

## Limits of Acceptable Change: About the Gorge

The Red River Gorge area contains approximately 40,000 acres of national forest land in [Menifee](#), [Powell](#), and [Wolfe](#) counties. The Gorge contains some of the most beautiful and biologically diverse lands in Kentucky. In addition, the archaeological record of the Gorge dates back over 12,000 years.

Several significant national designations have been given to the resources within the Gorge, including a National Wild and Scenic River, a Wilderness, and a National Scenic Byway. The Gorge itself has been designated a Geological Area, a National Natural Landmark, and a National Register Historic District.

### Approximately 41,000 acres of National Forest land:

- 29,000 acres are within Geological Area (13,000 acres of it are Clifty Wilderness)
- 12,000 acres outside Geological Area (west of Tunnel Ridge Road & Indian Creek) National Forest land within these boundaries:
- US 460 to the north
- KY 746 to the east
- Natural Bridge State Resort Park and private land to the south (some south of Parkway)
- Hatton Ridge Road & private land to the west

### Congressional Designations:

- Clifty Wilderness - 13,000 acres
- National Wild & Scenic River-19.4 miles of Red River

### Other Designations:

- Red River Gorge National Scenic Byway- 46 miles
- National Natural Landmark and National Geological Area- 29,000 acres
- National Archaeological Historic District- approx. 37,000 acres

### Trails:

- Approximately 60 miles of designated system trails
- Estimated user-created trails: approximately 100 miles
- Estimated backcountry campsites: approximately 1,000

### Rock Climbing

- 72 crags containing about 700 individual routes (approximately 50% sport)

### Open Roads:

- Approximately 22 miles of National Forest gravel roads within the Gorge (7)
- Approximately 2.4 miles of National Forest paved roads within the Gorge (Koomer & Sky Bridge)
- Approximately 18.4 miles of State paved roads within the Gorge (KY 77 & 715)
- Approximately 20 miles of Mountain Parkway & KY 15 between Slade & Pine Ridge exits

### Developed Facilities include:

- Koomer Ridge Campground, Gladie Education Center & Historic Site, Frenchburg Job Corp Center, 4 picnic areas, 2 boat launches, several trailheads

### Adjacent Influences include:

- Natural Bridge State Resort Park, private land inholdings (surrounded by NF), and nearby private land

### Documents

- [Map of Gorge](#) (pdf file)
- [Gorge Designations](#)
- [Laws affecting the Gorge](#)
- [What is Wilderness?](#)
- [Who's In Charge?](#)