

# Fort Henry Trails System

Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area

January 2014



The Fort Henry Trails System offers some of the most scenic forest settings in Land Between The Lakes (LBL). Located in southwestern LBL, the system consists of nearly 30 miles of trail through forest uplands and bottomlands. View maple, ash, and sweetgum bottoms, mature oak-hickory uplands, as well as native shortleaf pine stands. Hike along historic routes used by General Grant's Civil War troop movements from Fort Henry to Fort Donelson.

This trail system offers several opportunities—you can make your own loop, short or long, connect to the North/South Trail, or even hike the entire length. Fort Henry Trails are for hiking only, and offer some of the best opportunities for viewing a variety of hardwood and pine forests, deer and turkeys, and enjoying the solitude.

*Preliminary plans have been approved to construct a new multiple-use trail system in the Oak-Grassland Demonstration Area near Prior Creek. Until this new trail project is complete, the **Fort Henry Trails System will be open to bicyclists on a TEMPORARY basis.** Visitors seeking biking opportunities are expected to utilize existing Fort Henry trailheads and parking areas, practice proper trail etiquette, and always Respect the Resource, i.e. old home sites, Civil War remnants, wildlife habitat, etc.*

**Artillery Trail** (Yellow 17, 18, 20, 4) - This 3.2-mile trail follows a historic wagon road used by Ulysses Grant and his troops heading to Fort Donelson. This trail begins at Telegraph Trail and gradually rises in elevation before flattening along the ridgeline and eventually dropping off to meet with the Peytona Trail.

**Devils Backbone Trail** (Blue 5, 19, 18) - One of the most unique trails in the Fort Henry System, Devil's Backbone follows along a ridge overlooking opposing hollows. In places the knife-edge ridge is barely wider than the trail itself. Look for mountain laurel growing out of the bluffs.

**Peytona Trail** (Yellow 11-17) - As you hike this 1.3-mile trail, you will pass along old home sites and beaver dams. You may notice remnants of the 1800's iron industry along this trail.

**Pickett Loop** (Blue 1, 23, 24, 26) - This 2.2-mile loop passes many old home sites and offers views of Kentucky Lake. It can easily be accessed by the Fort Henry Trailhead or Boswell Landing Backcountry Area.

**Piney Trail** (Red 20-22) - Use this trail from Piney Campground to access the rest of the Fort Henry System. This 2.3-mile trail starts in a bottomland and ascends to a ridge top to meet up with the Volunteer Trail, as well as General Grant's historic route, the Artillery Trail.

**Shortleaf Pine Trail** (Yellow 6, 19) - Hike through one of the highest concentrations of mature shortleaf pine stands in LBL on this 1.6-mile trail. Use this loop in conjunction with Devil's Backbone to make a scenic loop.

**Telegraph Trail** (Red 1-14) - This 7.5-mile trail is the longest in the Fort Henry Trails System and connects with many others trails in the system, as well the North/South Trail, proving to be the backbone of this system. This follows along stream sides and creeks, and then climbs ridges only to come back down along the streams. Notice old home sites, cemeteries, springs, and beaver dams along this trail.

**Tennessee Ridge Trail** (Blue 9, 16) - Hike along this easy 1.8-mile trail that traces the physical divide between the Cumberland and Tennessee River watersheds. This trail lays furthest interior, thus providing some of the best opportunities for solitude.

**Volunteer Trail** (Yellow 2, 21) - Mostly traveling through bottomlands and low hills, this 2.2-mile trail connects Telegraph and Piney Trails.

**Length:** Approximately 30 miles

**Trailheads:** Fort Henry Trailhead Parking off FS RD 232, South Welcome Station, Boswell Landing, or adjacent Parking Lot

*(Seasonal Hunting Information available here.)*

**Trail Connection:** North/South Trail

**Surface Type:** Dirt

**Difficulty Level:** Easy to Moderate; 250+ change in elevation; 29.3 miles of footpaths, logging roads, and gravel roads

**Recommended Seasons:** Spring, Fall

**Facilities:** Parking, accessible restrooms, picnic area with grills


**Trail Markings:** Blue, Yellow, and Red Blazing

**Trail Ethics:** Pack it in. Pack it out!

**Backcountry/Trailside Camping:** Overnight camping is permitted along the Fort Henry Trails. All campsites must be at least 50 feet from the marked trail. Bury all human waste 200 feet from the marked trail. An overnight Backpacking Permit is required; free permits may be obtained at South Welcome Station Trailhead.

**Safety:** *You are responsible for your own safety.* You may encounter a variety of unexpected and/or dangerous conditions. It is your responsibility to be informed and take precautions. Trail users need to look for overhead hazards such as snags, hanging limbs, and leaning or uprooted trees. During windy conditions, please take care to protect yourself. Trail Markers are placed to better orient hikers. Please refer to map for specific location. Protect yourself from Lone Star and American Dog Ticks which thrive in our area. Precautions need to be taken primarily from mid-March to through mid-October. Poison Ivy flourishes in many areas of LBL; please use caution. Properly treat all trailside water before consuming. Springs may not be flowing during July, Aug., & Sept. Plan to bring water with you. Potable water can be found at Piney Campground and South Welcome Station.

## LBL Trail Rules

1. For your safety, all overnight backpackers are requested to register at South Welcome Station Trailhead.
2. Low impact camping, hiking, and biking techniques should be followed at all times. Stay on the trail, even through wet areas, to help prevent soil erosion. All garbage must be packed out.
3. Campfires are permitted in previously used spots except during periods of high fire danger. Only dead or down materials may be used for fuel. The fire should be attended at all times and completely extinguished before departure.
4. Horses and mountain bikes allowed on designated trails only. Motor vehicles strictly prohibited except for approved organized events.
5. *Respect the Resource*—leave plants, flowers, heritage, and cultural resources for others to enjoy. Do not harass the wildlife!
6. Firearms are strictly prohibited except during established LBL gun hunting seasons by legally licensed hunters with permits.
7. Pets must be on a leash of 6' or less and under physical control at all times. Respect other users.
8. LBL strongly encourages users to "Call Before You Haul" to check current trail conditions at 270-924-2000 or visit us on the web at [www.lbl.org](http://www.lbl.org) under *Alerts & Notices*.
9.  Help us eliminate garbage—take your trash to one of the Recycling Stations located at The Homeplace or South Welcome Station.

Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area has been set aside for your recreation and education. As you explore these trails, take time to enjoy the natural beauty and learn about the natural or cultural history of this special place.

{ Various trail information originally compiled by Johnny Molloy and captured in his book, "Land Between The Lakes Outdoor Recreation Handbook." }

**Emergencies**

911

**Non-Emergencies**

270-924-2000, 8am-4:30pm M-F  
or 877-861-2457 for  
24-hr Dispatch

**For More Information**

USDA Forest Service  
Land Between The Lakes  
100 Van Morgan Drive  
Golden Pond, KY 42211  
270-924-2000 or 800-LBL-7077  
[www.lbl.org](http://www.lbl.org)

**Volunteer Opportunities**

“Friends of LBL”  
Volunteer Coordinator  
270-924-2007  
[www.friendsoflbl.org](http://www.friendsoflbl.org)

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