

## Mark Twain National Forest Trail Map – Bell Mountain Wilderness Area 2022

This 9,143 acre wilderness is part of the St. Francois Mountains, one of the oldest landforms in North America. The wilderness is named for a family that once lived and farmed along the ridge top that is now known as Bell Mountain. Elevations range from 1,702 feet at Bell Mountain to 970 feet in the Joe's Creek drainage. Local relief is about 600 feet and is characterized by steep felsite and rhyolite outcroppings. Both Bell Mountain and Lindsey Mountain offer outstanding views of the surrounding area. The associated granite glades provide a variety of interesting plant and animal life.

Shut-in Creek crosses the area. It is a perennial spring fed stream with several shut-ins or gorges along its course. Steep talus slopes intersect the stream at several locations. Joe's Creek is another small perennial stream within the wilderness.

There are approximately 11.9 miles of trails maintained for hikers, including a small segment of the Ozark Trail.

A Wilderness is a special area set aside by Congress which "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable?" The area is rugged and is for experienced hikers only. Before you start, be prepared with adequate supplies; water sources within the Wilderness are not recommended for drinking. Groups are limited to a maximum of 10 people, to help protect wilderness values.

Oak and hickory are the predominate tree species, with some areas of natural oak-pine and some short leaf pine plantations. Upland brush and red cedar make up a small portion of the vegetative component. Blackjack oak, winged elm, hickories, sumac, and native grasses are found on the glades. Lichens abound on the exposed-surface rock. Some areas on Bell Mountain that were cleared in the 1940's now have almost pure stands of Northern Red Oak.

Bell Mountain Wilderness provides a unique habitat situation not typical of the majority of Missouri's Ozarks. The predominately oak-hickory forest is interspersed with pine and scattered glades resulting in a diversity of plant species more common to old growth forest. This habitat situation favors mature forest species such as pileated woodpeckers, wood thrush and oven birds. Moderate populations of most game species such as white-tailed deer, wild turkeys and squirrels can be found. Visitors have a chance to see a unique environment and combination of plant and animal communities not found in other areas of the Missouri Ozarks.

As a designated wilderness, the Bell Mountain Wilderness is managed by the Mark Twain National Forest and enjoys the highest level of permanent protection!

**Trails:** Bell Mountain Trail, Taum Sauk section of the Ozark Trail, Bell Mountain Connector, & Linsey Mountain Trail.

**Restrictions:** Foot, and horseback travel only, **no motorized or mechanized use.**

**Rating:** Moderate, terrain is sometimes steep.

**Disclaimer:**

-This map is intended to depict physical features as they generally appear on the ground and may not be used to determine title, ownership, legal boundaries, legal jurisdiction, including jurisdiction over roads or trails, or access restrictions that may be in place on either public or private land.

-Obtain permission before entering private lands, and check with appropriate government offices for restrictions that may apply to public lands.

-Lands, roads and trails within the boundaries of the National Forest may be subject to restrictions on motor vehicle use. Obtain a Motor Vehicle Use Map, or inquire at the local Forest Service Office for motor vehicle access information.

-Natural hazards may or may not be depicted on the map, and land users should exercise due caution. This map may not be suitable for navigational use.

- Please be aware that these maps may not display the most up-to-date trails or other information due to time-lag between changing conditions & map updates.