

Trail of Tears A-1

General Description

Leaving Murphy, you will be following the Hiwassee River for a short distance. As you turn north toward Marble you begin to climb gently and to encounter some rolling hills. Between Marble and Andrews you will be riding along the Valley River. Beyond Andrews you begin a 7 mile climb alongside Junaluska Creek. A 6 mile descent brings you to the Nantahala River Valley and Nantahala Lake. Beyond the lake you will climb through a remote and heavily wooded area approximately 9 miles to Wayah Crest. No facilities are available here. A descent of about 6.5 miles through an equally remote area ends this segment. This is an arduous ride and is recommended only for experienced, well-equipped and well-prepared cyclists. Approximately 48 miles/77 kilometers.

Hazardous Areas

Traffic volume on U.S. 64 East from Murphy is higher than is desirable, 4 miles.

Roadway Condition

The roads throughout this segment are generally well-paved and in good repair with grassy shoulders which are even with the road surface. Watch for stray gravel on curves.

Services

This is a remote area with few services outside the populated areas. Full services are available in Murphy and Andrews. Camping is available at Hanging Dog National

Forest recreation area and at private campgrounds near Murphy and Topton. The campground at Topton can be reached only via US 19/129/74, a busy, narrow road. Camping facilities are also provided at Apple Tree Group camp, but use is limited to organized groups of ten or more, by reservation only.

Points of Interest

- 1 Hanging Dog National Forest Recreation Area
Camping, boating and fishing are offered here
- 2 Murphy Historic Sites
The Murphy Courthouse, built of locally quarried blue marble, and the Episcopal Church of the Messiah, built in 1896 are interesting attractions in the area
- 3 John C. Campbell Folk School

Located in Brasstown, the school was founded in the 1920's to interest young adults in the life of their home community and thereby contribute to its development. Courses are still taught here on various mountain crafts, including woodcarving, weaving, pottery, folk music and folk dancing. Informal camping arrangements can be made at the school.

- 4 Walker's Inn/Chief Junaluska

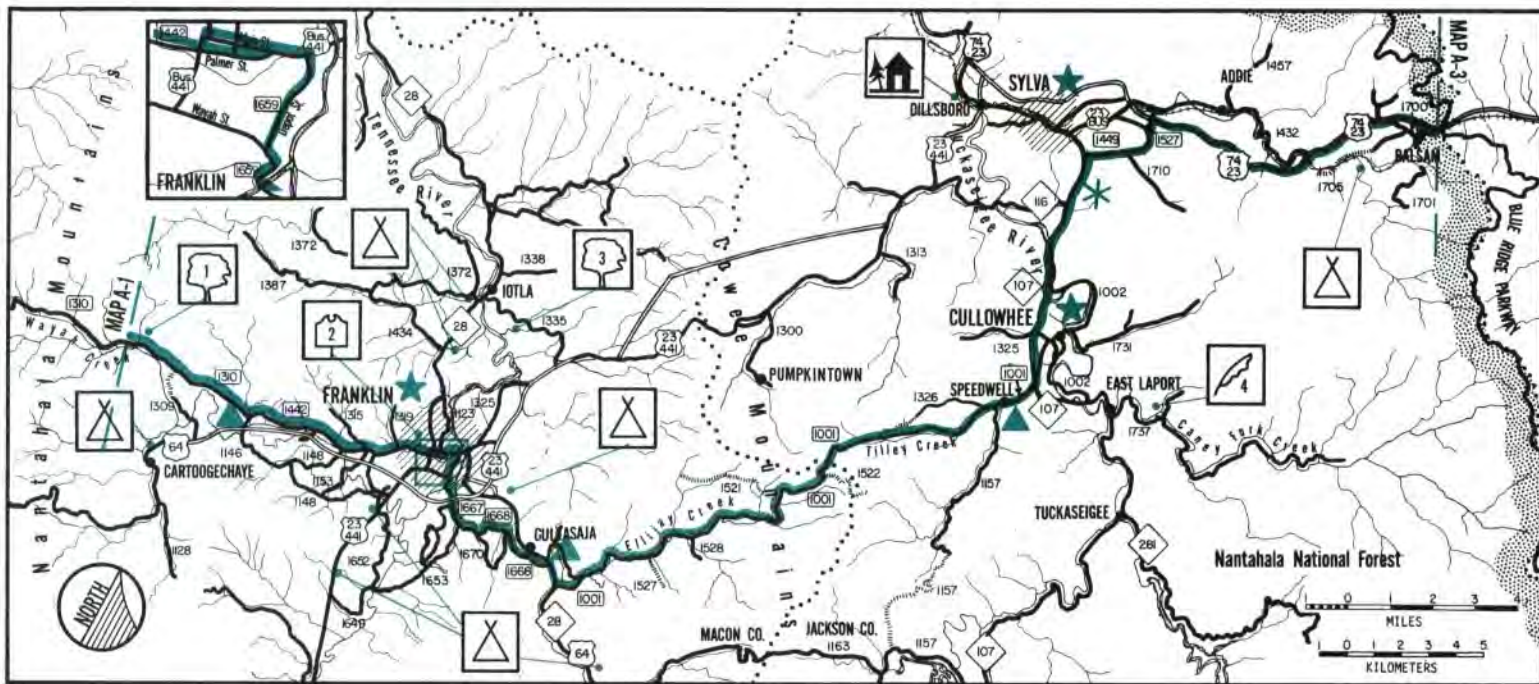
Built in 1840, this inn served as an overnight stage-coach stop during the years after the Civil War. The land on which it stands previously belonged to Junaluska, a Cherokee chief who distinguished himself as a national hero during the war of 1812. He was one of nearly 1,000 Cherokee warriors who allied themselves with Andrew Jackson at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, and assured his victory against the Creek Indians. Jackson's response to the allegiance of his Indian allies was to dictate cession of some of their land for white settlement and to begin

at once to insist that not only the Creeks but all southern Indians be removed to the far west. Through the years Jackson used his influence to this end. Cherokee removal became a reality.

Nearly 17,000 Cherokees were rounded-up and crowded into stockades. They were divided into detachments of roughly 1,000 for convenience in management en route, and a Cherokee commander was appointed to head each; the first detachment set out October 1, 1838. It is estimated that 4,000 Cherokees died either during confinement in the stockades or on their dreaded 800-mile journey to Oklahoma, a route which in Cherokee memory became known as the Trail of Tears.

- 5 Apple Tree Group Camp

Located in the Nantahala National Forest, this campground is administered by the U.S. Forest Service and is limited to tent camping by organized groups of 10 or more by reservation only. For details or reservations, contact the District Ranger, U.S. Forest Service, P.O. Box 469, Franklin, North Carolina 28734. 32 miles of signed hiking trails provide an opportunity to explore the area, which was once the site of a Cherokee Camp. Hunting parties in search of food and fur, war parties repelling invasion of their hunting grounds and chieftans seeking pacts of friendship all passed this way. Later, pack trains of traders from Charleston, South Carolina followed the route through this area, bringing calico, beads, gunpowder, knives and kettles to be exchanged for furbelts.



Nikwasi

A-2

General Description

Continuing to descend for 2 miles, you will enter the Cowee valley, in which Franklin is situated. Riding out of Franklin, you will climb alongside Ellijay Creek for a total of 9 miles, with 4 miles along a steep and winding road through a remote area. Then, descending 5½ miles alongside Tilley Creek to the Tuckasee River Valley you will reach Cullowhee. Following the river out of Cullowhee, you will have a fairly level ride all the way to Sylva, where you will begin a gentle climb to the Blue Ridge Parkway. This segment is recommended only for experienced riders as much of the terrain is difficult.

Approximately 49 miles/79 kilometers.

Roadway Condition

The roads throughout this segment are in very good condition.

Hazardous Areas

NC 107 just south of Sylva is somewhat congested. 2 miles.

Services

Few services exist outside the populated areas. Franklin, Cullowhee and Sylva offer full services. Private campgrounds are available in the Franklin area and east of Sylva.

Points of Interest

1 Arrowood Glade

This is a national forest recreation area offering picnicking and fishing. Drinking water is available. Camping is not permitted.

2 Nikwasi

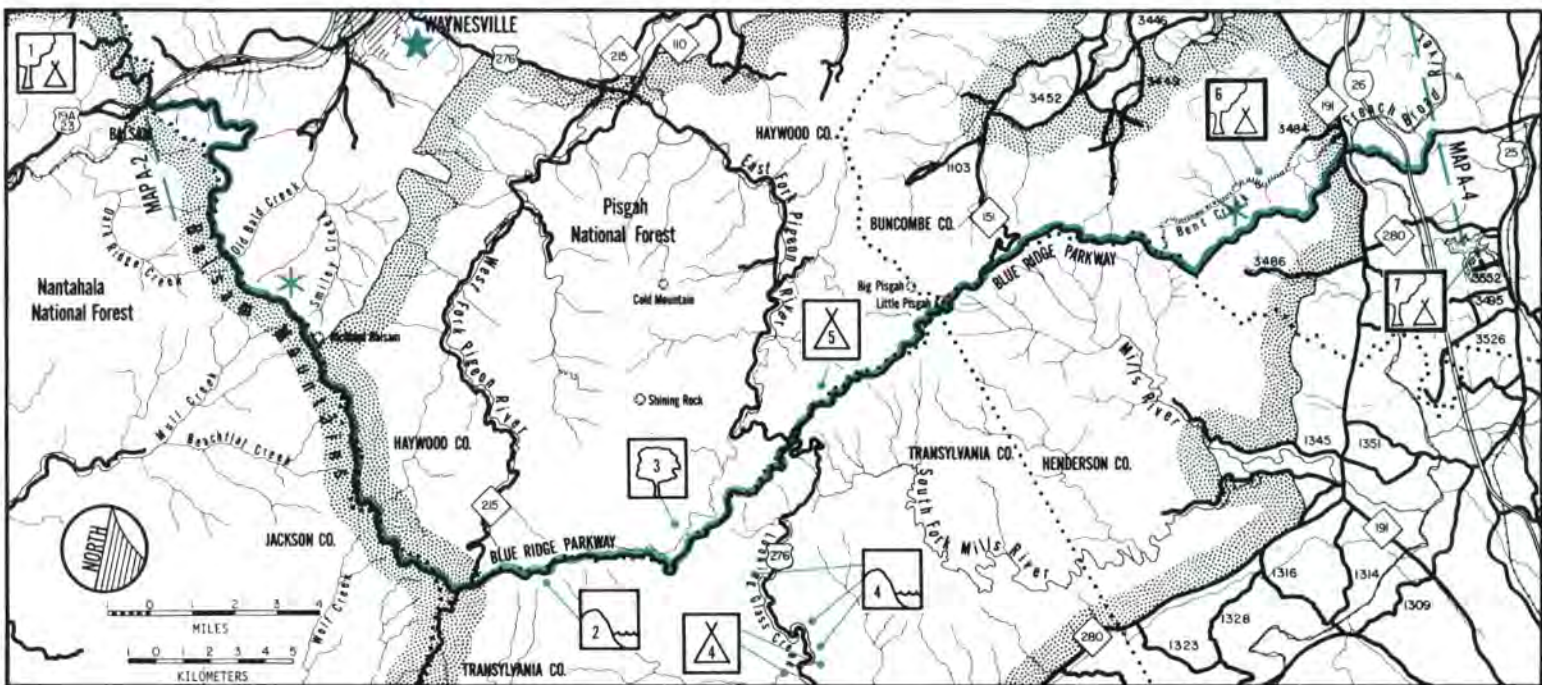
The town of Franklin is on the site of an old and sacred Cherokee Indian settlement which was called Nikwasi. There was a mound here which the Cherokees believed was inhabited by immortals called Nunnehi. According to a legend, the existence of this sacred town was threatened by a powerful rival tribe. The invaders greatly outnumbered the defending Cherokees and the situation seemed hopeless. As the Cherokees were retreating, a stranger appeared and shouted that he and his warriors would save the town. At first he was thought to be a neighboring Cherokee chief bringing reinforcements. Actually, he was a Nunnehi chief who was leading a large company of braves, fully armed and painted for war, from the side of the ceremonial mound. Since the Nunnehi were invisible to the invaders, they could not fight them, and fled. Thus the sacred town was saved on this and other occasions.

3 Rockhounding Sites

More than a dozen gem mines offer a chance to dig for precious and semi-precious stones such as rubies, sapphires, garnets, and amethysts. Most of these mines are open from May through October, some year round.

4 Judaculla Rock

This rock, formed from soft sandstone, is about 20 feet square, and is covered with mysterious Indian hieroglyphics which, to this day, have defied interpretation. A Cherokee legend says that these marks were made by a giant leaping from his home on the nearby mountaintop to the creek below.



Sliding Rock A-3

General Description

For this entire segment, you will ride on the Blue Ridge Parkway, a road which runs along the crests of the southern Appalachian Mountains for 469 miles. Although the terrain is quite difficult, the parkway offers a unique cycling experience. Built for recreation, the maximum speed limit for automobiles is 45 mph, and commercial vehicles are prohibited. Bicycling is permitted with the following guidelines: 1) Bicycles may be ridden only on paved road surfaces and parking areas. Bicycles, including mountain bikes, may not be ridden on trails or walkways. 2) The bicycle operator must exhibit a white light or reflector visible at least 500 feet to the front and a red light or reflector visible at least 200 feet to the rear during periods of low visibility, between the hours of sunset and sunrise, or while traveling through a tunnel. 3) Bicycles must be ridden in single file except when passing or turning left, and well to the right-hand side of the road. 4) Bicycle speed must be reasonable for control with regard to traffic, weather, road and light conditions.

Upon entering the parkway you begin a 12 mile climb to Richland Balsam, the highest point on the parkway. A 3 mile descent and a 2 mile climb bring you to Devil's Courthouse. A 14 mile descent, interspersed with some short, gentle climbs takes you through Shining Rock Wilderness Area to Mount Pisgah. A 19 mile downhill ride brings you to Asheville. This is a difficult, remote segment and recommended only for experienced cyclists.

Approximately 55 miles/89 kilometers.

The Southern Highlands route originates along this segment at

the intersection of US 276 and the Blue Ridge Parkway. This route connects with the Piedmont Spur at its eastern terminus, providing several mountain touring alternatives.

Hazardous Areas

A series of short tunnels with no interior lighting presents problems of visibility. A headlight is recommended.

Roadway Condition

The Parkway is well-constructed and well-maintained.

Services

Services are available along this segment only at Mt. Pisgah, where an inn, restaurant, small store and camping area are open, May through October. Camping is also available off the parkway at several Pisgah National Forest Recreation Areas. Waynesville, Brevard and Asheville are nearby cities which offer full services. Bike shops are available in Asheville.

Points of Interest

- 1) Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Follow the parkway 25 miles west for access to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The park has a total land area of nearly 800 square miles, and provides ample opportunities for camping, hiking, and nature study. Deep blue haze rising from the valleys gives the Great Smokies their name.

- 2) Devil's Courthouse

The summit of Devil's Courthouse affords a 360° panoramic view across the mountains of four states.

- 3) Shining Rock Wilderness Area

The "shining rocks" are snow-white quartz rock outcrops that

cap Shining Rock Mountain. Elevations along the 25 miles of hiking trails in the area range from 3,500 feet to 6,030 feet.

- 4) Pisgah Forest Recreation Area

Miles of hiking trails, sparkling trout streams and magnificent waterfalls make this an appealing area to explore. Of special interest is Sliding Rock, a refreshing attraction for hot, tired cyclists. The Davidson River Campground provides a convenient overnight stopover.

- 5) Mount Pisgah

Mount Pisgah was once part of the 100,000-acre estate owned by George W. Vanderbilt, where the first forestry school in America was established. This area now offers a large campground, picnic area, inn, restaurant, and hiking trails. A small camp store offers limited food supplies, May through October.

- 6) Lake Powhatan Recreation Area

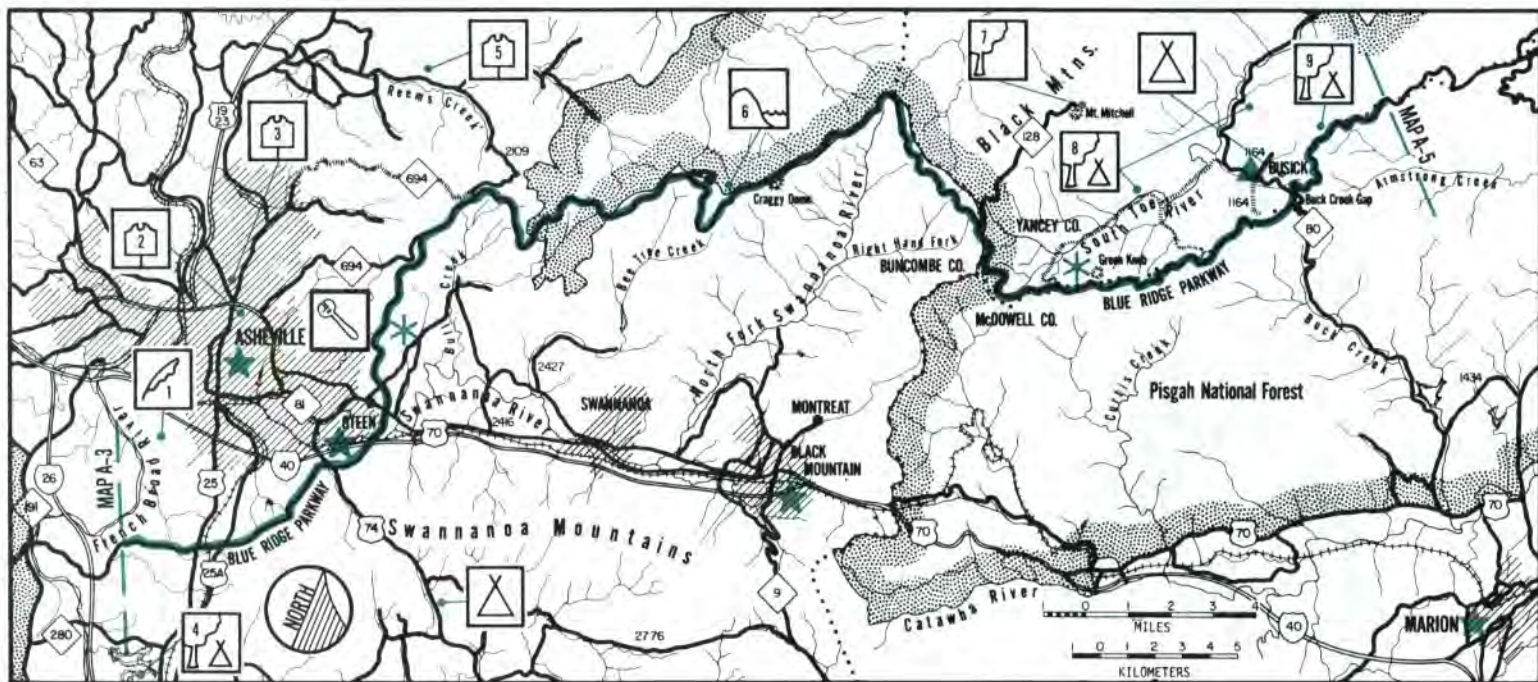
Part of the Pisgah National Forest, this area offers camping, swimming, and hiking.

- 7) Lake Julian Recreation Area

This seventy acre park offers many recreational opportunities including camping, fishing and rental boats, with swimming at a nearby county recreation area.

- 8) North Mills River Recreation Area

Also part of the Pisgah National Forest, this area offers camping, fishing and hiking.



Craggy Pinnacle

A-4

General Description

This entire segment is along the Blue Ridge Parkway (see segment A-3 for additional information). Asheville, near the beginning of this segment, is in the valley of the French Broad River. From Asheville you begin a 30-mile climb to the crests of the Black Mountains, gaining approximately 3,000 feet in altitude. A 14-mile downhill ride, interspersed with a few short climbs, brings you to Buck Creek Gap. A 4-mile climb ends this segment.

Approximately 53 miles/85 kilometers.

Hazardous Areas

Tunnels on the parkway present visibility problems both for the cyclist and the motorist. The parkway administration requires that, for your safety lights be used in these tunnels—most are very dark in the middle.

Roadway Condition

This road is excellent. The parkway is well-constructed and well-maintained.

Services

As there is no commercial development on the Parkway, services are available only at designated locations. Asheville and Marion provide full services, including bike shops. Camping is offered by Buncombe County at Lake Julian. A National Forest Recreation Area provides two more campgrounds. A large campground is available at Crabtree Meadows, right on the Parkway.

Points of Interest

- 1 Biltmore House and Gardens

This 250-room mansion, built for George W. Vanderbilt in 1895, is filled with priceless treasures which he collected from all over the world. The estate is made up of 12,000 acres including formal gardens, greenhouses, lakes, waterfalls, and a dairy operation. It has been called the finest castle in the United States. An entrance fee is charged.

- 2 Asheville Points of Interest

Asheville, situated on a plateau rimmed by the Blue Ridge, Pisgah and Newfound Mountains is the economic and cultural center of the mountain country of North Carolina. The land on which the city is situated was once a part of the Cherokee Indian hunting grounds.

The city offers many interesting attractions. At Biltmore Handweavers raw wools are washed, combed, dyed and woven into homespun; the houses of Biltmore Village, a restored English-style village built in the 1800's, now contain quaint shops; the botanical gardens display flowers and plants of the southern highlands, the National Weather Records Center houses weather records for the world, Colburn Mineral Museum offers a complete display of gems and minerals of the southern Appalachians; a city zoo and art museum round out Asheville's points of interest.

- 3 Thomas Wolfe Memorial

This site is a national historic landmark and a North Carolina State Historic Site. This house was Wolfe's boyhood home and served as a model for the setting of his first novel, *Look Homeward Angel*.

- 4 Lake Julian Recreation Area

See description in segment A-3.

- 5 Zebulon B. Vance Birthplace State Historic Site

Vance was a prominent political figure of his time, serving both in the state legislature and the United States Congress, plus three terms as governor of North Carolina. A restoration of the house and the farm outbuildings on this site gives an interesting glimpse into life after the close of the American Revolution.

- 6 Craggy Gardens Scenic Area

A visitors center provides water and sanitary facilities, although no food is available. Several interesting exhibits on wildlife of the area are on display along with an extensive collection of local herbs and wildflowers. A trail leads to Craggy Pinnacle, a point of scenic interest.

- 7 Mt. Mitchell State Park

In 1915, this area became the first North Carolina State Park. Mt. Mitchell, elevation 6,684 feet, is the highest peak east of the Mississippi River. The road leading from the parkway to the park is a very strenuous 5-mile climb.

- 8 Pisgah National Forest Recreation Area

Follow N.C. 80 north to this area. Two sites, Black Mountain and Carolina Hemlock, offer camping and fishing.

- 9 Crabtree Meadows

Right on the parkway, this area offers camping facilities, picnic area and a small camp store and restaurant which are open May 1 through August 31.