

# Harmon Den, Hot Springs areas offer abundance of recreation



A hiker at Lovers Leap enjoys the view of Hot Springs and French Broad River.



Posts with white rectangles mark the Appalachian Trail as it crosses Max Patch.

## WELCOME

The Harmon Den and Hot Springs area maps cover most of the Appalachian District's southwest side. The Appalachian District of the Pisgah National Forest has offices in Hot Springs and Burnsville. For more information, see: [cs.unca.edu/nfsnc](http://cs.unca.edu/nfsnc) or contact:

- Appalachian Ranger District  
P.O. Box 128  
Hot Springs, NC 28743  
828-622-3202
- Appalachian Ranger District  
P.O. Box 128  
Burnsville, NC 28714  
828-682-6146

## TRAIL DIFFICULTY



**Easy:** Route is easy to find and follow; entire trail has a less than 8 percent grade; length is less than 3 miles; trail is mostly flat with few rocks.



**Moderate:** Route may or may not be blazed; most of the trail has a less than 20 percent grade; length is usually between 2 and 8 miles; trail is usually rocky and may have stream crossings.



**Difficult:** Route may require pathfinding skills; most of the trail has a 20 percent or steeper grade; length is usually more than 8 miles; trail is rocky and uneven and may have stream crossings.

## Horse, hiking trails abound

Harmon Den offers 54.5 miles of trails with 14.2 miles of trails designated for horseback riding and 40.3 miles for hiking. In addition, miles of gated, dirt forest roads, shown in orange on the map, are open to horses. Other gated roads, shown in gray on the map, are not designated for horses. Horses may also be ridden on open roads, but watch for traffic.

This map and signs at the roads or trailheads designate for what uses a particular trail is maintained. The signs also show trail difficulty levels. Horse trails are blazed with yellow diamonds.

All trails are open to hikers but the Appalachian, Groundhog Creek, and Rube Rock Trails are for hiking only. Hiking trails are blazed with rectangles.

## Mountain biking featured

Hot Springs area features 44 miles of trails with 13.4 miles designated for mountain biking.

The Laurel River Bike Trail is blazed with yellow rectangles, while other bike trails are only signed. All other Hot Springs area trails are for hiking only.

## Map areas include 45 miles of AT

The Appalachian Trail (AT), a national scenic trail, is for hikers only. The AT follows the ridgeline of the Appalachians for more than 2,168 miles from Georgia to Maine. A total of 44.5 miles of the AT travels through these map areas from Great Smoky Mountains National Park on the south end to the Spring Mountain Shelter on the north side of Rich Mountain.

## No OHV trails open on district

No trails in the Appalachian Ranger District are open to all-terrain vehicles or motorized trail bikes. Only licensed vehicles are permitted on open roads.

## Plenty of fish, wildlife available

Part of Harmon Den in Haywood County and the area north of U.S. 25/70 to the Tennessee State line are bear sanctuaries where bear hunting is not allowed. Outside the sanctuaries, hunting is popular for bears as well as for deer, wild turkey, and grouse. Miles of cold mountain streams and some ponds offer trout fishing.

While the Forest Service manages wildlife habitat and stream quality, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission regulates fishing and hunting seasons and limits. Any public land open to hunting, such as national forest land, is called “game land” by the commission. A state license is required for fishing or hunting. Every hunter and angler should get a copy of the Regulations Digest from the commission by calling 919-662-4381 or from the website: [www.wildlife.state.nc.us](http://www.wildlife.state.nc.us), select “regulations.”

# CAMPING

## Group camping on creek

Silvermine Group Camp is located on Silvermine Creek not far from the French Broad River at Hot Springs. The camp is open by reservation from May 1-October 31 and provides space for up to 50 people.

When you rent the site, you're given a combination to the camp's gate, so you're the only campers. The camp provides a nice picnic shelter, two large tent pads, two grills, drinking water, and vault toilets. Lovers Leap, Pump Gap, and the Appalachian Trails are nearby. For reservations, call the Hot Springs office at 828-622-3202.

## Rocky Bluff offers solitude

Rocky Bluff Campground, 3 miles south of Hot Springs, is open April 30-October 31 for family camping. This wooded 30-site campground offers tables, grills, lantern posts, tent pads, flush toilets, a picnic area, and solitude.

The 1.2-mile Spring Creek Nature Trail circles the campground and meanders beside the creek, an excellent trout stream.

## Horse camp caters to riders

Harmon Den Horse Camp caters to riders and their horses. The campground is open May 1-October 31. Each site accommodates eight people and offers a table, grill, lantern post, tent pad, and stalls for four horses.

Nearby are vault toilets, garbage cans, and water for both people and horses. Horse trails leave

from the campground.

Sites are available by reservation through the Hot Springs office of the Appalachian Ranger District by calling 828-622-3202.

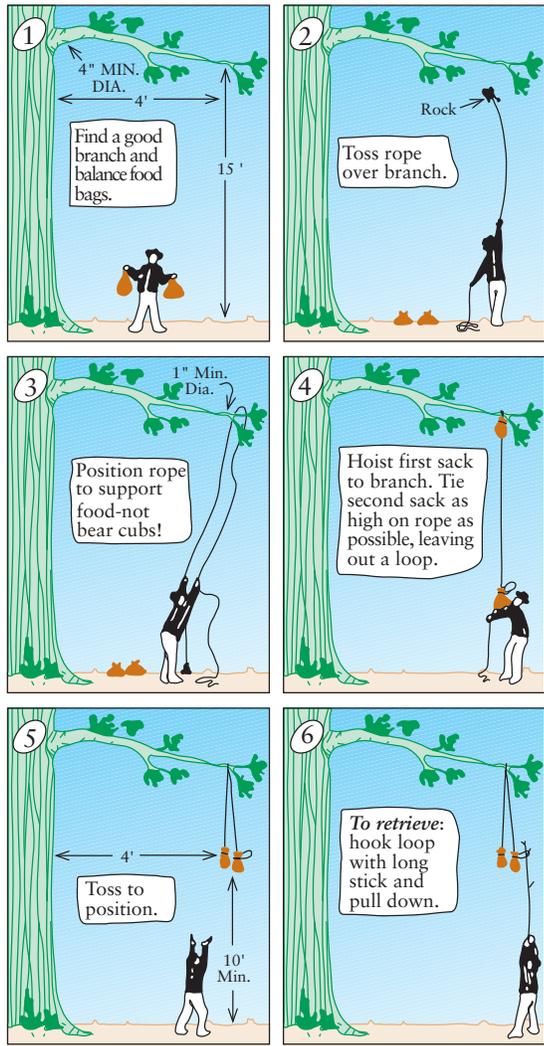
## No trace horse hints

- Take only fit, calm, experienced animals.
- Stay on the trail, and ride in single file.
- Water horses at natural fords or from a bucket.
- Keep stock tethered at least 200 feet away from streams and away from trails and campsites.
- Avoid temporarily tying stock to trees. Use a highline with tree-saver straps to tether your animal. This prevents stock from trampling roots and chewing bark.
- Break up and scatter manure and fill in pawed holes when breaking camp.
- Pack some grain, since grazing is limited. Be certain that feed is weed-free to prevent noxious plants from spreading.

## Look for camping symbol

Roadside camping is generally allowed beside most graveled road. However, along Cold Springs Road (Forest Service Road 148) in Harmon Den, roadside camping is permitted only at sites with this camping symbol: .

These sites are designated to minimize damage to Cold Springs Creek. At primitive camps, you must provide your own water, bury all human waste and toilet paper, and take out your trash. Use existing fire rings, and never wash in a creek.



## Bearproof your campsite

The bear population is increasing here, thanks to sanctuaries and timber management that improve bear habitat. Management includes favoring healthy growth of oak trees and creating sunny openings where berry thickets grow. When in the area, put food away when you're not eating. Hang your food (as shown above) when away from a vehicle.