

New River Gorge National Park and Preserve



River Map and Guide



Welcome to the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve



Sunrise at Fayette Station

You are about to embark on one of the most memorable experiences of your life. Whether this is your first trip or your one hundredth, a ride down the New River offers a unique experience every time. There is literally a surprise around every bend.

Traveling Through Time

Your trip on the New River will take you down one of the oldest rivers in the world. Over millions of years, the river has carved a gorge through the mountains. The exposed rock layers within this gorge provides you a glimpse into its geologic past. A tale of shifting continents, moving seas, changing climates, uplift, and erosion. Travel along this river also offers glimpses into its human history and the rejuvenation of a land and its ecosystem.

A Changing Landscape

The natural landscape of the New River is always changing, from morning to evening, season to season, and year to year. The early morning fog that blankets the river gives way to a sparkling ribbon of water in the mid-day sun. Birds chirp, turtles sun themselves on rocks, and the river sings. Dusk offers a chance to glimpse a beaver, mink, raccoon, and muskrat.

Spring rains can cause the river to rise flooding rocky outcrops and scouring the landscape. The forest of early spring showcase serviceberry, redbuds and dogwood blossoms. Summer offers the greens of dense forests, with humming insects and nesting birds. Fall colors herald the migration of thousands of birds, including falcons, eagles, and hawks.

Even in winter, the river never sleeps. Usually too fast to freeze, the river moves through the quiet landscape of the winter months.

Shaped by Humans

The land we see today has been shaped by centuries of human use. Artifacts dating back thousands of years suggest this region was inhabited in prehistoric times. Early people lived in villages in the fertile lowlands. Later, pioneers passed through on their push west, but some stayed to make their homes up and down the river. With the coming of the railroad, people built logging camps and company-owned mining towns. When coal and timber resources were depleted, the towns and mines were abandoned. Today we are witnesses to nature's reclamation of the gorge.

Recreation and Relaxation

New River Gorge National Park and Preserve has become a destination for many who turn to the outdoors for recreation and relaxation. It offers a chance to experience an exciting and challenging river and to enjoy one of the most significant natural areas in our nation.

Safety First

The rapids of the New River vary greatly in difficulty. Changes in water levels can cause the appearance or disappearance of certain features. Strong currents, sudden drop offs, and a rocky, uneven bottom make all sections of the river potentially dangerous.

Selected River Trips

The lower (northern) part of the New River should be attempted only by highly skilled boaters and experienced guides. While less demanding, the upper sections of the river in the park still require whitewater experience. Commercial outfitters offer guided trips on all sections of the river.



View along the Upper New

Upper Gorge

Hinton to Meadow Creek

Trip distance varies - several hours to one-half day

This popular section provides several easy to reach river access locations, and offers great scenery in a less remote setting. Tug Creek, Brooks Falls, and Brooks Ledges require caution.

Akers River Access to Sandstone Falls

7.5 miles - 3-4 hours

This section has a couple Class II and III rapids that are very challenging, particularly at high water levels. **Sandstone Falls is a required portage area.**



Floating the Middle New

Middle Gorge

Meadow Creek Campground to McCreery

13 miles - half day to a full day

This section consists of Class I and II riffles and shoals as well as several Class III rapids. It is among the most isolated stretches of the New River; few roads reach the river in this section.

McCreery to Stone Cliff

11.1 miles - 4 to 6 hours

This section is popular for day and overnight trips as well as for fishing trips. It has several long pools, but also contains challenging intermediate whitewater, particularly at high water levels.



Rafting the Lower New

Lower Gorge

Stone Cliff to Cunard

8.5 miles - half day

This section of the river is mostly flatwater, but has several Class II rapids and one large Class III rapid called "Surprise."

Cunard to Fayette Station

7 miles - half day

This section of the river is narrow and includes technical Class IV to V rapids, and is suitable only for advanced and expert paddlers.

Plan Ahead and Prepare:

- Learn about river issues, regulations, and permits.
- Use a river guidebook and map to plan your trip.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Know your river skills; traveling any section of this river is more demanding than paddling flat water.
- Carry the necessary equipment to minimize your impact on the environment.

River Safety Tips:

- Always wear a personal floatation device (PFD). A secure helmet is also recommended while running rapids.
- Plan to be off the river before dark.
- Do not overload your craft.
- Travel in groups. Never boat alone.
- Be sure to know your put-in and your take-out points.
- Avoid flow-through hazards. Be wary of fallen trees.
- Avoid hydraulics: swim under and downstream to get out.
- If you capsize, stay at the upstream end of the boat.
- Save people first. Rescue boats and equipment when it can be done safely.

How to Use this Guide

Page Number Key



Section Color












-  Lower Gorge
-  Middle Gorge
-  Upper Gorge

Mile Markers

River miles begin at the confluence of the New, Gauley and Kanawha Rivers and progress upstream. This guide follows the New River from mile six, just below Hawks Nest Dam, to mile sixty three, downstream of Hinton, West Virginia.

Enjoy your trip!

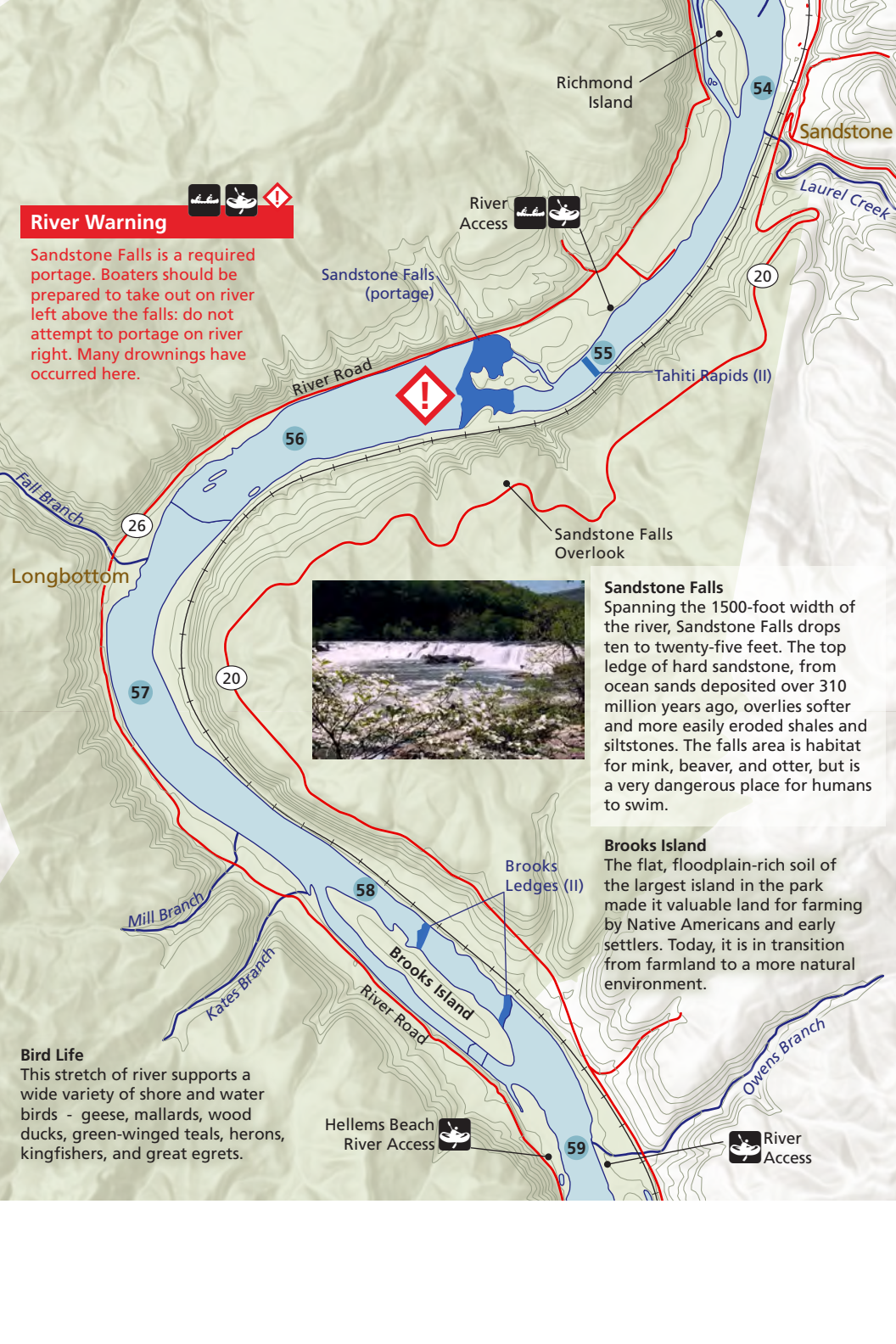
Map Legend

- | | |
|--|--|
|  In/Out Point for Kayaks and Canoes |  Rapids |
|  In/Out Point for Rafts |  River Mile |
|  Boat Ramp |  Highway |
|  Campground |  State Road |
|  Picnic Area |  Roads |
| |  Bridges |



River Warning

Sandstone Falls is a required portage. Boaters should be prepared to take out on river left above the falls: do not attempt to portage on river right. Many drownings have occurred here.



Sandstone Falls
Spanning the 1500-foot width of the river, Sandstone Falls drops ten to twenty-five feet. The top ledge of hard sandstone, from ocean sands deposited over 310 million years ago, overlies softer and more easily eroded shales and siltstones. The falls area is habitat for mink, beaver, and otter, but is a very dangerous place for humans to swim.

Brooks Island
The flat, floodplain-rich soil of the largest island in the park made it valuable land for farming by Native Americans and early settlers. Today, it is in transition from farmland to a more natural environment.

Bird Life
This stretch of river supports a wide variety of shore and water birds - geese, mallards, wood ducks, green-winged teals, herons, kingfishers, and great egrets.

Hellems Beach
River Access

River Access

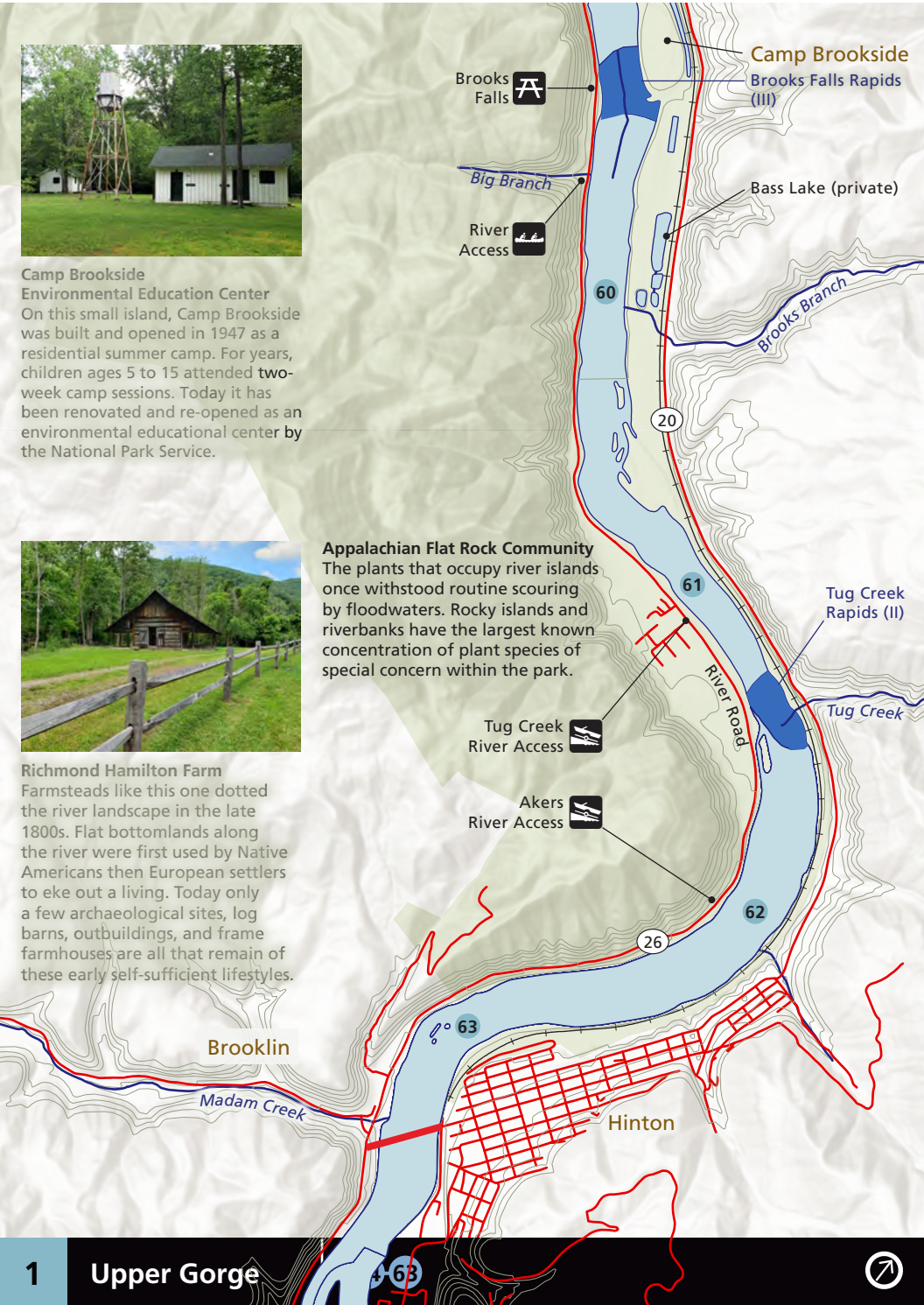


Camp Brookside Environmental Education Center
 On this small island, Camp Brookside was built and opened in 1947 as a residential summer camp. For years, children ages 5 to 15 attended two-week camp sessions. Today it has been renovated and re-opened as an environmental educational center by the National Park Service.



Richmond Hamilton Farm
 Farmsteads like this one dotted the river landscape in the late 1800s. Flat bottomlands along the river were first used by Native Americans then European settlers to eke out a living. Today only a few archaeological sites, log barns, outbuildings, and frame farmhouses are all that remain of these early self-sufficient lifestyles.

Appalachian Flat Rock Community
 The plants that occupy river islands once withstood routine scouring by floodwaters. Rocky islands and riverbanks have the largest known concentration of plant species of special concern within the park.



Glade Creek

Hamlet

Glade

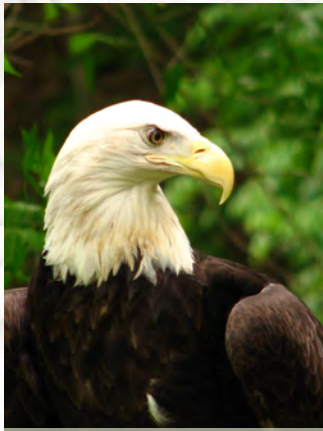
Hamlet Bridge Piers

The piers that rise out of the river once held a rail line used to transport lumber from the sawmill in Hamlet to the main line at Glade during the early 1900s.



Hamlet Town Site

Traces of the sawmill, millpond, company store, and old rail bed, are a testament to the hardworking people of Hamlet, an early 1900s sawmill town.



Eagles

Bald eagles can be sighted along the river corridor. They are nesting along Bluestone Lake and fish the shallow riffles of the upper New River. Bans on pesticides and hunting are helping these great birds recover from near extinction in the 1960s.

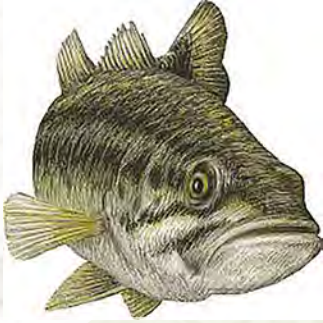
Rocky Rapids (II)

49

Camp Branch

Panther Branch

Davis Branch



Black Bass

The area from the I-64 bridge downstream to Grandview Sandbar is designated a black bass catch and release area.



Richmond Homestead

The Richmond family has farmed the riverbank and adjacent island for more than 200 years. They once operated a ferry at the town of Sandstone, originally named New Richmond. In 1812, their gristmill stood upstream at Sandstone Falls.

Mary Draper Ingles Bridge

Rocky Rapids (II)

Meadow Creek

Meadow Creek Campground



Sandstone Visitor Center is a gateway to the southern reaches of the park. Water is the theme of the museum exhibits and the video program. Notable are a floor map of the New River watershed, a bookstore, and a native plant garden. The visitor center is not accessible from the river.

Sandstone Visitor Center





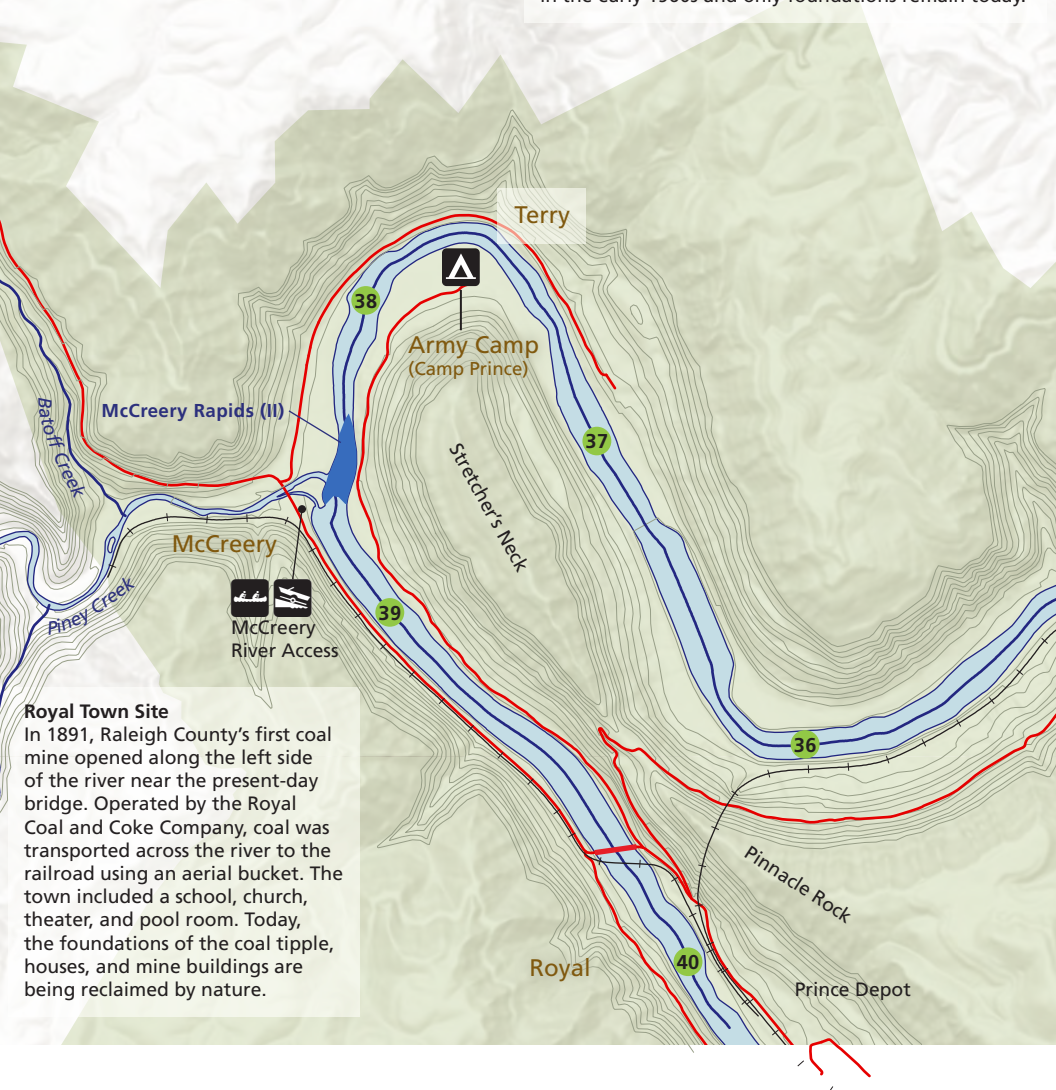
Batoff Mountain

Some say that this mountain was originally called Batteau Mountain, after the French word for boat, bateau. Boats would stop here to unload their goods and transport them up and over the mountain to avoid the hazardous rapids downstream.



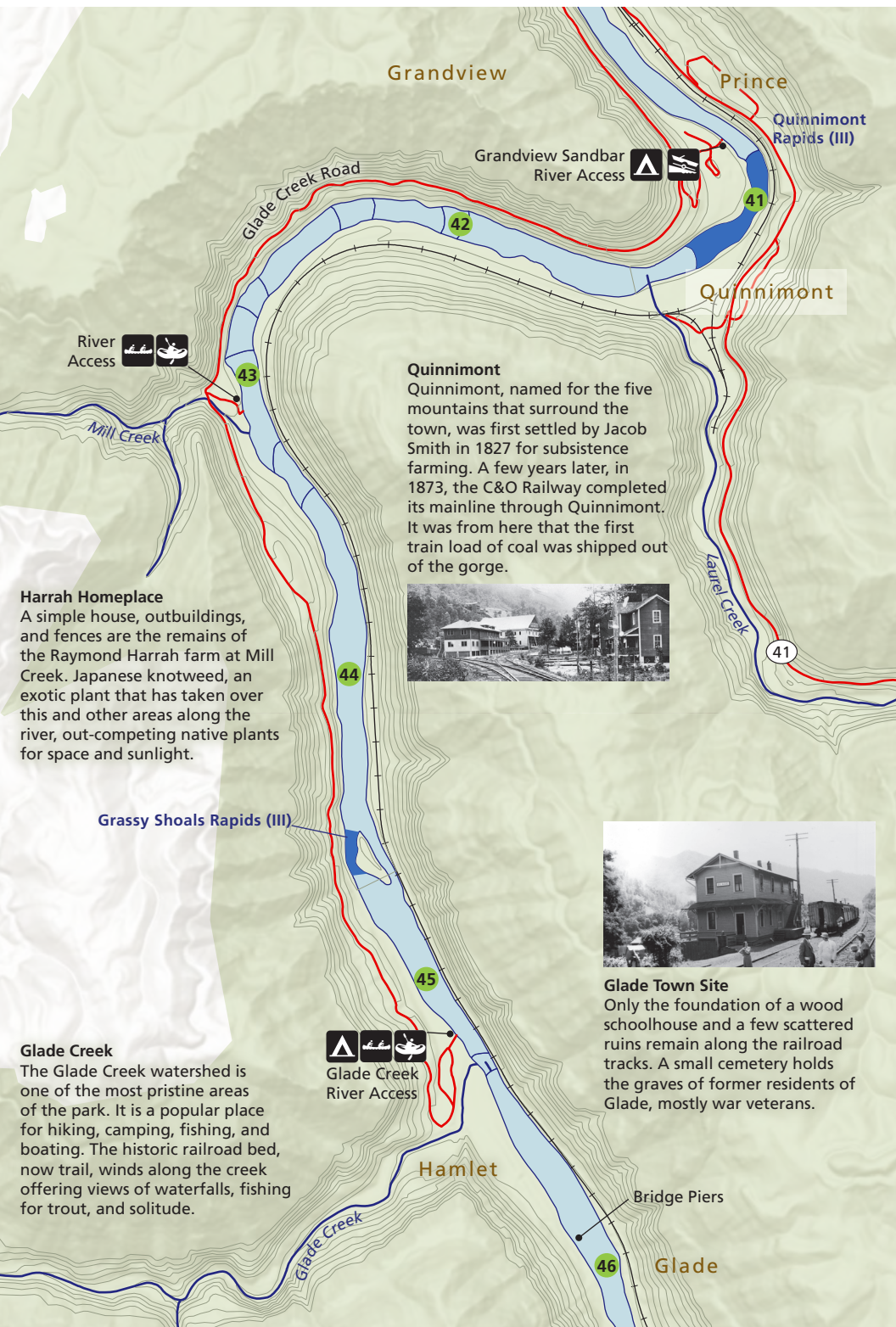
Army Camp

Camp Prince, or Army Camp as it was known locally was established around 1950 as a U.S Army training and testing ground for the quick assembly of floating bridges. These bridges were used for stream crossings of military equipment and personnel. The camp closed in the early 1960s and only foundations remain today.



Royal Town Site

In 1891, Raleigh County's first coal mine opened along the left side of the river near the present-day bridge. Operated by the Royal Coal and Coke Company, coal was transported across the river to the railroad using an aerial bucket. The town included a school, church, theater, and pool room. Today, the foundations of the coal tippie, houses, and mine buildings are being reclaimed by nature.



Grandview

Prince

Quinnimont Rapids (III)

Grandview Sandbar River Access

Glade Creek Road

Quinnimont

River Access

Mill Creek

Quinnimont
 Quinnimont, named for the five mountains that surround the town, was first settled by Jacob Smith in 1827 for subsistence farming. A few years later, in 1873, the C&O Railway completed its mainline through Quinnimont. It was from here that the first train load of coal was shipped out of the gorge.



Harrah Homeplace

A simple house, outbuildings, and fences are the remains of the Raymond Harrah farm at Mill Creek. Japanese knotweed, an exotic plant that has taken over this and other areas along the river, out-competing native plants for space and sunlight.

Grassy Shoals Rapids (III)



Glade Town Site

Only the foundation of a wood schoolhouse and a few scattered ruins remain along the railroad tracks. A small cemetery holds the graves of former residents of Glade, mostly war veterans.

Glade Creek

The Glade Creek watershed is one of the most pristine areas of the park. It is a popular place for hiking, camping, fishing, and boating. The historic railroad bed, now trail, winds along the creek offering views of waterfalls, fishing for trout, and solitude.

Glade Creek River Access

Hamlet

Bridge Piers

Glade



A Rich Resource

New River Gorge is the most prominent geologic feature in Southern West Virginia. Here the New River has cut a V-shaped gorge through the Allegheny Plateau exposing more than 3,200 feet of rock layers dating from 340 to 280 million years ago. The exposed layers of rocks are composed primarily of sandstone, limestone, and shale with interspersed layers of coal. In the lower gorge, the river cuts through Nuttall Sandstone, an uncommon sandstone that is 98% quartz.

As the New River follows its south to northwesterly path through the gorge, it connects with land to form distinct hydrologic features and aquatic habitats that support rich communities of fish, mussels, crayfish, and benthic macroinvertebrates—small insect larvae and other animals living among plants, rocks, logs, and sediment on stream bottoms.



New River Gorge also supports a diverse and significant collection of plant species due in part to the moisture gradient in the gorge. Steep ravines along some of the numerous tributaries to the New River provide distinctive habitats. Rocky outcrops, cliff faces, and waterfalls create specific microclimates that support plant species found only in this area.

Although the riparian area—the land adjacent to the river—only encompasses about 2% of the Park's landmass, it accounts for 65% of the plant diversity.

Within the gorge, one finds a unique ecosystem known as the Appalachian Riverside Flatrock Community. This plant community contains a rare assemblage of plants found in only a few places in the world. For centuries, intermittent floods flushed the flatrock community's hard, flat sandstone, stripping away soil, only allowing species to persist that are able to cope with the harsh environment. Many of the plants found in this community exist nowhere else in New River Gorge.

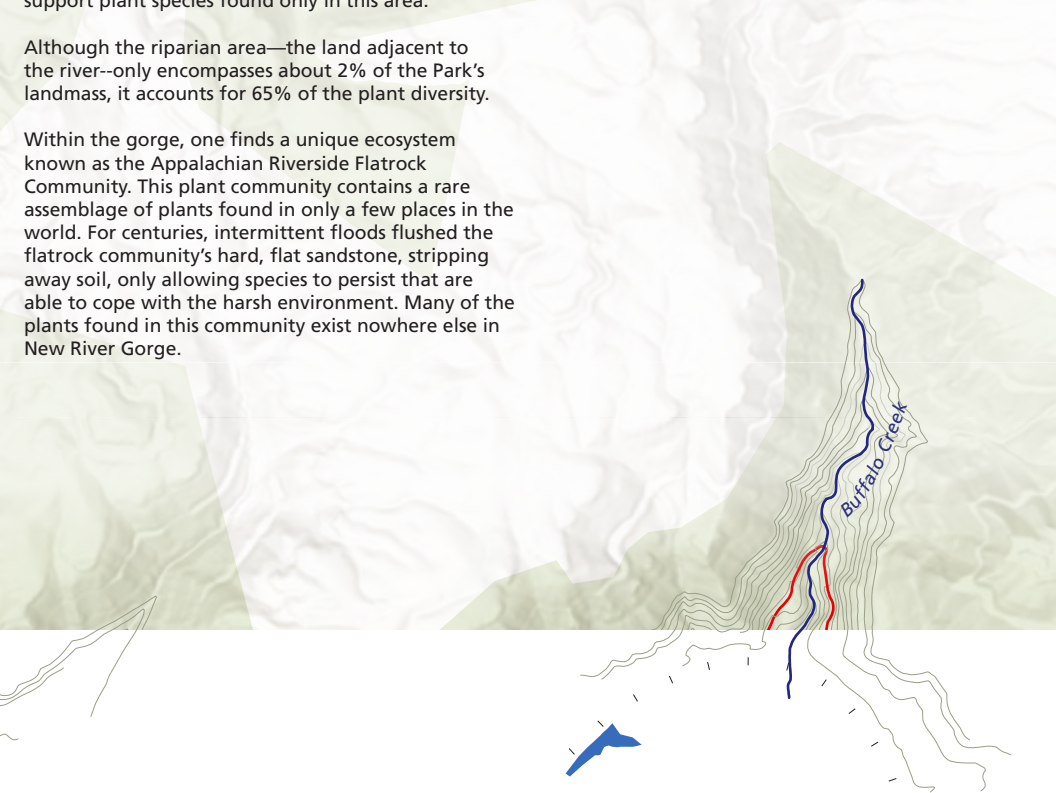
New River Gorge has at least 51 species of mammals, including threatened and endangered species such as Virginia big-eared bat, Indiana bat, and Northern long-eared bat.

Present also is the Allegheny woodrat, a species of special concern in West Virginia that is declining significantly throughout the eastern United States.

The river, stream tributaries, tracts of continuous forest, and abundant abandoned mine portals provide habitat for 30 known species of amphibians. These include the eastern hellbender, black-bellied salamander, and cave salamander. New River Gorge is located near the northern edge of the global salamander species diversity hotspot, which covers the south and central sections of the Appalachian Mountains. This biodiversity hotspot has the highest number of salamander species in the world!



The region is a vital link in the north-south migratory flyway. Each year, thousands of hawks fly across the region during the fall migratory season. Many songbird species utilize nesting and breeding habitat within the region's diverse river and stream riparian zones, forests, and cliff ledges.



Sand Silos

These cylindrical bins once stored sand used for glassmaking. The sand was quarried from sandstone near the rim of the gorge.

Sand Silos •

Claremont

Silo Rapids (III)

DANGER!!
Metal Stake
In River

River
Access

Thayer

Slater Creek



McKendree Hospital

For forty years, West Virginia operated the McKendree Hospital located on river right to treat the medical needs of coal miners and as a training hospital for hundreds of nurses. In 1941, the hospital became a home for the elderly until it closed permanently in 1956. The abandoned building has since been torn down.

Ledges Rapids (III)

McKendree
Hospital



Dowdy Creek

Enjoy a beautiful waterfall only a short walk from the river by walking through the culvert under the railroad tracks and along the edge of Dowdy Creek.

White House Rapids (II)

35

Dowdy Creek



Thurmond Historic District (above and right)

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, Thurmond became the commercial and financial center of the New River Gorge and for a while, the most lucrative town on the C&O Railway. Huge amounts of coal were brought into Thurmond from area mines to be shipped out on the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway. Having many coal barons among its patrons, Thurmond's banks were the richest in the state.

By 1910, Thurmond was the chief railroad center on the C & O Railway mainline. Fifteen passenger trains a day came through town and the depot served as many as 95,000 passengers a year.



However, with the onset of the Great Depression; less coal coming in from local mines; and the advent of diesel locomotives, the town began a steady decline. The many businesses in town closed and most of its residents moved on.

Today, the town of Thurmond remains surprisingly untouched by modern development. It is a link to our past, and a town with many stories to tell. Be sure to visit the restored Thurmond Depot Visitor Center, open from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Southside

Across the river from Thurmond was Southside, a place for business and pleasure. It boasted the famous Dungen Hotel as well as many stores, a movie theater, mortuary, and a railroad yard. Saloons with high-stakes gambling and brothels also lured many to the wilder side of Southside, also known as "Ballyhack."





Unfragmented Appalachian Forest
 New River gorge lies at the core of the globally significant Appalachian forest. The Gorge contains the most diverse flora of any river gorge in central and southern Appalachia. It provides essential habitats for endangered mammals, rare birds and amphibians. A dedicated botanist could find almost 1400 species of plants in the park.



Nuttallburg Mine Site

The Nuttallburg mining complex is the most nationally significant historic resource within the park. By the 1890s, the Nuttallburg Mine was one of the largest mines in the gorge. Henry Ford leased the mine in the early 1920s, as part of his effort to acquire control of raw materials needed for automobile production.



Rams Head

The gorge walls get steeper at the Rams Head rock formation and reveal the Nuttall Sandstone layer, prized by rock climbers.



Kaymoor Mine Site

Kaymoor was the longest lasting and most productive of the mines in the gorge. It closed in 1962. The remains of the mine complex are accessible by the Kaymoor Trail or the Kaymoor Miners Trail.

Cunard

River Warning

The river becomes more powerful and technical here. It narrows sharply and begins its strong descent. Only skilled paddlers should attempt the Class IV/V rapids from here to Fayette Station Rapids.



Red Ash Island

As part of the Red Ash Coal Camp, the island served many purposes. During the smallpox and influenza epidemics, it served as a "pest house" and cemetery where some 200 victims of the diseases and those killed in local mine disasters. In other years, the island was used for community gatherings, baseball games, picnics, and dances.

Brooklyn River Access
Brooklyn

Upper Railroad Rapids (IV)

Pinball Rapids (II)
(aka Indigestion Rapids)

Big Bologna Rapids (III)

Sewell Babcock State Park

Sewell

Crumbling foundations are the only remnants of the town left today. Sewell, one of the earliest and largest mining towns in the gorge, had 196 coke ovens in use that ran over a mile along the tracks. Nearby is the site of the 1798 Bowyers Ferry, one of the first ferry crossings on the New River.

Surprise Rapids (III)

River Warning

Surprise Rapid, Class III, has a large hole and hydraulic at its bottom - a surprise that can trick both inexperienced and experienced paddlers.

Red Ash Island

CSX Railroad No Trespassing

Beury

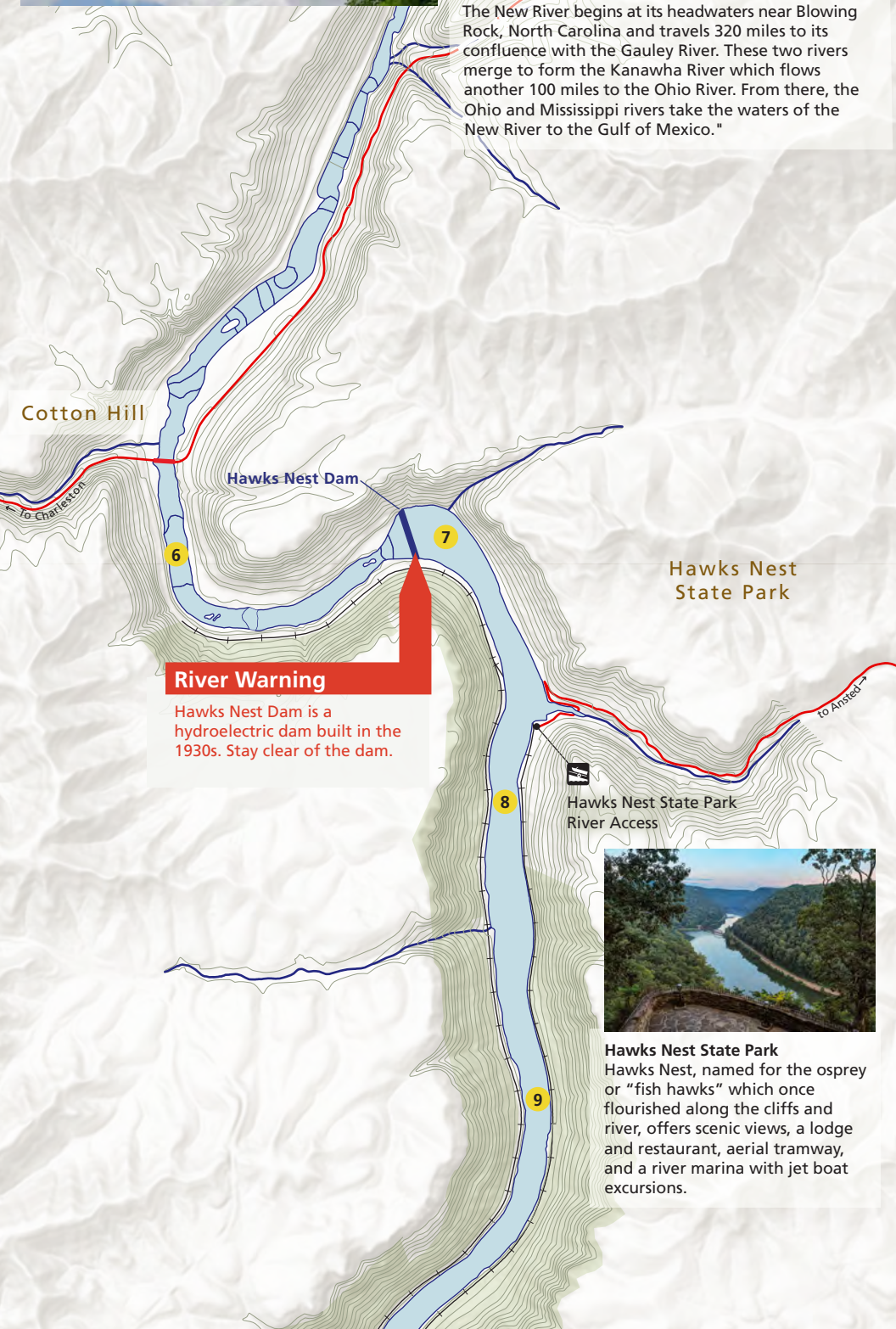




The New River Dries

The New River below Hawks Nest Lake, also known as the New River Dries, is generally too low to navigate for much of the year. The lake and dam were built in the 1930s to divert water from the river through the Hawks Nest Tunnel to a hydroelectric plant approximately 5 miles downstream. To determine an estimate of water flow in the Dries, take the cubic feet per second (cfs) from the USGS gauge at Thurmond and subtract 10,000 cfs. Check the Thurmond gauge at <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/usa/nwis/uv?03185400>

The New River begins at its headwaters near Blowing Rock, North Carolina and travels 320 miles to its confluence with the Gauley River. These two rivers merge to form the Kanawha River which flows another 100 miles to the Ohio River. From there, the Ohio and Mississippi rivers take the waters of the New River to the Gulf of Mexico."



Cotton Hill

Hawks Nest Dam

River Warning

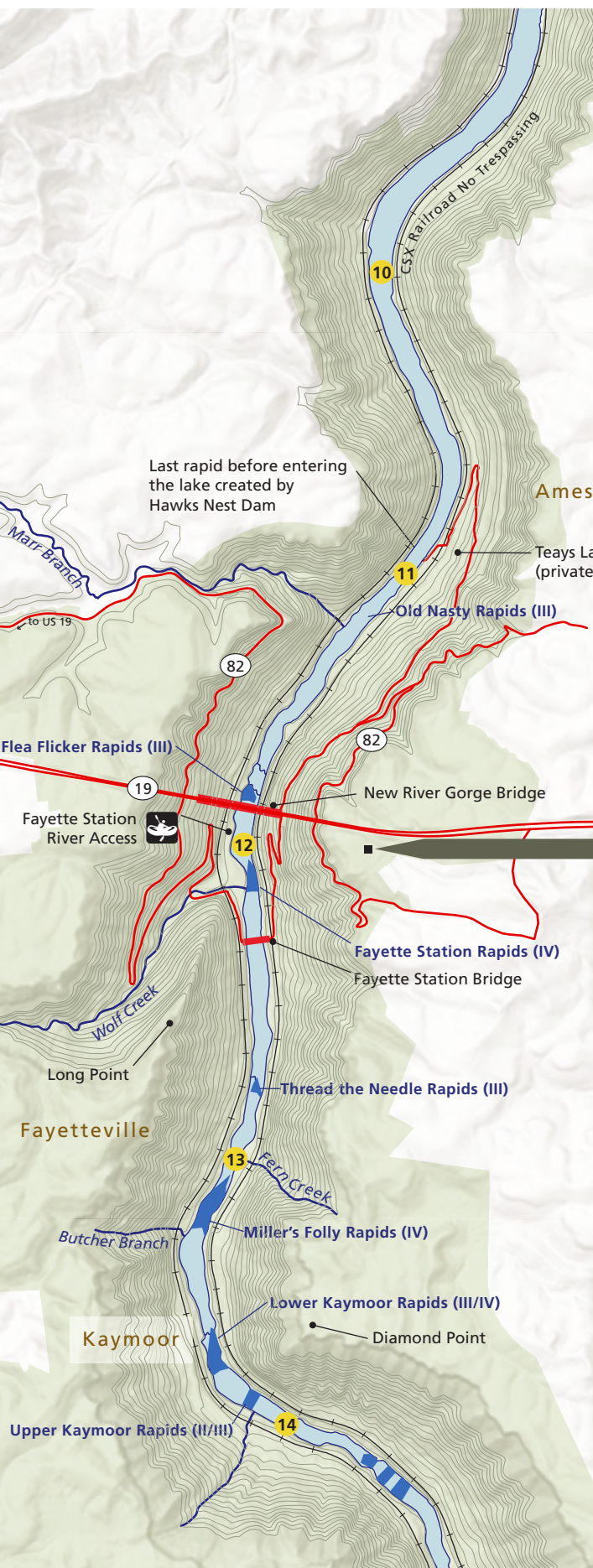
Hawks Nest Dam is a hydroelectric dam built in the 1930s. Stay clear of the dam.

Hawks Nest State Park

Hawks Nest State Park River Access



Hawks Nest State Park
Hawks Nest, named for the osprey or "fish hawks" which once flourished along the cliffs and river, offers scenic views, a lodge and restaurant, aerial tramway, and a river marina with jet boat excursions.



Canyon Rim Visitor Center
 Located on the rim of the gorge, the visitor center provides park and area information, a museum, and boardwalk. Step outside or take a short walk along the boardwalks for spectacular views into the gorge and of the New River Gorge Bridge.



Fayette Station Bridge
 Built in 1889, the Fayette Station Bridge connected the north and south sides of the gorge. Reconstructed in 1998, the bridge is open to one-way traffic. Pick up a Fayette Station Road Audio Tour at the Canyon Rim Visitor Center for more on the history of the road and area.

River Names

The naming of river features is a long-standing tradition that embodies stories of adventure, excitement, and warning. Many features have more than one name and the origins of the names are as varied and interesting as the river itself. The descriptions below offer a small glimpse into river lore.

River Rapids

This list of rapids is in no way intended to be complete or to serve as a how-to-run-a-rapid. It does not substitute for wearing a PFD, having experience, using good judgment, scouting, or recognizing new hazards, changing conditions, and daily water level fluctuations.

Below are listed the major rapids in the Lower Gorge from Dungen to Fayette Station.

Surprise- Class III

The fact that you cannot see the rapid until you are upon it gives this rapid its name. At river levels above two and one-half feet, a large hole and a series of breaking waves form that can easily flip a sixteen-foot raft.

Upper Railroad- Class III

Located upstream of the railroad trestle, Upper Railroad crosses the river a few miles below Surprise. The pool downstream of the railroad trestle is one of the deepest on the river—so deep that some say it holds a railroad car from an accident in the early 1900s.

Lower Railroad- Class III

This rapid has been the site of several fatalities at very low river levels. Difficulty increases tremendously at these levels due to an undercut rock called "Clam Shell," located about fifty feet off the left bank.

Swimmers- Class II

A small rapid, some folks find Swimmers enjoyable to swim.

The Warm-ups- Class II to III

The next three or four rapids are mere "warm-ups" to the Keeneys.

The first, Stripper's Hole, is named for the large hydraulic in the middle of the river. The hole is so powerful it can strip a raft clean of its paddles and more than a few paddlers have lost their shorts! At lower levels, it is also called "Scramble Like a Rat," because of the pinning rocks at the bottom right.

The second Warm-Up, also known as Ender Waves, is a favorite surf spot. At high water the rocks on the left create a large, nasty hydraulic known as Pig Farmer Falls.

Upper Keeney- Class III

The "Keeneys" are three rapids that begin at the confluence of Keeney Creek. You can recognize Upper Keeney by a huge boulder that looks like a humpback whale, Whale Rock.

Middle Keeney- Class IV to V

Middle Keeney has several large waves, holes, and rocks. At high water, Upper and Middle Keeney merge into one rapid with powerful breaking waves that can easily flip a boat. This wave train leads into Meat Grinder river right at the top of Lower Keeney, a place of numerous undercut rocks and sieves.

Lower Keeney- Class IV

Lower Keeney is a very powerful rapid because the gradient has doubled and the river has been squeezed to half its width between large undercut rocks at the top right and the left bank. Most of the current flows from right to left, pushing boats into large waves and the boulder on the left shore. Halls of Karma is a large diagonal boulder just below Lower Keeney. At medium to low water it creates very strong eddy lines and powerful boils. At higher flows, it turns into a large breaking hole that flips boats and is named "Lollygag."

Dudley's Dip or French Bread Loaf- Class III+

This rapid is called Dudley's Dip for the swim taken by the Lysander Dudley, Commissioner of the West Virginia Department of Commerce in the late 1960s. This rapid has undercut rocks along both banks. At low water there are two pour-overs.

Double Z- Class IV+

Originally named "Sunset" because one of the first exploratory trips was taken at dusk, the rapid is more commonly known as Double Z. A zig-zag maneuver is required to get through the rapid at mid to low water levels to avoid obstacles such as a pinning rock called "oughter rock" at the top right. (You oughter be right of it.)

At water levels less than one foot, Table Rock, a big flat undercut rock appears in the center near the bottom of the rapid. Vulture Rock is a long diagonal slab rock at the bottom right of Table Rock.

Hook 99 (Harmon's 99 or Harmon's Hole)- Class III

This rapid was named for C-1 (one-person canoe) racer Richard Harmon whose boat became pinned upside down against the large undercut rock in the center of the river. River runners who decided to name the rapid after the pinned boat read the number as 99 instead of 66.

Greyhound Bus Stopper- Class III+ to IV

A large sloping rock spans almost the width of the river, splitting the current to each side. At high water, the rock creates a river-wide hydraulic, and river lore says that it has enough force to stop a Greyhound bus.



Upper and Lower Kaymoor- Class II to III+

Upper and Lower Kaymoor are two small rapids that are named for the old mining town of Kaymoor. A large recirculating hydraulic, called "Teacher's Pet" forms at the bottom right of Lower Kaymoor.

Millers Folly- Class IV

The longest rapid on the New River, Miller's Folly (Undercut Rapid), has some enormous rolling waves no matter the water level. On the top right are large undercut rocks. There are large pour-overs and hydraulics on the top left at higher water. Bloody Nose Hole is very shallow and rocky at low water levels and becomes a large hydraulic at higher water levels.

Thread the Needle- Class II

Thread the Needle is also called "Tweenies," because you go 'tween the rocks. It boasts minor rapids at low water levels, but creates very large holes at water levels above eight feet.

Fayette Station- Class IV

At mid to high water levels, there is a large hydraulic on the river right about half-way through the rapid. This is the last public take-out before Hawks Nest Lake.

Flea Flicker and Old Nasty- Class III

Flea Flicker is the first rapid downstream of New River Gorge Bridge. Old Nasty is named after the large crunching hole which forms at high water. On river right, Teays Landing is a private river access. The next take out is at Hawks Nest Lake.

Running Rapids

The difficulty in running a rapid is related to changes in water levels and the appearance or disappearance of certain features. Always know which river gauge system and what conversion chart you are using to compare the Hinton, Thurmond, and Fayette Station gauges.

The minimum suggested water level for running the Lower New River is minus two feet, and the maximum suggested level is twelve feet. At normal summer flows of usually less than 2.5 feet, at Fayette Station, Lower New trips are generally from Cunard to Fayette station. At greater flows, trips often begin at Stone Cliff/Dunglen.

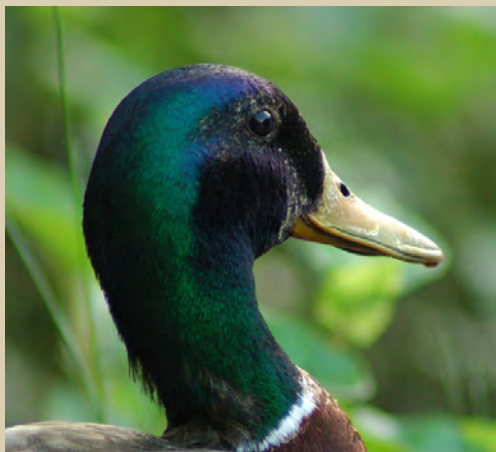
The best gauge for trips on the Upper New is the Hinton gauge operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. At readings of 2.5 or higher, the river is wide and powerful.

CFS

New River flow levels are described both by feet and CFS (cubic feet per second). The rate of flow of a river is measured by the rate at which a volume of water passes a given point in a given amount of time. A cubic foot, a box measuring one foot by one foot by one foot, is approximately the size of an American basketball. Imagine 60,000 basketballs passing a single point per second. During very heavy rains, the New River near Fayette Station can run as high as 60,000 CFS. The only word for it is truly "raging."

For additional information and links to West Virginia Real Time Hydrologic Data, visit the park website at <http://www.nps.gov/neri>

Fishing and Wildlife



The New River area has long served as a migration corridor for a wide variety of plants and animals. Over 65 types of mammal and 38 species of reptiles inhabit the area, and over 250 species of birds are found within the park boundaries. The richness of the park's river corridor ecosystem creates many diverse habitats that provide homes for this wide array of plant and animals life.

Fishing is one of the most popular activities on the New River. The diversity of fish in its waters makes it an excellent warm water fishery. West Virginia's Division of Natural Resources stocks the New's tributaries each spring with golden, rainbow, brook and brown trout.



Rules and Regulations



General Rules and Regulations

- Personal floatation devices are required.
- Camping is allowed throughout the park on federally-owned lands unless otherwise posted. A campsite must be at least 100 feet away from any river access area, developed trailhead, top edge or bottom of any cliff, park structure, or historic ruin. Length of stay is limited to 14 days at the same camping area. There is no camping fee.
- Open fires are allowed where campfire receptacles are provided and must be built in these designated containers. Campfires are prohibited within 100 feet of any river access area, developed trailhead, top edge or bottom of any cliff, park structure, or historic ruin. Use only dead and down wood. Be sure campfires are out and cold before leaving the area.
- Public intoxication or disorderly conduct is not permitted. The use of alcoholic beverages is prohibited at Thayer, and Dungen.
- Any vehicle that obstructs traffic or fails to comply with traffic control signs will be towed at the owner's expense.
- Respect the rights of private property owners. Tampering, damaging, or defacing government property is prohibited.
- Littering is prohibited. Do not burn trash.
- Pets must be restrained at all times; leashes are not to exceed 6 feet.
- Quiet hours are between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Practice LEAVE NO TRACE

Leave No Trace principles hold true when on and around rivers, lakes, and other bodies of water. Here are a few tips to help minimize your impact of our water resources.

Plan Ahead

- Learn about this river's specific regulations and issues.
- Schedule your trip knowing your group's skill level based on sections of the river you plan to paddle and current river conditions and levels.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Use established campsites large enough for your group.
- Beach your craft at an established landing site; avoid sensitive riparian areas.

Campfire Impact

- Carry and use a portable stove to cook on during the trip.
- Use only existing fire rings for open fires. Don't build new rings or dig pits.

Dispose of Waste

- Pack it in, Pack it out.
- Take a garbage bag with you to store and carry out your waste in. The issue of human waste is the biggest cause of pollution along the river. Use available toilet facilities at river access points and campgrounds. At other times use a washable, reusable toilet or other approved method to pack out human waste and trash.

Leave What You Find

- Prevent the spread of non-native species by thoroughly cleaning equipment after a water trip and properly disposing of live bait.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

- Treat others like you want to be treated.



Fishing

Catch and release programs ensure that there will be fish for future generations to fish for and for you to catch the next time you are out fishing.

Check the West Virginia Dept. of Natural Resources regulations for current catch and release locations and species in the park.

Things to consider when fishing a catch and release area:

- Return the fish to the water quickly, handling it as little as possible.
- Unhook the fish in the water.
- Use needle-nose pliers to remove the hook quickly and carefully.
- Move the fish in the water, moving water through its gills until it can swim away.



New River Gorge National Park and Preserve is one of more than 400 nationally significant places that make up the National Park System. Parks are special places that preserve and protect our nation's culture and history, scenic beauty, wildlife, plants, and provides sanctuaries for renewal of mind, body, and soul. By visiting New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, you have become one of the nearly 300 million visitors who have experienced one of these special places.

Because national parks are protected, you and future generations can plan on returning again and again for equally wonderful experiences.

For Park Information:

New River Gorge National Park and Preserve
PO Box 246
Glen Jean, WV 25846
304-465-0508

www.nps.gov/neri

