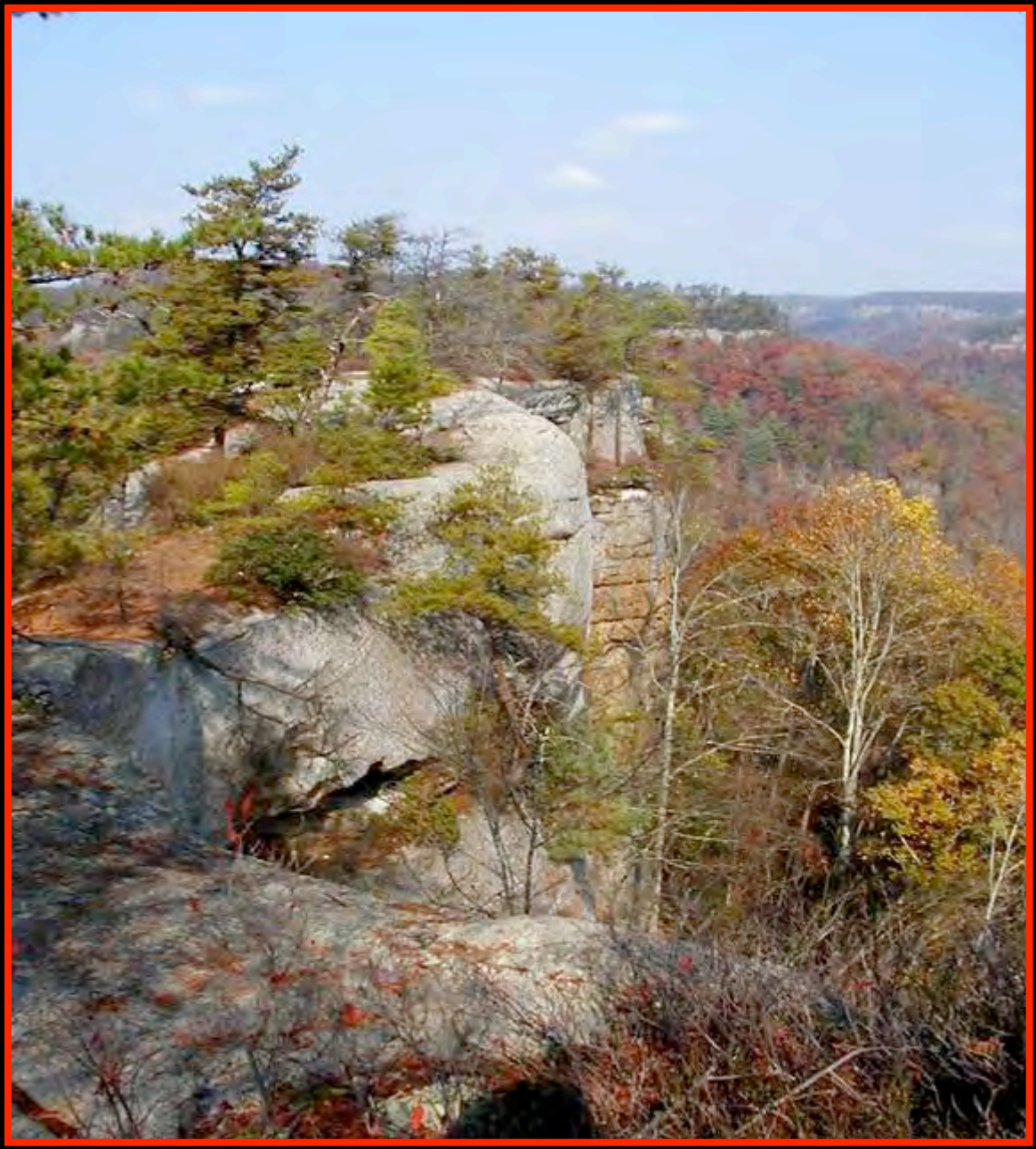
What is the Red River Gorge?

The Red River Gorge is…

- A part of the Daniel Boone National Forest
- The Daniel Boone NF is under the US Department of Agriculture

- Not a National Park
- Not part of Natural Bridge State Park

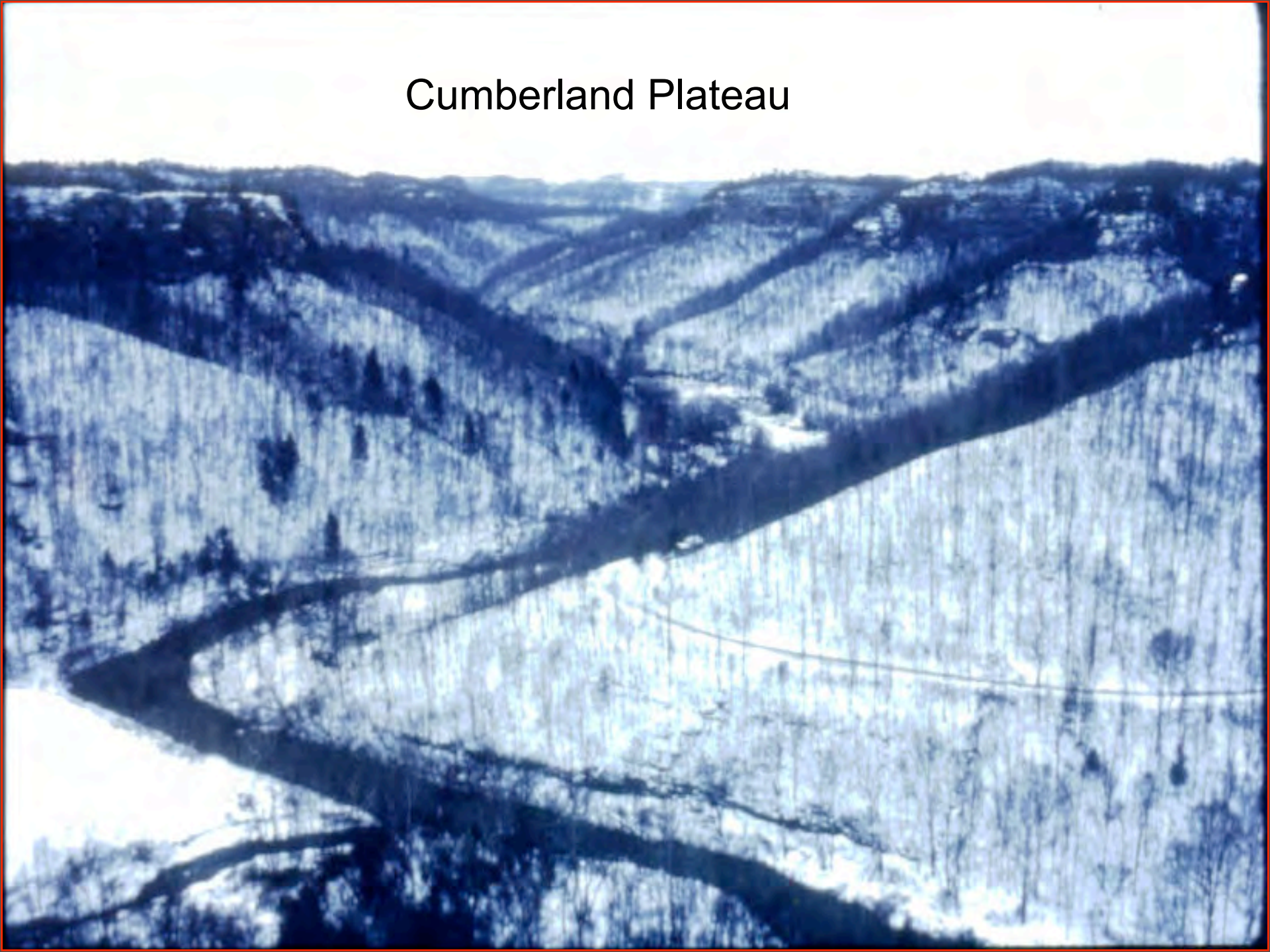
Rugged Terrain – 700 miles of cliffline



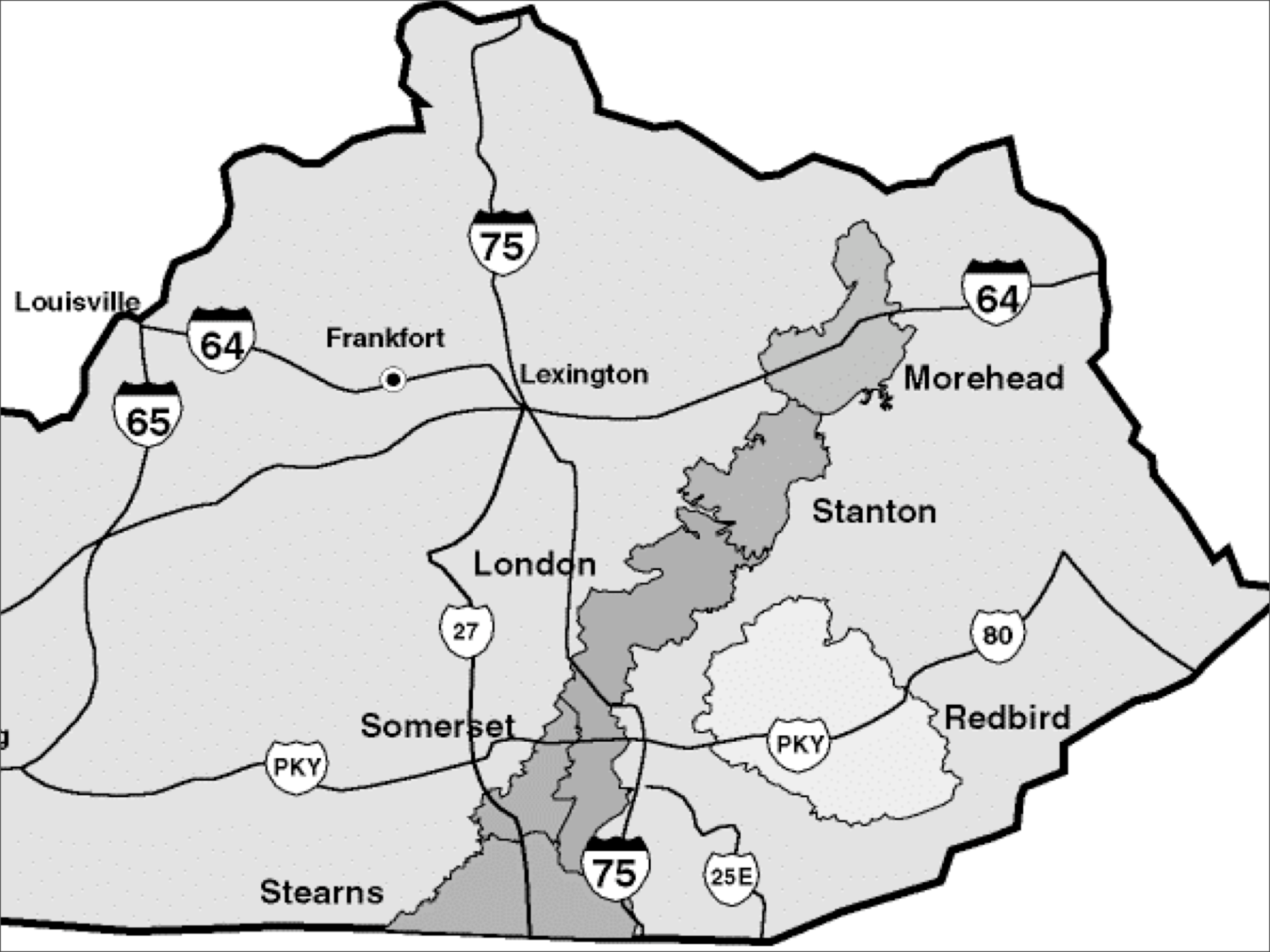
LAND OF THE ARCHES

Rock Shelters

Cumberland Plateau



Red River flows through the area


Louisville
64
65
Frankfort
Lexington
75
64
Morehead
Stanton
London
27
80
Redbird
Somerset
PKY
PKY
75
25E
Stearns

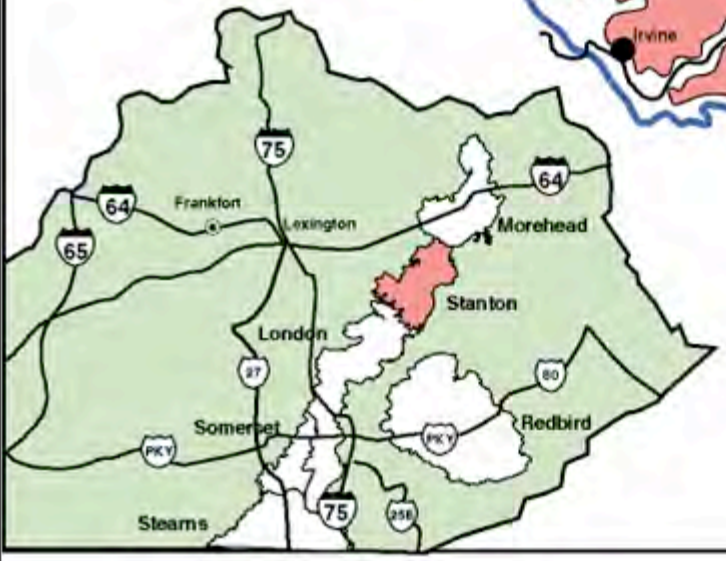
Stanton Ranger District

District Boundary

Red River Gorge Geological Area

Clifty Wilderness

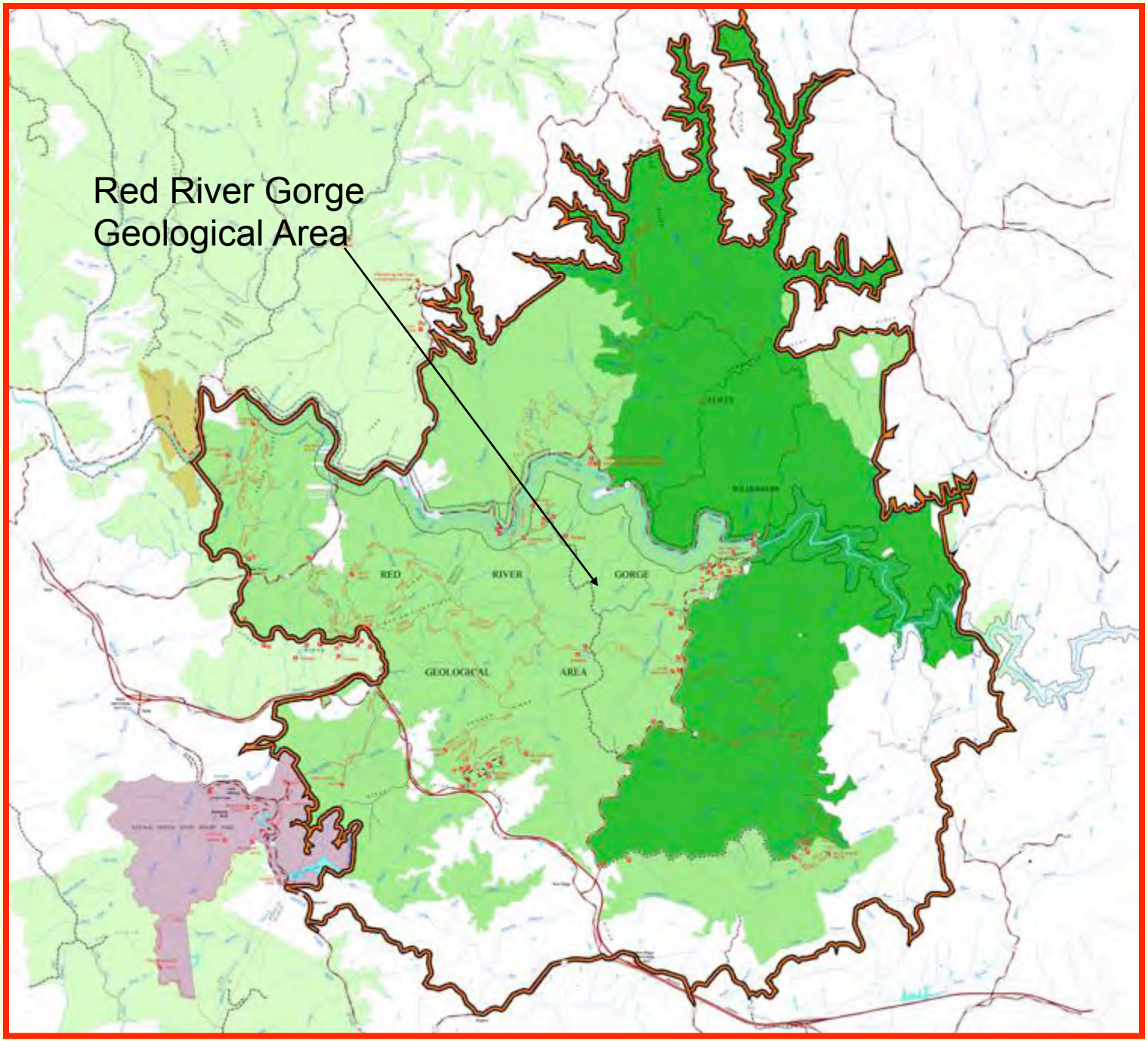
Natural Bridge State Park

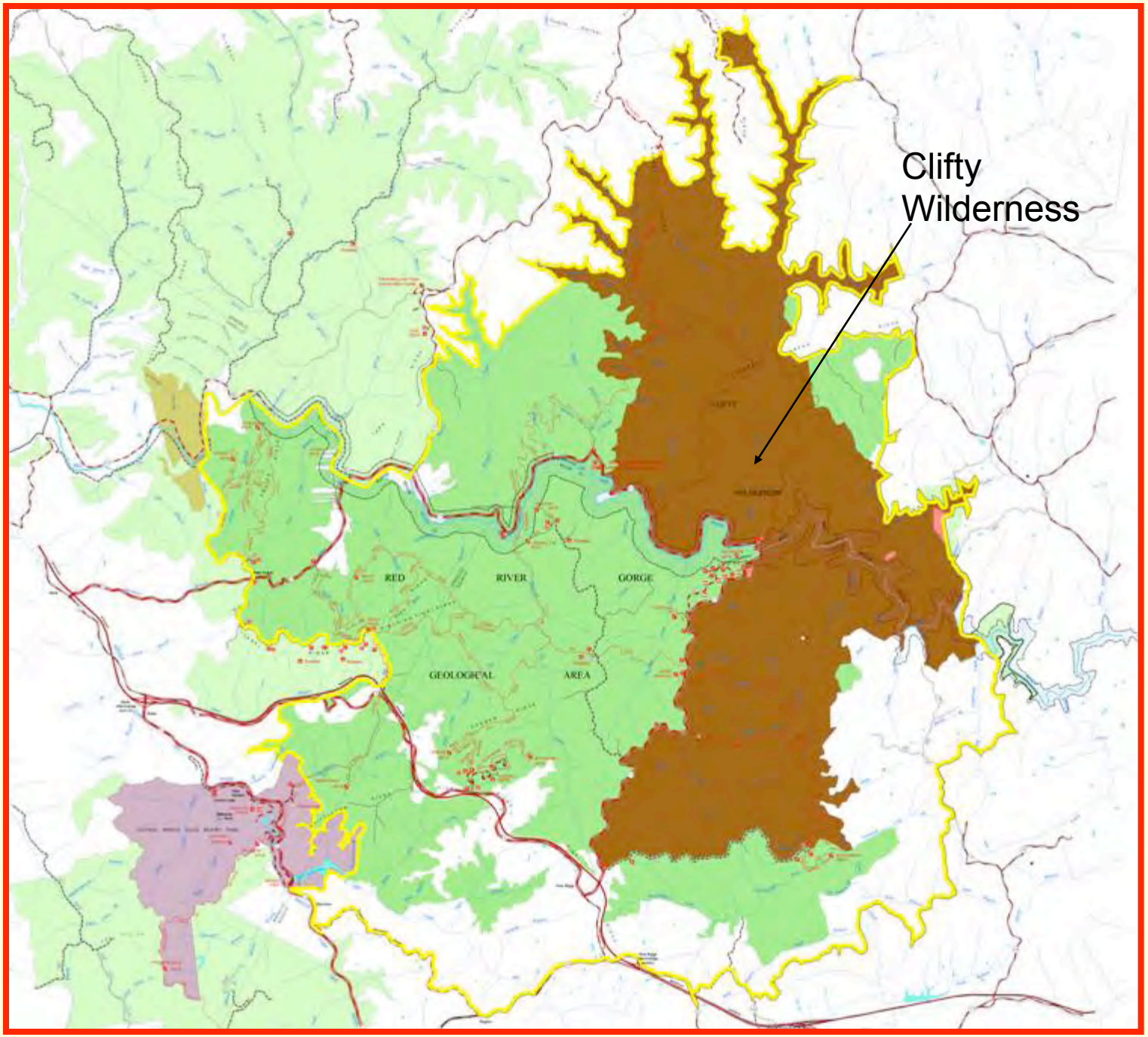


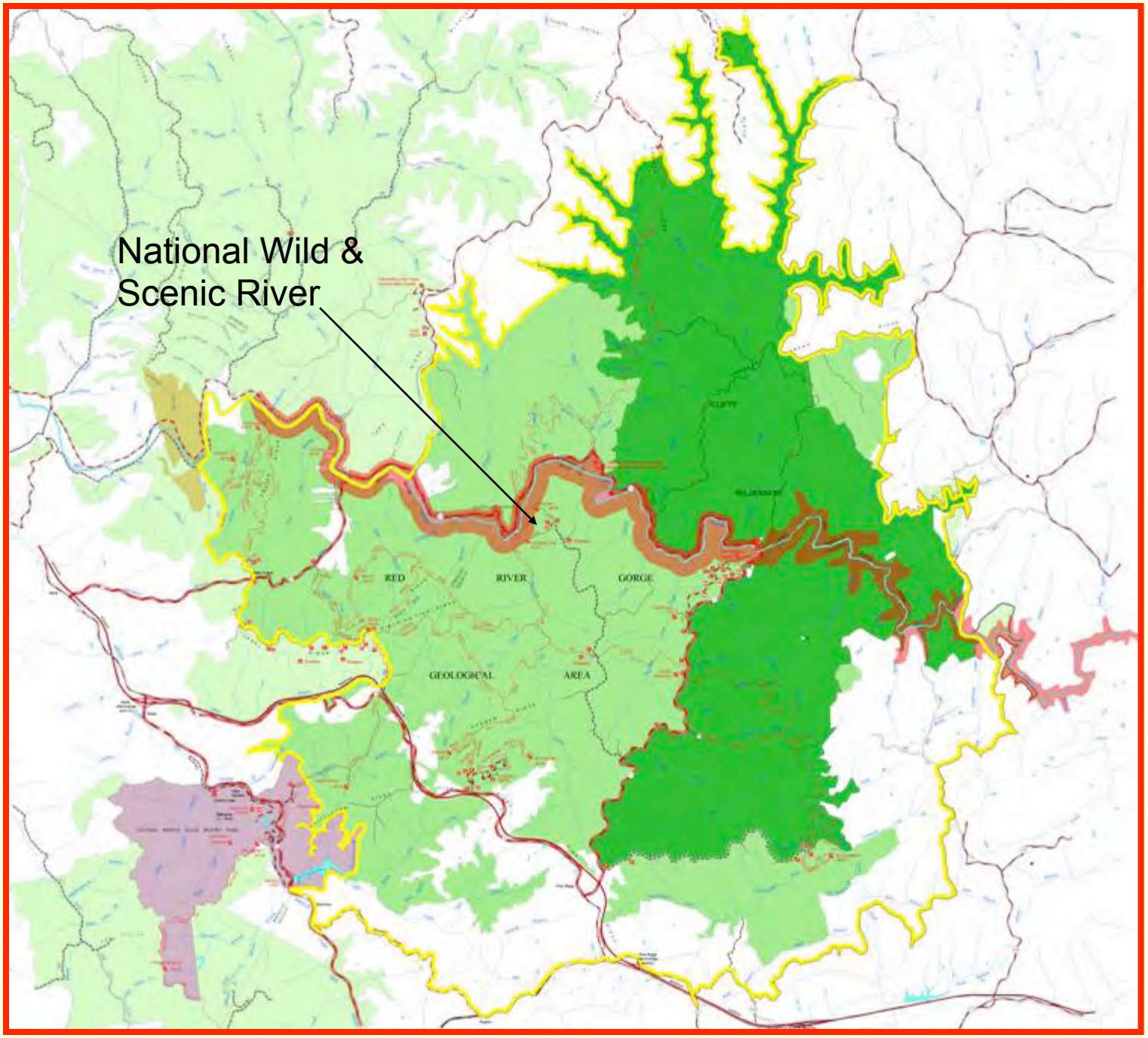
Frenchburg
460
Mariba
Wellington
77
613
Tarr Ridge
Gladie Creek
CLIFTY WILDERNESS
Stanton
Mtn. Pky.
Stanton District Office
RED RIVER
715
Grays Arch
Chimney Top Rock
Sky Bridge
Koomer Ridge
Nada
Nada Tunnel
39
Slade
213
1057
1639
Natural Bridge State Park
COTTAGE FURNACE
FITCHBURG FURNACE
Pine Ridge
24
Rock Bridge
11
15
Mountain Parkway
Fitchburg
975
STANTON DISTRICT
52
Irvine
1036
Sheltowee Trace NRT
Zachariah
1748
KENTUCKY RIVER
498
Mt. Olive
399
Beattyville
Heidelburg

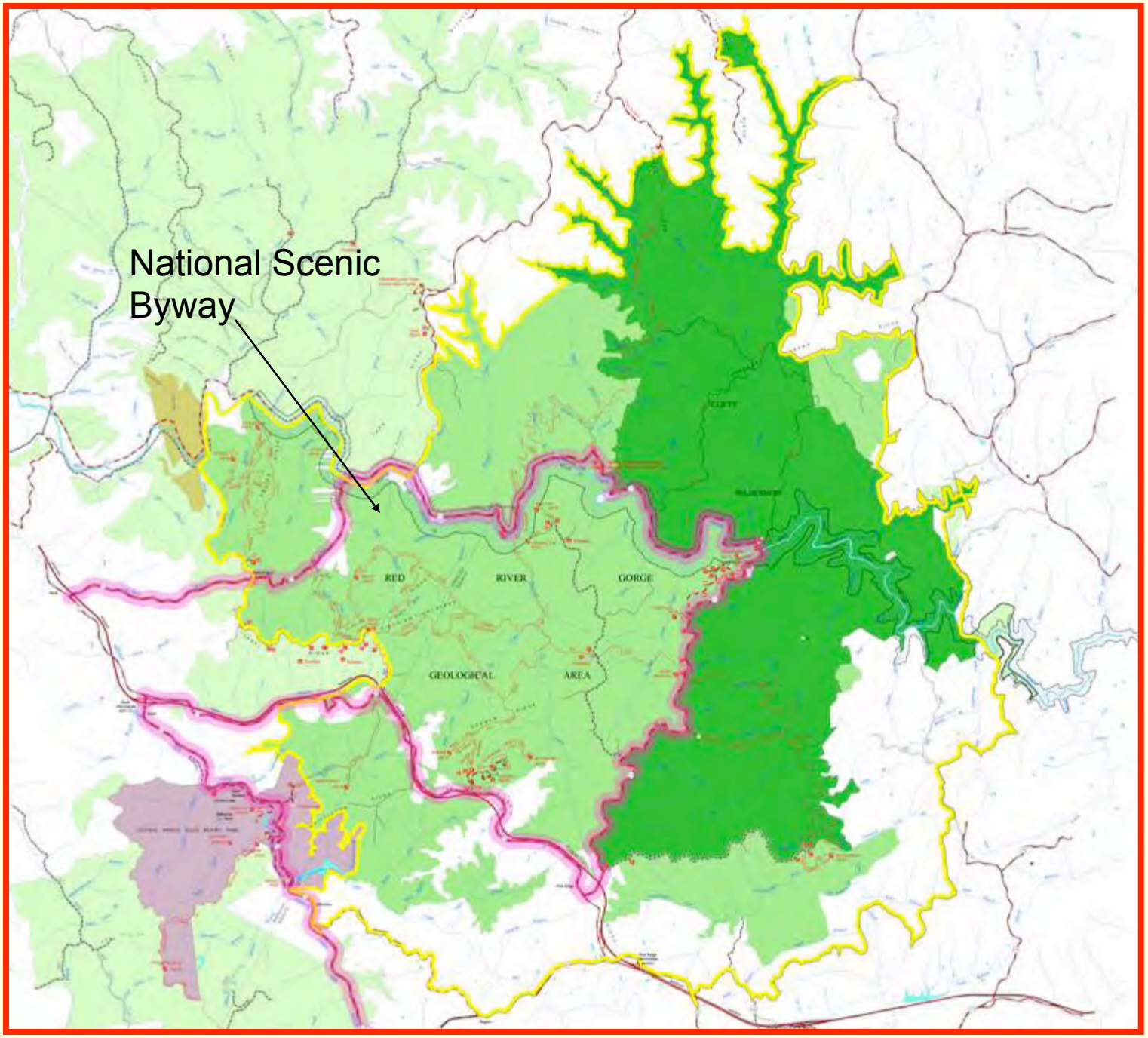
The Gorge has many designations:

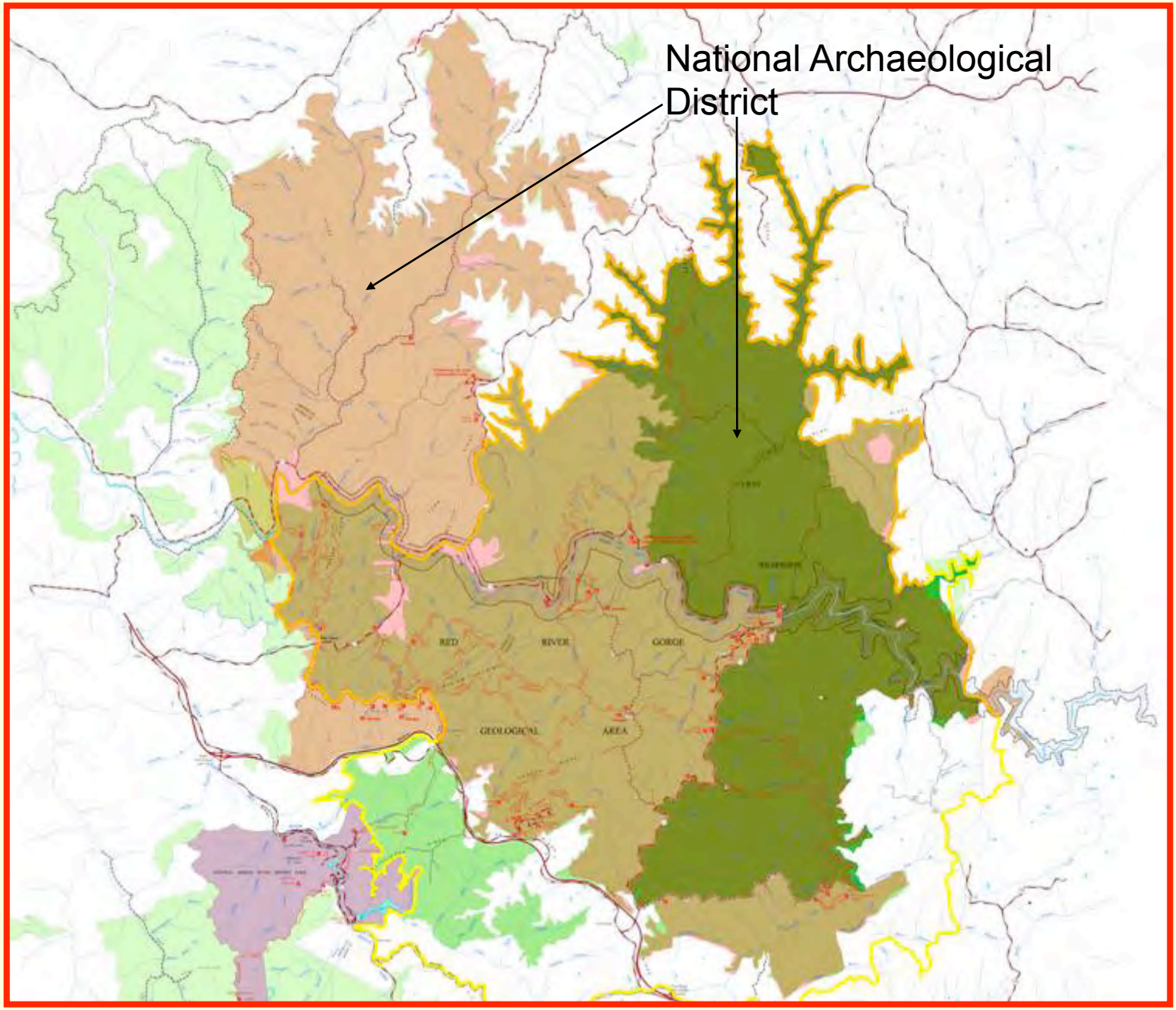
- National Geological Area 29,000 acres
- National Natural Landmark 29,000 acres
- Clifty Wilderness 13,000 acres
- National Wild & Scenic River 19.4 miles
- National Scenic Byway 46 miles
- National Archaeological District 37,000 acres


Red River Gorge
Geological Area
RED
RIVER
GORGE
GEOLOGICAL
AREA


Clifty
Wilderness
RED
RIVER
GORGE
GEOLOGICAL
AREA


National Wild &
Scenic River
RED
RIVER
GORGE
GEOLOGICAL
AREA

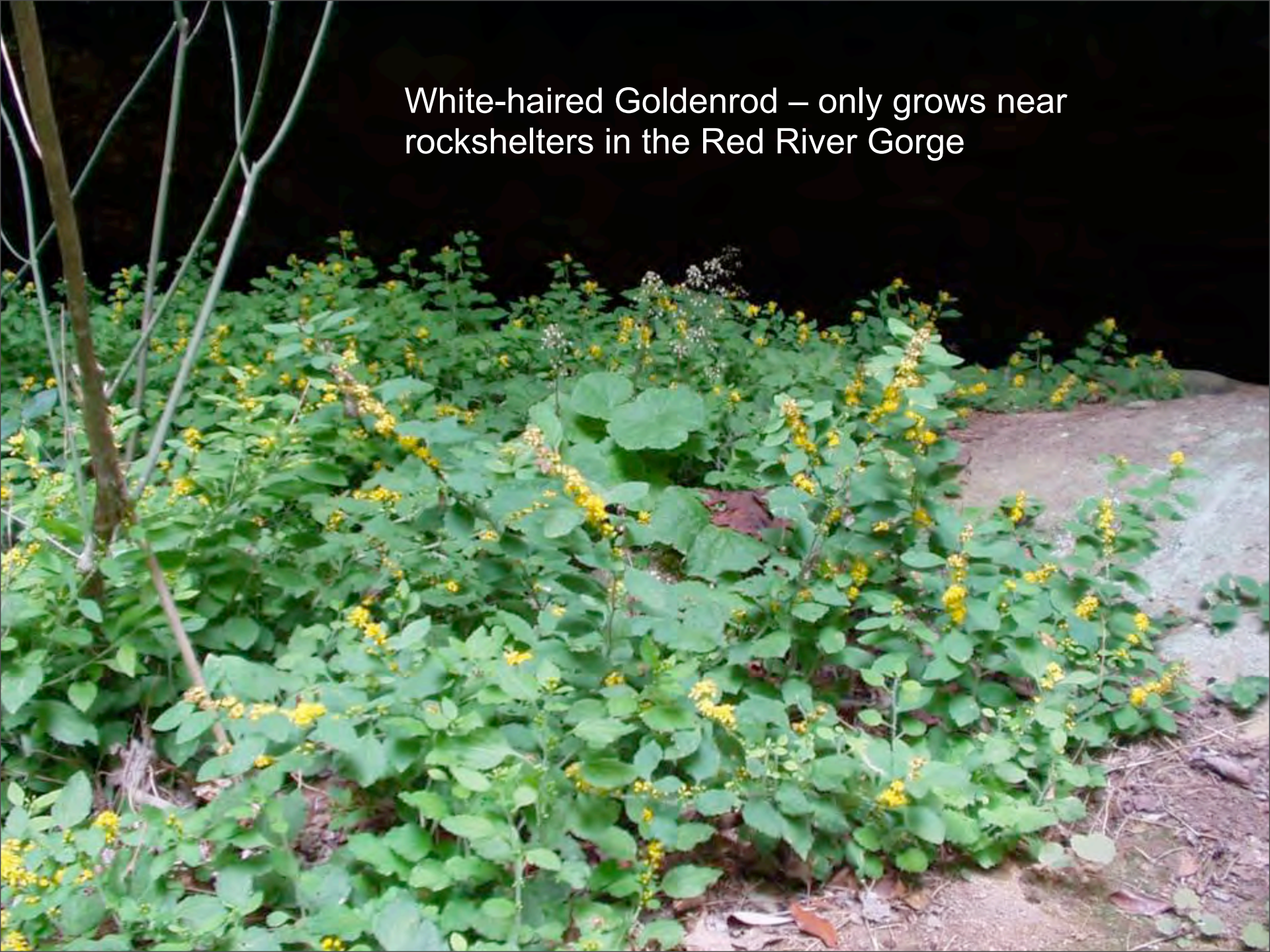

National Scenic
Byway
RED
RIVER
GORGE
GEOLOGICAL
AREA


National Archaeological District
RED
RIVER
GORGE
GEOLOGICAL
AREA

The Wilderness Act states that wilderness is a place…

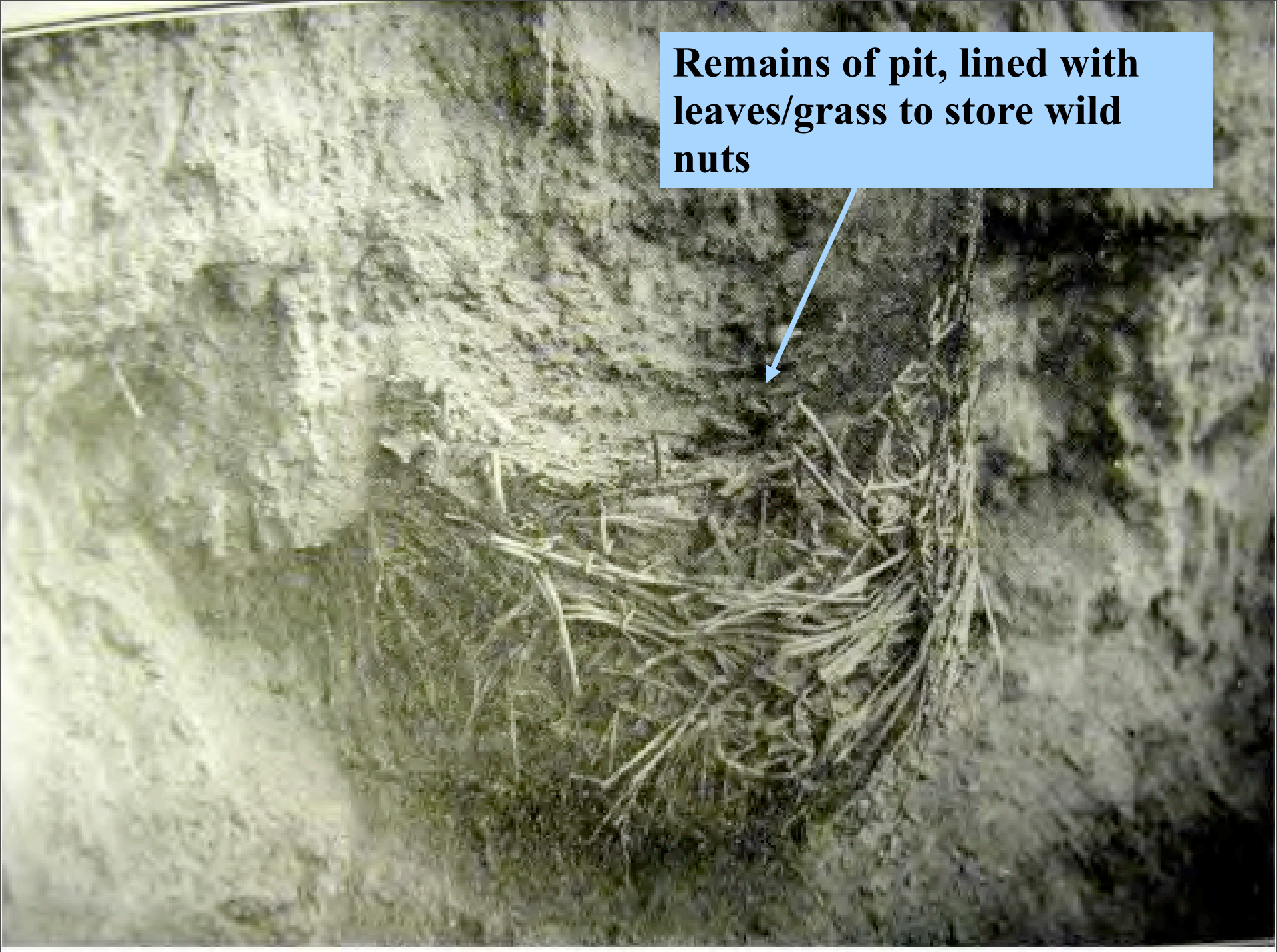
- “Which generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable…”
- “Where man himself is a visitor who does not remain…”
- “Which has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation…”

The Red River Gorge is home to many rare plants and animals


White-haired Goldenrod – only grows near
rockshelters in the Red River Gorge

HELP PRESERVE
OUR
CULTURAL
HERITAGE
BY LEAVING ARCHAEOLOGICAL
HISTORICAL REMAINS UNDISTURBED
REMOVAL OF ARTIFACTS
PROHIBITED BY LAW
FOREST SERVICE
U S
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Concentric Circle


Remains of pit, lined with leaves/grass to store wild nuts

Cultivated Plants and Wild nuts/seeds

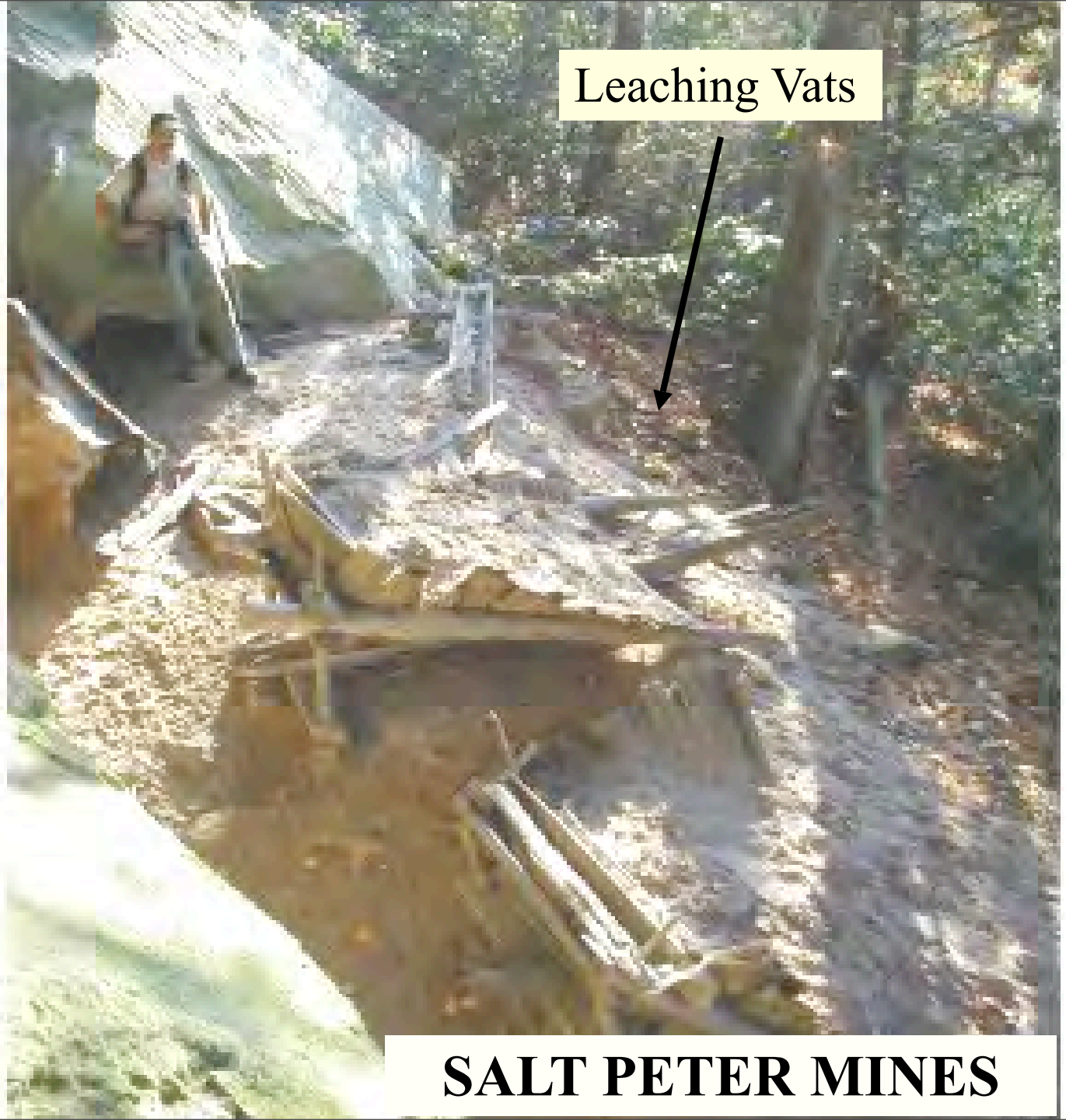
Origin of agriculture

MIDDEN – Intact stratified layers
of Cultural Deposits

MOONSHINE STILL

MOONSHINE STILL

Pen of hand-hewn logs made for holding mules/oxen during the early 1900's



SALT PETER MINES

Some fences have been installed to protect significant archaeological or biological resources

What’s out there?

- About 60 miles of designated system trails
- Well over 60 miles of user-created trails
- About 1,000 user-created campsites
- Over 700 user-created climbing routes
- Koomer Ridge Campground
- Gladie Education Center & Historic Site
- Frenchburg Job Corp Center
- 4 picnic areas
- 2 boat launches

What is “user-created”?

- Repeated traffic back & forth to the same spot that eventually beats out a path, a bare campsite, a bare spot at bottom of a climbing route
- Not developed or maintained by the Forest Service
- Remember all recreation use leaves some sort of impact

AN EXAMPLE OF A USER-CREATED TRAIL ALONG A CLIFFLINE USED BY HIKERS, CAMPERS AND ROCK CLIMBERS

Why are there “user-created”?

- Recreation use levels and patterns have changed since most Forest Service trails were designed and constructed in the 1960’s and 1970’s
- Visitors like to go to favorite places such as camping spots, vistas, fishing holes or climbing areas – whether there is a Forest Service system trail there or not

The Gorge is very accessible

- Mountain Parkway takes you right to the Gorge
- Within the Gorge area itself:
  - 22 miles of National Forest gravel roads
  - 3 miles of National Forest paved roads
  - 40 miles of state paved roads

Who visits the Gorge?

- Hikers
- Backpackers
- Campers
- Rock Climbers
- Rappellers
- Cavers
- Hunters
- Anglers
- Canoers
- Sightseers
- Partiers