

Places of interest near the wilderness

Brooks Cabin

The Brooks Cabin serves as a welcome center for visitors entering the Charles



C. Deam Wilderness. The cabin was built by John S. Brooks in the 1890s. The building is characteristic of log homes built between 1850 and 1920.

The Forest Service acquired the cabin in a land purchase in 1992 and decided to move it from Crawford County to its present location on the western edge of the wilderness for visitors to enjoy. Forest volunteers host open houses periodically throughout the year. Visit the “news and events” section of the Hoosier National Forest website for information on scheduled open houses.

Facilities: interpretive panels, picnic table, grill, small pond for shoreline fishing, vault toilet

Hickory Ridge Lookout Tower

The Hickory Ridge Lookout Tower, now standing guard over the Charles C. Deam Wilderness, was once a sentinel built to protect a fledgling forest from wildfire. Today, it stands as a tribute to its builders, the last lookout tower remaining of the original nine on the forest.

The tower was built in 1939 by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). It is 110 feet tall, made of steel, with a 7 foot square cab and 133 metal steps. It was staffed and used for fire detection until the 1970s. Many of the towermen recruited to staff the nine towers during high fire danger were local farmers. At the tower bases, the Forest Service provided a small house for the towermen and their families. To climb the Hickory Ridge Tower today would give the impression that it might have been a lonely life living at the base of the tower. But at the time this tower was built, there were 80 farms and homesteads in the area.

Over time, the open farmlands have reverted to forest. Today the tower serves visitors to the Charles C. Deam Wilderness by offering them a panoramic view of the forest and Monroe Lake. In October 1990, Hickory Ridge Lookout was placed on the National Historic Lookout Register.

Safety

The capacity of the tower is 9 people at one time. If you choose to climb the tower, use caution. The steps may be slick in rainy or icy weather. Stay out of the tower in high winds or during storms. It is a strenuous climb to the top, know your limitations, climb slowly, and use the handrails. The tower is heavily used and the impacts of use are threatening its historic character. Please practice Leave No Trace, and report any vandalism. Vandalism will be prosecuted and could lead to a fine and/or imprisonment.

Charles C. Deam Wilderness



This 12,953 acre area of the Hoosier National Forest was designated as wilderness by Congress in 1982. Wilderness designation places this area in a special legal status (subject to the 1964 Wilderness Act). It is managed to preserve a natural condition and provide opportunities for solitude.

Location specific information

Use type: hiking, horse riding and primitive camping

Length of trail system: 36 miles

Facilities: There are five trailheads with parking. Parking is limited at Hays and Hunter Creek trailheads. Nearby Blackwell Campground has overflow parking and provides free camping with vault toilets, picnic shelter, hitching posts and a mounting ramp.

Special features: scenic hardwood forest, varied terrain, views of Monroe Lake

Directions

From Ind. 446 south of Bloomington, turn on Tower Ridge Road at the Deam Wilderness sign.

GPS Coordinates:

- Blackwell Campground: 39°1'0.872"N, 86°23'23.089"W
- Hickory Ridge Lookout Tower (Open to the public): 39°2'5.453"N, 86°19'16.532"W
- Grubb Ridge Trailhead: 39°01'58.0"N, 86°20'28.0"W
- Hunter Creek Trailhead: 39°0'17.9742"N, 86°20'10.4346"W
- Hays Trailhead: 39°2'43.3176"N, 86°24'24.2532"W

Safety

- In case of emergency call 911
- Nearest hospital: Bloomington, Ind.
- Monroe Co. Sheriff: 812-349-2780

- Indiana Conservation Officer Dispatch: 812-837-9536
- Use caution during hunting seasons. Blaze orange clothing is recommended.

Etiquette and rules

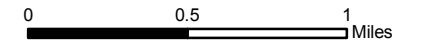
- Use of wheeled (including carts, wagons and bicycles) or motorized vehicles is prohibited.
- Camping is prohibited within 200 feet of trails, trailheads, roads, water sources, rock shelters, caves, and historic structures, unless in a Forest Service designated campsite.
- Camping is prohibited along the shoreline of Monroe Lake within ½ mile of the water's edge unless in a Forest Service designated campsite.
- There are 25 designated backcountry campsites. Horses are permitted at sites 13 and 25 ONLY (see map).
- Horse riders (age 17 and older) are required to have a permit and stay on designated trails. Permits are available from our offices, local vendors and online (see website).
- Parking is not allowed along Tower Ridge Road—only at trailheads or designated parking areas.
- Stock may not be tied within reach of any live tree.
- Group size is limited to 10 persons or less.
- Hikers yield to horse riders, move to downhill side of trail.
- Geocaching is prohibited.
- Follow Leave No Trace principles.






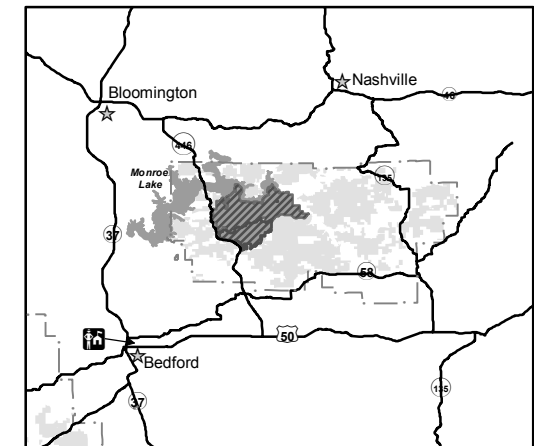
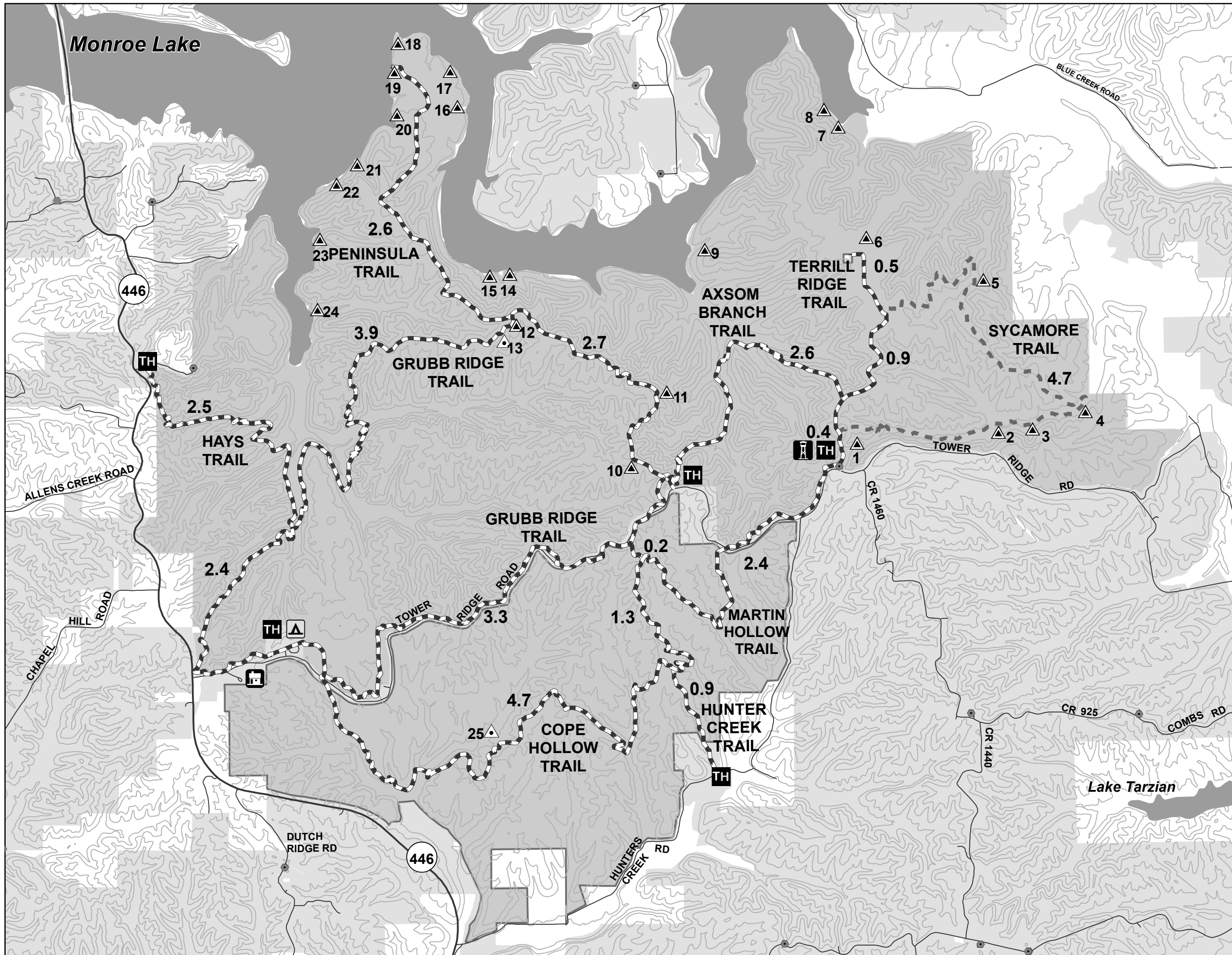
Scan here to see a geo-referenced map.

Monroe Lake

CHARLES C. DEAM WILDERNESS



-  TRAILHEAD
-  BLACKWELL HORSE CAMP
-  BROOKS CABIN
-  HICKORY RIDGE TOWER
-  DESIGNATED CAMPSITE
-  STOCK CAMPSITE
-  GATES
-  HORSE AND HIKING TRAIL
-  HIKING TRAIL ONLY
-  ROADS
-  50 FT CONTOUR
-  WILDERNESS
-  LAKES
-  FOREST SERVICE LAND



Location Map for Charles C. Deam Wilderness
Hoosier National Forest

Original data compiled from multiple source data and may not meet National Mapping Accuracy Standards. For specific data source information contact the Hoosier National Forest. No warranty is made to the contents or accuracy of the data.
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