

TOE RIVER CANOE TRAIL

The Toe River Canoe Trail runs 37 miles down the North Toe River from Riverside Park in Spruce Pine to Poplar. The trail travels through class I, II and III rapids, passing primarily undeveloped forest and farmland. There are beautiful scenic views of mountains, rapids and valleys. Many kinds of wildlife can be spotted along the way, including Great Blue Herons, ducks, hawks, ospreys, turtles, fish and amphibians. The trail offers access points at regular intervals along the trail, usually at a bridge. You can expect to travel about two to three miles per hour when the water is at normal conditions and should plan a trip between access points accordingly. Included are the directions and information about each access point and the river below it.

Water Level Information

River conditions can change drastically with the water level, and at very low levels exposed rocks can make the river impassable. After large rains the river can also flood and become extremely dangerous. Current water conditions for the Toe River can be estimated using the USGS gauges. For the **South Toe River**: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/uv?03463300>, the flow should be at least 110 cfs.

For the **Nolichucky River**: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/uv?03465500>, the flow should be at least 1100 cfs. Real-time flows for various Western NC and Tennessee streams can be obtained by phone at 1-800-238-2264.

Safety Information

Life jackets should be worn at all times while on the canoe trail and paddlers should never travel alone. Only competent swimmers should travel on the sections of the river with rapids of class II or above. Don't boat while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. It is also important to prepare for a trip by wearing proper clothing, using waterproof containers for carrying items, and wearing shoes that protect your feet from rocks and broken glass. Along the route there are ledges, rapids, rocks, downed trees, and other obstacles that can change with the water level. Paddlers should be aware of obstacles and how to avoid them. If you are a first time paddler you should choose a milder section of the river or travel with an experienced guide (see list of outfitters).

For further whitewater safety procedures go to:
www.americancanoe.org/?page=Top_10

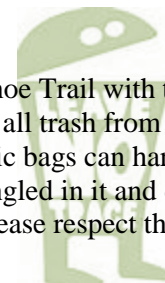
Boaters should also be aware that many sections of the river do not have cell phone reception.

Disclaimer

The cooperating organizations and individuals accept no responsibility for the personal injury or property damage that may occur.

No Trace Trail

Riverside Park is the only location on the Toe River Canoe Trail with trash pickup sites. Help keep our river beautiful and carry out all trash from all other locations. Litter, particularly fishing line and plastic bags can harm wildlife which often mistake it for food or become entangled in it and die. Most of the canoe trail runs through private property. Please respect the land and owners of this property, as well as other boaters.



ACCESS POINTS

Riverside Park: Going east on US-19E towards Spruce Pine turn left at the third light onto Highland Avenue. Go 0.4 miles to the stoplight just before the bridge and turn right onto Summit Avenue. Go 0.1 miles and take a left onto Tappan Street. After 0.2 miles, continue slightly left onto Riverside Drive. Almost immediately take the road left to the parking lot. There are bathrooms, pavilions, picnic tables, walking trails, and a playground. Access is on the river left in the park near the footbridge. Spruce Pine has also been designated a **Mountain Heritage Trout City** with special three day fishing licenses available through Spruce Pine Town Hall and Rivers Edge Outfitters.

This section of river starts in downtown Spruce Pine with the railroad tracks following along river right. After 0.25 miles the river passes under the bridge on Highland Avenue. After about 2 miles the river passes under the Highway 226 Bridge near where the old Spruce Pine dam was removed. 5.8 miles to Betty Bottoms VOP land ~ 9.5 miles to Boonford.

Penland mile 4.5: Going west on US-19E from Spruce Pine towards Burnsville, turn right on Penland Road. Turn right onto River Road. There is a small pull-off with river access. Be careful not to block traffic.

The river then flows through Betty Bottoms and the old Village of Penland land. Crabtree Creek joins on river left. Now Yancey County is on river left and Mitchell County is on the right. This route has class II rapids, good scenery, and great fishing.



The section of river from Boonford to Roses Branch is run by local outfitters, accessed at Lower Doe Bag, is not recommended for inexperienced boaters, as there are numerous class II + challenging rapids. There is also a DANGEROUS low water bridge on both sides of the second of two islands. The bridge is only a few feet above the water at normal levels and has metal debris underneath. Boaters should approach the center of the island and portage along the right side. The river then enters a long, deep canyon-like section with great fishing holes. On river right you will see a rock face above the railroad track, which lets you know you are approaching Abby Three. This is the only class III on the canoe trail. Canoes can portage Abby Three on river left. Boaters should be especially cautious since this is a remote and inaccessible area. Rapids and ledges should be scouted before attempting a run.

From Roses Branch to Toecane is a flatter section of river, mostly suited for family floats in tubes, funyaks, and canoes ~ 8.5 miles to *Toecane*.

Newdale on the South Toe: From the intersection of Highland Avenue on US-19E near Spruce Pine go 6.9 miles towards Burnsville until you reach the Newdale Bridge. Parking is on the left side of the road. There is a steep access trail leading to the river on the left side of the bridge.

This is a very beautiful, remote section of river. The water is clear and there are good swimming holes. After 6.39 miles, the North Toe River enters on the right. There are a few class II ledges and rapids that require paddling skill ~ 13.8 miles to *Toecane*.

NOTE: At mile 15.5 between Boonford and Toecane, Roses Branch Road can be used as an emergency access point. There is no parking and the land along the river is private property. However, some local outfitters will run this section of river.

Toecane mile 18: Going west on US-19E from Spruce Pine take Highway 226 North towards Bakersville. Go 9.3 miles until you reach the stoplight near the old courthouse in downtown Bakersville. At the second (blinking) light take a left to stay on Hwy 226 and go 2.7 miles. Just after Loafers Glory, where two local outfitters are located, turn left onto Toecane Road. Continue 1 mile through Toecane, over the railroad tracks, and to the left up the river. On the right side of the road upstream from the bridge, there is a grassy pull-off with access to the river. Parking is above the put-in. Please do not leave vehicles parked at the put-in, as this is a very popular access site.



This section of river is the beginning of the Toe River Gorge. It starts out wide and flat and then precedes through a series of moderately, challenging class II rapids. After the first bend, there is a rock garden where the current is fast with large waves when water levels are high. The rapids pass through a series of ledges where, even at high water levels, significant maneuvering is required to avoid rocks. This section is suitable for boaters with some experience in rafts, funyaks, but boaters in canoes should be experienced paddlers. The river travels through a very rural area with many forested sections and some farmland ~ 2.8 miles to *Red Hill*.

Red Hill mile 20.8: From the stoplight in downtown Bakersville go 5.5 miles on Hwy 226 through Loafers' Glory on to Red Hill. Take a sharp left on NC 197 South, heading down to the river. Go 0.8 miles to cross the railroad tracks and go across the bridge. River access is approximately 0.5 miles downstream of the bridge. This is a milder, flatter section of river and a great family float. There are a few class I rapids that are easily maneuverable. NC 197 South runs along 1.6 miles down the river. This section is a little more developed than other sections, but the scenery is still good ~ 3.8 miles to *Green Mountain*.

Green Mountain 24.6: From the Red Hill Bridge on NC 197 South go 2.3 miles to Wolf Song Ridge access on NC 197 South. This access point is also easily reached from Burnsville. From the stoplight near downtown Burnsville on US-19E go north 1.3 miles. Turn left onto NC-197 North and go 6.7 miles until you reach the river. This access is just upstream of Cory Rock Church.

This is a family friendly float trip with numerous class II rapids as the river drops toward the Nolichucky Gorge. The scenery is excellent. Just after the put-in the river passes by Green Mountain. After the town, the river begins to drop more quickly and there are a series of difficult class II+ shoals and ledges that can be portaged on river right. The river goes around an island and travels under the Relief Bridge after 4.6 miles. Pigeon Roost Creek flows in on the right just before the next access point ~ 5.4 miles to *Pigeon Roost Creek*.

Pigeon Roost mile 30.0: From the Green Mountain Bridge on Toe River Road, go 1.2 miles across the small bridge and turn right to stay on Toe River Road. Continue 3.2 miles and turn right across the Relief Bridge. Go 0.4 miles further and turn left onto NC 197 North. Go under the railroad tracks and continue 0.5 miles. Access is on the left side of the road just after a sharp



curve and the intersection with Pigeon Roost Road. There is a short path leading directly to the river and parking is limited to 4 or 5 cars. This section of river has numerous ledges and class II rapids. The scenery is excellent and there is great fishing ~ 2.1 miles to *Huntdale*.

Huntdale mile 32.1: From the Pigeon Roost access point go 0.9 miles on NC 197 North and continue straight onto Huntdale Road (NC 197 goes to the right). Continue 1.3 miles to the bridge. Turn left across the bridge. Access is at the end of the bridge. Parking is limited.

In 0.5 miles the Cane River enters on the left. This section has exceptional scenery and several class II ledges ~ 4.6 miles to *Poplar*.

Poplar mile 36.7: Going west on US-19E from Spruce Pine take Highway 226 North towards Bakersville. Go 9.3 miles until you reach the stoplight near the old courthouse in downtown Bakersville. At the second (blinking) stoplight take a left and stay on Hwy 226 North and go 5.6 miles through Loafer's Glory and Red Hill. Take a left onto NC 197 North and after 1.9 miles follow the road left to stay on NC 197 North. Five miles ahead at the intersection of Huntdale Road follow NC 197 North right away from the river. After 2.5 miles, keep to the left to stay on NC 197 North. Once you have gone 11 miles on NC 197 North turn left onto a small paved road following the railroad tracks. 0.3 miles ahead on the left over the railroad tracks are parking, toilets, and steps leading to the river.

CAUTION: Below Poplar the river enters the sections of Class III-IV rapids recommended only for experienced parties.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

The **Appalachian Trail Quilt** features more than 140 different wooden quilt squares at locations throughout Mitchell, Yancey and Avery counties. For more information and an up to date map visit the website at: www.quilttrailswnc.org or call (828) 682-7331.

The scenic **Blue Ridge Parkway** runs along the southern border of Mitchell, Yancey, and Avery Counties, offering scenic drives, walking, hiking, and other attractions. The Parkway also passes by the town of Little Switzerland. For more information visit: www.blueridgeparkway.org



The **North Carolina Birding Trail** has designated locations at Riverside Park, Bakersville Creek Walk, Altapass Orchard, Crabtree Meadows and Mount Mitchell State Park. More information can be found at the website: www.ncbirdingtrail.org/mountains.asp or by calling (919) 604-5183.

The **Mitchell County Agri-Tourism Trail** has many locations around the area at farms, orchards, nurseries, an historic mill, and the Energy Exchange at the landfill. For more information contact the local cooperative extension office at (828) 688-4811 or visit the website at: <http://mitchell.ces.ncsu.edu/>

HIKING & OTHER OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

About 25 minutes from Bakersville, Roan Mountain has walking and hiking trails, rhododendron gardens, and picnic tables. Tennessee's **Roan Mountain State Park** website has more information at: www.bakersville.com

Mount Mitchell offers hiking, camping, a view tower, and a visitor center with information and exhibits about the mountain. More information can be found on the website: www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/momi/main.php or by calling (828) 675-4611.

Grandfather Mountain is a nearby attraction that offers hiking, walking, a mile-high bridge, and a museum with natural wildlife habitats. For more information visit: www.grandfather.com or call 1-800-468-7325 or (828) 733-2013.

Linville Falls and **Crabtree Falls** are also nearby just off the Blue Ridge Parkway. Linville Falls has many hiking trails to view the magnificent waterfall and the surrounding **Linville Gorge**.



LOCAL OUTFITTERS, GUIDES & EQUIPMENT

Loafer's Glory Campground

They offer guided and unguided river trips. And have tubes, funyaks, sit-on-top kayaks, canoes, and rafts available.

(828) 537-4586

www.loafersglorycamping.com



Loafer's Glory Rafting & Tubing

They offer guided rafted and tubing for individuals and groups on the North Toe and other nearby rivers. They also offer an unguided funyak trip and an overnight on the French Broad River.

1-866-933-5628 or (828) 688-9290

www.ncrafting.com



Rivers Edge Outfitters

Located on Upper Street in Spruce Pine, they offer guided fishing trips, boat rental and shuttle services.

(828) 765-3474

www.riversedgeoutfittersnc.com



FISHING IN MOUNTAIN HERITAGE TROUT WATERS

Spruce Pine, Newland, and Bakersville have all been designated *Mountain Heritage Trout Cities* and special licenses are required to fish in these waters. The licenses can be obtained online, by phone, or in Spruce Pine and Bakersville. For maps of the waters and more information visit:

www.ncwildlife.org/fs_index_03_fishing.htm

CAMPING

For a list of campgrounds and lodging, check the Chamber of Commerce websites. There are numerous tent and RV campgrounds in the area and near the North and South Toe Rivers.



CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

For more information on hiking, camping, gem mining, festivals, music, arts and crafts, and other local attractions contact:

Avery County Chamber of Commerce

www.averycounty.com

(828) 898-5605 or 1-800-972-2183

Mitchell County Chamber of Commerce

www.craftyouradventure.com

(828) 765-9483 or 1-800-227-3912

Yancey County Chamber of Commerce

www.yanceychamber.com

(828) 682-7413 or 1-800-948-1632

