

Wilderness.net's Sheep Ridge Wilderness Fact Sheet

Introduction

The United States Congress designated the Sheep Ridge Wilderness in 1984 and it now has a total of 9,315 acres. All of the wilderness is in North Carolina and is managed by the Forest Service.

Description

All that remains of Sir Walter Raleigh's lost colony is the word croatan, Algonquian for "council town," carved on a tree on Roanoke Island. This raised bogland or pocosin lies in the heart of Croatan National Forest, with Catfish Lake Road to the north and Great and Long Lakes to the south. A high water table keeps the black muck of the pocosin wet and agreeable enough to grow dwarf swamp vegetation. Hazards include biting insects, poisonous snakes, and alligators. The reptiles are generally shy, retiring, and uninterested in humans, but the biting pests will be happy to greet you. Visitors who venture in to see the plants and animals usually make it a quick trip, as the Wilderness doesn't offer campsites or trails.

Leave No Trace

How to follow the seven standard Leave No Trace principles differs in different parts of the country (desert vs. Rocky Mountains). Click on any of the principles listed below to learn more about how they apply in the Sheep Ridge Wilderness.

1. [Plan Ahead and Prepare](#)
2. [Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces](#)
3. [Dispose of Waste Properly](#)
4. [Leave What You Find](#)
5. [Minimize Campfire Impacts](#)
6. [Respect Wildlife](#)
7. [Be Considerate of Other Visitors](#)

For more information on Leave No Trace, [Visit the Leave No Trace, Inc. website.](#)

Area Management

The Sheep Ridge Wilderness is part of the 109 million acre National Wilderness Preservation System. This System of lands provides clean air, water, and habitat critical for rare and endangered plants and animals. In wilderness, you can enjoy challenging recreational activities like hiking, backpacking, climbing, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, horse packing, bird watching, stargazing, and extraordinary opportunities for solitude. You play an important role in helping to *"secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness"* as called for by the Congress of the United States through the Wilderness Act of 1964. Please follow the requirements outlined below and use Leave No Trace techniques when visiting the

Sheep Ridge Wilderness to ensure protection of this unique area.

General Wilderness Prohibitions

Motorized equipment and equipment used for mechanical transport is generally prohibited on all federal lands designated as wilderness. This includes the use of motor vehicles, motorboats, motorized equipment, bicycles, hang gliders, wagons, carts, portage wheels, and the landing of aircraft including helicopters, unless provided for in specific legislation.

In a few areas some exceptions allowing the use of motorized equipment or mechanical transport are described in the special regulations in effect for a specific area. Contact the Forest Service office or visit the websites listed below for more specific information.

These general prohibitions have been implemented for all national forest wildernesses in order to implement the provisions of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Wilderness Act requires management of human-caused impacts and protection of the area's wilderness character to insure that it is "unimpaired for the future use and enjoyment as wilderness." Use of the equipment listed as prohibited in wilderness is inconsistent with the provision in the Wilderness Act which mandates opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation and that wilderness is a place that is in contrast with areas where people and their works are dominant.

Wilderness-Specific Regulations

Wilderness managers often need to take action to limit the impacts caused by visitor activities in order to protect the natural conditions of wilderness as required by the Wilderness Act of 1964. Managers typically implement 'indirect' types of actions such as information and education measures before selecting more restrictive measures. When regulations are necessary, they are implemented with the specific intent of balancing the need to preserve the character of the wilderness while providing for the use and enjoyment of wilderness.

The following wilderness regulations are in effect for this area. Not all regulations are in effect for every wilderness. Contact the Forest Service office or visit the websites listed on the 'Links' tab for more specific information about the regulations listed.

ALL VISITORS

- Group size is limited to no more than 10 people per party.
- Dogs must be under verbal control or leashed at all times.
- Pack out all debris, garbage, or other waste.

OVERNIGHT VISITORS

- Maximum length of stay is 14 days within any 30-day period.
- Camping is prohibited within 100 feet of streams.

Contacts

Croatan Ranger District
141 E FISHER AVE
NEW BERN, NC 28560

Phone: 252-638-5628

Links to Other Websites

[National Forests in North Carolina](#)

Links on Wilderness.net

[National, Regional and Local Wilderness Organizations \(NGOs\)](#)

A listing of societies, organizations, coalitions and other wilderness-related advocacy and stewardship groups.

[Career and Volunteer Opportunities](#)

A listing of sites providing information about wilderness- and environmentally-related career and volunteer opportunities.

Applicable Wilderness Law(s)

Law	Date	Acreage Change (in acres)
Public Law 98-324	June 19, 1984	9,540
North Carolina Wilderness Act of 1984 - Public law 98-324 (6/19/1984) To designate certain public lands in North Carolina as additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System		
—: download 98-324		