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CHEROKEE

NATIONAL FOREST

Forest Service Southern Region

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CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

THE Cherokee National Forest extends from Georgia to Virginia along the mountainous eastern border of Tennessee. It has two divisions, one south and one north of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The southern part, from the Georgia line to the Little Tennessee River, is known as the Cherokee Division. The northern part, between the Pigeon River and the Virginia line, is called the Unaka Division.

The forest covers 630,000 acres. Of these acres within the forest boundary, 561,000 acres are Government-owned. The remainder is mostly in private ownership. Some 50,000 people, mostly rural, live within the forest boundary. The cities of Chattanooga, Knoxville, Johnson City, and Bristol are all within 1 to 2 hours' travel distance of the forest. More than half the country's people live within an 8-hour car drive of the forest.

The Cherokee [illegible] of the 153 national forests in 40 States [illegible] the Forest Service of the Department [illegible] Like all national forests, it is administered [illegible] multiple-use principle for the greatest [illegible] number of people. This means [illegible] wildlife, and recreation are protected [illegible] the same time, with consideration [illegible] importance of each.

Water

Watershed protection was the primary purpose in establishing the Cherokee, as well as other national forests in the southern Appalachians. This mountainous region forms the headwaters of the Tennessee River and some of its important tributaries.

Since 1933, the Tennessee River has been controlled and developed by the Tennessee Valley Authority and 19 more on its tributaries. Power production at these Tennessee Valley Authority dams and auxiliary steam plants is about 16 billion kilowatt-hours per year. Six of the dams are located within the forest, forming Parksville Lake, on the Ocoee River, with two smaller reservoirs above it, and reservoirs on the Hiwassee and Watauga Rivers.

Two major towns, Johnson City and Greeneville, obtain their water directly from the streams of the forest. The Cherokee forest also conserves and regulates the flow of many other streams that furnish water to thousands of farms and rural communities.

Forest cover, with its undergrowth of shrubs and plants, together with fallen leaves, needles, and humus, creates ideal conditions on the ground and in the soil for maximum water absorption. Water is released more slowly and evenly than from bare ground. When this cover is damaged or destroyed there is much less capacity for absorption. Heavy rains quickly cause flooding, surface erosion, sedimentation of streams, and muddy water supplies. Hence wood and other forest products must be harvested with care, so as to avoid appreciable damage to the watershed. The huge investments in dams and reservoirs of the TVA system, together with city, farmland, and industrial developments, make watershed protection and sound management imperative.

Timber

Timber production, yielding sawlogs, pulpwood, fence posts, and many other products, is one of the primary uses of the forest. This use, when conducted under sound forestry practices, in no way conflicts with the all-important function of watershed protection.

The principal species listed in order of importance by volume are: Yellow pine, chestnut oak, hemlock, yellow-poplar, white pine, and white and northern red oaks. There are numerous other species of less commercial importance.

F-48870

Trees are a crop. They should be grown for useful products and harvested when mature.

The forest now contains over 1 billion board feet of merchantable timber, exclusive of dead chestnut, and has an annual growth of 30 million board feet. The present annual cut is 20 million board feet of green timber. This leaves a margin of growth to build up depleted stands.

Income from the sale of forest products exceeds $200,000 per year. Twenty-five percent of this income is returned to the various counties in which the national forest is located.

All products of the forest are cut by private individuals or companies. Sales range in size from one tree to several million board feet. All sales over $2,000 in value are advertised and sold to the highest bidder. This system gives all prospective purchasers an equal opportunity to buy national forest timber and assures the Forest Service a fair price for the product.

Wildlife

Wildlife management is a part of the land-management program. It provides for the protection and development of a suitable environment for all kinds of wildlife. Before the national forest was established, wildlife had been greatly depleted because of indiscriminate hunting and fishing, and deterioration of the habitat.

F-44478

Hunting wild bear provides unique sport on the Cherokee National Forest.

The Forest Service and the Tennessee Department of Conservation cooperate closely in developing and managing the fish and game resources within the national forest. Since 1936, five cooperative management areas

A good day's catch from well-stocked streams.

have been established. These are the 44,000-acre Ocoee Area east of Cleveland; the 79,000-acre Tellico Area east of Tellico Plains; the 34,000-acre Unicoi Area west of Erwin; the 6,700-acre Andrew Johnson Refuge south of Greeneville; and the 55,000-acre Kettlebottom Area east of Bristol. One State refuge, the Laurel Fork Area of 1,900 acres on Laurel Fork Creek, southeast of Erwin, is managed cooperatively by the State of Tennessee and the U. S. Forest Service.

Regulated hunts are conducted each fall for deer, bear, and wild boar, as well as for small game. An average of about 4,000 hunters take part. The hunting periods and number of hunters are regulated to assure continuous game production and high quality sport.

The forest contains many miles of excellent trout fishing streams, which are stocked with brook and rainbow trout of legal size. Fishing is also controlled, and as a result the quality of the fishing compares favorably with that of the best streams in the country. A fish-rearing station is maintained at Pleasant Field, on the Ocoee River. Fish from this station are used to stock trout are reared to catchable size. Stocking is supervised cooperatively by the Tennessee Department of Conservation and the Forest Service.

The only restrictions on hunting and fishing on national forest land outside of the management areas are those required by State game and fish laws.

Information regarding hunting and fishing regulations and the game hunts on managed areas may be obtained from the Forest Supervisor, Cleveland, Tenn., or the Department of Conservation, Nashville, Tenn.

Forest Fire Control

Fire is the most dreaded enemy of the forest. It kills young trees, damages timber, destroys wildlife, results in erosion which silts streams and reservoirs, and destroys the beauty of the forest.

Fire suppression and prevention on the national forest takes priority over all other jobs. Great progress has been made in reducing fire losses. This is indicated by the average area burned 10 years, less than two-tenths of 1 percent (0.2%) annually.

Ninety-nine percent of the fires in the forest are caused by man. Smokers' fires, debris-burning, and incendiarism head the list of causes.

The most dangerous fire seasons on the Cherokee National Forest are March through May and October through November. During these periods fire towers are occupied day and night by men or women who watch for the first trace of smoke that may indicate the start of a forest fire.

Since all but 1 of 100 fires that occur on the Cherokee National Forest are caused, 99 should be prevented. Visitors and residents of the forest are urged to use the same care and thoughtfulness with fire in the forest as they use in their own homes.

Recreation

Recreation uses of the forest such as hunting, fishing, picnicking, camping, and hiking are encouraged. It is estimated that nearly 1 million visits by motorists and vacationists are made to the Cherokee forest annually. Cool mountain streams, scenic drives, hiking trails, and facilities for camping and picnicking offer vacationists a variety of outdoor enjoyment and relaxation.

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park, which lies between the two divisions of the forest, comprises 445,000 acres. This park attracts more visitors than any other national park in the United States.

The Cherokee National Forest and the forest offer additional attractions for vacationists.

The mountains of eastern Tennessee are part of the great Appalachian range, geologically among the oldest in the world. Never high enough to be above timber line, except for occasional grassy "balds," they are covered with a mantle of green in summer, which turns to a mass of red, scarlet, yellow, and gold in autumn. Springtime, too, adds color with its myriad of flowering

plants, including the most conspicuous white and pink of dogwood and redbud, and the pinks and lavenders of azalea, mountain-laurel, and rhododendron.

Sources of Information

The Forest Supervisor and rangers are always glad to be of service to forest visitors. Call upon them for such help or advice as you may need. On the Cherokee, they are located as follows:

Supervisor—Cleveland, Tenn.

District Rangers—Parksville, Etowah, Tellico Plains, Greeneville, and Elizabethton, Tenn.

Healthful outdoor recreation can be found on numerous forest areas. (Tennessee Department of Conservation photograph.)

F-44247

Beautiful forest roads invite the visitor to scenic and healthful recreation as well as providing arteries of commerce.

F-44280

Backbone Rock. An unusual geological formation near an attractive campground.

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Numerous lakes are large enough to satisfy the boating enthusiast. (Tennessee Department of Conservation photograph.)

Bald River Falls. Protection of watersheds is an important phase of national-forest management.

Roan Mountain. Acres of rhododendron blooming in a setting of transcendent beauty.

Camp and picnic grounds are developed and maintained for forest visitors.

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Dates of Flowering Periods and Autumn Color

Redbud	April 1-15
Dogwood	April 15-May 1
Rhododendron—	
(Yonaha Mountain)	June 1-15
(Roan Mountain)	June 15-July 15
Mountain laurel	June
White rhododendron	Late June and July
Autumn color	October 15

Scenic Roads—Cherokee Division

U. S. 64 from Parksville Lake along the north shore of the lake through Ocoee Gorge to Ducktown.

Tennessee 68 from Tellico Plains, via Bee's Bald, Tellico Gap, to Vonore, Tennessee.

Tennessee 30, Kittery Highway from Reliance across Kittery Mountain to junction with Tennessee 30 at Kittery Gap.

Forest Service Road from junction of Tellico and North Rivers, via Stratton Gap and Hemlock Knob, to the Citico Creek Road.

Forest Service Road from Tellico River, 5 miles north of Tellico Plains, via Citico Creek to U. S. 411 at Vonore.

Forest Service Road from 5 miles above the dam on Tellico River, 10 miles east of Tellico Plains, via Tate to junction with Tennessee 30, 2 miles north of Reliance. Outstanding views over Parksville Lake.

Public Recreation Areas—Cherokee Division

Ocoee Creek—Tellico River road, 11 miles east of Tellico Plains. Picnicking; swimming in river. *Tellico River*—Tellico River road, 10 miles east of Reliance, 15 miles east of Tellico Plains. Reached by short walk on trail. Good view of the falls.

Kittery Gap—Kittery Highway and Salesmen's camp, 7 miles east of Tellico Plains.

Kittery Campground—High on Sassafras Mountain, 17 miles east of Ashville on the Kittery Highway. Camping and picnicking.

Citico Creek—Citico Creek road, Salesmen's camp on Citico Creek, 13 miles northeast of Tellico Plains.

Quinn Springs—On Tennessee 30, 5 miles east of Reliance, near Hiawassee River. Picnicking and camping.

Parksville Lake—On U. S. 64 between Ocoee and Duckstown. Commercial resort and boat dock available to the public. Picnicking and swimming on lake shore.

Chilhowee—Atop Bean Mountain, 6 miles southeast of Benton and 7 miles north of Parksville Lake. Reached by short walk on trail. Good view of the lake, bathing beach, bathhouse, shelters, hiking trails, and beautiful view from high overlook. Refreshment stand concessionaire. Fishing for bass and trout in lake.

Picnic spots—Tables and fireplaces are located at various points along Tellico and North River roads.

Points of Interest—Cherokee Division

Fort Loudon—At junction of Tellico and Little Tellico Rivers, 2 miles north of Vonore. Site of one of the most western outpost of English civilization. Built by the British in 1756, its garrison was massacred the following year and the fort burned.

Tennessee Rhododendron—Large stands in head of North River on the Tennessee-North Carolina line, 28 miles from Tellico Plains on the old route to Robbinsville, N. C. W. B. Stratton cleared the area for a cattle range and constructed cattle shed. His grave is partly in each State.

Hiss Knob—Highest point on the Cherokee National Forest, 4,848 feet. Reached by short walk by a hike of one-half mile from road. Located about 4 miles south of Stratton Meadow.

Fall Branch—Tennessee 30, Kittery Mountain Ridge, 17 miles from Tellico Plains. An area of virgin hardwood including white ash, yellow-poplar, black cherry, hemlock, and sugar maple; reserved from timber cutting. A 65-foot waterfall on Falls Branch.

Hemlock Knob—On Sassafras Ridge, the divide between the Tellico and Citico watersheds. Mountain top overlooking the Jeffries Bell country to the south.

Phenomenal Field Hearing Station—On Tellico River, 19 miles east of Tellico Plains on Forest Service road. Trout-rearing pools.

Duckstown Basin—An area of 15 square miles is and around Duckstown and Copperhill denuded of all vegetation by sulfur fumes from copper smelters. Damage continued for 25 miles in Ocoee Gorge. Conservation measures are expected to convert the sulfur fumes into sulfuric acid. Little damage is now occurring.

Bald River Falls—On Tellico River Forest Service road, 11 miles east of Tellico Plains. A 110-foot waterfall. Picnic tables at the point above the falls and in a small picnic area.

Scenic Roads and Trails—Unaka Division

U. S. 19-E from Hampton on Doe River and Mountain City to Roan Mountain State Park.

Forest Service Road from Kermiston to South Holston Reservoir and U. S. 421, a distance of 15 miles.

Tennessee 91 from Elizabethton, via Stony Creek, to U. S. 421 in Shady Valley. This is the most direct route from Elizabethton to Backbone Rock Recreation Area and Damascus, Va.

Forest Service Road from junction with U. S. 19-W and 23, 1 mile north of Erwin, across Unaka Mountain, via Limestone Cove and North Indian Creek to U. S. 19-E at Roan Mountain.

Forest Service Road from one-half mile north of the State line on Tennessee 70, to Camp Creek and Greeneville.

Forest Service Road from junction with Tennessee 91, 3 miles south of Greeneville, across Rocky Mountain, via French Broad River to Hot Springs, N. C.

Appalachian Trail from Mount Oglethorpe, Ga., to Mount Katahdin, Maine, a distance of 2,050 miles. Of this, 152 miles is in the Unaka Division, from Hampton, Tennessee, to Damascus, Va., following the crest of Holston Mountain to Elizabethton, thence across Unaka Mountain with the Tennessee-North Carolina line to Hot Springs, N. C.

Public Recreation Areas—Unaka Division

Backbone Rock—Five miles south of Damascus, Va. Facilities for camping, picnicking and hiking are provided.

Dennis Cove—On Forest Service road, 8 miles east of Hampton. Picnicking, camping, hiking, and wading. Trout fishing in stream.

Stony Creek—Tennessee 91 northward, 11 miles southeast of Johnson City. Picnicking.

Rock Creek—Six miles east of Erwin. Picnicking, camping, and hiking. Trout fishing in stream; small gravel beach in forest setting. Bathhouse operated by concessioner.

Camp Creek—Five miles southeast of Greeneville, 1 miles off Tennessee 107. Picnic area and wading pool for children.

Points of Interest—Unaka Division

Backbone Rock—On Backbone Creek, 5 miles south of Damascus, Va., a vertical rock ridge 75 feet high, with the roadway tunneled through it, surrounded by the Backbone Rock Recreation Area.

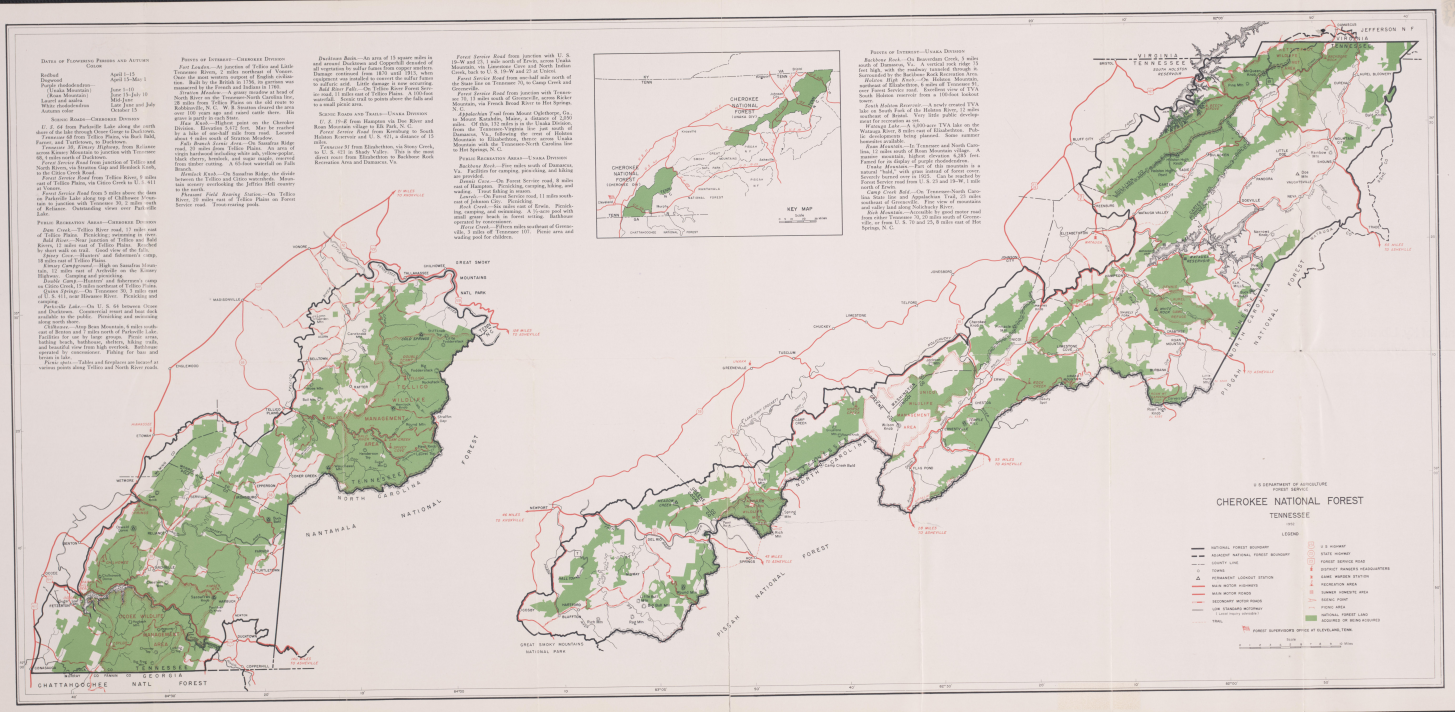
Holston High Knob—On Holston Mountain, 4 miles south of Damascus, Va., reached by short walk over Forest Service road. Excellent view of TVA South Holston reservoir from a 100-foot lookout tower.

South Holston Reservoir—A newly created TVA lake on South Fork of the Holston River, 12 miles southeast of Bristol. Very little public development for recreation.

Watauga Lake—A 5,000-acre TVA lake on the Watauga River, 8 miles east of Elizabethton. Public developments being planned. Some summer cottages on lake.

Yonaha Mountain—In Tennessee and North Carolina, 12 miles south of Roan Mountain village. A rhododendron bloom area of approximately 1 acre. Famed for its display of purple rhododendron.

Unaka Mountain—Part of this mountain is a natural "bald," with points of interest on the Tennessee side. Unaka Lake is reached by Tennessee 91 from U. S. 23 and 19-W, 1 mile north of Erwin.

Camp Creek Bald—On Tennessee-North Carolina line, 10 miles from Greeneville, 3 miles southeast of Greeneville. Fine view of mountains and valley land along Nolichucky River.

Roan Mountain—Tennessee 91 and a motor road from either Tennessee 91, 19 miles south of Greeneville, or from U. S. 70 and 25, 8 miles east of Hot Springs, N. C.