

## The official newspaper of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area

On March 7, 1974 Congress passed enabling legislation creating the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. This is an area known for the free-flowing Big South Fork of the Cumberland River and its tributaries.

*....conserving and interpreting an area containing unique cultural, historic, geologic, fish and wildlife, archaeologic, scenic and recreational values, preserving as a natural free-flowing stream the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River, major portions of its Clear Fork and New River stems, and portions of their various tributaries for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations, the preservation of the natural integrity of the scenic gorges and valleys and the development of the area's potential for healthful outdoor recreation (PL 93-251).*

The Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area encompasses approximately 98,000 acres in Scott, Fentress, Morgan and Pickett counties in Tennessee and 27,000 acres in McCreary County, Kentucky. It is almost perfectly divided by the Eastern and Central Time Zones.

In 2012, Big South Fork NRRRA was honored as an international mountain biking destination. The Park is also recognized as one of the Southeast's top locations for whitewater paddlers, and is among the top settings in the eastern U.S. for equestrian riders. Hiking, rappelling, camping, fishing and hunting are other activities enjoyed at the Big South Fork.

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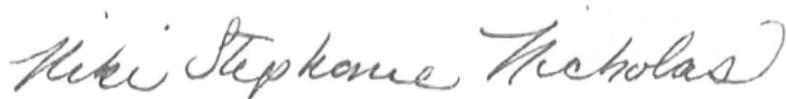


# Welcome from the Superintendent

Welcome to the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area! We are continuing to make improvements to the park's facilities and this year we are focusing on the Bandy Creek area. We have set aside one building at Bandy Creek for just education and interpretation purposes and are establishing a large classroom space for visiting school groups. This fall we will be starting the filming of a movie that will be shown in the Visitor Center. And the dilapidated amphitheatre is scheduled for renovation this autumn so it will be ready for interpretative talks, weddings, and other uses by next spring.

Trail work is always an important part of park operation and maintenance. Our trails program of staff, interns, and volunteers keep more than 400 miles ready for a range of activities including hiking, biking, horse and wagon riding, depending on the trail designation. Recent trail noteworthy improvements include a much needed reroute of the Proctor Ridge Trail, a thirty plus mile extension of the Sheltopee Trace, and international award recognition of the park's mountain biking options.

The Big South Fork offers an amazing range of recreation opportunities. Whether your outdoor passion is to ride, bike, hike, camp, float, climb, canoe, hunt, fish, birdwatch, photograph, paint, or just sit by the river and read a book, there is a place for you here. Have a wonderful time!



Superintendent

## 2013 Special Events Calendar

**All events are Eastern Time.**

### Spring Planting Festival - April 27

9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Join in a celebration of spring at a 1920s era farm. Demonstrations of horse and mule drawn equipment, plowing, planting, dulcimer music, farm animals and tasks of the homemaker will be presented throughout the day at Bandy Creek and the Lora Blevins homeplace. Craft demonstrations and sales items will also be available.

### Astronomy Programs - May through October

Paul Lewis from the University of Tennessee will be presenting astronomy programs with the help of astronomy volunteers (weather permitting).

**May 18 Solar Viewing - Bandy Creek - 3:00 p.m.**

**May 18 Astronomy - Bandy Creek - 9:00 p.m.**

**June 29 Astronomy - Bandy Creek - 9:30 p.m.**

**August 10 - Astronomy - Bandy Creek - 9:30 p.m.**

**October 5 - Solar Viewing - Bandy Creek - 3:00 p.m.**

**October 5 - Astronomy - Bandy Creek - 8:30 p.m.**

### National Trails Day - June 1

Volunteers will be working throughout the park on hiking, biking, horse and multiple-use trails. National Trails Day is held each year throughout the United States on the first Saturday in June. Thousands of volunteers participate in work projects in national areas, parks and forests. If you would like to volunteer, contact Wally Linder for information at (423) 569-2404, ext. 321 or online at [www.americanhiking.org](http://www.americanhiking.org).

### Daily and Evening Programs - Memorial Day through Labor Day

Throughout the summer months 15 minute programs will be held daily at Blue Heron Mining Community and at Bandy Creek Visitor Center. Evening programs will be offered at Blue Heron and Bandy Creek Campgrounds on Saturdays. These programs will feature different natural, cultural or recreational topics of the area. Program schedules with exact times and locations will be posted at Bandy Creek Visitor Center, and at Blue Heron Interpretive Center.

### Blue Heron Ghost Train - September 7

The Third Annual Blue Heron Ghost Train is sponsored by Big South Fork in cooperation with the Big South Fork Scenic Railway, McCreary County Library and the McCreary County Performing Arts Council

### Storytelling Festival - September 21

#### Dulcimer Workshop

Bring your own dulcimer and learn to play a tune. Beginners' sessions will be held on the hour beginning at 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. and again at 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. A limited number of dulcimers will be on hand for the public's use. Please sign up the day of the classes.

#### Craft Workshops

Learn about some old time crafts of the region through classes, demonstrations and sales. Crafts offered may include candlewicking, wood carving, needle felting, survival skills and basket making. Registration for classes will be on Saturday morning. Classes will be scheduled throughout the day beginning at 10:00 a.m. and ending at 5:00 p.m. Some classes are up to four hours in length. To check on classes that will be offered call Bandy Creek Visitor Center at (423) 286 -7275.

### Haunting in the Hills Storytelling Presentations

1:00 p.m. Family Oriented Stories

3:00 p.m. Special Local Tellers

5:00 p.m. Knoxville Area Dulcimer Club Concert

6:30 p.m. Bluegrass Music

8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Ghost Stories

### National Public Lands Day - September 28

Volunteers will be working on hiking, biking, horse and multiple-use trails. Public Lands Day is an annual event traditionally held on the last Saturday in September. Thousands of volunteers participate in work projects in national areas, parks and forests. If you would like to volunteer, contact Wally Linder for further information at (423) 569-2404, ext. 321 or online at [www.publiclandsday.org](http://www.publiclandsday.org).

### Cultural Heritage Month - October Saturdays

Enjoy a different cultural heritage activity each Saturday in October. Demonstrations and presentations might include blacksmithing, woodworking, spinning, old timey toys, dulcimer music, pioneer history, and coal mining displays. Activities will be located at the Blue Heron Depot and surrounding area. Times and schedules will be announced.

### All Interpretive Programs are Subject to Change.

**Contact Bandy Creek Visitor Center at (423) 286-7275 (PARK) or the Blue Heron Interpretive Center at (606) 376-3787 or (606) 376-5073 for program details.**

### Parks on the Internet

To find more information about what each National Park Service area has to offer, use [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov). Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area's page may be directly accessed through [www.nps.gov/biso](http://www.nps.gov/biso). Find us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @BigSouthForkNRR.

# General Information

## Tennessee - Bandy Creek Visitor Center (423) 286-7275 (PARK)

The Bandy Creek Visitor Center is open daily from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. From Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend, the Visitor Center will be open on extended hours Fridays and Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.



The Visitor Center and its restrooms are accessible to mobility impaired visitors.

## Kentucky - Blue Heron Interpretive Center (606) 376-3787 and (606) 376-5073

The Blue Heron Interpretive Center is open April through October. Call for times and days of operation. The offices are closed November through March. Restrooms are available and handicapped accessible. Park rangers will be at the contact station when the Big South Fork Scenic Railway is in operation.

The scenic train ride into Blue Heron is fully accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Blue Heron offers accessible restrooms and is partially accessible to individuals with mobility impairments (some steep grades and steps exist).

## Campgrounds

Bandy Creek and Blue Heron campgrounds have designated mobility impaired accessible sites for families and groups. Restroom facilities are also handicapped accessible. Water and electric hook-ups are available at both campgrounds. Alum Ford in Kentucky is also handicapped accessible, but restrooms are primitive and there is no water or electric hook-ups.

## Overlooks and River Access

East Rim and Honey Creek Overlooks in Tennessee and the Devils Jump Overlook in Kentucky are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. Leatherwood Ford river access offers handicapped accessible trails and restrooms.

## Backcountry Camping

Backcountry camping is allowed in Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. Backcountry permits are required to camp in the backcountry overnight. The permit provides valuable information in case of an emergency. There are no designated campsites, but there are rules that indicate where you can and cannot camp. Rangers may check backcountry campers for permits. Visit the Bandy Creek Visitor Center or Blue Heron to obtain a permit. Backcountry permits may also be purchased online at [www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/online-backcountry-permits.htm](http://www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/online-backcountry-permits.htm). Please contact (423) 286-7275 for more information.

Permit fees are as follows:

- 1 - 6 people \$5.00
- 7 - 12 people \$10.00
- 13 - 18 people \$15.00
- 19 - 24 people \$20.00



## River Information

The Big South Fork of the Cumberland River is a free flowing river. Sections of the river are calm enough for beginners while other parts are more challenging and have exciting whitewater. Peak times for river use are in the spring and sometimes late fall or winter. There is only one commercial company which provides equipment and trips for canoeing and rafting the river. If you are planning a river trip with your own equipment and expertise, please check in at the Bandy Creek Visitor Center to file a trip plan, register for overnight river trips, and obtain information that will help you have a safe trip. The website for current stream flow information is: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/tn/nwis/current/?type=flow>.

## Permitted Outfitters

Sheltowee Trace Outfitters - River Trips  
P.O. Box 1060  
Whitley City, Kentucky 42653  
1-800-541-RAFT or (606) 376-5567  
[www.ky-rafting.com](http://www.ky-rafting.com)

Southeast Pack Trips, Inc. - Horseback Trips  
299 Dewey Burkes Road  
Jamestown, Tennessee 38556  
(931) 879-2260



## Concessionaires

Bandy Creek Stables - (423) 286-7433 -  
<http://www.bandycreekstables.net>

Big South Fork Scenic Railway - (800)-462-5664  
<http://www.bsfsry.com>

Charit Creek Lodge - (931) 879-2776 -  
<http://www.charitcreeklodge.com>

Eastern National - (423) 286-7275 -  
<http://www.eparks.com/store>

Station Camp and Bear Creek Horse  
Camps -  
(423)569-3321 -<http://www.bigsouthforkhorsecamps.com>



## Blue Heron Snack Bar Hours of Operation

### April

Thursday and Friday - 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET.  
Saturday - 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.

### May - September

Wednesday through Friday - 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET.  
Saturday and Sunday - 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.  
Holiday Mondays from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET.

### October

Tuesday through Friday - 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET.  
Saturday and Sunday - 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.

## Special Use Permits

Special events such as weddings, foot races, and endurance rides require a special use permit. If you need more information about how to obtain a special use permit, contact the Park Fee Program Manager, Letitia Neal at 423-569-2404 ext. 267 or by email at [tish\\_neal@nps.gov](mailto:tish_neal@nps.gov). Information can also be found on our website at <http://www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/permits.htm>.

## Safety Facts

Keep safe and enjoy your trip to Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area by following these precautions:

(1) Be aware that there are poisonous snakes (copperheads and timber rattlesnakes), ticks, chiggers, and poison ivy found here. Be cautious as you hike the trails or use the backcountry. Always use a flashlight when walking at night to avoid stepping on a snake.

(2) Plan ahead and leave information about your trip with someone at home.

(3) Backcountry camping permits are required. These provide information to park rangers in case of emergencies. Obtain a permit online or at a park visitor center.

(4) Store all food, food containers and coolers out of reach from wildlife. Hang food in the backcountry so bears cannot reach it. A copy of the food storage regulations can be obtained from the visitor centers or the campground kiosks.

(5) Ticks and chiggers can cause irritating itchy bumps and sometimes a rash. Other insects like gnats, deer flies and mosquitoes can also be a nuisance while camping, horseback riding or hiking. Ticks can carry diseases. Protect yourself and your pets by using an insect repellent. Check yourself after being outdoors to remove ticks.



## Emergency Numbers

FOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE DIAL 911

### Tennessee

Bandy Creek Visitor Center  
(423) 286-7275 (PARK) -  
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time daily.  
Memorial Day through Labor day -  
8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time daily.

Scott County Ambulance, Oneida, TN  
(423) 569-6000

Scott County Sheriff  
Huntsville, TN  
(423) 663-2245

Jamestown Regional Medical Center  
W. Central Avenue, Jamestown, TN  
(931) 879-8171

Fentress County Ambulance  
(931) 879-8147

Fentress County Sheriff  
Jamestown, TN  
(931) 879-8142

### Kentucky

Blue Heron Interpretive Center  
(606) 376-3787  
(606) 376-5073  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time  
April through November.

McCreary County Ambulance  
(606) 376-5062

McCreary County Sheriff  
(606) 376-2322

# Campgrounds

Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area offers three campgrounds (Bandy Creek, Blue Heron, and Alum Ford) operated by the National Park Service and two horse campgrounds (Station Camp and Bear Creek) operated by a concessionaire. Bandy Creek Campground and Station Camp Horse Camp are located in Tennessee. Blue Heron, Alum Ford and Bear Creek campgrounds are located in Kentucky. Holders of Senior and Access Passes are entitled to a 50% discount for campsites at National Park Service operated campgrounds. Discounts do not apply at the concession operated horse camps.



## Bandy Creek Campground

This campground is open year round. Sites are reservable from April 1 through October 31 online at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) or by calling 1-877-444-6777. Although a reservation system is in place, campers are still welcome on a first-come, first-served basis for unreserved campsites. Please call the Bandy Creek Campground at (423) 286-8368 before arriving. The campground does fill up during holidays and special events.

From November 1 through March 31, campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis. During this time campers self-register by filling out an envelope from the entrance station, picking their site and then placing the fee into the provided envelope. Drop the envelope into the fee collection box at the campground entrance station.

Areas B, C and D offer 98 sites which have electric/water hookups. Area A offers 49 tent sites. Restroom/bathhouse facilities are located in areas A, C and D which have hot showers and are handicapped accessible. All restrooms/bathhouses in the campground except for the bathhouse in loop C are mobility impaired accessible. There are three accessible campsites in area A, four campsites in area D and one campsite in each group camp.

Bandy Creek sites in areas B, C, and D are \$22.00 for water/electric hookups per night and \$19.00 for tents per night in Area A. Although Area A has no electric hook-ups, RVs, pop-ups, and horse trailers are permitted in sites A1 – A12. Sites A13 – A49 are restricted for tents only.

Bandy Creek Group Area E-1 and E-2 are for large groups of 25 or more. E-1 offers 19 individual sites and E-2 offers 16 individual sites. These sites do not have electric/water hookups. The group areas offer a covered pavilion with electric/water and a cooking area. A fire ring for campfires is available. Separate bathhouses for each area offer hot showers. The cost is \$75.00 per night for up to 25 persons, plus \$3.00 for each additional person. Reservations can be made for the group camp up to one year in advance by calling 1-877-444-6777 or by going online at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).

## Blue Heron

Sites may be reserved from April 1 through October 31 by calling 1-877-444-6777. Blue Heron is closed during the winter season. Blue Heron offers 45 sites, with one site designated as accessible to mobility impaired individuals. Restroom facilities are also handicapped accessible. There is a fire ring and a dump station provided. Sites are \$17.00 per night with water/electric hookups. Although a reservation system is in place, campers are still welcome on a first-come, first-served basis for unreserved campsites. For additional information call (423) 286-8368.

## Alum Ford

Alum Ford is a primitive campground and offers seven campsites with a vault toilet facility. No drinking water is located at this area. The fee is \$5.00 per night. For additional information call (606) 376-5073. Alum Ford also has a boat ramp but, due to Lake Cumberland draw-down, the boat ramp is not usable at this time.

## Horse Camps

Both Station Camp and Bear Creek are operated by a concessionaire. There are water and electric hookups plus a tie out area for four horses at each site. The bathhouses have hot water showers. For more information about the horse camps or to make reservations, call (423) 569-3321.

Horseback riders staying at Bandy Creek Campground need to make separate reservations for their horses at Bandy Creek Stables. The stables are located a short distance across the road from the campground. Paddocks and stalls are available for rent. For more information about Bandy Creek Stables, please call (423) 286-7433.

# America the Beautiful

## National Parks & Federal Recreational Lands Pass

### ANNUAL PASS

America the Beautiful - National Parks & Federal Recreational Lands Annual Pass photo will be replaced each year. A Federal Lands photo contest is held each year. The grand prize winning image will be featured on the subsequent year's annual pass. Information on the current contest for the 2013 annual pass image can be found at [www.sharetheexperience.org](http://www.sharetheexperience.org). The annual pass sells for \$80.00 and is good for one year from date of purchase. The pass covers entrance fees at National Park Service and other federal areas. The pass can be purchased at federal recreation sites that charge entrance or standard amenity fees.



### SENIOR PASS

The Senior Pass sells for \$10.00 and is good for life. Any permanent resident of the United States 62 years or older may purchase the Senior Pass. This pass covers entrance fees to federal areas. Camping and guided tour fees are discounted 50% for cardholders. The pass can be purchased at federal recreation sites that charge entrance or standard amenity fees.



### ACCESS PASS

The Access Pass is free. Any age U.S. citizen or permanent resident who has medical proof of a permanent disability can apply. The Access Pass covers the entrance fees to National Park Service and other federal areas. Camping and guided tour fees are discounted 50% for cardholders. The pass can be obtained at federal recreation sites that charge entrance or standard amenity fees.



### MILITARY PASS

The Military Pass is free. Available to U.S. military members and dependents in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard and also, Reserve and National Guard members. Must be obtained in person at a Federal recreation site by showing a Common Access Card (CAC) or Military ID (Form 1173). The Military Pass covers the entrance fees to National Park Service and other federal areas.



## Hunting Seasons



Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area and Obed Wild and Scenic River do allow hunting during regular state seasons. Check with the Visitor Centers at these parks for maps of the safety (no hunting) zones and regulations. Hunters must be licensed in the state in which they will be hunting. It is the hunter's responsibility to know where the state lines are in the backcountry.

### Kentucky Big Game Hunting Seasons

Deer Archery - Zone 1-4: Third Saturday in September through third Monday in January.

Deer Muzzleloader - Zone 1-4: Two consecutive days beginning the fourth Saturday in October and seven consecutive days beginning the second Saturday in December.

Deer Modern Gun - Zones 1-2: 16 consecutive days, beginning the second Saturday in November. Zones 3-4: 10 consecutive days, beginning the second Saturday in November.

Deer Youth Hunt - Zones 1-4: Two consecutive days beginning the third Saturday in October.

Boar - Wild hogs may be taken during open deer season and during the extended hog season. The extended hog

season runs from the end of big game season in January and continues through February 28. Hunters must have a valid hunting license and National Park Service issued hog permit during the extended hog hunt.

Big South Fork NRA is in Zone 4.

For exact dates, contact Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, 1 Game Farm Road, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601, (502) 564-4336.

Website: [www.fw.ky.gov](http://www.fw.ky.gov).

### Tennessee Big Game Hunting Seasons

Permanent Opening Dates

Quail and Rabbit - Second Saturday in November.

Squirrel - Fourth Saturday in August.

Deer/Archery - Last Saturday in September.

Deer/Gun - Saturday before Thanksgiving.

Deer/Juvenile only - First Saturday and Sunday in November.

Boar - Wild hogs may be taken during open deer season and during the extended hog season. The extended hog

season runs from the end of big game season in January and continues through February 28. Hunters must have a valid hunting license and a National Park Service issued hog permit during the extended hog hunt at Big South Fork and Obed Wild and Scenic River.

For exact dates, please contact Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Region III, (931) 484-9571 or 1-800-262-6704 and Region IV, (423) 587-7037 or 1-800-332-0900 in Tennessee.

Website: [www.tnwildlife.org](http://www.tnwildlife.org).

Check Kentucky and Tennessee hunting guides for small game seasons.

### LOST AND FOUND

Report any lost items to rangers at Bandy Creek Visitor Center in Tennessee or at Blue Heron Interpretive Center in Kentucky. Found items should be turned in at Bandy Creek, Blue Heron or either campground kiosk.

## Big South Fork Bookstores

By Brenda Deaver, Park Guide

As you explore Big South Fork you may be curious about the history, plants, animals and natural features that you see while enjoying your favorite recreational activity. One sure way to find out about these things is to ask a park ranger. If you want to learn more on your own then, a visit to one of the two bookstores is a very good way to get more in-depth information.

One of the primary missions of the National Park Service is education. In order to assist the National Park's with this goal, non-profit cooperating associations have been created. Eastern National is the oldest of these associations, founded in 1947 and authorized by Congress to work with America's National Parks to provide unique, high quality educational and interpretive materials for its visitors.

The Big South Fork received a grant in 2012 from Eastern National to make improvements to the bookstore at Bandy Creek in Tennessee and we are in the process of becoming a "country store." A second bookstore is located in the Blue Heron Mining Community Depot in Kentucky.

The bookstores at Big South Fork carry items that are specific to the Cumberland Plateau which is rich with a wide diversity of plant and animal life. For example, the deciduous magnolias are a curiosity for many visitors, especially in the autumn when the huge leaves litter the forest floor.

Black bear are a fascination for children and adults. The thought of seeing one in the wild is exciting, but do you really know what to do should you encounter one? Living and camping safely in black bear country are "must read" books for visitors and local residents alike. We also have popular bear books for children.

Kids and "kids at heart" will enjoy a variety of fun activities in the children's section. Our basket of buddies has soft, huggable black bears as well as raccoons, fawn, beaver and red foxes. We also have books, coloring books, crayons, toys and games.

The cultural history of the Big South Fork is intriguing. From Indian tribes and long hunters to loggers and miners, you will discover living here was not easy, especially for the women and children. As a part of the 150 commemoration of the Civil War, we have a selection of books that cover this historic event in this area. Gue- rilla warfare was common and the local folks mostly just wanted to be left alone. You will also want to read about Sgt. York, World War I's most decorated hero.

No camping trip or sleep-over is complete without a ghost story or two. We have books with stories to scare you any time of year, but we offer a larger ghostly selection in September as a part of our "Haunting in the Hills" storytelling festival.

Both bookstores provide a variety of items that will enhance your visit. They feature educational and "just for fun" items: books, maps, cups, toys, shirts, bandannas, snacks and other convenience items. You will find something for everyone. Repeat visitors to the park will want to check out the stores every visit as we are continually introducing new items.

Did you leave it at home? We carry some convenience items like batteries, rope, zipper compasses, hiking sticks and candy. Ice is also available through the store. Come visit the bookstores and see what we have to offer.



## Fee Free Days at Big South Fork

Rough economic times call for economical fun, and you can't beat America's 397 national parks for family time, fresh air, and opportunities to learn about our great country. Every day there are more than 200 national parks that never charge an entrance fee. Find one close to you at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

Although Big South Fork does not collect entrance fees, we do have use fees. The park will have fee free days for backcountry camping and camping at Alum Ford Campground. Permits will still be required, but there will be no charge. The following dates are the official fee free days of 2013:

January 21- Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
April 22 - 26 - National Park Week  
August 25 - the National Park Service's 97th Birthday  
September 28 - National Public Lands Day  
November 9 - 11 - Veterans Day Weekend



# Protecting the Resource

By Randy Scoggins, Chief Ranger

Visitors to the area often ask park rangers what they do. The priority of the law enforcement rangers is based on the National Park Service's mission statement. The mission of the National Park Service is "To preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations...." With this mission statement in mind we determine what the park priorities are. These priorities change depending on what the park is experiencing.

Big South Fork is currently having more bear/human interaction with the increase in bear population. Just like Yogi Bear, the real bears like to inspect picnic baskets. Rangers at the park are spending more time in campgrounds and picnic areas to make sure people are informed about how to recreate in bear country. We have hired seasonal rangers the past two years whose primary job is to patrol campgrounds and day use areas. They are responsible for monitoring and documenting all bear behavior inside the park. People are encouraged to report all bear sightings inside the park to help us monitor the population.

The seasonal park rangers are sent to special training dealing with "Aversive conditioning to minimize bear/human conflict" at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Rangers learn how and when to provide negative reinforcement to bears. Once a bear becomes habituated to human food it will then continually seek out that food source. This is when the bear is likely to lose its fear of humans and possibly become aggressive. It is our goal to prevent this from happening.

Vandalism has become a major issue in the park. Rangers have spent many hours documenting and investigating these cases in the past few years. Vandals have caused thousands of dollars in damage. Bathroom facilities have been closed for several months at a time until funding could be obtained to repair them and portable toilets were put up in their place. Rangers continue to work closely with local citizens and law enforcement officers to solve these cases. Graffiti is occurring in some areas of the park. Park rangers spend a considerable amount of time cleaning these sites which takes away from other duties. The park uses a variety of methods to clean up these areas. Increased patrols have been scheduled in an attempt to cut down on this activity.

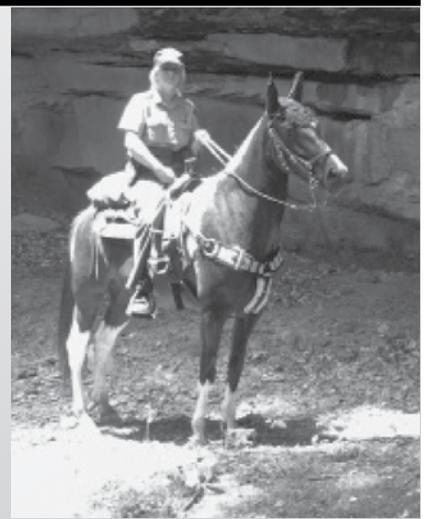
Rangers are tasked with conducting numerous condition assessments on cultural and archeological sites each year. This involves photographing the site and documenting any damage that may have occurred to the site. Most of the rock shelters in the park are considered archeological sites. These sites were used by prehistoric Native Americans and moonshiners and contain many sensitive plant species. Cumberland Sandwort is one endangered plant species that is found along the drip line of some rock shelters in the park. Camping in rock shelters is illegal in the park. This use could destroy fragile plants and evidence of historic use.

Park Rangers also perform search and rescue and fire fighting duties. When someone is lost or hurt in the backcountry, rangers are directed to the area where they need to search. Once found, victims are assessed for their condition and given the proper medical care and assisted to safety.

Wildfires occur in the park from time to time. During those fires, rangers act as firefighters to contain and extinguish the flames. At other times fires are prescribed as a means to help the environment. These prescribed burns, are done with the assistance of the resource management staff and park rangers.

In addition to law enforcement duties, all rangers participate in one or more of the following activities mountain biking, hunting, fishing, hiking, boating, climbing and/or horseback riding while on patrol and in their private lives. This helps the staff to relate to all of the different types of visitor groups.

We look forward to seeing you at the park and hope that everyone has a safe and enjoyable visit to the Big South Fork.



# Interpretation and Education

By Sue Duncan, Park Ranger

Park rangers have different duties at Big South Fork. Some of them wear a gun, protect the resources and enforce the laws. While other park rangers explain the park, give information to visitors, and educate the public. They are called interpretive park rangers, park guides and visitor use assistants. These rangers do not necessarily interpret another foreign language. They do explain and teach visitors about the park's cultural, natural and recreational features and help visitors understand the rules and regulations.

Interpretive Park Rangers are responsible for programs that you may attend in the park during the summer. They operate the visitor centers and the bookstores. Often times, they travel to schools and present environmental educational programs to children and work cooperatively with state parks or other federal agencies at special events.

Sometimes you may see these rangers wearing historic clothing to demonstrate a particular time period. They may give rifle demonstrations, cook over an open fire, spin wool, weave cloth or do embroidery. They are responsible for keeping arts and skills alive at historic homes and areas. Park Rangers like these, have multiple talents and skills. They may be helping visitors in the contact stations, hiking a trail or roving the campground with information. They may be greeting the scenic railway train, collecting fees, leading a nature walk or teaching children or adults about geology. You might even see one of these rangers out on horseback directing other riders on the trails. These rangers are also responsible for writing the informational handouts that you receive. Some work as website writers. Others plan special events and work with volunteers.

So when you come into a visitor center to ask about trails in Big South Fork, ask that ranger what else they do to assist visitors in the park. You will be amazed at all the information park rangers need to know and all the skills they have to use for their job.



# National Park Service Plugs 53 Abandoned Wells

By Etta Spradlin, Biological Science Technician  
and David West, Physical Science Technician

The National Park Service successfully plugged 53 wells over the last two and half years to protect groundwater and reduce hazards. By working with stakeholders, the Park was able to overcome many unique challenges to well plugging efforts, including wells located in environmentally and culturally sensitive areas, overgrown and eroded well-site access routes, and inaccurate or unknown well histories.

A well is an open bore that, if left unplugged, becomes a conduit for petroleum products (oil, gas or salt water) to be released at the surface. A well that is no longer producing oil and/or gas should be plugged with cement in order to isolate producing geologic formations and to protect ground water from possible contamination by petroleum products. Once these zones are protected by columns of cement, a well is plugged at the surface.

Ten of the wells were located in the protected area of the park known as "The Gorge," close to the main river and feeder streams. Because these areas contain sensitive resources and motorized access is limited by the enabling legislation, the use of heavy equipment and other motorized vehicles was scheduled to avoid breeding seasons of federally protected freshwater mussels and periods of heavy visitor use. Plugging activity at times required the closure of horse trails as a safety precaution, but park users were given notice of temporary closures by press releases and signs posted throughout the park.

One of the wells located adjacent to the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River was also historically significant. The Beatty Well was drilled in 1818 to obtain salt water. This product was refined to salt for processing meats and foods. As the well was deepened, crude oil was encountered and flowed in the river. Due to the historical significance of this well, the surface presence of the well was left in its original condition, with only a larger opening around the well head to indicate the disturbance.

Another issue confronting the well plugging effort was the need to cross private property. Fortunately, land owners adjacent to the park proved very cooperative with the plugging efforts. Private property owners were contacted several months before wells were scheduled to be plugged in order to discuss access. Cooperation with landowners allowed NPS and contractors to cross private property and also allowed the property owner to identify specific conditions related to access and reclamation.



Photo showing area after plugging.



Photo of 1818 Beatty Well before plugging.

Unfortunately, a number of the wells had inaccurate or no well histories. These well histories were needed to determine a plugging plan for each individual well. Issues such as unknown well depths and unknown zones of oil and gas production encountered during the original drilling made plugging a challenge. In order to protect freshwater zones, the majority of the wells were plugged with 1000 feet of cement. Although several of the well histories included descriptions of how the wells were plugged, no plugs were located or were leaking when the wells were opened.

All of the wells that were plugged and reclaimed had been deemed abandoned by the states of Tennessee and Kentucky. The term abandoned means that there were no bonds available for assisting with the funding of the plugging effort and that there was no longer a responsible party or operator in existence to plug the wells. The well plugging project was funded with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act dollars, project funds, and park funds.

Additional unknown wells have been located as a result of clearing access roads for these two projects and information provided by the public. The National Park Service will continue to plug and reclaim abandoned wells to protect park resources as funding becomes available.

## Farming Traditions at Spring Planting

By Sue Duncan, Park Ranger

Imagine what it would have been like to live in the Big South Fork area or on the Cumberland Plateau over one-hundred years ago. The early families who settled this area depended on their ability to successfully raise animals, crops, and gardens to feed themselves. Most of the farming that occurred here was truly subsistence farming. Mountain families began their planning for crops, vegetable gardens and livestock production in the late winter or early spring. The products that they grew had to sustain a family through the rest of the year. This tradition continues with many families even today. It is not uncommon for local residents to have large gardens which provide substantial amounts of food for their family.

Along with planning for their gardens and crops, families had a number of annual spring "chores" that were performed –plowing and preparation of the land, repairing wooden fences, livestock care and animal husbandry, mending and making clothing for the spring and summer seasons, spring house cleaning and airing out bed linens. Some of these tasks of times past have become traditional arts and crafts of today.

In celebration of these skills and traditions of spring, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area will be hosting its Thirteenth Annual Spring Planting Day on Saturday, April 27, 2013. There will be teams of horses and mules plow-

ing and planting sorghum seed at the historic Lora Blevins farm field. Craftpersons will be demonstrating forgotten arts such as blacksmithing, basket making, hand spinning, garden herb lore and woodworking. Displays will be set-up with antique farm tools, farm animals and family history.

In the Bandy Creek Visitor Center area there will also be demonstrations and craft sales available. Old-timey toys will delight young and old alike. Toe-tapping tunes of mountain dulcimer music will be performed by the Knoxville Area Dulcimer Club throughout the day. An antique tractor and farm equipment display will be at Bandy Creek with equipment dating from 1930's through 1960s. If you would like to bring your tractor and participate please call for details.

Come join in our celebration of spring and traditional mountain ways. The one-day event will take place from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. at the Lora Blevins homeplace and the Bandy Creek Visitor Center. For more information about this event contact the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at (423) 286-7275.



# Thirteenth Annual Spring Planting Day Fourth Annual Antique Tractor and Equipment Show

Show off your antique tractors and equipment!  
On Saturday, April 27, 2013 there will be an antique tractor and farm equipment display at Big South Fork NRA. This show is being held in conjunction with Spring Planting Day event.

The event will begin at 9:00 a.m. and last until 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. If you have antique tractors or equipment dated prior to 1974 that you would like to display please call 423-286-7275 for more information. The display will be at Bandy Creek field across from the visitor center.

Hope you can join us!



# Twenty-First Annual Haunting in the Hills Storytelling Festival

Saturday, September 21, 2013

Big South Fork NRA - Bandy Creek Field

Featuring Nationally Known Storytellers

Come join us for a full day of fun and activities. Free and open to the public. For further information contact Bandy Creek Visitor Center at (423) 286-7275.

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 10:00 a.m. | Folk Art Workshops, Demonstrations and Sales                        |
| 1:00 p.m.  | Family Oriented Storytelling  |
| 3:00 p.m.  | Special Local Tellers Swapping Stories                              |
| 4:00 p.m.  | Dulcimer Concert  |
| 5:30 p.m.  | Bluegrass Music by Great Day in the Morning                         |
| 6:30 p.m.  | National Park Ranger Stories  |
| 8:00 p.m.  | Ghost Stories guaranteed to thrill and chill listeners of all ages. |



# Blue Heron Ghost Train

Saturday, September 7, 2013

7:00 p.m. ET, Stearns, Kentucky Depot



The Third Annual Blue Heron Ghost Train is sponsored by Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area in cooperation with the Big South Fork Scenic Railway, McCreary County Library and the McCreary County Performing Arts Council

Train Fares: \$12.00 - Adults, \$6.00 - Children 12 and under  
Programs are free at Blue Heron.

Persons driving to Blue Heron should arrive by 7:30 p.m.  
Contact Big South Fork NRA (423) - 286-7275 ([www.nps.gov/biso](http://www.nps.gov/biso))  
or the Scenic Railway at (606) 376-5330 ([www.bsfsry.com](http://www.bsfsry.com))

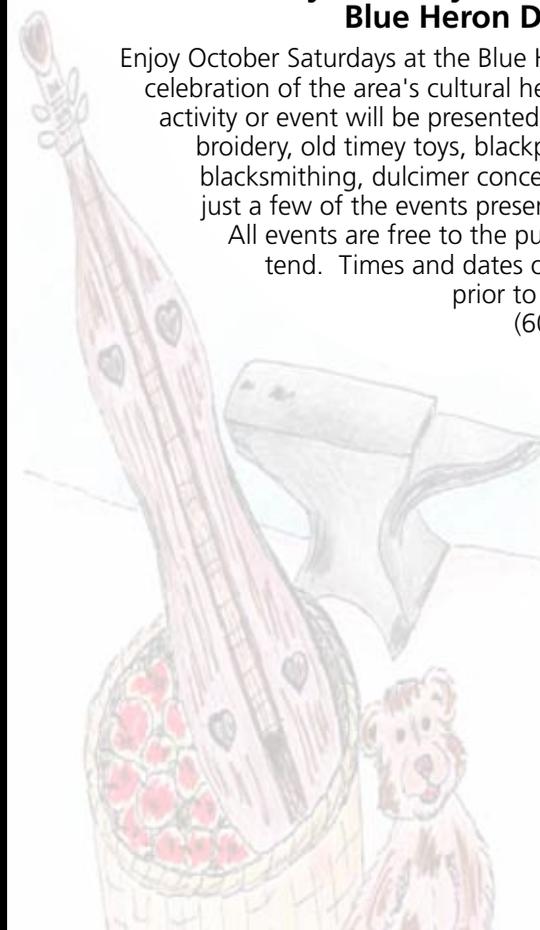
# Cultural Heritage Days

Every Saturday in October 2013

Blue Heron Depot

Enjoy October Saturdays at the Blue Heron Coal Mining Community in celebration of the area's cultural heritage. Each Saturday a different activity or event will be presented. Handspinning, candle wick embroidery, old timey toys, blackpowder rifle firing, woodworking, blacksmithing, dulcimer concerts and coal mining programs are just a few of the events presented by park staff and volunteers.

All events are free to the public and everyone is invited to attend. Times and dates of these events will be announced prior to each Saturday in October, or call: (606) 376-5073 or (606) 376-3787.



# Bandy Creek Stables Camp Store

By Letitia Neal, Fee Program Manager

If you come camping at Bandy Creek and find out that you have forgotten some items at home, check out the Bandy Creek Stables Camp Store before heading back out to town. The Camp Store will be open Fridays and Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 pm EST and Sundays 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

The Camp Store offers a limited selection of souvenirs, picnic supplies, snacks, pre-packaged ice cream, beverages, firewood, ice, trail maps, veterinarian supplies as well as tack supplies. Starting in March 2013, the Camp Store will also offer free Wi-Fi to the public.

Scan this QR code with your smart-phone for more information.



# Spring Wildflowers and Where to Find Them

By Sue Duncan, Park Ranger

Spring is a beautiful time of the year to get out and enjoy the flora of Big South Fork. The creeks and river are full from spring rains. Several wet weather dependant waterfalls will be flowing in full force. Warmer temperatures and increased daylight triggers wildflowers to bloom.

Visitors will enjoy hunting for the delicate blooms of wildflowers under last fall's leaf litter. Some of the best places to look for spring wildflowers are along the river trails at Leatherwood Ford in Tennessee and Devil's Jump in Kentucky. Station Camp and the trails near Charit Creek Lodge have a wide variety of wildflowers growing there. What you find will depend upon what month you begin to search and how warm the temperatures have been. Even in February you may see the earliest blooms peaking out. Usually flowers like hepatica, trout lilies, bloodroot and spring beauties are among the first to emerge. Sometimes they can even be seen on colder mornings with a light dusting of snow or frost on the ground.

Some of the more hardy spring wildflowers start to push the ground aside to make way for their presence. Bluets or quarkers ladies, blue phlox, bluebells, buttercup, rue anemone, cut-leaved toothwort, wood betony and trailing arbutus can be found in the rich, sandy, soils of the flood plain. Spring-flowering trees can be seen emerging along the roadways. Sweet shrub, dogwood, leatherwood and redbud are a few of the blooms you may see.

A little later in the spring, April and early May, dwarf iris, wild geranium, little brown jug, trilliums, jack-in-the-pulpit, May apple, lady slippers, showy orchis, coreopsis, golden ragwort, and fire pinks can be found. Take lots of photographs of these beauties, but remember not to pick them so that other may see them too!



Pictures: Clockwise top left Virginia Bluebells, Wild Geranium, Bloodroot, Erect Trillium, and False Solomon Seal with Erect Trillium; far right corner Lousewort Flower.



# It Was a Dark, Dark Night!

The Big South Fork is situated on the Cumberland Plateau far away from any large metropolitan areas. If you happen to stay at any of the campgrounds in the park on a clear night you will notice that it is quite dark. Many people who live in cities are amazed at how many stars they can see. These dark sky conditions make the Big South Fork a good place to observe the moon, stars, planets and deep space objects. Visitors are always welcome to bring their own binoculars or telescopes to observe on their own. There are however, four special programs during the year presented by the National Park Service, Paul Lewis from the University of Tennessee, Department of Physics and Big South Fork Astronomy Volunteers. That is when we bring out the telescopes and have special night sky viewing. These events are scheduled in May, June, August and October at the Bandy Creek Visitor Center.



On a clear night without a full moon the moons of Jupiter, the rings of Saturn, galaxies, nebula and globular clusters can be seen in the telescopes available for viewing. During certain times of the year meteor showers can be observed. The dark skies make viewing much better than in urban areas. These programs provoke a sense of awe and wonder as we contemplate the vastness of the universe and consider our place in it. When attending the night sky viewing be sure to bring a flashlight with a red lens to protect night vision, a chair or blanket for seating and appropriate clothing for the weather. Perhaps the most important thing to bring is your imagination.



# Cultural Resources Protection

By Kristy Slaven, Protection Park Ranger

Have you ever been hiking and happened to look down just at the right moment to see an arrowhead sticking out of the ground? Have you been tempted to climb on top of an arch just because it's a challenge you can't resist?

Before doing something you might regret later, think about doing what's best for protecting the park and its resources so future generations will have a special place to visit. If you remove artifacts or walk where you aren't supposed to be, you might cause irreparable damage. We want to be able to show future generations what our grandparents and great grandparents saw when they came to the National Park Service managed areas. If you dig for artifacts in a rockshelter, you will disturb evidence that future archaeologists could carefully sift through to learn more about past cultures that used the parkland. The looting of archaeological resources on your public lands, or any historical site, is not a simple case of trespass, petty larceny or vandalism. It is a major crime that is irreparable and can never be made whole again.



Treat the resources at Big South Fork with the same respect you show towards your own property. You probably would not carve initials or spray paint a tree, rock or sign that belongs to you. It might bring a moment's pleasure, but cause hours of aggravation as you try to restore the damage. Once a log on an 100 year old cabin is carved it can never be original again or repaired to it's original state.

The good news is that a national park belongs to you and all the citizens of the United States. You can help protect this special place by becoming familiar with the regulations and notifying park staff when you see or find something unusual. The following Acts were put in place to help protect our Natural and Cultural Resources:

The Antiquities Act of 1906 protects "objects of antiquity, "ruins," and other objects of historic and scientific interest from injury, destruction or theft.

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA) made it a felony for the excavation, removal, damage or defacement of archeological resources including human remains.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Section 4 amends Title 18 of the United States Code, the criminal code, made it a felony offense to Illegally Traffic in Native American human remains and cultural items.

The regulations under 36 CFR 2.1 (The Code of Federal Regulations) are also prohibited and enforced by the National Park Service. This includes possessing, destroying, injuring, defacing, removing, digging, or disturbing anything alive or dead.

As a park visitor you can help preserve prehistoric and historic resources by following these regulations.

1. Do not camp and or build campfires within 100 feet of a cave, rockshelter, arch, or trail including grave sites or historic structures. Camping is also prohibited in all cabins or other historic structures or sites.
2. Please respect all cemeteries and only take pictures. Do not use any chemicals or paint to try and read the headstones. Theft, defacing or moving headstones is also a violation.
3. Rockshelters are also known or rockhouses. Many of the park's trails go near or through them. Please stay on the designated trail. Many of these sandy areas contain endangered plants that are easily damaged. Many of these places have been dug in years past resulting the loss of prehistory and early history from the area. All such locations are protected now from disturbances and are monitored closely for any vandalism or looting. If you do find something like an arrowhead while walking on one of our trails, please just document the location and notify one of the park staff at Big South Fork.
4. Big South Fork still contains some historic structures such as the Lori Blevins farmstead, the Oscar Blevins Farm and the Litton/Slaven farm. Please treat all of these with respect and do not climb in or around these structures. Do not mark or remove anything from these locations.
5. Climbing and rappelling are prohibited in the following areas. This includes either technical rock climbing and rappelling, or other similar type activities: All arches; Chimney Rock in No Business; Chimney Rocks at Station Camp; Devils Den (Devils Cave); Yahoo Falls; All developed overlooks (100 Feet either side of guardrails); Maude's Crack; and Waterfalls (intermittent or not/100 feet either side of center).

Help us protect our cultural resources for future generations. These are our nation treasures.

# Get Involved at Big South Fork



By Johanna Wheeler,  
Facility Management Chief

National Public Lands Day (NPLD) is the nation's largest, single day volunteer event for public lands. NPLD began in 1994 with three sites and 700 volunteers. It proved to be a huge success and NPLD became a yearly tradition. In 2012, about 175,000 volunteers worked at 2,206 sites in every state, the District of Columbia and in many U.S. territories. 2012 was the biggest NPLD in the history of the event.

Come to Big South Fork in 2013 to celebrate twenty years of public land volunteerism. This event is held annually on the last Saturday of September.

Learn about the environment, natural resources, and the need for shared stewardship of these valued, irreplaceable lands.

Make new friends in the public sector and the local community based upon mutual interests in the enhancement and restoration of Big South Fork.

Help improve Big South Fork while working with volunteers and assisting land managers in hands-on work.

Some examples of projects are; building and maintaining trails, collecting and removing invasive plants, planting trees and other native plants, removing trash and general beautification of Big South Fork.

For more information on how you can participate in National Public Lands Day at Big South Fork contact Wally Linder at 423-569-2404. Or visit [www.public-landsday.org](http://www.public-landsday.org) to learn more about this national event in your area or throughout the United States.



Scan this code with your smartphone to access the Big South Fork NRRA website

# Be Prepared for Bears

By Justin Basham, Biological Science Technician

Due to the increased number of black bears in to Big South Fork area, people that call the Cumberland Plateau home now deal with wildlife other than raccoons, opossums, and skunks getting into their garbage cans and recycling bins. Many potential problems can be solved by one very simple solution... "keep things clean and put away." Don't dump food wastes such as watermelon rinds, banana peels, bacon grease, or anything else that has a scent outside your home or campsite. Bears can also recognize certain items such as coke bottles or cans, or coolers as a way to get a food reward if they have had that experience in the past.

There are bear proof containers that do not allow bears and other wildlife to easily access basic household trash. However, these products are expensive and do not hold as much waste as a typical dumpster. A simple and relatively cheap way to help keep nuisance wildlife away from trash is to rinse items that contain scents before they are thrown away. Before these items are discarded they should be placed in a plastic trash bag and tied tightly it will minimize the amount of scent that is distributed away from the dumpster.

"Bear proofing" a holding facility for garbage is also a good way to deter bears from getting into trash. This can be done by keeping bags of trash inside either in a garage, house, or well-built shed until trash pick-up day. No one wants to keep stinking trash in their house, so if you have no other means to keep your trash secure, a holding pen can be built for your trash. A sturdy "box" built near the road, constructed of 4x4 posts and heavy metal panels can help to deter bears from becoming a nuisance on your property.

Most of the complaints are from bears raiding garbage containers, bird feeders, pet food left outdoors and more recently farm crops. Additionally, some people even intentionally feed bears. As a result of the improper storage of garbage, easy availability of bird seed, and the direct feeding of bears, animals often become habituated to humans and become a nuisance and a threat to human safety. Nationwide bear management experience has shown the life expectancy of "nuisance" bears may be less than half of that of "wild" bears that do not

have repeated contact with humans. Disappointingly, there are no other alternatives but to destroy bears that have become a potential threat to human safety.

Horse feed is also an attractant for bears looking for food. Conflicts can be avoided by insuring feed be out only long enough for animals to eat in a short period of time. Avoid leaving livestock or pet feed out for extended hours or overnight.

The bottom line is that bears are expanding and are at greater numbers now than previously seen in the last 50 years. Although they are fun to watch and see, no one wants them to cause property damage which may ultimately lead to the destruction of the bear if the bad behavior continues. By keeping your property clean and taking the proper precautions when storing garbage, bears will be able to exist as they once did and humans can live beside them without conflicts.



For more information about park regulations or to report bear information please contact Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275 or the National Area Resource Hotline at 423-569-2404 x 505.

## Firewood Ban in Effect at Big South Fork

In order to better protect our native forests the Big South Fork has issued a ban on firewood of all hardwood species from outside of the counties immediately surrounding the Big South Fork. Those counties from which firewood may be transported in to the Big South Fork are Fentress, Morgan, Pickett and Scott counties in Tennessee, and McCreary County in Kentucky. Hardwood species brought into the park from outside of these counties is prohibited.

### WHY BAN FIREWOOD?

Many people are familiar with chestnut blight which, after an accidental introduction to North America around 1900, wiped out virtually all mature chestnut trees from their historic range in the Southeast. This devastating blight was caused by fungus that is thought to have been accidentally introduced to North America through imported chestnut trees. The purpose of the ban on outside firewood is to prevent the introduction of insects and diseases that are known to be currently causing devastation to tree stands throughout the United States. The transport of infected firewood has proven to be one of the most common ways that insects and diseases are spread to live trees.

Two species in particular are of great concern to the National Area. Emerald ash borer (EAB) has decimated ash trees



# DON'T MOVE FIREWOOD

throughout the Northeast and is rapidly spreading south. Tens of millions of ash trees have already been killed or are heavily infested by this pest. Heavily infested trees may die after 3-4 years of infestation. Another pest, the walnut twig beetle carries a fungus that causes thousand cankers disease (TCD) in walnut species. Walnut trees infected with the fungus usually die within 3 years of initial symptoms.

In addition to saving trees from invasive pests and diseases, the National Park Service is bound by both federal and state regulations that govern the movement of hardwood trees out of quarantined areas. In 2010, both Kentucky and Tennessee enacted emergency legislation that quarantines counties with confirmed presence of EAB and/or TCD which regulates the movement of firewood out of quarantined counties.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP?

You can help stop the spread of harmful insects into the Big South Fork by observing the firewood ban when visiting the area. Visitors may gather down and dead firewood for personal use while camping in the Big South Fork. Firewood can also be purchased from the Bandy Creek Stables and several local firewood vendors within the five counties mentioned above. For more information about firewood restrictions call the Visitor Center or campground staff at (423)-286-7275.



Firewood is available for purchase at the Bandy Creek Stables.

### Resource Protection Hotline Available

In order to increase the number of backcountry "eyes and ears" helping protect the park's valuable and often irreplaceable resources, a Resource Protection Hotline has been established.

Any park visitor or neighbor who witnesses what they believe to be an illegal activity such as digging arrowheads, poaching wildlife or harvesting plants is encouraged to call the Resource Protection Hotline at (423) 569-2404, ext 505. All information will be treated confidentially. No name or phone number will be required; however, persons wishing to leave contact information may do so.

# 1863: The Year of Terror

By: Tom Des Jean, Cultural Resource Specialist and Howard Duncan, Education Specialist

After the defeat of the Confederate Army led by General Felix Zollicoffer in December 1862 at the battle of Mill Springs, Kentucky (Where General Zollicoffer was killed), the upper Cumberland Plateau was left open and vulnerable with no protection from either side. Having no effective civil government, the region entered a period of lawlessness and chaos that brought terror and hardship to the citizens of the Big South Fork region. Fear was a common emotion among area residents on the Cumberland Plateau. Guerilla gangs roamed the area at will killing, stealing, and terrorizing local communities.



Champ Ferguson

The population of the counties surrounding the Big South Fork, were, for the most part, strongly pro Union and that made them targets for guerilla gangs with Southern leanings. The most notorious of these "Confederate" guerillas was Champ Ferguson. There were other guerillas to be sure, but Ferguson was among the most feared in the region. He and his followers were responsible

for some of the worst atrocities in the area. Originally from Clinton County, Kentucky, he moved to White County, Tennessee, when Kentucky failed to join the Confederate states in seceding from the Union. At the end of the war all of the guerillas operating under the Confederate flag were given pardons provided they laid down their weapons and took an oath of allegiance to the United States. All, that is, except for Champ Ferguson who was specifically identified as a wanted fugitive. He was eventually captured by Federal authorities and placed on trial for war crimes. He was convicted of more than fifty murders, but by his own admission claimed to have killed at least one hundred men.

The most notable Union counterpart to Champ Ferguson was a farmer from Fentress County, Tennessee, known as David Beaty. He was commonly known as "Tinker" Dave Beaty. Beaty formed a company called Captain David Beaty's Company of Independent Scouts. They did receive some small degree of support from the Union and their actions were sanctioned by Federal authorities. Beaty later claimed that the only reason he took up arms was to defend himself and family from the guerilla gangs roaming the countryside. Many local communities formed what were known as Home Guard units, pledged to protect their homes and families from outsiders who would cause trouble.

Even the isolated communities of the Big South Fork were not immune from the terror. In June of 1863 a group of Confederate guerillas entered the quiet community of No Business. After causing trouble there they proceeded to take up overnight residence at the home of Peter Burke near the Duck Shoals on the Big South Fork River. Later that evening they were surrounded by members of the local Home Guard and a fierce fire fight broke out. Local oral tradition tells that of the thirteen Confederate Guerillas that were in the Burke house seven were killed that evening. They may be buried in some secret location near the site of the old homestead. Today no trace of the grave site has been found.

There are more interesting Civil War stories posted on the park website at <http://www.nps.gov/biso/history-culture/index.htm>. Events such as these were unfortunately common during the war years and especially in 1863. That year was a time of hunger, deprivation, and fear for the residents of the upper Cumberland Plateau. It would create emotional scars that would take a very long time to heal.



"Tinker" Dave Beaty

## Hope for Hemlocks

By Marie Kerr, Biologist

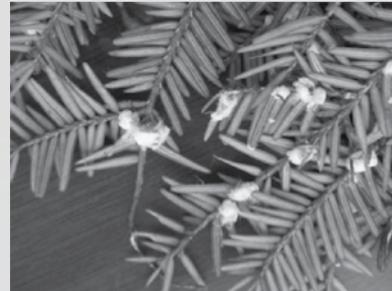
It seems like everyone and their sister is looking for a way to save hemlocks in their favorite places, whether on their own land or in areas they love within Big South Fork (BISO) or elsewhere. This is a good thing! In fact, good things are happening all over our area, and throughout the range of Eastern and Carolina hemlocks, to protect them from decline caused by infestations of a teeny-tiny little insect known as the hemlock woolly adelgid, also known as HWA or, as local folks have taught me, "little woolly buggers"! No matter what they are called, BISO personnel are dedicated to helping control as many local and regional infestations as possible and to teaching others how to do the same. So, What is Big South Fork Doing to Help Save Hemlocks?

After treating 1,261 hemlocks on six pilot sites in 2011, BISO launched a full-scale treatment program in 2012 and has thus far treated a total of 8,148 trees on 26 sites (now called Hemlock Conservation Areas or HCAs) covering an area of 500 acres in the park. This acreage represents approximately 3% of BISO's forest in which hemlock is either the dominant tree or codominant with other trees. Over the next 4-5 years, BISO hopes to treat and preserve around 10-15% of the hemlock forest in the park before a cycle of retreatment must start. This may seem like a dismally low percentage of trees slated for treatment, but with the labor-intensive nature of treatments, the cost of chemical needed to treat large acreages and the need to retreat trees 4-6 years after initial treatments, BISO managers believe this goal is both pragmatic and optimistic. BISO has worked diligently to select HCAs that ensure the safety of visitors and staff and that represent and protect as many park values as possible, including historic sites, rare plants or animals, unique features, such as natural arches, rockhouses, and waterfalls, popular gathering sites and campgrounds, scenic vistas, etc.

How Can I Save My Hemlocks? Luckily for all of us, treating hemlocks for HWA is not rocket science. Individual trees can be treated relatively easily and without much in the way of equipment. Also, imidacloprid, the main chemical used to treat HWA, is available over the counter, easy to prepare and is becoming more and more affordable. The main method of treatment used at BISO is by mixing water-soluble imidacloprid with water and applying it directly to the soil at the base of individual hemlocks. Though this method is called "soil drenching", only 1-2 ounces of chemical solution (depending on dosing) are used for each inch of tree diameter (e.g. at 1 ounce/inch diameter, a tree with a 20 inch diameter would get 20 ounces of solution).

Currently, imidacloprid used for drenching is available over-the-counter in either a water-soluble or flowable concentrate that is mixed with water. These products range in price, but can usually be found at a cost of 20-30 cents (or less) per inch of tree diameter. One big catch with the soil drenching method is that it cannot be used on trees that are close to water or in areas where the chemical may get into water, such as sites with shallow, rocky soil or with high water tables. In these cases, trees can be injected directly with liquid imidacloprid using specialized equipment. This method is costly (\$1.00-1.50/inch of tree diameter) and time-consuming, but can be done to save trees of higher value.

For more information about soil drenching and tree injections and to receive answers to frequently asked questions about how to treat your own hemlocks, contact the park at 423-569-9778. Also, watch your newspapers and local media for upcoming Hemlock Treatment workshops at Big South Fork, during which you can ask your own questions and get hands-on experience treating hemlocks in the park.



Left: hemlock adelgid infestation. Right: Bio-technician Justin Coffey applies liquid pesticide to the base of hemlock.

# Teacher-Ranger-Teacher

By Sherry Fritschi, Park Ranger &  
Lounicia Hughett, Teacher-Ranger-Teacher

If you visited Bandy Creek or Blue Heron in 2012, chances are you may have met Ranger Lounicia Hughett, an enthusiastic teacher who gave children's programs and worked at the visitor centers. As our third participant in a National Park Service program called Teacher to Ranger to Teacher (TRT), Lounicia brought to Big South Fork her expertise and classroom skills along with a deep desire to share nature with children.

Our teacher returned to school in the fall with fresh ideas about connecting kids to the outdoors, including the natural and cultural history of Scott County, TN and McCreary County, KY.

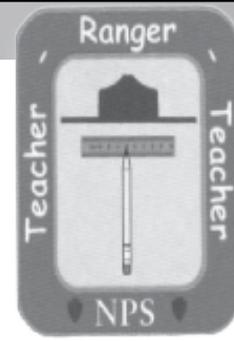
Lounicia was very busy during her tour of duty at Big South Fork. Through program development and working with seasoned interpretive park rangers, she gained knowledge about local plants and animals that she will continue to share with children. Lounicia also learned some Appalachian crafts such as making corn husk dolls, pioneer cooking and demonstrated these skills to the public. Lounicia's three teenage children became volunteers and played their traditional Appalachian musical instruments during special events and programs in the park.

In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, Lounicia wrote and presented programs based upon actual local events from that era. She brought the past alive and captured the interests of her audience. Hopefully, as a result of attending programs like these, some people will be interested in reading articles or books about the Civil War or dive into their own family history. They might discover some long forgotten local legends to pass along to the next generation.

Here's how the TRT Program operates. Throughout the nation, national parks and public schools work together to provide teachers opportunities to connect with park resources. They gain understanding and appreciation of America's special places that belong to all of us. When Teacher-Rangers return to their classrooms, they share their knowledge and enthusiasm with students and other teachers.

This summer, Big South Fork will give another educator the opportunity to participate in the Teacher to Ranger to Teacher program. The park signs an agreement with a local public school district to allow a teacher to work as a park ranger during the summer. While wearing the gray and green uniform, the teacher researches, develops and presents programs, plus works in the visitor centers.

The best part of this program happens when the school year begins. The Teacher-Ranger takes back to her classroom curriculum-based programs that draw on her summer's experience. During National Park week in April, she will wear her uniform to school. Students and other teachers will participate in activities that she develops about Big South Fork and other national parks. In April 2012, Teacher Ranger Teacher Tracy Spain (2011) incorporated information about National Parks into programs for her school. She developed a scavenger hunt that involved assigning students to specific National Park websites. Each child learned about a park and even mapped directions and calculated the cost to drive there and back.



Our busy lives are often filled with distractions to the point of losing sight of what really matters. Often, today's children spend so much time inside, kids don't even know what's in their own backyards. In order to preserve our natural and cultural heritage for future generations, we as adults need to share our knowledge, experiences and enthusiasm with children, the future caretakers of America's special places. That's what Teacher to Ranger to Teacher is all about.

If you are a teacher from the surrounding area who is interested in working a summer season at Big South Fork, contact the park at 423-569-9778 for information about applying for the position. Also, browse through the park website at [www.nps.gov/biso](http://www.nps.gov/biso) and other national park websites at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) for more information about the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher Program.



Tracy Spain and her class during National Park Week at Oneida High School.

## Youth Conservation Corps

By Johanna Wheeler, Facility Management Chief

The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) is perhaps the most well recognized summer work youth program in the National Park Service. The YCC has been instrumental in introducing young Americans to conservation opportunities in national parks since the program was created in 1970. YCC is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Interior and U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service established by Public Law 93-408.

Since its inception, the YCC has worked with many conservation agencies throughout the country to provide educational and team building skills to young people through participation in work projects. Hundreds of employees currently working in land management agencies were introduced to their profession through the YCC.

During the summer of 2012, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (NRRA) received funding for a Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crew to help with performing trail maintenance activities within the Big South Fork area. A crew of eight students from one of the local high schools (Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute) was selected for the project.

The project was set up to perform a wide range of trail maintenance activities such as repair and replacement of water bars to prevent soil loss and erosion along trail routes; repair, painting and installation of trail signs, and rehabilitation and leveling of trail tread to make smooth, sure footing for trail users. Clearing of overhanging limbs and overgrown vegetation along the trails was also accomplished.

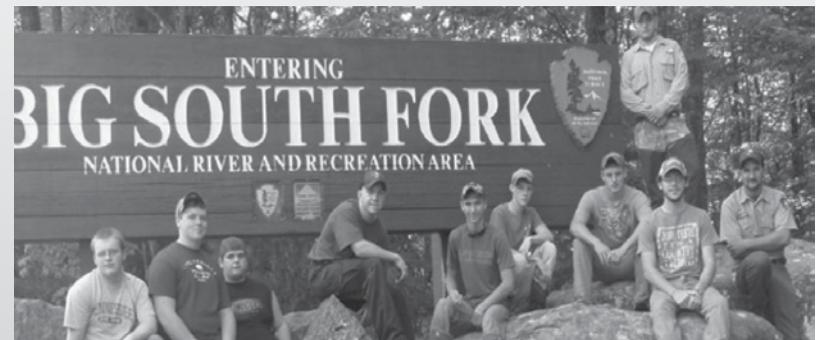
The YCC crew was also responsible for cleaning and repainting the Honey Creek Overlook which had been recently vandalized. Their efforts helped support a quality visitor experience at this popular location.

In addition to valuable time spent maintaining trails the YCC students took part in 1 hour daily educational programs. They learned about local plants, insects, and animals. Students discussed future plans and goals with their work leaders and other park staff. YCC students

participated in a closing graduation ceremony and gave presentations on things that they had learned and accomplished throughout the program. The 2012 YCC program was a complete success for everyone involved!

"We at Big South Fork NRRA are very happy to have had such a hard working crew of young people to help with all these projects, and accomplishments they completed are something to be proud of," said Superintendent Niki Stephanie Nicholas.

To learn more about YCC at Big South Fork and Obed, contact Wally Linder at 423-569-2404. Or visit [www.nps.gov/gettinginvolved/youth-programs/ycc.htm](http://www.nps.gov/gettinginvolved/youth-programs/ycc.htm) to learn more about a YCC program in your area.



The Big South Fork YCC crew for 2012 included Cody L. Baltimore, Jesse D. Cobb, Christopher W. Conatser, Justin A. Draughn, Dakota S. Gunter, Jacobby J. Johnson, Dalton T. McCoy, and Keith T. Yantz.



Burnt Mill Gaging Station.

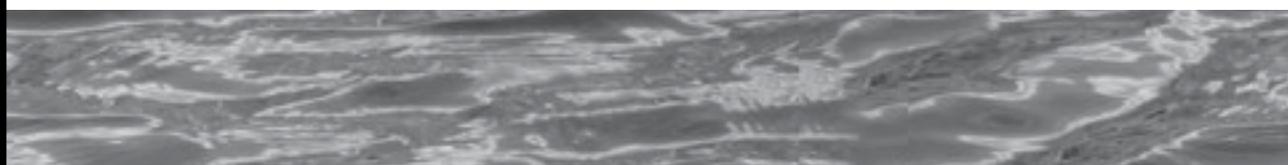
## Water Resources and Protection

By James Hughes, Hydrologist

Sixty miles of the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River and its tributaries within the recreation area support more threatened and endangered aquatic and riparian species than any other unit in the National Park system. These waters are therefore nationally critical to aquatic species conservation. Management of these resources is heavily dependent upon effective monitoring. Water quality monitoring at Big South Fork was initially conducted during the mid to late 1980's, but was discontinued due to funding constraints. Recently, the National Park Service actively began watching over river cobble bar communities, freshwater mussels, rare fish, benthic macroinvertebrates, and water quality at Big South Fork.

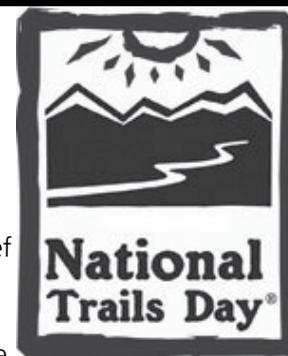
The National Park Service and the U.S. Geological Survey also partner to operate four streamflow gages within and adjacent to the NRRRA. Streamflow data provided by these gages are important to the recreational paddling community, and are also used in concert with water quality data to determine pollutant loads and assimilative capacity. Water quality monitoring efforts at Big South Fork have been upgraded to include deployment of real time water quality monitors at the New River and Clear Fork gages. These water resource monitoring stations provide 24/7 information on key water quality indicators every 30 minutes, placing our fingers firmly on the pulse of the two major tributaries whose confluence forms the Big South Fork River. This data is a valuable asset to NPS as well as to our state, federal, municipal, and private sector partners. It can be viewed on the internet at: <http://www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/rivergauges.htm>.

Although land use practices have affected water resources of the Big South Fork River in the past, recent monitoring indicates a promising trend of recovery in fisheries and other aquatic resources. Recent fish inventories identified 92 species of fish within the NRRRA, a 64% increase over similar inventories conducted in the early 1970's. The Bear Creek tributary alone has seen an increase from 2 to 16 fish species in response to remediation of acid mine drainage in the watershed. It will take some time for resources to recover, but the future of the Big South Fork River is looking brighter.



## Get Ready for National Trails Day

By Johanna Wheeler,  
Facility Management Chief



National Trails Day is a celebration of trails; embracing the idea of people going outside and within fifteen minutes, being on trails that wind through their cities or towns and bring them back without retracing steps. Trails do not just magically appear for our enjoyment; it takes many hours of planning, labor, and negotiating to develop them.

National Trails Day, the only nationwide celebration of trails, increases awareness about trails and celebrates the hard work and support of many people and partners; including volunteers, land agencies and outdoor minded businesses. It also is a day to introduce people to the many joys and benefits of trails.

Big South Fork has an extensive trail system with close to 400 miles of trails for many different recreational opportunities; hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking. National Trails Day activities include repair and rehabilitation of trails in order to prolong the life of these precious assets.

You can learn new skills, teach others and stay active and involved. Volunteers at Big South Fork help preserve and maintain the diverse natural, cultural and recreational resources of the park for today's visitors, as well as helping to preserve these same precious resources for future generations.

National Trails Day will occur on June 1, 2013. For more information on how you can participate at Big South Fork contact Wally Linder at 423-569-2404. Or visit [www.americanhiking.org](http://www.americanhiking.org) to learn more about this national event in your area or throughout the United States.

## Junior Ranger Program

Big South Fork has a Junior Ranger book and a cool cloth patch for you to earn for your jacket or book bag. Kids from age 4 to 12 are invited to use this book to explore Big South Fork with Oscar, the river otter. Many activities will help you learn about animals, plants, rocks, rivers and a coal mining town.

In addition to completing your book, you will be encouraged to explore the park by hiking a trail, riding a horse or a bicycle or paddling on the river. After successfully completing the Junior Ranger Program, you will receive a badge and a certificate to hang on your wall.

Come by one of the visitor centers and pick up your free Junior Ranger book today!



# How to Use a Bear-Resistant Food Storage Container

Have you ever noticed that they call these bear 'resistant' containers? It is especially not 'bear proof' if it is not closed and latched or latched improperly, or if you are not near it/your food and watchful when you have things out of it. Everything you eat, including in seemingly strong packaging, such as canned tuna, must be in the container. It is surprising to most campers that toiletries (lotion, lip products, sunscreen, soap (body and dish soap), insect repellent, deodorant, feminine products, and medications) must be stored in the containers or a hard-sided vehicle/trailer as well. These rules apply 24 hours a day, (except when you are actually using/cooking items) not just overnight.

A bear may enter your campsite day or night, even in the presence of many people, large dog(s), a big campfire or lots of lights. Running your vehicle engine or generator, playing loud music, trying various 'repellents' (mothballs, an open bleach container, dog or cat in-the-garden repellent, etc.) will not work. Each campground in the Big South Fork NRRRA has metal food storage lockers (food storage boxes) scattered throughout the campsites. The size of the food storage locker (29" deep x 38" wide x 43" tall) helps you plan what you can bring. Due to the fact that there are at least two sites sharing a storage box, it is a good idea to plan in advance to use the space available more effectively.



The latching system is opened by putting your fingers into a space on the front and pushing up on the latch. There is a child safety release handle (that glows in the dark) on the inside of the enclosure. Keep in mind that the boxes are dark metal and can build up heat inside. The storage boxes are metal and are noisy when opened or shut so be mindful of not disturbing your neighbors.

Big South Fork NRRRA warns: "Improper food storage may result in impoundment of your food, a fine of up to \$5,000, and/or revocation of your camping permit." A typical mistake people make with the food storage boxes is overstuffing the box and not being able to really shut it tight. A bear might not get the door open, but a raccoon can reach in through the crack, snag food bags with its paws and make a mess all over the campsite overnight. Assuming that because people are in the site the doors don't have to be latched all the time is a big mistake. Bears (and lots of raccoons and skunks) enter campsites during meals to try to get food off picnic tables, from vehicles with doors open or from food storage boxes that weren't latched. Especially after dark, don't turn your back on food.

Big South Fork NRRRA's rules say to dispose of all trash in the garbage cans, not to store it in the bear-proof campsite food storage box. And it probably won't fit in the box anyway. So, make regular trips to the bear-proof garbage cans. Big South Fork NRRRA also has bear-proof recycling bins located at the Blue Heron and Bandy Creek Campgrounds.



## Spotlight on Volunteers - Martin and Dorairene Henry

By Debby Zimmerman, Park Guide



Martin and Dorairene Henry from Knoxville, Tennessee have been volunteering for Big South Fork for about 19 years. They have been married for 57 years.

Martin is a Korean War Veteran who served in the Army from 1954 to 1955. He attended Memphis State University for two years before going into the army. After the service he finished his B. A. degree in Mechanical Arts. Martin worked in wholesale appliances for Philco and Philco Ford. He also worked for GE in Sales Distribution and Planning for the last 20 years of his career. He retired in 1990.

Dorairene attended the University of Tennessee for two years. Dorairene was one of the first female real estate agents in Knoxville. She retired in 1992.

After retirement, Martin and Doairene attended craft classes through the University of Tennessee. Both of them learned chair canning skills. Then, Martin discovered his talent for wood carving. They developed their craft skills and have been volunteering and demonstrating at Big South Fork since 1993.

Martin fondly remembers a young man that came to one of Big South Fork's special events where he was teaching wood carving classes. The first year he just stood at the entrance of Martin's tent and watched. They next year, he joined one of the classes. This man was none other than volunteer Jim Ferguson who does soap carving classes at the Storytelling Festival. By Martin sharing his talent, another person discovered his own potential to develop a craft and to sharing it with others.



The Henry's do an excellent job representing the park and presenting their skills and talents to visitors. We at the Big South Fork cannot thank them enough for their service and devotion throughout the years. Their presence makes our visitor's experiences positive and enjoyable.

Volunteers in Parks are people of all ages who spend anywhere from a few hours per week to several months per year working for the park. Volunteers work to complete jobs that permanent and seasonal employees do not have the time to accomplish. They provide a service that often would go unattended or incomplete. If you have a special interest or skill that you want to share and would like to participate in the Volunteers in Parks program please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 423-569-9779.

*Scan this QR code with your smartphone for more information about becoming a volunteer with us!*





## An Extraordinary Place

By Howard Duncan, Park Ranger

The Big South Fork is full of natural wonders. The area abounds with waterfalls, magnificent cliffs, sandstone chimney rocks, great overhanging rock shelters and most impressively, the natural arches. Of all the arches within the Big South Fork none are as large or impressive as the two conjoined Twin Arches. Located in the heart of the National Recreation Area the Twin Arches are relatively easy to reach by a short, moderately difficult hike.

The arches are indeed impressive. Taken as one landscape feature they are possibly the largest arch complex in the eastern part of the country. The arches have been named for their geographical orientation as the North Arch and the South Arch.

The North Arch is 62 feet tall with a span of approximately 93 feet while the South Arch is much more robust in appearance being 103 feet tall with a span of 135 and a clearance of 70 feet.

The trail is designed to allow access from the top and bottom of the arches. The arches are so large that it is not possible to view both at the same time. The round trip hike to the arches is approximately 1.5 miles. The 4.6 mile Twin Arches Loop Trail begins from the base of the arches with one side of the trail going to Jake's Place and the other side of the loop going to Charit Creek Lodge. The trail has an elevation loss and gain of approximately 1000 feet over the entire trail (500 feet down and 500 feet back to the arches).

The portion of the trail from North Arch to Jake's Place showcases some of the largest rock shelters to be found in Big South Fork. These rock shelters were very important to the original inhabitants of Big South Fork. Human habitation in Big South Fork dates back approximately 10,000 years. Some of these sites were also used by later settlers and "niter" miners searching for potassium nitrate to use in making gun powder. Jake's Place was the site of the home and farm of Jake and Viannah Blevins. Jake settled at this location in 1884 with his wife Viannah. Jake lived there until his death in 1935 and Viannah continued to live there until her death in 1945.

The Charit Creek Lodge is another interesting stop along the trail. The Lodge is actually an old pioneer homestead that has been around since at least the 1820's. Used by many families over the years and at one time a commercial hunting lodge, the structures have been preserved and adaptively used as a backcountry lodge. It is a wonderful place to rent a bunk, have a wholesome meal and relax to the gentle sounds of Charit and Station Camp Creeks as they transport you back to a simpler time.

The Twin Arches Loop has a little bit of all the elements that make the Big South Fork a very special place. The Twin Arches Trailhead is located off of Divide Road on the western boundary of Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.

