

Central Hardwoods Scenic Trail

Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area

January 2015



The Central Hardwoods Scenic Trail spans the entire width of Land Between The Lakes (LBL) connecting Lake Barkley and Kentucky Lake. We designed this multiple-use trail with smooth surfaces, gentle grades, and trailside rest areas. The paved eastern portion of the trail offers shoreline views of Lake Barkley as well as wildlife viewing opportunities in adjacent open areas. The central and western portions are made of compacted stone surface. Here visitors will explore rolling hills and ridge tops of a central hardwood forest ecosystem. Visitors will enjoy a variety of seasonal and scenic diversity. Spring and summer showcase vibrant wildflowers and a canopy provided by the hardwood trees. Fall and winter give way to an array of colors as well as deep woodland views from ridges and narrow valleys. Great viewing is available during any season. Outdoor enthusiasts will likely see wildlife that call the Central Hardwoods Eco-Region home, especially early and late in the day. Seven access points give visitors multiple opportunities to bike and hike sections of the Central Hardwoods Scenic Trail.

The Central Hardwoods Scenic Trail is a multiple-use trail. Bikers and hikers share the entire length of the trail.

Length: 11 miles (2.5 miles paved on the east side beginning at Lake Barkley, and the remaining 8.5 miles compacted stone west to Kentucky Lake)

Trailheads: Fenton, English Hill, Golden Pond, Meredith, Sunset, Devil’s Elbow, Cumberland and parking lots

- **Fenton** - (located at Fenton Campground) Begin your hike at one of the first recreation areas established in LBL.
- **English Hill** - (located on FS RD US68/KY80-B) This rise is known locally as English Hill, named for Mary and M. E. English, the family that once lived there.
- **Golden Pond** - (located at Golden Pond Visitor Center) Learn more about LBL here. Exhibits, an observatory, and planetarium also add to your experience.
- **Meredith** - (located on FS RD US68/KY80-C) Named for nearby Meredith Cemetery. The Meredith family used a jenny (female donkey) instead of horses. They used them to plow, ride, and hitch them to wagons or buggies.
- **Sunset** - (located on FS RD 160 & US68/KY80) Just home from WWII in 1947, two local brothers, Conley and Lew Wallace, built the Sunset Inn (which was located here). Both served in the Pacific during WWII. Conley named it the Sunset Inn for the “setting sun” shoulder patch insignia on his 41st Infantry Division uniform.
- **Devil’s Elbow** - (located on FS RD 159 & US68/KY80) In the days of steamboats, the community of Golden Pond was served by a landing on the Cumberland River known as Devil’s Elbow, so called because of the large bend in the Cumberland River here.
- **Cumberland** - (located on FS RD 134 & US68/KY80) The area, named for the river and the community which had been located on the western shore of the river just north of the bridge, is now covered by Lake Barkley.

Surface Type: Asphalt, Compacted Stone

Difficulty Level: Easy to Moderate

Recommended Seasons: Year-round

Facilities: Parking, accessible restrooms, picnic area with grills at Golden Pond Visitor Center; Pavilion with grills and vault toilet at Fenton

Backcountry/Trailside Camping: Camping is not allowed along this trail.

Trail Ethics: Pack it in. Pack it out! Share the trail with mountain bikers and hikers.

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/uprooted trees. During windy conditions, please take care to protect yourself. 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. Pack in water for the duration of your trip. The Golden Pond Visitor Center provides drinking fountains, vending machines, and restrooms during normal operating hours.

Central Hardwoods Scenic Trail Rules

1. Trails are open from dawn to dusk only. Camping is not allowed.
2. Low impact biking and hiking 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. Mountain biking is discouraged during periods of wet trail conditions.
4. Horses and motor vehicles strictly prohibited.
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 and only 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.LandBetweenTheLakes.US under Alerts.
9. ♻️ Help us eliminate garbage—take your trash to the Recycling Station located at Golden Pond Visitor Center.

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

Emergencies

Forest Service
Law Enforcement
911 or 877-861-2457

For More Information

USDA Forest Service
Land Between The Lakes
270-924-2000 or 800-LBL-7077
www.LandBetweenTheLakes.US



Volunteer Opportunities

Friends of Land Between The Lakes
Volunteer Coordinator
270-924-2007
www.friendsofbl.org



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