

Proposed Ripple Hollow Wilderness Area

Shawnee National Forest



The proposed Ripple Hollow Wilderness Area is located in the Illinois Ozarks of southwestern Illinois. It offers 3,530 acres of rugged limestone bluffs and deep ravines that shelter old-growth mixed hardwood forest. Its two long valleys, North and South Ripple Hollow, contain beautiful, clear, gravel bottom streams, twenty-one habitat types in relatively undisturbed condition, and a wide diversity of plants and animals. Mammals such as bobcat, wild turkey, deer, squirrel, and beaver reside here. Bird species are numerous and include the Mississippi kite and bald eagle.

The area is a remnant of our wilderness heritage. Ripple Hollow has seventeen surveyed prehistoric sites, as well as remnants of early western expansion.

Visitors can enjoy nature walks, bird watching, hiking, backpacking, and horseback riding. While Ripple Hollow has no officially designated trails, there are some user established trails. The trails are not well signed, so be sure to use a compass or GPS with a topographic map.

The southern tip of Illinois was once a vast expanse of forested wildlands stretching from the Mississippi River to the Ohio River. Early settlers viewed this wilderness as an enemy to be conquered, and industrialists later saw it as yet another supply of resources to be exploited.



Today we are left with only the remnants of that wilderness heritage.

In 1990 the federal government acknowledged Ripple Hollow's wilderness character, but chose to not designate it as a part of the National Wilderness System at that time. It is still eligible for designation.

Directions to Ripple Hollow Trails

(See topographic map on the reverse side) From the Jonesboro, IL town circle take SR 127 south for 8.5 miles to the Union/Alexander County Line (just south of the town of Mill Creek) and turn right/west.

- 1) Follow this road about 4.5 miles to the **Ripple Hollow South Access** parking area. Three trails, **Ripple Hollow Trail**, **Ripple Ridge Trail**, and **Dogwood Flats Trail**, all lead to **North Ripple Hollow Trail**.
- 2) To the northwest, **No. Ripple Hollow Trail** leads to the **Pine Knob/IL Ozarks Trail (P.K./I.O.)** that leaves the east wilderness boundary.
- 3) Going the other way, the **North Ripple Hollow Trail** meanders west/southwest to the junction of **South Ripple Hollow Trail**. You can follow this trail upstream/southeast for about a mile. By following the trail up a very steep hill to the west you will connect with the **Vick Hill Trail** that leads back to the road about two miles southwest of the parking lot. Avoid this area when the soil is wet to prevent excess erosion. You can either retrace your steps, or stage a car at the **Vick Hill** trailhead.

Careful map measurements will help you estimate trail loop distances.

Hunting is popular within this wilderness area during designated seasons. Backpacking and horseback riding is not recommended during the hunting season. For safety, campers are encouraged to register with the Jonesboro Ranger District.

For more information contact:

Illinois Wilderness Action Network
(IWAN)
P.O. Box 117
Carbondale, IL 62903

<http://www.illinoiswilderness.org>

Where to Stay, What to See and Do

Campsites

- Grapevine Trail Campground, SNF 681-833-8576
- Horseshoe Lake, IDNR 618-776-5689

Lodging

- Anna Plaza Motel, Anna 618-833-5215
- Horseshoe Lake Motel, Olive Branch 618-776-5201
- Lincoln Motel, Jonesboro 618-833-2181
- Ridge View Lake B&B, Tamms 618-747-9305
- Southernaire Courts, Olive Branch 618-776-5323
- Super 8 Motel, Anna 618-833-1888
- Worthington Motel, Olive Branch 618-776-5333

Restaurants

Many restaurants are available in Anna, Jonesboro, and Olive Branch.

Other attractions

- Union County Conservation Area
- Horseshoe Lake Conservation Area Atwood Ridge/Hamburg Hill, SNF
- Historic Thebes

Closest Medical Facilities

- Union County Hospital
517 N. Main Street
Anna, IL 62906
618-833-4511
- St. Francis Medical Center
I55 & Route K
Cape Girardeau, MO
573-335-1251

USFS Ranger Station

Jonesboro Ranger District
521 N. Main Street
Jonesboro, IL 62906
618-833-8576



