

PRECIPITATION



Mean number of days with 0.01 or more inches of precipitation per year.

TEMPERATURE



Average high and low temperature (in Fahrenheit) for each season. Winter through Fall, by region.

PREVAILING WINDS



Prevailing winds and mean annual wind speed (in miles per hour). Northeast winds prevail in September and October.

Bicycle Laws and Safety Tips

In North Carolina the bicycle is legally classified as a vehicle. This means that bicyclists have full rights and responsibilities on the roadway and are subject to the regulations governing the operation of a motor vehicle. North Carolina traffic laws require the rider of a bicycle to:

- ride on the right, in the same direction as other moving traffic;
- obey all traffic signs and signals, including stop and yield signs and one-way directional signs;
- use signals to communicate intended movements;
- yield to pedestrians and emergency vehicles;
- equip the bicycle with a front lamp visible from 300 feet and a rear reflector or lamp which is visible from a distance of 200 feet at night;

In addition, bicycles are prohibited from all interstate highways.

Traveling by bicycle can be an exhilarating experience, but requires a great deal of care on the part of the cyclist. Motor vehicle drivers often do not see bicyclists on the road and many do not realize that the bicyclist has a legal right to be there. It is important, therefore, to ride defensively and in a predictable manner. The bicycle always loses in a conflict with a car. Stay alert and keep safe.

To insure a safe trip along the back roads of North Carolina, please note the following suggestions:

- always wear a bicycle helmet;
- avoid riding at night, especially in rural areas;
- when riding with a group, ride single file;
- do not ride during periods of low visibility, particularly at dusk, in dense fog or during heavy rain;
- do not attempt trips which are beyond your capabilities;
- wear bright clothing for visibility;
- be courteous to other drivers; keep traffic flowing by helping them pass you in a safe manner.

"This guide is published by the Department of Transportation as an aid to bicyclists. The Department of Transportation in no manner warrants the safety of the highways indicated on these maps for use by bicyclists. These roads are suggested only as more suitable than others for use by bicyclists as connecting routes. All roads suggested are regular roads of the highway system used by automobiles and trucks, with no special lanes provided for bicycles. As no separate lanes are provided for bicycles and therefore are dangerous for use by bicyclists, the bicyclist assumes the risk for his own safety when using the routes indicated on these maps."

It is urged that no one under 15 years of age attempt to ride all or any portion of these routes without adult supervision.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

NORTH CAROLINA



BICYCLING HIGHWAYS

Bicycling Highways

North Carolina is an ideal place to bicycle tour. Climate, terrain and the many miles of pleasant country roads combine to provide an exciting trip for every type of bicyclist . . . long-distance tourist, week-end rider or day tripper.

Many people are unaware of the unlimited cycling opportunities in North Carolina. For this reason, the Department of Transportation Bicycle Program created a system of "Bicycling Highways", routed along 3,000 miles of lightly traveled backroads throughout the state. Ten different routes have been developed, selected according to strict criteria based on the safety needs of cyclists. These "Bicycling Highways" routes generally parallel major highways, thus offering a good alternative to those busy roads.

Southern Highlands

Abruptly dropping 2,000 feet from the Blue Ridge Parkway to Brevard and another 1,000 feet from Saluda to Columbus, this 120 mile bicycle route takes you through some of the most beautiful parts of the Southern Highlands. The route diverges from the Mountains to Sea route at Wagon Road Gap and winds down through the Pisgah National Forest past places like Looking Glass Falls and Sliding Rock Falls, a perfect spot to take a refreshing plunge into a cool mountain stream. Several old country inns located along the route near the towns of Pisgah Forest, Flat Rock, Saluda and Tryon give you a chance to experience the elegance of the past. Near Flat Rock, you will pass the Carl Sandburg home, now a National historic Site. Here, too, is the Flatrock Playhouse, North Carolina's official State Theater, where vagabond players stage productions during the summer. Leaving the highlands behind, the route continues through the foothills to join the Piedmont Spur route near Lincolnton.

The Southern Highlands route is designated as NC Bike route 8. Signs like the one above mark the way. But don't put your maps away, just in case a sign is missing. Otherwise you could find yourself a long way off the route or on a road not suited for cycling.



Using This Guide

The information presented in this guide has been compiled to help you prepare for and take a bicycle trip along one of the North Carolina "Bicycling Highways" routes. Included is information on state laws which pertain to bicycles, safety tips, weather information, sources for additional tourist information, a campground directory and a set of strip maps detailing the route.

These maps provide a wealth of information. To orient you to your general location, the road network, prominent physical features, cities and towns and county boundaries are shown. A north arrow and scale of miles/kilometers are also included. The actual route you follow is highlighted with color. An enlargement of any section of the route which is confusing or difficult to follow is shown in a special inset on the appropriate map segment. Match lines are provided to show how the segments of the route fit together. If another "Bicycling Highways" route intersects the route you are following, it is identified with dashed lines in color and the appropriate map series/segment number is shown.

All roads which are a part of the route or which intersect the route are numbered. To help differentiate the numbers of the secondary road which are a part of the route from those which are not, the numbers of the secondary roads which you follow are enclosed in a rectangle (**1005**). US and NC numbered highways which are a part of the route are not differentiated in this way. On the road, secondary roads numbers can be found on posts at all intersections. These numbers are small and sometimes obscure, so look carefully. Also important to note is that although you may be going straight, secondary road numbers can change at county lines, major intersections and sometimes when going through a town.

Much additional information pertinent to your safety, travel needs and interests is highlighted in color on the maps. This information includes the locations of country stores (▲); full service towns with motel or inn accommodations, laundromats, supermarkets, restaurants, post offices, banks, etc. (★); and hazardous areas (✖). Special pictographic symbols mark the location of bicycle shops, campgrounds, recreation areas, historic sites, and other points of interest.

Narrative information is provided for each map segment to explain or expand the information symbolized on the map. Included is a general description of the terrain; the overall distance of each segment; an assessment of roadway conditions; potentially hazardous areas, noting approximate distance of any problem; availability of services along the route or within reasonable biking distance of the route; bike shop locations; and, descriptive information on each point of interest.

This guide was produced by the North Carolina Bicycle Program through the efforts of:
Curtis B. Yates - Director
Mary Paul Meletiou - Program Manager
Bruce Burgess - Cartographer
Mark Smith - Graphic Designer
Joanne Jones - Program Assistant

We welcome your comments or further questions. Contact:
Bicycle Program
North Carolina Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611
(919) 733-2804

For More Information

Travel and Tourism
Department of Commerce
430 N. Salisbury Street
Raleigh, NC 27611

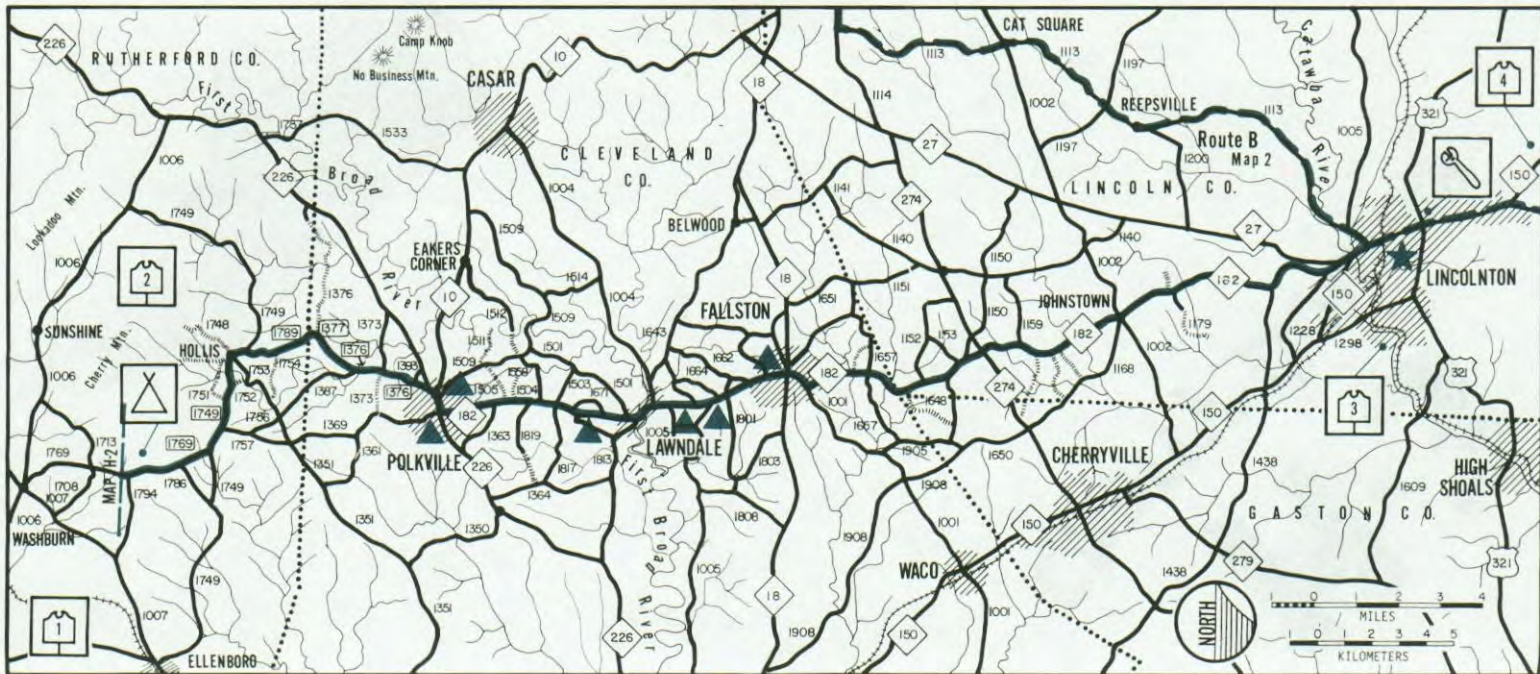
Provides information on accommodations and campgrounds plus brochures on major points of interest.

Public Affairs Map Section
Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 25201
Raleigh, NC 27611

Provides official State Highway maps. Also, detailed maps of each county, for which a nominal fee is charged.

Trails Coordinator
Department of Environment,
Health and Natural Resources
12700 Bayleaf Church Road
Raleigh, NC 27614

Provides information on State Parks and recreational trails.



Cherry Bounce

H-3

General Description

A few more steep hills take you out of the Cherry Mountain area and into the rolling terrain of the Piedmont. Small farms and open fields line the quiet rural lanes along which you pass. The mountains recede into the distance. At the outskirts of Lincolnton, this route intersects with segment B-2 of the Piedmont Spur.

Approximately 36 miles/54 kilometers.

Roadway Conditions

For the most part the roads used for this segment are in good condition. SR 1376 in Cleveland County near the Rutherford County line is a little rough, however.

Services

Numerous county stores throughout the central part of this segment provide opportunities for a refreshing break. Full services are available in Lincolnton, where you will also find a bicycle shop. Camping is permitted at South Mountains Christian Camp, at the beginning of this segment.

Points of Interest

- 1 Monazite

Around the turn of the century, the mining of monazite was an important industry in Rutherford County. This material was extensively used at that time in the manufacture of mantels for incandescent lamps. It is reported that Thomas Edison and a party of scientists visited the area in 1906 to investigate the monazite deposits. In 1911, the availability of cheap ore from Brazil and India, however, put an end to the local monazite boom.

- 2 Cherry Bounce

When Amos Owens settled in this area one hundred and fifty years ago, cherry trees covered the mountain. They were so lavish that the local folks named the mountain for them. Owens built himself a house of stone on a spur near the top of Cherry Mountain. It was three stories high. His mules were kept on the ground floor. His family lived on the second floor. Bee gums occupied the third floor.

When his crops failed in 1845, he turned to a craft his ancestors had practiced in Ireland—whiskey-making. His was a mixture of corn whiskey, honey and cherry juice and it was known locally as Cherry Bounce. In time, he got the reputation of being the master distiller in all the hills.

At that time it was legal to make whiskey in North Carolina, but only if a tax was paid on each gallon of spirits. Amos Owens steadfastly refused to pay this levy. He argued that the land, the corn, the cherries, the honey and the still were all his and he should be able to do what he pleased with his property. As a result, he served several jail terms in the fifty years during which time he made and sold his Cherry Bounce.

At the beginning of each term of court he had to appear to answer the charges against him. Each year he traveled to the courthouse loaded down with potatoes for sale, with a sizeable amount of Cherry Bounce buried beneath them. Typical sales would total "20 bushels and 40 gallons of 'taters'."

When Amos was in his late seventies, he served a six month jail term. He came out a changed man. He never made another drop of whiskey or brandy. Cherries no longer grow on the mountain, but Cherry Bounce is still a familiar name in these hills.

- 3 Confederate Laboratory

During the Civil War, drugs for the confederacy were not readily available, so laboratories were established in several locations to produce needed medicines. Supplies were hauled by wagon from the North Carolina mountains to these laboratories where herbs, roots, barks, and other natural substances were prepared for medicinal use. A portion of one such laboratory which was in operation in this area, remains.











- 4 Schenk-Warlick Mill























This mill, established about 1815, was the first cotton spinning mill in North Carolina. In the years before 1815 the state had been economically isolated, thus necessarily self-sufficient. Use of the spinning wheel and the hand loom in the home had largely met the demands for thread and cloth. Although the state possessed adequate resources, manufacturing on a factory basis was slow to develop and was so new and risky that it was unable to compete with agriculture, which continued to dominate the economic life of the state. No serious effort developed to "bring the cotton mills to the cotton fields."

notes:

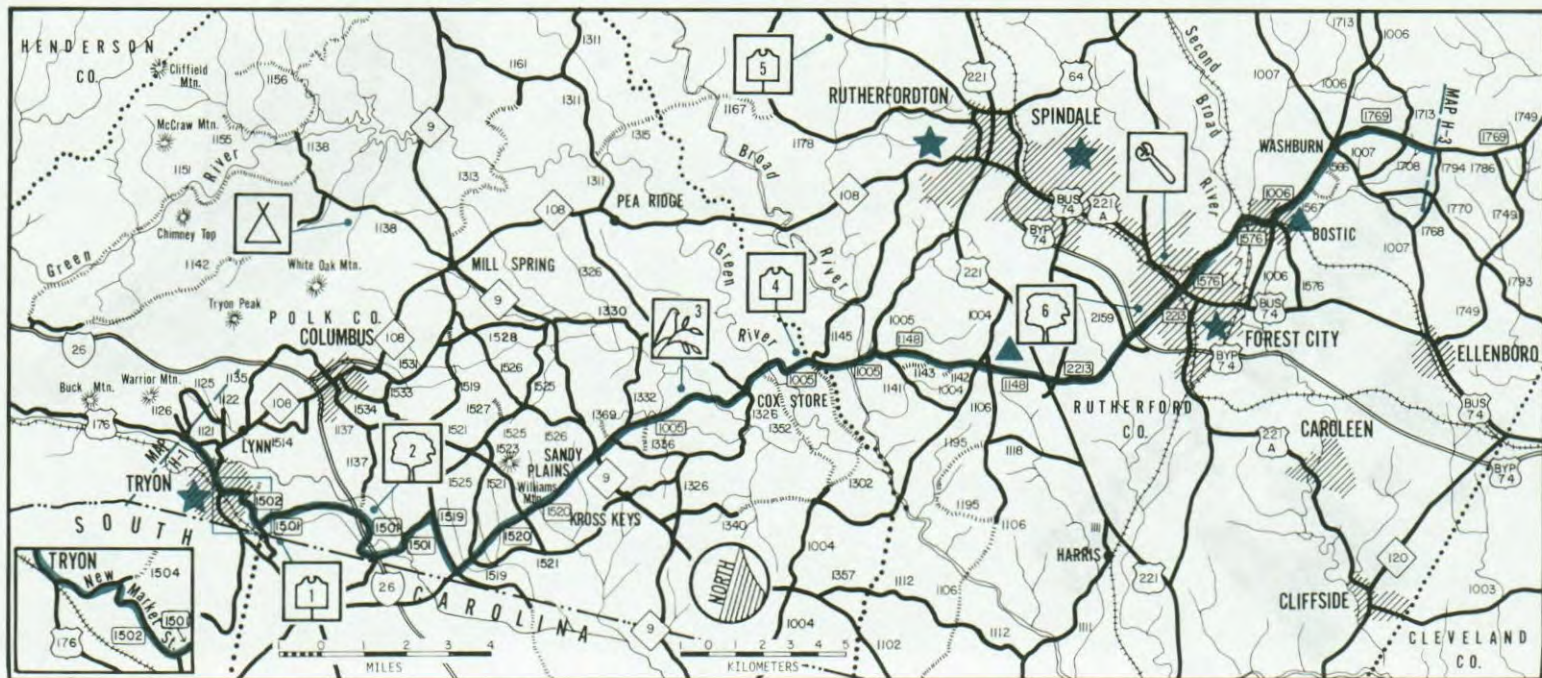
H-3 Cherry Bounce

legend

	BICYCLE SHOP		HISTORIC SITE
	FLORA AND FAUNA		SCENIC AREA
	FOLKLORE		RECREATION AREA
	CULTURAL/ EDUCATIONAL SITE		CAMPGROUND
	RESTAURANT		RECREATION AREA/ CAMPGROUND

	BICYCLE ROUTE		CANAL
	PAVED ROAD		LAKE/SOUND/OCEAN
	UNPAVED ROAD		RAILROAD
	DIVIDED HIGHWAY		COUNTY LINE
	N.C. NUMBERED HIGHWAY		FOREST/PARK BOUNDARY
	U.S. NUMBERED HIGHWAY		TOWN
	INTERSTATE HIGHWAY		CITY
	ROUTE ON SECONDARY ROAD		ENLARGEMENT
	SECONDARY ROAD NUMBERS		BASIC SERVICES
	SEGMENT MATCH LINES		HAZARDOUS AREA
	RIVER OR CREEK		FULL SERVICE CITY





Sam's Tribute

H-2

General Description

The route continues to descend for another 1.5 miles into the town of Tryon. A steep .5-mile climb takes you out of town and into the lush "hunting country" dotted with elegant homes and beautiful horse farms. Glimpses of high mountains appear as you crest each hill of the rolling terrain which takes you alternately past dense forests and settled farmlands, into Forest City. Beyond Forest City, a series of short, steep climbs take you into the Cherry Mountains, to the end of the segment.

Approximately 36 miles/58 kilometers.

Roadway Conditions

In general, the roads throughout this segment are well-paved and well-maintained.

Services

Very few country stores can be found along the back roads of this segment, so stock up on supplies at stores in the towns along the way. Full services are available in Tryon, Forest City, Spindale and Rutherfordton. There is a bicycle shop in Forest City. Camping facilities are available near Mill Spring, about 9 miles off the route.

Points of Interest

- 1 Block House

Built in 1756 as a trading post, the Block House later served as a fortified shelter for colonists during the French and Indian War. It was moved a few hundred yards to its present site in 1942, at which time it was greatly enlarged and embellished. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Nearby is the stone which marks the western terminus of the 1772 boundary survey between North and South Carolina.

- 2 Foothills Equestrian Nature Center

This 210-acre preserve is home to nature lovers and equestrian enthusiasts alike. The meadows, streams and woodlands, interwoven with over 8 miles of horseback riding and walking trails are open year round to the public at no charge.

- 3 Kudzu

Imported from Asia in the early 1800's, this member of the pea family was planted extensively in the south as a ground cover during the 1930's to prevent soil erosion. Favorable climatic conditions allowed it to spread rapidly, becoming an uncontrollable pest. Eerie "Kudzu forests" can be seen throughout this area.

- 4 Green River Plantation

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this 150-year-old house was built with bricks transported by wagon trains from Charleston, S.C. and hand-hewn oak and pine logs from the surrounding forest. It is currently a private residence, not open to the public.

- 5 Bechler Mint

In the mid 1800's, Rutherfordton was in the center of the largest gold producing area in the United States. Every small stream carried enough gold dust to make gold washing pay. There was no standard medium of exchange for this precious metal, however, making trade

difficult. The nearest mint was in Philadelphia, a long and hazardous journey at best.

Two German brothers, Augustus and Christophe Bechler, gunsmiths and goldsmiths who had settled in the area, began operation of a mint to remedy this situation. They produced coins in \$1.00, \$2.50 and \$5.00 denominations. Their mint was operated from 1830 until 1840, when the US government opened a mint in Charlotte. During this time they minted over \$3,000,000 worth of coins, which served as the principal form of money in this area. Few of their coins are still in existence.

- 6 Sam Thomas Memorial Bicycle Route

Sam Thomas, a long time-resident of Forest City, always worked hard to promote the causes he believed in. He was convinced of the viability of the bicycle as legitimate mode of transportation. Sam wanted to see this vehicle recognized and accepted as such by the state and local government agencies responsible for improving the bicycling environment. As a member of the North Carolina Department of Transportation Bicycle Committee from 1978 until his death in 1985, he devoted much effort toward realizing this goal.

Sam's lifelong involvement with bicycling began in 1942, when he bought his first bicycle after someone had stolen the tires and wheels off his car. During that time when both rubber and gasoline were rationed, the bicycle was a logical and efficient choice as a replacement for his car. Sam and a friend commuted by bike for the next year before they entered the service. Sam once recalled, "That was the most beautiful year I remember. I saw every flower that bloomed that spring."

In 1986, the Board of Transportation took action to commemorate Sam Thomas' efforts on behalf of North Carolina's bicyclists by dedicating the Southern Highlands Bicycling Highways route to his memory.

notes:

legend

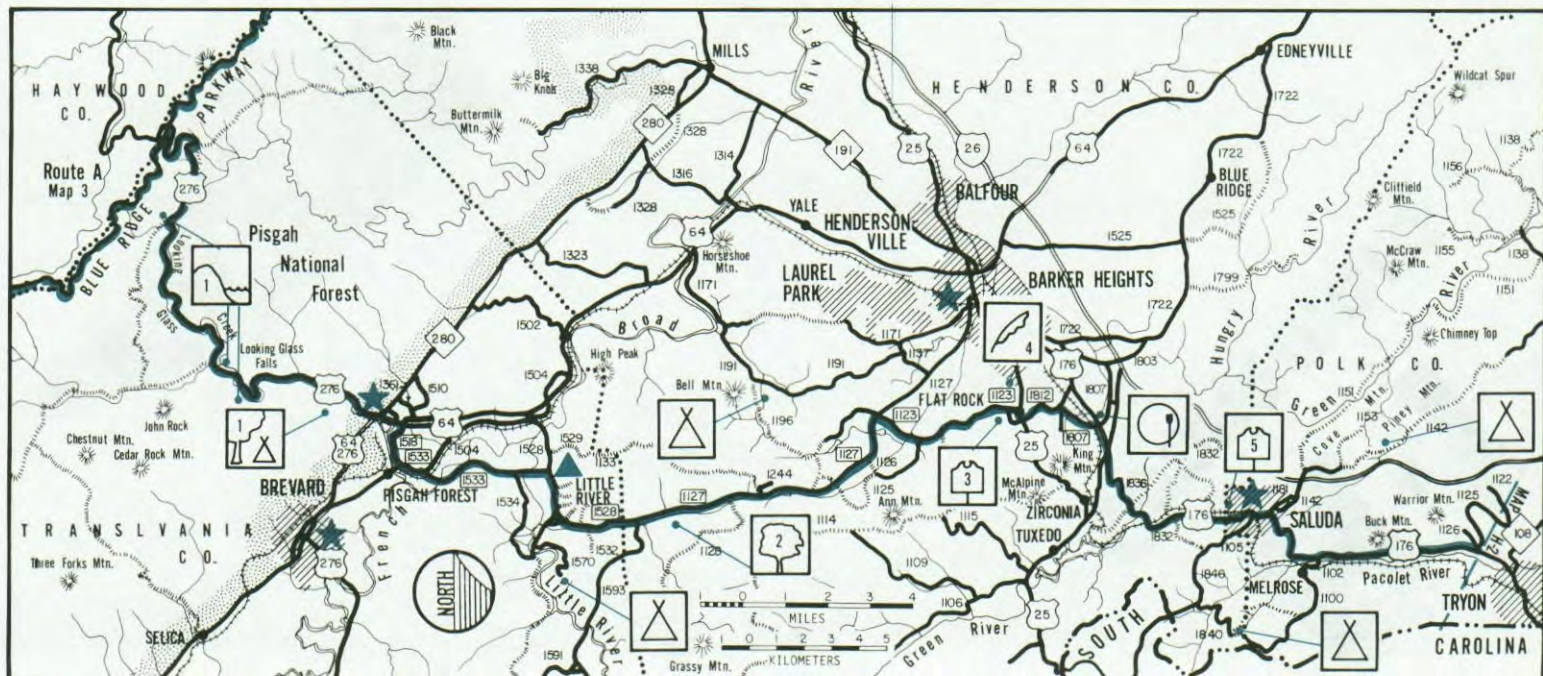
	BICYCLE SHOP		HISTORIC SITE
	FLORA AND FAUNA		SCENIC AREA
	FOLKLORE		RECREATION AREA
	CULTURAL/ EDUCATIONAL SITE		CAMPGROUND
	RESTAURANT		RECREATION AREA/ CAMPGROUND
	BICYCLE ROUTE		CANAL
	PAVED ROAD		LAKE/SOUND/OCEAN
	UNPAVED ROAD		RAILROAD
	DIVIDED HIGHWAY		COUNTY LINE
	N.C. NUMBERED HIGHWAY		FOREST/PARK BOUNDARY
	U.S. NUMBERED HIGHWAY		TOWN
	INTERSTATE HIGHWAY		CITY
	ROUTE ON SECONDARY ROAD		ENLARGEMENT
	SECONDARY ROAD NUMBERS		BASIC SERVICES
	SEGMENT MATCH LINES		HAZARDOUS AREA
	RIVER OR CREEK		FULL SERVICE CITY



H-2

Sam's Tribute





Connemara

H-1

General Description

The 120-mile Southern Highlands Route originates at Wagon Road Gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway and terminates in Lincolnton. It serves as a southern link between the Mountains to Sea route (intersecting with Segment A-3) and the Piedmont Spur (intersecting with Segment B-2). The Southern Highlands route combines with portions of those two routes plus the Sandhills Sector and the Cape Fear Run, to form a southern cross-state route.

This first segment begins with an exhilarating 15-mile plunge down the Blue Ridge Escarpment—a drop of over 2,400 feet, into the Foothills region of North Carolina. Rolling hills, interspersed with occasional short, steep climbs characterizing the next 28 miles into Saluda. From there you drop another 1000 feet in the next 4 miles, to the end of this segment.

Approximately 46 miles/75 Kilometers

Roadway Condition

The roads in this segment are well-paved and well maintained.

Services

There are no stores or restaurants for the first 15 miles of this segment. Few country stores exist along the route outside the populated areas, so be sure to carry some extra supplies. Full services are available at the intersection of US 276 and US 64, and at Brevard, Flat Rock, Hendersonville and Saluda. Two campgrounds are located within the Pisgah National Forest, with others near Little River and Saluda. Primitive camping facilities are available at Holmes State Forest.

Points of Interest

1 Pisgah Forest Recreation Area

Campgrounds, trout streams, hiking trails, picnic areas, waterfalls and scenic vistas throughout this area provide for a variety of recreational opportunities. Sliding Rock is an especially refreshing attraction for hot, tired cyclists. The rock, which is approximately 60 feet long, has a continuous sheet of water covering it. Since it is relatively smooth, it can be used as a sliding board for a plunge into the pool of cool, clear water below.

The Cradle of Forestry National Historic site is another Pisgah Forest attraction. Here in the Pink Beds, an Appalachian mountain valley, professional forestry was first practiced and taught in the US in 1898. A 20-minute film, two interpretive trails and museum displays at the visitor center tell the story.

2 Holmes State Forest

This 231-acre preserve provides a convenient and appealing picnic stopover. Primitive camping is also available. The site is at the end of a 2.5-mile gravel road. Water and pit toilets are provided.

3 Carl Sandburg Home

Carl Sandburg and his family first came to the mountains of Western North Carolina in 1945, settling at Connemara, a beautiful 240-acre farm near Flat Rock. Here this poet, author, lecturer, minstrel, one-time political activist and social thinker spent the last 22 years of his long life. Sandburg's years at Connemara were productive, highlighted by the publication of a novel, his autobiography, and several volumes of history and poetry, including the *Complete Poems* for which he won a Pulitzer Prize in 1951. Life at Connemara was busy, too, for other family members. Mrs. Sandburg continued to breed and care for her large, prize-winning goat herd and to run the farm business with the help of their daughters.

In late 1968, a year after Sandburg's death, Congress established the Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site to commemorate the life and work of one of America's leading literary figures. The site, including the main house which dates from 1838, is open to the public daily except for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Admission is free.

4 Flat Rock Playhouse

The Flat Rock Playhouse is the home of North Carolina's official State Theater and is the oldest professional summer theater in the state. Vagabond players stage theatrical productions during the summer, from June through Labor Day. An admission fee is charged.

5 Saluda Mountain Railroad Grade

At 4.7% incline, this section of railroad line is the steepest standard-gauge, main-line railroad grade in the United States. From Melrose to Saluda the railroad climbs 600 feet in three miles and in places reaches a maximum grade of 220 feet per mile. This section of track is still in use today.







The building of the Saluda grade railroad was a dangerous and laborious task. Construction took almost two years, with much work done at night using lanterns and flares in an effort to meet the scheduled deadline.

The first train to run over this track pulled into Hendersonville, the end of the line, on July 4, 1879. A contemporary newspaper story described the excitement in this way: "Suddenly the stillness of the valley was broken by the whistle of an engine somewhere down the line, whereupon there was a scurrying hither and yon. For lots and lots of people, most of whom had never seen an engine or a train, had gathered to behold the marvelous sight... Every neck was craned and every eye was fixed toward the bridge over the creek where the engine would first come into view... There it came! Rattling and roaring and belching a great column of smoke from the big funnel—like a smoke stack. What a monster in size it was! What a marvelous and mighty power!"

notes:

H-1
Connemara

legend

	BICYCLE SHOP		HISTORIC SITE
	FLORA AND FAUNA		SCENIC AREA
	FOLKLORE		RECREATION AREA
	CULTURAL/ EDUCATIONAL SITE		CAMPGROUND
	RESTAURANT		RECREATION AREA/ CAMPGROUND
	BICYCLE ROUTE		CANAL
	PAVED ROAD		LAKE/SOUND/OCEAN
	UNPAVED ROAD		RAILROAD
	DIVIDED HIGHWAY		COUNTY LINE
	N.C. NUMBERED HIGHWAY		FOREST/PARK BOUNDARY
	U.S. NUMBERED HIGHWAY		TOWN
	INTERSTATE HIGHWAY		CITY
	ROUTE ON SECONDARY ROAD		ENLARGEMENT
	3257 SECONDARY ROAD NUMBERS		BASIC SERVICES
	SEGMENT MATCH LINES		HAZARDOUS AREA
	RIVER OR CREEK		FULL SERVICE CITY

COPYRIGHT®, NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION, 1987. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



Southern Highlands Campgrounds

Segment H-1

Pisgah National Forest
Davidson River Campground
Pisgah Ranger District
P.O. Box 8
Pisgah Forest, NC 28768
(704) 877-3265

open April thru mid-December

Little River Camping Resort
Rt. 2, Box 241
Pisgah Forest, NC 28768
(704) 877-4475

open mid-May thru Labor Day

Holmes State Forest
Rt. 4, Box 308
Hendersonville, NC 28739
(704) 692-0100

open mid-March thru November
Primitive camping only

call ahead for reservations
closed Mondays and Tuesdays

Big Willow Campground
Rt. 4, Box 424-B
Hendersonville, NC 28739
(704) 693-0187

open May thru October

Orchard Lake Campground
P.O. Box 96
Saluda, NC 28773
(704) 749-3901

open mid-April thru mid-October

Cozy Cove Camp-Park
Saluda, NC 28773
(704) 749-4366

open April thru October

Segment H-2

Silver Creek Campground
Rt. 2, Box 86
Mill Spring, NC 28756
(704) 894-3342

open April Thru October

Segment H-3

South Mountains Christian Camp
Rt. 2 Box 1014
Bostic, NC 28018
(704) 245-3322

open all Year

please call ahead or upon arrival to
let camp director know you will be
on the site.

Bicycle Camping in North Carolina

Touring by bicycle has become more and more popular as a way to see and experience North Carolina. Many bicycle tourists have come to prefer the added flexibility afforded by camping. Whether your destination for the night is a state park, a private campground or an impromptu roadside location, self-contained bicycle travel is the way to go. But in order to fully enjoy the experience, you must be well-prepared.

In North Carolina, a tent with a fly is a must. Rain showers are frequent and sometimes occur at night. Mosquitos abound. Raccoons, possums and other small creatures roam the woods at night looking for food. A good tent provides shelter from all these problems.

A lightweight stove and cookset are other nice conveniences. Because most of our bicycle routes follow lightly-traveled back roads, restaurants are not always readily available. But, there is usually a country store near your evening's destination, where you can obtain the items necessary to prepare a simple, nutritious supper.

Campgrounds along our routes are generally spaced a day's ride apart. If, for some reason, you must seek a campsite on private land, be sure to ask permission first. Most landowners are very cooperative. Always leave the area clean and express your appreciation to your host before you leave. A good impression will make it easier for the next touring cyclist who might need help.

Wherever you plan to camp, try to reach your destination well before nightfall. Your evening will be much more enjoyable if you have time to set up camp, prepare your meal and clean up while there is still light. Early arrival also reduces the chance that the campground will be full when you get there. This occasionally happens on summer weekends at the more popular state parks.

We hope you will enjoy bicycle camping in North Carolina. If you have any additional questions about touring in the state, contact the Bicycle Program or the Division of Travel and Tourism, Department of Commerce, PO Box 25249, Raleigh, NC 27611.



NC Dept. of Transportation Bicycle Program
PO Box 25201, Raleigh, NC 27611, (919) 733-2804

NC BICYCLING HIGHWAYS CAMPGROUND DIRECTORY



**SOUTHERN
HIGHLANDS**





NORTH CAROLINA BICYCLE ROUTE SYSTEM

