Help protect archaeological sites and habitat for threatened and endangered species. DON’T CAMP OR BUILD FIRES IN ROCKSHELTERS OR ALONG THE CLIFFS.

NOTE: This map is not intended for use as a trail map. If you plan on hiking any of the longer trails, and if you are not familiar with the area, we suggest using trail maps showing topography. Maps can be obtained from the locations listed on the back of this brochure.

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A pass is required for parking overnight in the Gorge and Indian Creek Area (between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.). Passes are available in local stores and at the District Office in Stanton.

The Sheltowee Trace National Recreation Trail (Trail #100) traverses the entire length of the Daniel Boone National Forest. Most of the Sheltowee Trace passes through the Red River Gorge. The trail is marked by a diamond-shaped blaze or a turtle symbol. The cliffs of the Red River Gorge are beautiful, but they are also dangerous. Please be careful.
WELCOME to the Red River Gorge Geological Area, a unique and scenic national area designated and managed by the USDA Forest Service. A National Natural Landmark, the Gorge is a part of the Daniel Boone National Forest. It is managed for year-round public use and enjoyment and to protect its watershed, wildlife, spectacular geological features, primitive character, and public safety.

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Natural Stone Arches. The number, size, and variety of natural stone arches in the Gorge contribute to its uniqueness. Sculpted by 70 million years of wind and water, the Gorge offers spectacular views of heavily forested slopes, ridges, and cliffs that provide a stunning backdrop for more than 100 natural arches.

Clifftop Wilderness. Within the Gorge is Clifftop Wilderness, a rugged and undeveloped area designated as wilderness by Congress in 1985. This 12,646-acre area features arches, rock shelters, and towering cliffs encircling steep, forested slopes and narrow stream valleys.

Hiking Trails. Many arches in the Gorge can be found or viewed from the 60 miles of hiking trails. One of the best known and most accessible arches is Sky Bridge, 75 feet long and 23.5 feet high.

TRAILS. Trails within the Red River Gorge have been designated National Recreation Trails. These trails are open to hiking only. Mountain bikes and all motorized vehicles are prohibited on trails in the Red River Gorge. Horses are permitted on designated trails.

Nada Tunnel. An interesting way to enter the Red River Gorge is through the 500-foot Nada Tunnel, located along KY 77. This tunnel, open to one-lane traffic only, was built for use by a logging railroad during the early 1900’s.

Koomer Ridge Campground is a U.S. Fee Area with trailer/tent spaces, vault toilets, fire grills, lantern posts, drinking water, picnic tables, and an amphitheater. Sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Tent sites remain open year-round, although reservations are available during the off season. Koomer Ridge Campground is in full operation from mid-April through the end of October.

The Red River. Kentucky’s first National Wild and Scenic River, the Red River, offers the canoeist a memorable trip. The river flows through the area designated and managed by the USDA Forest Service. A National Natural Landmark, the Gorge is a part of the Daniel Boone National Forest.

The Red River Gorge is through the 900-foot Nada Tunnel, located along KY 77. This tunnel, open to one-lane traffic only, was built for use by a logging railroad during the early 1900’s.

Archaeology. Archaeological studies are providing insight into the lives of prehistoric people who lived in the Gorge. These Native Americans left no written records, but clues about their way of life still exist. Archaeological sites scattered throughout the Gorge provide many clues about how they lived. In later times, history records that the area was occupied by the Shawnee and other tribes, and adventurers such as Christopher Gist, Dr. Thomas Walker, and Daniel Boone preceded settlers by colonial Europeans moving west. Campsites, old buildings, and historic farmsteads still tell their stories. These fragile archaeological resources are irreplaceable and must be protected. Archaeological sites are protected under the law. To preserve these sites:

• Do not disturb rock shelters.
• Do not collect or dig for artifacts.
• Do not disturb the soil, dig, or move rocks.
• Obey all signs and encourage others to do the same.

All artifacts and cultural resources are protected by state and federal law. Report looting or vandalism to the Stanton District Office.

SAFETY

General. Everyone who enters the Red River Gorge should be aware that the area is rugged and quite difficult to navigate. Most serious injuries and deaths are caused by falls. Care should be taken to watch your footing and avoid overstepping or slipping.

WARNING

DANGEROUS CLIFFS

• Avoid camping near the edge of cliffs. You may be closer to the edge than you realize.
• Plan to arrive at your destination before dark.
• Avoid getting close to dangerous cliffs.
• Foot travel after dark is not safe. If you must travel after dark, stay in familiar areas and use a flashlight.
• Watch your footing when walking near cliffs. Trees and bushes can’t be trusted to hold you if you slip.
• Watch your children carefully, and keep them close to you at all times. Don’t let them run.

INFORMATION

Koomer Ridge Campground, located along KY 77, is the only structured camping area in the area. The Center provides trail, camping, and other information. Maps, passes, books, and souvenirs are available for purchase. The Center is open seven days a week during spring through fall from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

OBJECTIVES

Safeguarding the common inheritance from past generations and adventurers such as Christopher Gist, Dr. Thomas Walker, and Daniel Boone, the Gorge provides many clues about how they lived. In later times, history records that the area was occupied by the Shawnee and other tribes, and adventurers such as Christopher Gist, Dr. Thomas Walker, and Daniel Boone preceded settlers by colonial Europeans moving west. Campsites, old buildings, and historic farmsteads still tell their stories. These fragile archaeological resources are irreplaceable and must be protected. Archaeological sites are protected under the law. To preserve these sites:

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