

# Blue Ridge Parkway

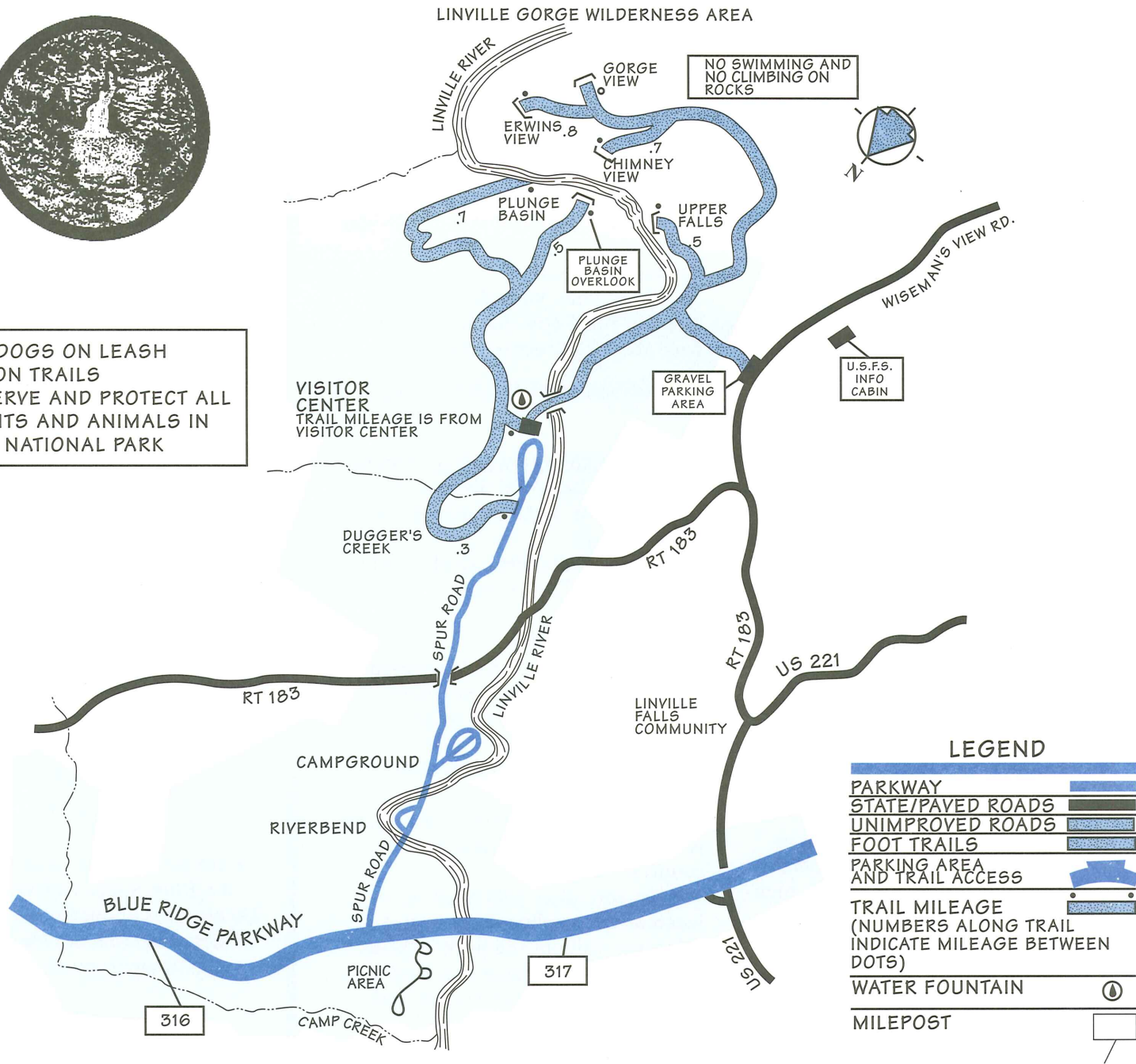
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



## Linville Falls Trails



KEEP DOGS ON LEASH  
STAY ON TRAILS  
PRESERVE AND PROTECT ALL  
PLANTS AND ANIMALS IN  
THIS NATIONAL PARK



# Linville Falls Trails

Two main hiking trails lead to beautiful views of the Linville Falls. Both begin at the Linville Falls Visitor Center and pass through remnants of a virgin hemlock forest mixed with other familiar trees such as white pine, oaks, hickory, and birch. A colorful and varied display of wildflowers decorates the trails in spring. Red and golden leaves in fall beautifully contrast with the soothing green of hemlocks.

The Linville Falls trails range in difficulty from moderate to strenuous. **Erwins View Trail**, a moderate walk of 1.6 miles round-trip, offers hikers four overlooks, each revealing a different aspect of the Linville Falls area. The first overlook is 0.5 miles from the visitor center, and is a moderate walk with a slight loss of elevation. Here, the Linville River spills gently over the

upper falls where it widens and pauses. Drifting into a narrow canyon, the water suddenly spirals out of sight and plunges 45 feet over the lower falls.

The next overlook, **Chimney View**, 0.7 miles from the visitor center, is the first point on the trail where the lower falls can be seen. It offers an excellent chance to photograph both the upper and lower falls. The overlook is named for the chimney-like rock outcroppings located to the right of the waterfall. The trail is strenuous in this area with considerable elevation gain. At **Gorge View Overlook**, hikers can see the Linville River cutting its way through the Linville Gorge Wilderness Area.

The Erwins View Trail ends at **Erwins View Overlook**, 0.8 mile from the visitor center. From this

vantage point hikers can enjoy a panoramic view of the Linville Gorge and a distant view of the upper and lower falls.

The trails to **Linville Gorge** (1.4 miles round trip) and to **Plunge Basin** (1 mile round trip) also start at the visitor center. The trail to Linville Gorge forks 0.2 mile from the visitor center. The right fork takes hikers to **Plunge Basin Overlook** where they can view the lower falls and the Chimneys. The left fork winds down through rock cliffs to the bottom of the falls where the force of the water cascading over the falls creates a large pool. Both of these trails are strenuous. **SWIMMING AND CLIMBING ON THE ROCKS ARE PROHIBITED.**

## 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 most 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.
- Bicycles are not permitted on Parkway trails.
- Camping is permitted only in park campgrounds or designated back-country sites.
- 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 or 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](http://www.nps.gov/blri) on the Internet.