

Location:

State Routes 16, 21/2, 36/1 and Forest Road 296 provide the primary access to the area. Nearby communities include: Anthony, 1 mile west, White Sulphur Springs, about 5 miles south, and Lewisburg, 15 miles to the southwest.

Area Rules:

- Groups over 10 persons are prohibited in the Wilderness.
- Mountain bikes and mechanical devices such as carts are not allowed on Wilderness trails.
- Horses are not allowed on Blue Bend Trail, TR 614.
- Removal of plants, stone or moss is prohibited.
- Pets must be under your control at all times.
- Motor vehicles are restricted to roads and parking areas.
- Camp at least 200 feet from roads, streams and trails.
- Follow Leave No Trace ethics. More information can be found at www.lnt.org.

History:

The Public Lands Management Act of 2009 (PL 111-11) was signed by President Obama March 30, 2009. This Public Law included the Wild Monongahela Act which designated the Big Draft Wilderness.



For additional information, contact:

**Marlinton-White Sulphur Ranger District
410 E. Main Street
White Sulphur Springs, WV 24986
(304) 536-2144, Ext 0**

<http://fs.usda.gov/mnf/>

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What is Wilderness?

The National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) was created in 1964 with the passage of the Wilderness Act. The Wilderness Act was passed to preserve natural conditions and provide opportunities for solitude. The Forest manages wilderness to offer visitors challenge, discovery, and self-reliance. We believe that these are the key to the "wilderness experience." We therefore, manage these areas for the protection of the resource, not for visitor comfort or convenience. This enables you to meet nature on its terms, not modify it to suit your own. If you choose to enter one of our Wilderness areas, here are some things to keep in mind:

- Motorized and mechanical equipment, including but not limited to chainsaws, mountain bikes and deer carts are not permitted within the Wilderness.
- Horses and other stock are permitted, except on the Blue Bend Trail. However, many of our Wilderness trails are steep, rocky, and/or boggy and are not conducive to stock use. In some places, they are narrow footpaths, especially in areas that have rerouted around obstacles. In these conditions, heavy stock animals create a lot of damage to soft soils or can harm themselves on the rocks. They are difficult to maneuver in narrow places when meeting other visitors. There are also very few places that provide sufficient forage for stock. We suggest hiking in the Wilderness areas and riding in other places on the Forest.

- Trails are not marked or blazed. Small rock cairns may mark areas where the trail is difficult to follow, but since some hikers put up or knock down cairns for their own reasons, these are not always reliable. The trails don't always stay in their traditional locations or where the maps indicate. In order to enhance wildness, any obstacle that can be stepped over, ducked under, or walked around without unacceptable damage to the environment or reasonable risk to safety is left in place. This allows the natural process of the Wilderness to continue with little impairment and creates a wilder, more natural appearance. Plan ahead. Have a map before you come; they are not stocked at trailheads. Topographic maps are more useful than simple line-drawn maps. A compass should be considered a necessity. Bridges at stream crossings are rare, existing only where they protect the stream bank from heavy use. Most of the time, you will have to ford the streams.
- Search and rescue is not initiated unless threat to life exists. In most cases, you will have to get yourself out of whatever predicament you get yourself into. Remember to plan your trip and make decisions during the trip that will make search and rescue unnecessary. Be smart; these areas seem small, but you can be injured or killed if you make poor decisions.

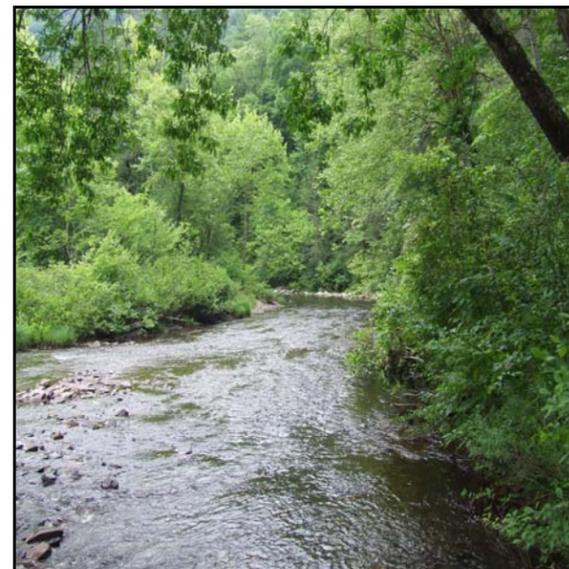
Wildlife:

The area provides habitat for a diversity of wildlife species. Species within the area include whitetail deer, black bear, grouse, cottontail rabbit, wild turkey and a variety of birds and reptiles.



Monongahela National Forest
200 Sycamore Street
Elkins, West Virginia 26241
(304) 636-1800 Telephone/TTY

Big Draft Wilderness



Description: The 5,144 acre Big Draft Wilderness is located on the Southern tip of the Forest, just south of Blue Bend Recreation Area and about five miles north of White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. Slopes within the area range from 10 to 60% and are typically long ridges with narrow summits and mountain slopes. The primary vegetative type is oak and hickory, with pockets of hemlock and white pine. The understory consists of rhododendron, mixed shrubs, grasses and ferns. The elevations range from 1,800 feet to over 3,100 feet.

Trail System:

This is a popular area for a variety of recreation opportunities. Use within the area is considered moderate to high most of the year and is primarily by hikers, hunters, paddles and anglers. The 14-mile trail system is open to hikers and equestrians, and provides numerous scenic views.

Blue Bend Trail (TR 614)

The Blue Bend Trail is on the National Register of Historic Places. There is a trail shelter along the Blue Bend Trail that receives moderate use. The trail makes four switchbacks in climbing Round Mountain. On reaching the top, the trail levels off and follows a ridge before descending rapidly back toward the river.

Starts at: Blue Bend Campground

Length: 5 miles

Anthony Creek Trail (TR 618)

Anthony Creek Trail is heavily used by anglers using Anthony Creek. The trail is level and travels through hardwood forest along Anthony Creek. There is one ford of Anthony Creek that can be difficult during high water.

Starts at: bridge by Anthony Creek boat ramp or Blue Bend Campground.

Length: 3.8 miles

South Boundary Trail (TR 615)

The trail roughly follows the south boundary of the Forest. The trail has several accents and descents before connecting with Anthony Creek Trail.

Starts at: Big Draft Road (CO 36/1)

Length: 4.8 miles

Weather Considerations:

Freezing temperatures can occur any time of the year. Snow can be expected from October through April. Forest Roads are not maintained during the winter.