

The Virginia Creeper Trail



Interesting Sites Along The Trail:

- Mile 0.0 (trailhead): Site of Black's Fort, precedent of Abingdon
- Mile 0.5 (on right): Mansion of W. Robertson, early Virginia governor
- Mile 1.8 (both sides): Entrance to Great Knobs, views of Berry Creek
- Mile 3.7 (both sides): Long trestle, site of old Watauga station
- Mile 7.2 (both sides): Confluence of Middle & South Forks Holston River
- Mile 8.5 (on right): Alvarado, site of old station
- Mile 15.5 (both sides): Entrance to Damascus, Appalachian Trail junction
- Mile 17.5 (both sides): Iron Bridge, enter Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area
- Mile 19.5 (left side): Recreation Area facility, Appalachian Trail access.
- Mile 23.0 (both sides): Taylors Valley - Daniel Boone campsite
- Mile 27.0 (both sides): Creek Junction, 563 ft trestle
- Mile 30.5 (left side): Restored Green Cove Station
- Mile 33.4 (both sides): Reconstructed Whitetop Station and highest point—3576 ft

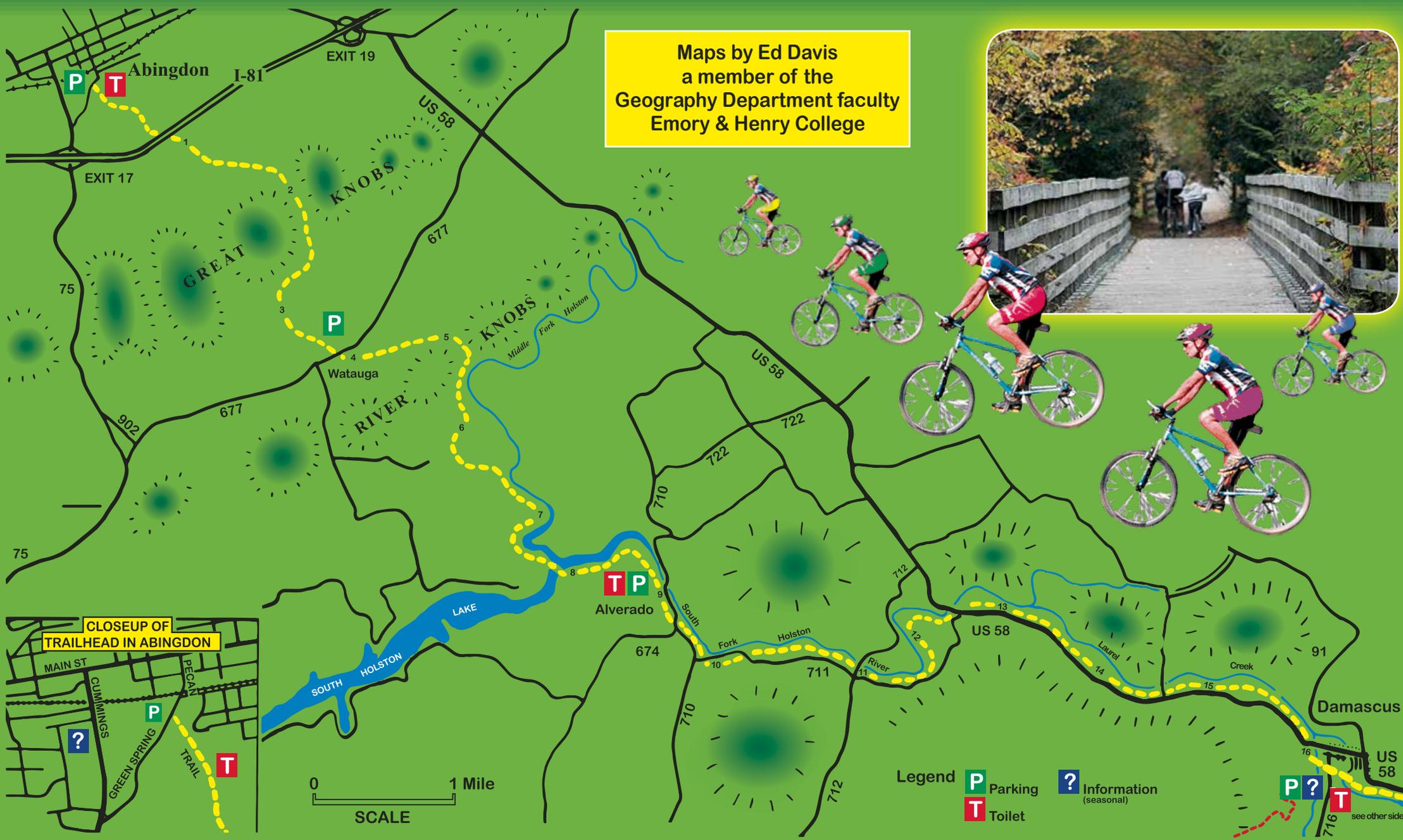


A NATIONAL RECREATION TRAIL

Abingdon, Virginia to the North Carolina State Line

Donations to help protect and maintain this great natural and historic corridor may be made to the Virginia Creeper Trail Club, P.O. Box 2382, Abingdon, VA 24212 www.vacreepertrail.org

Now Two Locations!
 Whitetop 276.388.3056
 Damascus 276.475.3611



Maps by Ed Davis
a member of the
Geography Department faculty
Emory & Henry College

THE VIRGINIA CREEPER TRAIL

The Virginia Creeper Trail is a public access, shared-use trail connecting Abingdon, Virginia with the Virginia-North Carolina border 1.1 miles east of Whitetop Station, Virginia. The total trail length is 34.3 miles.

The Virginia Creeper Trail began as a Native American footpath. Later, the European pioneers, as well as early explorer Daniel Boone, used the trail. Shortly before 1900, W.E. Mingea constructed the Virginia-Carolina Railroad from Abingdon to Damascus. In 1905 the Hassinger Lumber Company extended the line to Konnarock and Elkland, North Carolina. In its day, the line hauled lumber, iron ore, supplies, and passengers. Its nickname, Virginia Creeper, came from the early steam locomotives that struggled slowly up the railroad's steep grades. The Virginia Creeper engine and tender are now on display at the Abingdon trailhead. Virginia Creeper is also the name of a vine that grows prolifically in this area.

With 100 trestles and bridges, sharp curves, and steep grades, the Virginia Creeper was the typical mountain railroad. Train crews faced washouts, rock slides, and other hazards, but it was economics that sounded the line's death whistle. Having failed to turn a profit since the Great Depression, the Creeper ran its last train March 31, 1977.

Less than a century after the railroad arrived, the Virginia Creeper once again became a quiet trail. Through the work of volunteers and with help from local and federal governments, the Creeper became a National Recreation Trail.

Between Abingdon and Damascus, the trail right-of-way belongs to the two towns. Although the public legally has the right to use the trail, most of the actual land between Abingdon and the Iron Bridge east of Damascus is privately owned. The 15.9 miles of trail between Iron Bridge (mile 18.4) to the state line are part of the Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area in the Jefferson National Forest. Except for a short stretch through Taylor's Valley, the public owns both the right-of-way and the actual property.

The Virginia Creeper Trail traverses some of the most rugged and picturesque scenery in the Eastern United States and is widely lauded as one of the most beautiful trails on the continent. Enjoy your visit!

Although the public legally has the right to use the trail, much of the actual land is privately owned. Stay on the trail, close any gates, respect all property and livestock, and be courteous to landowners and other trail users. Please observe these

RULES OF THE TRAIL

1. No littering—not even cigarette butts!
2. No motorized vehicles permitted on the trail.
3. Do not block any gates or park on the trail at any time.
4. Camping is allowed in most of the US Forest Service area, but only well off the trail. Camp on private property only with permission.

5. Dogs must be kept on a leash at all times.
6. Possession or use of fireworks, alcohol, or other illegal substances is prohibited.
7. Bicyclists and pedestrians should yield to oncoming equestrians. Equestrians should move over to allow bicyclists to overtake them.
8. Equestrians should dismount and walk horses across bridges and trestles. Bicyclists should use extreme caution when crossing trestles.
9. Bicyclists should use a non-intrusive bell, sounding device or give a verbal warning to get the attention of other trail users before overtaking them.

10. Bicycle and equestrian helmets are not required, but are highly recommended.
11. Riders must keep bicycles and horses under control and avoid excessive speeds.
12. Hunting or carrying firearms on the non-US Forest Service portion of the trail is prohibited. Firearms and bows may be carried on the US Forest Service portion of the trail only during hunting seasons, but shooting across or from the trail is prohibited. All state hunting regulations must be obeyed. Target shooting is prohibited in National Forests at all times.

Creper Trail Bike Rental & Shuttle

The only shuttle service with a shop at the top of the trail!

Shuttles every 90 minutes, starting at 9:00 a.m.

276.475.3611

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