

Wilderness.net's Big Frog Wilderness Fact Sheet

Introduction

The United States Congress designated the Big Frog Wilderness in 1984 and it now has a total of 8,132 acres. Georgia contains approximately 136 acres. Tennessee contains approximately 7,996 acres. It is managed by the Forest Service.

Description

Distinguished by 4,224-foot Big Frog Mountain, the vast majority of this forested mountain Wilderness lies in Tennessee, with only a sliver in Georgia. It borders the Cohutta Wilderness. The Big Frog-Cohutta combination, with adjacent Primitive areas, creates the largest tract of Wilderness on USFS land in the eastern United States. Virginia pine covers the lower elevations, and hardwoods, including white oak, red oak, and hickory, shade the upper. The Wilderness is home to a few deer, wild turkeys, and a mixture of Russian wild hogs released in the 1960s and domestic hogs gone wild. Timber rattlesnakes commonly slither across these trails. Hikers can enjoy the most diverse and the best hiking in Cherokee National Forest in this Wilderness, choosing from pathways that wander easily with little elevation changes; long, contouring trails; and strength-sapping up-and-down routes. Although rugged, most of the trails are well maintained. The nearly 300 mile Benton MacKaye Trail traverses the Big Frog Wilderness, providing a long distance thru-hike, or a backbone to loop with other trails for overnight backpacking opportunities. The Big Frog Trail provides access to several other trails that cross the Wilderness along ridges and streams. From the top of Big Frog Mountain you can hike south into Cohutta Wilderness on the Hemp Top Trail (eight-tenths of a mile). Even in the wet season (spring and early summer), water may be hard to find, so carry plenty.

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 Big Frog 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 Big Frog Wilderness is part of the 110 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 Big Frog 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 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.

Contacts

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3171 HIGHWAY 64
BENTON, TN 37370

Phone: 423-338-3300

Phone: 423-476-9700

Cherokee National Forest
2800 OCOEE ST N
CLEVELAND, TN 37312

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)
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Public Law 98-578	October 30, 1984	5,055
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Tennessee Wilderness Act of 1984 - Public law 98-578 (10/30/1984) To designate certain lands in the Cherokee National Forest, Tennessee, as wilderness areas, and to allow management of certain lands for other purposes than wilderness

 [download 98-578](#)

Public Law 99-490	October 16, 1986	3,000
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Tennessee Wilderness Act of 1986 - Public law 99-490 (10/16/1986) To designate certain lands in the Cherokee National Forest in the State of Tennessee as wilderness areas, and for other purposes

 [download 99-490](#)