the trail.

Why shouldn't I throw away food scraps in my campfire?

Bears and other wild animals are attracted to food scraps and burned residue. Bears that become habituated to human food often stop foraging for food and are typically the animals that cause problems.

Where can I buy gasoline if I'm in the Bandy Creek Area?

The closest gas stations are located in Oneida and Jamestown, TN. Both towns are about twenty miles from Bandy Creek.

Take the plunge into the Bandy Creek Pool this Summer!



OPEN SATURDAYS, SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS FROM MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND THROUGH LABOR DAY FROM NOON TO 6:00 P.M. EASTERN TIME.

THE POOL MAY BE RESERVED BY THE HOUR FROM NOON TO 6:00 P.M. MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HOLIDAYS). CONTACT US AT 423-569-2404 EXT 267 OR VISIT US ONLINE AT www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/afterhourspoolparties.htm FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Do you want to see beautiful scenery without having to walk far?

by Sherry Fritschi, Interpretation Park Ranger

Three overlooks within the park are accessible by way of short paved trails from parking lots. The views of the Big South Fork River from above the gorge change throughout the seasons, providing excellent photographic opportunities.

East Rim Overlook and Honey Creek Overlook are located in the Tennessee portion of the park and Devils Jump Overlook is in Kentucky. The Blue Heron Overlook, which is located on the same road as Devils Jump Overlook, provides a nice view of the coal tippie at Blue Heron but the paved walk to get there is steep and moderately difficult. Look at the park map printed in this newspaper or use the map on your park brochure for driving routes to these panoramic views.

If you prefer to watch scenery through a window while leaving the driving to somebody else, consider taking a ride on the Big South Fork Scenic Railway, a national park concessionaire. Board the train from the historic depot in Stearns, Kentucky, and enjoy the landscape as the train rolls by houses, farms and through the forest on its way to and from the Blue Heron Coal Mining Community. Visit www.bsfsry.com or call 1-800-462-5664 for train schedules and fare information.

Watching the Big South Fork Spring to Life

by Dave Carney, Chief of Interpretation and Education

The changing seasons are one of the things that make Big South Fork special. The bright fall colors at their peak will make you stop and stare no matter how many times you have seen them, and the snow dusted trees and hanging ice sculptures always seem to trigger memories of winter holidays from your past, but it is after the fall and winter that nature seems to get busy. As the days get longer, the ice and snow melt back into motion, the wildlife stretch their legs, and the forest brings color back to our lives.

It is subtle at first as you believe that the grass has started to green along the edge of the trees, but just when you are about to dismiss the idea as just hopeful thinking the purple hue of the redbud trees begin to line the edge of the forest. The color of the redbud trees will intensify daily from the end of March into April, and just as they reach their peak they are joined along the forest edge by the creamy white flowers of the dogwoods. To catch the two together, you must not wait a day, and don't stop with the roadsides because these two trees are simply the forest's way of announcing its grand reopening.

As soon as the redbud and dogwood have been seen blooming together, it is time to take a hike. It is during this time that the trees have yet to leaf out for the summer and the warm sun reaches the forest floor that the spring ephemerals paint the ground. Spring ephemerals are perennial plants that emerge quickly in the spring and die back to their underground parts after a short growth and reproduction phase. Don't forget your camera or you will miss the short window to get pictures of many varieties of trillium, violets, and orchids. Almost any trail in the park is great for searching for spring wildflowers, but they will start on the ridges and south facing slopes where the ground warms faster and will come later on north facing slopes and in the gorges. Stop at the Bandy Creek Visitor Center or the Blue Heron Historic Mining district to ask rangers where flowers might be blooming during your visit, and if you have missed them the rangers will point out other amazing things that have come to life along the trails of the Big South Fork.

Below are some of the Park Botanist, Marie Tackett, favorite wildflower hikes and horse rides.

TENNESSEE

Hiking:

Angel Falls Overlook Trail (part of the John Muir Trail ...my personal favorite for wildflowers)

Angel Falls Viewing Trail (river right)

Horse and hiking:

River Trail East upstream from Station Camp Crossing

Big Island Loop Station Camp Island downstream to Big Island

Coyle Branch

KENTUCKY

Hiking:

Yahoo Falls Trail Loops

Sheltowee Trace from Alum Ford, downstream to Yahoo Falls area

Sheltowee Trace from Alum Ford, upstream to Negro Creek Trail



