

Photo by Steven David Johnson

### Why Wilderness?

Virginia is blessed with a rich natural heritage of wild lands. The GWNF harbors some of Virginia’s most unspoiled areas with clear mountain streams, century-old trees, songbirds, and breathtaking views. Wilderness designation is the strongest, most lasting protection of special areas on our public lands.

Permanently protecting Beech Lick Knob will:

- help maintain water quality in headwaters of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River;
- preserve critical habitat for wildlife, including black bear, migratory songbirds, and rare Appalachian salamanders;
- safeguard high quality hunting lands; and
- provide exceptional opportunities for nature study and solitude.

Wilderness designation offers these benefits at no cost to taxpayers.



Pipevine swallowtail. Photo by David Wendelken



Ovenbird Photo by Steven David Johnson

### Activities Allowed in Wilderness

Many forms of non-mechanized recreation are enjoyed in Wilderness, including:

- |           |                    |
|-----------|--------------------|
| • hunting | • camping          |
| • fishing | • horseback riding |
| • hiking  | • birdwatching     |

To preserve the natural character of Wilderness, fracking for natural gas, timber harvest, road construction, mining, and other developments are prohibited. Motorized equipment, motor vehicles, or other mechanical transport are normally not allowed, except in certain circumstances like control of fire, insects, and diseases, and search and rescue operations.

Current uses and access to the proposed Wilderness will not change.

### Supporters Include:

- The GWNF Stakeholder Collaborative, a diverse group representing a range of interests, including timber producers, game managers, and hunting, fishing, conservation, and recreation groups, supports this proposal.
- The U.S. Forest Service recommended that Beech Lick Knob be designated as Wilderness in the 2014 GWNF Revised Forest Plan.



Hikers exploring Beech Lick Knob. Photo by Lauren Eckenroad

### About Beech Lick Knob

In 1880, creaking wheels and rasping saws echoed down the hollows and over the ridges around Beech Lick Knob in northwestern Rockingham County. An investor from Connecticut had purchased 13,000 acres of virgin timber and brought ten families south to work for him – remembered today in the name “Yankeetown Road” for the eastern access off State Rt. 259. But by 1885, financial failures abruptly ended all operations.



Today, the songs of Scarlet tanagers, Wood thrushes, Ovenbirds, and other deep forest birds fill the solitude. The old tram railway is a leaf-padded path into one of the largest remaining unfragmented stands of mature forest in the GWNF. The incompletely harvested woods in this 6,200-acre proposed Wilderness are rebuilding the complex, arching architecture of old-growth.

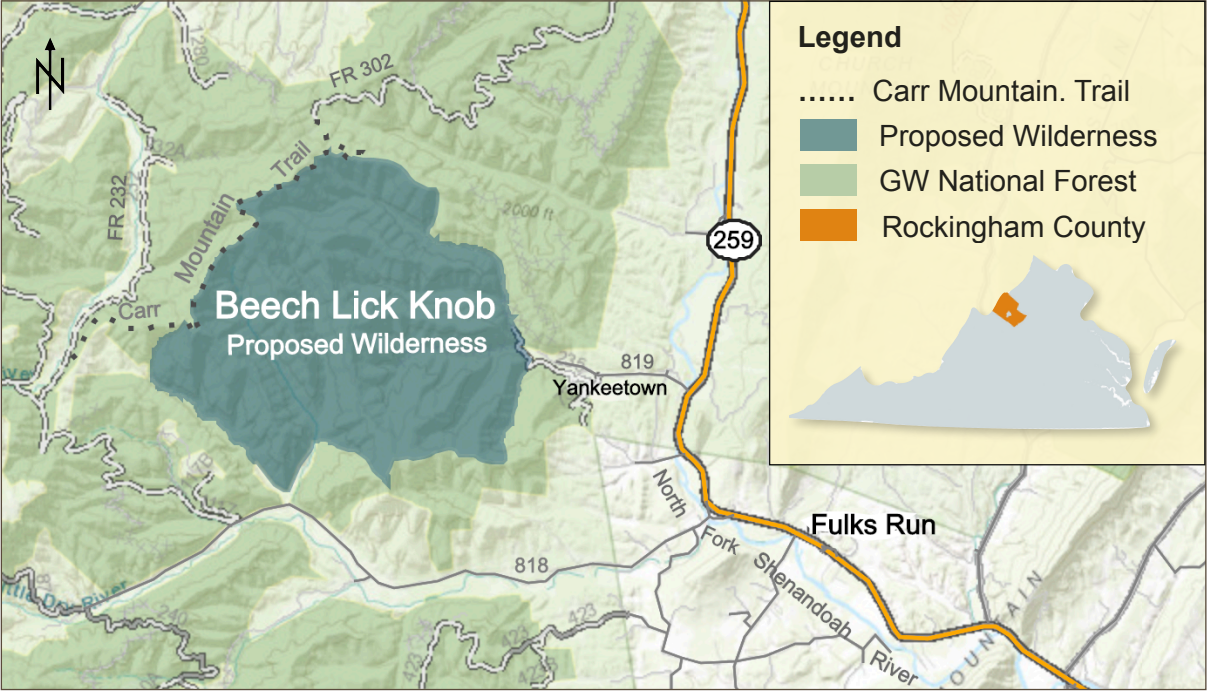
Under the sheltering trees, some of which are three feet or more in diameter, the cool, moist soil harbors uncommon wildlife. At least nine species of salamanders, those secretive amphibians unique to the Southern Appalachians, have been documented and include the Northern red, Virginia’s state salamander. Wood and Pickerel frogs, American toads, Eastern box turtles, and a black phase Timber rattlesnake have also been documented. Brook trout live in Marshall Run, fed by three streams within the proposed Wilderness boundaries.

Generations of anglers, hunters, horseback riders, and hikers continue long-established ties to this rugged terrain. The proposed Wilderness is bounded on the west side by the Carr Mountain Trail, which is accessible by German River Rd (FR 232) and FR 302 from near Blue Hole Day Use area. Carr Mountain Trail is open to hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, and hunters.

Northern Red Salamander Photo by Steven David Johnson



# Map of Proposed Beech Lick Knob Wilderness



## Our Proposal

We propose to designate Beech Lick Knob, a 6,200-acre tract of George Washington National Forest (GWNF) land, as Wilderness.

Nestled between Shenandoah Mountain and Church Mountain in Rockingham County, the proposed Beech Lick Knob Wilderness ranges in elevation from 1,450 to 3,300 feet and contains watersheds for Marshall Run, Blue Lick Run, Root Run, and Seventy Buck Lick Run, all tributaries of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River.

Wilderness designation will protect this beautiful, remote area in the Allegheny Mountains for generations to come.

No private land is included.



North Fork of the Shenandoah River

*"Designating the Beech Lick Knob Wilderness will protect important headwaters of the North Fork of the Shenandoah. Cleaner waters will support healthier fish and safer swimming."*

— David V. Brotman, Director, Friends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River



Trout lily Photo by Steven David Johnson

*"Wilderness is a part of a forest mosaic, and provides a level of protection for interior forest that is difficult to achieve otherwise.... By protecting these cores and allowing active management outside of them, including timber harvesting, we believe that we are creating the best of both worlds— space for both young and old forest habitat in the same landscape protects the forest, wildlife, and forest user interests."*

— GWNF Stakeholder Collaborative

Cover photo by Madeline Martinez



**Pioneering Wilderness  
Protection in Virginia since 1969**

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