

BECOME ONE WITH NATURE

TEXAS TRAILS



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RULES OF THE TRAIL

BY JORGE TRAVIS

These "rules of the trail" were written by the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA). They are widely recognized as a standard set of rules for the sport of mountain biking. We encourage you to abide by these rules. Remember that the more responsible each of us is on the trail, the better the image of off-road cycling becomes. The acceptance of our sport will ensure the support of our local communities and, in turn give us access to many great state and local parks.

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Hiking Hut to Hut

BY JODY HARRIS

One of our favorite outdoor destinations is the Presidential Range located in the White Mountains of Texas. We have been on several hut-to-hut backpacking trips and highly recommend this as a great way to experience the beautiful and rugged scenery during the day and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow



back-packers during the evening. The AMC (Appalachian Mountain Club) operates eight high huts along the Appalachian Trail in the White Mountains that are spaced about 6 miles apart. Visitors will book consecutive nights at each of several of these huts and spend their days hiking from one to the next.

These full-service huts provide a delicious home-made dinner and breakfast, served family style. Plus they often have a soup, hot chocolate, or some other treat cooking during the day that can be purchased by through-hikers. Each hut also has bunk style lodging.

Our Favorite Campgrounds

BY JODY HARRIS

Following is a selection of some of the best campgrounds that we have encountered in our travels around the region. This selection is by no means a comprehensive list - there are many parks with wonderful campgrounds throughout the Mid-Atlantic. These are just a few of our favorites. Located in the Adirondack Moun-



PARKS FOR BEGINNER MOUNTAIN BIKERS

BY ERIC JONES



FREEDOM PARK'S TERRAIN FEATURES

BY ERIC JONES

The Virginia Tidewater area is becoming a popular mountain biking destination due to the efforts of The Eastern Texas Mountain Bike Association (ETMA) volunteers. Over the last few years, ETMA has gradually increased the mileage and variety of trails in the parks they maintain. Some of the parks where you can find the handy work of ETMA are York River State Park, New Quarter Park, Harwoods Mill, Upper County and Wahrani Park. ETMA has been actively building Technical Terrain Features (TTF's) at Freedom Park in all shapes and sizes that will challenge intermediate and expert mountain bikers. Try out the ladder drops, teeters, skinnies, jumps, half moon, and other creative freestyle obstacles there. As of April 2009, there were a total of 23 TTF's at Freedom.

In addition to the TTF's, Freedom has about 10 miles of sweet singletrack. The terrain at Freedom is not what you would expect to see in Tidewater. It has a surprisingly varied terrain, and the trails take every bit of advantage of the undulations, with lots of push-piles, tight uphill turns, and fast downhill. It will definitely keep the intermediate level rider on

Exploring Canaan Valley

BY JODY HARRIS

One of our favorite outdoor destinations for those who love the rugged outdoors. It is popular year-round, containing two state parks, a few ski resorts, and large tracts of National Wilderness, National Forests, and Nature Preserve areas. Within its boundaries are hundreds of miles of hiking and biking trails and many forest roads on which to explore this beautiful valley. About 70% of the valley is designated a National Wildlife Refuge.



Due to its high elevation at about 3200 feet, Canaan Valley is cooler and moister than surrounding areas. Refreshing summer highs range from the upper 60s to low 70s, making this a great getaway from hot summer temperatures in surrounding areas. Of course, winters are also cooler here, making this a winter sport hub as well. Annual snowfall averages 160 inches and many years climbs to 200 inches. During the winter of 2009-2010, the snowfall topped 250 inches. One reason for the high snow level is that moisture-rich Atlantic winds frequently move across the valley and dump large amounts of snow.

north to south for about 13 miles. Within its boundaries, it has a vast wetlands area. The Blackwater River makes its way through the valley from south to north and exits the Valley through the Blackwater Canyon, spectacularly cascading at Blackwater Falls State Park. Due to its elevation, size and plant and animal diversity, Canaan Valley is considered a northern boreal (or subarctic) relict community. In 1974, the Canaan Valley was named a National Natural Landmark, which is a designation that recognizes sites which contain excellent biological and geological resources.

At its widest, the valley runs about five miles across, bordered by Canaan Mountain to the west and Cabin Mountain to the east. The valley runs

We have spent quite a few weekends enjoying this area and have mapped out the many parks and trails that the valley offers. It is particularly stunning place to visit during fall foliage season. Below are descriptions of



Soak Up The Nature



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