



Middle Ridge Trail #518

Stearns Ranger District • Daniel Boone National Forest • Kentucky



Stearns District
3320 US 27 North
Whitley City, KY 42653
606-376-5323



Directions
Take US 27 south 18 miles from Somerset, KY or take US 27 north 10 miles from Whitley City. Turn east onto Forest Road 839. Go 1/4 mile to Middle Ridge trailhead on the right.



Open Dates
Trails are open all year.



Trail Fees
None.



Parking
At the trailhead.



Camping
Primitive camping is permitted in the Beaver Creek Wilderness except in rock shelters. Camping for more than 14 consecutive days without terminating forest occupancy for a minimum of 10 days within a 31 day timeframe is prohibited.



Accessibility
These trails do not meet accessibility standards for persons with disabilities.



Trails are closed to motorized vehicles, bicycles and horses.



Consumption of alcohol and open containers of alcohol are prohibited.



Do not camp or build fires within 100 feet of the base of any cliff or the back of any rock shelter.



No climbing or rappelling from cliffs, arches or other rock formations at the Three Forks of Beaver Overlook.

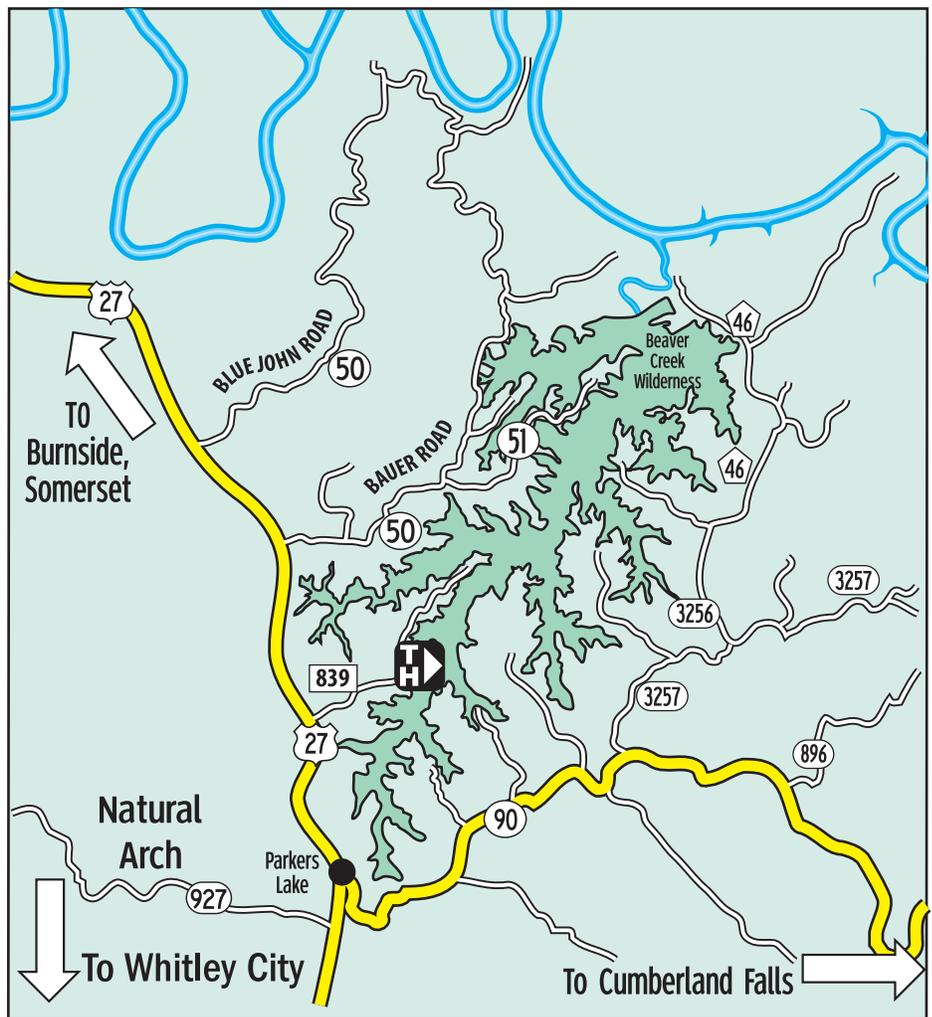
Guides like this are available online at fs.usda.gov/dbnf.
12/12/2012



Middle Ridge Trail #518, located on Stearns Ranger District of the Daniel Boone National Forest, provides access to Beaver Creek Wilderness. The trail follows the creek to the Three Forks of Beaver Trail #512. You may continue to follow Beaver Creek or return to the Middle Ridge Trail. The upper portion of the Middle Ridge Trail is the most difficult trail in the wilderness with multiple stream crossings. Primitive camping is permitted in the Beaver Creek Wilderness except in rock shelters. Campers should camp at least 300 feet away from any road, stream or trail.

Connections: Three Forks of Beaver Trail #512; Bowman Ridge Trail #514.

Begins:	Trailhead parking lot	Difficulty:	Most Difficult
Ends:	Trail #512	Surface:	Dirt
Length:	6.5 miles	County:	McCreary
Quad:	Hail, Wiborg	Latitude:	36.86895
Closest Town:	Somerset	Longitude:	-84.48325



U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service
Southern Region - Daniel Boone National Forest
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/dbnf>

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FOR YOUR SAFETY

Drugs and alcohol are prohibited. The wilderness is no place for impairment.

Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.

Prepare for extreme weather, hazards and emergencies.

Hike with a partner or group.

Cell phones and GPS units may not function due to remoteness and rugged terrain.

Be aware of standing dead trees when camping and hiking.

Be aware of your surroundings and watch for bears, stinging insects and venomous snakes.

Stream water is unsafe to drink. Pack in your water.

Cliffhikes are dangerous. Plan ahead and arrive at your destination before dark.

Call 911 for emergencies.

IN BEAR TERRITORY:

Hike in a group, and keep children close at hand.

Hike during daylight hours. Stay on the trail.

Avoid surprising a bear.

If a black bear is visible, but not close, alter your route to avoid its area.

If a black bear approaches, do not run. Remain calm, face the bear and slowly back away.

If the bear continues to approach, group together. Scare the bear away by shouting and acting aggressively.

Towering sandstone cliffs, natural arches, hardwood forests, rippling streams and abundant wildlife are some of the special resources that led to designation of this 4,753-acre area as a wilderness in 1975. Beaver Creek Wilderness is an isolated, natural area where you may encounter adverse weather, wild animals and strenuous hiking conditions. Expect few trail signs or markers to guide you.

Before becoming a wilderness, this area was settled as a small coal mining and cooperage town during the late 1800s. Signs of the past remain visible with old roads, homeplaces, stone fencing, exotic shrubs and grave sites scattered throughout the area. Over time, nature is slowly erasing the signs that man left behind. The prehistoric use of the land at Beaver Creek dates back nearly 10,000 years. Archaeological evidence suggests that Native Americans used rock shelters in the area as temporary shelter, most likely for hunting and gathering. State and federal laws protect all archaeological resources. Do not collect or dig for artifacts.

The wilderness is surrounded by the Beaver Creek Wildlife Management Area, which is managed cooperatively between the Forest Service and the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. Hunting is allowed in the wilderness. See Kentucky Hunting and Trapping Guide for special quota hunt information.

What is Wilderness?

Not all forests are wilderness. A Wilderness is a special area that has been set aside by congress for preservation as a natural area for present and future generations. The Wilderness Act of 1964 designated the nation's first wilderness areas. The Daniel Boone National Forest manages two wilderness areas, Clifty Wilderness and Beaver Creek Wilderness.

The Wilderness Act defines wilderness as areas that:

- Are affected primarily by the forces of nature, where man is a visitor who does not remain.
- Possess outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.
- Are undeveloped, federally owned, and generally over 5,000 acres in size.
- Are protected and managed so as to allow natural ecological processes to operate freely.
- May contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

KNOW before you **GO** **You are responsible for your own safety.**

All outdoor activities have inherent risks and you may encounter a variety of unexpected and/or dangerous conditions. It is your responsibility to be informed and take precautions. Learn more at www.fs.usda.gov/r8.



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Storing Your Food and Trash in Bear Country

Unless cooking or eating, store your food inside a hardtop vehicle, the trunk of a car or a bear-resistant container. Store your food garbage in the same manner where trash cans are not installed.

When camping in the backcountry hang your food at least 10 feet off the ground and four feet away from a tree.

Food and trash storage is mandatory Stearns Ranger District, Supervisors Order 16-04-10.



Put your trash in bear-resistant trash cans, in areas where they are provided.

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



Hang food and trash from a tree, out of bear's reach in backcountry areas where bear-resistant trash cans and vehicles are not nearby.

Visiting a Wilderness

Wilderness areas are primitive in nature. The rugged natural environment challenges visitors to be self-reliant and requires excellent outdoor skills. Modern facilities such as toilets, drinking water, shelters or campgrounds are not provided. Few, if any, signs or trails are provided to guide you. When entering a wilderness you are entering a remote site where cell or radio communications may not exist. Emergency services may be very limited.

Wilderness travel is by foot. Motorized vehicles and equipment such as all-terrain vehicles and chainsaws as well as mechanized equipment such as bicycles and wheeled carts are prohibited.

You are free to explore and discover all that wilderness provides including solitude, challenge, scenic beauty, and natural ecosystems. Hiking, camping, hunting and fishing are allowed.

Help Protect the Wilderness

As more people seek to escape the urban world and experience nature on its own terms, the wilderness is becoming more impacted from our visits. To ensure that future visitors can have the same high quality wilderness experience, each person must take responsibility to minimize the impact of their visit.

Some important things you can do:

- Carry out everything you bring in. Do not leave trash or food debris.
- Use a camp stove instead of building a campfire. If a campfire is necessary, keep it small and tend to it at all times.
- Never cut or damage live trees.
- Bury human waste at least 200 feet from water sources.
- Refrain from taking rocks, wildflowers, antlers or artifacts. Take only memories.
- Select campsites at least 200 feet away from streams.
- Do not camp or build fires in rock shelters.

tread lightly!®

LEAVING A GOOD IMPRESSION



Get some simple tips on more ways to minimize your impact when playing in the outdoors at www.treadlightly.org. Tread Lightly!® is a national nonprofit organization with a mission to promote responsible outdoor recreation through ethics education and stewardship.

