

Daniel Boone National Forest

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Daniel Boone National Forest

[IUCN](#) category VI (protected area with sustainable use of natural resources)



View from the Tater Knob in the Daniel Boone National Forest



Location [Kentucky, USA](#)

Nearest city [Winchester, Kentucky](#)

	 37°17′17″N
	83°52′31″W 37.28806°N
Coordinates	83.87528°W Coordinates: 
	37°17′17″N
	83°52′31″W 37.28806°N
	83.87528°W
	2,100,000 acres (8,500 km ²)
Area	(proclamation boundary);
	706,000 acres (2,860 km ²)
	(Forest Service)
Established	23 February 1937 ^[1]
Visitors	2,507,000 (in 2004)
Governing body	U.S. Forest Service
	Official website

Daniel Boone National Forest is the only [national forest](#) completely within the boundary of [Kentucky](#). Established in 1937, it was originally named the Cumberland National Forest, after the core region called the Cumberland Purchase Unit. About 2,100,000 acres (8,500 km²) are contained within its current proclamation boundary, of which 706,000 acres (2,860 km²) are owned and managed by the [United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service](#) (as of April 2006), up from around 620,000 acres (2,500 km²) in the early to mid-1990s.

The forest was named after [Daniel Boone](#), a frontiersman and explorer in the late 18th century who contributed greatly to the exploration and settlement of Kentucky.

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Daniel Boone National Forest surrounds or contains a variety of popular and notable features, including:

- One of the world's largest concentrations of caves. The counties of Wayne, Pulaski, and Rockcastle alone have 173 miles (278 km) of mapped passageways ^{[2][3]}
- [Cave Run Lake](#) - a [USACE](#) reservoir
- [Laurel River Lake](#) - a USACE reservoir
- [Buckhorn Lake](#) - a USACE reservoir
- [Red River Gorge](#) Geologic Area - popular with hikers, campers, and rock climbers
- [Sheltowee Trace Trail](#)
- [Natural Bridge State Park \(Kentucky\)](#)
- [Yahoo Arch](#)
- [Yahoo Falls](#)
- [Cumberland Falls](#)

There are two areas designated as Wilderness:

- Clifty Wilderness
- Beaver Creek Wilderness

[\[edit\]](#) History

In 1937, a national forest was established containing 1,338,214 acres (5,416 km²) within its proclamation boundary. As of June 1937, the Forest Service had purchased only 336,692 acres (1,363 km²). Most early purchases were large, isolated tracts owned by lumber and coal companies with but few inhabitants. The Forest Service has since had difficulty acquiring more land within the proclamation boundary, the bulk of which was, and still remains, small owner-operated farms.

Due in part to World War II, funds for land acquisition were curtailed in the early 1940s. Substantial acquisition efforts could not resume until the mid-1960s. The lengthy cessation of land acquisitions, except for period during the forest's renaming, caused a highly fragmented ownership pattern.

Naming the forest entailed considerable debate. The name 'Daniel Boone National Forest' was advocated by various groups, and was favored by most local leaders in Kentucky, before the area's formal designation as the Cumberland National Forest soon after its inception. Protests began immediately after the national forest was named.

The naming issue was reopened in the late 1950s. The Forest Service investigated the name 'Cumberland', and found it came to Kentucky in 1750 when [Thomas Walker](#) named the [Cumberland River](#) in honor of [Prince William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland](#). The Duke had defeated the [Scottish Highlanders](#) in 1746 at the [Battle of Culloden](#), an especially brutal conflict. Many Scottish families fled to America and ultimately Kentucky as a result of the event. The Forest Service found that for their descendants still living in eastern Kentucky, the name 'Cumberland' was particularly distasteful.^[4]

In addition, the Forest Service noted the influence of history on the names of places in Kentucky. While the settlement of the region began before the [American Revolution](#), the population grew dramatically after the [Revolutionary War](#), when many veterans received land grants in reward for military service. During this

period of time, place names with British connotations fell out of favor and changes were made. For example, prior to the Revolution, the [Kentucky River](#) was called the Louisa River (or Levisa), after the wife of the Duke of Cumberland.



Natural Arch

During the 1960s, a new movement to rename the national forest took place. The [Kentucky Senate](#) passed a resolution in 1966 urging the Forest Service to change the name to 'Daniel Boone National Forest', and President [Lyndon B. Johnson](#) signed a proclamation so renaming the forest in 1966.

Also during the 1960s, part of the national forest was designated a Primitive Weapons Area (renamed Pioneer Weapons Area) and set apart for hunting with [longbow](#), [crossbow](#), or [muzzle-loading firearms](#) (either [flintlock](#) or [percussion](#)). In 1970, this was the only US area where deer could legally be hunted with crossbows. The park remains unique still for allowing only muzzle-loaded firearms.

In 1967, a large and disconnected addition to the national forest was created, called the Redbird Purchase Unit, after a key purchase from the Red Bird Timber Company. According to Robert F. Collins of the Forest Service, Thomas R. Frazier (born July 7, 1931; died February 1, 2008) was the first District Ranger of the Redbird Purchase Unit, and is credited as being a major factor in the success of the Redbird land purchasing unit ("A History of the Daniel Boone National Forest", dedication page, 1975).

The Daniel Boone National Forest embraces some of the most rugged terrain west of the Appalachian Mountains. The forest lies within the Cumberland Plateau, where steep forested slopes, sandstone cliffs and narrow ravines characterize the land in this region.

People come here to **hike, camp, picnic, rockclimb, boat, hunt, fish, ride, target shoot** and relax. The forest contains three large lakes (**Cave Run Lake, Laurel River Lake and Lake Cumberland**), many **rivers and streams, Clifty Wilderness, Beaver Creek Wilderness, Red River Gorge** and the **Sheltolee Trace National Recreation Trail** that extends across the length of the forest.

Spread across **21 counties** of southern and eastern Kentucky, nearly **708,000 acres** of national forest system lands are managed within a 2.1 million-acre **proclamation boundary**. The forest is divided into four areas known as ranger districts: **Cumberland, London, Redbird and Stearns**. It also hosts three **Job Corps Centers**.

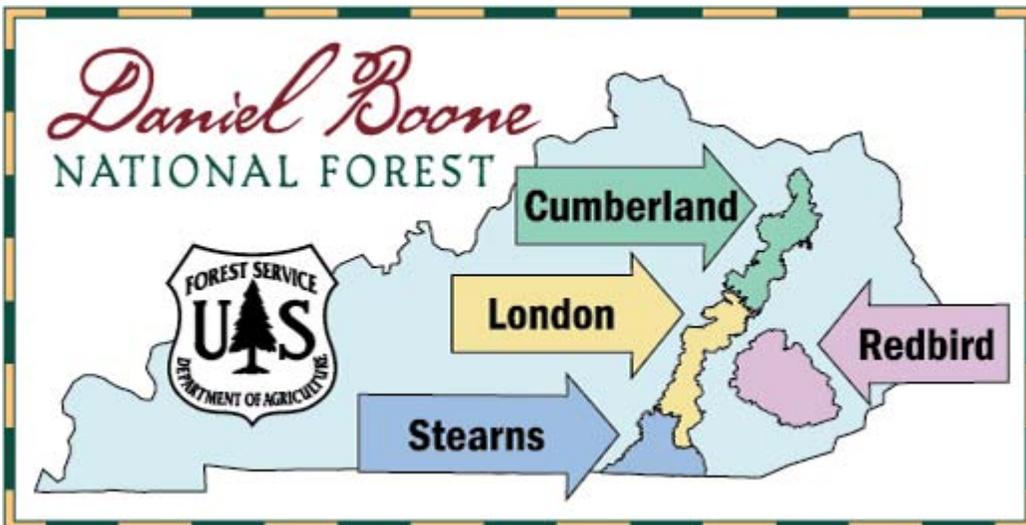
Recreation

Recreation on the Daniel Boone

The Daniel Boone National Forest is one of the most heavily used forests in the South, with over 5 million visitors annually. People come here to backpack, camp, picnic, rockclimb, boat, hunt, fish, ride and relax. The forest contains three large lakes (Cave Run Lake, Laurel River Lake and Lake Cumberland), many rivers and streams, two wilderness areas, and the Shelton Trace National Recreation Trail that extends across the length of the forest.

The forest is divided into four areas known as Ranger Districts. Each district has its own management staff led by the District Ranger.

For more information about recreation activities, select one of the AREAS (right "Areas & Activities sidebar) in which you want to recreate, or select one of the RECREATION ACTIVITIES you want to do from the tool bar on the left. and then view the opportunities within each of the Districts.



Cane Creek WMA

Cane Creek WMA Information

Public Hunting Area Location

Regional Locator

WMA Overview

Location & Size: Laurel County, 6,691 acres

Contact (606) 376-8083; London Ranger district
606-864-4163

Elevation minimum 728 feet, maximum 1296 feet.

Area Habitat mostly forest: open land 6%, forest 94%, wetland 0%, open water 0%.

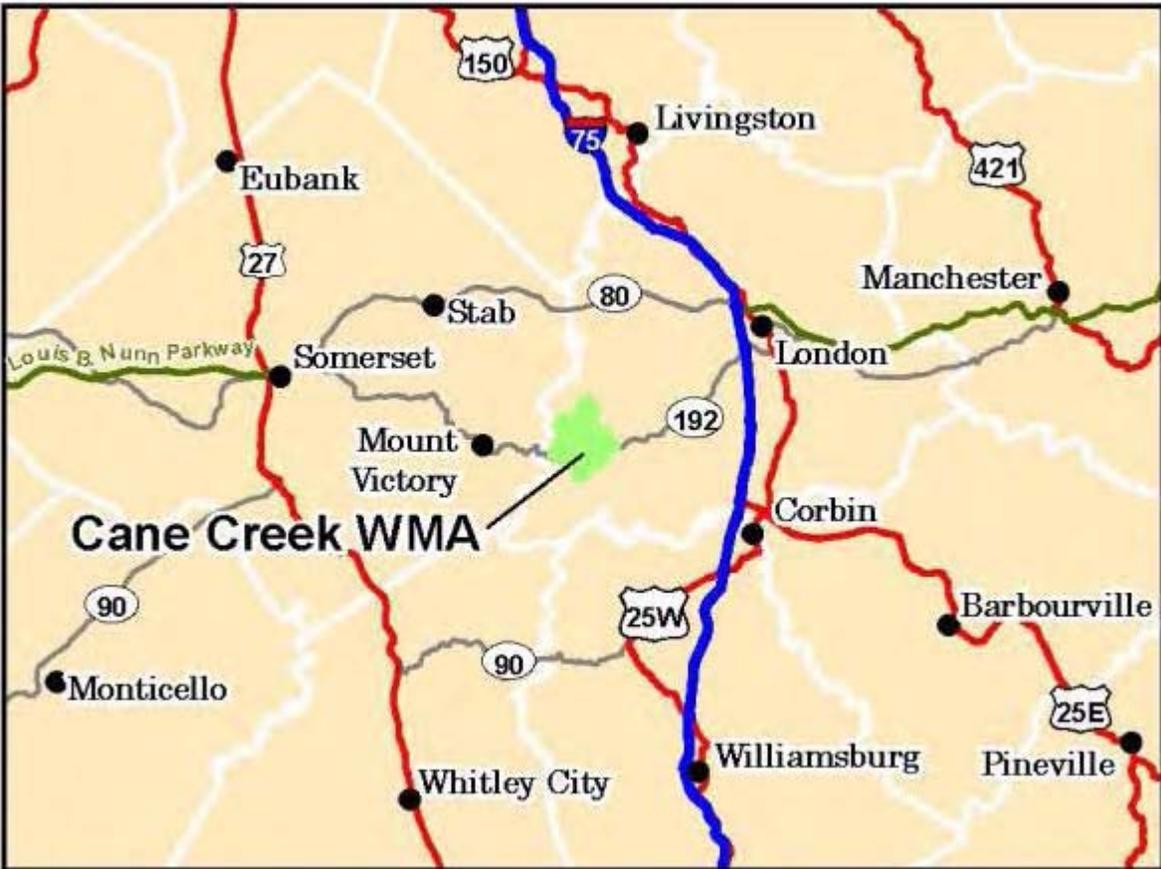
Directions & Description: Approximately 15 miles west of London. To the southern portion, from London: Travel 11 miles southwest on Hwy 192. Use map to access desired destination. To the northern portion, from London: Take Hwy 192 west approximately 6 miles. Turn right on Line Creek-Cold Hill Road (FR 56). Travel 2.7 miles and bear left on FR 119 (gravel road). Travel 5.9 miles to the WMA on the left.

Access by interior roads and traversed by Sheltopee Trace trail. Primarily hilly, steep terrain, mostly forested with only a few openings. No developed facilities. For camping check with owner. Within Daniel Boone National Forest. Owned by U.S. Forest Service.

Online Resources

Public Hunting Area users must abide by the Kentucky hunting, trapping, and fishing regulations. It is incumbent on persons using Public Hunting Areas to become familiar with these regulations. Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources provides these regulations on their Web site at fw.ky.gov or by calling 1-800-858-1549.

Cane Creek WMA



Sheltowee Trace Trail

The **Sheltowee Trace Trail** is a 282 miles (453.84 km) [National Recreation Trail](#) that was created in 1976 and stretches from [Pickett State Park](#) in [Tennessee](#) to northern [Rowan County, Kentucky](#). The trail is named after [Daniel Boone](#), who was given the name Sheltowee (meaning "Big Turtle") when he was adopted as the son of the great warrior [Chief Blackfish](#) of the [Shawnee tribe](#).

The trail is mostly in the [Daniel Boone National Forest](#), but also takes visitors through the [Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area](#), [Cumberland Falls State Resort Park](#), [Natural Bridge State Resort Park](#), two large recreation lakes ([Cave Run Lake](#) and Laurel Lake), and many wildlife management areas. All but the southernmost 10 miles (16.09 km) are in Kentucky.

The trail may be multi-use, in certain sections, allowing [horses](#), [mountain bikes](#) and [off-road vehicles](#) in some designated sections. Check with the ranger district for local rules if in doubt. Using Off road motorcycles, SUVs, 4x4, ATV's and even mountain bikes in certain areas can result in equipment confiscation and or fines.

The Sheltowee Trace National Recreation Trail is considered the "backbone" of the forest's trail system. Many other trails link to the Sheltowee forming loops for day hikes or opportunities for long distance adventure. Visit the day hiking page for a complete list of all trails and additional information about each section of the Sheltowee.

The trail begins in northern Kentucky on KY377 and travels south nearly 290 miles to its terminus at Pickett State Park in Tennessee. Old homesteads, oil and gas wells and logging tracts, remnants of past land uses, can be seen along the trail. The rugged trail meanders narrow ridges and dips into gorges surrounded by towering cliffs. You may also cross private land or follow road corridors between tracts of national forest land.

Designated Trail Uses:

Hiking is allowed on the entire trail. Horses, mountain bikes and off-highway vehicles less than 50 inches wide are permitted only on sections designated for those uses.

Safety Tips:

- Be bear aware and properly store food and personal items to avoid attracting bears.
- Stream water may be unsafe to drink. Bring or treat your drinking water.
- [Hunting](#) is allowed on national forest lands under state regulations. Trail users should take appropriate safety precautions during hunting seasons.
- The forest is remote and rugged. Cell phone service is not available on many sections of the trail. Notify a friend of your travel plans as a safety precaution.

Current Conditions:	The trail route is marked with white diamonds bearing the image of a turtle. Exit and entry points along roadways are marked with the turtle diamond or the National Recreation Trail symbol. Yellow signs or red paint on trees may occasionally be seen marking the boundary of private property. Please be respectful of landowner rights and stay on the designated trail when crossing sections of privately owned land. You may encounter "user-developed" trails that are not part of the official Forest Service trail system. These unofficial trails can cause confusion and lead you astray. If you think you might be lost, retrace your path and look for Sheltowee trail markers.
Fees	None
Permit Info:	A recreation permit is required when camping overnight in the Red River Gorge.
Open Season:	Open All Year
Usage:	Light-Medium
Best Season:	Spring or Fall
Busiest Season:	Summer
Operated By:	Daniel Boone National Forest
Information Center:	The Sheltowee Trace was officially designated a National Recreation Trail in 1979. It is named in honor of Daniel Boone, who is also known as Sheltowee (pronounced shell-toe-ee). The name given to him by Chief Blackfish of the Shawnee tribe.

Laurel River Lake



Laurel River Lake

Located within the Daniel Boone National Forest, Laurel River Lake features 5,600 acres of deep, clear water and nearly 200 miles of tree-lined shore. As one of the most scenic lakes in Kentucky, visitors come here to enjoy boating, swimming, fishing and camping in the great outdoors.

The U.S. Forest Service administers the main body of the lake and most of its shoreline. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers oversees the operation of Laurel River Dam and recreation facilities at the dam site.

Laurel River Lake receives heavy use on the weekends during summer months. Week days and the months of September through March offer visitors more solitude.

Recreation Permits

A fee is required to use Flatwoods, Grove, Holly Bay, Marsh Branch and Laurel Bridge boat ramps. A permit must be displayed in your vehicle at these locations. Permits may be bought at local stores or Forest Service district offices. Call the London Ranger District or more information.



Boating

Most of the lake is open to motorized and non-motorized boats. Laurel River Lake has eight boat ramps for lake access. The boat ramp at Holly Bay Campground is for campers only.



Marinas

Two full-service marinas operate on Laurel River Lake. They are located near Grove and Holly Bay campgrounds. The marinas are privately operated under a special-use permit issued by the Forest Service.



Fishing

The lake provides excellent fishing for bass, rainbow trout, walleye, crappie, bluegill and catfish. Night fishing for trout is popular during the summer. Fishing licenses may be bought at county clerk's offices, marinas and many local stores. State fishing regulations are enforced.



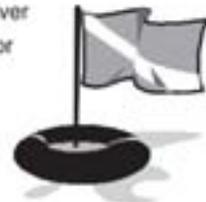
Swimming

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintains a swimming beach at the spillway of Laurel River Dam. Lifeguards are not provided. Swimming is not allowed at boat ramps or marinas.



Scuba Diving

The clear waters of Laurel River Lake provide opportunities for scuba diving. This flag indicates divers below the water surface. Boats must stay 100 feet away.





Canoeing

The Goose Management Area on Cane Branch is closed to motorized boats but open to canoes, kayaks and rowboats. The area provides a unique opportunity to explore the lake at a slower pace.



Picnicking

The Forest Service manages picnic areas at Laurel Bridge and Flatwoods on Laurel River Lake. The Laurel Bridge area has flush toilets and a picnic shelter.

The Bald Rock Picnic Ground on KY 192 has vault toilets, a volleyball court, horseshoe pits and hiking trails.

The Army Corps of Engineers maintains a picnic area and shelter near Laurel River Dam.



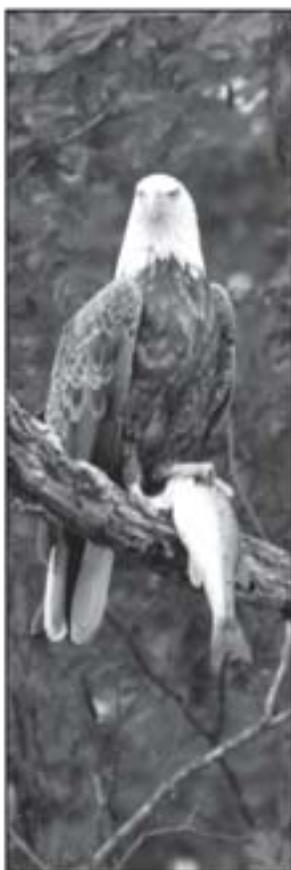
Hiking

Hikers will enjoy miles of trails near Laurel River Lake. The Sheltowee Trace National Recreation Trail skirts the western edge of the lake.



Wildlife Viewing

The quiet coves and surrounding forest along the lake offer plenty of opportunity for wildlife viewing. The lake is home to Canada geese, bald eagles and other wildlife species. The Canada Goose Management Area in Cane Branch is closed to motorized boats.



Never go boating under the influence.

Kentucky law prohibits consumption and open containers of alcohol in public places, including national forest land and Kentucky waterways.



Wear your lifejacket.

Wearing a life jacket at all times could have saved 80% of all drowning victims according to the U.S. Coast Guard.



Do not swim at boat ramps or marinas.

Stray electrical currents can pose serious threats in the water where boats are connected to power.



Be aware of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Swim away from areas where engines vent exhaust fumes. Never sit or hang on the back deck of boats while engines are running.



Black bear encounters

- Protect yourself and black bears by storing trash and food in safe locations.
- Avoid camping and hiking alone in the backcountry.
- Make noise to avoid surprising a bear.
- Never approach a bear or other wild animal.
- Do not hike in the dark.
- Carry EPA-registered bear pepper spray.
- If a bear is observed nearby, pack up your food and trash and leave immediately.
- If a bear approaches, move away slowly; do not run. Get into a vehicle or a secure building.
- If attacked by a black bear, fight back using any object available. Act aggressively and intimidate the bear by yelling and waving your arms.

CAMPING AT LAUREL RIVER LAKE

All campgrounds at Laurel River Lake are operated by concessionaires under a special use permit with the U.S. Forest Service. Fees and seasons vary. Campgrounds are open April through October. Check with the district office for specific dates.

Drive-In Campgrounds

Holly Bay Campground and Grove Campground have electricity, drinking water, flush toilets and shower facilities.

Boat-in Campgrounds

Two boat-in campgrounds, Grove and White Oak, are accessible by boat or foot travel. Drinking water, vault toilets and trash bins are provided onsite.

Group Campgrounds

The Craigs Creek Group Use Campground is designed for groups of 12 or more people. The camp has three group sites, a picnic shelter, drinking water, flush toilets and shower facilities. A trail leads from the campground to the lake.

Lakeside Camping

Primitive campsites must be at least 300 feet from the shoreline, roads or trails.



Storing your food or trash in bear country

Avoid attracting bears by keeping a clean camp site. Never feed a bear. Once bears learn to associate food with humans, they can become aggressive for another easy meal. Feeding bears is illegal in Kentucky.

- Do not leave food or garbage inside fire rings, grills or around your site.
- Never leave food or coolers unattended, even in developed picnic areas.
- If bear-proof containers are not available, store food and garbage inside a hard-top vehicle or trailer.
- Wipe tabletops clean before vacating a camp or picnic site.
- Never store food inside your tent.
- If a bear is observed nearby, pack up your food and trash immediately and leave the area.

Store food and trash inside a vehicle with a hard top.



Take food and trash with you when you leave.



Put your trash in bear-resistant cans provided.



INFORMATION

**London District Office**

Daniel Boone National Forest
761 South Laurel Road
London, KY 40744 606-864-4163

**Forest Supervisor's Office**

Daniel Boone National Forest
1700 Bypass Road
Winchester, KY 40391
www.fs.usda.gov/dbnf 859-745-3100

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

71433 Laurel Lake Road
London, KY 40744 606-864-6412
www.lm.usace.army.mil/op/fau/rec/

**Grove Marina**

P.O. Box 1483
Corbin, KY 40701 606-523-2323
www.grovetmarina.com/

**Holly Bay Marina**

P.O. Box 674
London, KY 40744 606-864-6542
www.hollybaymarina.com/

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R8-RG 258 Revised April 2012

Laurel River Lake Visitor Information

Daniel Boone National Forest
Kentucky



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Southern Region

2012

Laurel River Lake

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Laurel River Lake



Laurel River Dam and Lake

Location [Laurel](#) / [Whitley](#) counties, [Kentucky, USA](#)

 [36°57′N 84°16′W](#)[36.95°N](#)

Coordinates [84.267°W](#)[Coordinates: !\[\]\(9cc80862e225935f5e2ce39495f8c582_img.jpg\) \[36°57′N\]\(#\)](#)

[84°16′W](#)[36.95°N 84.267°W](#)

Lake type [Reservoir](#)

Basin countries [United States](#)

Max. length 19 mi (30 km)

Surface area 5,600 acres (2,300 ha)

Average depth 65 ft (20 m)

Max. depth ca. 280 ft (85 m)

Water volume 435,000 [acre·ft](#) (0.537 km³)

Shore length¹ 206 mi (332 km)

Surface elevation 1,015 ft (309 m)

¹ Shore length is [not a well-defined measure](#).



Laurel River Lake, Kentucky

Laurel River Lake, located west of [Corbin, Kentucky](#), in the [USA](#), is an [reservoir](#) built in 1977 by the [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#) on the Laurel River, a tributary of the [Cumberland River](#), in the [Daniel Boone National Forest](#). The lake covers parts of [Laurel](#) and [Whitley](#) counties. ^[1]

The 282 foot (86 m) high [dam](#) was built between 1964 and 1974. It is a combination earth and rock-fill dam. [Hydropower](#) production began in 1977. As of 2006, it produced an average annual energy of 67 gigawatt hours of [hydroelectricity](#).

The Army Corps of Engineers and the [Forest Service](#) cooperate on developing recreational facilities around the reservoir. Today most of the lake is managed by the Forest Service as part of Daniel Boone National Forest. The Army Corps of Engineers manages the operation of the dam itself, and runs recreational facilities at the dam.

Laurel River Lake's drainage area is 282 square miles (730 km²). The area of the lake changes based on how full it is, but it is about 19 miles (31 km) long, with 206 miles (332 km) of shoreline. Its area ranges from about 5,600 to 6,060 acres (23 to 25 km²), with a maximum flood-control size of 6,650 acres (27 km²). The reservoir's storage capacity (volume) also changes, but is about 435,000 [acre feet](#) (537,000,000 m³).

[\[edit\]](#) References

- [^] Kleber, John E., ed. (1992). "Lakes". The Kentucky Encyclopedia. Associate editors: [Thomas D. Clark](#), Lowell H. Harrison, and James C. Klotter. [Lexington, Kentucky](#): The University Press of Kentucky. [ISBN 0-8131-1772-0](#).