

Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

www.nps.gov/biso



GO BIG 2026 CHALLENGE

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Welcome to the GO BIG 2026 CHALLENGE!

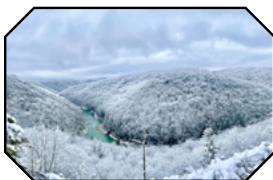
Every Season Gives a Reason to Go Big in the Parks!

The GO BIG 2026 Challenge is back for another exciting year--and we're continuing to celebrate the unique experiences each season brings. This year, we're especially excited to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Obed Wild and Scenic River, a milestone that honors five decades of preserving the rugged beauty, rich biodiversity, and free-flowing waters of this treasured landscape. Look for the special Obed 50th anniversary category in this year's challenge!

While Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area and Obed Wild and Scenic River continue to offer environmentally sustainable recreation opportunities, Manhattan Project National Historical Park, nestled in the urban community of Oak Ridge, remains a surprising oasis of outdoor fun. Whether you're exploring on foot, bike, watercraft, or horseback, you'll earn points as you engage with each park. As you work toward your point goal, look for the unique activities and features that make every season in these parks worth exploring.

The booklet features four seasonal categories, winter, spring, summer, and fall, with subcategories of questions or tasks to complete during each season, each with point values. Earn 100 points to receive your unique GO BIG 2026 Challenge patch. Building on the success of last year's Lightning Challenges, we're continuing the program this year! Designed for explorers on shorter visits, this mini challenge offers a quick, engaging way to dive into the parks and earn points. For more information on the Lightning Challenge, stop by one of the parks' visitor centers or call 423-286-7275. New for 2026, the Off-Trail Impact Award recognizes participants who go beyond the trails by earning the highest point totals through attending events and ranger-led programs.

Pick and choose from the categories and questions to find the ones that are right for you. Complete a few or conquer them all; the choice is yours to make. We encourage you to embark on this adventure, exploring all three parks, enjoying what each season brings, and taking part in preserving these natural treasures for generations to come. Remember, every season is a reason to GO BIG in the parks--how will you take on the challenge this year? The adventure is yours to discover!





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Means location is wheelchair accessible.



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Snowy Strolls

Points earned for miles must be completed on trails, riverways, or designated use areas at Big South Fork, Obed, and Manhattan Project during the winter season of 2026.

1. Earn 2 points for every mile hiked in the winter season.

____ :Total miles

2. Earn 2 points for every mile pedaled in the winter season.

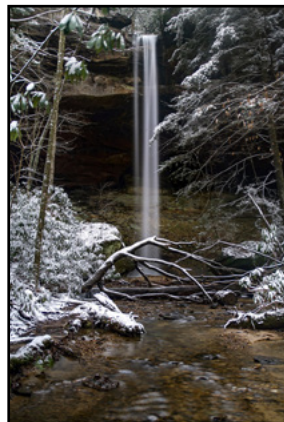
____ :Total miles

3. Earn 2 points for every mile riding equestrian at Big South Fork in the winter season.

____ :Total miles

4. Earn 2 points for every mile paddled at Big South Fork and Obed in the winter season.

____ :Total miles



Yahoo Falls at Big South Fork.

Cold Days, Big Impacts

Help your national parks by becoming a park volunteer. Contact the parks at biso_information@nps.gov for more information and to sign up! All points earned in this section must be completed during the winter season.

____ **5. 50 Points:** Sign up as a Trail Keeper. Volunteers must do a complete check of the trail during the 2026 winter season and turn in their required paperwork to the Volunteer Coordinator to receive the points.

Date(s): _____

Trail(s): _____

6. ♿ Be a Park Volunteer! Contact the parks in 2026 to learn how you can assist with special events and other projects that must be completed during the winter season to earn points. Sign up by email at biso_information@nps.gov (Trail Keeper time does not count on this section.)

Earn 1 point for every hour worked. Total hours worked: _____

____ :Total points

____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Winter Events and Programs

7. Receive 5 points for every ranger-led program at Big South Fork, Obed, or Manhattan Project you attend during the winter:

Some programs are wheelchair accessible.

Name of programs and dates: _____

_____ :Total points



Winter view from Lilly Bridge, Obed WSR.

Sleeping Bags & Snowflakes

Camp in the parks this winter to earn a cool 10 points! Reservations may be made by calling 877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov.

8. 10 Points per permit: Obtain a permit and go backcountry camping at Big South Fork or Obed this winter. Permits can be obtained at Bandy Creek Visitor Center, Blue Heron Interpretive Center, Obed Visitor Center, or online at www.pay.gov.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

9. 10 Points each camping trip: Go camping at Big South Fork's campgrounds this winter -- Bandy Creek Campground, Station Camp Campground, and Alum Ford Campground.

Date(s) Camped: _____

Campground(s): _____

_____ :Total points

10. 10 Points: Go camping at Rock Creek Campground at Obed this winter.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : TOTAL POINTS EARNED



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Obed's Quiet Canvas

Winter at Obed brings a quiet beauty, with a peaceful stillness that invites reflection. Though the park slows down, it's a perfect time to notice subtle details. This season's calm encourages you to pause, observe, and capture the spirit of Obed.

____ 11.  **10 Points:** Write a poem, sketch, or take a photo inspired by Obed's winter quiet and beauty. Share your creation on biso_challenge@nps.gov.

Critters in the Cold

With many critters adapting to the cold, winter offers a special chance to spot many animals, including some hardy insects. As food becomes scarce, animals may be more active during daylight hours and easier to spot. While there may be fewer species around, you can enjoy watching their unique behaviors and discover how each critter survives and thrives in the chilly season.

12. 1 point each: See how many wildlife species you can identify while exploring the parks this winter. Wildlife includes any species of bird, invertebrate, fish, mammal, reptile, or amphibian. Give yourself one point for each species you correctly identify--whether by sight, sound, tracks, or other signs. Each species counts only once per season.

Species: _____

____ :Total points

____ : TOTAL POINTS EARNED



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Bearly Awake

During winter, black bears retreat to dens in hollow trees or caves, conserving energy by relying on stored body fat. Though not true hibernators, they remain mostly inactive, and mother bears give birth to cubs during this time. Complete the activities below during the winter season to learn more about black bears in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

____ **13. ♿ 3 points:** During the winter months, black bears enter a state called torpor, a lighter form of hibernation that allows them to conserve energy without entering a deep, continuous sleep. While in torpor, a bear's heart rate and breathing slow down, and their body temperature drops slightly, but they can still wake easily if disturbed. Unlike true hibernators, black bears may shift positions in their den, respond to nearby sounds, or even briefly leave their den during milder weather. This adaptation helps them survive long periods without eating, drinking, or eliminating waste--all while relying on stored body fat for energy. What are two key differences between torpor in black bears and true hibernation seen in other animals?

Answer: _____

____ **14. ♿ 2 points:** As winter approaches, black bears seek out dens to shelter from the cold and conserve energy during their period of torpor. These dens come in many forms. What matters most isn't the location, but that the den offers protection from the elements and a sense of safety. Bears do not line their dens with much bedding and may even have snow drift into the entrance. Females give birth during this time, making their dens a critical part of both survival and reproduction in the winter months. What are some surprising places black bears might choose to den for the winter? Answer: _____



____ **15. ♿ 2 points:** In the world of black bears, parenting is a solo job and it's all on mom. After mating in the summer, male black bears go their separate ways and play no role in raising cubs. By the time winter arrives and females are giving birth in their dens, male bears are also in torpor, focused only on conserving energy and surviving the cold months. Cubs are born and raised entirely by their mothers, who care for them through the winter and into their first year, teaching them how to find food, avoid danger, and eventually survive on their own. What role does the male black bear play in raising cubs during winter?

Answer: _____

Young black bear cub.

____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Winter's Cosmic Chill

Long nights provide extra time for stargazing, and for those willing to brave the chill, the rewards are truly breathtaking. Complete the activities below during the winter season to learn more about dark night skies. Stumped on a question? Visit or call Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

_____ 16. ♿ 10 points: Winter nights are often clear and crisp, making it a great time for stargazing. Visit the parks on a clear winter night. What visible constellations are most prominent in the sky? Date:_____ Answer:_____

_____ 17. ♿ 3 points: Cold winter nights bring the chance to observe several meteor showers. What meteor showers are typically seen in the winter months, and how can you prepare for the best viewing experience?
Answer:_____

_____ 18. ♿ 3 points: If you were designing a park visitor center and campground, how would you balance outdoor lighting needs with night sky conservation? List three specific ways you would reduce light pollution while still ensuring safety and visibility for residents.
Answer:_____



Blue Heron Tipple Bridge under moonlight.

_____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Staying Warm on the Web

Explore the parks from the warmth of home this winter by visiting online, where stories of the past and virtual adventures await your discovery. Go to the parks' websites at www.nps.gov/biso, www.nps.gov/obed, and www.nps.gov/mapr to find the answers.



Station Camp Campground, Big South Fork NRA.

____ **19. ♿ 3 points:** No matter what type of camping you enjoy--RV, tent, or even camping with your horse--Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area has a campground to meet your needs. There are a total of five campgrounds within the park: two located in Tennessee and three in Kentucky. Can you name all the campgrounds and what type of camping they offer?

Answer: _____

____ **20. ♿ 2 points:** Obed Wild and Scenic River is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2026! As part of this special year, discover more about one of the park's favorite places to stay--Rock Creek Campground. This is the only campground in the park, featuring 11 primitive sites open year-round near the Nemo area. Each site includes a grill, food storage locker, and access to toilets.

What is the physical address of Rock Creek Campground, and what is the per-night reservation fee?
Answer: _____

____ **21. ♿ 2 points:** Use the Directions and Maps section on Manhattan Project NHP's website to learn about the historic sites. Click on the green map markers to see each location's name, photo, and a brief description. Many points of interest are located in the publicly accessible areas of Oak Ridge, while others are within the secure Oak Ridge National Laboratory property to the south. Click on at least five green map markers and learn about each location. Which one would you most like to visit, and why?

Answer: _____

_____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Snow Safe & Sound

Everyone should be able to Go Big and enjoy their time at the parks. One way to do this, is to enjoy the parks with safety in mind. If you or someone in your group is injured or ill while visiting the parks or you see something suspicious or unsafe, dial 911 or speak with park staff. To answer the following questions, check out the "Safety" tab on the parks' websites or follow on social media.

____ 22. 3 points: List three key items you should pack when hiking in icy or snowy conditions?
Answer: _____

____ 23. 2 points: List two ways you can stay warm and prevent hypothermia while camping in cold temperatures? Answer: _____



Winter paints with ice on the trails, a stunning reminder to walk carefully and stay safe while exploring.

____ : TOTAL POINTS EARNED

WINTER TOTAL POINTS _____



Spring Season: March 20-June 20

Trails in Bloom

Points earned for miles must be completed on trails, riverways, or designated use areas at Big South Fork, Obed, and Manhattan Project during the spring season of 2026.

24. Earn 1 point for every mile hiked in the spring season.

_____ :Total miles

25. Earn 1 point for every mile pedaled in the spring season.

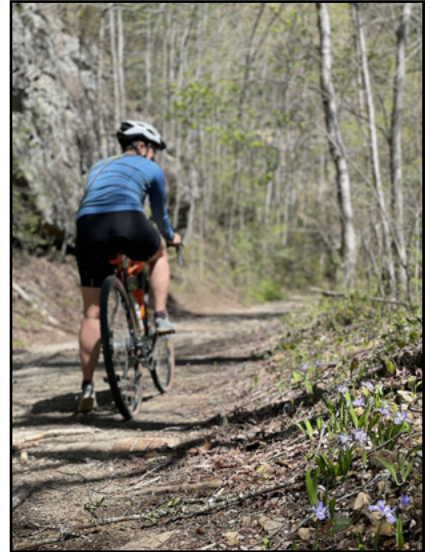
_____ :Total miles

26. Earn 1 point for every mile riding equestrian at Big South Fork NRA in the spring season.

_____ :Total miles

27. Earn 1 point for every mile paddled at Big South Fork and Obed in the spring season.

_____ :Total miles



Big South Fork has close to 300 miles of mountain biking trails.

Planting Seeds of Service

Help your national parks by becoming a park volunteer. Contact the parks at biso_information@nps.gov for more information and to sign up! All points earned in this section must be completed during the spring season.

_____ **28. 50 Points:** Sign up as a Trail Keeper. Volunteers must do a complete check of the trail during the 2025 spring season and turn in their required paperwork to the Volunteer Coordinator to receive the points.

Date(s): _____

Trail(s): _____

29.  Be a Park Volunteer! Contact the parks in 2026 to learn how you can assist with special events and other projects that must be completed during the spring season to earn points. Sign up by email at biso_information@nps.gov (Trail Keeper time does not count on this section.)

Earn 1 point for every hour worked: Total hours worked: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 20

Spring Events and Programs

30. **10 Points for each of the major spring events attended the parks:**

_____ Spring Planting & Music Festival: Bandy Creek - April 25

_____ Decoration Day - Saturday, May 2 and the entire month of May (earn up to 25 points)

_____ **:Total points**

31. **10 Points:** Attend one of the spring Tennis Court Dances held by Manhattan Project NHP on Thursdays, May 21 and June 18. Don't forget to bring your dancing shoes!

Dates: _____

_____ **:Total points**

32. **Receive 5 points for every ranger-led program at Big South Fork, Obed, or Manhattan Project you attend during the spring:**

Some programs are wheelchair accessible.

Name of programs and dates: _____

_____ **:Total points**

Springtime Sleepouts

Camp in the parks this spring and enjoy life blooming all around you! Reservations may be made by calling 877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov.

_____ **33. 10 Points per permit:** Obtain a permit and go backcountry camping at Big South Fork or Obed this spring. Permits can be obtained at Bandy Creek Visitor Center, Blue Heron Visitor Center, Obed Visitor Center, or online at www.pay.gov.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ **:Total points**

_____ **34. 10 Points per camping trip:** Go camping at Big South Fork's campgrounds this spring -- Bandy Creek Campground, Blue Heron Campground, Station Camp Campground, Bear Creek Campground, and Alum Ford Campground.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ **:Total points**

35. **10 Points:** Go camping at Rock Creek Campground at Obed this spring.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ **:Total points**

_____ **: TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 20

Obed Awakens

Spring at Obed bursts to life. The warming days invite exploration as nature awakens from its winter rest. It's the perfect season to notice new growth, breathe in the crisp air, and celebrate the renewal that marks both the land and the river--and Obed's 50 years of protection!

____ **36. 10 Points:** Take a 50-minute walk on a trail like Point Trail or Lilly Bluff Overlook. Look for signs of new life: wildflowers, budding trees, or animal activity. Take a moment to reflect on how Obed has changed over the past 50 years. Date: ____

Critter Comeback

As the world wakes up from winter, spring brings a burst of life and activity among critters of all kinds. Migrating birds head north, insects emerge, and animals become more visible as they search for food and mates. With new growth and warmer days, spring is the perfect time to observe a wide variety of species.

37. 1 point each: See how many wildlife species you can identify while exploring the parks this spring. Wildlife includes any species of bird, invertebrate, fish, mammal, reptile, or amphibian. Give yourself one point for each species you correctly identify--whether by sight, sound, tracks, or other signs. Each species counts only once per season.
Species: _____



Common buckeye butterfly can be found in the parks.

____ **:Total points**

38. 2 points for each wildflower: Spring marks the return of wildflowers. Earn extra points this season by identifying three of the showiest wildflowers you find in the parks. Each species counts only once per season.

Species: _____

____ **:Total points**

____ **: TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 20

Springtime Stretch for Bears

With the arrival of spring, black bears emerge from their dens, hungry after months of dormancy. They forage for fresh plants, insects, and leftover nuts while mother bears guide their cubs through their first experiences in the wild. Complete the activities below during the spring season to learn more about black bears in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

____ 39. **2 Points:** As winter fades, black bears emerge from their dens, ending their period of torpor. After months without eating, drinking, or moving much, they're hungry and ready to start feeding again. This is a crucial time for bears to rebuild energy reserves after a long winter. What types of foods do black bears primarily eat when they first emerge from their dens in spring?
Answer: _____



A fed bear is a dead bear, keep food and trash secured to protect both wildlife and yourself.

____ 40. **2 Points:** For cubs born during winter, spring marks their first extended time outside the den. They begin learning basic survival skills by watching their mother, including how to forage and recognize safe places. This early exposure is vital for their growth and development. What is one key skill that bear cubs start learning from their mothers in spring?
Answer: _____

____ 41. **3 Points:** In the outlined box below, draw a bear in the park, take a photo of your drawing and email it to biso_challenge@nps.gov.



____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 20

Springtime Starlight

With milder temperatures and blooming landscapes, spring provides a comfortable and refreshing stargazing experience. Complete the activities below during the spring season to learn more about dark night skies. Stumped on a question? Visit or call Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

____ **42. ♿ 10 Points:** As the days grow longer in spring, the stars shift in the night sky. Visit the parks on a clear spring night. What visible constellations are most prominent in the sky?
Date: ____ Answer: ____

43. ♿ 3 Points: Spring is a time of renewal, and the night sky offers some spectacular sights. If you were to plan a spring stargazing adventure, which celestial event or object would you most want to observe, and why?
Answer: ____



Lilly Bridge at Obed Wild & Scenic River is a great place to catch the stars at night.

____ **44. ♿ 3 Points:** Obed WSR is designated as an International Dark Sky Park. Why do you think national parks play an important role in preserving dark skies?
Answer: ____

45. ♿ 3 Points for each species: Spring nights come alive with the calls and flights of night birds in the parks. See how many you can identify while exploring the parks after dark. Night birds can be identified by sight or by sound. Give yourself three points for each species you correctly identify. Each species counts only once per season. Remember to also record each species in the "Critter Comeback" category for 1 point each. Date(s): ____
Species: ____

____ **:Total points**

____ **: TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 20

Springtime Web Discovery

Spring into the season of renewal by exploring the parks' websites, where you can find plenty of interesting facts and stories to enjoy. Go to the parks' websites at www.nps.gov/biso, www.nps.gov/obed, and www.nps.gov/mapr to find the answers.

____ **46. ♿ 2 points:** Everyone loves a warm, glowing campfire while camping, whether you're roasting marshmallows or simply enjoying the outdoors in the afternoon. Unfortunately, firewood can sometimes carry unwelcome guests, such as invasive insects, that can cause serious harm to the forest. What is required when building a campfire inside Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area? Answer: _____

47. ♿ 2 points: By following minimum impact principles, visitors help preserve the natural beauty of Obed WSR. While these principles are not official regulations, they enhance the wilderness experience and ensure that the area's unique values remain intact for both current and future visitors. Name the seven Leave No Trace principles. Answer: _____



Ringing of the bell ceremony in Oak Ridge.

____ **48. ♿ 2 points:** One of the many monuments commemorating World War II is the International Friendship Bell, located in Oak Ridge. This symbol of peace and unity between the United States and Japan was cast by renowned Japanese bell maker Sotetsu Iwasawa in Kyoto, Japan, in 1993. The bell stands 7 feet tall, weighs 8,000 pounds, and was created at a cost of \$83,000. Where in Oak Ridge is the International Friendship Bell located? Answer: _____

____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 20

Spring into Safety

Springtime weather beckons us to get outside and recreate safely! If you or someone in your group is injured or ill while visiting the parks or you see something suspicious or unsafe, dial 911 or speak with park staff. To answer the following questions, check out the "Safety" tab on the parks' websites or follow on social media.

____ 49. ♿ **3 points:** List three potential hazards you should watch out for when visiting the parks in the spring. Answer: _____

____ 50. ♿ **2 points:** Springtime often brings sudden rain and muddy trails. What are two precautions you can take to ensure a safe and enjoyable park visit in the spring? Answer: _____



Ride the horseback trails of Big South Fork this spring, but watch for high waters and slick paths. Safety first, adventure always!

____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**

SPRING TOTAL POINTS _____



Summer Season: June 21-September 21

Hot Trails, Cool Views

Points earned for miles must be completed on trails, riverways, or designated use areas at Big South Fork, Obed, and Manhattan Project during the summer season of 2026.

51. Earn 1 point for every mile hiked in the summer season.

_____ :Total miles

52. Earn 1 point for every mile pedaled in the summer season.

_____ :Total miles

53. Earn 1 point for every mile riding equestrian at Big South Fork NRRRA in the summer season.

_____ :Total miles

54. Earn 1 point for every mile paddled at Big South Fork and Obed in the summer season.

_____ :Total miles

Helping Hands & Summer Plans

Help your national parks by becoming a park volunteer. Contact the park at biso_information@nps.gov for more information and to sign up! All points earned in this section must be completed during the summer season.

_____ **55. 50 Points:** Sign up as a Trail Keeper. Volunteers must do a complete check of the trail during the 2026 summer season and turn in their required paperwork to the Volunteer Coordinator to receive the points.

Date(s): _____

Trail(s): _____

56.  Be a Park Volunteer! Contact the parks in 2026 to learn how you can assist with special events and other projects that must be completed during the summer season to earn points. Sign up by email at biso_information@nps.gov (Trail Keeper time does not count on this section.)

Earn 1 point for every hour worked: Total hours worked: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 21-September 21

Summer Events and Programs

57. **10 Points** for each of the major summer events attended at the parks:

_____ “Days of Peace and Remembrance” Sunrise Bell Ringing - August 6

_____ Obed Photo Contest Reveal - August 21

_____ Big South Fork Photo Contest Reveal - September 4

_____ Haunting in the Hills Storytelling Festival - September 19

_____ :Total points

58. **10 Points:** Attend one of the Tennis Court Dances held by Manhattan Project NHP on Thursdays, July 16, August 20, and September 17. Don’t forget to bring your dancing shoes!

Dates: _____

_____ :Total points



59. **Receive 5 points for every ranger-led program at Big South Fork, Obed, or Manhattan Project you attend during the summer season:**

Some programs are wheelchair accessible.

Name of programs and dates: _____

_____ :Total points

Our ranger-led programs can be found listed on the website or ask our staff at the visitor centers.

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 21-September 21

S'more Summer Fun

There's plenty of shade in the parks to beat the heat while camping at Big South Fork and Obed. Bring the whole family! Reservations may be made by calling 877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov.

60. 10 Points per permit: Obtain a permit and go backcountry camping at Big South Fork or Obed this summer. Permits can be obtained at Bandy Creek Visitor Center, Blue Heron Visitor Center, Obed Visitor Center, or online at www.pay.gov.

Date(s) Camped: _____
_____: **Total points**

61. 10 Points per camping trip: Go camping at Big South Fork's campgrounds this summer -- Bandy Creek Campground, Blue Heron Campground, Station Camp Campground, Bear Creek Campground, and Alum Ford Campground.

Date(s) Camped: _____
_____: **Total points**

62. 10 Points: Go camping at Rock Creek Campground at Obed this summer.

Date(s) Camped: _____
_____: **Total points**

Obed Summer Flow

Summer at Obed pulses with energy--wildlife thrives in the sun and the lush forest offers cool shade. It's the perfect time to explore the vibrant sounds and sights of the season. Celebrate 50 years of wild by embracing all the fun and movement summer brings to the park.

63. 10 Points: Grab a pair of water shoes and explore the shallow streams and riverbanks at Obed. Look closely for aquatic insects, fish, and other small creatures that call the water home. Try to identify at least five different critters or plants along the way. Record each species in the "Critters in the Sunshine" category for 1 extra point each. Date: _____

Species: _____



An American toad rests on the mossy forest floor, a small but vital part of the Big South Fork and Obed ecosystem.

_____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 21-September 21

Critters in the Sunshine

Summer is a busy season for critters, with warm days bringing out a wide variety of animals, birds, and insects. This is the perfect time to watch creatures in full activity--feeding, nesting, and raising their young. With longer daylight hours, you'll have plenty of opportunities to explore and discover the vibrant life buzzing all around you.

64. 1 point each: See how many wildlife species you can identify while exploring the parks this summer. Wildlife includes any species of bird, invertebrate, fish, mammal, reptile, or amphibian. Give yourself one point for each species you correctly identify--whether by sight, sound, tracks, or other signs. Each species counts only once per season.

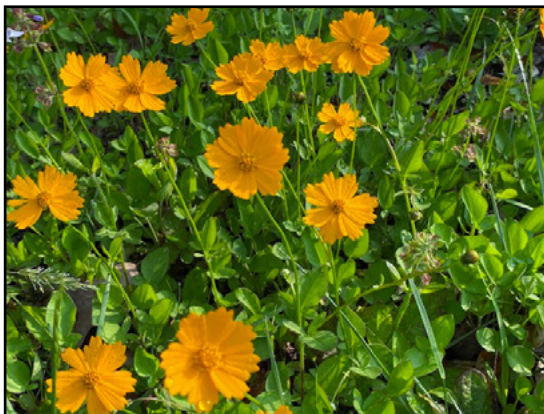
Species: _____

____ :Total points

65. 2 points for each wildflower: Summer still has wildflowers in bloom! Spring marks the return of wildflowers. Earn extra points this season by identifying three of the showiest wildflowers you find in the parks. Each species counts only once per season.

Species: _____

____ :Total points



Golden ear-leaved tickseed brightens the trails of Big South Fork.

____ : TOTAL POINTS EARNED



Summer Season: June 21-September 21

Bear Days of Summer

Summer brings an abundance of food, from berries to insects, helping bears build fat reserves. This is also mating season, with males traveling in search of mates, while others seek shade and water to stay cool. Complete the activities below during the summer season to learn more about black bears in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

____ **66. ♿ 2 points:** Summer is prime feeding time for black bears. With longer days and a wide variety of food sources available, bears spend much of their time foraging. This time of year is all about building up fat reserves for the months ahead, especially for females. What types of foods do black bears primarily eat during the summer, and why is this season so important for their diet?

Answer: _____



The American black bear, a powerful yet shy resident of Big South Fork. Remember to admire from a distance and keep food and trash secure.

____ **67. ♿ 2 points:** Unlike in winter, black bears are very active during the summer months. They travel long distances in search of food, water, and mates, often moving through different habitats daily. This is also a time when young bears, recently separated from their mothers, begin to establish their own territories. Because they're so active, and driven by food, bears can occasionally wander into campsites or neighborhoods. That's why it's important to secure food, trash, and anything with a strong scent when visiting bear country. Why are black bears more active in the summer, and how does that affect their interaction with people? Answer: _____

____ **68. ♿ 2 points:** By summer, black bear cubs born in the den during winter are several months old and growing fast. They begin to follow their mothers more actively, learning important survival skills. Cubs stay close to their mothers throughout their first year, watching and mimicking her every move. Summer is also when cubs face their biggest challenges--avoiding predators, learning what's safe to eat, and staying out of trouble. With their natural curiosity and small size, they're more vulnerable during this time, making their mother's protection and guidance critical. What are two important things black bear cubs learn from their mothers during the summer?

Answer: _____

____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 21-September 21

Starlit Summer Nights

Summer nights are made for stargazing, with warm temperatures and breathtaking sights overhead. Complete the activities below during the summer season to learn more about dark night skies. Stumped on a question? Visit or call Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

____ **69. ♿ 10 Points:** As the days grow longer in summer, the stars shift in the night sky. Visit the parks on a clear spring night. What visible constellations are most prominent in the sky?
Date:____ Answer:_____

____ **70. ♿ 5 Points** Summer brings warm, clear nights perfect for meteor showers. What causes meteor showers, and when can you expect to see the most meteors during summer months?
Answer:_____

____ **71. ♿ 3 Points:** National parks are some of the last places to see truly dark skies. Imagine you are a park ranger leading a night sky program. What would you include in your presentation to help visitors understand and appreciate the beauty of the night sky?
Answer:_____

72. ♿ 2 Points for each species: Summer nights are a good time to spot or hear night birds in the parks. See how many you can identify while exploring the parks after dark. Night birds can be identified by sight or by sound. Give yourself two points for each species you correctly identify. Each species counts only once per season. Remember to also record each species in the "Critters in the Sunshine" category for 1 extra point each. Date(s): _____
Species: _____

____ **: Total points**

____ **: TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



View of the Milky Way over Nemo Bridge in Obed WSR.



Summer Season: June 21-September 21

Staying Cool on the Web

This summer, dive into the parks online and discover fascinating stories and facts from wherever you are. Go to the park's websites at www.nps.gov/biso, www.nps.gov/obed, and www.nps.gov/mapr to find the answers.

____ **73. ♿ 2 points:** The region surrounding Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area may contain more natural arches than any other area in the eastern United States. Over time, the resistant Rockcastle conglomerate has slowly eroded to form arches of various sizes and shapes throughout the landscape. While only a few of these arches are easily accessible or have maintained trails leading to them, some can still be reached with a short hike or drive. Can you list some of the most accessible arches that can be reached by trail or with easy access?

Answer: _____

____ **74. ♿ 2 points:** The Lily Bluff region offers some of the most scenic hiking trails at Obed. While exploring these trails, visitors can enjoy stunning rock outcrops with views of the river gorge, hike to a natural arch through a lush, moisture-rich forest, and see cascading creeks along the way. As you continue celebrating 50 years of wild and scenic adventure, take a moment to explore this special part of the park. What is the name of the longest trail located in the Lily Bluff region?

Answer: _____



Split Bow Arch, located on the Kentucky side of Big South Fork.

____ **75. ♿ 2 points:** Once a thriving community, Wheat was home to several schools, a post office, a service station, three churches, and even a small college. The community was officially named in 1881, after the first local postmaster, Henry Franklin Wheat. Today, the only surviving building from the original community is the Wheat Church, now located on the K-25 site. What other name is the Wheat Church known by, and when was it constructed?

Answer: _____

____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 21-September 21

Don't Sweat It—Stay Safe!

Don't let summer fun turn into a safety hazard! If you or someone in your group is injured or ill while visiting the parks or you see something suspicious or unsafe, dial 911 or speak with park staff. To answer the following questions, check out the "Safety" tab on the parks' websites or follow on social media.

____ **76. ♿ 2 points:** Summer heat can be intense. List two ways to prevent dehydration and heat exhaustion while exploring a park?

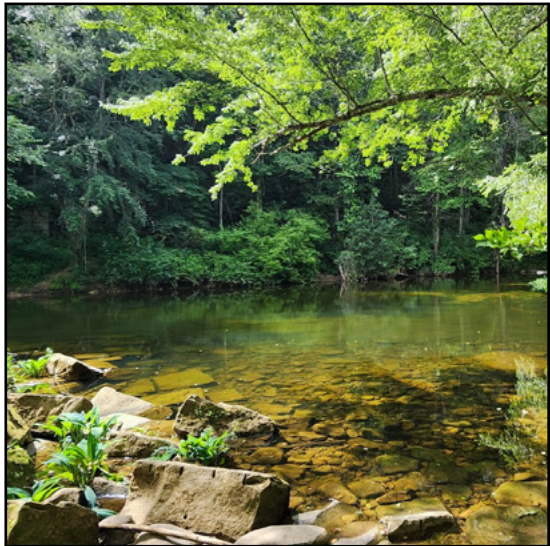
Answer: _____

____ **77. ♿ 2 points:** Campfires are great for roasting marshmallows, but they can also be dangerous. What steps should you take to safely build and extinguish a campfire?

Answer: _____



Campfire s'mores done right at Big South Fork or Obed. Enjoy the gooey goodness, but keep water close and never leave the fire unattended.



Peaceful views from Jett Bridge at Obed. When cooling off watch your footing on rocks, and respect the water's current.

____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**

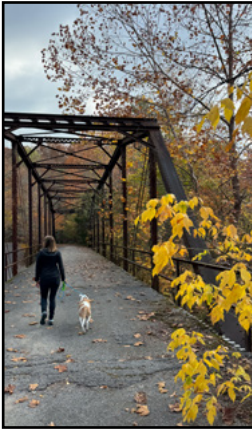
SUMMER TOTAL POINTS _____



Fall Season: September 21-December 31

Wander Into Fall

Points earned for miles must be completed on trails, riverways, or designated use areas at Big South Fork, Obed, and Manhattan Project during the fall season of 2026.



Fall colors on display at Nemo Bridge, Obed WSR.

78. Earn 1 point for every mile hiked in the fall season.

_____ :Total miles

79. Earn 1 point for every mile pedaled in the fall season.

_____ :Total miles

80. Earn 1 point for every mile riding equestrian at Big South Fork NRRRA in the fall season.

_____ :Total miles

81. Earn 1 point for every mile paddled at Big South Fork and Obed in the fall season.

_____ :Total miles

Autumn Acts of Kindness

Help your national parks by becoming a park volunteer. Contact the parks at biso_information@nps.gov for more information and to sign up! All points earned in this section must be completed during the fall season.

_____ **82. 50 Points:** Sign up as a Trail Keeper. Volunteers must do a complete check of the trail during the 2026 fall season and turn in their required paperwork to the Volunteer Coordinator to receive the points.

Date(s): _____

Trail(s): _____

83. Be a Park Volunteer! Contact the parks in 2026 to learn how you can assist with special events and other projects that must be completed during the fall season to earn points. Sign up by email at biso_information@nps.gov (Trail Keeper time does not count on this section.)

Earn 1 point for every hour worked: Total hours worked: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 21-December 31

Fall Events and Programs

84. **10 Points** for each of the major fall events attended at the parks:

_____ Blue Heron Ghost Mine - October 17

_____ :Total points

85. **10 Points:** Attend the Tennis Court Dance held by Manhattan Project NHP on Thursday, October 18. Don't forget to bring your dancing shoes!

_____ :Total points

86. **Receive 5 points for every ranger-led program at Big South Fork, Obed, or Manhattan Project you attend during the fall season:**

Some programs are wheelchair accessible.

Name of programs and dates: _____

_____ :Total points

Fall Asleep Outdoors

Fall is one of the most popular times to camp at Big South Fork and Obed. Book your campsite early! Reservations may be made by calling 877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov.

_____ **87. 10 Points per permit:** Obtain a permit and go backcountry camping at Big South Fork or Obed this fall. Permits can be obtained at Bandy Creek Visitor Center, Blue Heron Visitor Center, Obed Visitor Center, or online at www.pay.gov.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ **88. 10 Points per camping trip:** Go camping at Big South Fork's campgrounds this fall --Bandy Creek Campground, Blue Heron Campground, Station Camp Campground, Bear Creek Campground, and Alum Ford Campground.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ **89. 10 Points:** Go camping at Rock Creek Campground at Obed this fall.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 21-December 31

Fall for Obed

Fall at Obed paints the landscape in rich hues of gold, red, and orange. Crisp air and vibrant foliage create the perfect backdrop for hiking, climbing, or simply taking in the views. As the season changes, reflect on the beauty that's been preserved here for 50 years.

____ **90. 10 Points:** Go rock climbing or attend an 'Adaptive Outdoor Rock-Climbing' or 'Climb with a Ranger' program (also worth 5 points in the events category) to learn about the cliffs and formations that shaped Obed's landscape.

Date: _____



Rockclimbing is a popular activity at Obed.

Harvest Time Critters

As the air cools and leaves change color, fall is a time of preparation and transition for many critters. Animals gather food, birds begin migrating, and insects slow down as the season shifts. Fall offers a unique chance to observe these busy behaviors and see how wildlife gets ready for the coming winter.



Freshwater snails play key roles in keeping rivers and streams like Obed and Big South Fork healthy.

91. 1 point each: See how many wildlife species you can identify while exploring the parks this fall. Wildlife includes any species of bird, invertebrate, fish, mammal, reptile, or amphibian. Give yourself one point for each species you correctly identify--whether by sight, sound, tracks, or other signs. Each species counts only once per season.

Species: _____

____ :**Total points**

92. 2 points for each wildflower: Did you know fall still has plenty of wildflowers blooming? Earn extra points this season by identifying three of the showest wildflowers you find in the parks. Each species counts only once per season.

Species: _____

____ :**Total points**

____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 21-December 31

Beary Hungry, Beary Ready

Fall is a crucial time for black bears as they eat constantly to prepare for winter. They focus on high-calorie foods, making this one of the most active seasons for bear sightings. Complete the activities below during the fall season to learn more about black bears in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

____ **93. ♿ 2 points:** As fall arrives, black bears focus on eating as much as possible to build fat reserves for the upcoming winter. This time of year bears eat and drink nearly nonstop, consuming large amounts of berries, nuts, acorns, and even insects. This process is called hyperphagia. Why is hyperphagia important for black bears in the fall?

Answer: _____

____ **94. ♿ 2 points:** What is the reproductive strategy called in black bears where the fertilized egg remains in a suspended state and doesn't implant in the uterus until the mother has enough fat reserves to survive hibernation and support a pregnancy?

Answer: _____



Juvenile black bear crossing the street at Big South Fork.

____ **95. ♿ 2 points:** In the fall, bears are especially active as they search for food to prepare for winter. Hikers may unknowingly surprise a bear, especially in dense vegetation or near natural food sources like acorns or berries. Fortunately, there are simple ways to reduce the chance of a close encounter. What are two things hikers can do to help prevent a surprise bear encounter on the trail?

Answer: _____

____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 21-December 31

Autumn Skies

With fewer bugs and cooler temperatures, fall is a great time to step outside and marvel at the cosmos. Complete the activities below during the fall season to learn more about dark night skies. Stumped on a question? Visit or call Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.



Our parks' dark skies can offer breathtaking views.

____ **96. ♿ 10 Points:** As the leaves change in fall, so does the night sky. Visit the parks on a clear autumn night. What visible constellations are most prominent in the sky?
Date:____ Answer:_____

____ **97. ♿ 5 Points:** The fall sky often brings spectacular events like the harvest moon. What is a harvest moon, and how does it differ from other full moons throughout the year?
Answer:_____

____ **98. ♿ 3 Points:** Pass It On! What is one action you could take today to reduce light pollution in your community?
Answer:_____

____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 21-December 31

Autumnal Web Wandering

This fall, explore the parks online and uncover interesting stories and facts as the season changes. Go to the parks' websites at www.nps.gov/biso, www.nps.gov/obed, and www.nps.gov/mapr to find the answers.

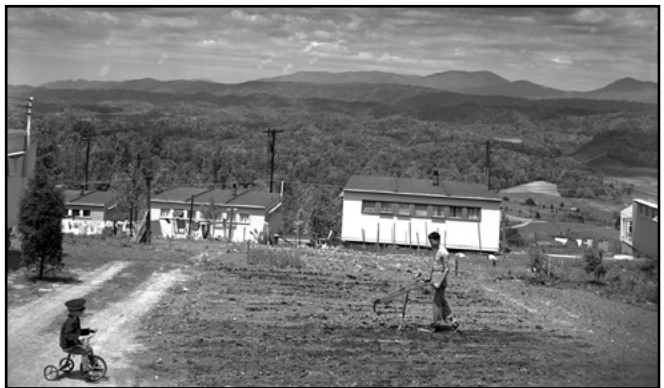
____ **99. ♿ 2 points:** One of the many recreational activities to enjoy in Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area is mountain biking. Volunteer mountain bike clubs have designed, built, and now maintain several trails throughout the park. In addition to bike-only trails, mountain bikes are also allowed on highway edges, backcountry roads, and some horse trails--offering riders of all skill levels a variety of trail options. The General Management Plan specifically mentions one of the many hiking and biking trails in the park. What is the name of this trail?

Answer: _____

____ **100. ♿ 2 points:** As part of the Obed Wild and Scenic River's 50th anniversary celebration, learn about a fascinating piece of history on display at the visitor center-- a 350-pound millstone found and retrieved from Clear Creek. In 1929, a great flood destroyed many gristmills in the area, and this artifact is one of the few pieces that survived the flood. What year was this millstone retrieved? Answer: _____

____ **101. ♿ 2 points:** Because of nationwide food rationing during World War II, the government encouraged people to start Victory Gardens to help supplement their food supply. Victory Gardens were found in nearly every local community, from rural farms to urban neighborhoods. Gardeners not only grew vegetables and herbs but also cultivated fruit-bearing plants. By the end of the war, how many Victory Gardens were there, and what percentage of the vegetables consumed during this time came from these gardens?

Answer: _____



An Oak Ridge resident diligently tending to his garden while a spectator looks on.

____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 21-December 31

Leaves Are Falling, Safety's Calling

Knowing how to be safe while recreating in the parks will keep you from “fall”ing into hazards. If you or someone in your group is injured or ill while visiting the parks or you see something suspicious or unsafe, dial 911 or speak with park staff. To answer the following questions, check out the “Safety” tab on the parks’ websites or follow on social media.

_____ **102. ♿ 3 points:** Fall weather can be unpredictable. Why is it important to dress in layers when visiting a park this season?

Answer: _____

_____ **103. ♿ 2 points:** Leaves can make trails slippery and hide obstacles. What are some ways to avoid tripping or getting lost while hiking in fall?

Answer: _____



People come from all over to view fall colors at Lilly Bluff Overlook, Obed WSR.

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**

FALL TOTAL POINTS _____

SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE

During the GO BIG 2026 Challenge we will be having #TriviaTuesday on the first Tuesday of every month on Facebook and YouTube. To participate, record the posted questions below, the date it was posted, and the correct answer to receive your points!

DATE	QUESTION	ANSWER	POINTS
Total Points for Social Media Challenge			

Off-Trail Impact Point Log

Earn points each season by attending ranger-led programs and special events. These experiences help you connect with the parks. The more you participate, the closer you'll get to earning the Off-Trail Impact Award for outstanding year-round engagement.

Season Events and Programs	POINTS
Winter Event and Ranger-led Program Point Total	
Spring Event and Ranger-led Program Point Total	
Summer Event and Ranger-led Program Point Total	
Fall Event and Ranger-led Program Point Total	
Event and Ranger-led Program Total Points in 2026	

Activity Log Sheet

U.S. Department of Interior

[illegible]

Log total miles for each season on pages 4, 11, 18. and 26

GO BIG 2026 CHALLENGE POINT LOG

Add up the points for each season and log them onto the corresponding lines below.

POINT LOG FOR EACH SEASON	
Winter Season Point Total: Pages 4-10	
Spring Season Point Total: Pages 11-17	
Summer Season Point Total: Pages 18-25	
Fall Season Point Total: Pages 26-32	
Social Media Challenge Point Total: Page 33	
Total	

GRAND TOTAL: _____

For award purposes we need you to select your age category:

Under 18 y/o ☐

Adult ☐

Those who wish to be considered for an award must have their booklets turned in to the Bandy Creek Visitor Center no later than December 1, 2026. There will be a "GO BIG Celebration" on December 5, 2026 at Bandy Creek Visitor Center for everyone who participated. Those present will be considered for an award in various categories, however, employees and their families are not eligible to compete.

AWARD CATEGORIES

- Most Hiking Miles
- Most Biking Miles
- Most Equestrian Miles
- Most Volunteer Points
- Most Off-Trail Impact Points--NEW!
- Most Overall Points: First and Second Place

*****Each participant can only qualify as a winner in one category.*****

POINT LOG FOR GO BIG CELEBRATION	
TOTAL Hiking	
TOTAL Biking Miles	
TOTAL Equestrian Miles	
TOTAL Volunteer Points	
TOTAL Off-Trail Impact Points	



This certificate is proudly presented to

Please Print Name

for completing the

Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area GO BIG 2026 CHALLENGE

Dated this _____ day of _____

Park Ranger Signature