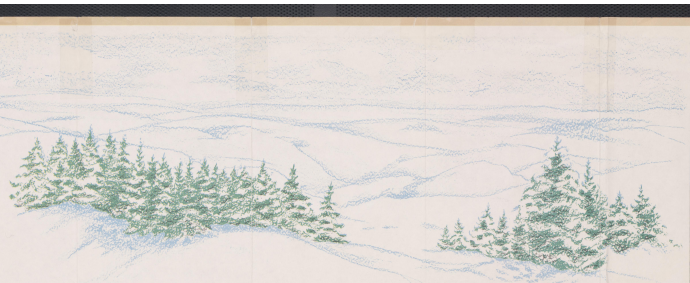


Welcome to Your

MONONGAHELA National Forest

THE LAND BECKONS

THE Monongahela National Forest is not an easy place to get away from—once you've been there. For this land of sprawling mountain peaks, soft lowland valleys lying in the shadows of solemn rock outcroppings and swift tumbling rivers leaves an indelible image of natural vigor and spontaneity. Even after the vacation or picnic is finished, and gear is stowed away for another year, the sweet smell of fresh air lingers on.

The Monongahela is an easy place to reach, however, and not just for the few fortunate people who might live in the neighborhood. Reclining against the eastern border of West Virginia, the Monongahela National Forest is in the heartland of the Middle Atlantic States and within 250 miles of over one-third of the nation's population.

Major highways passing through or near the Forest include east-west U. S. Route 60, which connects the capitals of Virginia and West Virginia, and north-south U. S. Routes 19 and 220, which extend from South Carolina to Pennsylvania.

People wishing to contact the Forest for information may do so by writing:

Forest Supervisor
Monongahela National Forest
Elkins, West Virginia 26241

RECREATION IS WHERE IT ALL BEGINS

THERE'S a lot of the Monongahela National Forest for visitors to see, even more they can take away with them, and just looking for a scenic spot to have a good time is where it all begins.

Auto touring is one of the most popular ways to get to know the Forest, whether you come only for the day or you have a carload of gear and you're looking for a place to make camp. The Forest covers more than a million and a half acres of the Allegheny Mountain Range, and the extensive network of back-country roads offer breathtaking views of some of the loftiest mountains in the East.

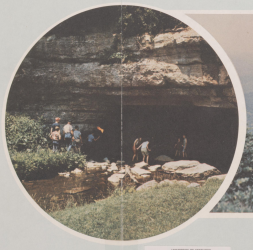
The highest peak in this land of mountains—also the highest point in West Virginia—is Spruce Knob (D-3), located in the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area. From the observation tower, which rises over 4,862 feet at the Knob's summit, West Virginia becomes an imposing reality as ridgeline after ridgeline ripples away into the distance.

To the east of Spruce Knob, yet still within the 300,000-acre National Recreation Area are Seneca Rocks (E-2). These are a quartzite formation of shear-faced, towering rocks which erupt dramatically nearly 1,000 feet out of the edgeline forest at a rolling pastureland. A truly remarkable natural feature, Seneca Rocks overlook a network of clear, swift streams which lace the interior of the Recreation Area and branch throughout the rest of the Forest.

Embracing the headwaters of the Potomac River, the National Recreation Area is being developed for everything its name implies.

Here, as in other developed sites, camping units are equipped with tent pad, parking spur, toilet and water facilities, fireplace and firewood. Individual camping units are spaciously placed with a maximum of natural cover to insure privacy. The parking spur is large enough to accommodate the average camp trailer; however, there are no sewer or electrical hook-ups.

Recreation opportunities throughout this area include swimming, boating, white-water canoeing, fishing and hiking. Fishermen, however, should check state regulations, governing licensing, seasons and limits before taking to the streams and lakes. Nor is a camera, loaded with color film a bad bet—whether you're traveling in the National Recreation Area or throughout the Forest generally. The seasons here are distinct and colorful and the sharply contrasting features of the landscape are worthy of permanent record.



OTHER developed recreation areas include:

STUART RECREATION AREA (C-2) is about five miles from Elkins and is fringed by an excellent trout stream, the Shavers Fork. There is a small swimming area on the river and an interpretive forest trail.

BLUE BEND RECREATION AREA (B-6) is located on Anthony Creek. Evening visitor information programs are offered here, along with guided tours along a forest interpretive trail.

LAKE SHERWOOD RECREATION AREA (C-5) holds the largest lake in the Forest. In addition to camping and picnicking, there are boat launching ramps (no outboard motors), hiking trails and a sandy beach with modern bathhouse. This area is a joint project of the Forest Service and the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources.

Campfire permits are not required on the Monongahela National Forest. However, within developed recreation areas, visitors are urged to use only the fireplaces. In undeveloped areas throughout the remainder of the Forest, a sufficient area should be cleared to mineral soil before igniting a campfire, and care should be taken to insure the fire is built at a safe distance from overhanging cover. And please—wherever you are—be sure your fire is dead-out when unattended or your trip is completed.

SOME AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

SCENIC DRIVES through the Monongahela National Forest will give memorable experiences any season, but especially in autumn. The traversing highways and minor roads give access to almost endless scenic views and to natural features of great scientific and educational interest.

CRANBERRY GLADES BOTANICAL AREA (B-5) is three miles from the Cranberry Mountain Visitor Center. The Glades are an outdoor lab for botanists and naturalists, and part of the interpretive program of the Center. Cranberry Glades has been likened to the tundra country of Alaska with reindeer moss and other northern plants.

SMOKE HOLE (E-2) is an area on the North Fork South Branch Potomac River. The name refers to the caves along the mountainside, where Indians are thought to have lived centuries ago. Moonshiners are reputed to have operated stills. Wet forms where cool air from the caves meets the moist warmer air in the gorge, giving the appearance of smoke.

Spruce Knob observation tower

FALLS OF HILLS CREEK (B-5) is a scenic area of three waterfalls along a short stretch of Hills Creek. There is a beautiful forest trail leading down the gorge to the falls, the most spectacular of which is 65 feet high.

MAX ROTHKUGEL PLANTATION (D-3) is 150 acres of Norway spruce and European larch seeded in 1907 by this Austrian forester. It is one of the earliest known plantings in West Virginia.

PARSONS TREE NURSERY (D-2) is located at Parsons Nursery Bottom, 95 acres of flat fertile land along the Black Fork. The nursery, part of the Monongahela National Forest, is under lease to the State of West Virginia.

CRANBERRY MOUNTAIN VISITOR CENTER (B-5) can be the pulse of the Monongahela National Forest for the people who make use of it. Open throughout the summer tourist season, the Cranberry Mountain Visitor Center offers a variety of displays and programs to answer questions and make your stay on the Forest more meaningful.

GAUDINEER SCENIC AREA (C-3) is a remnant of a vast virgin spruce forest. These spruce tower 300 feet and grow to 35 inches in diameter. The 130-acre primeval stand is about 250 years old.

DOLLY SODS (E-2) is a remote area high on Allegheny Mountain, east of Lanesville, noted for fall migratory birds. Ornithologists come here to study the various species. Bear Rocks, elevation over 4,000 feet, is adjacent to the gathering place for hawk watchers. Picnicking and camping facilities are available in a remote, peaceful setting.

FERNOW EXPERIMENTAL FOREST (D-2) is an outdoor research area of the Forest Service's Timber and Watershed Management Laboratory at Parsons. This area was set aside from the Monongahela for studies in managing mountainous forest land, and to find practical solutions to problems of managing the timber and water resources of the area.

Seneca Rocks

BUT IF YOU REALLY WANT TO SEE THE FOREST...

ONCE you've seen the recreation areas, once you've driven the roads and stopped at all the places where people normally stop, and you feel you really want to become a part of the Forest, park your car, heft a pack onto your back and set out on foot. Meeting the environment the hard, slow way—on its own terms—is the best way to learn.

As you plan a trip like this, you might desire a more detailed map than the one you are reading, in which case topographic maps are available by writing:

U. S. Geological Survey
Washington, D. C. 20242

As you begin your trek into the distant mountains and river valleys, one of the first things you will become aware of is the variety of life forms in the Forest. From small plants and insects to various species of wildlife and the lush cover of maturing hardwoods and evergreens, life appears spontaneous and abundant wherever the eye turns. Even at the alpine summits of places like Spruce Knob where the environment makes life a luxury, a surprising variety of plants erupt into the bright sunlight and cling stubbornly to the barren slopes which spawned them.

All of these things point to a healthy, well-managed forest, and that is no accident. Nor is it a museum piece, untouched and untouchable, where men have been defined out of the natural order of life.

From its inception, the National Forest System has been guided by a belief that all living things—man notwithstanding—are part and parcel of the same earth, with the same stake in the environment and the same natural law requiring present generations to conserve that environment for future generations.

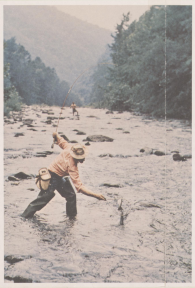
This does not mean that man does not disturb the Forest. In fact, it means just the opposite, except that within a controlled framework like the National Forest System multiple-use management—carefully planned and executed to produce the greatest benefit, both to the people it serves and the environment from which this service is derived.

Only you can prevent forest fires.

One of the most apparent indicators of environmental quality is water, because sooner or later everything we do or fail to do with the land is recorded there. Watershed management, therefore, is emphasized in every phase of forest planning. Whether it is timber harvesting, recreation site development or wildlife habitat improvement, the impacts of these activities on surrounding water resources are carefully measured and accounted for in subsequent management.

Off the beaten path of the Forest, you will see many of these activities—or the results of them—in progress. And more important, you will not only see that man can be sustained equitably in the natural environment but that many of the principles which make the forest a successful community could be modified and applied with equal success in the world at large.

Along the forest's edge, pasturelands called "sods" rise and fall gracefully. Once forested, much of this land was cleared for agriculture by early pioneers and the hardy grass cover developed naturally in their wake. Now feed-water for grazing 2,500 acres of these pasture-lands have been fenced—are managed under permit to local livestock owners.



In the forest itself, there is timber to be cut. This is an important part of forest management for many reasons. First and foremost are the products we derive and the many jobs that are created in the course of the timber harvest. In addition, 25 percent of the revenues collected from timber sales are returned to the states and counties with National Forest ownership to be used for roads and schools.

Other benefits which accrue from carefully planned timber management are soil protection, clear water and a home for wildlife. With the cooperation of the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, Forest Service management assures an abundance of white-tailed deer, black bear, wild turkey, beaver, squirrels, and ruffed grouse.

Thus the Forest slowly unfolds behind you; and when your trek is done—even when it is only a memory—you have become a part of the Forest and will remain so. For man belongs there, in spirit if not in presence; and it has been his drive to escape the wilderness, more than his need for civilization, which has cost us so dearly in the past.

Open spaces in the Forest, produced through the timber harvest, provide food for many of these animals, maintaining healthy populations for hunters or people who simply enjoy catching a glimpse of nature's own in their natural surroundings. As with fishing, however, hunters should check state game regulations for licensing, seasons and limits before starting out.

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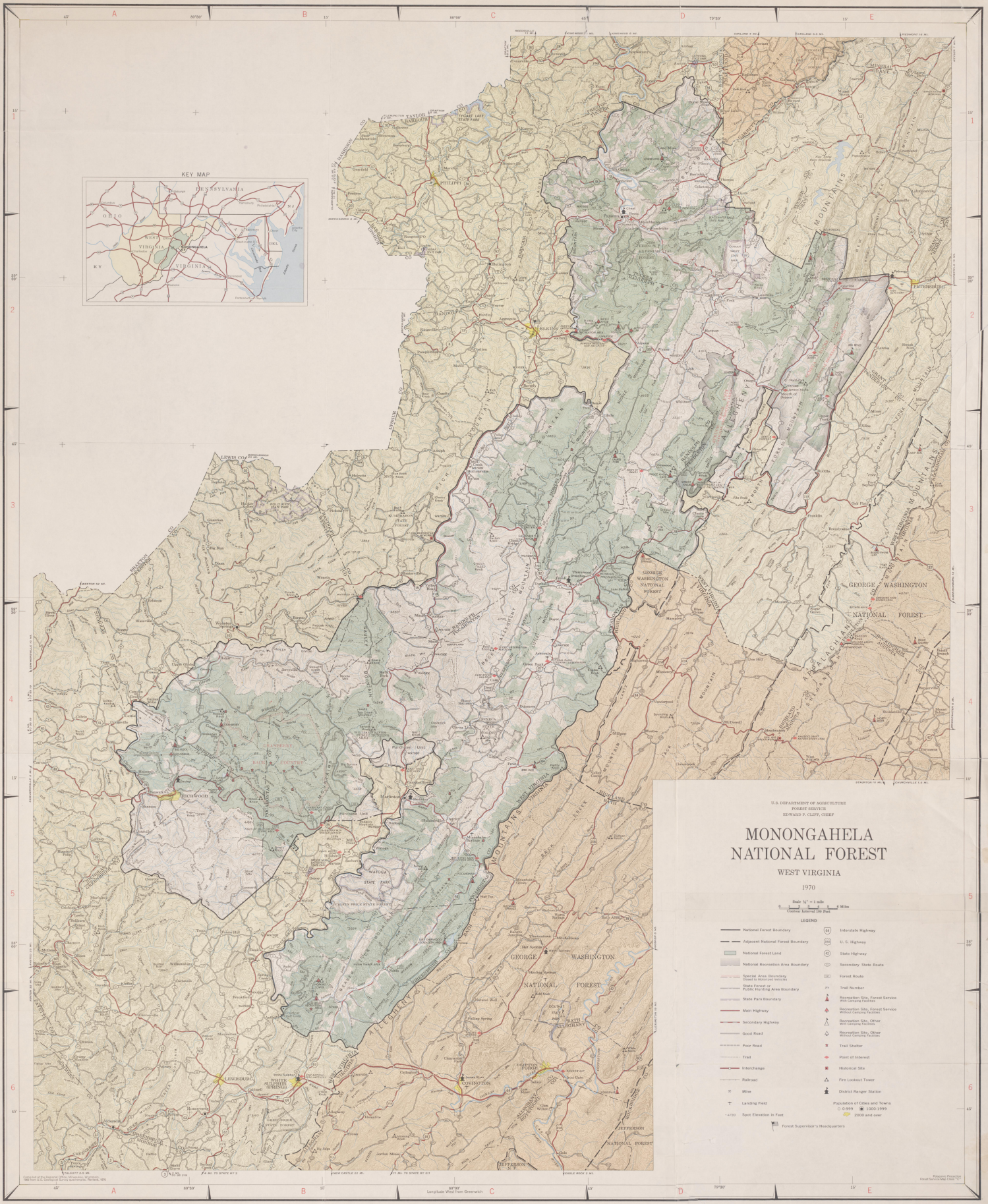

National Forest

MONONGAHELA

FOREST SERVICE • U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ELKINS, WEST VIRGINIA

RECREATION SITES INDEX

Site Name	Map Key	Camping	Picnicking	Swimming	Fishing	Boating	Drinking Water	Public Lands	Hiking	Hunting	Other
ALPENA GAP	1						•				
BEAR HEAVEN	2	•									
BIG ALL KNOB	3	•									
BIG BEAR	4	•			•		•	•			
BIRD RUN	5	12	•	•			•				
BLUE BEND	6	40	•	•			•				
CRANBERRY	7	27	•	•			•				
DOLLY SODS	8										
GAUDINEER KNOB	9										
HICKORY TOWER	10										
HORSESHOE	11	23	•	•	•		•	•			
LAKE SHERWOOD	12	30	•	•	•		•	•			
LAUREL FORK	13	9	•	•	•		•	•			
NORTH BEND	14	13	•	•	•		•	•			
OLD HUGE RUN	15	12	•	•	•		•	•			
OLIVER TOWER	16	10	•	•	•		•	•			
PINE SPRING	17	10	•	•	•		•	•			
RED CREEK	18	43	•	•	•		•	•			
SPRUCE KNOB LAKE	19	27	•	•	•		•	•			
STUART	20	42	•	•	•		•	•			
SUMMIT LAKE	21	17	•	•	•		•	•			
WOODBINE	22	25	•	•	•		•	•			
WILDERNESS AREA (Seneca Rocks-Dolly Sods Scenic Area)	23										
WILDERNESS AREA (Cranberry)	24										