

Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Canaan Valley
National Wildlife Refuge
6263 Appalachian Highway
Davis, WV 26260
304/866 3858
E-mail: canaanvalley@fws.gov
http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Canaan_Valley/

To report emergencies or violations call
304/815 3000

Federal Relay Service
for the deaf and hard-of-hearing
1 800/877 8339

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
<http://www.fws.gov>

January 2016



Bobolink
Steve Maslowski/USFWS

Permitted:



- Hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding and bicycling are allowed on designated routes.



- Hunting is permitted in accordance with state and refuge regulations. A refuge hunt permit is required.



- Persons possessing, transporting or carrying firearms on national wildlife refuges must comply with all provisions of state and local law. Firearms are not allowed in any Federal buildings.



- Dogs must be on a leash, not left unattended, and are restricted to designated pedestrian routes except when used for hunting in accordance with refuge regulations.

Prohibited:



- Camping
- Open fires
- Cutting firewood
- Littering



- Off-road vehicles including snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles



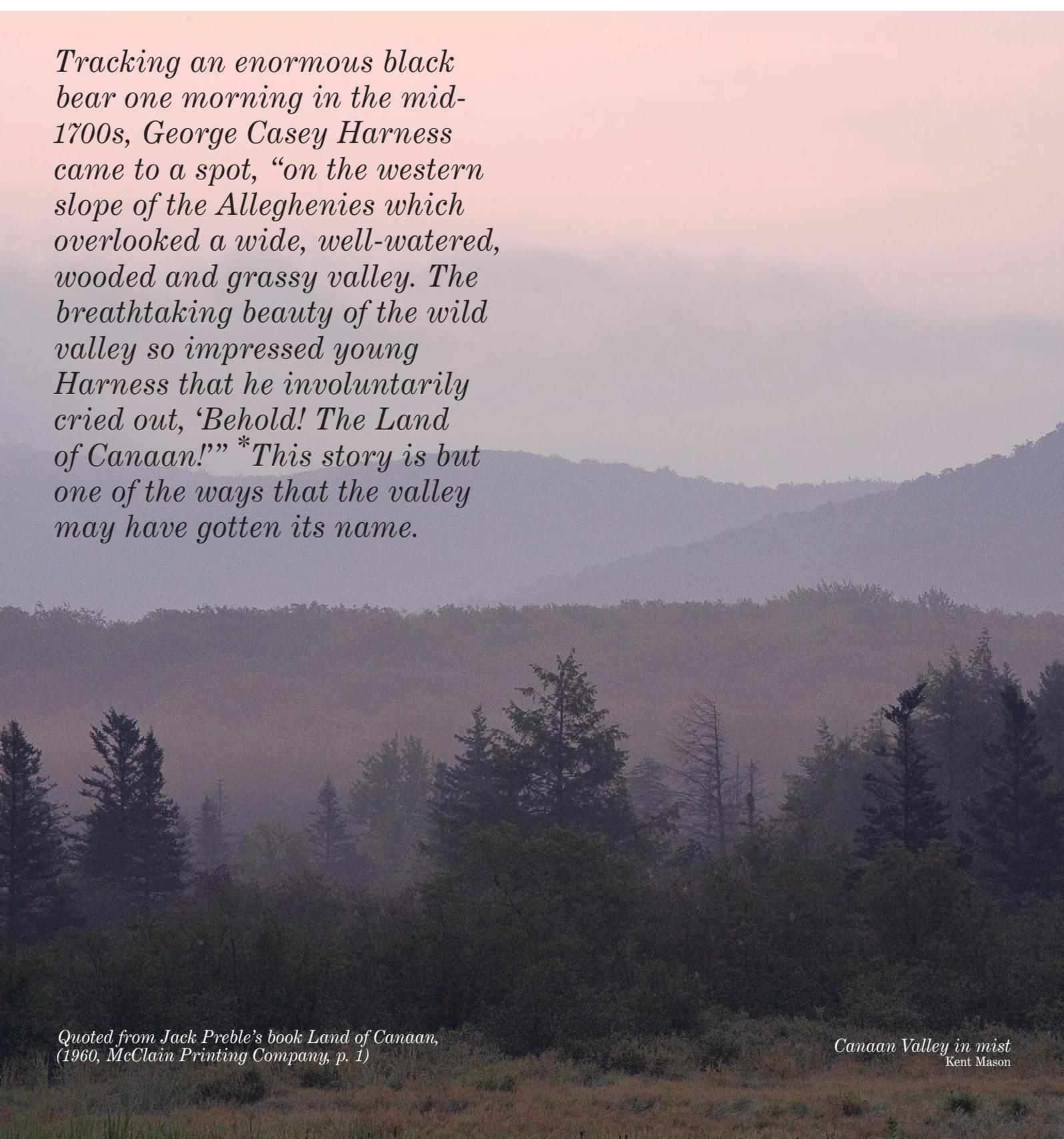
- Feeding wildlife
- Abandoning wild or domestic animals on the refuge

- Collecting plants, animals or other natural, historical or archeological items

- Overnight parking in parking lots except in designated lots

- Permanent structures such as tree stands, stairways or rope swings





*Tracking an enormous black bear one morning in the mid-1700s, George Casey Harness came to a spot, “on the western slope of the Alleghenies which overlooked a wide, well-watered, wooded and grassy valley. The breathtaking beauty of the wild valley so impressed young Harness that he involuntarily cried out, ‘Behold! The Land of Canaan!’” *This story is but one of the ways that the valley may have gotten its name.*

*Quoted from Jack Preble’s book Land of Canaan,
(1960, McClain Printing Company, p. 1)*

Canaan Valley in mist
Kent Mason

Conserving the Nature of the Mountains

Welcome to Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge! Canaan Valley is one of over 560 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, a Federal Agency. The National Wildlife Refuge System is a network of lands and waters managed specifically for the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat for the continuing benefit of the American people. It represents the most comprehensive wildlife resource management program in the world.

The refuge was established in August 1994, with a purchase of 86 acres. Today, the refuge has grown to around 17,000 acres.

The refuge conserves the largest shrub and bog wetland complex in the southern Appalachians. This complex has a mixture of wetland types, including muskeg, alder, wet meadow, swamp forest and spiraea thicket. Upland areas provide grass and shrublands important for migratory birds. High elevation woodlands provide habitat for threatened and endangered



Beaver dam



USFWS

Indiana bat

History

species including Cheat Mountain salamander and Indiana bat.

The area supports over 40 distinct plant communities with more than 580 species of plants. This rich and varied habitat is home to an estimated 290 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish.

During the last ice age, 10,000-18,000 years ago, northern species died out as the glaciers moved southward. The glaciers did not reach Canaan Valley, but the cold did. The plants and animals here adapted to a cold climate. At the end of the ice age, as the climate warmed, many moved northward with the retreating ice, repopulating the newly uncovered earth.



Ken Sturm/USFWS

Pink Lady slippers

These cold tolerant plants and animals also found niches high in the mountains where they could survive far south of what is now their normal range. Northern plant species, typical of Canada and the far reaches of New England, can still be found in Canaan Valley at their the southernmost known location. Balsam fir is found throughout wetlands in Canaan Valley. No wonder Canaan Valley is often described as “a bit of Canada, gone astray.”

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, while railroads delivered products to market, the area’s timber industry boomed. Forests of spruce, birch, cherry, beech and other trees were harvested, leaving branches and tree tops (slash) on the ground. Without the shade the soils, rich with decaying plants and slash, began to dry. Fires began, ignited by lightning, people or sparks from trains. In some uplands even the decaying plants in the soil burned, leaving inorganic soils exposed to the forces of erosion.



Bluebird nestbox

The logging and fires opened up what had been an impenetrable forest. With the soils burned and eroded, forests were slow to regenerate. Drier, open areas grew into grasslands and farming and grazing became important to the local economy.

Today, the rugged and beautiful valley holds a variety of wetlands, forests and grasslands.

The combination of habitat types throughout the valley provides a home for a diversity of wildlife. Animals such as deer, raccoon, geese and squirrel are easy to see. Others such as mink, bobcat and barred owls stay hidden most of the time. Beavers use trees to build dams, altering water levels to suit their needs. Woodcock treat us to their breeding display in spring. Elusive turkey and ruffed grouse provide a challenge for hunters. Along with native brook trout, you will also find other species of trout and bass in the Blackwater River and its tributaries.

Wetlands

There are relatively few places in West Virginia where ducks call, herons fly, and shorebirds probe the earth for food. Canaan Valley is such a place. Mallards, black ducks and wood ducks nest in the marshes. Solitary and spotted sandpipers are found wherever a small pocket of wetlands exist. Timid herons and snipe squawk in alarm and fly when encountered. Frogs and salamanders mate in the vernal pools. These are among the many animals you may find in Canaan Valley's wetlands.



Beaver
Bob Hines

A patchwork of 23 wetland types, including bogs, shrub swamps and wet meadows carpet the valley floor. At around 8,500 acres, this is the largest wetland complex in the state

of West Virginia, and is a regionally significant wetland complex within the southern Appalachians. Currently, 5,573 acres of these wetlands are part of the refuge.

The ecological functions of wetlands provide valuable services to people. Wetlands absorb water like a sponge, slowing it down during heavy storms, thereby reducing downstream flooding. During times of drought, wetlands slowly release water. Along rivers they buffer the shoreline, reducing the erosive effects of the water. Wetlands also filter sediment, trash and pollutants.

Forests

Forests of beech, cherry, birch and maple cover the slopes of the mountains and add color to the fall. Scattered stands of spruce, balsam fir and hemlock remind us of the boreal forest that once dominated the valley. Squirrels, ruffed grouse, turkey, deer and bear make their homes in these woodlands. Hermit thrush, ovenbirds and woodland warblers also find their place here. A large diversity of salamanders find their niches in these and other Appalachian woodlands.



Red spruce forest

Canaan Valley's forests harbor the threatened Cheat Mountain salamander, found in areas with spruce forest cover. Endangered Indiana bats may be found along the stream corridors.

Grasslands



David Seals

Monarch butterfly on milkweed

Grasslands are important in all seasons for the wildlife that they hold, particularly birds. Savannah, field and grasshopper sparrows, bobolink and meadowlark are a few of the species using the refuge's grassland areas. Flowering plants provide food during Canaan Valley's short growing season for hummingbirds and a diversity of butterflies.

Grasslands are also important during the winter months. They provide hunting areas for rough-legged hawks and migrating northern harriers. The short vegetation allows raptors access to the small mammals who also call grasslands their home.

Grassland habitat is in decline nationwide. This has led to a decline in grassland bird populations including those along the eastern migratory path. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works to conserve these birds, in accordance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, here and at other refuges.

A Refuge for People Too!

We encourage wildlife-dependent forms of recreation. The refuge is open for wildlife observation and photography, hunting, fishing, environmental education and interpretive programs.

The trail system provides opportunities for visitors to watch and learn about wildlife, photograph nature and engage in nature study. Parking and trail maps are available at most trail heads. All refuge roads and trails, including



David Seals

Beall Trail hike

those labeled "pedestrian only" are open for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in winter. Refuge roads are typically not plowed during the winter.

Wildlife Viewing and Photography

Wildlife can be viewed closely by using binoculars, a spotting scope, or a long camera lens. The refuge has binoculars and a library of reference books to loan to visitors during their stay. Sitting quietly will increase your chances of seeing wildlife. Dawn and dusk are the best times to observe wildlife. Use all of your senses. Rustling plants can often tell you where to look for wildlife. Smell can bring your attention to interesting plant life.

Hunting

A special hunt permit must be obtained to hunt on the refuge. This permit, along with a valid West Virginia state hunting license and valid photo identification, must be carried by the hunter while on refuge property. Hunting is permitted on the refuge from September through February and during spring gobbler season.



Mary Konchar

White-tail deer in autumn



Refuge tour at White Grass

Check state regulations for specific seasons and allowable uses. During hunt seasons bright colored clothing such as blaze orange is recommended for all visitors.

Fishing

Fishing is allowed subject to state regulations. Walking access is available from designated routes and parking lots. Consult the refuge trail map for fishing access points. An ADA compliant accessible fishing pier provides access to the Blackwater River along Timberline Road.

Hunt and Photography Blinds

During the hunting season, two accessible blinds are available by reservation for disabled hunters. Outside the hunting season, these blinds are available by reservation for wildlife observation and photography.

In any season cars make good wildlife observation and photography blinds. Drive slowly, stopping to scan places wildlife might hide. Your patience might pay off.



Freeland view



American woodcock

Environmental Education and Interpretation

The refuge has library resources about wildlife and nature along with supplemental curriculum guides and field study equipment. These resources are available for both formal classroom educators and leaders of youth groups.

A regular schedule of interpretive programs and tours are offered. A calendar of events is available at the visitor center and trail head kiosks, on the refuge website, and through social media posts.

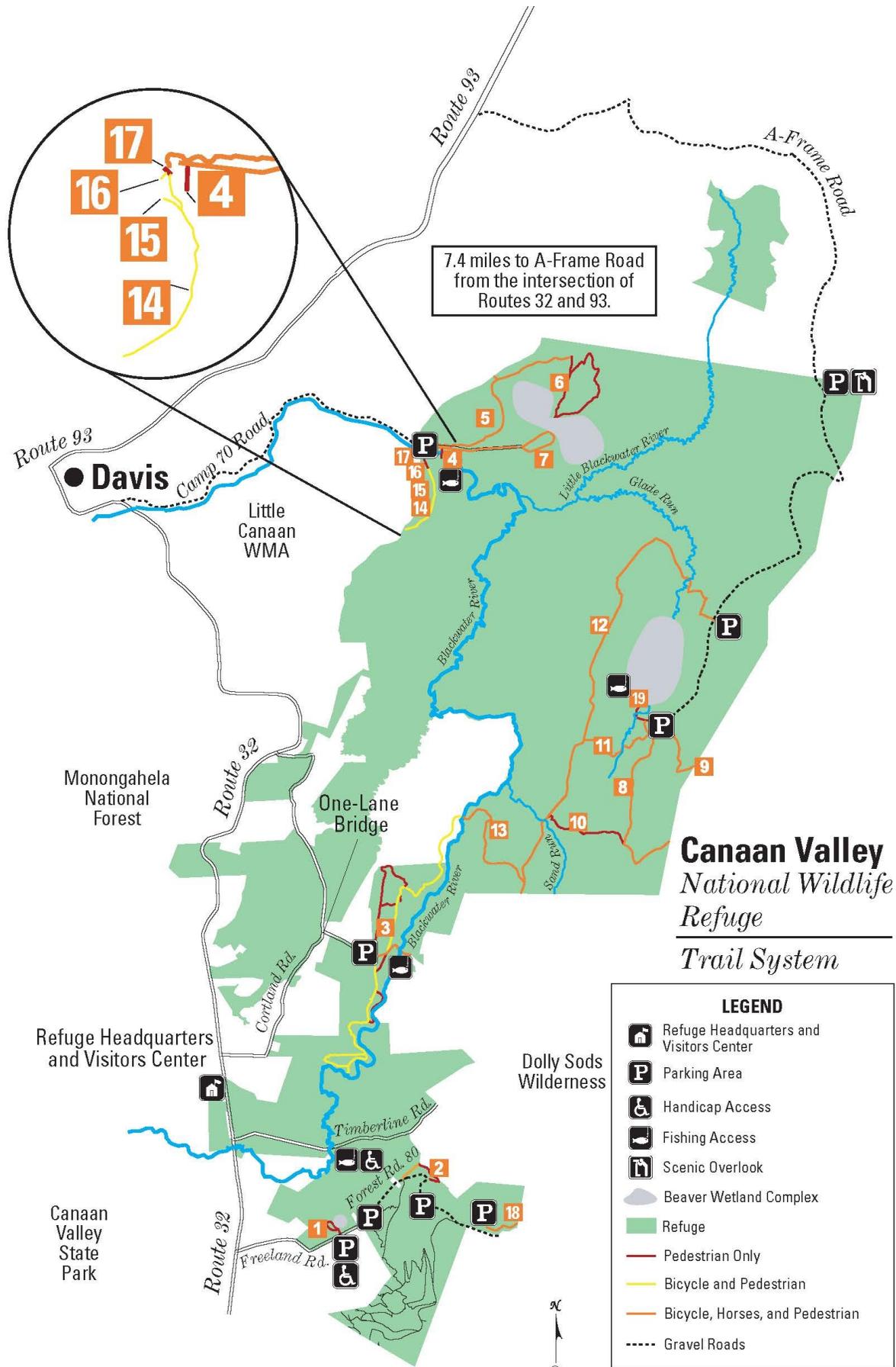
Friends, volunteers and partners

Public support and involvement are essential elements for a successful refuge. Volunteer and friends groups play a vital role in the ongoing success of refuge projects and programs.

The Friends of the 500th is a non-profit citizen's group devoted to conserving the unique natural and cultural resources of the refuge and promoting nature-oriented education. The Friends work with refuge staff and partners to promote awareness of the refuge, recruit volunteers, lead special programs such as bird walks, conduct natural history tours and organize and lead Master Naturalist and teacher trainings.

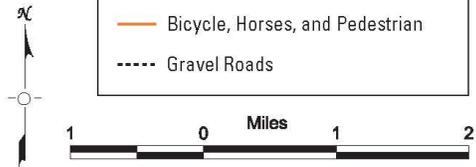
Refuge contacts

We hope you enjoy your visit to Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. If you would like more information about the refuge, the National Wildlife Refuge System or if you would like to volunteer, please contact the refuge manager using the contacts on the back of this brochure.



REFUGE TRAILS AND TRAIL MILES WITH BLAZES

1	Freeland Trail	0.4 (Including Loop)
2	Idleman's Run Trail	0.4 (One way)
3	Idleman's Run Trail and Road Loop	0.9 (Loop)
3	Beall Trails	3.4 (Total)
△	Beall North Trail	1.3 (Loop)
▲	Beall Connector	0.2 (One way)
▲	Beall Bridge Trail	0.2 (One way)
▲	Beall South Loop	0.4 (Loop)
▲	Farm View Loop	3.4 (Loop)
▲	Shortcut	0.2 (One way)
▲	Bog Overlook	0.06 (One way)
4	Rivers Edge Trail	0.06 (One way)
5	Brown Mountain Trail	2.1 (One way)
6	Brown Mountain Overlook	2 (Loop)
7	Camp 70 Loop (Including Old Road)	1.6 (Round trip)
8	Cabin Mountain Trail	2.2 (One way)
9	Cabin Mountain Spur	0.8 (One way)
10	Sand Run Trail	0.9 (One way)
11	South Glade Run Crossing	0.9 (One way)
12	Middle Valley Trail	5 (One way)
13	Blackwater View Trail	3 (One way)
14	Canaan Mountain Trail	1 (One way)
15	Hellbender's Tail Trail	0.1 (One way)
16	Shady Hollow Trail	0.03 (One way)
17	Blackwater River Fishing Access Trail at Camp 70	0.01 (One way)
18	Wilderness Way Trail	0.3 (One way)
19	Fishing Hook Trail	0.2 (One way)



Canaan Valley

National Wildlife Refuge Trails

1. **Freeland Boardwalk Trail:** (0.4 mile, including loop) Easy. Nice views of Canaan Valley abound on this short accessible boardwalk leading through a wet field, shrubland, and past a beaver pond and bubbling spring. An easy walk takes visitors to a stand of balsam fir, a plant community typical of Maine and Canada. Pedestrian only
2. **Idlemans Run Trail:** (0.4 mile, one way) Moderate. This short pedestrian trail travels through woodlands along Idlemans Run. Enjoy the wildflowers, and look for the completed stream restoration work. Trail length is 0.40 mile and is for pedestrian use only. Return on Forest Road 80 to make a loop which totals 0.9 miles.
3. **Beall (pronounced "bell") Trails System:** (9 total miles) Easy-to-moderate for a variety of trail users. Loops go north and south from the parking area at the end of Beall Lane, off Cortland Road, leads to 4.7 miles of trails. Loops go north and south from the parking area and are excellent for bird watching, and photography.

Beall North Trail: (1.3 miles, loop) Pedestrian only. Core trail loops back to parking area. Use this easy trail to experience forest, fields, shrub swamp, and bog habitats. Beall North Trail allows access to Blackwater View Trail (3.2 Miles, one way) and eventual connection to Middle Valley Trail (5.2, one way) in the heart of Canaan Valley NWR.

Beall Connector Trail: (0.2 mile, one way) Pedestrian only. Connects Beall North Trail to Blackwater View Trail. Views of early successional habitat.

Blackwater View Trail: (3.2 miles, one way) Pedestrians and bikes. Moderate. Trail goes from Beall parking lot through forest, across the Blackwater River, then connects with Middle Valley Trail. Belted Kingfishers, bald eagles, wood frogs, spring peepers can be seen and heard along a leafy, green corridor. Horses allowed east of the Blackwater River.

Bog Overlook Trail: (0.1 mile, one way) Pedestrian only.

Farm View Trail: (3.4 miles, loop) Pedestrian and bicycles only. This easy-to-moderate loop trail offers great views of the valley and surrounding mountains as it passes through old farm fields that have been converted to grasslands, shrublands, and riparian habitat. Connects to the Beall South Loop (0.4 mile loop, pedestrian only).

Beall South Loop: (0.4 miles, loop) Pedestrian only. This easy-to-moderate trail is great location to spot grassland birds, wander through riparian forests, and experience the upper reaches of the Blackwater River. Down-and-uphill sections can be moderately difficult.

Shortcut Trail: (0.2 mile, one way) Pedestrian only. Easy. Short connector allows access to Farm View Trail from Beall Bridge Trail. (0.2 mile)

4. **Rivers Edge Trail:** (0.06 mile, one way) Easy. Short trail from Camp 70 parking lot through a hemlock grove to the ADA canoe/kayak boat launch. Pedestrian only.
5. **Brown Mountain Trail:** (2.1 miles, one way) Moderate. The Brown Mountain Trail travels north from the Camp 70 parking lot. This is a pleasant trail through the forest with a gently increasing grade. It leads to Brown Mountain Overlook Trail. Listen for different woodland birds, including scarlet tanagers and a variety of warblers. Open for pedestrian, horse, and bicycle use.
6. **Brown Mountain Overlook Trail:** (2 mile, loop) Moderate. This loop on the valley floor provides a beautiful overlook of Canaan Valley's wetlands. Watch for a variety of water birds and wetland plants. Pedestrian only.
7. **Camp 70 Loop Trail:** (2.4 miles, round trip) Moderate. Camp 70 Loop Trail travels east from the Camp 70 parking lot. The trail provides excellent views of beaver ponds and the refuge's central wetlands. This trail is open for pedestrian, horse, and bicycle use.
8. **Cabin Mountain Trail:** (2.2 miles, one way) Moderate to Difficult. Passes through forested habitat and travels up slope for a beautiful view of the Valley. Look for woodland birds and other wildlife. Open for pedestrian, horse, and bicycle use.
9. **Cabin Mountain Spur Trail:** (0.8 mile, one way) Moderate. This is a steep trail travels through northern hardwood forest for most of its length. Easy access for this trail begins near the A-Frame Road parking lot. Open for pedestrian, horse, and bicycle use.
10. **Sand Run Trail:** (0.9 mile, one way) Moderate. This trail travels through forested and wetland habitat to join with Middle Valley Trail (west) and Cabin Mountain (east) on either end. A variety of wildlife can be viewed on this trail. Pedestrian only.
11. **South Glade Run Crossing Trail:** (0.9 mile, one way) Moderate. South Glade Run Crossing Trail travels through forested and grassland habitats to connect Cabin Mountain trail to Middle Valley trail. The trail crosses Glade Run on a footbridge and has nice views of the Glade Run wetlands. Open for pedestrian, horse, and bicycle use.
12. **Middle Valley Trail:** (5 miles, one way) Moderate. This trail crosses Sand Run and Glade Run as it travels along a low sandstone ridge. Near Glade Run alder thickets harbor unique plant and animal species. Bog goldenrod and cottongrass grow in the northern reach of the trail. From spring through fall be on the lookout for savannah sparrows, vesper sparrows, American bittern, and many different warblers. Open for pedestrian, horse, and bicycle use. **Note:**The north stream crossing is often flooded because to on-going beaver dam building activity. Please plan accordingly.
13. **Blackwater View Trail:** (3 miles, one way) Moderate. This trail travels from Middle Valley Trail, through forest, and ends at the Beall Parking Lot. Look for belted kingfishers flying along the river and bald eagles soaring high above. Listen for wood frogs and spring peepers calling from ponds along the trail in the springtime. Open for pedestrian, horse, and bicycle use east of Blackwater River at bridge. Pedestrians, and bikes west of Blackwater River.
14. **Canaan Mountain Trail:** (1 mile, one way) Moderate. Open for pedestrian and bicycle use.
15. **Hellbender's Tail Trail:** (0.1 mile, one way) Easy. Open for pedestrian and bicycle use.
16. **Shady Hollow Trail:** (0.03 mile, one way) Easy. Open for pedestrian and bicycle use.
17. **Blackwater River Fishing Access Trail @ Camp 70:** (0.01 miles, one way) Easy. Pedestrian only. Cross the bridge and follow the the trail on the right to the Blackwater River.
18. **Wilderness Way Trail:** (0.3 mile, one way) Easy. Beginning at the day use parking area at the top of Forest Road 80, this trail skirts intermittent ponds and red spruce forests to arrive at the US Forest Service/Dolly Sods Wilderness area property boundary. Open for pedestrian, bikes, and horse use (on refuge property). Limited parking available at trailhead.
19. **Fishing Hook Trail:** (0.2 miles, one way) Easy. This short trail allows fishing access at pond area. Pedestrian only.

A-Frame Road and adjacent trails: A-Frame Road is 9 miles long from US Route 48 (Corridor H) to the endpoint at the Refuge parking lot. Parking is permitted in the designated lots and along roadsides on the Refuge. A-Frame Road is a public access route open to pedestrian, horse, bicycle, and vehicle use. This road is not maintained in winter.

Forest Road 80: (2.0 miles, one way) Moderate. This public access road is open to pedestrian, horse, bicycle, and vehicle use. Forest Road 80 provides access from the Canaan Valley to Dolly Sods Wilderness Area. This road is not maintained in winter.