

Wilderness.net's Rich Mountain Wilderness Fact Sheet

Introduction

The United States Congress designated the Rich Mountain Wilderness in 1986 and it now has a total of 10,508 acres. All of the wilderness is in Georgia and is managed by the Forest Service.

Description

At 4,050 feet, Rich Mountain anchors a diverse botanical area. A second-growth hardwood forest provides habitat for deer, squirrels, raccoons, wild turkeys, ruffed grouse, black bears, quail, and woodcocks. Small- and big-game hunters are the predominant human users of this Wilderness (which lies within Rich Mountain Wildlife Management Area). A few hikers and horseback riders occasionally end up here, despite the lack of established trails. Instead, they follow what remains of old logging roads. Private land nearly surrounds the Wilderness.

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 Rich Mountain 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 Rich Mountain 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 Rich Mountain 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.

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 for more specific information about the regulations listed.

ALL VISITORS

- Dogs must be leashed in areas where the Wilderness is within a Wildlife Management Area.
- Food and refuse must be stored in bear-resistant containers.
- Pack out all debris, garbage, or other waste.

STOCK USERS

Hitching, tethering, and hobbling pack or saddle stock within 50 feet of any water source is prohibited.

- Pack or saddle stock may not be hitched or hobbled in a manner that causes damage to live trees, vegetation, or soil.

Contacts

Blue Ridge Ranger District
2042 HWY 515 W.
BLAIRSVILLE, GA 30512

Phone: /06-/45-6928

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 99-555	October 27, 1986	9,649
Georgia Wilderness Act of 1986 - Public law 99-555 (1/21/1986) To designate certain National Forest lands in the State of Georgia to the National Wilderness Preservation System, and for other purposes		

 [download 99-555](#)