



# One Horse Gap Trail



Shawnee National Forest

Vienna/Elizabethtown Ranger District

www.fs.fed.us/r9/shawnee

2002

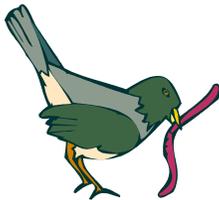
## Trail Highlights

The One Horse Gap Trail is famous for a short loop trail known as “the gap trail”. As its name indicates, the trail features a narrow gap in the bluffs that allows only one horse to pass through at a time. This trail system utilizes segments of system-trails, dirt and gravel roads and even remnants of old wagon roads. Many interesting things can be found along the trail, from old cemeteries and old homesite stone foundations to towering bluffs and flowing creeks.

The trail system provides access to One Horse Gap Lake, War Bluff and Big Grand Pierre Creek (a candidate wild & scenic river) and the River to River Trail (a 160-mile linear trail spanning southern Illinois). Hikers and backpackers share the area with horseback riders and hunters. Also, be aware the Nine Day Trail Ride in late July, early August attracts thousands of equestrians to the One Horse Gap Trail every year.

## Wildlife Viewing

Wildlife watchers will enjoy the quietness of One Horse Gap Lake, as well as the many forest clearings that were created to provide habitat for wildlife. There are designated natural areas set aside to perpetuate rare and endangered plant and animal species. Also, many of the bluffs offer wonderful scenic views.



## Surrounding Area

Illinois Iron Furnace, Garden of the Gods Recreation Area, High Knob Picnic Area, Pounds Hollow Recreation Area, Rim Rock National Recreation Trail and Lusk Creek Wilderness.

## Emergencies

The nearest hospital is Harrisburg Medical Center in Harrisburg. The nearest public phone is in Elizabethtown.

## For More Information

Vienna/Elizabethtown Ranger District  
P. O. Box 37  
Vienna, IL 62995  
(618) 658-2111

**Length:** 10 miles

[Map](#)

**Travel Time:** 1/2 hour to several hours.

**Surface Type:** Dirt, gravel.

**Difficulty Level:** Easy to Moderate

**Recommended Season:** Spring, summer and fall

**Facilities:** The trail is accessible at a number of locations. However, most trail heads offer limited parking. It is recommended visitors hauling trailers park along the lake dam road (see map).

**Access:** From Elizabethtown, take highway 146 west 6 miles to One Horse Gap Blacktop. Turn north onto the Blacktop and go 3 miles to the “crossroads”. The One Horse Gap area lies north and east from the crossroads (see map for trail access points). To reach the “the gap trail” go through the crossroads, about 2 miles; trailhead begins on the west side of the road.

**Safety:** At times the trails lead along the top of high bluffs. Trail tread may be slippery during and after rain. Be aware of hunting seasons.

**Trail markings:**  River To River Trail (blue i)

 Hiker/Equestrian Trail (white diamond)

**Trail Ethics:** Pack it In, Pack it Out. Stay on the designated trail and leave the beauty of the rocks and plants for others to enjoy. Equestrians are prohibited in designated natural areas. Natural area boundaries are marked with a painted yellow oak leaf on the trees.

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*Trail Markings*



River To River Trail (blue i)



Hiker/Equestrian Trail