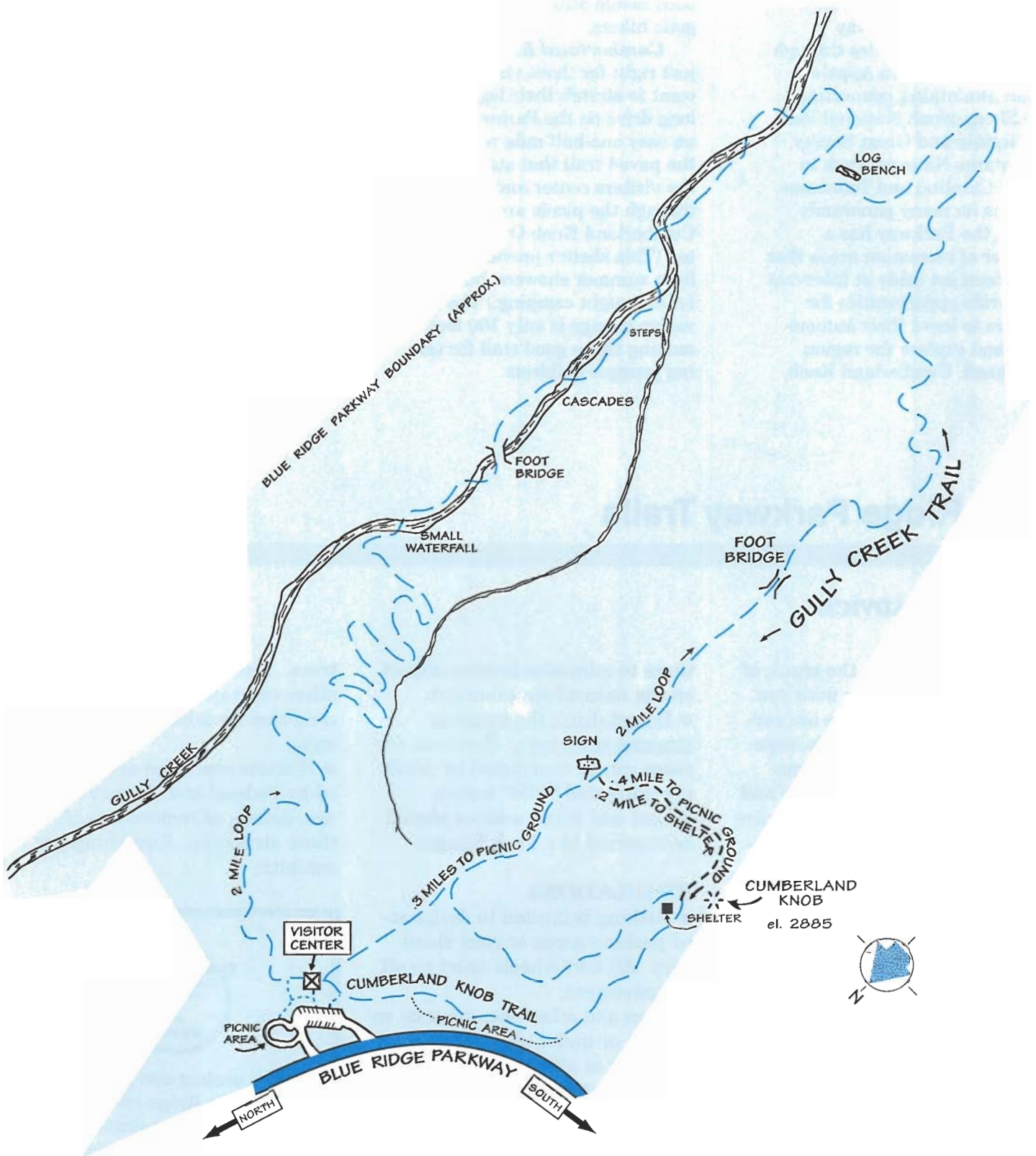




Cumberland Knob Trails



CAUTION: The Gully Creek Trail is a strenuous two-mile hike with several steep inclines. The elevation change from the visitor center to the bottom of the loop is 800 feet. Do not overestimate your abilities.

Cumberland Knob Trails

Welcome to the place where the Blue Ridge Parkway began. It was at Cumberland Knob more than a half century ago that construction of the nation's first and, ultimately, longest rural parkway began. Today, the Blue Ridge Parkway stretches for 469 miles through the scenic southern Appalachian Mountains, connecting the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina and Tennessee. Besides its many panoramic vistas, the Parkway has a number of recreation areas that have been set aside at intervals to provide opportunities for visitors to leave their automobiles and explore the region first-hand. Cumberland Knob,

with more than 2,000 acres, is one of these areas. Besides its extensive picnic facilities, recreation field, and visitor center, Cumberland Knob has trails built for the enjoyment of both casual strollers and energetic hikers.

Cumberland Knob Trail is just right for those visitors who want to stretch their legs after a long drive on the Parkway. For an easy one-half mile walk, take the paved trail that starts near the visitors center and loops through the picnic area to the Cumberland Knob Overlook shelter. (This shelter provides refuge from summer showers, but is not for overnight camping.) The elevation change is only 100 feet, making this a good trail for taking younger children.

Gully Creek Trail is strenuous but rewards hikers with views of a delightful mountain stream and the many plants that live along its cool, damp banks. The vegetation here contrasts sharply with that of the dryer mountain slopes. Hikers can begin at the visitor center, although it may be easier to start from the Cumberland Knob Trail loop. Allow two hours.

Blue Ridge Parkway Trails

IMPORTANT ADVICE

- Lock valuables in the trunk of your car or take them with you.
- Hiking shoes or boots are recommended for most trails, especially for the more strenuous ones. Steep and rocky areas and slippery stream crossings require extra attention and careful footing. Even for trails marked "easy," it is advisable to wear flat or rubber-soled shoes for comfort and good traction. Wearing sandals, "flip-flops," or high heels can result in accidents.
- Sudden changes in weather are common in these mountains. Even in mild seasons, rapid dips in temperature and unexpected thunderstorms frequently occur, and at higher elevations the wind and temperature can carry a surprising chill. Be prepared for weather changes by bringing along suitable clothing.
- For your safety and the protection of the resources, stay on established trails. Shortcutting at switchbacks causes soil erosion, disfigures the trail, and makes it difficult for other hikers to find their way. Take advantage of log walkways, steps, or other trail construction. They are

there to minimize human impact on the natural environment.

- Do not drink the water in streams or springs. Bacterial diseases can be contracted by drinking untreated "wild" waters.
- Lost and found articles should be reported to a Park Ranger.

REGULATIONS

- Parking is limited to designated parking areas or road shoulders. All four wheels must be off the pavement.
- Dogs and other pets must be on a leash or under physical restraint at all times while in the park. The territorial instinct of dogs can lead to fights with other dogs on the trail. Dogs also frighten hikers and chase wildlife.
- Deposit all litter in trash cans and recycling bins.
- Metal detectors are prohibited.
- Natural resources are protected by Federal law. Do not disturb animal and plant life in any way. Hunting, trapping, and carrying weapons are prohibited. Do not interfere with animals by feeding, touching, or frightening them. Do not cut, deface or damage

trees. Leave wildflowers and other vegetation in their natural condition for other hikers to enjoy.

- Historic resources are protected by Federal law. Do not damage, deface, or remove any of these structures, furnishings, or exhibits.



Help protect and preserve the Blue Ridge Parkway. Be alert for uncontrolled fire, safety hazards, accidents, and emergencies.

Please report such conditions by calling: 1-800-PARKWATCH

(1-800-727-5928)

For general parkway information, call (828) 298-0398 or visit www.nps.gov/blri on the Internet.