

Wilderness.net's Sampson Mountain Wilderness Fact Sheet

Introduction

The United States Congress designated the Sampson Mountain Wilderness in 1986 and it now has a total of 7,960 acres. All of the wilderness is in Tennessee and is managed by the Forest Service.

Description

The five clear, swift, rocky streams that course through this Wilderness, which drain secluded hollows shadowed by steep and open ridges, plunge over several waterfalls, some of them dramatic cascades. A heavy forest cover of pine and hardwoods includes 536 acres of old growth that has been flourishing for more than a century. Wildflowers proliferate, and flowering shrubs include laurel, rhododendron, and flame azalea. Trout fishing may be excellent in the streams, but if your line keeps coming up empty, you can always snack on native blueberries. Problem is, you have to share the sweet fruit with black bears, who live here in greater numbers than anywhere else north of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Several trails crawl faintly up creek valleys until they gradually fade away altogether. Confusing old roadbeds appear and disappear just as suddenly, leading nowhere. All the designated trails are maintained to Wilderness standards. Squibb Creek Trail, in the extreme western section, travels 2.2 miles up Squibb Creek to a picturesque waterfall where the path dead-ends. Turkeypen Cove Trail forms a 4-mile loop with Middle Spring Ridge Trail providing nice views and some steep climbs. This could be your best opportunity to wander in solitude in a Tennessee Wilderness. Sampson Mountain, which peaks at 4,060 feet, anchors 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 Sampson 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 Sampson 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 Sampson 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.

Contacts

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CLEVELAND, TN 37312

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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 99-490	October 16, 1986	8,319

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](#)