

Obed

Obed Wild and Scenic River
Tennessee



Obed Wild and Scenic River consists of sections of four different streams—Daddys Creek, Clear Creek, Emory River, and the Obed—within the same watershed. Together these waterways have created a rugged landscape of wild land and water found in relatively few places east of the Mississippi River. Cutting deeply into the sandstone of the Cumberland Plateau, the Obed and its tributaries have carved spectacular gorges as much as 150 meters (500 feet) deep. Huge sandstone boulders dot the streams, and overhanging bluffs shelter you as they once protected the ancient peoples who made these narrow river valleys their home.

Because of the variety of environmental conditions, there is a wealth of plant and animal life. The area supports a mixed forest

of pine, hickory, maple, hemlock, rhododendron, mountain laurel, and azalea. Bass, bluegill, and catfish are found in the swift, clear water. More than 100 species of birds make their home in the region. And if you are lucky, you may even see the rare red-cockaded woodpecker. The land itself is a natural habitat for a number of animals—opossum, bobcat, mink, fox, whitetail deer, raccoon. In contrast, few people live here. Most early pioneers found the land inhospitable, difficult to farm, and too far from the centers of commerce. The mainstream of settlement flowed around and beyond this plateau region, leaving it generally untouched and unchanged. Thus there are no large cities or industrial complexes along the streams; no dams or impoundments alter the flow of the free-running streams; few roads lead into the area. The evidence of human beings is meager. A mill

site remains and an occasional homestead can be located, but this area has been changed more by the constant action of wind, water, and other natural forces than by the hand of man.

The Obed Wild and Scenic River, which was added to the National Park System by act of Congress October 12, 1976, is managed by the National Park Service and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. Much of the river system flows through the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area, which is under the jurisdiction of the State of Tennessee. The National Park Service presently owns some tracts of land, but most of the land will continue to be protected through a partnership of the Federal Government, the State of Tennessee, and the private landholders in the vicinity.

Visitor facilities will be limited and somewhat primitive. The hope is to keep these streams and the land alongside them in a relatively unchanged state, while making it possible to reach the streams. Despite this remoteness and the present lack of development, the Obed offers you a multitude of opportunities for enjoyment. If you accept the river and the land on their own terms, they can provide rewarding memories that will last a lifetime.

A Variety of Outdoor Pleasures



At any moment this fisherman's repose may be interrupted by a fish taking the bait.



The park's streams have many beautiful surprises, among them is this waterfall.



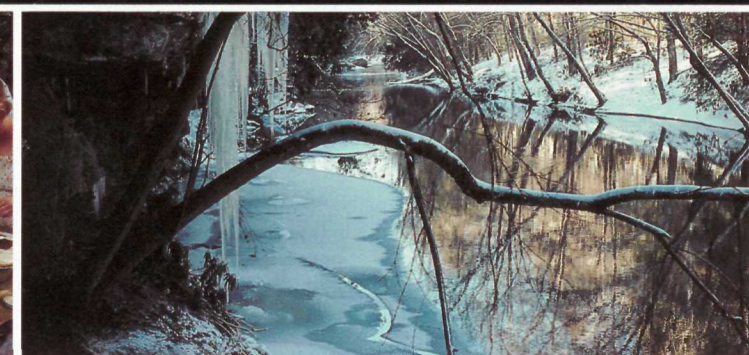
Nothing beats a swim on a hot summer day.



Mistflower is one of many wildflowers native to the countryside.



Picnics, one of summertime's joys, are made even more pleasant by good food and good company.



The ice, snow, and clear, cold water make a magical winter scene, a

reminder that all seasons have something to offer.

Things to Do

Paddling
Canoeing and kayaking bring many people to the Obed. While there are opportunities for casual floating on quiet stretches of water, this is one of the best and most difficult whitewater regions in the eastern United States. Civilization seems a long way off here. It is one of the few remaining places in the country where waters run free and there has been little or no change in the natural sequence of events; that is one of the reasons the area was chosen to be a wild and scenic river. Because the Obed is rough country, any activity must be pursued carefully and in harmony with the land.

The cold rainy season between December and April is usually the only time the rivers are full enough for float trips. At that time, the streams can have nearly continuous rapids and dangerous currents—technical whitewater. Paddling or "running" this kind of water takes training, ex-

perience, and the right equipment. It is important to take certain precautions before making a whitewater trip:

- Always float with at least two other craft.
- Make sure a family member or friend knows where and when you plan to begin your trip and where and when you plan to get off the river.
- Wear adequate clothing of the right type to protect yourself. The water can be extremely cold and therefore extremely hazardous. A wet suit is advisable in the winter or early spring.
- Permission should be obtained from the landowner if you will be using access points that cross private property.
- Know what HYPOTHERMIA is and how to avoid it.
- Be familiar with the International Scale of River Difficulty and recognize your skill level.



- The river level, on all sections, can change rapidly. The risk is too great if you attempt to paddle when the water level is in the trees.
- Know the conditions in the area where you plan to paddle. There are places where it is difficult to get off the river if trouble arises.
- And there are times of the year and certain places where portaging difficult rapids may be necessary.

Ask your local chapter of the American National Red Cross for a copy of *White Water in an Open Canoe*. For *Paddlers' Safety Code and River Rating Guide*, write to the American Whitewater Affiliation, P.O. Box 321, Concord, NH 03301.

Canoe Clubs

For information about canoe clubs in your community and area, write to any of these organizations: American Canoe Association, Box 248, Lorton, VA 22079.

American Whitewater Affiliation, P.O. Box 321, Concord, NH 03301.

Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association, P.O. Box 3104, Nashville, TN 37219.

Swimming

There are a number of traditional swimming holes along the streams, and in warm weather swimming and wading can be refreshing activities at these and other places in the park. However, the river bottoms are uneven with deep holes close to the banks. These, coupled with wet, slippery rocks, can make swimming and diving hazardous. Care in selecting places to swim, knowledge of the water conditions, and never swimming alone can make this a pleasurable and

rewarding time on any of the Obed's streams.

Camping

There are no developed facilities within the boundaries of the Obed Wild and Scenic River, but you may camp at Potters Ford on the Obed River, except when the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area is closed and during the deer and turkey hunting seasons. Primitive facilities are available at Frozen Head State Park, 9 kilometers (6 miles) from Wartburg, near Tenn. 62. Cumberland Mountain State Park, 13 kilometers (8 miles) south of Crossville on U.S. 127, has a developed campground. You will find private campgrounds along I-40 and in the Crossville area. Wherever you travel, carry out your litter and dispose of it properly so that you and others can continue to enjoy the beauty of the Obed and of Tennessee. Picnicking is permitted on public lands.



Hiking

Although there are no developed trails within the Wild and Scenic River, hiking can be fun if you are careful and know what you are doing. Always make sure someone else knows your plans. Know your route, and be wary of the bluffs along the gorge rim. Hiking trails are being planned, but it may be some time before they are available for use. A number of old logging roads in the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area are no longer open to traffic and can now be used for hiking. See note on closures.

Hunting and Fishing

Deer, boar, turkey and small game may be hunted in season with a permit from the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. Firearms are prohibited except during hunting season when you must carry the necessary licenses and permits. A Tennessee fishing license is required to fish in the area. For fishing and hunting information in the Catoosa Wildlife

Management Area, which has different hunting seasons than elsewhere in the state, write to the manager, 216 East Penfield, Crossville, TN 38555.

Regulations and Safety

The Obed is being preserved in ways that let nature continue its work unimpeded. Wind, water, and time have shaped this landscape. The future is dependent on you. Being careful of the land and the water will ensure that the next person may have a similar opportunity.

Non-game animals, plants, and artifacts are protected here. It is illegal to harm or remove them.

Wood ticks are prevalent in warm months, so examine yourself periodically and remove ticks before they attach themselves. Chiggers can also prove irritating.

Rattlesnakes and copperheads live here and are best left alone. Know the safety precautions for snake country. Common sense is your best protection against accidents. Make sure children realize they are in a natural area containing hazards unfamiliar to more populous areas. Remember: clear water is not always

clean water. Do not drink stream water without boiling or treating it.

Bluffs and cliffs are dangerous and can result in serious injury. Slippery, muddy rocks provide uncertain footing and can also result in injury. Be careful, because removal of an accident victim to safety and medical facilities is not an easy or quick matter.

Since this is a remote area with few roads and little traffic, protect your vehicle against the possibility of vandalism. Put valuables in the trunk and leave your vehicle locked. Park where you or a responsible person can protect your property while you enjoy the park. If at all possible have a friend drop you off and pick you up if you plan to float a section of the river.



Obed

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Tennessee Wildlife
Resources Agency

River Chart

Use the accompanying chart as you plan your trip on one of the rivers or creeks. Look at the map and determine where you would most like to put in and take out. Then, by checking this chart, you can see the distance that you will have to travel and the degree of difficulty of that section. Planning your trip in advance may offset an unforeseen problem and make your trip memorable for the right reasons.

	Distance	Average Difficulty*	Maximum Difficulty**	Flow (in cubic feet per second)		
				Minimum	Optimum	Maximum
Obed-Emory Potters Ford to Obed Junction	19 km./12 mi.	II	III	1000	3000	5000
Obed Junction to Clear Creek Jct.	6 km./4 mi.	III	IV	500	1500	3000
Clear Creek Jct. to Nemo Bridge	8 km./5 mi.	II	III	500	1500	3000
Clear Creek Barnett Bridge to Jett Bridge	8 km./5 mi.	II	II	500	2500	4000
Jett Bridge to Lilly Bridge	3 km./2 mi.	II	III	800	2500	4000
Lilly Bridge to Clear Creek/Obed River Jct.	3 km./2 mi.	III	IV	1000	2500	3000
Daddys Creek Devils Breakfast Table to Obed Jct.	3 km./2 mi.	II	II	700	1500	3000

Notes to Chart

*Average difficulty indicates degree of difficulty of a section of river at optimum flow.

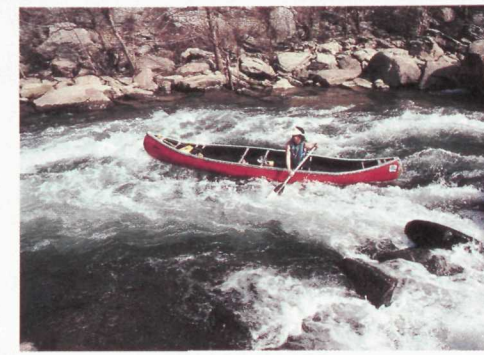
**Maximum difficulty indicates the highest rated rapid in that section of the river at optimum flow. Flow information on most streams in East Tennessee is available from TVA. In Tennessee call 800-362-9250; out-of-state call 800-251-9242 and ask for the "Emory at Oakdale" reading.

Further Information

Obed Wild and Scenic River is managed by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, and by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. For more information write to one of these addresses: Superintendent, Obed Wild and Scenic River, P.O. Drawer 630, Oneida, TN 37841; National Park Ranger, Obed Wild and Scenic River, Federal Building, Room 109, P.O. Box 429, Wartburg, TN 37887; and Manager,

Catoosa Wildlife Management Area, 216 East Penfield, Crossville, TN 38555.

For topographic quadrangle maps produced by the U.S. Geological Survey, guide books, and other information, contact either the National Park Service or the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

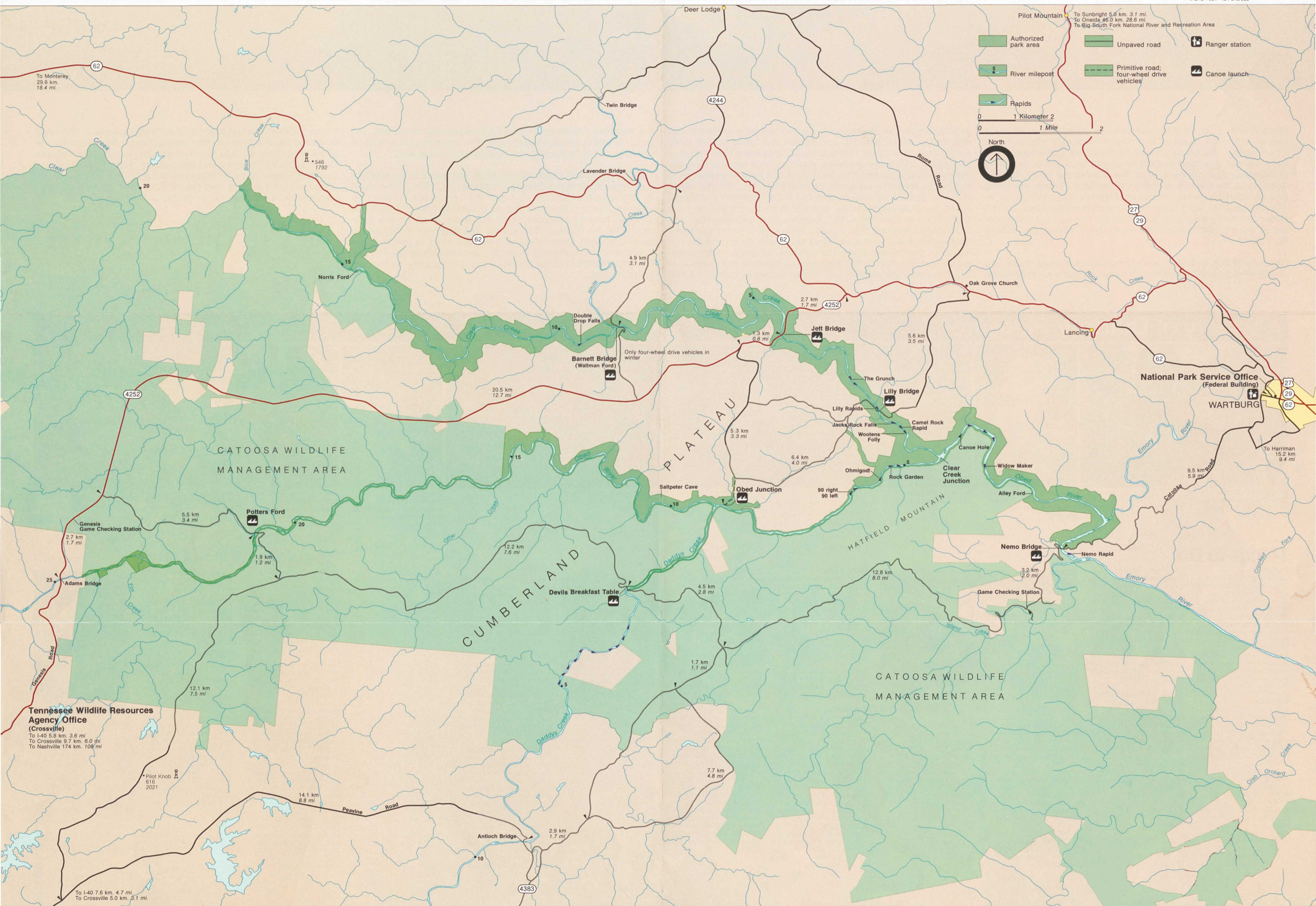


Traveling to the Park

The Obed is in central East Tennessee. From Nashville and west, take I-40 to U.S. 127 north. From Knoxville and east take I-40 to U.S. 27 north. Both U.S. 27 and 127 run north and south and connect with Tenn. 62 that skirts the northern edge of the area. Cross-country buses and scheduled airlines serve both Knoxville and Nashville where rental cars are available. No rail passenger service is within easy distance.

Area Closures

Catoosa Wildlife Management Area is closed to visitors every January, February, and March to minimize impact on roads, environment, and wildlife. The area is also closed to all except hunters during the big game hunts in the fall and spring.



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Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency Office (Crossville)
To I-40 5.8 km. 3.6 mi
To Crossville 9.7 km. 6.0 mi
To Nashville 174 km. 108 mi

National Park Service Office (Federal Building) WARTBURG

Pilot Knob 616 2021

To I-40 7.6 km. 4.7 mi
To Crossville 5.0 km. 3.1 mi