

# SPRUCE KNOB - SENECA ROCKS

The Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area is comprised of 100,000 acres of lush backcountry. Rugged mountain peaks spiral out of thick stands of evergreens and then fall away dramatically from sheer-faced cliffs to rolling valley floors of dense hardwoods and open pastures. The interior is laced with a network of clear, swift running streams and numerous caves which gaze mysteriously across that rushing water—profound darkness and solitude emanating from the thick woodland cover. Visitors to this area will confront mute evidence of the primitive forces which charged this land with its fierce beauty and unique character.

Located on the Monongahela National Forest, this tract was established as a National Recreation Area by Act of Congress in 1965 to be administered by the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. By its very nature, Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks is suited to a wide range of outdoor recreation activities—and especially the more primitive types such as hiking, mountain climbing, caving and white-water canoeing—and is situated within 250 miles of more than a third of the Nation's population.

Along with recreation facilities, management guidelines provide for the development of other forest resources when it is not incompatible with the primary recreation function of the area.

Total development of this area will not be accomplished for some years; however, a number of facilities are ready for use now. At Spruce Knob Lake, visitors will find facilities for camping, fishing and boating, although no power boats are allowed here. On Spruce Knob is an observation tower and interpretive trail. Sites for picnicking are nearby. Camping, picnicking, swimming and fishing may be enjoyed at the Smoke Hole and camping at the Seneca and Big Bend Campgrounds. Seneca Creek, the North Fork and the South Branch of the Potomac are high quality fishing sites. The Seneca Rocks Visitor Center is expected to open in 1978. Located just below Seneca Rocks near the town of Mouth of Seneca, the Center will provide information about the area as well as things to see and do throughout the Forest. The entire area offers



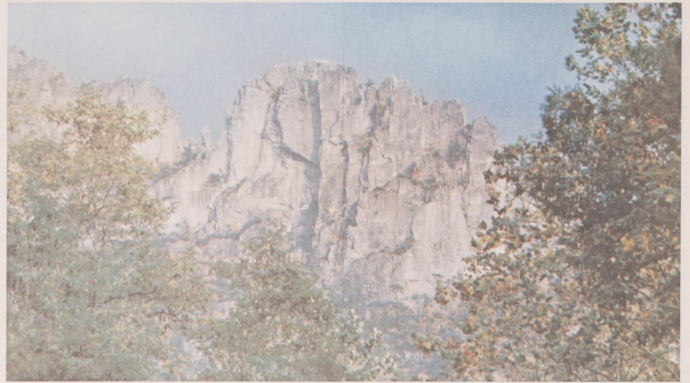
SPRUCE KNOB OBSERVATION TOWER

excellent opportunities for hiking-backpacking over many miles of trails transecting remote areas. Further information about recreation developments may be obtained from the Potomac Ranger District Office at Petersburg or the Supervisor's Office at Elkins.

Some Areas of special interest are: SENECA ROCKS is a 1,000-foot quartzite formation which rises above the North Fork Valley at Mouth of Seneca. Besides its interest to sightseers, Seneca Rocks is considered by climbers to be the best rock climb in the East. As a result of its intensive use, it has been acclaimed the "Face of 1,000 Pitons." Nearby and rivaling the famous Seneca Rocks are the similar formations of Champe Rock, Blue Rock and Chimney Rock.

SPRUCE KNOB, the high point of Spruce Mountain, is the highest point in West Virginia, rising to over 4,800 feet. It is an area of windblown red spruce and rock outcrops, and is easily accessible by road. It affords excellent views of the mountains to the east and west. In addition, visitors will enjoy the Spruce Knob observation tower and interpretive trail.

THE SMOKE HOLE is actually a canyon through which the South Branch of the Potomac flows for 20 miles, over half the distance of which it is flanked by a quiet scenic road. In the Smoke Hole is located both Big Bend Campground and Smoke Hole Campground and Picnic Area.



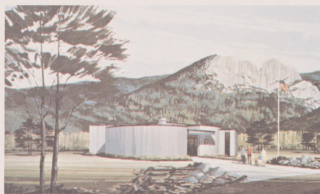
SENECA ROCK

EAGLE ROCK is a spectacular rock formation named for Colonel William Eagle, a Revolutionary War soldier who lived nearby. Colonel Eagle enlisted in the army at the age of 15 and fought at Valley Forge. He died in 1848 and is buried close to the base of Eagle Rock.

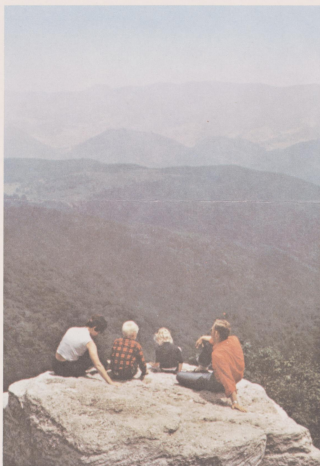
NORTH FORK MOUNTAIN, or North Mountain, is the dominant range in the eastern part of the National Recreation Area. Extending the length of the area, it is a favorite with hikers because of the panoramic mountain-top view it affords.

SENECA CREEK originates on Spruce Mountain and courses northeast to empty into the North Fork at Seneca Rocks. It is a stream of scenic waterfalls and wild beauty, and has the reputation of being one of the best trout streams in West Virginia. The old logging railroad that once followed the stream is gone, and the remaining grade is now a favorite back country trail for hikers. The headwaters are in the Pioneer Area, where no motorized vehicles are allowed.

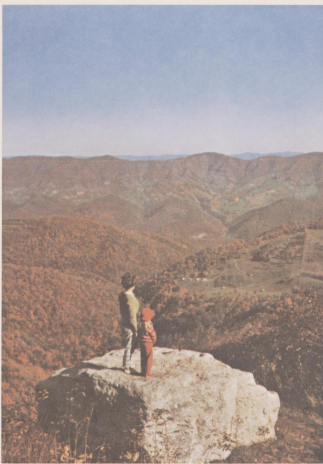
CAVES of this region are characterized by two privately owned geologic attractions—Seneca Caverns and Smoke Hole Caverns. Thousands of people visit these areas each year, along with the numerous smaller caves which exist throughout the Recreation Area.



RECREATION CENTER



VIEW NEAR SPRUCE KNOB



MONONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST



SOUTH BRANCH POTOMAC RIVER



BACK PACKING—SPRUCE KNOB

For additional information, you may contact the following offices:  
District Ranger  
Potomac Ranger District  
Petersburg, West Virginia 26847  
Forest Supervisor  
Monongahela National Forest  
Box 1548  
Elkins, West Virginia 26241



Only you can prevent forest fires.

"The broad objectives of the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area are: (1) to develop, protect, and administer the area in a manner which will best provide for public outdoor recreation benefits; (2) to conserve the scenic, scientific, historic, and other values which will contribute to public use and enjoyment; and (3) assure continued management, utilization, and disposal of natural resources—timber, forage, minerals, wildlife, and water—that are compatible with, and do not significantly impair the purposes for which the recreation area is established."

Public Law 89-207

SPRUCE KNOB-SENECA ROCKS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

MONONGAHELA National Forest

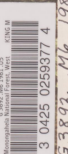
SUNSET OVER SPRUCE KNOB LAKE

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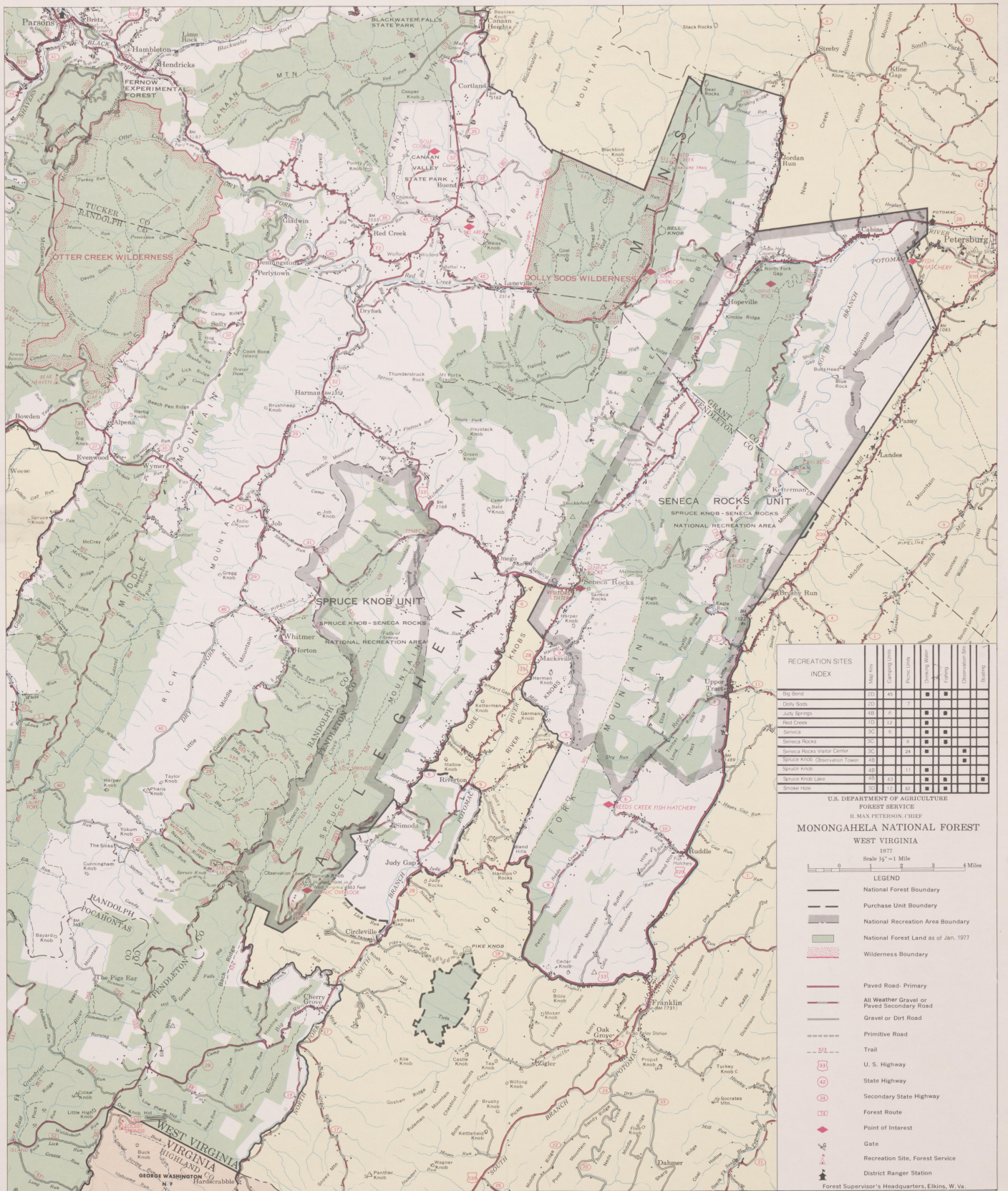
FOREST SERVICE  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
ELKINS, WEST VIRGINIA



GIVE A HOOT  
DON'T POLLUTE



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RECREATION SITES INDEX

Site Name	Map Area	Map Area	Map Area	Map Area	Map Area	Map Area	Map Area	Map Area	Map Area
Big Bend	31	45							
Dolly Sods	19	6							
Judy Serrin	19	6							
Red Creek	110	12							
Seneca	30	6							
Seneca Rocks	30	6							
Seneca Rocks Visitor Center	30	12							
Spruce Knob Observation Tower	10	12							
Spruce Knob	10	12							
Spruce Knob Lake	10	12							
Smoke Hole	10	12							

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
 FOREST SERVICE  
 R. MAX PETERSON, CHIEF  
**MONONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST**  
 WEST VIRGINIA  
 1977  
 Scale 1/2" = 1 Mile

**LEGEND**

- National Forest Boundary
- Purchase Unit Boundary
- National Recreation Area Boundary
- National Forest Land as of Jan. 1977
- Wilderness Boundary
- Paved Road - Primary
- All Weather Gravel or Paved Secondary Road
- Gravel or Dirt Road
- Primitive Road
- Trail
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- Secondary State Highway
- Forest Route
- Point of Interest
- Gate
- Recreation Site, Forest Service
- District Ranger Station
- Forest Supervisor's Headquarters, Elkins, W. Va.