

# the COHUTTA WILDERNESS

IN 1975 CONGRESS PASSED THE WILDERNESS ACT, WHICH PROVIDED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW WILDERNESS AREAS IN THE EAST. SIXTEEN AREAS, THE LARGEST OF WHICH IS THE COHUTTA, WERE GIVEN WILDERNESS STATUS WHEN PRESIDENT FORD SIGNED THE BILL INTO LAW.

The Cohutta Wilderness is a 34,102-acre area lying in Georgia and Tennessee within the Cohutta Mountains, part of the Blue Ridge mountain chain. Elevations range from 950 feet in the Alcoy Valley to 4,200 feet on Big Frog Mountain. The headwaters of the Jacks River and the Conasauga River rise here and provide the habitat for three species of trout, as well as for the Coosa Bass which is found only in upland streams free of pollution.

The Georgia Botanical Society has identified over 40 varieties of rare and uncommon plants in the Georgia portion of the Wilderness. Black bear, wild boar and other wildlife roam its remote interior. Hunting and fishing are allowed, being regulated in Georgia by the Game and Fish Division of the Department of Natural Resources, and in Tennessee by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.



The Jacks River drainage, pictured here from a bluff above Horseshoe Bend, is steep and rocky. Hikers should plan trips into this area carefully, to match their physical capabilities.

Wilderness, as described in the Wilderness Act, is "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." A common conception of wilderness is an area where man has never intruded and virgin stands of timber grow and die without interference. But Wilderness Areas in the Eastern portion of the United States are different in that they have all left the impact of man in the not too distant past. The Cohutta is no exception. From 1915 to 1935, an estimated 70% of what is now the Cohutta Wilderness was logged. Remnants of the narrow-gauge railroad system used to transport logs can still be seen.

The Forest Service purchased the first tract of about 23,000 acres from a lumber company in 1930 and began the hard job of protecting and managing the cutover and scarred terrain. Now, the imprints left by man are virtually unnoticeable.

The wilderness is yours to enjoy -- and also yours to protect. Please observe the regulations listed below.

American chestnut, once a dominant tree species in the southern Appalachians, was harvested by lumbermen in the early 1900's, leaving the huge stumps that can still be seen today. By the 1930's, the chestnut blight had destroyed almost all trees that remained.



When the Jacks River and Conasauga River are at their summertime low levels, forcing them is a considerable challenge. When they are at high level in spring or after a rain, they can become dangerous torrents.

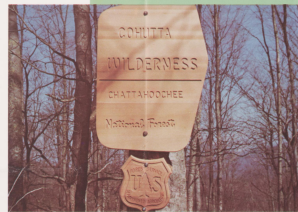
For your own personal safety and to insure preservation of wilderness conditions, you are urged to comply with the following recommendations:

- \*\*\* DO NOT WASH IN THE WATER SUPPLY. DISPOSE OF WASTE WATER AWAY FROM SPRINGS AND STREAMS.
- \*\*\* TO DISPOSE OF HUMAN WASTE, STAY AT LEAST 100 FEET AWAY FROM ANY WATER SUPPLY. DIG A SMALL HOLE ABOUT EIGHT INCHES DEEP AND COVER WASTE COMPLETELY WITH LOOSE SOIL AND SOD.
- \*\*\* PREPARE YOUR CAMPSITE TO CREATE THE LEAST IMPACT ON THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT.
- \*\*\* FILE A TRIP PLAN WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS.
- \*\*\* KEEP GROUPS SMALL TO MINIMIZE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.



These acts are prohibited in wilderness areas. Violators are subject to punishment under 16 USC 951 and 18 USC 1863.

- \*\*\* USE OF MOTOR VEHICLES, MOTORIZED EQUIPMENT, MOTORBOATS, OR OTHER FORMS OF MECHANICAL TRANSPORT. Leave vehicles at parking areas located at all trailheads.
- \*\*\* CUTTING TREES, OR DIGGING UP OR PICKING PLANTS.
- \*\*\* LEAVING TRASH OR GARBAGE WITHIN THE WILDERNESS. Garbage cans are available at trailheads for the deposit of this litter.
- \*\*\* FAILURE TO USE CAUTION WITH CAMPIRES. You could be responsible for destroying the wilderness if your campfire escapes.



GIVE A HOOT DON'T POLLUTE

Wilderness trails may be different than other National Forest trails. While most may be signed and marked at trail heads and junctions, they may present a difficult challenge to many hikers. Trail blazes or markings may be infrequent and difficult to follow. Wilderness is often the most rugged country, and trails can be steep and rocky.

Hikers should study the map carefully before starting their trip to determine distance and degree of difficulty for Wilderness trails.

The Conasauga and Jacks River Trails cross and re-cross the rivers frequently. Hikers should avoid using these trails during high water periods.

Most trails in the Wilderness are not suitable for horseback travel.

Wintertime icing can make approach roads unsafe. If you have any questions about traveling to or into the Wilderness, contact the District Ranger's office for advice.

The terrain of the Cohutta is rugged and difficult for even the most experienced campers and backpackers. Prepare yourself and your equipment well. Be safety conscious at all times.

Additional information and emergency assistance can be obtained from:

- Cohutta Ranger District  
U.S. Forest Service  
Chatsworth, Georgia 30705  
404-695-3932
- Coosa Ranger District  
U.S. Forest Service  
Benton, Tennessee 37307  
615-338-5201

Southern Region-2 1977

#### Please DO

- ... pack out all unburnable trash.
- ... extinguish campfires with water.
- ... keep hiking parties small.
- ... burn all trash that your campfire will consume completely.
- ... carry a survival kit.
- ... use only wood that is "dead and down" for fires.
- ... sterilize all drinking water.
- ... bury human waste.
- ... take only pictures, leave only footprints.
- ... use a backpacker stove to eliminate the need for firewood.

#### Please DON'T

- ... litter.
- ... kill or injure vegetation.
- ... use motorized vehicles in Wilderness areas.
- ... wash you, your clothes, or utensils in streams.
- ... leave fires unattended.
- ... deface rocks or trees.
- ... smoke while hiking.
- ... bury garbage.
- ... fail to leave word with friends or family as to where you plan to hike, and when you will return.

## the COHUTTA WILDERNESS

chattahoochee and cherokee national forests in georgia and tennessee



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOREST SERVICE • SOUTHERN REGION

MAP DEPT AUG 1 1978



- DROWN  
YOUR  
CAMPFIRES



**WOODSY OWL FOR  
NATURAL BEAUTY!**

We just can't depend on the other guy to keep our outdoors beautiful. It's up to each and every one of us to prevent sight pollution and to make America a better place to live. For ways you can help, send for Woodsy Owl's anti-pollution poster. It's yours free when you write Woodsy Owl, Forest Service, U.S.D.A., Washington, D.C. 20255.

And remember, give a hoot, don't pollute.  
Don't be a dirty bird, no matter where you go.



**SPECIAL TRAIL INFORMATION**

Rugged terrain and flood-prone rivers make the Chatutta Wilderness especially challenging to hikers and horsemen. Wilderness users should plan trips carefully, and study this map to be sure that their proposed route is within the limits of personal physical endurance. They also should check to make sure that weather conditions will be favorable enough for a safe trip.

The Hemp Top, Rough Ridge, and Teabritches Trails climb steep grades for long distances. The Jacks River Trail is arduous; hikers must ford the River forty times along its length.

This trail and the Conasauga River Trail can present special dangers during periods of high water in springtime, or after any heavy rainfall. The rivers rise in a matter of hours, changing from pleasant mountain streams to rushing torrents. Hikers on these two trails can be left stranded and unable to continue in either direction.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE

**CHOUTTA WILDERNESS  
CHATTAHOOCHEE AND CHEROKEE  
NATIONAL FORESTS**  
GEORGIA AND TENNESSEE  
1970

Scale 1:25,000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 40 FEET

**LEGEND**

- National Forest Boundary
- Wilderness Boundary
- State Boundary Line
- County Boundary Line
- Paved Road
- All Weather
- Dirt Road
- Primitive Road
- Trail and Distance
- State Highway
- Forest Route
- Forest Trail
- Wilderness
- Other National Forest Land
- Recreation Site
- Parking

