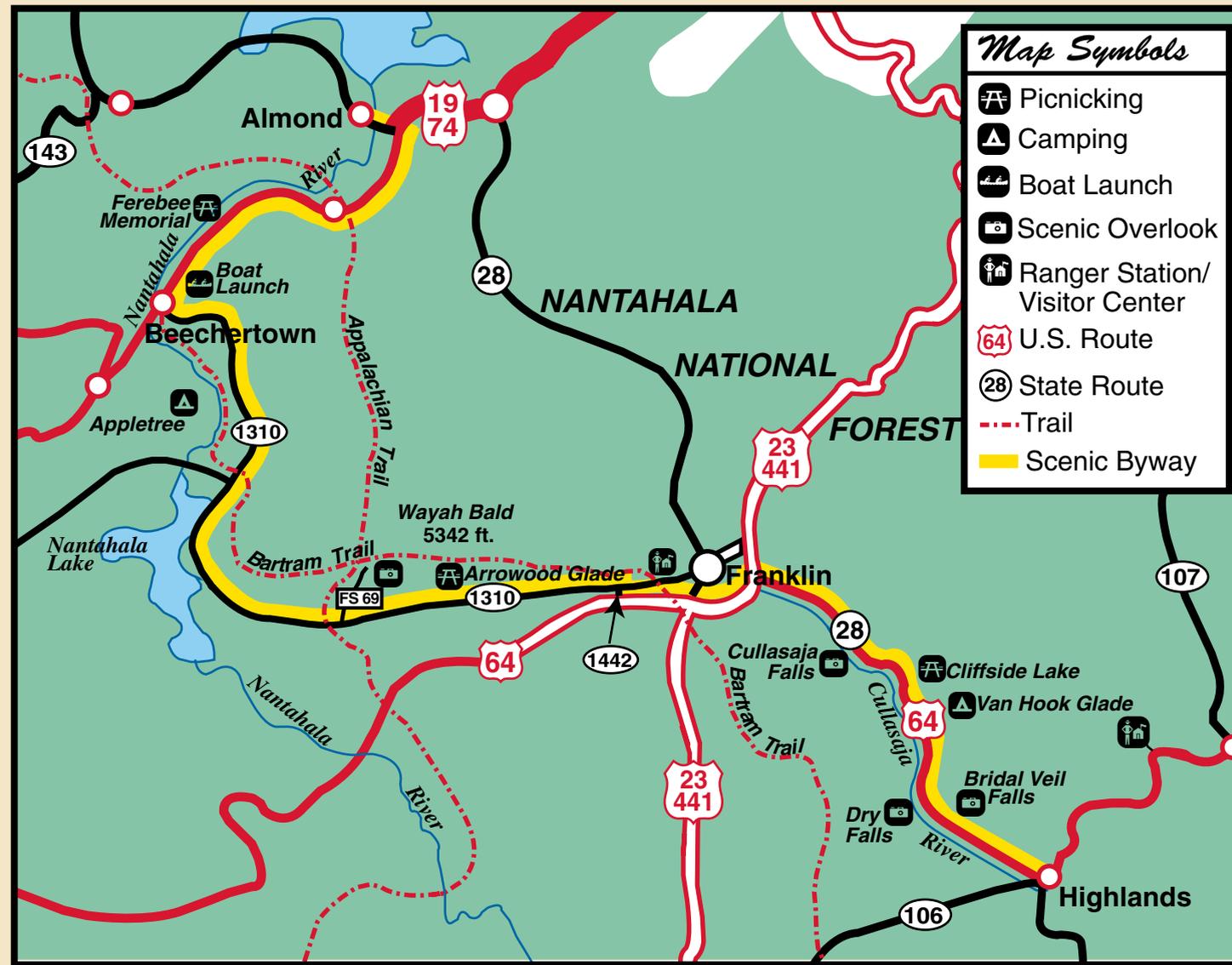


# Take a ride on the Mountain Waters Scenic Byway



**U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
Southern Region**



## BYWAY DRIVING DIRECTIONS

**FROM ASHEVILLE:** Take I-26E to exit 40 (Asheville Airport). Turn right on NC 280W. NC 280W becomes U.S. 64W in Pisgah Forest. Stay on U.S. 64W to Highlands. Follow "FROM HIGHLANDS" directions below.

**FROM HIGHLANDS:** Take U.S. 64W/NC 28N to Franklin (18 miles). Turn left on U.S. 64W. Follow U.S. 64W for about six miles. Turn right on SR 1442 (Old Murphy Rd.), and go .2 mile. Turn left on SR 1310W (Wayah Rd.). For 28 miles, stay on SR 1310W, which passes Nantahala Lake. In Beecher-

town, turn right on U.S. 19N/74E. Follow U.S. 19N/74E through Nantahala Gorge to Almond.

**FROM BRYSON CITY:** Take U.S. 19S/74W, and follow U.S. 74W for about 20 miles through Nantahala Gorge. Turn left on SR 1310E (Wayah Rd.), and go 28 miles. SR 1310E passes Nantahala Lake and Wayah Gap. Near Franklin, turn right onto SR 1442 (Old Murphy Rd.), and go .2 mile. Turn left on U.S. 64E, and follow for 24 miles to Highlands.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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## WATERFALLS: Fatal Attractions

Getting too close to a waterfall is dangerous. Wet rocks are slick, and a slip above a waterfall can kill you. Stay on the trail. Avoid shortcuts, climbing on rocks or walking on plants near the trail.

## CAMPING OPPORTUNITIES

**Van Hook Glade Campground:** Open April to October, 20 sites. Off U.S. 64 in Cullasaja Gorge, 4.3 miles west of Highlands. To make reservations, call 877-444-6777 (toll free) or go to recreation.gov.

**Appletree Group Campground:** Open April to October, four group sites. Hiking and fishing opportunities. Three nearby trails: Appletree, Bartram and London Bald trails. Located 2.5 miles off SR 1310 on SR 1401. By reservation only; call the Nantahala District Office at 828-524-6441.

**Standing Indian Campground:** Open April to October. Offers 84 campsites. Take U.S. 64W, turn left on old U.S. 64W and follow signs. To make reservations, call 877-444-6777 or go to recreation.gov.

## FOREST MANAGEMENT AT WORK

The byway mainly travels through the Nantahala National Forest. National forests are managed for many uses: recreation, timber, wildlife, water and more. At overlooks, you may see signs of forest management.

## DRIVE WITH CAUTION

Parts of the byway are narrow and curvy. Please stay in your lane and drive cautiously. During the winter, occasional snow and ice may require the use of tire chains or four-wheel-drive vehicles.

## FOR MAPS & MORE INFORMATION

Contact the Nantahala Ranger District, 90 Sloan Road, Franklin, NC 28734, 828-524-6441.

## CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

For details on other area attractions, call these chambers of commerce: Franklin Area, 800-336-7829; Swain County (Bryson City) 800-867-9246; Highlands Area, 828-526-2112; Cashiers, 828-743-5191.

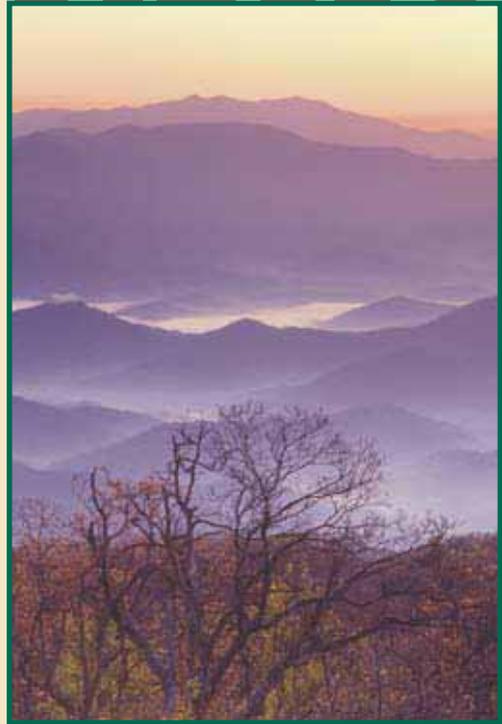
# Sample the **VIEWS**



(Above) Dry Falls showers leave a mist on those who venture on the walkway beneath the falls. After construction, Dry Falls will open in fall 2008. (Right) An angler casts her line for trout in the Nantahala River.



# VIEWS



Wayah Bald sunrise spreads its color.

**T**he Mountain Waters Scenic Byway is a 61.3-mile drive that winds through the Nantahala National Forest's two river gorges, hardwood forests and countryside. Traveling from Highlands to Almond, the byway follows U.S. 64, old U.S. 64, SR 1310 (Wayah Road), and U.S. 19/74. Here is a sample of byway attractions:

## **CULLASAJA GORGE**

The first 7.5 miles of the byway travels through the Cullasaja Gorge. The winding road parallels the Cullasaja River and offers spectacular views of the river, which boasts several waterfalls and many fishing opportunities.



Rafters ride the rolling waters of the Nantahala River.

## **BRIDAL VEIL FALLS**

This often-photographed site is 1.2 miles west of Highlands on U.S. 64. You can drive by the "veil" of water falling from 120 feet. Parking is nearby.

## **DRY FALLS**

You'll find this 75-foot beauty 2.1 miles west of Highlands on U.S. 64. From the parking lot, a trail with steps leads you right behind the waterfall.

## **CLIFFSIDE LAKE & VAN HOOK GLADE**

This recreation area is 4.4 miles west of Highlands and then 1.5 miles off U.S. 64. The area offers a picturesque lake that is popular for swimming and fishing, a historic bathhouse with cold showers, and many shady picnic spots. Offering 20 campsites, Van Hook Glade Campground is nearby. Hikers can stretch their legs on one of seven short trails. Choose the easy 0.75-mile loop that circles the lake or enjoy the view along the moderate 1.5-mile Clifftop Vista Trail. At the top is a gazebo built in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

## **WAYAH CREEK & PICNIC AREAS**

West of Franklin, the byway turns right on Old Murphy Road, then left on SR 1310. SR 1310 (Wayah Road) parallels much of Wayah Creek. This six-mile creek is a good fishing stream, but most of the streamside is private land and is posted "no trespassing." Along Wayah Creek is the Arrowood Glade Picnic Area, which offers seven tables and a picnic shelter.

## **RUFUS MORGAN TRAIL**

This one-mile loop trail winds through mature hardwood forest to a waterfall. From SR 1310 (6.6 miles west of U.S. 64) turn left on FR 388 (Boardtree Road) and drive 2.2 miles to the trailhead.

## **WAYAH BALD**

A side trip to Wayah Bald is well worth the effort. From Wayah Gap, journey 1.3 miles up gravel Forest Road 69 and see the Wilson Lick Ranger Station. Built about 1913, Wilson Lick is the first ranger station in the Nantahala National Forest. Continue another 3.2 miles up FR 69 to Wayah Bald. Take the short, paved trail to the historic Wayah Bald Fire Tower. The tower offers a great view of the Appalachian Mountains in Georgia, Tennessee and both Carolinas. Picnic nearby at the Wayah Bald Picnic Area or hike two long-distance trails, the Appalachian and Bartram Trails, which cross the bald at the tower.

## **NANTAHALA LAKE**

Located about six miles west of Wayah Gap, this lake has 29 miles of shoreline and offers fishing, and boating. Boat ramps are available.

## **NANTAHALA RIVER FISHING**

This mountain river offers great trout fishing in its upper and lower reaches. The stretch of river above the powerhouse has great catch-and-release fishing from spring until early summer.

## **NANTAHALA RIVER GORGE**

Every year the Nantahala River draws more than 250,000 boaters who enjoy whitewater rafting, canoeing and kayaking. Many begin their trip from the river's launch site at the start of the 8.5-mile whitewater run, where changing rooms and flush toilets are available. About 2.75 miles downriver is the Ferebee Memorial Picnic Area, which offers another launch and take-out area. At the Nantahala River's lower end, two commercial-only take-outs and a public take-out are provided. Outfitters plan trips to fit all skill levels and rent equipment for every whitewater adventure.