Barren Fork Heritage Trail is located on Stearns Ranger District near Barren Fork Horse Camp on the Daniel Boone National Forest. This 0.75-mile trail is paved for wheelchair accessibility. It is closed to mountain bikes and horses.

The heritage trail provides visitors with a glimpse into the past. Several signs along the trail interpret the area’s mining history, and you can see the old foundations of some of the buildings that were part of the community. This area was the site of a coal mining town operated by Barren Fork Mining and Coal Company from 1881 to 1935. Here they mined what was considered some of the best quality low sulfur coal in McCreary County. Over 100 families were thought to have lived and worked in the mining community. The mines were closed in 1935 due to labor disputes. The land was then sold to the United States in 1936, but the minerals were reserved by the company and small mining operations continued until 1948.

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. If 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.