



# **Natural Bridge of Virginia**

## **A Reconnaissance Briefing**

Prepared by the Department of  
Conservation and Recreation



**“It is impossible for the emotions arising from the sublime to be felt beyond what they are here; so beautiful an arch, so elevated, so light, and springing as it were up to heaven, the rapture of the spectator is really indescribable!”**

**~Thomas Jefferson,  
Former owner of the Natural Bridge**

**Staff from the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Divisions of State Parks and Outdoor Recreation Planning were asked to perform a Reconnaissance Briefing for the Secretary of Natural Resources.**

**Contributing staff:**

✓ Joe Elton, DCR State Parks Director

Theresa Duffey, DCR State Parks Natural and Cultural Resource Manager

✓ Craig Seaver, DCR State Parks Field Operations Manager

Jeff Foster, DCR State Parks District 3 Manager

Al Cire, DCR State Parks District 3 Resource Specialist

Lynn Crump, DCR Outdoor Recreation Planning Environmental Program Planner

Staff met with Jim ✓ Woltz and Charlie ✓ Wade of Woltz and Associates; Faye Cooper, Valley Conservation Council; Spencer ✓ Suter, Rockbridge County; and Chris ✓ Wise, Rockbridge Area Conservation Council on July 23, 2013.

# **Natural Bridge of Virginia**

## **A Reconnaissance Briefing**

### **Table of Contents**

1. Briefing
2. Resolutions of Support
  - Buena Vista
  - Rockbridge
  - Lexington
  - Virginia Natural Bridge Coalition
3. Buildings/Description
4. Location and Directions
5. Regional Attractions
6. Aerial Map

## NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA

Promoted for centuries as one of the natural wonders of the new world, the Natural Bridge is a solid rock formation, over 200 feet in height with a large arch spanning Cedar Creek, located in Rockbridge County, Virginia close to Interstate 81. State highway, U.S. Route 11, also known as Lee Highway, runs across the top of the bridge. The Natural Bridge and surrounding 1,600+/- acres and associated facilities is presently for sale and is scheduled for auction on November 14, 2013; being handled by Woltz and Associates, Inc.

There is strong interest and support by the locality and local conservation groups to help acquire the property and establish a permanent conservation ownership structure, as well as ensure permanent public access to Natural Bridge. The Rockbridge Area Conservation Council (RACC) and the Valley Conservation Council (VCC) are co-leading a new coalition of conservation and historic resource groups, the Virginia Natural Bridge Coalition (VNBC), to raise regional awareness and resources supporting establishment of a National or State park for the non-commercial lands of the Natural Bridge property. Resolutions have been passed by the Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors, the Buena Vista City Council, and the Lexington City Council supporting the long term protection of the Natural Bridge for the future enjoyment of the citizens and visitors to the United States of America.

Department of Conservation and Recreation Divisions of State Parks and Outdoor Recreation Planning staffs performed a preliminary site visit and analysis of Natural Bridge to help the Administration evaluate the potential of a portion of this site becoming a state park. The DCR team met and toured Natural Bridge on July 23, 2013 with representatives from Woltz and Associates, Rockbridge County, the RACC and VCC. It is the recommendation of this team that strong consideration be given to acquiring portions of Natural Bridge to become a state park to ensure its protection and provide visitor access to such a unique geological and historical resource of the Commonwealth. Advocates believe that as a state park, this site could become one of the most visited and well known state parks not only in Virginia but nationally.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Steeped in history, the Natural Bridge is thought to be a sacred place of the Native American Monacan tribe, and the site of a major victory over pursuing Powhatans, centuries before the arrival of European settlers in Virginia. It is believed that George Washington came to the site as a young surveyor in 1750 on behalf of Thomas Fairfax, 6<sup>th</sup> Lord Fairfax of Cameron. On July 5, 1774, Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States and author of the Declaration of Independence, acquired a grant from King George III for a sum of 20 shillings, for a 157 acre tract of land including the Natural Bridge. In the early 1800's, Jefferson leased the land for the purpose of establishing a shot manufactory, utilizing the Bridge as a shot tower. Ownership of the property passed out of the Jefferson family during the period 1833-1835, following his death, and has remained in private ownership ever since. As early as 1830, it is noted that a hotel was built on the property, for the purpose of accommodating visitors to the Bridge. Reportedly, a road has been located over the Bridge since 1753. In 1997, the Natural Bridge was listed on the Virginia Landmark Register and the National Register of Historic Places. In 1998, it was listed by the National Park Service as a National Historic Landmark.

## PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The property is approximately 1,600 acres. An updated survey is being prepared by Woltz and Associates. The property has numerous facilities, including a hotel with other lodging buildings,

restaurant, gift shop, wax museum, the Natural Bridge Caverns operation, as well as waste water treatment and water treatment plants. The majority of the facilities are clustered at the intersection of U.S. Route 11 and Route 130. This is also the access point to a one mile hiking trail that departs at the Gift Shop, passes along Cedar Creek under the Bridge, past a recreated Monacan village with temporary camp structures, a former Saltpeter Mine, the Lost River, ending at Lace Falls.

Of the overall acreage, approximately 1,400 acres is undeveloped with about 80% forested and the remaining acreage in open rolling fields, riparian corridors, creek, pond and cliffs, and the Natural Bridge geological feature. Turner Dam and pond are located on the northern section of the property, close to US Route 11. The dam was constructed in the 1940's, is permitted and requires some upgrades. The majority of the forested area underwent a high grade timber harvest around 2010 and has been left to hardwood regeneration. Much of the open fields are now fallow, although some fields are in agriculture with a local farmer not per a contract or lease but more a "gentlemen's agreement". The view shed to the east from the elevation of the open fields located along Golf Course Road at the southern section of the property is spectacular and on par with what one would expect from a state park site.

→ Cedar Creek originates on Short Hill Mountain in Botetourt County, and extends downstream for over 20 miles until it flows through the property and just one mile upstream from its confluence with the Upper James River. Cedar Creek was listed on the 303(d) list in 2002 and remains on the 2012 impaired list as Category 5A, and the development of a TMDL is expected in 2014. The upper reaches of Cedar Creek have been identified as significant habitat for the eastern brook trout, *Salvelinus fontinalis*, a species of interest to the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and US Fish and Wildlife Service.

As part of the property evaluation, the DCR Division of Natural Heritage Resources was consulted with regard to known rare species and karst resources. Regarding above-ground rare species known from the site, there is a 1964 record for the rare plant species, Addison's leatherflower, *Clematis addisonii*, collected somewhere in the vicinity of Cedar Creek at or within a few miles of Natural Bridge. In order to evaluate the status of this record, a follow-up visit by botany staff of the DCR Division of Natural Heritage is recommended as soon as is feasible.

The Natural Bridge property is very significant from a karst perspective. There are 11 caves with over 7,000 total feet of surveyed cave passage. Three of the caves are designated as significant under the Virginia Cave Protection Act, including Natural Bridge Caverns, operated as a show cave and advertised as the deepest cavern on the east coast. Nine of the 11 have reportedly not been investigated for biological resources. There are 3 globally rare terrestrial species, including the Natural Bridge cave beetle. Most of the records are from Natural Bridge Cavern (aka Buck Hill Caverns).

#### EXISTING FACILITIES

There are numerous buildings and facilities associated with the property as briefly mentioned above. More detailed information is attached about size and age of these various facilities. Discussions are underway on the feasibility of connecting to the county water system, possibly utilizing existing storage and pumping capabilities of the existing water plant. The waste treatment plant was estimated to have been constructed in the 1940's, but has been upgraded and appears to function properly. The pending discussions will also address the current condition of waste treatment plant. Electric service is provided by Dominion Power.

The Virginia Department of Transportation has conducted a study of US Route 11 crossing over the Natural Bridge. While a copy of the study has not been obtained at this time, it was discussed that the results showed the crossing to have adequate structural stability for the existing road use. It was mentioned that some discussions had occurred with VDOT about a possible relocation of the road off the Bridge.

Should portions of this property be acquired for a state park, the only facilities of interest would be the Gift Shop building, the Summer House Cafe located along Cedar Creek near the Bridge, and possibly two of the houses being used as residences. The houses would require additional evaluation as to condition and suitability for park housing. All of the facilities are connected to the waste treatment plant and water plant, which would require a cooperative arrangement to continue use of these while avoiding the need for ownership of these utilities. The gift shop is a 50,990 square foot brick building, constructed in 1954. Based on its proximity as the gateway to the Natural Bridge, the Gift Shop could be converted into an exemplary Visitor Center. The Summer House Cafe functions much like a picnic shelter with restrooms and snack bar. It is also the access point to the trail for the shuttle bus and for handicap accessibility.

The following financial information was provided by Woltz and Associates with the request that it be kept confidential. In 2012, revenue profits for the various facilities that would be associated with a state park include \$350,000 at the Gift Shop, \$14,000 at the Gift Shop Deli, \$43,000 at the Summer House Cafe, and \$1.6 million for the Natural Bridge attraction. The ticket price for the attraction is \$21/adult and \$12/ children (ages 5 – 12); and includes access to the Natural Bridge, Monacan village, Drama of Creation show at dusk, and the wax museum. The ticket prices and revenue amounts do not include the Natural Bridge Caverns. Natural Bridge is open year round, although some facilities are open seasonally. The staffing and operational costs associated with these components of the overall Natural Bridge operation have not been analyzed in depth so an accurate comparison to a state park operation is not available. However, it is anticipated that the complexity of an operation similar to what is presently in place would require a minimum of \$500,000 for annual operating expenses, not including salaries.

#### REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS

Within an easy drive of Natural Bridge, there are opportunities for camping, touring the zoo or driving through the safari park, using local liveries to canoe or kayak along the James River, or go horseback riding. There are numerous overnight facilities in addition to the Natural Bridge Hotel including bed and breakfasts, rental cabins, and country inns. Other recreational opportunities such as fishing, hunting, bird watching and trails can be found on public lands managed by the National Forest Service and Commonwealth. All of these enhance and support the need to protect the Natural Bridge as a site available to the public. For a more comprehensive list of regional attractions, refer to the appendices.

## ACQUISITION SCENARIOS

Several possible scenarios were mentioned in the briefing provided by Woltz and Associates for the DCR Staff. All the scenarios involved what is considered a core 105 acres that includes about a mile of Cedar Creek including the Natural Bridge and additional 600 or more acres of undeveloped land. It was suggested that the owners see this as meeting their legacy goal for conserving the bridge through stewardship by a public entity. To a public or conservation buyer dedicated to this goal, Woltz suggested the owners would sell this portion for about \$12 million. Given that there is a revenue stream of about \$2 million annually being generated by the associated attractions that could become part of a state park, there is the possibility that if the acquisition was financed, it could be paid with this revenue.

Woltz is actively pursuing several strategies, including; seeking a conservation buyer who would purchase this portion of the property and donate it to Commonwealth. They are working with multiple land trusts on this effort. The county is considering approving a loan to purchase the property so it can be removed from the auction and preserve the opportunity for it to be purchased by the Commonwealth, by a conservation buyer, through a fundraising effort that might be launched or some other scenario. They have been in contact with numerous political leaders who are interested in this outcome, including; Congressman Bob Goodlatte, Senators Emmett Hanger, Creigh Deeds and John Watkins. There is a sense that a strong, bipartisan contingent will likely approach Governor McDonnell to enlist his active support in finding a way to preserve the natural, cultural and economic potential of Natural Bridge.

Woltz has indicated that a plan to protect this portion must be in place before the November 14 auction date. Assurances are needed by Woltz and the owners that if a strategy is found to acquire this portion of the property, the Commonwealth will commit to accepting it for a state park.

## STATE PARK RECOMMENDATION

The scenic, cultural and natural aspects of the Natural Bridge property lend this site to becoming a state park. Portions of the existing site would accommodate many of the traditional park offerings such as camping and cabins. There are numerous opportunities to design and construct an extensive trail system on the site for use by hikers, bikers and equestrians. This trail system could potentially provide a connection to the James River Heritage Trail and Upper James River Water Trail. Although Cedar Creek is not large enough to provide water access such as kayaking or boating, which is a desired feature of a state park, the Upper James River is a mile downstream. This close proximity would allow for park programming to be offered at and on the James River. The location and function of the Gift Shop as the gateway to the Natural Bridge make its conversion to a state park visitor center ideal. The opportunities to interpret the natural and cultural significance of the Natural Bridge using traditional interpretive methods as well as advances in technology will be limited only by available funding.

While the overall acreage of 1,600+/- exceeds the desired minimum 600 acres for a state park, the entire property is not desirable for a state park. It is not financially feasible for the state park system to take ownership of all of the facilities and operations presently offered at Natural Bridge. Based on discussions with Woltz and Associates, it is anticipated that the current owners will entertain subdividing the property to accommodate the needs of a state park yet still maintain the viability of the commercial aspects for a private enterprise. If a private business were to acquire the facilities such as the hotel and restaurant, Natural Bridge Caverns operation, and wax museum, a private/public partnership would be an option for the state park to provide access to the Natural Bridge and related interpretive programming.

Natural Bridge, as a state park, could become one of the most visited parks within the system by virtue of its national recognition and easy access off a major interstate. If this site were to be acquired as a state park, the public expectation would be a seamless transition of ownership with no break in the access to the Natural Bridge. While renovations would be required of certain facilities, it is feasible to meet the public expectation. However, this will require Administration support in the way of staff and operational costs being made available at the time of acquisition. This iconic geologic feature recognized by one of Virginia's most distinguished founding fathers as "the most sublime of nature's works..." cannot be allowed to disappear from the enjoyment of future Virginians, and citizens and visitors of the nation.

## **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, The Natural Bridge of Virginia was formed by the forces of God and nature; and

**WHEREAS**, The Bridge has been deemed sacred by all Americans throughout modern history, from native tribes to the present day inhabitants of Rockbridge county and the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista, and by visitors from every corner of the Nation and the world; and

**WHEREAS**, The Bridge was owned by American Founding Father and President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, from 1774 until his death on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1826; and

**WHEREAS**, President Jefferson believed that The Bridge should forever be available for public access; and

**WHEREAS**, The Bridge represents both a literal and symbolic image of the westward expansion of the United States of America; and

**WHEREAS**, and as a result of its historic significance, The Bridge has been designated as a National Historic Landmark, a Virginia Historic Landmark, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places; and

**WHEREAS**, The County of Rockbridge was named in honor of this natural and historic treasure; and

**WHEREAS**, The Bridge is a source of pride and honor for Rockbridge County and its regional partners, the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista; and

**WHEREAS**, the popularity of The Bridge as a destination for tourists and travelers provides significant economic opportunity to the entire region; and

**WHEREAS**, our Nation has been exceptionally fortunate that, subsequent to President Jefferson's ownership of The Bridge, a succession of owners has, since 1826, honored his vision by allowing public access and enjoyment of the natural splendor of The Bridge; and

**WHEREAS**, The Bridge and its surrounding properties are currently being marketed for public sale; and

**WHEREAS**, the Buena Vista City Council fully recognizes the importance of keeping The Bridge fully accessible for future generations, and that one sure way to guarantee perpetual public access is for The Bridge to be publicly owned.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Buena Vista encourages Leaders of our State and Nation to explore every possible avenue to ensure that The Natural Bridge of Virginia be forever preserved for the enjoyment of the citizens of, and visitors to, the United States of America.

Lawrence F. Hogan  
Lawrence F. Hogan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Deen W. Moore  
Clerk of Council

July 18, 2013  
Date of Adoption

## RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING ESTABLISHMENT OF PERPETUAL PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA

**Whereas** The Natural Bridge of Virginia was formed by the forces of God and nature; and,

**Whereas** The Bridge has been deemed sacred by all Americans throughout modern history, from native tribes to the present day inhabitants of Rockbridge County and the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista, and by visitors from every corner of the Nation and the world; and,

**Whereas** The Bridge was owned by American Founding Father and President of the United States Thomas Jefferson, from 1774 until his death on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1826; and,

**Whereas** President Jefferson believed that The Bridge should forever be available for public access; and,

**Whereas** The Bridge represents both a literal and symbolic image of the westward expansion of the United States of America; and

**Whereas** and as a result of its historic significance, the Bridge has been designated as a National Historic Landmark, a Virginia Historic Landmark, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places; and,

**Whereas** The County of Rockbridge was named in honor of this this natural and historic treasure; and,

**Whereas**, The Bridge is a source of pride and honor for Rockbridge County and its regional partners, the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista; and,

**Whereas**, the popularity of The Bridge as a destination for tourists and travelers provides significant economic opportunity to the entire region; and,

**Whereas** our Nation has been exceptionally fortunate that, subsequent to President Jefferson's ownership of The Bridge, a succession of owners has, since 1826, honored his vision by allowing public access and enjoyment of the natural splendor of The Bridge; and,


**Whereas** The Bridge and its surrounding properties are currently being marketed for public sale; and,

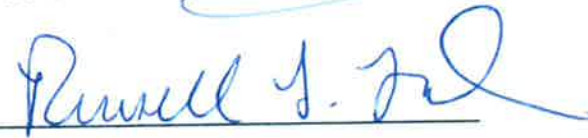
**Whereas** the Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors fully recognizes the importance of keeping The Bridge fully accessible for future generations, and that one sure way to guarantee perpetual public access is for The Bridge to be publicly owned,

**Now therefore be it resolved** that the Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors encourages Leaders of our State and Nation to explore every possible avenue to ensure that The Natural Bridge of Virginia be forever preserved for the enjoyment of the citizens of, and visitors to, the United States of America.

Adopted this 24th day of June, 2013

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ronnie R. Campbell - Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Albert W. Lewis, Jr. - Vice Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Russell S. Ford

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John M. Higgins

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David W. Hinty

**RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING ESTABLISHMENT OF PERPETUAL PUBLIC ACCESS  
TO THE NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA**

**Whereas**, The Natural Bridge of Virginia has been deemed sacred by all Americans throughout modern history, from native tribes to the present day inhabitants of Rockbridge County and the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista, and by visitors from every corner of the Nation and the world; and,

**Whereas**, The Bridge was owned by American Founding Father and President of the United States Thomas Jefferson, from 1774 until his death on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1826; and,

**Whereas**, President Jefferson believed that The Bridge should forever be available for public access; and,

**Whereas**, The Bridge represents both a literal and symbolic image of the westward expansion of the United States of America; and

**Whereas**, and as a result of its historic significance, the Bridge has been designated as a National Historic Landmark, a Virginia Historic Landmark, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places; and,

**Whereas**, The County of Rockbridge was named in honor of this this natural and historic treasure; and,

**Whereas**, The Bridge is a source of pride and honor for Rockbridge County and its regional partners, the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista; and,

**Whereas**, the popularity of The Bridge as a destination for tourists and travelers provides significant economic opportunity to the entire region; and,


**Whereas**, our Nation has been exceptionally fortunate that, subsequent to President Jefferson's ownership of The Bridge, a succession of owners has, since 1826, honored his vision by allowing public access and enjoyment of the natural splendor of The Bridge; and,


**Whereas**, The Bridge and its surrounding properties are currently being marketed for public sale; and,

**Whereas**, the Lexington City Council fully recognizes the importance of keeping The Bridge fully accessible for future generations, and that one sure way to guarantee perpetual public access is for The Bridge to be publicly owned,

**Now therefore be it resolved**, that the Council of the City of Lexington, VA encourages Leaders of our State and Nation to explore every possible avenue to ensure that The Natural Bridge of Virginia be forever preserved for the enjoyment of the citizens of, and visitors to, the United States of America.

Adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2013

  
Brenda L. Doyle, Clerk of Council

  
Mimi M. Elrod, Mayor  
Lexington, VA

## VIRGINIA NATURAL BRIDGE COALITION MISSION

The Rockbridge Area Conservation Council (RACC) and the Valley Conservation Council (VCC) are co-leading a new coalition of conservation and historic resource groups, the Virginia Natural Bridge Coalition (VNBC), to raise regional awareness and resources supporting the establishment of a national or state park for the non-commercial lands of the Natural Bridge property.

The VNBC Mission is “to effect perpetual public access to and stewardship of the Natural Bridge of Virginia as a State or National Park/Monument, or other suitable holder/owner; to conserve the property’s undeveloped non-commercial lands and to support the harmonious development of adjacent private tourist businesses”.

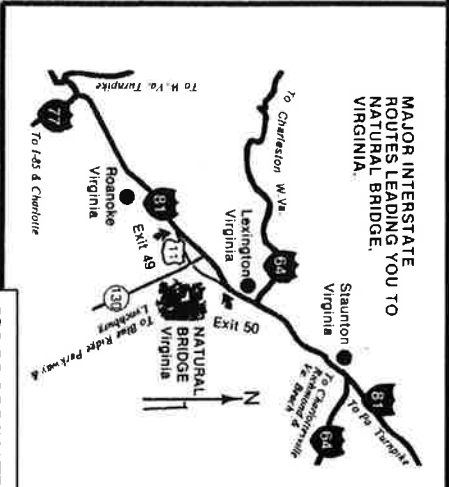
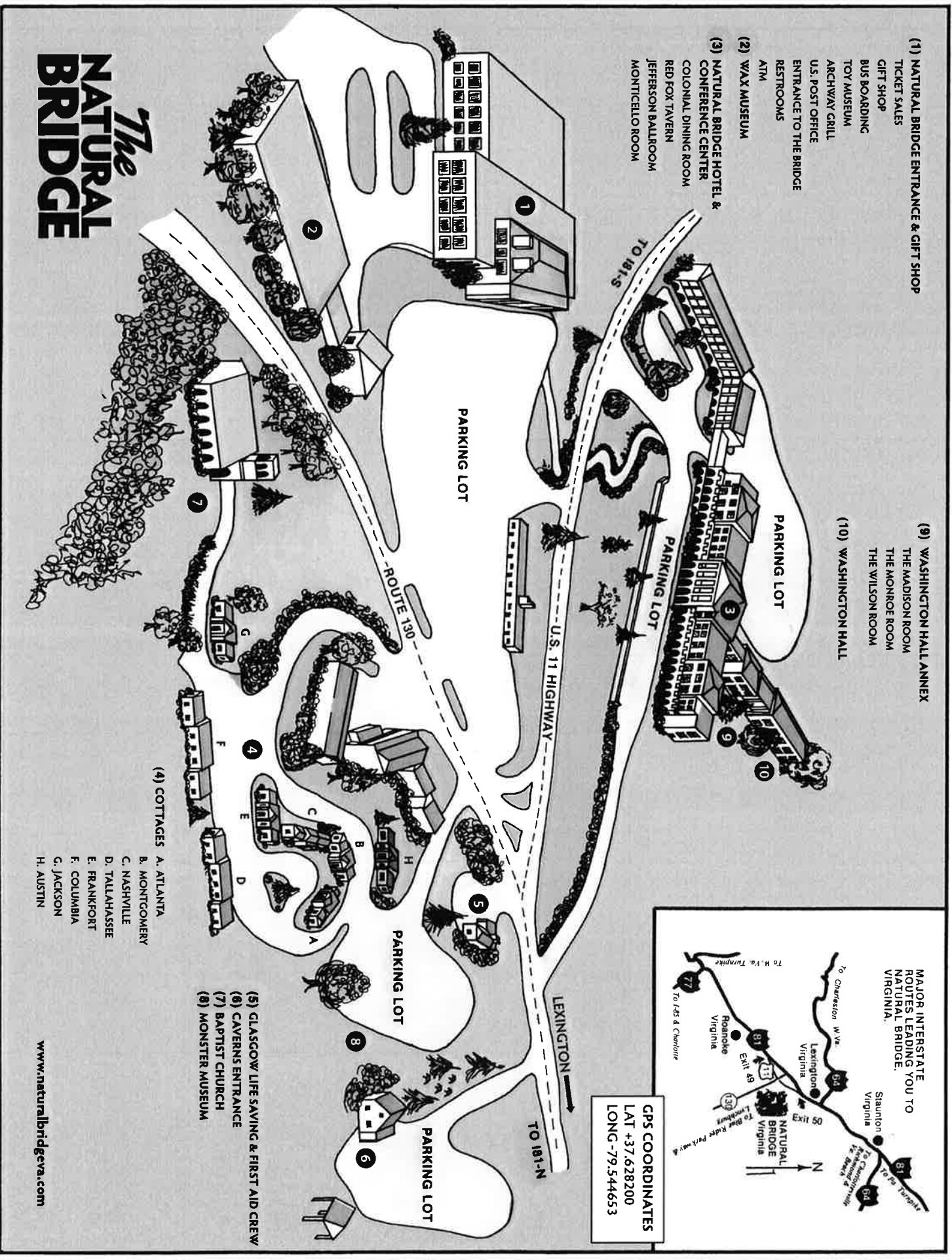
# The NATURAL BRIDGE

- (1) NATURAL BRIDGE ENTRANCE & GIFT SHOP
  - TICKET SALES
  - GIFT SHOP
  - BUS BOARDING
  - TOY MUSEUM
  - ARCHWAY GRILL
  - U.S. POST OFFICE
  - ENTRANCE TO THE BRIDGE
  - RESTROOMS
  - ATM
- (2) WAX MUSEUM
- (3) NATURAL BRIDGE HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER
  - COLONIAL DINING ROOM
  - RED FOX TAVERN
  - JEFFERSON BALLROOM
  - MONTICELLO ROOM

- (9) WASHINGTON HALL ANNEX
  - THE MADISON ROOM
  - THE MONROE ROOM
  - THE WILSON ROOM
- (10) WASHINGTON HALL

- (4) COTTAGES
  - A. ATLANTA
  - B. MONTGOMERY
  - C. NASHVILLE
  - D. TALLAHASSEE
  - E. FRANKFORT
  - F. COLUMBIA
  - G. JACKSON
  - H. AUSTIN

- (5) GLASGOW LIFE SAVING & FIRST AID CREW
- (6) CAVERNS ENTRANCE
- (7) BAPTIST CHURCH
- (8) MONSTER MUSEUM



**GPS COORDINATES**  
 LAT +37.628200  
 LONG -79.544653

**NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA, INC.**

**BUILDINGS/DESCRIPTION  
(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO PLACEMENT ON FACILITY MAP)**

1. **GIFT SHOP BUILDING (50,990 Sq. Ft. – Brick Building)**  
Built in 1954.  
  
Main Floor: Gift Shop/Restaurant/Offices/Ticket Sales/Restrooms/Candy Counter  
  
Lower Level: U.S. Post Office/Indoor Swim Pool/ Restrooms/ Game Room/ Entrance to Bridge Pathway/Bus/Butter Fly Exhibit  
  
Top Level: 8-Dormitory Rooms & 1-Bath/Storage-Not in use.  
  
BRIDGE LEVEL: Sewage Treatment Plant/Bus Stand/Summer House Café (Pavilion) Built 1954. Two-Story Rock Building/Patio. Small Apartment on 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor/Cedar Creek/Dam/Pathway/The Natural Bridge/Picnic Area.
2. **WAX MUSEUM. 14,052 Sq. Ft. Two-story Brick Building, Built in 1957. Currently LEASED to Dorfman Museums.**
3. **HOTEL – 71,640 Sq. Ft. Three-Story Brick Building, Built in 1964;**  
  
Main Floor: Lobbies/Gift Shop/Offices/Restrooms/Storage, Jefferson Ballroom (5,600 sq. ft.), Colonial Dining Room (Seats 200) & Kitchen. Red Fox Lounge (Adjoins Dining Room – Seats 50), Equipped with Elevator.  
  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Floors: 92 Guestrooms/90-Bathrooms.  
  
Basement Floor: Housekeeping, Engineering, Laundry, Boilers, Equipment Room, Monticello Room, Restrooms, Engineering Office, Exercise Room  
  
Annex (Adjoins Hotel): 9,720 Sq. Ft./Three-Story Brick Building, Built in 1952. 30-Guestrooms & 30-Bathrooms.
4. **COTTAGES. 8-Brick Buildings with 36-Guestrooms**
  - A. Atlanta Cottage (Top of Hill) 1,296 Sq. Ft., 4-Guestrooms/4-Bathrooms. One-Story; Built 1949.
  - B. Montgomery Cottage (Top of Hill) 1,296 Sq. Ft., 4-Guestrooms/4-Bathrooms. One-Story; Built 1949.

NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA, INC.  
BUILDINGS

4. COTTAGES CONTINUED:

- C. Nashville Cottage (Top of Hill) 1,296 Sq. Ft., 4-Guestrooms/4-Bathrooms. One-Story; Built 1949.
- D. Tallahassee Cottage (Top of Hill) 1,944 Sq. Ft., 6-Guestrooms/6-Bathrooms. One-Story; Built 1949.
- E. Frankfort Cottage (Top of Hill) 1,296 Sq. Ft., 4-Guestrooms/4-Bathrooms. One-Story Building; Built 1949.
- F. Columbia Cottage (Top of Hill) 1,944 Sq. Ft., 6-Guestrooms/6-Bathrooms. One-Story Building; Built 1949.
- G. Jackson Cottage (Top of Hill) 1,296 Sq. Ft., 4-Guestrooms/4-Bathrooms. One-Story Building; Built 1949.
- H. Austin Cottage (Top of Hill) 1,296 Sq. Ft., 4-Guestrooms/4-Bathrooms. One-Story Building; Built 1949.

4.1 INN – In Partial Use by Employees

- A. Annapolis Building (Bottom of Hill) 2,560 Sq. Ft., 8-Guestrooms/8-Bathrooms. Two-Story Building; Built 1949. Fronting on Rte. 130.
- B. Richmond Building (Bottom of Hill) 4,772 Sq. Ft., 10-Guestrooms/10-Bathrooms plus Lobby/Office/Restroom. Two-Story Building; Built 1959. Fronting on Rte. 130.
- C. Raleigh Building (Bottom of Hill) 2,016 Sq. Ft., 6-Guestrooms/6-Bathrooms. Two-Story Building; Built 1949. Fronting on Rte. 130.

5. RESCUE SQUAD (Sq. Ft. Unknown); Built 1957. Brick Building, Two-Bays, Office, Restrooms. Fronting on U.S. 11 Highway.

6. CAVERNS BUILDING. Built 1980. Frame Building. Main Floor: Gift Shop/ Restrooms/Office/Entrance to Caverns. 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: Apartment.

CAVERNS PICNIC AREA. On Road Up To Caverns. Outdoor Shelter-Left Side of Cavern Building. Parking Out Front.

NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA, INC.  
BUILDINGS

7. BAPTIST CHURCH/CEMETERY. Property Given to the Church. (Top of Hill Near Cottages.)
8. TENNIS COURTS (2). Top of Hill Near Cottages. Playground in Front. Tennis Courts Fenced. Not in Use.
9. WASHINGTON ANNEX. 5,544 Sq. Ft., Two-Story Building. Built in 1937-Frame/Bricked-1964, Renovated 1990.  
  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor: Meeting Rooms (3); Restrooms (3); Madison & Monroe (512 Sq. Ft. each) Wilson (576 Sq. Ft.)  
  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: Offices (8); Currently Utilized for Sales and Administration.
10. WASHINGTON HALL MEETING FACILITY. 2,400 Sq. Ft., One-Story Brick Building. Built in 1947. Kitchen Area/Lobby/Restrooms. Located Behind Hotel – Renovated 1990.
11. MAINTENANCE GARAGE. Stucco Building Built 1921. New Roof in 1984. Utilized by Maintenance Crew.
12. RESIDENCES OWNED BY NATURAL BRIDGE OF VA, INC. Five-Frame One-Story Residences, to the Right Facing Hotel (On U.S. 11, North). Built 1910-1930: Each Has Two-Three Bedrooms/Kitchen/Dining/Living Room/Bathroom. One Occupied-4 Need Work.  
  
THREE-CAR FRAME GARAGE & VACANT SMALL BUILDING IN SAME AREA.  
  
RESIDENCES ON RTE. 130, East (Azalea Drive):
  1. Two-Story Frame Home: Built 1935; 1536 Sq. Ft. Three-Bedrooms/One & One-Half Bathrooms/Kitchen/Dining Room/Living Room with Fireplace/Family Room. Recently Occupied By Management Staff.
  2. Two-Story Frame Home: Built 1935; 2,196 Sq. Ft. Four Bedrooms/One and One-Half Bathrooms/Kitchen/Dining Room/Living Room with Fireplace. Occupied by General Manager.
13. WASHINGTON COTTAGE. 1,200 Sq. Ft. Frame Building. Built About 1930 (New Roof in 1987). Behind the Hotel Annex. Two-Bedrooms/Living Room/Kitchen/Dining/Two-Bathrooms. Not occupied.

NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA, INC.  
BUILDINGS

14. LEE COTTAGE. To Left of Hotel Annex. Sq. Ft. Unknown. Built 1919. Renovated into Two-Apartments in 1982. Each has Two-Bedrooms/Living Room/Kitchen/Dining/One Bathroom. Currently Used As Accounting Offices And Maintenance Offices.
15. BOILER HOUSE. Behind Hotel & Annex. Built 1915. Block Building. Not In Use.  
SMOKE-STACK. Behind Boiler House-Bricked. Not In Use.
16. WATER TOWER. Behind Hotel & Residences.
17. OLD GOLF COURSE AREA-PECOS TRAINING AREA. Located-Rte. 760, South Off of U.S. 11 Hwy.
18. THREE-STORY CINDERBLOCK BUILDING. Built in 1963. Located Behind Hotel. 12-Rooms & Shower Room. This Building is Vacant (Possible Storage).
19. SKATING RINK BUILDING. 1,152 Sq. Ft. Built 1961. Located on Parking Lot. Fronting on Rte. 130. One-Story Building.
20. WATER RESERVIOR AND TREATMENT FACILITY. Above Maintenance Shop.

# NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA®

## Location and Directions

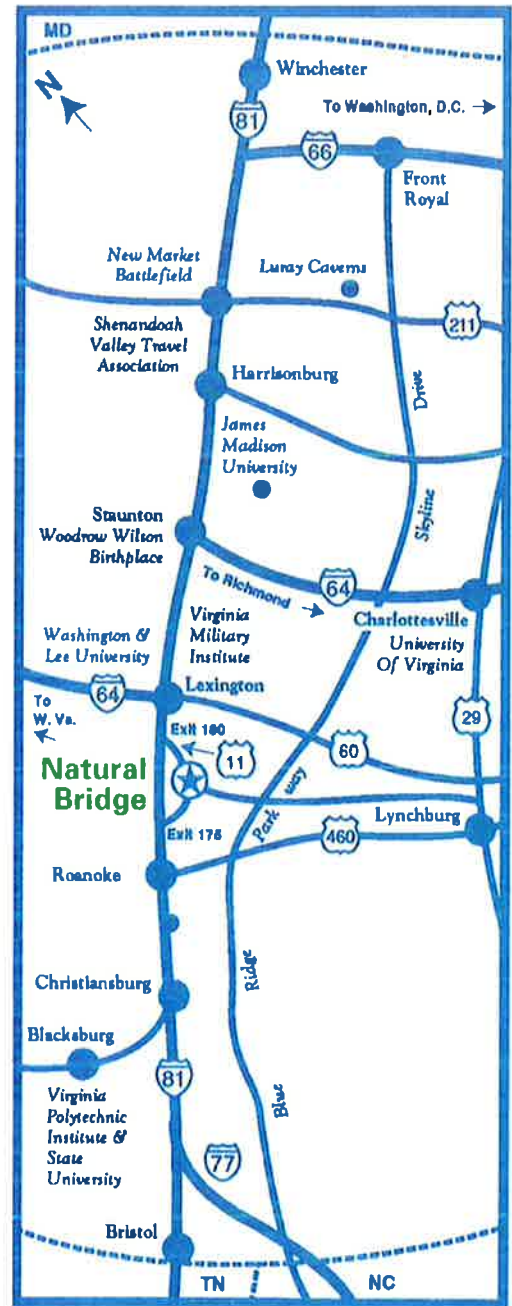
Whether coming from near or far,  
it's easy to get to Natural Bridge.

**E**njoy the convenience of our proximity to I-81 (under 5 minutes, on Rt. 11 at 130) and I-64. Plus, we're just 30 minutes from the Roanoke Airport, and 15 minutes from the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway. From I-81, take Route 11, exit 180 (from the North) or 175 (from the South) to our Hotel & Conference Center entrance.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Natural Bridge of Virginia!

### Distances to Natural Bridge

Blacksburg, VA . . . . . 69	Baltimore, MD . . . . . 226
Charlottesville, VA . . . . . 80	Charleston, WV . . . . . 195
Fredericksburg, VA . . . . . 150	Charlotte, NC . . . . . 225
Harrisonburg, VA . . . . . 70	Columbus, OH . . . . . 407
Lexington, VA . . . . . 16	Greensboro, NC . . . . . 138
Lynchburg, VA . . . . . 35	New York, NY . . . . . 460
Norfolk, VA . . . . . 195	Philadelphia, PA . . . . . 330
Richmond, VA . . . . . 135	Pigeon Forge, TN . . . . . 282
Roanoke, VA . . . . . 35	Pittsburgh, PA . . . . . 300
Asheville, NC . . . . . 270	Washington, DC . . . . . 180



Group Sales  
P.O. Box 57, Natural Bridge, VA 24578  
[www.naturalbridgeva.com](http://www.naturalbridgeva.com)  
[thebridge@naturalbridgeva.com](mailto:thebridge@naturalbridgeva.com)

**540-291-2121 800-533-1410**

## REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS

Given its rich history, natural splendor, and accessibility to travelers, The Natural Bridge of Virginia could easily stand alone as a premier attraction. However, its status as a destination is enhanced by availability of myriad, nearby opportunities for outdoor adventure.

### Attractions and within 10 minutes:

- Yogi Bear's Jellystone Camp Resort is a family camping resort that includes 62 tent sites, 155 full hook-up sites and cabin rentals. The facility has a small lake with a large waterslide, playgrounds and a jumping pillow as well as access onto the James River for canoeing, kayaking and tubing.
- Natural Bridge/Lexington KOA Campground features 25 tent sites, 31 full hook-up and cabin rentals. The facility includes bathrooms, cable and a pet playground.
- The Natural Bridge Zoo offers African elephant rides and baby tiger photos. The zoo features animals such as white tigers, mountain lions, monkeys, a giraffe, a zebra, camels, exotic birds, and other baby animals along with a petting zoo.
- The Virginia Safari Park is a drive-thru safari adventure featuring over 1,000 free-roaming animals from around the world.
- Wilderness Canoe is locally owned and operated and features 7 tent sites along the James River and offers canoe, kayak and tube floats.
- Tish Vest Horseback Riding offers trail rides and riding lessons.
- Herring Hall, C&O Caboose and Bradshaw's Log Cabin are located in the Natural Bridge area within minutes of the Bridge.

### Within 45 minutes

- Located approximately 40 minutes west of The Bridge, Lake Robertson Park is owned and operated by Rockbridge County. Featuring 56 tent and hook-up sites, picnic shelters, tennis courts, a pool, volleyball court, 10 miles of hiking trails, boat and canoe rentals, horseshoes and a 26 acre fishing lake, the park is a popular family destination.
- Approximately 20 minutes east of the Bridge in Buena Vista, the Glen Maury Park offers 100 tent sites, 42 full hook-up sites and options for swimming, fishing, biking, music and golf along the Maury River.
- Lee Hi Campground is located within 30 minutes of the Bridge and features 15 tent sites and 50 full hook-up sites. The Campground is directly behind Lee Hi Travel Plaza, the home of Berky's Restaurant, which has been featured as a destination on the Travel Channel.
- The Virginia Horse Center is Virginia's premier equestrian destination and offers 10 tent sites, 86 full hook-up sites and is within a 20 minute drive of scenic Goshen Pass.
- In addition, there are more than 70 bed and breakfasts, rental cabins and Country Inns located throughout Lexington, Buena Vista and Rockbridge County available for rent.
- The Chessie Nature Trail is a rails to trails link between Lexington and Buena Vista with Woods Creek Trail continuing west through Lexington

## **More public recreational venues/opportunities**

The Commonwealth of Virginia maintains over 27,000 acres of land in several Wildlife Management Areas and State Forest all of which within 45 minutes of the Natural Bridge. These lands provide excellent opportunities for hunting, fishing, bird-watching and hiking.

- 15,705 acres in Goshen Wildlife Management Area.
- 5,278 Little North Mountain Wildlife Management Area.
- 3,799 acre Short Hills Wildlife Management Area.
- 2,353 acre Moore's Creek State Forest

The National Forest Service maintains the following nearby outdoor recreational attractions, within view of Natural Bridge, on the slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

### **Hiking/Camping**

- The iconic Appalachian National Scenic Trail traverses the Blue Ridge Mountains, just to the east of Natural Bridge.
- Cave Mountain Lake recreation area, which features a small lake, beach area, swimming, hiking, picnicking and 41 tent sites is also minutes to the east.
- The James River Face Wilderness Area is bounded on the northeast by the James River and on the south by Petites Gap Road. James River Face reaches a high point of 3,073 feet on Highcock Knob and a low point of about 650 feet at the James River and contains 32 miles of trails.
- Devil's Marbleyard is a large quartzite boulder field within the James River Face Wilderness Area and is a popular hiking destination.
- Thunder Ridge Wilderness Area is south of the James River Face Wilderness bordered on the south and east by the Blue Ridge Parkway. Elevations range from 1,320 feet on the northwest corner to 4,200 feet. It contains five miles of developed trails including 3.5 miles of the Appalachian Trail.
- Rich Hole Wilderness Area is just west of Lexington in Alleghany County
- Apple Orchard Falls is a popular hiking trail located just south of the Thunder Ridge Wilderness Area.
- Gunter Ridge Horse Trail is a popular riding destination.
- Locher Tract includes trails for hiking and two ponds for fishing and fabulous bird watching opportunities.

### **Hunting**

- This area of the Blue Ridge Mountains boasts vast areas of both readily-accessible National Forest lands and road-less wilderness with high populations of deer, bear, turkey and small game.

### **Scenic Parkways/Byways**

- The Blue Ridge Parkway, which was created as a link between the Shenandoah National Park and the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, is visible from The Bridge and only minutes away via car. The Blue Ridge Parkway is a National Parkway and is known for its scenic vistas.
- The Wilderness Road (known today as US Route 11, or Lee Highway) gained fame in early America as the quintessential migration path for hardy, westbound settlers. Also known as the Great Wagon Road, The Warriors Path, the Great Indian Road by Treaty of Lancaster, and the Valley Turnpike, this historic route passes directly over the Natural Bridge.

## **Rivers**

Rockbridge County is known for its water recreational activities, including canoeing, kayaking, tubing, fishing, swimming and bird-watching. Nearby opportunities include:

- James River – The Scenic Upper James River is within 2 miles of Natural Bridge and has numerous public canoe/kayak launch sites. Many species of fish abound in the James, but the most popular targets are smallmouth bass, muskellunge and flathead catfish. Nearby public access points include:
  - Alpine
  - Locher Tract
  - Tank Hollow
  - Locher Landing
  - Snowden

Bisecting the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Balcony Falls section is one of the most popular floats on the James River, providing class III challenges.

- Maury River – From the scenic Goshen pass in the Goshen / Little North Mountain Wildlife Management to its confluence with the James River at Locher Landing, the Maury has numerous public access points. The Goshen Pass area provides excellent stocked and wild trout fishing opportunities and is a nationally famed whitewater kayaking destination, with up to class V sections. The lower reaches of the Maury are more tame, but including challenging class II+ stretches and excellent smallmouth fishing. Formed by the Calf Pasture and Little Calf Pasture Rivers the Maury is entirely contained within Rockbridge County.
- In addition to Rockbridge County's two primary rivers, numerous nearly smaller streams provide fishing opportunities for both stocked and wild trout. Stocked streams include South River, Irish Creek, Mill Creek, North Creek and Jennings Creek. The upper reaches of North Creek and Buffalo Creek are designated wild trout waters, with healthy populations of both wild, stream-bred trout and stocked fingerlings.
- More great James River sections are above Rockbridge and a canoe/kayak rental & livery is located in Buchanan

## **Bicycling**

Rockbridge County has seven documented on-road bike routes that are suitable for beginners, families and advanced riders. These routes are documented by Bike the Valley and Bike Virginia.

The 2013 Bike Virginia tour kicked off in Buena Vista. Approximately 1,300 bikers travelled from Buena Vista through southern Rockbridge County. The Natural Bridge Ride is an on-road bike route that runs along Buffalo and Broad Creeks via Plank Road. Sections of this ride are also part of the U.S. Bike 76 Route. It ends at the Natural Bridge. In addition to on-road routes there are numerous off-road routes for advanced bicyclist.



Google earth

miles 3 5  
km

Google Earth Pro

Boundaries are Approximate