

Walk Across McCreary County in 2009

The hiking committee met the other day and decided to concentrate on the Sheltowee Trace in McCreary County for 2009. All of the Saturday hikes will take place on the Sheltowee Trace and we should be completed with the McCreary County section in December 2009.

There will be weekday hikes to other locations.

We will be leaving out parts of two sections due to a large amount of road walking, there is about a 4 mile section along the Divide Road on Peters Mountain and about a 3 mile section on Hwy 700 that we will not be walking. However, if you have your heart set to hike either or both of these sections we will work something out.

The only dates that are not set are the first April hike and in November. The first April hike will coincide with the Forest Service Wildflower Walk. The November hike will not be on opening day of Deer Season. The 2009 Deer Season dates have not been set yet.

We plan on an ending program celebration of some type to recognize those who completed the McCreary County Section, present a slide show of experiences along the trail, and thank sponsors.

Starting Point:

Hikes will leave from the McCreary County Extension Office, which is located at the McCreary Center of Somerset Community College in Whitley City, KY. Most hikes will leave at 9:00 am, some may leave sooner based upon distance needed to travel. You should plan on arriving one half hour early to get checked in and one last stop to a civilized rest room.

Transportation:

Transportation is going to be an issue. None of these trails are loop trails and some of the trailheads are in remote locations. We do have access to a school bus, but it comes with a fee. We are currently trying to secure some sponsors for this adventure. There will still be a transportation fee of \$5.00 - \$10.00 per day depending on the number of participants and sponsorship.

If you are interested in helping sponsor this great adventure let me know.

I will need to know 2-3 days in advance the number participating so I can arrange transportation.

Food and Drink:

Each hiker is responsible for their own.

Weather:

No one can predict the weather; we will not hike in extreme conditions. The call may not be made till the morning of the hike.

Stream Crossings:

A number of these trails have stream crossings. It is advisable to pack a pair of pool shoes, flip flops, etc. at towel in a zip lock bag, and a pair of dry socks.

Maps:

Maps of the Sheltowee Trace sections that are on the Stearns Ranger District can be downloaded from the following web site:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/boone/recreation/sheltowee.shtml>

Medications:

If you are taking any medications please pack some with you in case of an emergency. If you have allergic reactions to things you find in the wild like; bees, poison ivy, etc and require an EpiPen please pack that also.

Physical Condition:

We are not out to over exert anyone. We want these hikes to be a great experience for all involved. Most of the time hiking in the woods we average a little over a mile per hour, counting rest breaks, lunch breaks, etc. Five miles on a trail is different than five miles on a treadmill or track.

Only you know your condition and abilities. Some of these hikes are located in areas where there is not a "getting off" point.

Kids:

Kids are welcome; however anyone under 18 years of age must have an adult with them. You know your child when it comes to this type of activity.

Dogs:

Our policy so far on dogs has been they must be well behaved around people and kept on a leash. However, they cannot ride on the bus.

Schedule of Hikes

February 21, 2009

Tennessee line to Hemlock Grove Picnic Area:

This is Section 38 of the Sheltowee Trace. This is about a 5.5 mile hike that will require crossing Rock Creek two times. The Forest Service rates this trail Easy to Moderate with very little elevation change. This would be considered a family/kid friendly section, assuming the kids can do 5.5 miles.

March 21, 2009

Divide Road to Wilson Ridge Trail Head:

This is Section 36 of the Sheltowee Trace. We **will not** be walking the 4 mile section that is on the road. This is about a 6 mile hike that has a couple of large up hills. The Forest Service rates this section moderate. This will probably be the most challenging section. This would **not** be considered a family/kid friendly section.

April 11, 2009 (we think this will be the date)

Wildflower Walk and Yahoo to Alum Ford:

This hike will start by participating in the US Forest Service Wildflower Walk in the Yahoo Falls Area then we will hike part of Section 33 from Yahoo to Alum Ford, which is about 2 miles with very little elevation change. When rainfall is plentiful there are numerous small waterfalls along this section. There will be some small branch crossings. This hike is rated easy. This would be considered a family/kid friendly section.

April 25, 2009

Yamacraw to Alum:

This is the remaining part of Section 33. This hike will be approximately 6 miles in length and will take hikers past Julie and Princess Waterfalls, rock shelters, and along the Big South Fork River. This trail has very little elevation change and is rated moderate only because of its length. This time of year one should experience an abundance of wildflowers. This would be considered a family/kid friendly section.

May 16, 2009

Wilson Ridge to Yamacraw Bridge:

This outing will take in Sections 34 and 35 of the Sheltowee Trace. The hike will begin at the trail head on County Road 582 and will descend to Yamacraw Bridge. This is about 3.5 miles and will have creek crossings. Participants will also see a railway bridge that was built in 1907 that spans the Big South Fork. The Forest Service rates this hike moderate. This probably would **not** be considered a family/kid friendly section.

June 13, 2009

Peters Mountain to Hemlock Grove:

This is Section 37 of the Sheltowee Trace. This section is 2.6 miles in length. The elevation change will be downhill and will require a creek crossing. Parts of this trail are in the creek bed, so if we have had rain, be prepared. One nice 80 foot waterfall is along this trail. This would be considered a family/kid friendly section.

July

No Hike

August

No Hike

September 19, 2009

Hwy 27 to Yahoo:

This hike will take in part of Section 31 and all of Section 32 and will be about 6 miles in length. It will take participants from Hwy 27 crossing over Big Creek and descend to Yahoo Falls. The trail passes waterfalls, abandoned mines, and rock shelters. There will be a few creek crossings. The Forest Service rates the trail easy to moderate. This probably would **not** be considered a family/kid friendly section.

October 10, 2009

Hwy 27 Trail Head to Sandhill Camp:

This is part of Section 30 and 31. This will be about 6.5 miles, with most of it being on the old Barren Fork Railway, there will be one up hill and at least 2 creek crossings. There are numerous mine openings along this trail, building foundations, and a waterfall. The Forest Service rates it as moderate. This probably would **not** be considered a family/kid friendly section.

November 7 or 14, 2009 (subject to Deer Season dates)

Sandhill Camp to Hwy 700 including loop on the east side of Hwy 700:

This hike will take in parts of Section 29 and 30. We will not be walking the section of Section 29 that is on the Hwy 700. This hike will be 5.5 – 6 miles in length. The Forest Service rates this hike Moderate. This section has waterfalls, rock shelters, and stream crossings. This probably would **not** be considered a family/kid friendly section.

December 5, 2009

Hwy 700 to Cumberland Falls:

This is Section 28 of the Sheltowee Trace. This section is about 5.5 miles in length. Along this trail participants will experience numerous rock shelters, a waterfalls and almost a continuous view of the Cumberland River. Elevation change will be mostly down hill, there will be no creek crossings. Forest Service rates this trail Moderate. This probably would **not** be considered a family/kid friendly section.