Welcome to a Wilderness Experience.

The Richland Creek Wilderness was created by the 1984 Arkansas Wilderness Act and contains 11,801 acres in the middle of the Boston Mountains. One of three wildernesses on the Buffalo Ranger District, it takes its name from the main creek running through the area. Rich, fertile soil is found along the lower creek portion near the Buffalo River.

An unusual feature of the Ozark Mountains is that the “mountains” are actually plateaus, uplifted as a unit with few folds or faults. The ruggedness of these mountains is due to erosion of the plateaus caused by swift rivers flowing between them. Topography within 1/4 mile on either side of Richland and Long Devil’s Fork Creeks is quite rugged and scenic. Rock bluffs over 100 feet high and extending over a mile along each side of Richland Creek graphically reveal a north’s development.

The forest cover is mostly second and third growth oak-hickory. Some scattered stands of shortleaf pine in old fields still exist from when the Forest Service purchased the land in the 1930s and 1940s.

There are no developed trails located in the wilderness. A system of old logging roads that runs throughout the area provides an informal network of trails for hiking and horseback riding. Kayakers can float Richland Creek after heavy rains. The wilderness area is known for its crystal clear creeks and waterfalls. Remember to take drinking water or a filtration device with you for your safety.

Directions to Access Points

The most popular access point to the wilderness is at the Richland Creek Campground located on the east end along Forest Road 1205. From Russellville, take Arkansas Highway 7 north for 37 miles to Pocolo, then turn right (east) on Arkansas Highway 16 and go 9 miles; turn left (north) on Forest Service Road 1205 (also Pope County Road 68) which is located 1.5 miles south of Ben Hur. Take Forest Service Road 1205 north 9 miles to Richland Creek campground which provides access to the wilderness area. Caution: Because of rough roads, visitors are not encouraged to take camping trailers to Richland Creek campground.

To the north is another access to the wilderness area. Take Highway 74 east of Jasper, travel to the end of the highway about 6 miles east of Mt. Judea to a “T” in the road; go south following the pavement for 2 miles; travel to another “T” (there will be a sign saying Bass, Arkansas on an old barn); go east ¼ mile and turn left (east) again going across a creek, (this is Forest Road 1205/Newton County Road 37). Follow to the intersection of County Roads 36 and 37. Take a left to continue on 37 and continue for 9 miles to the campground. Caution: During rainy weather, the crossing at Bass, Arkansas might become impassable.

About ¼ mile north of the campground, along Forest Road 1205, is another access point with a pullout area and a visitor registration box.

Hill Cemetery, located in the northern portion of the wilderness, is also a good access point. It is 7 miles north of the Richland Campground on Forest Road 1205. At this point, there will be a 4-way intersection, take the south road (left) and proceed past the house to the end of the road (about 1 mile.) Caution: This access is not recommended for passenger cars. The first ¼ mile of the road is on private property so the owner’s permission is required for any travel off the road. In addition, parking is extremely limited.