



Burnsville Lake

US Army Corps of Engineers

Weston and Gauley Bridge Turnpike Trail

When the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers developed the Burnsville Lake project, the section of the Weston and Gauley Bridge Turnpike which led from the Little Kanawha River near Bulltown Historic Area at Burnsville Lake to the Stonewall Jackson Lake boundary was purchased. The turnpike was purchased to preserve this nearly undisturbed section of the turnpike.



This section of the turnpike is now maintained by the Corps of Engineers as a hiking trail. The trail is listed on the National Park Service's National Recreation Trail Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

The trail has over 10 miles of picturesque scenery, and provides an excellent opportunity for hikers to take a trip back in time and hike through this beautiful country as they imagine what it would have been like to travel the turnpike during the Civil War.

History of the Turnpike

To link roads that ran from East to West through both Weston and Gauley Bridge, it had long been felt that there was a need for a North-South road. This road would provide access to parts of Braxton, Lewis, Nicholas, and Fayette Counties, which were increasing in population.

In 1849 work was begun on a turnpike road through a wild and largely unsettled area of western Virginia. Considering the very limited resources and lack of any local engineering experience, it was a bold undertaking indeed. The proponents of this enterprise lacked technical and financial resources, but they made up for this shortcoming by a display of broad-based local support and great enthusiasm. The road was finally completed in 1858, at an average cost of approximately \$450 per mile.



The turnpike had three major bridges — one over the Elk at Sutton, one over the Little Kanawha near Bulltown, and one over the West Fork near Weston.

Battle of Bulltown

The Battle of Bulltown occurred on October 13, 1863, near a bridge where the Weston and Gauley Bridge Turnpike crosses the Little Kanawha River. Both Union and Confederate forces wanted to prevent their opponent from crossing the bridge to cut off supplies. The Union fortifications were occupied by 400 troops under the direction of Captain William Mattingly. Colonel William L. Jackson (a native of what is now West Virginia and first cousin of Stonewall Jackson) led the Confederate forces. They attacked the Union forces at 4:30 a.m. The Union forces repelled the attack on their



fortifications and refused to surrender. They sent for help to Clarksburg and Weston. The battle ended about 4:30 p.m.

The Confederates camped for the night at the Salt Lick Bridge. Reinforcements arrived the next day from Clarksburg and forced the Confederates to retreat.

Both sides had casualties, including one civilian casualty—Moses Cunningham—who ran out of his nearby farmhouse into the line of fire and shouted, "Hurrah for Jeff Davis!" He was clipped by a bullet, but recovered.

The Battle of Bulltown is reenacted biannually on the Sunday before Columbus Day in October.



Bulltown Historical Area

The area, which is located adjacent to Bulltown Campground, includes a Visitor Center, historic structures dating back to the mid to late 1800's, the Bulltown Battlefield, and the turn-of-the-century Cunningham Farmstead. Self-guiding trails and a section of the Weston and Gauley Bridge Turnpike are available for visitors to walk. Special programs and tours are available during the summer months. Groups may arrange tours with the staff at the Visitor Center or by calling the Resource Manager's Office.

Trail Rules

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers strives to preserve the integrity of the area for future generations. As you walk the trail, please respect the trail and follow these rules:

- Motorized vehicles are prohibited on the trail.
- Do not remove any natural or cultural historic items — take only pictures.
- Always carry water and a copy of this map.
- Please stay on the trail. Shortcuts cause erosion.

For More Information

Project Office —

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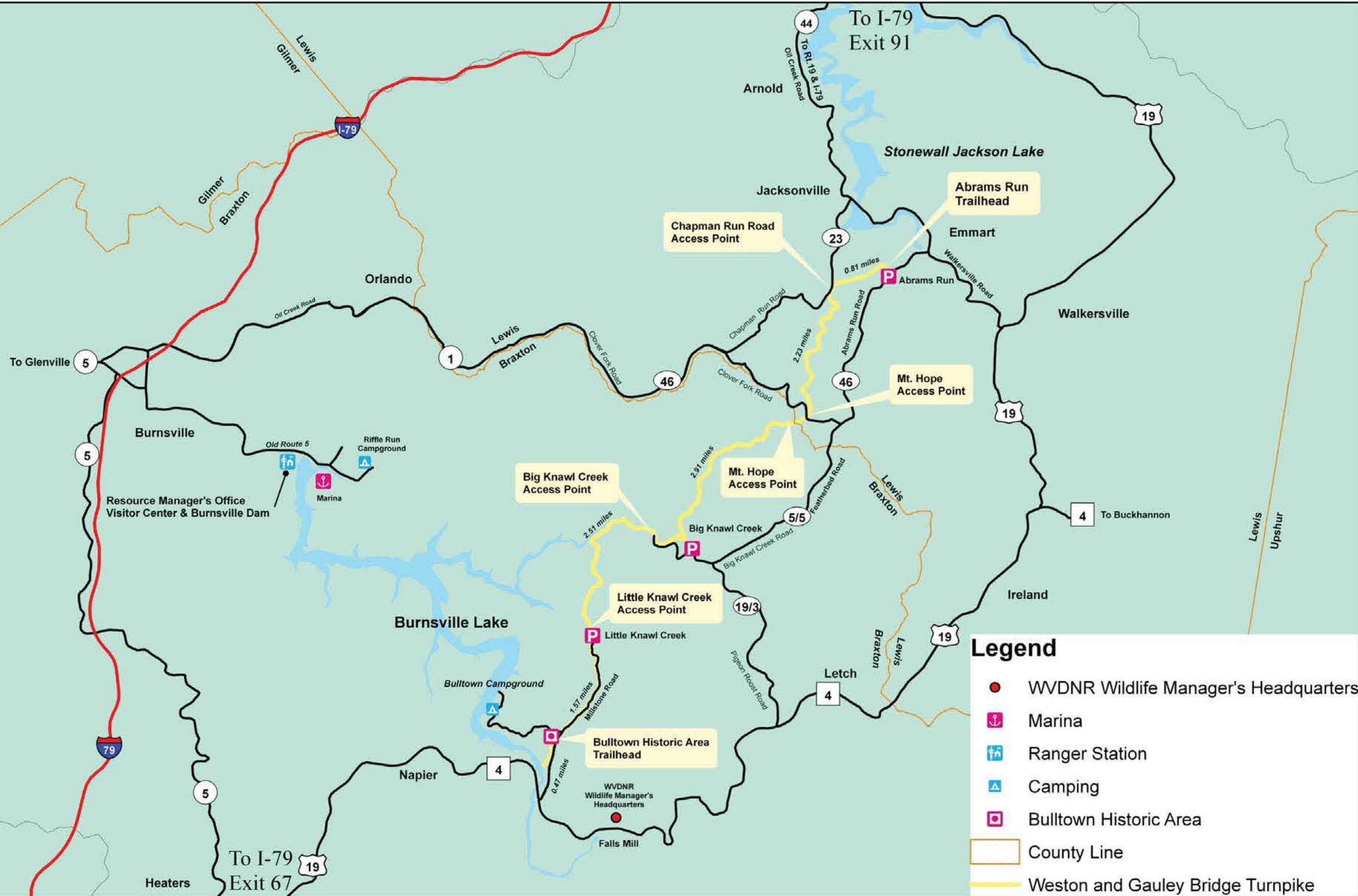
24-hour Message —
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Legend

- WVDNR Wildlife Manager's Headquarters
- Marina
- Ranger Station
- Camping
- Bulltown Historic Area
- County Line
- Weston and Gauley Bridge Turnpike