

# Wildlands of Illinois

## Shawnee National Forest

### Burke Branch Proposed Wilderness

**B**urke Branch proposed Wilderness Area is located in the Shawnee National Forest in Pope and Massac counties. The 6,230 acre area contains two main creeks, Barren Creek and Burke Creek. There are 23 habitat types here offering a wide diversity of plants and animals. In portions where limestone bedrock occurs, sinkholes are numerous on the forested ridge tops. Brasher Cave is located in this limestone area, but gated to protect rare and endangered species. Mammals such as bobcat, wild turkey, deer, squirrel, and beaver reside here.

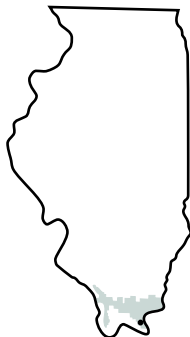
Within Burke Branch is the 300-acre Cretaceous Hills State Nature Preserve. It contains several seep springs that form wet, acidic, "boggy" areas. Unusual plants found here are cinnamon, marsh and royal ferns, and sphagnum moss. Due to the sensitive nature of this area, it is best to arrange for a local naturalist to take you here.

**PRACTICE GOOD HIKING & CAMPING ETHICS -- LEAVE NO TRACE**



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 the wilderness as

dangerous, and industrialists later saw it as an endless supply of resources to be exploited. Today we are left with the remnants of our wilderness heritage. Burke Branch was identified as having wilderness characteristics, but was not protected in the 1990 Illinois Wilderness Act.



#### Directions

These directions should be used in conjunction with the Paducah NE & Brownfield quadrangle topographic maps.

There are no marked trails in Burke Branch. User-made trails generally follow old unimproved roads. Unless you are an experienced map reader, please do not attempt to visit this area without a knowledgeable guide.

To Southern Burke Branch -- Mill Spring & Cretaceous Hills Nature Preserve: From

I-24 take Exit 37 to US45. Go east 2.5 miles, turn left on Unity School Rd., continue 4 miles to CR 136. Turn left, go 4 miles north to parking area.

To Northern Burke Branch -- Barren & Burke Creek area: Follow directions above, but continue on Unity School Rd. about 6.5 miles to CR 144. Turn left, go about 2.5 miles to T, turn left on CR 140 and continue north about 5 miles to FR 1410.

#### For more information contact:

Illinois Wilderness Action Network (IWAN)  
PO Box 117  
Carbondale, IL 62903  
[www.illinoiswilderness.org](http://www.illinoiswilderness.org)

#### Where to Stay, What to See, and Other Helpful Information...

##### Campsites

Fort Massac State Park, 618-524-4712  
Dixon Spring State Park, 618-949-3394  
Lake Glendale Rec. Area, SNF, 618-658-2111  
Primitive camping is allowed at each of the described trailheads — no water, no toilets

##### Lodging

Most of the major chain motels in Metropolis, IL  
Barren Creek Cabins, 618-683-4004  
The Mansion of Golconda, 618-683-4400  
Michael's Motel, Golconda, 618-683-2424

##### Restaurants

Many restaurants in Metropolis, IL (locals recommend ElTequila & Farleys Cafe in Brookport & Golconda)

##### Other attractions in area

Fort Massac State Park  
Dixon Springs State Park  
Kinkaid Mounds

##### Closest Medical Facilities

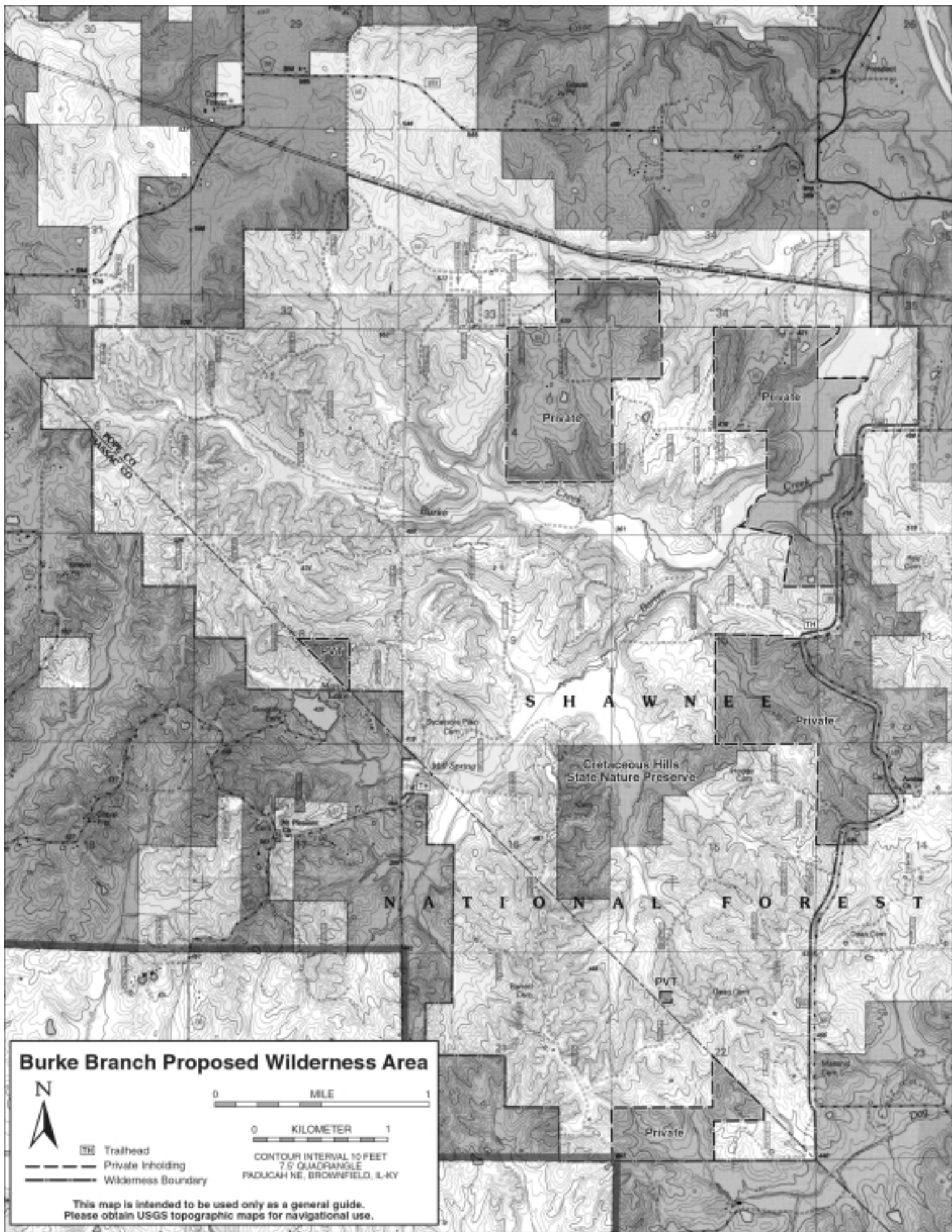
Massac Memorial Hospital  
128 Chick St.  
Metropolis, IL 618-524-2176

##### USFS Ranger Station

Vienna Ranger Dist.  
PO Box 37  
Vienna, IL 62995  
618-658-2111

##### Recommended Topographical Maps

Paducah NE & Brownfield 1:24,000, available from the USFS.



### Burke Branch Proposed Wilderness Area



0 MILE 1

0 KILOMETER 1

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
7.5' QUADRANGLE  
PADUCAH NE, BROWNFIELD, IL-KY

- Trailhead
- Private Inholding
- Wilderness Boundary

This map is intended to be used only as a general guide.  
Please obtain USGS topographic maps for navigational use.