



Horseback riding has become an increasingly popular activity on the Natchez Trace Parkway. While there are no horse rental concessions available on the Parkway, visitors are able to bring horses to ride on the established horse trails. Four horse trails have been developed adjacent to the Natchez Trace Parkway in Mississippi and Tennessee, in connection with the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail. The Natchez Trace Parkway also provides access to the Witch Dance Horse Trail on the Tombigbee National Forest. Horseback riding is prohibited on all other areas of the parkway, including on the roadway itself. For more information, including trailhead photos, please visit our website at www.nps.gov/natr.

Rules and Regulations

Trailers are permitted on the Parkway when used non-commercially to transport horses for recreational riding, and must be properly equipped with red taillights, red stoplights, and mechanical turn signals. Clearance lights are required on trailers over six feet high.

Trailers carrying over one ton must be properly equipped with brakes designed so as to be applied by the driver of a towing motor vehicle from its cab and so connected that in case of an accidental breakaway of the towed vehicle the brakes will be applied automatically.

All trailers must be connected to the towing vehicle by means of a safety chain or equivalent device and may not exceed a total length of 55 feet.

The loading and unloading of horses and pack animals is permitted only at designated horse trailheads, referred to as staging areas on Parkway maps.

All horses transported to or ridden on any park trail shall be accompanied by either the original or a copy of an official negative test (Coggins test) for equine infectious anemia (EIA) administered within the previous 12 months.

Only one rider per horse is permitted.

Please stay on designated trails.

Camping

Horses are not permitted in the camping or picnic areas. There are hitching posts available in the picnic areas along the Leipers Fork Segment of the National Scenic Trail. There are private campgrounds off the parkway that do allow horses, or provide horse stalls and trails. A complete list of campgrounds is available upon request.

Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail, Rocky Springs Segment (Milepost 59)

About 30 miles southwest of Jackson, Mississippi, near Port Gibson, the Rocky Springs section offers four miles of trail extending from the Utica-Regantown Rd. trailhead/staging area (Milepost 59 on the Natchez Trace Parkway) south to the Rocky Springs Campground (Milepost 54.8) that is open to horseback riding. This four mile (one way) steep and challenging horse trail contains creeks and ravines. Riders will need to cross the Parkway motor road one time on this trail. The Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail continues on for two and one-half miles to Owens Creek Waterfall (milepost 52.4), but this section is open to hikers only. The entire trail is out and back, not a loop.

Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail, Ridgeland Segment (Milepost 115)

The Ridgeland Trail, just north of Jackson, Mississippi, is 23 miles and passes through a variety of areas of historical significance and natural beauty. Limited trailer parking is available at the Highway 43 trailhead at Milepost 114.9. From Milepost 114.9 you can travel north about 16 miles to the northern terminus at Yockanookany (Milepost 130.9), or south about 7 miles to the West Florida Boundary (Milepost 107.9). Riders will need to travel along the Parkway motor road near Milepost 109, just north of the West Florida Boundary. Horse riders that choose not to ride on the Parkway may turn around. This is an out and back trail, not a loop.

Witch Dance Horse Trail in the Tombigbee National Forest (Milepost 233)

The Witch Dance Horse Trail, located in the Trace Unit of the Tombigbee National Forest, is an 18-mile, multi-loop trail winding through varied topography and changing forest settings. Access can be gained from the Natchez Trace Parkway at the Witch Dance Rest Area (Milepost 233), located four miles north of Highway 8. A paved parking/staging area is located opposite the comfort station.

Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail, Tupelo Segment (Milepost 260)

A 3.5-mile loop trail is located in southwest Tupelo, Mississippi, within the boundaries of the Parkway. The parking/staging area is accessed from Jackson Street in Tupelo, MS. From the Natchez Trace Parkway, exit onto Highway 6 at Milepost 260. Travel west on MS Highway 6 for approximately ½ mile to Air Park Road. Turn right and travel north to the end of the road at Jackson Street. Turn right on Jackson Street. A paved parking/staging area is on the left.

Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail, Leipers Fork Segment (Milepost 408 to 428)

This horse trail, approximately 25 miles in length is located one mile south of Tennessee Highway 46 near the Leipers Fork Community. The trail parallels the Parkway from the Garrison Creek Trailhead and parking/staging area (Milepost 427.6) to Tennessee Highway 50/Shady Grove parking/staging area (Milepost 408.0). This trail crosses under the Parkway motor road in several areas. Due to construction on Highway 840, a section of trail has been rerouted around the construction zone (milepost 423.9 to 425.4). Riders should be aware of noise in the construction area, and extra caution is advised. This project is expected to last until 2013. Please visit our website at www.nps.gov/natr for the most recent updates and closures.