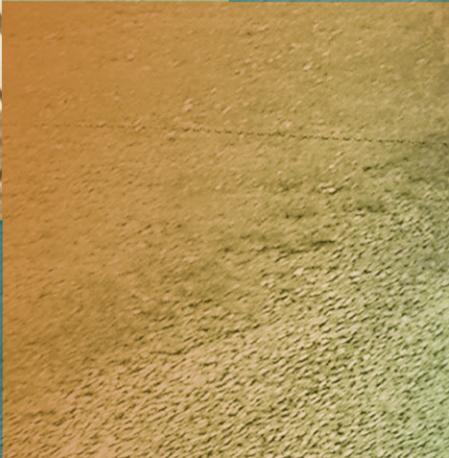


B I K E

Virginia Department of Transportation
2010 VIRGINIA BICYCLING GUIDE



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THE VIRGINIA BICYCLING GUIDE

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* Local bicycle clubs have been identified in most geographic regions of Virginia.

REGIONS





INTRODUCTION

The Commonwealth of Virginia has many great locations to ride a bicycle. The state offers natural wonders and beauty, historical resources, and opportunities for thrills and excitement. One of the best ways to explore Virginia is on two wheels. In southwestern Virginia, bicyclists can enjoy the spectacular scenery of the Appalachian Mountains, where numerous state parks, an expansive national forest, and miles of country roads await road riders and mountain bikers alike.

Two important trails in the Virginia bicycle network are the 45-mile Washington and Old Dominion Trail between Shirlington and Purcellville in Northern Virginia and the 34-mile Virginia Creeper Trail between Abingdon, Damascus and Whitetop in Southwestern Virginia. These trails link to other regional trails, creating a connected network that can be used for recreation and transportation. Bicyclists will find trail networks across the state and new segments are being planned and built. To keep up with trail construction updates, check VDOT's website regularly (http://www.virginiadot.org/default_noflash.asp).

The Shenandoah Valley offers mile upon mile of rural landscape flavored by unique folk traditions and the enduring signs of a Civil War past. East of the mountains, Virginia's Piedmont extends through the rolling hills and whiteboard fences of central Virginia before gently sloping into the ever-present Colonial history of the Hampton Roads area. Farther east, Virginia's grand rivers meet the Atlantic to form an enchanting setting of waterways and quiet farms in the Chesapeake Bay and Eastern Shore regions. And don't forget Northern Virginia, home to some of the state's best rail trails and Southern Virginia, future home of the Tobacco Heritage Trail, which will eventually link Brunswick, Charlotte, Halifax, Lunenburg, and Mecklenburg Counties with 174 miles of transportation and recreation corridors. Perhaps no other place in the country combines such diverse natural beauty with so many layers of American history.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is an overview of bicycling in Virginia. It presents a range of practical information on bicycling in the state, from laws and safety tips to advice on planning a bicycle trip. This guide also presents detailed information on bicycle routes, state parks and bicycle clubs in each of Virginia's nine tourism geographic regions—the Blue Ridge Highlands; Central Virginia; Chesapeake; Eastern Shore; Heart of Appalachia; Northern Virginia; Shenandoah Valley; Southern Virginia; and Hampton Roads. These regions also correspond to the state bike map regions.



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BICYCLE ROUTES OVERVIEW

In Virginia, there are hundreds of miles of designated United States bicycle routes, off-road mountain biking opportunities, and a range of facilities for beginners and families with young children. The urban trails network of northern Virginia, the Virginia Capital Trail, and the Heart of Appalachia Bike Route are just a few of the many examples of bicycling opportunities in Virginia.

How to Use this Guide

This guide uses the following symbols to identify whether a ride is an On-Road Route, Off-Road Paved Trail, Off-Road Unpaved Trail, or Mountain Bike Trail. Look for these symbols at the start of each ride.

Symbols Used in this Guide



On Road Route

This ride follows on-road routes. Any type of bicycle can be used and conditions vary.



Off-road Paved Trail

This ride is primarily off-road. It is a paved trail so any type of bicycle can be used.



Off-road Unpaved Trail

This ride is primarily off-road; however, it is an unpaved trail so bikes with thin tires are probably not appropriate. Trail surfaces could include compacted cinders, crushed gravel, or simple hardpack dirt surfaces.



Mountain Biking Trail

This ride is a more traditional off-road mountain bike trail.

The Virginia Bicycling Map

The Bicycling in Virginia map provides information on major bicycle routes, bicycle clubs, information centers, and other resources of interest to bicyclists in Virginia. The map presents setting, terrain, elevation and surface conditions on selected routes, and enlargements of selected locations. The map also shows other helpful information, including state and national parks, camp sites, and family-friendly trails. The bicycle routes shown on the map are listed below. Additional information on these routes is included on the map, which is available on VDOT's web site at <http://www.virginiadot.org/bikemap>.

Bicycle Routes on the Virginia Bicycling Map

- The Virginia Capital Trail, currently under construction, will be a unique bicycle and pedestrian route linking the first settlement in Jamestown, the Colonial Capital in Williamsburg, and Virginia's modern seat of government in Richmond. Four sections totaling 15 miles have been completed.
- The Virginia Creeper Trail is a 34-mile-long former railroad bed that has become a multipurpose trail stretching from the mountains to the valleys.
- The Tobacco Heritage Trail is an ambitious project that will eventually link Brunswick, Charlotte, Halifax, Lunenburg, and Mecklenburg Counties with 174 miles of transportation and recreation corridors.
- Virginia is home to 838 miles of the U.S. Bicycle Route system, which is more than any other state. Established officially by the federal government in 1982, the Virginia sections of U.S. Bicycle Routes 76 and 1 cross the state from east to west and north to south. These routes are primarily on-road routes.





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- The Blue Ridge Parkway is a 469-mile scenic route that runs through 39 counties in Virginia and North Carolina. The Parkway is maintained by the National Park Service and traverses some of the most scenic parts of Virginia's Appalachian Mountains.
- The Heart of Appalachia Bike Route is 128 miles of roads and trails in Tazewell, Bland, Russell, and Wise Counties.
- New River Trail State Park in southwest Virginia features 57 miles of trail on abandoned railroad right-of-way through Grayson, Carroll, Wythe, and Pulaski Counties.
- Northern Virginia has the most extensive bicycle transportation network in the Commonwealth. Its trails, paths, and bicycle lanes accommodate bicyclists of all needs and ability levels, from families to commuters to long-distance bicyclists.



Williamsburg and the revolution, to the national battlefields of the Civil War, to the skyscrapers of present-day Richmond. Upon completion, this 54-mile pedestrian and bicycle trail will connect the Commonwealth's present capital of Richmond with the colonial capitals of Jamestown and Williamsburg. The project is being overseen by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) with project funding coming through a combination of federal transportation enhancement grants, state and local government funds, and private donations.

Trail users will have a generous 8- to 10-foot-wide standalone paved surface that parallels scenic Route 5 and the James River. With few exceptions, the trail will be separated from the roadway by

vegetated areas or protective barriers. The Virginia Capital Trail is intended for users of all ages and abilities and will be ADA compatible. It will feature interpretive signage and bicycling and pedestrian amenities. The project is divided into five phases and almost 16 miles are open for use and more than 30 more miles are under design or construction. Final completion is anticipated in 2012.

In 2007, 600 bicyclists rode the "Capital to Capital Century" between Dorey Park and Jamestown and were among the first to ride the newly completed section of the Capital Trail from Jamestown to the Chickahominy River. As of September 2007, bicyclists are able to use the eastern section of the Capital Trail from the historic Governor's Mansion in Colonial Williamsburg, through the historic settlement at Jamestown, near the Greensprings Plantation National Historic Site, to the banks of the Chickahominy River. Note that between Colonial Williamsburg and the Chickahominy River, bicyclists may ride on the scenic Colonial Parkway (a shared roadway) that parallels the trail. The trail currently crosses the Chickahominy on the Judith Dresser Bridge; however, there is no trail on the Charles City side of the river to receive bicyclists. It continues through the rural villages of Rustic and Cherry Hall, past the historic Sherwood Forest Plantation, to Charles City County. Project highlights are noted below.

The Virginia Capital Trail

The Virginia Capital Trail represents more than 400 years of history, following the path of the people, places, and events that helped shape America- from the first English settlement at Jamestown, Colonial



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Project Highlights

- Richmond Riverfront Phase: 5.5 miles, construction underway with close to one mile completed.
- Randolph Landing Phase: Nearly 7 miles, plans under development, completion is dependent on private development.
- New Market Heights Phase: 12 miles, began in 2009, completion scheduled 2013.
- Charles City Courthouse Phase: Eight-mile segment from Charles City Courthouse to VCU's Rice Center for Environmental Life Sciences, now open, completed in 2009.
- Sherwood Forest Phase: 13.5 miles, completion anticipated in 2010.
- Chickahominy Riverfront Phase: 4.5 miles now open, completed in May 2007.
- Greensprings Phase: 2.8 miles now open, completed in November 2006.
- Colonial Parkway: 22 miles along the limited access parkway through a historic National Park. Cyclists and pedestrians share the road with automobiles along this scenic parkway.

Major Bicycle Routes Passing Through Virginia

With more than 838 miles of the U.S. Bicycle Route (USBR) system, Virginia has more miles of U.S. Bicycle Routes than any other state. The US Bicycle Route system is comprised primarily of signed, on-road routes with some segments along separated shared-use paths. U.S. Bicycle Route 1 (USBR 1) is a cross-country bicycle route that runs the length of the United States eastern seaboard from Maine to Florida. In Virginia, USBR 1 runs 274 miles north-south across the state, from Arlington to the North Carolina border in Mecklenburg County. U.S. Bicycle Route 76 (USBR 76) extends 564 miles east-west across Virginia, beginning at Yorktown in Virginia's Historic Triangle and heading west to the Kentucky state line in Dickenson County.

The USBR system is a network of routes of national and regional significance. USBR 1 and 76 were designated by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and approved by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The routes were established officially by the federal government in 1982. No other designations of U.S. Bicycle Routes have been made since these first two routes were established.

There are also other national Adventure Cycling routes in Virginia, which share much of the USBR alignments. The 500-mile Virginia section of the Trans-America Bicycle Trail runs from Yorktown to the Kentucky state line near Breaks Interstate Park. The Atlantic Coast Route includes a 150-mile Virginia section of the Maine to Virginia Bicycle Route running from Washington, DC to Richmond and a 130-mile Virginia section of the Virginia to Florida Bicycle Route running from Richmond to the North Carolina state line at Suffolk. The Atlantic Coast Route and Trans-America Bicycle Trail roughly parallel USBR 1 and 76

respectively. Slight variations in the routes are due to designations by VDOT, and Adventure Cycling.

State Parks

Virginia has 34 state parks from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the hilly piedmont area and the flat coastal plains. Some parks, including Chippokes Plantation, Pocahontas, and Seashore State Parks, offer special biking trails. The New River Trail State Park, running through 57 miles of southwestern Virginia, is along a converted rail bed which, in some locations, provides a rough riding surface more suited to mountain bikes. Camping and travel information on the parks is available from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's web site at <http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov>. Detailed information about each state park is included in the Regions section of this Guide.

Crossing the Waters

The coastal plain of Virginia features many bodies of water that feed the Chesapeake Bay, North America's largest estuary. Several major river crossings, primarily in the Hampton Roads region prohibit access by bicyclists due to safety concerns. These prohibited crossing locations, along with alternatives, are listed below.

- James River Bridge, which links Newport News with Smithfield in Isle of Wight County (Routes 17/32). Alternate crossing: Take the free Jamestown-Scotland ferry across the James River, on Route 31 between Jamestown in James City County near Williamsburg and Scotland, located in Surry County (about 20 miles northwest of the bridge). Ferry schedules and information can be found online at <http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/ferry-jamestown.asp>. Another option is to take a Hampton Roads



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Transit (HRT) bus over the Monitor-Merrimac Memorial Bridge-Tunnel (I-664) connecting Newport News with Suffolk. HRT buses are all capable of taking up to two bicycles at a time. Contact HRT for schedules and route information at <http://www.hrtransit.org> or (757) 222-6100.

which connects Hampton and Newport News with Norfolk and Virginia Beach. Alternate crossing: Hampton Roads Transit bus service is available with two bike racks on every bus. Contact HRT for schedules and route information at <http://www.hrtransit.org> or (757) 222-6100.

- County maps showing secondary routes also are available for purchase from VDOT. The Bike Walk Virginia website has links to many local jurisdictions' bicycle maps at <http://www.bikewalkvirginia.org>.
- Randy Porter's *Mountain Bike! Virginia* and Scott Adams' *Mountain Bike Virginia* are great books about mountain biking in Virginia.

- Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel (Route 13), which connects Norfolk and Virginia Beach with Northampton County on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Alternate crossing: The Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel offers a shuttle van for bicyclists. The cost is \$12, the same as a passenger car toll. You must call ahead. For more information contact the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel at (757) 331-2960. Bicyclists can also cross the Chesapeake Bay on seasonal tour boats operating between Onancock, MD and Reedville, VA with stops on Tangier and Smith Islands.
- Midtown Tunnel (Route 58) connecting downtown Norfolk with downtown Portsmouth. Currently the tunnel does not accommodate bicyclists but an expansion project currently being developed will add another tube that will provide access to bicycles and pedestrians. Alternate crossing: Hampton Roads Transit bus service is available with two bike racks on every bus. Contact HRT for schedules and route information at <http://www.hrtransit.org> or (757) 222-6100.
- Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel (Interstate 64),

- Monitor-Merrimac Memorial Bridge-Tunnel (Interstate 664), which crosses the James River near the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay between Newport News and Portsmouth. Alternate crossing: Hampton Roads Transit offers bus routes that cross the bridge and buses are equipped to take up to two bicycles. Contact HRT for schedules and route information at <http://www.hrtransit.org> or (757) 222-6100.
- Nice Memorial Bridge (Route 301), which connects King George County with Newburg, Maryland. There is no alternate crossing nearby.

Other Resources

- To obtain a list of events, policies and local bike shops and other local resources visit VDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program website at <http://www.virginiadot.org/>, click on "Programs" from the left menu bar, then scroll down and select the heading "Bicycling and walking".





INTRODUCTION

BICYCLING EVENTS

Virginia Bicycling Events Calendar

There are many bicycle events to choose from throughout the year in towns and cities across Virginia. Because event details may change from year to year, contact event organizers for current information.

A brief selection of bicycling events in Virginia is provided below:

May

12 Hours of Lodi Farm

Night owls rejoice! This event gives you all the late-night riding you can take on an eight-mile lap. All proceeds go to the Lodi Farm Trail Fund. Lots of prizes and primitive camping on site. Midnight Saturday to noon Sunday. Fredericksburg.



TRAILS



CONTACT

Konrad Heller
Phone: (540) 455-5605
E-mail: fredevents@hotmail.com
Web site: <http://www.teambikeworks.org/>

Tour de Chesapeake

In mid-May, Mathews County hosts Chesapeake's premier bicycling event, the annual Tour de Chesapeake. Celebrate the arrival of spring by biking through wonderful, scenic, and flat Mathews County with more than 1,000 other bicyclists. The tour is structured to provide both beginners and experienced bicyclists with some thrills. Tours of 10, 20, 30, 50, and 64 miles give you the opportunity to pick the perfect spring warm-up. The abundant, quiet, scenic lanes winding down to forgotten coves on the Chesapeake Bay, the East River and the North River will put you in bicyclist's bliss. Imagine pedaling in and out of bountiful salt marshes instead of weaving through traffic. There's also a children's bike safety rodeo, live music, and other entertainment, perfect for a family's first biking adventure. The tour starts at Thomas Hunter Middle School, where participants can pitch tents. Bicyclists can choose tours of 17, 40, 60 and 80 miles in length.

CONTACT

Tour de Chesapeake
Phone: (757) 229-0507
E-mail: info@bikechesapeake.org
Web site: <http://www.bikechesapeake.org>

National Bike-To-Work Day

Two wheels are better than four. Celebrate National Bike month by pedaling to the office. Call for events near you.

CONTACT

League of American Bicyclists
Phone: (202) 822-1333
Web site: <http://www.bikeleague.org>

Queen City Century

The Queen City Century is a ride through the beautiful Shenandoah Valley in Augusta County south of Staunton. You'll see scenic vistas, county farms, small towns, and rural roads. All routes are paved and have little traffic.

CONTACT

James Burris
121 South Lewis Street, Staunton, VA 24401
Phone: (540) 887-8700
E-mail: james26b@hotmail.com
Web site: <http://www.queencitycyclingclub.com>



June

Knott's Island Century Ride

100 miles? No problem. Join the Tidewater Bicycle Association for a ride from Chesapeake to Knott's Island, N.C. (and back). Hey, you get a breather on the ferry ride. Virginia Beach.

CONTACT

Steve Zeligman

Phone: (757) 285-9085

E-mail: president@tbarides.org

Web site: <http://www.tbarides.org>

Bike Virginia

A five-day, 300-mile tour through horse country, this bike ride goes from Front Royal to Luray, stopping along the way at wineries and natural attractions. Front Royal.

CONTACT

Kim Perry

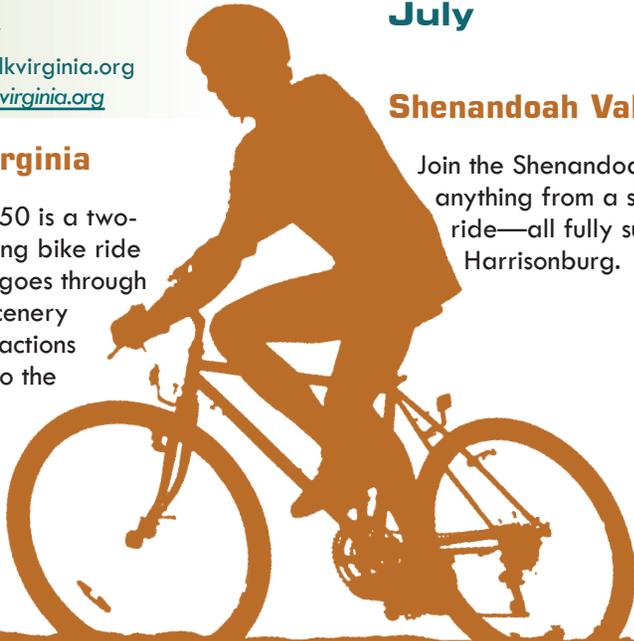
Phone: (757) 229-0507

E-mail: kperry@bikewalkvirginia.org

Web site: <http://www.bikevirginia.org>

Bike MS: Ride Virginia

The Ride Virginia MS 150 is a two-day, 150-mile fundraising bike ride starting in Richmond. It goes through spectacular, seasonal scenery and colonial tourist attractions along the James River to the Colonial Williamsburg area on Saturday, and returns to Richmond on Sunday. Richmond.



CONTACT

Judy Griffin

Phone: (804) 591-3034

E-mail: judy.griffin@nmss.org

Web site: <http://www.irideforms.org>

MS Tour de Vine

The MS Tour De Vine begins and ends in Charlottesville. Bicyclists will explore the heart of Virginia wine country while bicycling through the beautiful landscape of the Blue Ridge. The Tour de Vine has several routes, including 25-, 50-, 75- and 100-mile routes on Saturday and Sunday. Charlottesville.

CONTACT

Shannon Tevendale

Phone: (434) 971-8010 x227

E-mail: shannon.tevendale@nmss.org

Web site: <http://www.mstourdevine.org>

July

Shenandoah Valley Bike Festival

Join the Shenandoah Valley Bicycling Club for anything from a short family jaunt to a century ride—all fully supported. \$15.00, 7:00 a.m. Harrisonburg.

CONTACT

E-mail: president@svbike.org

Web site: <http://www.svcoalition.org/events>

Web site: <http://www.ourcommunityplace.org/bikefest>

Bicycling and Barbeque

Bicycling and Barbeque event will be held on the roads in and around Galax in conjunction with "Smoke on the Mountain," the Virginia Barbecue Championship. All proceeds from Bicycling and Barbeque go directly to the Free Medical Clinic of the Twin Counties, a 501(c)3 organization, and are tax deductible. Bicycling and Barbeque offers four route choices ranging from 25 to 60 miles, including two "challenge" loops. Galax.

CONTACT

Fred Mitchell

934 West Stuart Drive, Galax, VA 24333

Phone: (276) 233-8621

Web site: <http://www.galaxoutdoors.com>

August

50 States and 13 Colony Tour

Take a tour of Washington, DC visiting all 50 state streets in search of DC statehood. This unique urban ride visits all eight wards of the District and is a yearly membership favorite. Washington, D.C.

CONTACT

Washington Area Bicyclist's Association

Phone: (202) 518-0524

E-mail: waba@waba.org

Web site: <http://www.waba.org/events/50states.php>





September

Great Peanut Bicycle Tour and Ride.

Enjoy four days of touring southern Virginia and northern North Carolina. Meet hundreds of fellow bicyclists of all levels and learn about peanuts in Greensville County, Emporia.

CONTACT

Robert Wrenn

Phone: (800) 449-BIKE

Web site: <http://www.greatpeanuttour.com>

Ride in the Heartland

Ride through the rolling countryside of Charlotte County, hunting grounds of the Saponi tribes. Ride on our own century or metric century bike routes, or choose from shorter family rides. All routes are marked and on paved roads. Routes include the Red Hill National Shrine (Patrick Henry's home) and the Staunton River Battlefield State Park.



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CONTACT

Nancy Carwile

235 Thomas Wood Lane, Cullen VA 23934

Phone: (434) 248-6407

E-mail: ncarwile@hotmail.com

Web site: <http://www.bikeheartland.org>

Boys and Girls Club Cycling Challenge

You can be a hero to the kids of the Boys and Girls Club and our community by participating in the second Boys and Girls Cycling Challenge at the Old Trail Golf Club in Crozet. By riding alongside the participants and sponsoring their team of club members or your own, you will be a hero by setting a positive example.

CONTACT

Beth Ike

Boys and Girls Club Cycling Challenge
Charlottesville VA 22902

Phone: (434) 971-6944

E-mail: admin@bgclubcville.org

Web site: <http://www.bgcchallenge.org>

10th Annual Cannonball Century

Choose from beautiful rides starting from Curtis Memorial Park in Hartwood of 35, 62, or 100 miles through the rolling hills of central Virginia.

CONTACT

Morgan Jenkins

P.O. Box, 7844, Fredericksburg VA 22404

Phone: (540) 372-7055

E-mail: morgkell@cox.net

Web site: <http://www.bikefred.com>

Shenandoah 100

This ride is part of the National Ultra Endurance Series. It is a 100 mile race beginning and ending at the Stokesville Campground in Mount Salon, VA.

CONTACT

Shenandoah Mountain Touring, L.L.C.

P.O. Box 1423

Harrisonburg, VA 22803

E-mail: chris@mountaintouring.com

Web site: http://www.mtntouring.com/mountain/htm/shenandoah_mountain_100/page_sm100.htm

October

Annual Between the Waters Bike Tour

This one-day ride will take you through the back roads of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The four routes, 100 miles, 60 miles, 40 miles, and 20 miles are flat and well marked. The Tour is a sustainable ecotourism event giving riders the opportunity to see the beauty of our rural area. The Between the Waters Bike Tour is a creation of Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore (CBES), a non profit organization working to "support balanced growth while enhancing our quality of life and preserving our natural resources" on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Proceeds from the bike Tour are used to help publish the CBES newsletter, ShoreLine, and for our other community activities.

CONTACT

Phone: (757) 678-7157

Web site: <http://www.cbcs.org>



October, cont.

Bike DC

Bike DC is a fully-supported tour of one of the world's greatest cities and some of Northern Virginia's most picturesque road bicycling. Voted the "best city tour" by *Bicycling Magazine* in 1999, the event caters to riders of all skill levels, from families with small children to experienced cyclists. There are self-paced tours of varying distances that take you through the urban greenways, tree-lined streets, and monuments in Washington, DC and Northern Virginia. Thanks to the efforts of WABA, count on getting the chance to pedal 10 of those miles on the George Washington Memorial Parkway, which is closed to motor vehicle traffic for this annual event. Mechanical support, trail marshals, and sag crew volunteers will be on-hand to lend their expertise. The post-tour festival includes live music, food, beverages and drawings for bike-related gear. Dates for the event change every year, so contact WABA.

CONTACT

WABA
Phone: (202) 558-7401
Web site: <http://www.bikedc.net>

Between the Waters Bike Tour

The Between the Waters Bike Tour offers a wonderful taste of Eastern Shore biking. Generally held on the fourth Saturday of October every year, this popular event gives riders the opportunity to experience the beauty of this rural area. Four routes are offered, including a 100-mile English century, a 60-mile metric century, a 35-mile metric half-century, and a 20-mile family ride.

CONTACT

Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore
Phone: (757) 678-7157
Web site: <http://www.cbes.org>
The organization also offers a "Between the Waters" travel guide.

Fall Foliage Bike Festival

For those who enjoy the company of others, plan to schedule your visit to the Shenandoah Valley during the Bicycling Education Association's Shenandoah Fall Foliage Bike Festival in October. Over the last 10 years, the Fall Foliage Festival has expanded into a premier event that takes bicyclists of all ages and ability levels along some of the area's most picturesque back roads through northern and southern Augusta County. Those looking for off-road thrills will not be disappointed with the choice of roads and trails through the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests on the Fall Foliage Festival itinerary. Each day offers both on-road and off-road rides, so if you can't decide between bringing your road bike or mountain bike, bring them both. The event offers sag wagon support, free camping space is available, and the area's many hotels and inns roll out the red carpet when the event takes place. Just be sure to make your reservations early since this is a very busy season in the Shenandoah Valley. For more information about the Fall Foliage Festival, contact the Bicycling Education Association.

CONTACT

Bicycling Education Association
Phone: (757) 229-0507
Web site: <http://www.bikevirginia.org>





INTRODUCTION

PLANNING YOUR TRIP

Traveling With Your Bike

If you are traveling by bus, train, or plane to one of the Commonwealth's many trails, there are a few guidelines you should follow. Most forms of private transport require that you box your bike in a standard cardboard bike box (available from the bus station, train station, or airport) or an aftermarket bike carrier (available at your local bike store). Boxing the bike usually requires that you remove the pedals and turn the handlebars sideways. In addition, some carriers have special requirements.

Bicycling Conditions

When planning your trip, consider that the state's topography runs the gamut from mountains in the west to flat plains on the East Coast. Generally, the state has a pleasant, somewhat humid climate on the coast, with drier conditions in the west. Spring and summer temperatures range from the mid-60s to mid-90s during the day and from the upper-40s to lower-70s at night.



Bicycling is an activity that can be enjoyed virtually year-round in Virginia. Being prepared in the heat of summer will mean having a day's worth of water, sun screen, and bug repellent, while spring and fall rides will need extra layers and possibly rain gear. In cooler seasons, layers that can be easily stored when not in use are recommended. Remember that rides into the mountains can bring temperatures 10 or more degrees colder than in the valley. Cycling gloves add comfort to your hands, and also provide a layer of protection should you take a fall.

Drink plenty of water. If you can't carry as much as you will need, plan a route that allows for replenishing. For extended backcountry rides, it may be best to carry a portable water purification system. Also remember that how you sit on your bike is important for comfort. Position your arms so that your wrists are straight and relaxed. Staying limber in your upper body will also help absorb bumps when riding. Wearing gloves cushions the ride for your hands. Thicker padding or tape on your handlebars may help as well. Periodically try to run a little system check: Are your fingers, elbows and shoulders relaxed? Is your weight centered over your feet? If so, your pedal stroke will actually help "lift" a little weight off of both your hands and seat.

Hunting Season

Hunters use the state and national forests during the various hunting seasons in Virginia. To check the dates and locations for these seasons, contact the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries at (804) 367-1000 or visit <http://www.dgif.Virginia.gov/hunting/regulations>



TRAILS





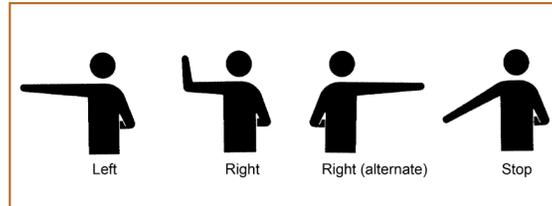
INTRODUCTION

Rules of the Road

Information on appropriate riding behavior and other safety considerations is provided below. A more detailed description of Virginia laws concerning bicycles and their use can be found on VDOT's website at: <http://www.vdot.Virginia.gov/> under "Programs" in the "Bicycling and walking" section.

- Bicyclists must ride with the flow of traffic on the right side of the highway, as close as practicable to the right edge of the roadway. Exceptions to this are when bicyclists are overtaking and passing another vehicle, preparing for a left turn, or avoiding unsafe conditions including when the lane is too narrow to safely share with a passing vehicle. In addition, bicyclists are not excluded from riding on the highway shoulder.
- Bicycles may be ridden along the majority of Virginia highways but cannot be ridden on interstates or other controlled access highways. These highways are identified on the state highway map. Note that the state highway map identifies where access is limited in some way, but it does not specifically show highways with bike prohibitions.
- Bicyclists may make left turns as either motorists

or pedestrians do. To make a left turn as a pedestrian would, the bicyclist should continue straight across the intersecting road, obey the traffic signals, turn left at the corner and proceed as usual. Bicyclists also may dismount and walk in the crosswalks of the intersecting roads.



- Bicyclists must signal their intentions to stop or turn. The proper signals are made with the left arm as shown below. The signals do not have to be given continuously if both hands are needed to control the bicycle.
- Bicyclists must not ride between two lanes of traffic moving in the same direction unless one lane is a separate or mandatory turn lane.
- Bicyclists cannot ride more than two abreast on highways. When riding two abreast, bicyclists cannot impede the movement of traffic, and need to move into single file when being overtaken from the rear.
- Bicycles may be ridden on sidewalks unless prohibited by local ordinance or traffic control devices. While on sidewalks and shared use paths, bicyclists must always yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and give an audible signal before passing a pedestrian.
- Bicyclists pulling onto a sidewalk or highway from a driveway must yield the right of way to pedestrians or vehicles already on the sidewalk or highway.

Passing

- Bicyclists may overtake and pass another vehicle only when it is safe to do so. Bicyclists may pass another vehicle on the right or left, and they may stay in the same lane, change lanes, or ride off the road if necessary for safe passing. Please note that passing motor vehicles on the right side may be extremely dangerous if the motorist does not see the bicyclist and attempts a right turn.
- Motorists must approach and pass a bicyclist at a distance of at least 2 feet and at a reasonable speed.

Safety Considerations

- Bicyclists must not carry articles which prevent them from keeping at least one hand on the handlebars.
- Bicyclists must not attach themselves or their bicycles to any other vehicle on the roadway.
- Bicyclists are not permitted to wear earphones in both ears while riding a bicycle.

Equipment

- Every bicycle ridden between sunset and sunrise must have a white light on its front with the light being visible at least 500 feet to the front. The bicycle must have a red reflector on the rear visible 300 feet to the rear. A red light visible for 500 feet to the rear may be used in place of or in addition to the red reflector.
- Bicycles ridden on highways must have brakes that will skid the wheels on dry, level, clean pavement.





Helmet Use

Several jurisdictions in Virginia require every person 14 years of age or younger to wear a protective helmet whenever riding or being carried on a bicycle on any highway, sidewalk, or public bicycle path. The jurisdictions listed below report such ordinances to VDOT, although be sure to check with your locality for current information, as helmet ordinances may change.

- Albemarle County
- Amherst County
- Clarke County
- Fairfax County
- City of Hampton
- James City County
- Town of Luray
- City of Manassas Park
- Orange County
- Prince William County
- Town of Vienna
- York County
- City of Alexandria
- Arlington County
- City of Falls Church
- Floyd County
- Town of Herndon
- Town of Leesburg
- City of Manassas
- City of Norfolk
- City of Petersburg
- Stafford County
- Town of Wise

Safety Tips

This guide describes on-road and off-road bicycling opportunities. Many of the rides are shared by Virginia bicyclists who feel these rides offer a unique way to experience the Commonwealth. The on-road rides share the roadways with motor vehicles. Most roads do not have accommodations such as bicycle lanes. Throughout the state, scenic routes enjoyed by local bicyclists are often on narrow pavement, with little or no shoulders, and curves and hills that limit sight distance. The off-road rides range from family-oriented outings on paved trails to rigorous climbs up heavily forested mountainsides. The inclusion of suggested routes in the guide does not guarantee safety. Bicyclists should thoroughly educate themselves about suggested routes or areas where they are planning to ride and then choose routes that suit their abilities.

Tips for Safe Bicycling

- **Be aware of everyone and everything around you.** Ride in a predictable manner. Do not assume that a motorist will see you. If you are unsure about a motorist’s intentions, yield.
- **Illuminate at night.** Riding at night can be more dangerous than daytime riding, because cyclists are less visible. A headlight and rear reflectors will make you more visible and are required by law. A flashing tail light is a good common-sense addition, too.
- **Steer clear of parked cars.** While staying aware of moving vehicles, always leave at least three feet between you and parked cars. This will help you avoid hitting a surprise open door. Also, watch for people sitting in parked vehicles, and expect that they may open their doors!
- **Educate yourself.** Bicycle classes and “effective cycling” courses are offered in many communities. For more information on

the “effective” cycling program and possible locations to take this workshop in your area, contact the League of American Bicyclists, 1612 K St., NW, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20006. (202) 822-1333 Website: <http://www.bikeleague.org>

- **Stay away from sidewalks or stay on designated bike routes.** Yield to pedestrians in cross-walks. When on designated pathways, provide warning when passing other bicyclists and pedestrians.
- **Wear a helmet.** Bicyclists wearing a helmet have an 85% reduction in risk of head injury due to a crash. Helmets are particularly important for children, since they suffer the majority of serious head injuries from bicycling accidents. Adjust your helmet correctly—the forward straps of the helmet need to be tight enough to keep the brim of your helmet across your forehead. This will usually place the strap’s Y clip directly below your ear.
- **Avoid the “right hook.”** Watch for cars and buses making a right turn in front of you. Never pass a bus or car on the right as you approach an intersection, as you might get caught between the vehicle and a curb.
- **Ride on the right side of the road.** Make sure you ride in the same direction as vehicle traffic.
- **Traffic laws are the same for motorists and bicyclists.** Obey the rules of the road.



TRAILS





Rules of the Trail

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) has been instrumental in the education and training of local groups in the craft of constructing sustainable bike trails and the proper etiquette in using these trails. Here are IMBA's riding guidelines:

- Ride on open trails only. Respect trail and road closures—ask if you are not sure. Avoid possible trespassing on private land; obtain permits and authorization as required. Federal and state wilderness areas are closed to cycling. Leave gates as you found them, or as marked.
- Leave no trace. Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you. Even on open trails, do not ride under conditions where you will leave evidence of your passing, such as on certain soils shortly after rain. Observe the different types of soils and trail construction; practice low impact cycling. This also means staying on the trail and not creating new ones. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you packed in.
- Control your bicycle. Inattention, even for a second, can cause disaster. Excessive speed creates unnecessary risks!
- Always yield the trail. Make known your approach well in advance. A friendly greeting or a bell is considerate and works well; startling others is inconsiderate. Anticipate that other trail users may be around corners or in blind spots.

- Don't spook animals. All animals are startled by an unannounced approach, sudden movement or loud noise. This can be dangerous for you, others, and for the animals.
- Plan ahead. Know your equipment, your ability, and the area in which you are riding—and prepare accordingly. Be self-sufficient at all times. Wear a helmet and carry supplies for changes in weather or other conditions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

IMBA P.O. Box 7578
 Boulder, CO 80306-9899
 Phone: (303) 545-9011
 E-mail: imba@aol.com
 Web site: <http://www.imba.com>

Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a nationwide movement to establish "active transportation" programs for students traveling from home to school.

In Virginia, the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program is managed by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) with federal funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation. Through a competitive application process, VDOT provides funds to schools (K-8) and localities for the development of bike and pedestrian safety and encouragement programs as well as infrastructure projects to enable and encourage biking and walking to school. By first developing a simple SRTS plan to identify the hazards and barriers to walking and biking, targeted schools and allies in the community work collaboratively to make

biking and walking to school safe and appealing options to children and families.

Many benefits are felt in communities where programs are successful including reductions in school drop-off traffic; the air is cleaner; children build exercise into their day and arrive at school ready to learn; communities come alive with more people on the sidewalks and streets; and children develop confidence and a sense of independence while establishing lifelong healthy habits.

Starting up a program can be as simple as a family engaging their neighbors to join them walking or biking to school once a week, or as elaborate as community-wide efforts to develop strategies to greatly increase walking and bicycling and targeting needed infrastructure improvements.

Other Resources

Additional resources for bicyclists in Virginia include:

- VDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program promotes bicycling and walking throughout Virginia. Learn more about the program and about bicycle and pedestrian projects conducted by VDOT at <http://virginiadot.org/programs/bk-default.asp>.
- A number of implementation guidance documents for localities have been compiled to improve communication between agencies and for better planning and accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists under terms of the 2004 policy. These documents are available at <http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/bk-documents.asp>.



NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Northern Virginia offers bicycle rides and routes to suit the tastes of the full range of bicyclists. Tree-shaded parks and well-marked bicycle routes provide opportunities for all kinds of riding, from paved trails to gravel-and-dirt canal towpaths to narrow single-track trails. With several national parks and a variety of regional and state parks, Northern Virginia has more than a few “hidden” gems.

- The C&O Canal is considered one of Washington, D.C.’s and Maryland’s premier rides. The 185-mile-long tow-path alongside the canal has become one of the finest resources available to those searching for an outdoor escape in the Northern Virginia region. The trail now connects to the Great Allegheny Passage in Cumberland, Maryland, which is a 150-mile system of biking and hiking trails connecting Cumberland to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Taken together, the trails provide a continuous nonmotorized

corridor 316 miles long from Pittsburgh to Washington, DC. The C&O Canal is just one of many bicycling opportunities in the region.

- Fountainhead Regional Park and Great Falls National Park have miles of maintained gravel carriage roads and single-track trails.
- The Mount Vernon Trail offers a comfortable and scenic route along the Potomac River to Mount Vernon, the home of the nation’s first president and there are great urban bicycling opportunities from Fredericksburg to Washington, D.C.

The variety of parks, trails, urban rides, and

historic destinations makes bicycling in Northern Virginia a truly rewarding experience. Northern Virginia also benefits greatly from some of the Commonwealth’s most active bicycling organizations such as the Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts (MORE), who garnered recognition

from the International Mountain Bike Association in 1996 for “overall

excellence in support of

socially responsible and

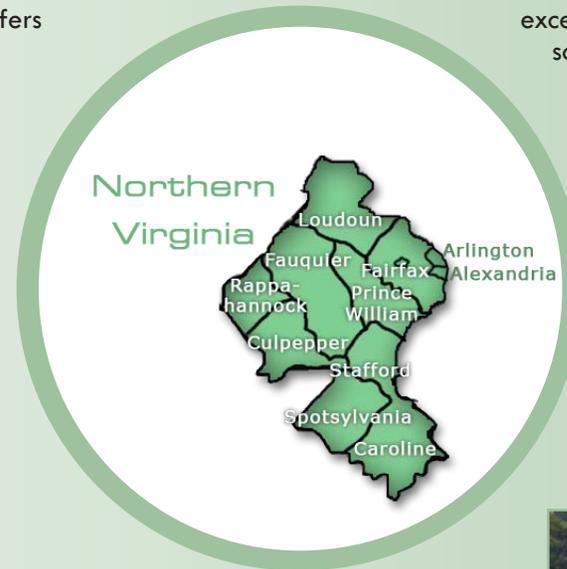
environmentally sound

trail cycling” and the

Washington Area

Bicyclist Association

(WABA) who have been advocating for an integrated transportation system in the Washington, DC region for more than 30 years.



TRAILS





RECOMMENDED RIDES IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Burke Lake Park Ride



Perfect for a lazy Saturday afternoon, this flat paved-and-dirt ride around Burke Lake, southwest of Annandale, is a great option for those looking for an easy spin and the opportunity to enjoy pleasing lakeside views. For those in search of even more off-road thrills, try the trails following the power lines in nearby South Run District Park.

CONTACT

Burke Lake Park

Phone: (703) 323-6601

Web site: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burkelake

Capital Crescent Trail



The Capital Crescent Trail is a shared use off-road trail from Georgetown, D.C. to Silver Spring, MD available for walkers, joggers, bikers, and rollerbladers. The rail-trail conversion was built on the abandoned rail bed of the 11 mile Georgetown Branch of the B&O Railroad. It is a hard surface trail from Georgetown to Bethesda, and is a packed crushed stone trail suitable for most bikes from Bethesda to Lyttonville, in west Silver Spring. The trail connects with a number of other trails, including the C&O Canal Towpath and the Rock Creek Trail.

CONTACT

Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail

P.O. Box 30703

Bethesda, MD 20824

Phone: (202) 234-4874

Web site: <http://www.cctrail.org>

The C&O Canal Towpath

For three quarters of a century, the famed C&O Canal operated as an artery for barge shipping from the Washington, D.C. area to Cumberland, Maryland. The canal ceased operation in the 1930s, victim to the cheaper and faster Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The canal operator's loss has become bicyclists' gain. In 1971, the C&O Canal was made a national park and the 185-mile-long towpath alongside it has become a great resource to those searching for an outdoor escape in the Northern Virginia area. The C&O Canal Towpath connects to the Great Allegheny Passage in Cumberland, MD, which is a 150-mile system of biking and hiking trails connecting Cumberland to Pittsburgh. Ridden together, the trails provide a continuous nonmotorized corridor from Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C.

The C&O Canal ride isn't extraordinarily demanding. The 12-foot-wide graded path is relatively flat and, being well-maintained and generally free of obstacles, not at all difficult for those with basic bike handling skills. Recommended rides are short out-and-backs or two-vehicle shuttles. You can also ride the entire length if you think you are up for the challenge. For a shorter ride you can pick up the trail at numerous points along the towpath. If you would like to start at the beginning, milepost zero is located at the Georgetown C&O

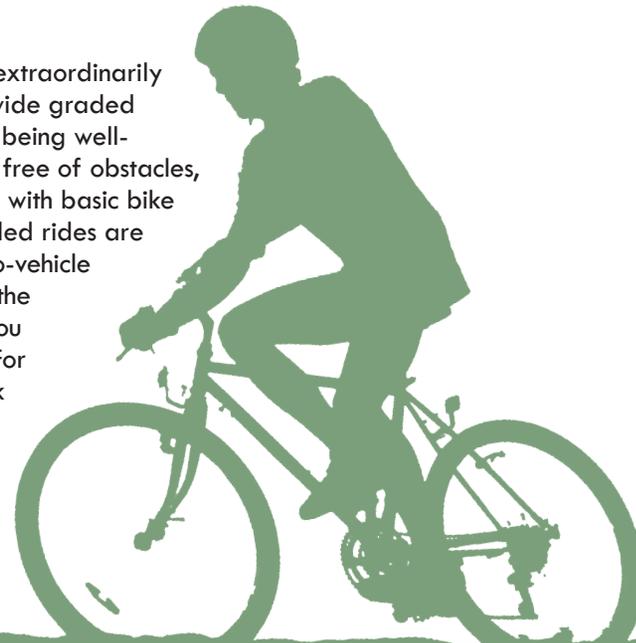
Canal Visitor's Center on Thomas Jefferson Street in Washington, DC. To get there, take Interstate 66E to the Key Bridge. Once across the river, take a right on M Street, then go six blocks to Thomas Jefferson Street.

CONTACT

C&O Canal Visitor's Center

Phone: (202) 653-5190

Web site: www.nps.gov/choh





Centreville Power Lines



Just northeast of Bull Run Regional Park, eight miles of technical single-track trails follow power lines strung between Union Mill Road (Route 659) and Centreville Road (Route 28). Start your ride just south of Centreville Elementary School on Route 28.

Fountainhead Regional Park



Northern Virginia mountain bikers are lucky to live in an area where interested and enthusiastic bicyclists have teamed up. At the top of their list of achievements is the five miles of terrific mountain-bike-only single-track at Fountainhead Regional Park. Make no mistake about it, the course designers laid out these trails with the aggressive, technically savvy mountain biker in mind. When you ride here, make sure you bring along your helmet and a spare set of lungs, as the trail will challenge even the most experienced riders as it snakes through the bottomland hardwoods along the Occoquan River. Fountainhead's remote feel and abundance of wildlife (be wary of deer crossing the trail) are uncommon in an area so close to a bustling metropolis. Be careful about taking in too much scenery all at once though, as the twists, turns, drops, obstacles and steep climbs require both eyes and full concentration.

To get to the trailhead at Fountainhead Regional Park, which is located in Fairfax Station in Fairfax County, take the Beltway (Interstate 495) south to the Braddock Road exit near Annandale. Follow Braddock Road west to Route 123 South. Take a left off Route 123 onto Hampton Road. Take another left

into Fountainhead Regional Park and park in the first parking lot on the right. The unidirectional mountain-bike-only trail is well-marked—one way only please! The trail closes if weather conditions are bad. For directions and more information on trail conditions, call the Fountainhead Regional Park Office.

CONTACT

Fountainhead Regional Park

Phone: (703) 250-9124

Website: <http://www.nvrpa.org/parks/fountainhead>

Great Falls National Park



Mountain biking is welcome in Great Falls National Park, which is located in northeastern Fairfax County. The park's riding varies from maintained gravel carriage roads to rocky single-track trails. Riders of all ages and skills come to enjoy the variety, helping to make it one of the most visited parks in the nation. Be sure to follow the trail to Sandy Landing where you will be treated to an expansive view of Mather Gorge. Also be sure to check out where the Potomac River falls from the bedrock of the Piedmont region down onto the Atlantic Coastal Plain. If you are lucky you will even see kayakers testing their mettle on the Class IV/V rapids, while rock climbers labor on the cliffs just across the water. Brochures and maps of the park are available at the Visitor's Center just inside the gate.

CONTACT

Great Falls National Park

Phone: (703) 285-2966

Website: <http://www.nps.gov/grfa/index.htm>

Mount Vernon Trail



The Potomac River will be your companion on this 18.5-mile trail to George Washington's estate, Mount Vernon, which lies at the very southern tip of his namesake city in Fairfax County. As you pedal south from the starting point on Roosevelt Island, the trail offers numerous vantage points to see the monuments in the nation's capital. Further south, you will pedal through the cobblestone streets of Old Town Alexandria. The boutiques, 18th-century architecture, and formal gardens create the feel of an era gone by. This district has numerous attractions worth visiting, including Christ Church, Robert E. Lee's boyhood home, and the 19th-century lighthouse at Jones Point. Further south, amateur naturalists will enjoy the opportunity to park their bikes and investigate the tidal estuaries of Dyke Marsh. From there, it is a quick pedal to Mount Vernon. The guides and workers in period costume make it seem as if Washington still roams the paths and hallways. Bike lock rentals (but not bikes) are available at the ticket office on the estate grounds. To get there from the Arlington area, follow the George Washington Memorial Parkway south and take the right exit to Memorial Bridge and Arlington Cemetery. Follow the exit ramp to the stop sign at Memorial Avenue and turn right on Memorial Avenue. Continue to the





traffic circle, drive halfway around and exit right onto the George Washington Memorial Parkway heading north. The exit to Theodore Roosevelt Island will be on the right.

CONTACT

George Washington Memorial Parkway
Phone: (703) 289-2500
Web site: www.nps.gov/gwmp/mtvernontrail.htm

Prince William Forest Park



Located along Interstate 95 between Fredericksburg and Washington, DC are almost 12 miles of paved roads and 10 miles of hard-packed gravel roads, perfect for bicyclists, in a remote setting. The park also offers group and backcountry camping options to travelers. Best of all, you will not have to spend all day in the car to get there.

CONTACT

Prince William Forest Park
Phone: (703) 221-7181
Web site: www.nps.gov/prwi



Rappahannock Canal Trail



The Rappahannock Canal Trail is a paved and level out-and-back trail in Fredericksburg with wetlands that are home to swans, herons, and other wildlife. The Rappahannock River canal system once stretched 50 miles upstream to Fauquier County. The canal path is now 1.8 miles long and winds along the canal from Fall Hill Avenue to Princess Anne Street in Fredericksburg.

Tour of Fredericksburg



Explore Fredericksburg by following one of the three loops mapped out by the area bicycling club, the Fredericksburg Cyclists. The 3, 9, or 20-mile tours offer a sampling of the riverside views, old homes, and Civil War history that have made Fredericksburg a mandatory stop for American history buffs. During the Civil War, the city's location made it a major point of contention between the Continental and Confederate armies. Almost 20,000 Americans were killed in the battle that occurred here in December

of 1862. The scars from the fighting can still be seen on many of the city's 18th- and 19th-century buildings. Start at the Fredericksburg Visitor's Center with their 15-minute audio-visual program and begin your exploration of this beautiful city from there. Walking and driving tours are also available.

CONTACT

Fredericksburg Visitor's Center
Phone: (540) 373-1776

Wakefield Park and Accotink Park



Located just west of the beltway in Fairfax County, these two parks are a dirt lover's heaven. A veritable smorgasbord of flat easy spinners, steep climbs, rolling descents, and fun little obstacles lie within the park boundaries. The flat four-mile loop around Lake Accotink is perfect for those looking for an easy cruise. It also is a great way to get the heart pumping prior to attacking the maze of unmarked single-track trails shooting off in all directions from the main trail. Meet up with local riders in the parking lot or just go explore. There are enough trails in the woods to keep you riding all day long. Although they are not marked, it is tough to get lost. Locals suggest leaving your car in the parking lot at Wakefield Park. The more technical trails in Wakefield are off to the right of the baseball field and tennis courts. To get to Accotink from the Wakefield Parking Lot, follow the paved (and marked) Wakefield/Accotink Trail that leads off to the left of the ball fields. For more information on trail conditions, call Accotink Park.

CONTACT

Accotink Park
Phone: (703) 569-3464
Web site: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/accotink



TRAILS





Washington & Old Dominion Railroad Trail



The W&OD is a paved bike corridor that stretches 45 miles from the bustling City of Alexandria to the wide-open spaces of Purcellville. Built on the former roadbed of the W&OD Railroad, this trail is a great example of the nationwide “Rails-to-Trails” movement. As you head west out of Alexandria, you will have a hard time remembering that you are pedaling through one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country. Rolling Virginia countryside and views of the Blue Ridge Mountains will delight you as the trail meanders through Leesburg, home to many fine restaurants, quaint boutiques, and bed-and-breakfasts. Excellent maps of the entire trail are available from the W&OD Trail Office. The web site for the Friends of the W&OD at www.wodfriends.org also is a good source of additional information.

CONTACT

W&OD Trail Office
Phone: (703) 729-0596



Yowell Meadow Park Trail



Yowell Meadow Park Trail is a level, paved one-mile, multiuse trail with smaller nature trails in downtown Culpeper. The multiuse trail is lined with markers with information about Culpeper’s history, while the nature trail passes a monument dedicated to the Culpeper Minutemen. In addition to the paved and nature trails, the park has play areas and facilities for basketball, baseball, beach volleyball, and tennis. For more information, contact the Culpeper Department of Tourism.

CONTACT

Culpeper Department of Tourism
Phone: (540) 727-0611





STATE PARKS IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Lake Anna State Park



The area in what is now Lake Anna State Park in Spotsylvania County used to be known as “Gold Hill” and contained the Goodwin Gold Mine. The park has 11 trails totaling more than 15 miles that pass over moderate terrain through mixed hardwood and pine forest. All trails are designated for hiking with 10 miles designated as shared, multiple-use trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding. Lake Anna State Park is adjacent to Route 601 off Route 208, 25 miles southwest of Fredericksburg and 60 miles northwest of Richmond.

CONTACT

Lake Anna State Park

Phone: (540) 854-5503

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/lak.shtml

Sky Meadows State Park



Sky Meadows State Park is located on the eastern side of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Frederick County. The park provides vistas to the foothills and access to the Appalachian Trail, along with rolling pastures and woodlands. Bicycles are permitted only on paved park roads. The park is less than two miles south of Paris, Virginia via U.S. Route 50 to Route 17 South; or seven miles north of I-66, Exit 23 on Route 17 North. The park entrance is on State Route 710.

CONTACT

Sky Meadows State Park

Phone: (540) 592-3556

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/sky.shtml





BICYCLE CLUBS IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

A. P. Hill/Rappahannock Bicycle Club

P.O. Box 682
Bowling Green, VA 22427-0682
Phone: (804) 633-6500

BikeWalk Virginia

Web site: <http://www.bikewalkvirginia.org>

Fredericksburg Cyclists

P. O. Box 7844
Fredericksburg, VA 22404-7844
Rosemary Pitts
Phone: (540) 371-0398
E-mail: rpitts3696@aol.com
Web site: <http://www.bikefred.com>

Friends of Washington and Old Dominion Trail

21293 Smiths Switch Road
Ashburn, VA 20147-6016
Phone: 703-729-0596
E-mail: wod@nvrpa.org
Website: <http://www.wodfriends.org>

Potomac Pedalers Touring Club

10378 Democracy Lane, Suite A
Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: (202) 363-8687
E-mail: PPTCoffice@bikeppts.org
Web site: <http://www.bikeppts.org>

Reston Bicycle Club

P.O. Box 3389
Reston, VA 20195
Web site:
<http://www.restonbikeclub.org>

Virginia Bicycling Federation

P.O. Box 5621
Arlington, VA 22205
Phone: (703) 696-4432
Fax: (703) 532-6101
E-mail: vabikefed@erols.com
Web site: <http://www.vabike.org>

Washington Area Bicyclist Association

1803 Connecticut Avenue, NW
3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20009
Phone: (202) 518-0524
Fax: (202) 518-0936
E-mail: waba@waba.org
Web site: <http://www.waba.org>





HAMPTON ROADS

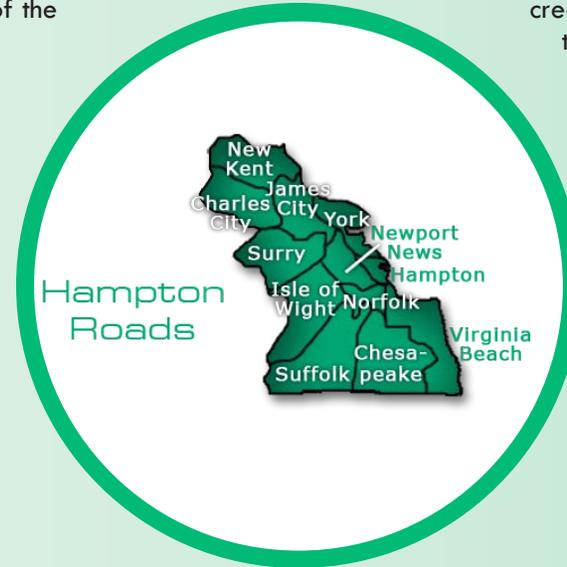
From the first English settlement in the new world at Jamestown, to colonial independence, to the Civil War, the Hampton Roads region of Virginia has been a part of some of the most dramatic and pivotal events in U.S. history. Set against the coastal landscape of the James and York Rivers and the Atlantic Ocean, this piece of southeastern Virginia is a rare combination of scenic beauty, unparalleled history, and pure bicycling fun. Historic colonial villages and Civil War battlefields, the 10-acre gardens at the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg, and the picturesque boardwalk in Virginia Beach are just a few of the many opportunities available in the Hampton Roads area.

Of course, visitors will want to do as much as possible by bicycle. Thanks to the Colonial Parkway, local Parks and Recreation Departments, and efforts of Hampton Roads area bicycle clubs, there is no shortage of bicycle trails surrounding and connecting these attractions. Hampton Roads is home to an amazing array of wildlife and flora, as well as several unique ecosystems. Visitors can

pedal in cadence to the hoots and howls of a variety of birds and mammals amidst the trees, flowers, and shrubs. Visitors can take a tour of the Owl's Creek Salt Marsh, just east of Oceana Naval Air Station along Oceana Boulevard, or watch the migration of birds at the Back Bay Wildlife Refuge on the coast, south of Sandbridge. There is no end to the ecological adventures in southeast Virginia.

Bicycle clubs such as the Tidewater Bicycling Association, Peninsula Bicycling Association, Williamsburg Area

Bicyclists, James River Velo Sport, and the Eastern Virginia Mountain Bike Association are active in planning group rides, maintaining and creating new trails, and keeping the bicycling community informed about local events. Local bicycle shops also are involved in the bicycling community; stop in to ask for ride recommendations, trail conditions, or for the latest technical advice. Whether you are visiting for a weekend or have lived in Hampton Roads for years, take advantage of one of Virginia's premier bicycling locations.



TRAILS





RECOMMENDED RIDES IN HAMPTON ROADS

Crossing the Waters

The Hampton Roads regions feature several major water crossings where bicycling is restricted. For a description of those crossings and alternatives, please see the Crossing the Waters section in the Introduction (page 5).

Beaverdam Reservoir



Built as a reservoir for the town of Gloucester, Beaverdam Reservoir is surrounded by more than nine miles of single-track trails, with plans to expand to more than 25 miles. Not technically challenging, the reservoir is a great spot for beginning mountain bikers.

CONTACT

Beaverdam Park

Phone: (804) 693-2107

Web site: <http://www.gloucesterva.info/pr/parks/trails.htm>

Cape Henry Trail

Cape Henry Trail provides the opportunity to experience Virginia Beach's oceanfront resort area while also passing through First Landing State Park. It includes a variety of different terrains, including a coastal environment of Cyprus swamps, lagoons, and high sand dunes. The trail is hard-packed sand and dirt and is approximately six miles long. Route 60 to First Landing State Park provides access to the trail.

CONTACT

First Landing State Park

Phone: (757) 412-2300

Web site: www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/fir.shtml#trails

Carrollton Nike Park Bike Trail



The Carrollton Nike Park Bike Trail is located north of the James River Bridge near the town of Smithfield, Virginia. It winds through wooded areas surrounding a large pond. It is an approximately 2.5-mile, single-track trail loop with very few ups and downs. There are several short climbs and descents, as well as several different types of bridges along the trail. To get to the trail, cross the James River Bridge from Newport News heading toward the town of Smithfield on US 17 South. About two miles after crossing the bridge, turn right onto VA 669 and follow the signs to the park's entrance. Enter the driveway and go straight ahead to the last parking loop. The trailhead is on the left and is marked by a small sign listing the IMBA trail rules.

CONTACT

Carrollton Nike Park

Phone: (757) 357-2291

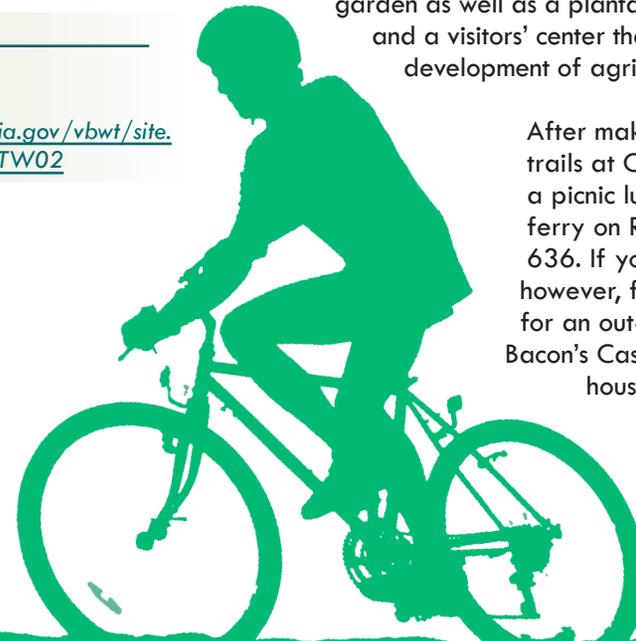
Web site: <http://www.dgif.Virginia.gov/vbwt/site.asp?trail=1&loop=CTW&site=CTW02>

Chippokes Loop



This scenic 22.2-mile road ride begins with a relaxing trip on the James River Ferry [(757) 294-3354], from Jamestown Beach to the Town of Scotland located on the south side of the James River in Surry County. Bikers ride for free, so enjoy the views of Jamestown Island and watch boats sailing the James River. After disembarking, ride along Route 31 past Smith's Fort, a colonial house built in 1760 on land given as a wedding gift by Chief Powhatan to John Rolfe. Continue through the town of Surry, and turn left on eastbound Route 626 (Old Burrough Road) to tour the back roads of Surry County. Turn left on Route 616, and head up to Chippokes Plantation State Park [(757) 294-3625] via Route 633. Chippokes features a six-acre garden as well as a plantation house built in 1854 and a visitors' center that charts the development of agriculture in the area.

After making use of the biking trails at Chippokes and having a picnic lunch, head back to the ferry on Routes 634, 637, and 636. If you're still feeling strong, however, follow Route 634 south for an out-and-back trip to Bacon's Castle, a 17th-Century house with a restored





English-style garden and an interpretive display of archaeological work.

CONTACT

Chippokes Plantation State Park

Phone: (757) 294-3625

Web site: www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/chi.shtml

Dismal Swamp Canal Trail

The Dismal Swamp Canal Trail is a former section of Virginia State Route 17. It is now a multiuse trail open to bicycling, walking, running, horseback riding, and boating. The north trailhead is located at the intersection of Dominion Boulevard and Old Route 17 in Chesapeake and runs south 8.5 miles, adjacent to the Dismal Swamp Canal (providing a 17-mile bike out-and-back).

CONTACT

City of Chesapeake

Phone: (757) 421-7151

Web site: <http://www.chesapeake.va.us>

Freedom Park



Freedom Park is located in James City County, Virginia. The park includes 689 acres and has five miles of trails, with additional trails planned in the coming years. The park includes both single-track loops and double-track multiuse paths. It is well maintained and includes several ramps and bridges. There are many short and long uphill climbs and downhill descents.



CONTACT

Freedom Park

5535 Centerville Road
Williamsburg, VA 23188
Phone: (757) 259-5360



Harwood's Mill



Although the Hampton Roads area may seem an unlikely place for obstacle-studded single-track trails, challenging and technical bike paths do exist. Near Newport News, Harwood's Mill consists of three single-track loops connected by a mile-long double-track service road, offering about five miles of trail. Do not be fooled by the relatively flat terrain—the twisting, turning trail and the occasional log jump or obstacle keeps riders on their toes. The single-track trail at Harwood's is divided into novice, advanced, and expert, making it easy for riders to enjoy more—or less—challenging trails. For beginners, the sandy double-track service road makes a nice two-mile out-and-back. Because of the tight turns, trails at Harwood's Mill are one-way. Be sure to obey the signs and ride in the correct direction, as visibility is limited. To reach Harwood's Mill, take Interstate 64 to exit 258 and turn north onto Route 17. Follow Route 17 for four miles, and turn left onto Oriana

Road. After crossing the Harwood's Mill Reservoir turn into the parking area.

CONTACT

Harwood's Mill

Phone: (757) 886-7912

Jamestown Loop



This five-mile loop winds through the Jamestown National Historic Site on Jamestown Island, past the original Old Church tower and ongoing archaeological dig along the James River. It is punctuated with excavated foundations and interpretive signs. The loop is perfect for families.

CONTACT

Jamestown National Historic Site

Phone: (757) 898-3400

Newport News Park



Newport News Park is one of the largest municipal parks in the country. The 8,000-acre park includes a 5.3-mile bikeway. The unpaved trail includes three single-track loops and several connecting fire trails. Bike rentals are available at the campsite office. The trail is open daily from sunrise to sunset.

CONTACT

Newport News Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism

Phone: (757) 886-7912

Web site: http://www.nnparks.com/parks_nn.php





New Quarter Park



New Quarter Park includes around 545 acres of mature forests, meadows, ravines, and tidal wetlands. It is located close to historic Williamsburg. The park has a mountain bike trail as well as many routes for family biking.



CONTACT

York County Department of Parks and Recreation
Phone: (757) 890-3500

Colonial Parkway/Yorktown



This 26-mile ride begins and ends at the Williamsburg Visitor Center and follows the Colonial Parkway along the banks of the York River through the Yorktown Visitor Center (757) 898-2410 and Yorktown, where Washington defeated British forces in the decisive battle of the American Revolution. Several of the original colonial dwellings still stand today. Also beautifully preserved are the battlefields, including reconstructions of the trenches and parapets built by colonists and the British forces. The Newport

News Visitor Center (888) 493-7386 and the Commonwealth of Virginia's Victory Center Museum (888) 593-4682 provide battlefield tours, films, and historical interpretations of this pivotal moment in America's history.

Excellent for bike riding, the three-lane design of the Colonial Parkway allows plenty of room for motor vehicles to pass, and the parkway features several historical markers. There also are quite a few picnic areas, perfect for enjoying lunch while contemplating the calm waters of the York. In addition to the historic battlefields, the lush coastal environment and panoramic views of the river make for a relaxing and scenic tour. If you are up for a longer ride, begin at the Williamsburg Visitor Center to make a trip up the nine-mile encampment tour trail, which features reconstructions of the French and American headquarters and encampments. Also, be sure to visit the Watermen's Museum in Yorktown, which showcases the life of fishermen in the Chesapeake Bay. This ride begins at the Colonial Williamsburg Visitor Center [(757) 229-1000]. To reach the trail, take Interstate 64 east to exit 238 (Route 143 South) to Williamsburg. Veer right and follow Route 132 to the Visitor Center.

Virginia Capital Trail



The Virginia Capital Trail represents more than 400 years of history, following the path of the people, places, and events that helped shape America from the first English settlement at Jamestown, Colonial Williamsburg and the Revolutionary War, to the National Battlefields of the Civil War, to the skyscrapers of present-day Richmond. Upon completion, this 54-mile pedestrian and bicycle trail will connect the Commonwealth's present capital of Richmond with the colonial capitals of Jamestown and Williamsburg. The

project is being overseen by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) with project funding coming through a combination of federal transportation enhancement grant, state and local government funds, and private donations. The Capital Trail joins the Colonial Parkway, reaching the banks of the Chickahominy River in James City County with additional segments currently under construction. For updated information on the status of the trail, visit <http://www.vdot.Virginia.gov/projects/newcaptrail/welcome.asp>

CONTACT

Web site: <http://www.virginiacapitaltrail.org>

Upper County Park



Upper County Park in James City County is approximately 80 acres in size and includes a 3.5-mile mountain bike trail. Admission to the park is free and there is a nominal charge to swim or rent the shelter. The park is open daily from sunrise to sunset.

CONTACT

Upper County Park
Phone: (757) 566-1451

US Bicycle Route 76



The Commonwealth of Virginia is home to 838 miles of the U.S. Bicycle Route system—more than any other state. Established officially by the federal government in 1982, the Virginia sections of U.S. Bicycle Routes 76 and 1 cross the state from east to west and north to south. In Virginia, US Bicycle Route 76 starts in Yorktown, near Colonial National Historical Park in the Hampton Roads region, and it winds through nearly the entire state, before entering



TRAILS





Kentucky near Breaks Interstate Park. Additional information on US Bicycle Route 76 is provided earlier in this guide.

CONTACT

Adventure Cycling Association
Phone: (800) 755-2453

Washington Ditch Road



In addition to its wealth of historic sites, the Hampton Roads region also hosts one of the most unique natural features on the east coast, the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Once covering over a million acres, the Swamp is believed to have been occupied by the Nansemond Indians as long as 9,000 years ago. North Carolina's first colonial governor, William Drummond, stumbled upon the Swamp while on a hunting expedition in the late 1600s, and found one of Virginia's two natural lakes, which is now named after him. At the heart of the Swamp, Lake Drummond is believed to have formed as a result of a large forest fire. George Washington attempted to drain the swamp for farmland in the 1760s, and the huge canals still exist. Later, the Dismal Swamp was a popular location for runaway slaves to hide. The entire swamp was deforested at least once by large-scale logging operations that continued until 1976. Its current status as a wildlife refuge protects it from further damage, and allows for a great deal of new growth. Boasting 213 species of bird and 56 species of turtle, not to mention otters, minks, raccoons, foxes, deer, black bears, bobcats, and 21 snake species, the Great Dismal offers bicyclists an unparalleled opportunity to explore Virginia's wetlands environment.

The four-mile-long Washington Ditch Road leads to Lake Drummond and accesses many of the more than 150 miles of unpaved roads within the 106,000-acre wildlife refuge. An out-and-back ride,

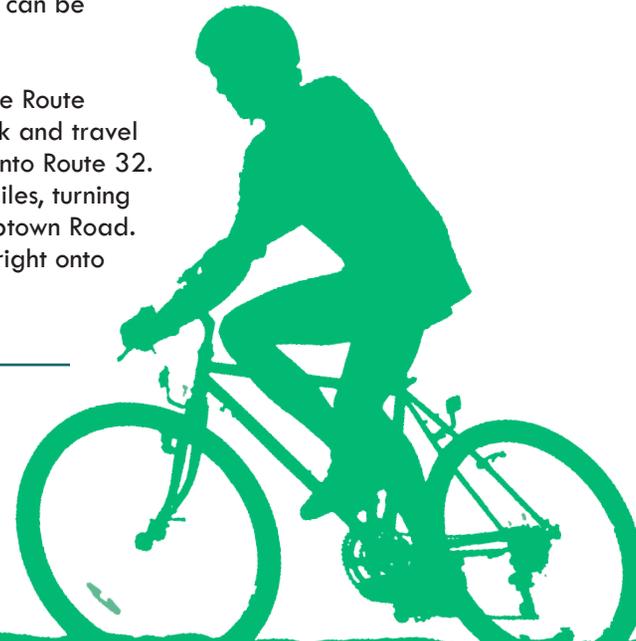


the route is easy, allowing riders to concentrate on the spectacular wildlife. Keep a lookout for unique plants such as the silky camellia, rare log fern, and dwarf trillium. Also be sure to investigate the 1-mile Boardwalk Trail near the Washington Ditch parking area. If you visit during the winter months, you're likely to see huge numbers of blackbirds and robins, while during spring migration, the swamp hosts 34 species of warbler. Be sure to bring bug repellent during the summer, as the mosquitoes can be fierce.

To reach Washington Ditch Road, take Route 13 south out of the old City of Suffolk and travel about 3.5 miles, before turning left onto Route 32. Continue on Route 32 for around 5 miles, turning left onto Route 759, also called Babbtown Road. Go another five miles, and then turn right onto Washington Ditch Road.

CONTACT

Great Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge
Phone: (757) 986-3705





STATE PARKS IN HAMPTON ROADS

Chippokes Plantation State Park



Chippokes Plantation State Park has been a working farm for more than 370 years. The park offers 3.5 miles of riding on asphalt and sand trails. While at the park, bicyclists can tour an antebellum mansion, stroll through gardens, or view a collection of antique farm and forestry equipment.



The park is located in Surry County. Access to the park is provided via Route 10.

CONTACT

Chippokes Plantation State Park

Phone: (757) 294-3625

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/chi.shtml

False Cape State Park



False Cape State Park in the City of Virginia Beach has five trails, including the Barbour Hill self-guided interpretive trail, which totals 7.5 miles. They are available for hiking, biking and exploration. The park is home to migrating and wintering birds, including whistling

swan, snow geese, Canada geese, and a variety of duck species. Accessible only by foot or bicycle through Back Bay or by boat, False Cape is Virginia's least-visited state park, helping to preserve one of the most unspoiled coastal environments on the East Coast.

Beginning at Back Bay's visitor center, you can ride approximately five miles along a system of flat, bike-friendly dikes to False Cape Park. Due to concerns that visitors were disturbing the winter refuge of waterfowl, these dikes are closed from November to April. During these months, visitors wanting to access False Cape must bike along the beach. Be sure to note the tide schedule, as biking along sandy beaches at high tide is difficult, if not impossible. While biking, keep an eye out for river otters, deer, mink, fox, muskrats, and raccoons as well as wild horses, feral pigs and nutria. When you reach False Cape, be sure to check out the remains of a 19th-century community, Wash Woods, which consisted mainly of farmers and fishermen. The cemetery and church tower are all that remain of this settlement that was destroyed by a hurricane in the 1930s. Also visit the wildlife lookout tower for better bird watching.

To get to the park from Interstate 64, exit onto Indian River Road East. Go 13 miles, then turn left onto Newbridge Road, before turning right onto Sandbridge Road. Next, turn right onto Sandpiper Road to Little Island City Park.

CONTACT

False Cape State Park

Phone: (757) 426-7128

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/fal.shtml





First Landing State Park



First Landing State Park offers recreational activities and opportunities to explore unique habitats featuring lagoons and rare plants in the City of Virginia Beach. The park features six miles of gravel, packed dirt, and sand trails that connect, at both ends of the park, with the City of Virginia Beach's trail system for miles of additional riding. The park is located on Route 60 at Cape Henry in Virginia Beach.

CONTACT

First Landing State Park

Phone: (757) 412-2300

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/fir.shtml

York River State Park



York River State Park has more than 20 miles of trails, which allow visitors to explore the marsh, river shoreline, and upland forest in an area where freshwater and saltwater meet to create a habitat rich in marine and plant life. The park offers five miles of natural and gravel trails, 11 miles of mountain bike trails, and a very difficult single-track trail in James City County. Combine the Woodstock, Backbone, Riverview, and White Tail trails for eight miles of casual, scenic riding along old road beds and tame single-track. The ride meanders through hardwood forests, circles Woodstock pond and skirts the York River at a difficulty level perfect for families. Be careful to stay on designated bike trails and yield to hikers and equestrians who also use these trails. For those seeking adventure, the two-mile Laurel Glen and six-mile Marle Ravine trails, designed and built by the Eastern Virginia Mountain Bike Association (757) 566-2242, boast steep climbs and descents, lots of twisting single-track and plenty of adrenaline. If you crash on one of the hard trails, take the opportunity to look for rare orchids, ginseng, and glade ferns that flourish in this highly fertile environment.

To reach York River State Park, take Interstate 64 to exit 231, and go east on Croaker Road (Route 607), before turning right onto Riverview Road (Route 606). Turn left on York River Park Road (Route 696), and the bike trails are on the right, past the entrance station.

CONTACT

York River State Park

Phone: (757) 566-3036

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/yor.shtml



TRAILS





BICYCLE CLUBS IN HAMPTON ROADS

Eastern Virginia Mountain Bike Association

P.O. Box 7553
Hampton, VA 23666
Web site: <http://www.evma.org>

Hampton Roads Mountain Bike Club, Inc.

752-7 McGuire Place
Newport News, VA 23601

Hilton Bicycle Club

9913 Warwick Boulevard
Newport News, VA 23601

James River Velo Sport

P.O. Box 12072
Newport News, VA 23612
Web site: <http://www.jrvs.org>

Peninsula Bicycling Association

P. O. Box 12115
Newport News, VA 23612-2115
Phone: (757) 356-1451
E-mail: hbeizer@aol.com
Web site: <http://www.pbabicycling.org>

Tidewater Bicycle Association

Phone: (757) 285-9085
E-mail: president@tbarides.org
Web site: <http://www.tbarides.org>

Tri-Power Cycling Club

2280 Souverain Lane
Virginia Beach, VA 23454
Web site: <http://www.teamtripower.com>

Williamsburg Area Bicyclists

P. O. Box 2222
Williamsburg, VA 23187-2222
E-mail: njcarter@starpower.net
Web site: <http://www.wabonline.org>



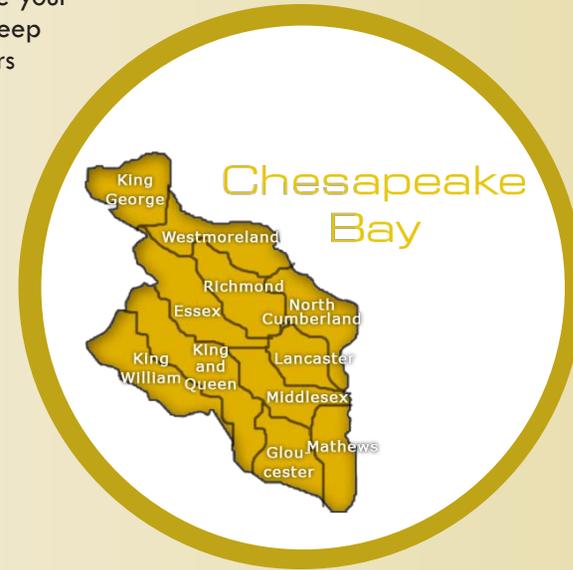


C H E S A P E A K E B A Y

Home to flat-out good riding without the strain of hill climbs and technical trails, the Chesapeake Bay region or “Virginia’s Waterfront” offers some of the Commonwealth’s best road biking through beautiful rural landscapes with diverse ecosystems and a variety of architectural styles. The Chesapeake Bay region also has important historical resources such as the birthplaces of former presidents James Madison, James Monroe, and George Washington.

Chesapeake has two distinct regions, each of which reaches into the bay with fingers of land that provide numerous beaches and shoreline habitats to explore. The Northern Neck is bounded by the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, while the Middle Peninsula lies between the Rappahannock and York Rivers. The Chesapeake area is spider-webbed with lightly traveled back roads and quaint hamlets that are ripe for exploration by bike. What’s more, the area’s namesake feature, the Chesapeake Bay, is the largest and most productive biological estuary in North America.

With more than 2,700 species of plants and animals native to the area, you’re bound to share your ride with winged or furry companions. Keep your eyes peeled for osprey (1,600 pairs nest along the shores of the Bay) and bald eagles. The endangered piping plover can be seen ducking through the marshes as well. In winter, you’ll have the added thrill of pedaling past Canada geese and whistling swans, both of which make the Bay their cold-weather home. With many possible trip routes, easily accessible historical attractions and a variety of natural habitats, there’s no better way to explore the Chesapeake Bay region than by bike.



TRAILS





RECOMMENDED RIDES IN CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION

Crossing the Waters

The Nice Memorial Bridge (Route 301) connecting King George County and Maryland restricts bicycling. For a description of this crossing, please see the Crossing the Waters section in the Introduction (page 5).

Ball's Neck Trail



Though there are no paved shoulders, this Virginia scenic byway is quiet and bicyclists are respected. The 40-mile round-trip route takes you past farmland vistas, old millponds, Chesapeake Bay nature preserves, and several beautiful old plantation homes.

CONTACT

Northern Neck Tourism Council

Phone: (800) 393-6180

Website: <http://www.northernneck.org>

Caledon Natural Area



Ride Route 206 approximately four miles from Arnolds Corner to the Caledon Natural Area along the Potomac River in King George County. For a longer trip, take Route 218 east for 15 miles out of Fredericksburg. Caledon is the summer home to one of the largest concentrations of American bald eagles on the East Coast. Several hiking trails stay open year-round and limited tours of the eagle habitats are offered seasonally to allow visitors a closer look.

CONTACT

Caledon Natural Area

Phone: (540) 663-3861

Cat Point Creek Trail



Starting near Warsaw in Richmond County, the Cat Point Creek Trail follows a tributary of the Rappahannock River past river vistas and salt marshes. Continue through part of the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge, where you'll see migrating waterfowl, herons, and eagles.

CONTACT

Northern Neck Tourism Council

Phone: (800) 393-6180

Gwynn's Island



No bike trip to charming Mathews County would be complete without a tour of Gwynn's Island, a portrait of coastal Virginia. From Route 198, take Route 223 northeast at the Town of Hudgins. Follow this road for a couple miles and you will come to a drawbridge that connects Gwynn's Island to the mainland of Virginia. With all the boat traffic in the area, you may very well get a chance to see the small drawbridge in action. A public boat landing and a quaint harbor sit at the south entrance to the island. From there, numerous small roads perfect for biking extend over the island. Traffic here moves slowly and the roads afford terrific views of the Chesapeake Bay. The island is small enough that it can be easily ridden in less than a day, leaving many hours of daylight to explore the numerous other harbors of Mathews County. If you're still looking for more biking opportunities in the area, check out the several designated routes that can be done individually or linked together (including Gwynn's Island) throughout Mathews County.

CONTACT

Mathews County Chamber of Commerce

Phone: (804) 725-4229

Web site: <http://www.visitmathews.com>





Of Kings and Queens

Essex, King and Queen, King William, Middlesex, and Gloucester Counties make up the Middle Peninsula of Virginia. The Middle Peninsula is fertile farm country located between the Rappahannock and York Rivers. South of Fredericksburg and around Fort A.P. Hill, there are many country roads branching from Route 17 that offer quiet explorations of the south side of the Rappahannock River. A stop in Tappahannock offers a chance to take a river cruise. Just south of Tappahannock, riders can pick between several country roads along Route 360 and loop back southwest to Millers Tavern and St. Stephens Church. From St. Stephens Church, turn southeast onto Route 14 to Stevensville and Walker Coleman Pond, site of the King and Queen Fish Cultural Station. Route 14 continues along the northern banks of the Mattaponi River. This mostly flat ride joins Route 33 and swings east again. Stay on Route 33 and you will finally run out of land when you reach Stingray Point. Just six miles west of Stingray Point, Route 3 turns south across the Piankatank River and picks up Route 198, another fast, flat road with connections to Gloucester, James Store, Beaverlett, and the rest of the southern end of the Middle Peninsula.

CONTACT

King and Queens County Administrative Office
Phone: (804) 785-5975



Peaceful Land



The Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers are located on the Middle Peninsula and are named for two Native American tribes.

Each year the chief of the Mattaponi tribe presents a gift of peace to the Governor of Virginia in accordance with original treaties. Adventurous bicyclists can link approximately 25 miles of quiet roads between Manquin and West Point for a perfect day's touring. Begin at Manquin, located 22 miles northeast of Richmond on Route 360. Take Route 618 east approximately six miles. Turn right onto Route 629 for two miles, followed by a left turn onto Route 632. From here, Route 632 runs southeast for about 12 miles passing close to the river towns of Elsing Green, Lester Manor, and Sweet Hall. After Sweet Hall, Route 632 joins Route 30, which continues approximately seven miles to the West

Point Historic District. West Point lies at the tip of the peninsula where the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers join to form the York River.

CONTACT

West Point Historic District
Phone: (804) 843-4620

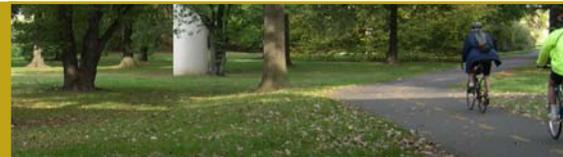
Northern Neck Heritage Trail Bicycling Route



Begin your tour in Montross at the Westmoreland County Museum and Visitor Center and follow Route 622 to Stratford Hall and then Route 3 to Pope's Creek Plantation, the birthplace of George Washington. Follow Route 638 to Ingleside Plantation Winery for a tour and wine tasting. Stop at Westmoreland Berry Farm on Route 637 to refuel with fresh fruit sundaes and then take the scenic ridge road back to Montross.

CONTACT

Northern Neck Planning District Commission
Phone: (804) 493-0130
Website: <http://www.nnpdc.org/NNPDC-PROJ/NNPDC-0015/nnpdc-proj-0015.htm>





Sandy Point Loop Scenic Trail



The Sandy Point Loop Scenic Trail is an easy loop in Westmoreland County on the Northern Neck. The route begins in Kinsale, a working harbor where signs of 19th-century prosperity linger in the Yeocomico River waterfront. A museum in the town center is open most summer weekends. Top off your water bottles at the museum to sample some of the famous “Kinsale aquifer” on your ride. The ride is dotted with interesting farmhouses and watermen’s cottages and offers beautiful views of the Potomac River. Several exciting historical sites also can be found along the ride. For example, Mary Ball, mother of George Washington, lived for several years at nearby Sandy Point Plantation. Another point of interest is Bonums Creek, near Tucker Hill, which is the site of a large oyster house. There’s also Yeocomico Church, a National Historic Landmark built in 1706. The church is a cross between Gothic and Classical architectural styles and its original structural features, furnishings and detail have been preserved. In its cemetery you can find the gravestone of the novelist John R. Dos Passos (1896-1970), who had a home nearby.

To begin the ride, leave town on Kinsale Road (Route 203) traveling northeast. Cross Kinsale Bridge and

at the top of the hill stay straight on Kinsale Bridge Road (Route 607). Travel 1.5 miles to Sandy Point Road (Route 604) and go right for about three miles, to Sandy Point Beach. Turn right (south) on Skipjack Road (Route 610) and travel about one mile along the Potomac to the intersection with Lynch Point Road. Bear right on Skipjack Road and travel 2.5 miles until you intersect Sandy Point Road (Route 604) again. A convenience store located here offers refreshments. Go left, then right on Tucker Hill Road (Route 610). At Kelly Road (Route 663) turn right and travel about one mile to Bonums Road (Route 763), which forks to the right again. This road goes to the oyster house. Return the way you came to Tucker Hill Road and go right. At Tucker Hill, go left on Old Yeocomico Road (Route 606) and pedal 0.5 miles to Yeocomico Church. From the church continue on Old Yeocomico Road to Sandy Point Road (Route 604), hang a left, and then a quick right onto Kinsale Bridge Road (Route 607), which will take you back to Kinsale.

CONTACT

Northern Neck Tourism Council
Phone: (800) 393-6180

Route 3. Take a right onto Route 3 and then a quick left onto Route 646 again. A right on Route 643 and another right on Route 642 will deliver you to Windmill Point Road. Take a left and ride to the tiny village of Foxwells, a quaint trip between picturesque old farmhouses, with views of the water, fishing, crabbers, the broad Rappahannock River and Fleet’s Bay. You’ll eventually reach the bay at Westland Beach, the perfect place to cool off. Then turn around and follow Windmill Point Road to the village of White Stone, where you can browse antique shops and boutiques and lunch at the wine and cheese shop. Return to Irvington on Route 200.

CONTACT

Northern Neck Tourism Council
Phone: (800) 393-6180

Windmill Point Loop



This historic ride in Lancaster County starts in Irvington and follows back roads to the very nose of the Northern Neck, which pokes precariously into the Chesapeake Bay. It tours Irvington’s historic district along Steamboat Road and Carter’s Creek, then follows Route 200 north to Route 646 and swings right. Or take a left on Route 646 and visit Historic Christ Church. Built in 1735, it is the best preserved colonial church in Virginia. Retrace your route on Route 646, cross over Route 200 and go approximately 2.5 miles to



TRAILS





STATE PARKS IN CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION

Belle Isle State Park



Belle Isle State Park has a wide variety of tidal wetlands interspersed with agricultural fields and upland forests. Bicyclists can enjoy several unpaved trails crossing the

park. Bike rentals are available at the park. The park is located in Lancaster County and can be reached by taking Route 3 to Route 354, then Route 683 to the park entrance.

CONTACT

Belle Isle State Park

Phone: (804) 462-5030

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/bel.shtml

Westmoreland State Park

This park is located on the Potomac River in Westmoreland County, 5 miles west of Montross on Route 3. The park is a recommended base camp for bicyclists exploring the Northern Neck due to its variety of accommodations and central location. Note that the park offers hiking trails, but no internal bicycle facilities.

CONTACT

Westmoreland State Park

Phone: (804) 493-8821

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/wes.shtml

Zoar State Forest



Zoar State Forest is located near the town of Aylett and is accessible from both Route 30 and Route 360. While only 300 acres, the park provides a variety of experiences,

including a nature trail, demonstration areas focused on agricultural land management, and vast quail habitats. The Mattaponi Bluffs loop meanders through forests and wetlands, and offers magnificent views of the Mattaponi River. Note that Virginia State Forests now require a \$15 annual permit for most outdoor activities (including bicycling) for anyone over 15 years of age.

CONTACT

Zoar State Forest

Phone: (804) 769-2962

Web site: <http://www.dof.Virginia.gov/stforest/index-zsf.shtml>





BLUE RIDGE HIGHLANDS

The Blue Ridge Highlands region of Virginia includes hundreds of miles of fire road and single-track trails designed specifically for mountain biking. One of the defining features in the region is the beautiful Blue Ridge Parkway, or “America’s Most Scenic Drive.” Many people enjoy bicycling on this stretch as it offers some of the greatest elevation changes available along any route in Virginia. The region also includes an abundance of outdoor recreational opportunities, such as the Mount Rogers Scenic Byway and Mount Rogers Highlands, along with places to see wildlife such as Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area and Crooked Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Often referred to as the Virginia Highlands, this mountainous area has been surveyed, hunted, and traversed by some of America’s greatest heroes such as Thomas Lewis and Daniel Boone. The Blue Ridge Highlands are still Virginia’s frontier in many ways,

and bicyclists are rediscovering this rugged and unique region. In addition to great biking opportunities, visitors will enjoy historical resources and Appalachian culture. Stop at the Barter Theatre, America’s oldest professional repertory theatre in Abingdon, visit Bristol, the birthplace of country music, or venture to a fiddler’s convention at Galax in this cradle of mountain music. Exploring the region by bicycle is a great way to experience all that it has to offer.



TRAILS





RECOMMENDED RIDES IN BLUE RIDGE HIGHLANDS

Blue Ridge Parkway



“America’s Most Scenic Drive” also may be among America’s favorite bike routes. The Blue Ridge Parkway meanders 469 miles from Shenandoah National Park in northern Virginia to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina. The section in the Blue Ridge Highlands region of Virginia offers some of the greatest elevation changes along the parkway, ranging from 650 to almost 6,000 feet in elevation. The parkway follows the Appalachian Mountains and provides some of the most spectacular scenery in the world. The parkway has limited access points so cyclists choosing to ride the parkway need to plan their trip accordingly.

CONTACT

Blue Ridge Parkway

Phone: (828) 298-0398

Web site: <http://www.nps.gov/blri>

Blacksburg Road Course



A lovely road ride, the Blacksburg Road Course leaves from the Museum of the Geological Sciences just outside Blacksburg and follows country roads northeast to Catawba and back. The loop is approximately 45 miles long.

CONTACT

Museum of the Geological Sciences

Phone: (540) 231-3001

Brush Mountain



Brush Mountain is within bicycling distance from the Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg. It is located in the Jefferson National Forest, which has abundant opportunities for great riding. Trail maintenance by a coalition of local riders, bike shops, and mountain bike clubs keeps these once overused runs in great shape. With older trails such as The Beast, Basin, and Horsehair, and the addition of newly developed trails on adjacent Gap Mountain, the Brush Mountain area provides a multitude of opportunities for mountain bikers.

CONTACT

Blacksburg Ranger District

Phone: (540) 552-4641

Flat Top Mountain



In Giles County, 25 miles north of Wytheville, a 12-mile loop of remote countryside follows a mix of equestrian trails and forest service roads. It also includes many miles of single track trails winding throughout George Washington-Jefferson National Forests.

CONTACT

Blacksburg Ranger District

Phone: (540) 552-4641

Huckleberry Trail



Huckleberry Trail is a six-mile asphalt-paved bike and pedestrian path in Blacksburg, Virginia. The trail currently runs from the Blacksburg library to the New River Mall; however, there are plans to extend it in the future. There are distance markers every half mile, as well as benches along the trail. Parking is available at both ends of the trail and near Warm Hearth and the Hightop and Merrimac crossings.

CONTACT

Blacksburg Parks and Recreation Department

Phone: (540) 961-1135





Mountain Lake to Butt Mountain



As if the tremendous network of short trails on this 2,600-acre old-world resort was not enough, the area serves as the launch for the 21.5-mile Mountain Lake to Butt Mountain loop. Mountain bike rentals, maps, and guide services are available at Mountain Lake.

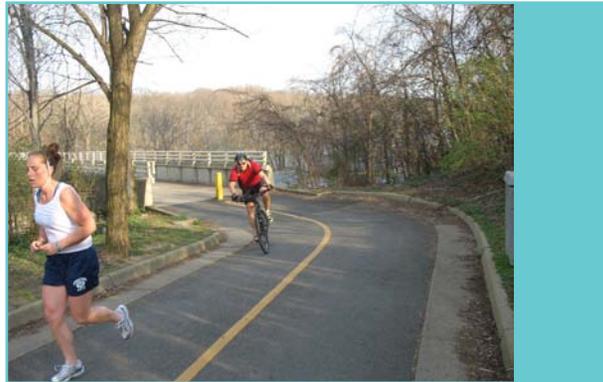
Mount Rogers Scenic Byway



At an elevation of 5,729 feet, Mount Rogers is the highest point in Virginia. The Mount Rogers Scenic Byway provides access through the scenic forests and countryside surrounding Mount Rogers and is divided into two parts. From Troutdale go southwest on Virginia Route 603 through the center of Mount Rogers National Recreation Area to the intersection with US Highway 58. The other section of the byway is located on US Highway 58, from Damascus east to Volney; sections of this road are unsuitable to vehicles or trucks more than 35 feet long. Attractions in the area include the Appalachian Trail, Little Wilson Creek Wilderness, Lewis Fork Wilderness, the Beartree Recreation Area, Grayson Highlands State Park, and Whitetop Mountain.

CONTACT

Mount Rogers National Recreation Area
Phone: (276) 783-5196
Web site: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/gwj/mr/>



New River Trail



New River Trail is located in New River Trail State Park, which features 57 miles of trail on abandoned railroad right-of-way through Grayson, Carroll, Wythe, and Pulaski Counties. The trail parallels the scenic and geologically unique New River for 39 miles and links numerous other attractions, including Mount Rogers National Recreation Area and Shot Tower Historical State Park. The route crosses more than 30 trestles and bridges of the abandoned railway and includes two tunnels. From the Hiwassee trestle south of Pulaski, the trail begins a steady climb southwest to Fries Junction, and then forks to provide access to the towns of Fries and Galax. Numerous access points provide entry to the trail, which is the centerpiece of this 765-acre park that averages only 80 feet wide. There are campgrounds and facilities for a variety of

visitors, including hikers, cyclists, equestrians, boaters, and paddlers. The truly adventurous might want to try the annual New River Trail Challenge, a triathlon with mountain bike, canoe, and running segments.

CONTACT

New River Trail State Park
Phone: (276) 699-6778

Virginia Creeper Trail



The Virginia Creeper Trail is a 34-mile-long former railroad bed that has become a multipurpose trail stretching from the mountains to the valleys. It owes its popularity to outstanding scenery, and encompasses two geographic regions of Virginia. The Blue Ridge Mountains lie to the east, and the Ridge and Valley province of Virginia extends to the west. Because of this geographic variety, the Creeper Trail can be divided into two distinctly different yet equally beautiful halves. Take two days to see both parts of the trail or ride the entire length from White Top to Abingdon in a single day-long excursion.

Starting at the New River Trail trailhead in Pulaski, riders can now connect to the Virginia Creeper Trail via Mount Rogers National Recreation Area by linking the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail, the Iron





Mountain Trail, and the Beech Grove Trail to form a 76-mile ride that skirts Virginia's highest mountain, Mount Rogers, and intersects the Creeper about 20 miles east of Abingdon. The Mount Rogers National Recreation Area publishes trail brochures for each segment, which are available by calling (800) 628-7202.

Hire one of the shuttle services to transport your bike to Whitetop station, at the very top of the Virginia Whitetop Station Creeper Trail, and then enjoy the 33-mile downhill jaunt through time and history. Waterfalls, narrow gauge rail trestle bridges, and spectacular views are around every bend.

CONTACT

Mount Rogers National Recreation Area

Phone: (276) 783-5196

Several companies in the area offer bike rentals and shuttle service to Whitetop Station.

Web site: <http://www.vacreeptrail.us/>

Claytor Lake State Park



Tucked into a bend of the 4,500-acre, 21-mile-long Claytor Lake in the New River Valley of southwestern Virginia, the park offers three miles of hiking trails, and access to Claytor Lake for boating and swimming.

CONTACT

Claytor Lake State Park

Phone: (540) 643-2500

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/cla.shtml

Fairy Stone State Park



Home of the mysterious "fairy stones," this is one of the six original Virginia state parks to open on June 15, 1936. The cross-shaped stones so prevalent in the region, plus beautiful scenery, rich history, and ample recreational choices make Fairy Stone State Park one of the Commonwealth's most popular parks. Junius B. Fishburn, former president of the Southwest Virginia Trust Company, donated the nearly 5,000-acre site, which includes the 168-acre lake adjoining the Philpott Reservoir and now includes some great bicycling trails. Nine of the 14 miles of the Stuart Knob and Little Mountain trail system are open

for mountain bike use. The ruggedness of the trails combined with the camping, fishing, swimming, and other activities make this a great retreat.

CONTACT

Fairy Stone State Park

Phone: (276) 930-2424



TRAVEL



STATE PARKS IN BLUE RIDGE HIGHLANDS

Grayson Highlands State Park



Located near Mount Rogers in Grayson County, this park offers views of alpine-like peaks more than 5,000 feet high. Five miles of mountain bike trails weave through the park's natural beauty, with access to 60 additional miles of trail. To reach the park, take I-81 to exit 45 in Marion, then Route 16 to Volney and go west on Route 58.

CONTACT

Grayson Highlands State Park

Phone: (276) 579-7092

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/gra.shtml

Hungry Mother State Park



A 108-acre mountain lake with a beach, bathhouse, beautiful woodlands, and miles of multiuse trails make this a wonderful family getaway. Bicycles are only allowed on the 2.7-mile Lake Trail and 0.9-mile Raider's Run Trail. Plan a trip in July and enjoy the Hungry Mother Arts and Crafts Festival. The park is located four miles north of Marion on Route 16 in Smyth County.



TRAILS

CONTACT

Hungry Mother State Park

Phone: (276) 781-7400

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/hun.shtml

New River Trail State Park



Federally designated as a national Millennium Trail, the New River Trail offers 57 miles of trails, 40 of which are along the New River between Pulaski and Galax.

This linear park follows an abandoned railroad right-of-way with a trail surface that is predominantly cinder, and serves as a link to a number of other recreational areas. The trail may be accessed at Ivanhoe, Fries, Galax, Draper, Pulaski, and Foster Falls. It features three major trestle bridges: the Hiwasee (951 feet long), the Ivanhoe (670 feet), and Fries Junction (1,089 feet). This ride is a spectacular family weekend jaunt or a perfect day trip to let your muscles rest after ascending the mountains. The New River Trail State Park serves as a home base for trips to other destinations as well, including Mount Rogers National Recreational Area, Claytor Lake State Park, and Grayson Highlands State Park. The park also features an interesting piece of history, Shot Tower. More than 190 years ago, settlers melted lead in a kettle atop the 75-foot structure and poured it drop-by-drop into a kettle of water 155 feet below (at the bottom of an additional 85-foot shaft). The result: ammunition. The tower still stands at mile marker 25.2 and is open to visitors, but keep an eye out if you plan to stop at the Shot Tower—there is little signage to inform you that it is directly overhead. The area has one of many picnic areas along the trail as well. One of the best family day trips starts in Draper at the six-mile mark, and heads

south to the Shot Tower. There is a slight elevation loss in this section, despite the fact that you're riding upriver. There also is a collection of railroad memorabilia and a concession store in Foster Falls.

Bicyclists can enter the New River Trail from three recommended points from the northern terminus by taking Interstate 81 to Pulaski. Take exit 94 and go north on Route 99. Park at the restored rail station and trailhead. To access the trail from its midpoint, from Interstate 77 take exit 24 and travel east on Route 69 to Route 52, go northeast on Route 608, and follow the signs to the park. The park headquarters are located here. From the southern terminus: Take I-77 to Route 58/221 and go west to Galax. Trailhead parking is available where Route 58 crosses Chestnut Creek. The New River Trail goes through Carroll, Grayson, Pulaski and Wythe Counties, as well as the City of Galax.

CONTACT

New River Trail State Park

Phone: (276) 699-6778

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/new.shtml



BICYCLE CLUBS IN BLUE RIDGE HIGHLANDS

Franklin Freewheelers

5067 Franklin Street
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
Web site: <http://www.franklinfreewheelers.org>

New River Valley Bicycle Club

P. O. Box 488
Blacksburg, VA 24063
Phone: (540) 231-8356
Fax: (540) 231-3863
E-mail: clay@BungalowSoftware.com
Web site: <http://www.nrvbike.org>

Virginia Creeper Trail Club

P. O. Box 2382
Abingdon, VA 24212
Phone: (540) 676-0879
E-mail: VirginiaCreeperTrailClub@gmail.com
Web site: <http://www.vacreepertrail.org>





E A S T E R N S H O R E

For true two-wheel escape, it is hard to beat the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The Eastern Shore is sandwiched between the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. You will know you've entered a unique bicycling destination as soon as you cross the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel. Unlike any other part of the Old Dominion, the Eastern Shore is ideal for two-wheelers who prefer level terrain. The Eastern Shore has many back roads running through farmland and small seaside towns, with little traffic. So put that roof rack to good use and get across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel. The Old Dominion's portion of this fabled peninsula is less developed than much of Virginia and for many bicyclists, the friendly people and a simpler way of life is a welcomed escape.

Except for the Chincoteague area, Virginia's Eastern Shore is vastly undiscovered. Thanks to the lack of major crowds, there are few paths worn bare by tourists, and certainly not by bicyclists. One of the

beauties of riding on the Eastern Shore is the variety of tour options. There is a varied selection of routes to choose from including little-traveled country roads, small towns, rural and coastal landscapes and all are relatively flat. Of course, the distances between some towns and the many dead-end roads leading to the water's edge mean that proper planning and a good map are crucial. Because of the Eastern Shore's location, you will likely experience wind during virtually any ride. It is typically not a big problem, but you might check the direction of the wind before choosing a direction of travel. Trees block the wind on many rides, but far-reaching waterfront vistas will leave bicyclists more exposed.



TRAILS





RECOMMENDED RIDES ON THE EASTERN SHORE

Crossing the Waters

The Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel (Route 13) connecting Norfolk and Virginia Beach with Northampton County restricts bicycling. For a description of this crossing, please see the Crossing the Waters section in the Introduction (page 5).

Assateague Island National Seashore



Assateague Island is a barrier island located off the coasts of Maryland and Virginia. It offers sandy beaches, salt marshes, maritime forests, and coastal bays.

There is a paved path that leads bicyclists from Chincoteague to Assateague. There also are loops and trails in the area, offering the opportunity to experience this beautiful part of the Commonwealth by bicycle. There are two entrances to Assateague Island National Seashore. The north entrance is at the end of Route 611, eight miles south of Ocean City, Maryland. The south entrance is at the end of Route 175, two miles from Chincoteague, Virginia.

CONTACT

Assateague Island National Seashore Toms Cove
Phone: (757) 336-6577
Web site: <http://www.nps.gov/asis>

Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge



The Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge is located along the National Seashore and is a great place to get off the already-quiet Eastern Shore roads and into another two-wheel world. The Wildlife Loop Trail is paved and open only to hikers and bicyclists from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. in the spring and summer and from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the fall and winter. The 3.2-mile loop is great early in the morning, when wildlife viewing opportunities are at their peak. The route circles Snow Goose Pond, providing the chance to see herons, egrets, and other wading birds while you ride. Thousands of waterfowl winter here, including snow geese, black ducks, mallards and pin-tails. Be sure to jump off your bike at Marsh Trail and check out the observation tower. The Wilderness Loop makes for an excellent wintertime off-road ride.

The Wildlife Loop leads to the 1.5-mile Swan Cove Bike Trail, where wildlife sightings and great beach views await. Similarly, the 1.6-mile



Woodland Trail offers an excellent possibility of seeing the endangered Delmarva Peninsula fox squirrel. Be sure to stop at the trail's observation platform to look for the famed Chincoteague wild ponies. After any ride in Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, a rewarding ocean swim is certainly in order. In the Virginia portion, there are 17 miles of beachfront, which is only accessible by foot from September 1 to March 15. Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge is reached by following Route 13 from Accomack. A right on Route 175 will take you to the refuge. The Swan Cove Bike Trail and other trails can be reached via Beach Road.

CONTACT

Chincoteague Refuge Visitor Center
Phone: (757) 336-6122
Web site: <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/chinco/visitorcenter.html>

Bayside Road



Bayside Road runs parallel to Route 13 on the west side of Lankford Highway while Seaside Road runs roughly parallel on the east side of the highway. Taken together, these roads make for an excellent "Eastern Shore Century" ride. Bayside Road is the area's oldest road and connects isolated towns along the Chesapeake Bay and inland. This ride adds up to more than 100 miles even before you consider all the interesting dead-ends that run down each of the many "necks" jutting out into the bay.

CONTACT

Eastern Shore Visitor's Center
Phone: (757) 787-2460



Seaside Road



Bicyclists can travel nearly the entire length of Virginia's stretch of shoreline, which is approximately 75 miles long, without ever having to pedal on Route 13 or Lankford Highway. You can avoid this busy road by staying on the seldom traveled and diverse back roads on either side of the highway. Once an old stagecoach route, the Seaside Road (Routes 600 and 679, which are connected by Route 605) parallels Route 13 on the eastern side of the peninsula, connecting small towns and villages along the way. The ride offers views of marshes, back bays, and barrier islands. As noted above, this route makes for a great Eastern Shore century. After crossing the CBBT, Route 600 is to the east of Route 13 and runs parallel with it to provide many starting points.

CONTACT

Eastern Shore Visitor's Center
Phone: (757) 787-2460

Tangier Island



Although not physically connected to the Eastern Shore peninsula (it is part of Accomack County), Tangier Island shares the Chesapeake Bay with the region, its people, and visiting bikers. From May through October, bikers can take the daily ferry from Onancock to Tangier Island for a day or more of biking, which, along with walking, is the best way to get around the island. A seafood meal or even spending the night is an option before heading back by ferry.



CONTACT

Eastern Shore Visitor's Center
Phone: (757) 787-2460

Town of Cape Charles



With great bed-and-breakfasts, dining opportunities, and a beach, Cape Charles is a superb base for bicycle trips to the Eastern Shore. Route 184 leads out of town and to some great southern Eastern Shore bicycling along Routes 642, 600 (Seaside Road), and others.

CONTACT

Eastern Shore Visitor's Center
Phone: (757) 787-2460

Town of Chincoteague



Along with being a great base for exploring Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, the quaint town of Chincoteague also is wonderful for road rides around town and back on the mainland. The bridge to and from the mainland on Route 175 is not recommended for bicycling. In town, Ridge Road and North Main Street make for a fun bicycle loop. The town also is home to the region's only bike shops, featuring rentals, minor repairs, and major insight into area rides. Note that the bike shops are seasonal, so check to make sure they're open before you visit.

CONTACT

Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce
Phone: (757) 336-6161

Town of Onancock



The Town of Onancock is located on Onancock Creek and is another ideal base for day trips, with places to eat, sleep, and bike. The back roads leading out of town are almost endless, and offer nice rides up to Deep Creek and Chesconnessex. There are more back-road rides to the east of Route 13, around Daughtery. There also is a great 32-mile loop ride





mostly on Routes 605 and 718 encompassing Onancock, Accomac, Locustville, Wachapreague, and Pungoteague. The Town of Onancock also provides access to the Seaside and Bayside Road rides and also to the Tangier Island ferry.

CONTACT

Eastern Shore Visitor's Center
Phone: (757) 787-2460

Town of Quinby



Reached by a bridge over the Machipongo River, the town of Quinby is an excellent home base for rides north or south along the water on Route 605. Take Bradford's Neck Road on the ride up to the quaint waterfront town of Wachapreague or head south on Upshurs Neck Road.

CONTACT

Eastern Shore Visitor's Center
Phone: (757) 787-2460

Town of Wachapreague



Known as the "Little City by the Sea," Wachapreague is another great waterfront base for bicycling on the Eastern Shore. It has destinations for accommodations and dining. Be sure to stop by the waterfront laboratory of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) for a look at the future of Virginia seafood.

CONTACT

Virginia Institute of Marine Science
Phone: (804) 684-7000

Virginia Route 695



Riding on Virginia Route 695 is a classic one-way or round-trip "shore-to-shore" ride. The route is around 25-30 miles one-way, depending on diversions. It runs from Saxis through Temperanceville (Route 13) and ends south of Atlantic Road. It features little traffic and lots of quiet country scenery. It also intersects Atlantic Road (Route 679), which is a super ride in the northern region of the Eastern Shore.

CONTACT

Eastern Shore Visitor's Center
Phone: (757) 787-2460



TRAILS





STATE PARKS ON THE EASTERN SHORE

Kiptopeke State Park



Located near the southern end of the Eastern Shore, Kiptopeke State Park in Northampton County offers short road riding possibilities. It also serves as a base for out-and-back rides over to the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge, Seaside Road (Route 600), and



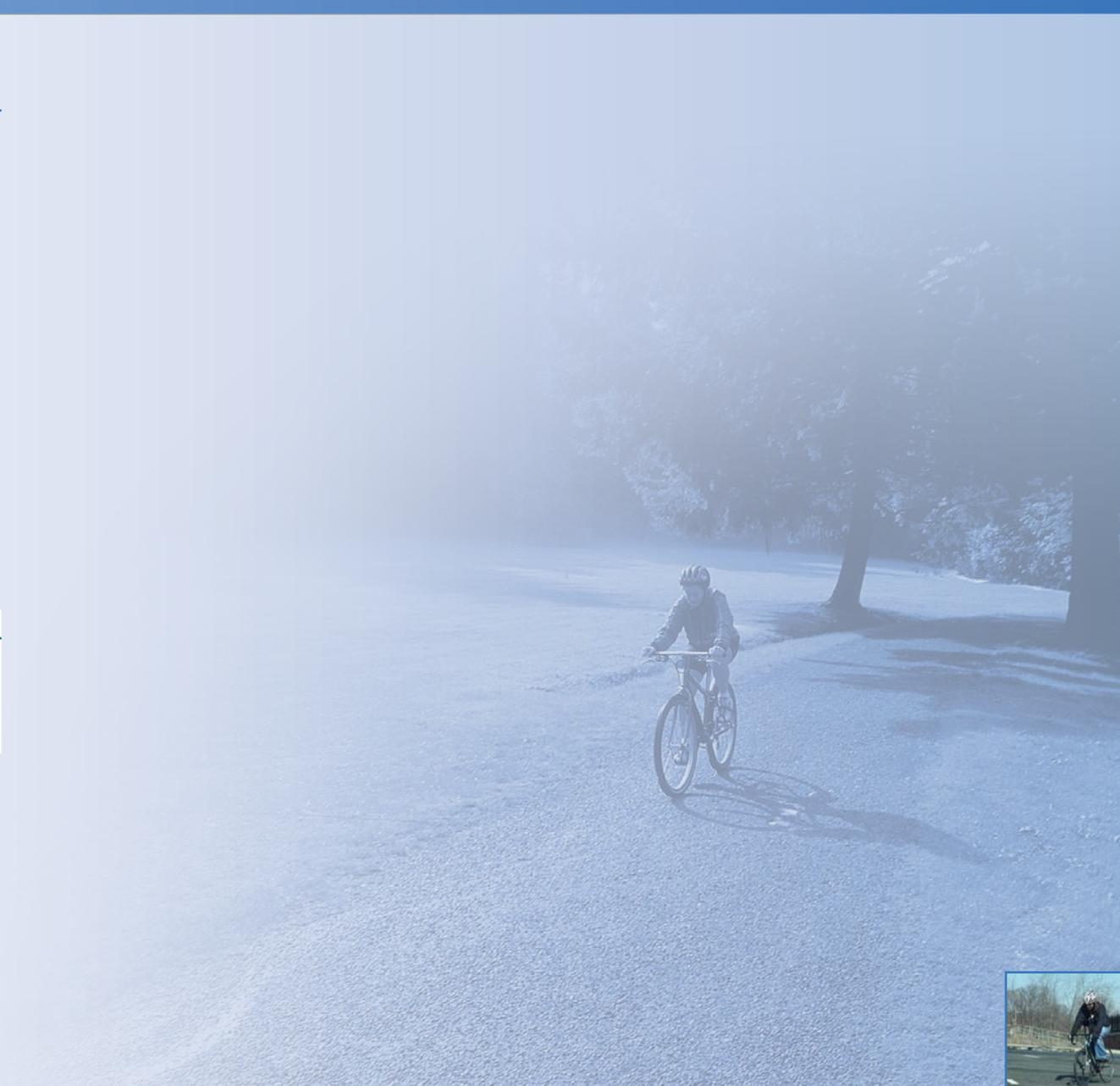
endless lightly traveled roads. The park offers recreational access to the Chesapeake Bay along with opportunities to explore a unique habitat for migratory birds and animals and a coastal dune environment. Two miles of paved trail are open to bicyclists. To reach the park, travel three miles north of the CBBT on Route 13, then west on Route 704 to the park entrance.

CONTACT

Kiptopeke State Park

Phone: (757) 331-2267

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/kip.shtml





HEART OF APPALACHIA

The Jefferson National Forest, Burke’s Garden, and the Heart of Appalachia Bike Route are just a few of the many opportunities to explore in the Heart of Appalachia region, Virginia’s westernmost tip. The Jefferson National Forest provides hundreds of miles of fire roads and single-track bicycle trails. For family-oriented riding, there are miles of non-technical rail-trails that pass over narrow gauge trestles and through serpentine tunnels. The on-road TransAmerica Trail passes through southwest Virginia and into Kentucky at Breaks Canyon, the deepest gorge east of the Mississippi River.

The area’s premier bicycling event, the Burke’s Garden Century, provides riders a taste of true mountain scenery without peddling up steep mountain roads. The Heart of Appalachia Bike Route offers 128 miles of scenic bicycling adventure between the six-mile Guest River Trail near the Kentucky border and Burke’s Garden, a geological wonder cloistered between Rich and Brushy Mountains, just south of Bluefield, West Virginia.

The Heart of Appalachia region’s landscapes are rugged and beautiful. The region also offers rich cultural diversity, from the Cherokees to coal miners to bluegrass and other traditional music. The latter is celebrated with the newly mapped The Crooked Road: Virginia’s Heritage Music Trail, which takes you through some of the area’s many mountain-music venues. There’s no better way to experience the Heart of Appalachia region’s scenery, natural beauty, and culture and to get to know its people than by bicycle.



TRAILS





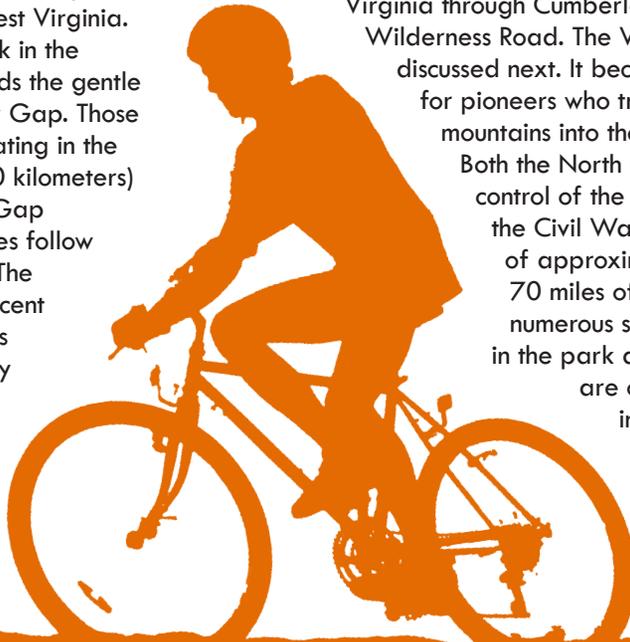
RECOMMENDED RIDES IN HEART OF APPALACHIA

Burke's Garden



Located at the easternmost edge of the Heart of Appalachia region on the border of Tazewell and Bland Counties, Burke's Garden is the highest valley in Virginia at 3,100 feet. The valley itself is exceeded in beauty only by the 4,500-foot-high ring of mountains that surrounds it. Fewer than 300 people currently live in this 45-square-mile perch that is home to approximately 20 miles of paved roads that can be enjoyed by bicycle.

The Burke's Garden Century, held each August, first came about by accident. In August of 1997, Tim Myers led a ride out of the town of Narrows into Burke's Garden and back; ever since, the number of bikers has grown. The Burke's Garden Century is one of the few relatively flat rides in mountainous southwest Virginia. It starts at Wolfe Creek Park in the town of Narrows and ascends the gentle grade of Route 61 to Rocky Gap. Those riders interested in participating in the "metric century" option (100 kilometers) may join in from the Rocky Gap Elementary School. Both rides follow Route 61 toward Tazewell. The day's only climbing is the ascent of Rich Mountain into Burke's Garden, a unique community in a high-elevation valley. Store stops are located along the route at 20-mile increments, but restrooms are not available at each stop.



The charming old country store in Burke's Garden is in itself worth the effort of the ride.

CONTACT

New River Valley Bicycle Association (NRVBA)
P.O. Box 488, Blacksburg, VA 24063-0488
Beth Lohman
Email: calohman@gmail.com
Web site: <http://www.nrvbike.com>

Cumberland Gap National Park



Located at the westernmost tip of Virginia, this was the first great gateway to the west. Cumberland Gap is a mountain pass that was used by wildlife, Native Indian tribes, and later by settlers moving west. Daniel Boone was hired to blaze a trail beginning in southwest Virginia through Cumberland Gap known as the Wilderness Road. The Wilderness Road Trail is discussed next. It became the route westward for pioneers who traveled west through the mountains into the wilderness of Kentucky. Both the North and the South vied for control of the Cumberland Gap during the Civil War. Today the park consists of approximately 20,000 acres and 70 miles of hiking trails. There are numerous scenic and historic features in the park and ranger-led programs are offered throughout the year, including tours of Gap Cave and the historic Hensley Settlement. The park can be accessed from Virginia by traveling west on Highway 58 to

its intersection with 25E in Tennessee.

CONTACT

Cumberland Gap National Park
Phone: (606) 248-2817
Web site: <http://www.nps.gov/cuga>

Wilderness Road Trail



Located in Lee County, a newly completed 10-mile linear hiking, biking, and equestrian trail bisects Wilderness Road State Park on the Kentucky-Tennessee border near Ewing.

The trail connects the park with the campgrounds at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. Do not miss the Annual Wilderness Road Festival on the second Saturday in October. The park rents bikes between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

CONTACT

Wilderness Road State Park
Phone: (276) 445-3065

Guest River Gorge Trail



The Guest River Gorge Trail is a picturesque 5.8-mile rail-trail following an old Norfolk Southern railroad route.

Dedicated in 1994 after the railroad had abandoned the rail bed and donated the land to the Forest Service, the trail passes through Swede Tunnel, built in 1922, over a number of trestles, past waterfalls and rock outcroppings, and through hardwood forests. This portion of the Guest River is designated a State Scenic River. Millions of years ago the Guest River eroded a passage through Stone Mountain on its way to join the Clinch River.



THE VIRGINIA BICYCLING GUIDE HEART OF APPALACHIA

Cutting through massive rock, it opened a deep corridor that is a scenic wonder today. Hikers, bicyclists, anglers, canoeists, and kayakers can enjoy the scenery and interesting geology of the gorge. The first 1.5 miles of the trail are hard-packed gravel, while the remaining miles are original gravel ballast. The trailhead features paved parking and restrooms. The trail is located in the Jefferson National Forest near Coeburn, Virginia and is linked to the Sugar Hill Loop Trail (to the right).

CONTACT

Clinch Ranger District
Phone: (540) 328-2931

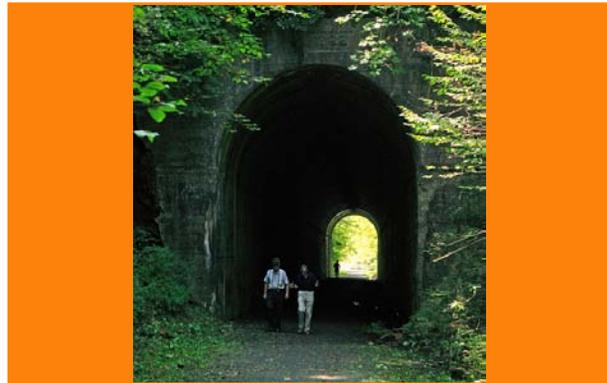
Heart of Appalachia Bike Route



Begun as an assortment of loops and out-and-back routes through Tazewell, Russell, and Wise Counties, the Heart of Appalachia Bike Route offers 128 miles of scenic bicycling adventure and is the only official state bicycle route in Virginia. The primary route lies between the six-mile Guest River Trail near the Kentucky border and Burke's Garden, a geological wonder cloistered between Rich and Brushy Mountains, just south of Bluefield, West



TRAILS



Virginia. It includes five side trails recommended for touring or mountain bikes that will deliver you deep into the natural splendor of the region. The route provides a variety of terrain and surfaces, including paved and gravel roads, rail-trails, single-track side trips, and considerable on-road portions. Since the ride uses both paved and unpaved secondary roads, experienced riders say that knobby tires on a road bike or hybrid tires on a mountain bike are the way to go. The route is signed throughout its length, with maps available.

CONTACT

Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority
Phone: (276) 762-0011
Web site: <http://www.heartofappalachia.com>

Oxbow Lake and Sugar Hill Loop Trails



Located 25 miles northwest of Abingdon where Russell County and Wise County meet, the town of Saint Paul is home to the Oxbow Lake Trail and the Sugar Hill Loop Trail. The Oxbow Lake Trail is a paved and wheelchair-accessible one-mile loop in Oxbow Lake Park, a city-owned park adjacent to the Clinch River. The trail is a

popular destination for many of Saint Paul's residents. Restroom facilities are located at the parking area. To access the trail, follow Route 63 out of the Town of Saint Paul. Turn left at the intersection of Route 63 and US 58 ALT West for 0.1 miles and turn right into the parking area for Oxbow Lake Park.

The Sugar Hill Loop Trail offers eight miles of historic nature walks and excellent biking opportunities. The trail provides great views of the beautiful Clinch River from atop Sugar Hill, the large ridge north of Oxbow Lake Park with an elevation of around 1,454 feet. The trail offers beginning to intermediate bikers an opportunity to ride along the Clinch River on a flat and comfortable surface, but be warned that as you continue you will encounter steep hills and hairpin turns as you head back to the river. The trail traverses dense hardwood forests that are home to breeding songbirds including red-eyed vireo, wood thrush, yellow-billed cuckoo, and some warblers, as well as other wildlife. The trailhead is just west of the Oxbow Lake Trail. Parking is available in a shared parking lot at the Oxbow Lake Park or at the west end of the lake.

CONTACT

Oxbow Lake Park
Phone: (276) 762-5297

Sugar Hill Loop
Phone: (276) 762-5297
Web site: <http://sugarhillclinch.com/>



STATE PARKS IN HEART OF APPALACHIA REGION

Breaks Interstate Park



One of only two interstate parks in the nation, Breaks Interstate Park is located on the Kentucky-Virginia border in Dickenson County. The park features the deepest gorge east of the Mississippi River. Breaks Canyon is five miles long, 1,600 feet deep, and 250 million years old. Sometimes called the “Grand Canyon of the South,” this gorge was carved by the Russell Fork River, a tributary of the Big Sandy River. The biking is a gentle, but spectacular 3.5-mile loop. The park also is where after 500 miles in Virginia, the TransAmerica Bike Trail enters Kentucky and continues west. The park is located on Route 80 at the Virginia/Kentucky state line.

CONTACT

Breaks Interstate Park
Phone: (276) 865-4413

Natural Tunnel State Park



Natural Tunnel State Park has been attracting sightseers to the mountains of southwestern Virginia for more than 100 years. The walls of the tunnel show evidence of prehistoric life. Keep an eye out for fossils on the walls or in the creek bed. Most trails are open to mountain bikes, with bike rentals available at the campground host campsite. Natural Tunnel State Park is in Scott County, approximately 13 miles north of Gate City and 20 miles north of Kingsport, Tennessee.

CONTACT

Natural Tunnel State Park
Phone: (276) 940-2674
Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/nat.shtml

Wilderness Road State Park



Wilderness Road State Park 10 miles of trails and direct access to the Wilderness Road Trail for another 10 miles. Retrace history on the Indian Ridge Trail, a self-guided heritage trail. The park is located 5 miles west of Ewing at the intersection of Routes 58 and 923 in Lee County.

CONTACT

Wilderness Road State Park
Phone: (276) 445-3065
Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/wil.shtml



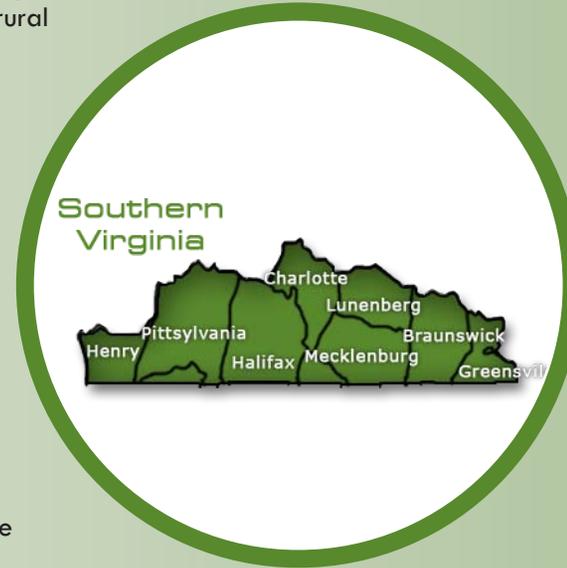


S O U T H E R N V I R G I N I A

Southern Virginia has a great deal to offer bicyclists looking for adventure. The region includes classic country roads, beautiful scenic byways, and U.S. Bike Route 1. As the heart of Virginia's historic tobacco growing region, Southern Virginia is home to the future Tobacco Heritage Trail, which will eventually link Brunswick, Charlotte, Halifax, Lunenburg, and Mecklenburg Counties with 174 miles of transportation and recreation corridors using abandoned rail beds, bridges, rights-of-way, and state roadways. When completed, High Bridge State Park will be an important part of this emerging system, connecting to and extending the Tobacco Heritage Trail and creating an even larger trail network in the Southern Virginia region.

Southern Virginia also offers beautiful rural rides and state parks such as Staunton River State Park and Oconeechee State Park. Riding around

these parks provides the opportunity to experience Virginia's picturesque rural countryside and historic treasures. Southern Virginia also is home to many great bicycling destinations such as the Anglers Ridge Mountain Bike Trail System, the Danville Riverwalk, and the Richmond and Danville Trail. These trails provide opportunities for bicyclists of all skill levels and for road and mountain bikers alike. Add to this charming Main Street communities and Revolutionary War, Civil War, and Civil Rights Heritage and it's easy to see why Southern Virginia is attracting more and more bicyclists.



TRAILS





RECOMMENDED RIDES IN SOUTHERN VIRGINIA

Anglers Ridge Mountain Bike Trail System



Anglers Ridge Mountain Bike Trail System is a 12-mile mountain bike system offering technical challenges on trails such as Hot Tamale, Little Pisgah, and Broken Arrow as well as more moderate trails such as Anglers Ridge, Riverside Drive, and Eagle Scout. The trails are located around Stinson Drive and Riverside Drive in the vicinity of the Danville Riverwalk Trail, which is described below.

CONTACT

Southern Virginia Mountain Bike Association
Web site: <http://www.svmba.org>

Danville's Riverwalk



The Danville Riverwalk Trail is a seven-mile, multipurpose trail along the Dan River in Danville, Virginia. The paved path is designed for use by walkers, bikers, rollerbladers, those with disabilities, and others. The trail can be accessed from Dan Daniel and Anglers Parks, the Carrington Pavilion, Danville's Science Center, historic downtown Danville, and from the restaurants and hotels on Riverside Drive. The Riverwalk also provides access to the Anglers

Ridge Mountain Bike Trail System described above. Parking is available at the Crossing at the Dan River, Dan Daniel Park, and Anglers Park.

CONTACT

Danville Parks, Recreation Welcome Center
Phone: (434) 793-4636
E-mail: parksrec@ci.danville.va.us

Richmond and Danville Trail



The Richmond and Danville Trail is a 5.5-mile trail along an abandoned railroad corridor that was part of the Norfolk Southern railway system. The trail travels through farmlands, woods, and picturesque Virginia countryside. The trail is relatively flat with a crushed stone surface and is comfortable for most riders. To reach the trail, take Route 58 for around 2.5 miles and then turn north on Route 62 and then follow Route 62 (Ringgold Depot Road) for 3 miles. The western trailhead is on the south side of the road. To reach the eastern trailhead, go east on Route 58 for around 3.75 more miles and then turn north on Hackberry Road. Follow this road for 3.25 miles. The trailhead is on the west side of Hackberry Road near the intersection of Kerns Mill Road.

CONTACT

Dan River Trail Association
Phone: (804) 822-5725
Website: <http://www.danrta.homestead.com>

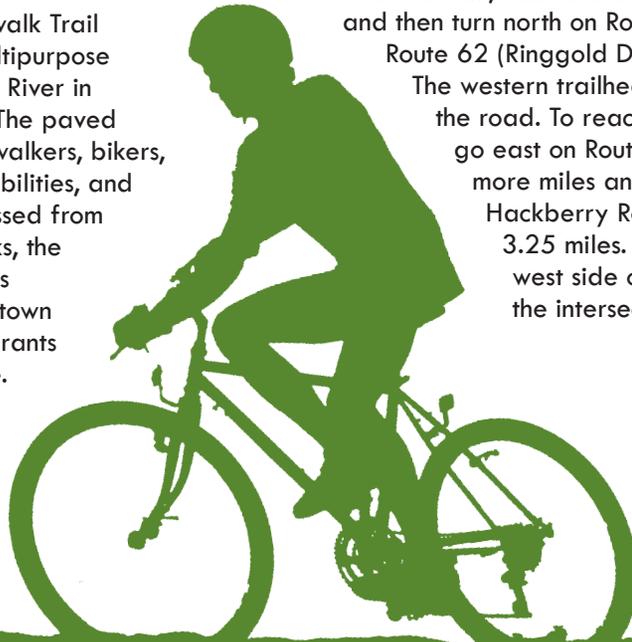
Tobacco Heritage Trail



The Tobacco Heritage Trail is an ambitious and exciting project that will eventually link Brunswick, Charlotte, Halifax, Lunenburg, and Mecklenburg Counties with 174 miles of transportation and recreation corridors. The 70-mile phase from Lawrenceville to Clarksville is under active development. Right-of-way has been acquired and the first five-mile segment from Brodnax to LaCrosse is open. Using abandoned rail beds, bridges, rights-of-way, and state roadways, the planned system will provide a network to boost transportation, tourism, and economic development in rural, historic Southern Virginia. The first section of the Tobacco Heritage Trail was officially opened in September 2005.

CONTACT

Tobacco Heritage Trail
Web site: <http://www.tobaccoheritagetrail.org>





STATE PARKS IN SOUTHERN VIRGINIA

High Bridge State Park



When completed, High Bridge State Park will be a rail-to-trail park connecting the towns of Pamplin and Burkeville and running through the communities of Prospect and Farmville in Cumberland, Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties. The property for the park has been acquired and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation anticipates significant amounts of trail completion in the coming year. The trail is planned to cover a 33.5-mile stretch that roughly parallels U.S. Route 460. The highlight of the trail is a bridge positioned 160 feet above the Appomattox River, from which visitors will experience an expansive view of land where Union and Confederate soldiers fought during the Civil War.

CONTACT

High Bridge State Park

Phone: (434) 315-0457

Web site: www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/hig.shtml

Occoneechee State Park



South of Staunton River Park on Virginia's largest lake, Buggs Island Lake, also known as John H. Kerr Reservoir, is Occoneechee

State Park. The park features 18.1 miles of trails that allow visitors to experience the history of the Occoneechee Indians and plantation life in the 1800s, including terraced gardens at Prestwood Plantation. The park includes a 15-mile multipurpose linear trail for hiking, biking, and horseback riding.

CONTACT

Occoneechee State Park

Phone: (434) 374-2210

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/occ.shtml

Staunton River Battlefield State Park



Staunton River Battlefield State Park was the site of a struggle between a group of Confederate soldiers and 5,000 Union Cavalry members. The Confederate

soldiers successfully defended a bridge of strategic importance to General Lee's army. The park includes hiking and biking trails, as well as self-guided historic and nature trails. It is located 18 miles northeast of South Boston. To reach the park, take Route 92 to Clover, go approximately five miles to Route 600, turn left, go approximately three miles, and turn right on Route 855.

CONTACT

Staunton River Battlefield State Park

Phone: (434) 454-4312

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/stb.shtml

Staunton River State Park



Staunton River State Park is nestled along the shores of Buggs Island in Mecklenberg and Halifax Counties. It includes acres of woods and broad meadows, and 10 miles of natural-surface mountain bike trails. Six hiking trails follow the shores of the Staunton and Dan Rivers, in addition to Buggs Island Lake. Experience the conditions that Revolutionary and Civil War generals and soldiers camped in, as some areas of the park are little changed. The park is located 18 miles southeast of South Boston. Take Route 360, then go south on Route 344 for 10 miles.

CONTACT

Staunton River State Park

Phone: (434) 572-4623

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/sta.shtml





BICYCLE CLUBS IN SOUTHERN VIRGINIA

Emporia Bicycle Club

P. O. Box 668
Emporia, VA 23847
Phone: (800) 449-BIKE
E-mail: rcw@telpage.net

Southern Virginia Mountain Bike Association

E-mail: symbainfo@comcast.net
Web site: <http://www.svmba.org>

Cyclists of Danville

E-mail: wwj@toast.net
Web site: <http://www.cyclists-of-danville.com>





S H E N A N D O A H V A L L E Y

“Here I am, in the centre of the magnificent valley of the Shenandoah, the great valley of Virginia. And a glorious valley it is—equal to the Promised Land for fertility, far superior to it for beauty and inhabited by an infinitely superior people.” Washington Irving’s words on the beauty of the Shenandoah Valley Region are no less accurate today than they were in 1853. The Blue Ridge Mountains to the east and the Alleghenies to the west frame an expanse of land that includes vistas, history, and country charm. Its back roads create a marvelous destination for road bicyclists, while the surrounding George Washington and Jefferson National Forest provides infinite possibilities for mountain bikers.

While the Shenandoah Valley’s first known European explorer, John Lederer, arrived around 1720 from the early colonial settlements along the coast of Virginia, it was not until several years later that German and Scotch-Irish settlers began to funnel into the Valley from Pennsylvania via the Valley Road, which is now known as Route 11. In those days, it was merely a trail used by

Native American hunting parties. As time went on, it became the main thoroughfare for pioneers on their way west and so stagecoach stops became the turnpike towns of Mount Sidney, Mount Crawford, Mount Jackson, Woodstock, and Edinburg. As you pedal around the Shenandoah Valley Region, you will marvel at the beautiful examples of 18th-century architecture that still remain.

The Shenandoah Valley’s earliest resources were high-grade iron ore and the fertile fields that Washington Irving described. These resources, as well as its strategic location near the Union capital in Washington, D.C. and the Confederate capital in Richmond, made the area hotly contested during the Civil War. While the most visible battlefield lies in the Northern Valley at New Market, there is an interest

to conserve the numerous other battlefields that dot the Valley. Civil War historians can readily identify the various locations through which General Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson dodged and weaved during his Valley Campaign in the spring of 1862.

The Shenandoah Valley Region is a bicyclist’s paradise. On most days, you are not likely to see many two-wheelers along the narrow country roads and mountain bike trails in the Shenandoah Valley Region. Despite its impressive features, it is still easy to lose yourself in the rhythm of your pedaling and the beautiful valley scenery as you roll across its hills, creeks, and valleys.



TRAILS





RECOMMENDED RIDES IN SHENANDOAH VALLEY

Barbour's Creek



North of Roanoke, Barbour's Creek has long been the venue for a regional championship mountain bike race.

An 18-mile loop starts from the Pines

Campground in the Eastern Divide Ranger District of the Thomas Jefferson National Forest.

CONTACT

Thomas Jefferson National Forest

Phone: (540) 552-4641

Big Levels



While the sport of mountain biking has not been around the Valley for that long, rides at Big Levels in the Glenwood-Pedlar Ranger District (a wildlife

management area south of Waynesboro) have quickly become classics and they serve as rights of passage for competitive mountain bikers. Big Levels, following the western edge of the Blue Ridge near Sherando Lake Recreation Area, lives up to its name. Riders eager to test their aerobic and technical skills will take Mills Creek Trail as it climbs the mountain via a series of switchbacks. This section of the 21-mile loop gains 1,000 feet in elevation over 1.5 miles before reaching the Bald Mountain Primitive Road. There are several ways to get back down to Big Levels, but you cannot beat the single-track descent via Slacks and White Rock Gap Trails, which will take you back to Sherando Lake. Not only are the trails sublime, but you will have the opportunity to cool off with a dip in the lake after your ride. To reach Big Levels take the Waynesboro/Lyndhurst exit off Interstate 64 on the western side of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Head south on Route 664 toward Sherando Lake and turn right onto Forest Development Road 42, also known as the Coal Road. Less than a mile down this gravel road, you will find a small parking area on the left side of the road, which marks the start of the Orebank Creek Road. There are no signs to hint at the great mountain biking that awaits you.

CONTACT

Glenwood-Pedlar Ranger District

Phone: (540) 291-2188

Blueberry Trail



Located west of Harrisonburg, the home of James Madison University, in the Dry River Ranger District of the George

Washington National Forest, the four-mile

ride on the Blueberry Trail is short and sweet. Rising gradually from Forest Development Road (FDR) 225 just down the road from the Union Springs Dam, the trail is mildly technical as it climbs steadily toward Mud Pond Gap. There are few names that are as accurate as Mud Pond, although it still makes a nice spot to take a break after the 540-foot climb. The downhill is a roller coaster ride that, like most downhill, is over before you are ready. Given the short length and moderate aerobic challenge, many riders will want to take another go-round. Like the wild blueberries that grow along the uphill stretch, this is one sweet ride. From Harrisonburg, head south on Route 42 toward Dayton. After passing the traffic light at Dayton, turn right onto Route 257. Continue straight at Ottobine onto Route 742 and then veer left onto Route 933. You'll pass the Union Springs Dam on the left before the gravel road becomes FDR 225. Continuing for several miles, you'll start the ride where FDR 225 crests and there's a gated road on the left.

CONTACT

North River Ranger District

Phone: (540) 432-0187





Carvins Cove Natural Reserve



At 12,700 acres, Carvins Cove Natural Reserve, located in the City of Roanoke, is the second largest municipal park in the country. In addition to being a major water source, it has abundant recreation opportunities. The Appalachian Trail follows one of Carvins Cove's northwest ridgelines. Hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrian trail riders are welcome. There is a diverse blend of trails in the reserve ranging from very technical rides to more family oriented rides. Trails are maintained by various mountain bikers, equestrians, and hikers. Expect to see deer, wild turkeys, black bears, and rattlesnakes.

CONTACT

City of Roanoke Parks and Recreation Department
Phone: (540) 853-2236

Trails at Carvins Cove



The Carvins Cove trails are great examples of how popular mountain biking has become in Virginia. They have only recently been opened to the public thanks to the tireless efforts of local riders. From the boat dock at the end of Reservoir Road, a trail winds north along the eastern shore of the reservoir, eventually crossing the Angell and Sawmill Branches and ending at Carvins Cove Road. This five-mile dirt route is a lovely family excursion or a good limbering-up on your way to the single-track sections.



Twenty-five miles of technical single-track trail now exist within the Carvins Cove area. The Gauntlet, popular among experienced riders, includes a 1,500-foot drop on a slim single-track trail. Recently, two archaeological expeditions have uncovered ancient paths now known as the Stickman and Clown Head trails. These "new" trails, in addition to the established Trough and Gauntlet routes, make for many days of exploration. Most of the Cove is well mapped. Maps are available at the Roanoke Valley Convention and Visitors Center.

CONTACT

City of Roanoke Parks and Recreation Department
Phone: (540) 853-2236

Duncan Hollow



The 17-mile loop at Duncan Hollow follows along Massanutten Mountain. Located in the Harrisonburg area, the route offers an excellent opportunity to warm up on gravel forest roads before climbing around 1,250 feet via the Duncan Hollow Trail to Scothorn Gap.

CONTACT

Lee Ranger District
Phone: (540) 984-4101

Elizabeth Furnace



The trail begins at George Washington National Forest located eight miles west of Front Royal. With an elevation of 2,106 feet, Signal Knob was a strategic lookout for Confederate troops at the northern end of the Shenandoah Valley. The furnace here was one of many that turned iron ore into more usable pig iron that was used for armaments during the Civil War. This 11.5-mile loop offers its fair share of up hills and down hills on gravel forest service roads and well-maintained single-track trails.

CONTACT

Lee Ranger District
Phone: (540) 984-4101





Goshen Gallop



The Goshen Gallop ride offers the opportunity to pedal for 35 miles northwest of Lexington on Route 39 with the spectacular Goshen Pass as your turnaround point. The pass is a great place to stop for a picnic, fishing, or to marvel at the Maury River as it carves its way through solid rock.

CONTACT

Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Club

Web site: <http://www.svbikeclub.org>

Great Lakes Loop



You'll pass Elkhorn Lake, Todd Lake, and the Staunton Dam on this 14-mile ride that includes one- to four-mile ascents and descents on gravel roads in the George Washington National Forest. These offer great opportunities to park the bike and catch a few trout or have a picnic lunch. This area is west of Staunton and provides numerous spots for mountain bike campers to pitch a tent or just sleep under the stars.

CONTACT

North River Ranger District

Phone: (540) 432-0187

Gypsy Hill Park



Gypsy Hill Park is a 214-acre, multiuse recreational facility located in the town of Staunton. The park has numerous recreational amenities, including a 1.3-mile circular roadway called Constitution Drive, which runs through the center of the park and is a designated play street, suitable for walkers, bicyclists, and rollerbladers.

CONTACT

Gypsy Hill Park

Phone: (540) 332-3945

Hanging Rock Battlefield Trail



Spearheaded by the Hanging Rock Battlefield and Railway Preservation Foundation, the Hanging Rock Battlefield Trail opened in 1999. The trail follows the route of an abandoned railroad that was donated by the Norfolk and Southern Railroad Company. The trail stretches from a trailhead on Kessler Mill Road in Salem to the Hanging Rock area. It is located in proximity to where Confederate forces caught and defeated the rearguard of a retreating federal force during the Civil War. The trail has a cinder surface and is around two miles long.

CONTACT

Roanoke County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Department

Phone: (540) 387-6078

City of Salem Parks and Recreation Department

Phone: (540) 375-3057

Jackson River Scenic Trail



The Jackson River Trail is a 17-mile trail in Alleghany County, Virginia. The trail runs from Covington to the Coles Point Recreation Area at Lake Moomaw.

Developed along an old railroad bed, the trail provides access to many natural, historic, and scenic resources. The Jackson River runs along the trail and provides a natural habitat for reproducing wild trout.

CONTACT

Alleghany County Parks and Recreation Department

Phone: (540) 863-6622

Lake to Lake



Whether your favorite part of mountain biking is the up hills or down hills, you are bound to enjoy this 17-mile point-to-point ride. If you continue past this ride in the westernmost part of Rockingham County, you will find yourself in West Virginia. Starting from Switzer Lake at the foot of High Knob (4,100 feet) just off Route 33, you will climb vigorously for the first 10 miles or so, level off for a short stretch, and then descend via the Hone Quarry Ridge Trail leading to the Hone Quarry Recreation Area. Pack your camping gear and do this ride as an overnighter with a return back to Switzer Lake the next day or arrange to have a second vehicle parked at Hone Quarry. Those in top physical shape can do a 34-mile out-and-back in one day. Like other lakes in Virginia's national forest, Lake Switzer and Hone Quarry offer outstanding



TRAILS





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trout fishing in addition to beautiful scenery from their location at the base of the Shenandoah Mountains.

Lick Run Greenway



The Lick Run Greenway covers much of the city of Roanoke, from Brown-Robertson and Booker T. Washington parks to Hotel Roanoke, the civic center, and downtown.

The greenway begins at the Route 581 overpass near Valley View Mall and travels down to Lick Run Creek. Once downtown, users will be able to get on the Mill Mountain Greenway in Elmwood Park and go to Mill Mountain and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The greenway is a paved surface trail and is around 1.2 miles in length.

CONTACT

Roanoke County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Department

Phone: (540) 387-6078

Website: <http://www.greenways.org>

Little Bald Knob



This 17.4-mile loop traverses fire roads and single-track trails in the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests west of Staunton. Downhillers will revel in the tortuous three-mile descent which drops some 2,000 feet in elevation before reaching the North River.



CONTACT

North River Ranger District

Phone: (540) 432-0187

Long Way to Reddish Knob



Reddish Knob's 4,397-foot elevation is a beacon for those wishing to take in the awesome panoramas across Rockingham County, as well as numerous road

bicyclists who make the climb up Route 924 west of Harrisonburg. It is a popular ride for both road and mountain bikers alike. The six-mile ascent from the West Virginia side of the Shenandoah Mountains on this 26-mile loop is a good introduction to the long climbs that are typical of Virginia's national forest. The trail terrain is almost entirely comprised of hard-dirt and gravel packed forest roads, making it a popular choice for both road and mountain bikers.

You'll have long forgotten the sweat and exertion that this ride demands as you careen back to the start on a 7.5-mile downhill.

CONTACT

North River Ranger District

Phone: (540) 432-0187

Luray-Hawksbill Greenway



The Luray-Hawksbill Greenway in Luray provides great opportunities for wildlife watching in an urban setting. Hawksbill Creek is accessible from the greenway, which can be followed all the way through

town. The greenway is a four-mile scenic path that offers outdoor recreational activities including walking, biking, Class A trout fishing, and wildlife watching. To reach the greenway from Camp Roosevelt, return to Route 675 and turn left. Follow Route 675 east into Luray to Broad Street. Turn left on Broad Street and proceed 0.2 miles to the parking lot on the left.

CONTACT

Luray-Hawksbill Greenway

Phone: (540) 743-6475





The Mountain Mama Road Bike Challenge



The Mountain Mama Road Bike Challenge features nine mountains and more than 10,000 feet of climbing. The ride offers demanding ascents and exciting descents, as well as rolling valley roads and breathtaking views from the mountains of the Allegheny Highlands. Water and food stops are located approximately every 15-20 miles and SAG support is provided.

CONTACT

Highland County Chamber of Commerce
Phone: (540) 468-2550
Web site: <http://www.highlandcounty.org>

North Mountain Ridge



“North Mountain” is a moniker given by early European settlers to various sections of the Allegheny range that frames the western edge of the Shenandoah Valley, but somehow the Native American “Endless Mountain” seems a better fit. This particular ridgeline is located west of Lexington, following the Rockbridge County line. The ride begins with a five-mile climb on a combination of overgrown fire roads and single-track

trails and ends with a four-mile descent. In between the ascending and descending parts of this 17-mile loop, you will meander across a spectacular stretch of single-track that begs you to stop to admire the awe-inspiring vistas.

CONTACT

James River Ranger District
Phone: (540) 962-2214

North Rockbridge Tour



The 72-mile North Rockbridge Tour begins and ends in the town of Lexington, home to Washington and Lee University and the Virginia Military Institute. It was named to honor Lexington, Massachusetts and the role that it played in the first days of the Revolutionary War. True to its namesake, Lexington also saw its share of action during the Civil War. This ride will take you through agricultural lands that are typical of Rockbridge County, named for the Natural Bridge. This 215-foot limestone arch is one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World. The bridge is the remnant of the ceiling of an old cave. Limestone caves as well as sinkholes are typical of the karst topography in the Shenandoah Valley. Near the southern end of the Shenandoah Valley, you will start out on this ride pedaling north along the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains and return in a southerly direction in the shadow of the Allegheny Mountains. You will coast downhill from McKinley to Rockbridge

Baths, formerly frequented by General Robert E. Lee during his presidency at what was then Washington College (and is now Washington and Lee University). A four-mile side trip will take you to Goshen Pass, where the Maury River has carved its way through the Alleghenies over time. The ride begins and ends at the

Lexington Visitors' Center on Washington Street. To get there, take exit 55 from Interstate 81/64 (Horse Center exit). Turn south on Route 11 to the center of town and stay on Business Route 11. After passing the Virginia Military Institute on your right, turn left on Washington Street. The Visitor's Center will be on your right.

CONTACT

Rockbridge Area Tourism
Phone: (540) 463-3777
Website: <http://www.lexingtonvirginia.com>

Potts Mountain



Near Blacksburg, Potts Mountain provides abundant opportunities for great riding. Extensive trail maintenance by a coalition of local riders, bike shops, and mountain bike clubs keeps these once overused runs in good shape. With the addition of newly developed trails on adjacent Gap Mountain, the area has become something very special. Older trails such as The Beast, Basin, and Horsehair should also be on any bicyclists' checklist.

CONTACT

Blacksburg Ranger District
Phone: (540) 552-4641

Roanoke River Greenway



The Roanoke River Greenway has been a popular route for bicyclists in the region for a long time and provides a link between Wasena, Smith, River's Edge, and Piedmont parks. Users can enter the greenway from Elm Avenue and Franklin Road, which provides a good alternate route to heavily traveled roads in the vicinity. Future plans include using the Roanoke River Greenway to





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link to Salem to the west. The greenway is a paved route around five miles in length (includes on- and off-road portions).

CONTACT

Roanoke Valley Greenways

Phone: (540) 387-6060

Email: lbelcher@roanokecountyva.gov

Web site: <http://www.greenways.org>

Springhill Sojourn



Take Route 747 south past Mennonite farms toward the Allegheny Mountains and prepare for some huffing and puffing, as a healthy climb leads into the George

Washington National Forest. Plan to stop at Natural Chimneys to see limestone formations where there were once underground caves. As you pedal your way into the national forest, agricultural fields yield to wooded and rocky crags. The descent through the North River Gorge is as breathtaking as the climb to Todd Lake is challenging. For more information on Natural Chimneys, call (540) 350-2510.

CONTACT

Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition

Web site: <http://www.svbcoalition.org>

Southern Augusta Ambler



The Southern Augusta Ambler is a 52-mile loop beginning in Staunton and fanning out through Augusta County's Middlebrook area, which many believe offers some of the finest bicycling in the Commonwealth.

CONTACT

Augusta County Chamber of Commerce

Phone: (800) 471-3109





STATE PARKS IN SHENANDOAH VALLEY

Douthat State Park



Douthat State Park is set amid some of Virginia's most breathtaking mountain scenery. It boasts 38 miles of mountain bike trails with natural surfaces. Bike rentals are available at the park. The park is located near Clifton Forge. To reach the park, take Exit 27 off Interstate 64 to Route 629, then travel seven miles north.

CONTACT

Douthat State Park

Phone: (540) 862-8100

Web site: http://www.dcr.Virginia.gov/state_parks/dou.shtml





BICYCLE CLUBS IN SHENANDOAH VALLEY

Blue Ridge Bicycle Club

P.O. Box 13383
Roanoke, VA 24033-3383
E-mail: Board@brbcva.org
Web site: <http://www.blueridgebicycleclub.com>

Milepost Zero Bike Club

330 Ellison Lane
Waynesboro, VA 22980
Phone: (540) 942-2054
E-mail: milepostzero2002@yahoo.com
Website: <http://www.milepostzero.homestead.com>

Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Club

P. O. Box 1014
Harrisonburg, VA 22801-1014
Web site: <http://www.svbikeclub.org>

Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition

E-mail: gallery@svbcoalition.org
Web site: <http://www.svbcoalition.org>

Winchester Wheelmen

P. O. Box 1695
Winchester, VA 22604
Phone: (540) 662-1510
E-mail: info@winchesterwheelmen.org
Website: <http://www.winchesterwheelmen.org>

Queen City Cycling Club

121 South Lewis Street
Staunton, VA 24401
Phone: (540) 887-8700
E-mail: info@queencitycyclingclub.com
Web site: <http://www.queencitycyclingclub.com/>





CENTRAL VIRGINIA

Central Virginia is crossed by tumbling rivers, twisty trails, and scenic roads. While there are only two natural lakes in the Old Dominion, there are many spectacular rivers and Central Virginia is home to some of the best. Central Virginia also has some of the most topographical variety in the state, containing parts of three physiographic regions; Blue Ridge, Piedmont, and Coastal Plain. Whether you long to hear the roar of falling waters below Crabtree Falls, absorb the strength of the James River, or explore the ancient majesty of the New River, Virginia offers running creeks and big bends in every style, as well as the roads and trails to bring you along for the ride.

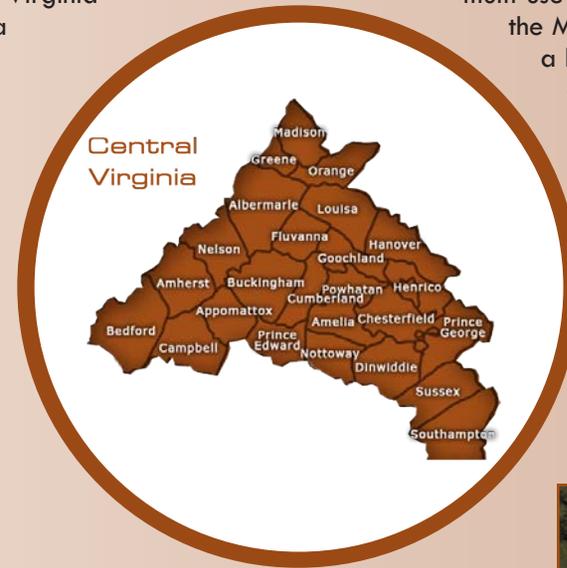
The James River slices across the Blue Ridge Mountains to create the lowest point on the Blue Ridge Parkway; climbing gluttons know it's only uphill from there. The ride south from the James River along the Blue Ridge Parkway climbs nearly 4,000 feet before cresting on Thunder Ridge. From the mountains, the James River winds peacefully out into the piedmont, providing scenic excursions through the nation's early fertile crescent.

Like the James River, the Tye River climbs out of the mountains and then slows to a leisurely pace beyond the Blue Ridge foothills. The ascent up Route 56 past the Tye River and Crabtree Falls was a featured challenge several years ago in the Tour duPont bike race, taking riders through the mountain town of Montebello and the overlook at Spy Rock on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Of course, no trip to Central Virginia would be complete without a dip into the region's great intellectual currents. Thomas Jefferson's mountain-top home, Monticello, overlooks the City of Charlottesville. The University of Virginia, one of Jefferson's great legacies, also awaits visitors in Charlottesville. Both provide insights into Jefferson's architectural and horticultural genius as well as his political thoughts and writings and both are included on the

World Heritage List. Less widely known are the mountain biking opportunities right in Mr. Jefferson's backyard. Mt. Jefferson, dubbed Observatory Hill by locals in honor of the McCormick Observatory and Research Center that sits at the top, holds some of the best urban mountain biking in the nation.

New to Monticello is the Thomas Jefferson Parkway, a spectacular winding gravel and boardwalk multi-use trail through the woods below the Monticello grounds. It provides a lovely excursion into the countryside Jefferson loved so dearly. Road riders visiting Central Virginia will find the Trans-America Bike Route an invitation to explore east of Monticello as it travels along the James Monroe Parkway past Ash Lawn and into the rolling hills toward Richmond.



TRAILS





RECOMMENDED RIDES IN CENTRAL VIRGINIA

“60-Mile Century”



The century, or hundred-mile road ride, is the hallmark of many bicyclists’ calendars. The degree of a ride’s scenic beauty often seems to be in direct proportion to the effort required. This beautiful and scenic ride in Nelson County manages to fit the effort of a century ride into only 60 miles. From Nellysford, Route 151 takes you south past the turn to the Wintergreen Ski Resort and over the climb of Brent Gap. It is as steep and winding as many European alpine roads.

Across the top of Brent Gap, the road curves gently through a beautiful valley to Roseland. The greatest rainfall ever recorded in the western hemisphere deluged this area of Nelson County in 1969 as Hurricane Camille hit the Blue Ridge Mountains. Much of the area flooded, and several roads leading into the valley were never reconstructed. Turning right onto Route 666, you’ll find some fast twists to this well-paved rural road. Route 666 intersects with Route 56. From Route 666 take a right on Route 56 West. Past Crabtree Falls, the town of Montebello is a little more than halfway into the trip, and makes a great place for a snack. But don’t sit too long! It’s still several miles up to the Blue Ridge Parkway. From Route 56 West, turn right and head north on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Head north past Spy Rock overlook and through high elevation meadows and orchards to Reeds Gap overlooking Wintergreen. Then get ready for an extremely steep descent on Route 664. Below Wintergreen the road settles down a little as it parallels Spruce Creek back to Route 151. Locally, it is said that after having surveyed parts of this area, George

Washington told his troops that were they to lose the war the British would never find them in Nelson County. After surviving the 60-mile Century, you will understand why.

CONTACT

Milepost Zero Bike Club
Web site: <http://milepostzero.homestead.com>

Belle Isle

Located just across the James River from downtown Richmond, Belle Isle is the pride of the Richmond park system. A bicycle bridge spans the river to the island that was originally an Indian fishing village and later a Civil War prisoner camp. More recently, this site hosted the mountain bike leg of the Nissan XTERRA race series. Trails designed for the race are open for public riding. There are opportunities for bicycling on a mix of wide and narrow wooded trails throughout the James River Park system, but note that all of the trails are of the off-road variety. While visiting Belle Isle, also take the time to check out Buttermilk Mountain Bike Trail. It’s located in Richmond along the James River between Routes 1 and 161 and has single-track mountain bike trails, great scenery and a convenient location in proximity to Richmond and Belle Island.

CONTACT

James River Park Ranger
Phone: (804) 780-5311

Blackwater Creek Trail



A six-mile National Recreation trail along an abandoned railroad right-of-way in Blackwater Creek Natural Area, this trail passes through natural and historic sites before terminating in downtown Lynchburg.

CONTACT

Lynchburg Parks and Recreation Department
Phone: (434) 455-5858





Delfosse Trail



This challenging 5.5 mile trail was designed for hiking, mountain biking, and occasionally scheduled ATV riding. The trail rolls and twists around the mountain at the Delfosse Winery. The trail is open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to dusk with access through the winery. Enjoy a taste of award winning wine when you have completed the trail.

CONTACT

Nelson County Parks and Recreation by telephone
Phone: (434) 263-7130
E-mail: eharper@nelsoncounty.org
Web site: <http://www.nelsoncounty.com>

James River Heritage Trail



The James River Heritage Trail is one of the best urban trails in Virginia. It combines two smaller trails, the Blackwater Creek Bikeway and Lynchburg's RiverWalk. The trail is more than eight miles long. It's well marked with trail signs and mileage markers and there are many easy connections to other trails along the entire route. It winds through a diverse range of forestland before continuing on to downtown Lynchburg. The Blackwater Creek Bikeway accounts for the first three-mile section of the trail and was the first section of the James River Heritage Trail to be completed. The Blackwater Creek Bikeway eventually becomes the RiverWalk, which

traverses along the edge of downtown Lynchburg.

McIntire Park



McIntire Park is one of the most popular parks in Charlottesville. The park has approximately four miles of bicycle-friendly trails along with great views of the mountains to the east, wooded areas with varied topography and streams. Trails run along the creek and through mature forests and are located behind the picnic shelters, to the north of the baseball fields. There are three parallel trails running north of the descent to the Charlottesville High School Bridge, and one running south to Melbourne Road from the bridge. There are also trails on the east side of the railroad tracks, north of the McIntyre Golf Course. Enter behind the guardrail to the right of the gate leading to the leaf dump on Melbourne Road. The park is located off of the US Route 250 Bypass.

CONTACT

Charlottesville Park and Trail Planner
Phone: (434) 970-3656
E-mail: gensic@charlottesville.org
Web site: <http://www.cambc.org>

Observatory Hill



In the University District of Charlottesville above the University's Hereford College, there are excellent technical single-track trails. The area gets its name from the proximity to the McCormick Observatory on Mount Jefferson. Its wooded location near campus makes it easily accessible for a large number of bicyclists and day hikers. The trail includes steep and challenging single-track around the natural contours of Mount Jefferson. There are approximately seven miles of mostly technical single-track bounded by city and campus roads.

CONTACT

Charlotte Area Mountain Bike Club
Web site: <http://www.cambc.org>





Outdoor Wilderness Leadership School (OWLS.)



Located at the top of Wintergreen Mountain at the Wintergreen Ski Resort in Nelson County, the Outdoor Wilderness Leadership School constructed 22 miles of trails, including the 12-mile downhill course named “Logger’s Alley.” OWLS offers mountain bike rentals and even a shuttle service from the bottom of Logger’s Alley back up to the resort. The annual OWLS Fat Tire Festival is traditionally held on Memorial Day weekend.

CONTACT

Outdoor Wilderness Leadership School
Phone: (866) 535-OWLS
Web site: <http://www.owlsadventures.com>.

Poor Farm Park



Located four miles west of Ashland (which is approximately 20 miles north of Richmond), Poor Farm Park has 205 acres of parkland with nature trails and picnic areas. There are mountain bike trails throughout the park.

CONTACT

Hanover County Parks and Recreation Department Phone: (804) 365-4695.

Saunders-Monticello Trail



The Saunders-Monticello Trail currently stretches two miles along the south side of the Thomas Jefferson Parkway (Route 53) and across Saunders Bridge to the Monticello Shuttle Station. Comprised partly of on-grade sections made of finely crushed, packed stone and partly of raised boardwalk, the trail is open to pedestrians, bicyclists, and to those in wheelchairs. With a maximum grade of five percent, the trail is completely accessible as it climbs steadily from the trailhead parking lot to a point just across the road from the entrance to Monticello.

CONTACT

Monticello
Web site: <http://www.monticello.org/parkway/trail.html>

Trans-America Trail



This cross-country bike route was first established as BikeCentennial in celebration of our nation’s 200th birthday. To honor the rich history of Virginia’s role in the establishment of our nation, the route starts in Yorktown, travels to Richmond, capital of the Confederacy, and from there to Charlottesville, home of Thomas Jefferson. From Charlottesville, the trail climbs Afton Mountain past the home of June Curry, the famous Cookie Lady who has supported bicyclists since 1976, and on to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

CONTACT

Adventure Cycling Association
Phone: (800) 755-2453
Web site: <http://www.adventurecycling.org/transam>

United State Bicycle Routes 1 and 76



Central Virginia is home to sections of the U.S. Bicycle Route system along US Routes 1 and 76, the only place in the nation where the two routes cross. Established officially by the federal government in 1982, the Virginia sections of U.S. Bicycle Routes 76 and 1 cross the Commonwealth from east to west and north to south. For more information, see pages 5 and 26 of this guide.

CONTACT

Adventure Cycling Association
Phone: (800) 755-2453





Virginia Blue Ridge Railway Trail



The first 4.5 miles of the seven-mile gravel surface recreational trail used for biking, hiking, and horseback riding have been completed between Piney River and Rose

Mill. It is a beautiful and easy trail along the Piney River in Nelson County. There are parking lots at both ends of the trail and it is open from sunrise to sunset. At this time there are no restroom facilities. The final 2.5 miles are in the planning stage. The trail provides spectacular scenic views of the Piney and Tye Rivers, as well as an abundance of wildlife, rock formations, and plant life. It provides opportunities for walking, jogging, bicycling, horseback riding, and cross country skiing.



CONTACT

Nelson County Visitor Bureau

Phone: (434) 263-7015

E-mail: info@nelsoncounty.org

Web site: <http://www.nelsoncounty.com>





STATE PARKS IN CENTRAL VIRGINIA

Bear Creek Lake State Park/Cumberland State Forest



Bear Creek Lake State Park is located in the heart of Cumberland State Forest. It has a 40-acre swimming lake with shower facilities that make it a perfect start and finish to a ride. A 14-mile looping trail ventures into Cumberland State Forest and back. Many additional side tracks and out-and-back trails and service roads make for enjoyable exploration. Cumberland State Forest, in the Virginia piedmont, is more rolling and a little more accessible than Bear Creek Lake State Park. To reach the park from Route 60, go north on Route 622, then west on Route 629 in Cumberland County. Note that Virginia State Forests now require a \$15 annual permit for most outdoor activities (including bicycling) for anyone over 15 years of age.

CONTACT

Bear Creek Lake State Park
Phone: (804) 492-4410
Web site: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational_planning/highbridge.shtml

Cumberland State Forest
Phone: (804) 492-4121
Web site: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/bea.shtml.

High Bridge Trail State Park



High Bridge Trail State Park is expected to open in late 2011. Twenty-two miles of the 34-mile rail-to-trail conversion have been built, and upon completion it will link Burkeville in Nottoway County to rural Pamplin City in Appomattox County. Attractions along the trail include the college town of Farmville and the Town of High Bridge, which played a role during the final Confederate retreat to the Appomattox Courthouse. The trail will go through Cumberland, Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties.

CONTACT

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
Phone: (434) 315-0457
Web site: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational_planning/highbridge.shtml

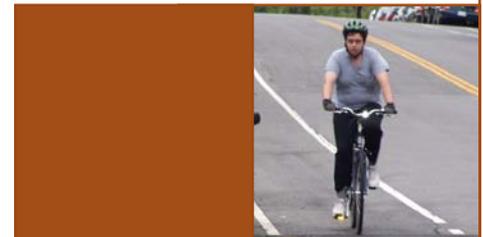
Holliday Lake State Park



Located just minutes from Appomattox National Historical Park on Route 24, Holliday Lake State Park contains a 150-acre lake and plenty of land. Surrounding the lake is a maze of fire roads, power line trails, and single-track trails out of which the 12-mile Carter-Taylor Trail has been carved. A more technical five-mile trail circumnavigates the lake itself. Access the park via Route 24 between Appomattox and Route 60 and from Routes 626, 640, and 692 in Appomattox County.

CONTACT

Holiday Lake State Park
Phone: (434) 248-6308
Web site: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/hol.shtml.





James River State Park



One of Virginia's newest state parks, James River State Park features 1,442 acres of rolling farm meadows, quiet forest, and beautiful mountain vistas. It is nestled in a crook of the James River east of Amherst and north of Appomattox. The James River was used by Indians and early settlers for transportation and commerce; you can



learn about this culture during an annual Batteau Festival which presents a moving recreation of life aboard the flat bottomed boats the settlers used. Join the interpretive guide at James River State Park and learn the background and history of the Cabell family that settled this piece of rich bottomland. You can then explore the old roadbed now known as the Cabell Trail by mountain bike.

Altogether there are 20 miles of multiuse trails within the park and many miles of gravel road looping out and back. The seven miles of pavement into the park from Route 60 include farm pastures and river vistas. This park's three miles of trail along the banks of the James River in Buckingham County make for a picturesque excursion. The facilities are new and thoroughly up-to-date. Bike rentals, primitive camping, and boat landings are also

available. To reach the park from Route 60 West turn right on Route 605 at the James River Bridge. Go seven miles and turn left at Route 606.

CONTACT

James River State Park
Phone: (434) 933-4355
Web site: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational_planning/highbridge.shtml

Pocahontas State Park



Just 20 miles from downtown Richmond in Chesterfield County, Pocahontas State Park offers a five mile bicycle trail and a trail accessible for persons with disabilities. In addition, there are many bicycle trails that wind through the surrounding woodlands. The park also has single-track bicycle trails. The Old Mill Trail is a favorite family ride.



Chester Linear Park is located near Pocahontas State Park, also in Chesterfield County, and includes facilities for pool swimming, boating, and camping. To reach Pocahontas State Park, take Interstate 95 to Route 288 north, then Route 10 east to Route 655.

CONTACT

Pocahontas State Park
Phone: (804) 796-4255
Web site: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/poc.shtml

Twin Lakes State Park



Twin Lakes State Park is located in the heart of Central Virginia in Prince Edward County. This historical park offers a full array of cultural, environmental, and recreational activities. Bicyclists can enjoy a multiuse trail developed in conjunction with Prince Edward State Forest. In 1986, Prince Edward State Park and neighboring Goodwin Lake were merged to form Twin Lakes State Park. An eight-mile trail (not a loop) leads through the Prince Edward-Gallion State Forest, beginning at the Stoney Knoll Forestry Office. The park is located five miles southwest of Burkeville. To reach the park, take Route 360 west to Route 613.

CONTACT

Twin Lakes State Park
Phone: (434) 392-3435
Web site: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/twi.shtml





BICYCLE CLUBS IN CENTRAL VIRGINIA

Charlottesville Area Mountain Bike Club

1581 Thornridge Way
Charlottesville, VA 22911
E-mail: info@cambc.org

Milepost Zero Bike Club

P.O. Box 1693
Waynesboro, VA 22980
Phone: (540) 942-2567
(540) 241-2031
E-mail: milepostzero2002@yahoo.com
Web site: <http://www.milepostzero.homestead.com>

Monticello Velo Club

307 2nd Street, NW
Charlottesville, VA 22902
Phone: (434) 982-3977
E-mail: RS3j@cms.mail.Virginia.edu
Web site: <http://www.bluewheel.com>

Nelson Bicycling Alliance

395 Goodwin Creek Trail
Afton, VA 22920
Phone: (540) 456-6746
E-mail: renders@cfw.com

Richmond Area Bicycling Association

P. O. Box 6565
Ashland, VA 23005
E-mail: sgagnon@dekaresearch.com
Web site: <http://www.raba.org>

Wheel Power Christian Cyclists

P. O. Box 4791
Lynchburg, VA 24502
Phone: (434) 385-5839
E-mail: info@wheelpower.org
Web site: <http://www.wheelpower.org>

