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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

PROTECT ILLINOIS WILDERNESS

Irresponsible users and logging and mining companies threaten our remaining wild areas and our chance to experience beauty in our own backyard. Americans can protect wilderness in the Shawnee National Forest by urging Congress to protect our Illinois wilderness areas.

SHAWNEE NATIONAL FOREST

- Over 285,000 acres in the southernmost section of Illinois.
- Very biologically diverse, it is where prairie and forest regions meet.
- Contains five different geological areas.
- Has rich river bottomlands along the Mississippi and Ohio rivers.
- It is unglaciated, so the bedrock is much closer to the surface, exposing many beautiful rock formations.

WILDERNESS IN THE SHAWNEE

The 1990 Illinois Wilderness Act dedicated seven areas as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Thanks to the support of the entire Illinois Congressional delegation and the efforts of people across Illinois, Clear Springs, Bald Knob, Panther's Den, Bay Creek, Burden Falls, Lusk Creek, and Garden of the Gods are now permanently protected from logging, mining, additional oil and gas leasing, off-road vehicles, and building construction.

Three additional areas now qualify for inclusion as Illinois Wilderness.

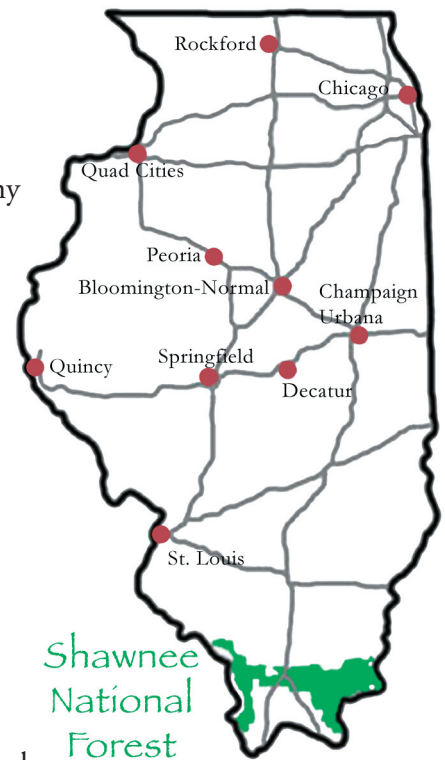
THE PROPOSED WILDERNESS AREAS

Burke Branch (6230 acres), is in the southeast corner of the Shawnee in Pope and Massac counties. There are two major creeks and 23 different habitats offering a wide diversity of animal and plant life. Where there is limestone, numerous sinkholes can be found.

One of the most spectacular parts of Burke Branch is the 300 acre Cretaceous Hills Nature Preserve. Here, you can find many seep springs that are home to 6 foot tall ferns. Burke Branch contains the largest acid seep springs in the Midwest and the last mesic barren in North America.

Ripple Hollow (3530 acres) is known for its rugged topography of steep slopes and deep ravines, harboring old growth forest. Its name comes from two hollows that form two long wide valleys, each containing beautiful clear, gravel bottom streams.

This proposed wilderness area has 21 habitat types in relatively undisturbed condition, making for a wide diversity of wildlife. There are also seventeen surveyed prehistoric sites and possibly more.



Protect Illinois Wilderness



Illinois Wilderness Action Network

WHAT IS WILDERNESS?

“an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is managed so as to preserve its natural conditions.”

(from the 1964 Wilderness Act)

WHY WILDERNESS?

- A unique recreational experience.
- A place free from roads, noise, pollution, and human intrusions.
- Home for rare birds, animals, and plants.
- Clean water and air
- Quiet, solitude, and open spaces to explore

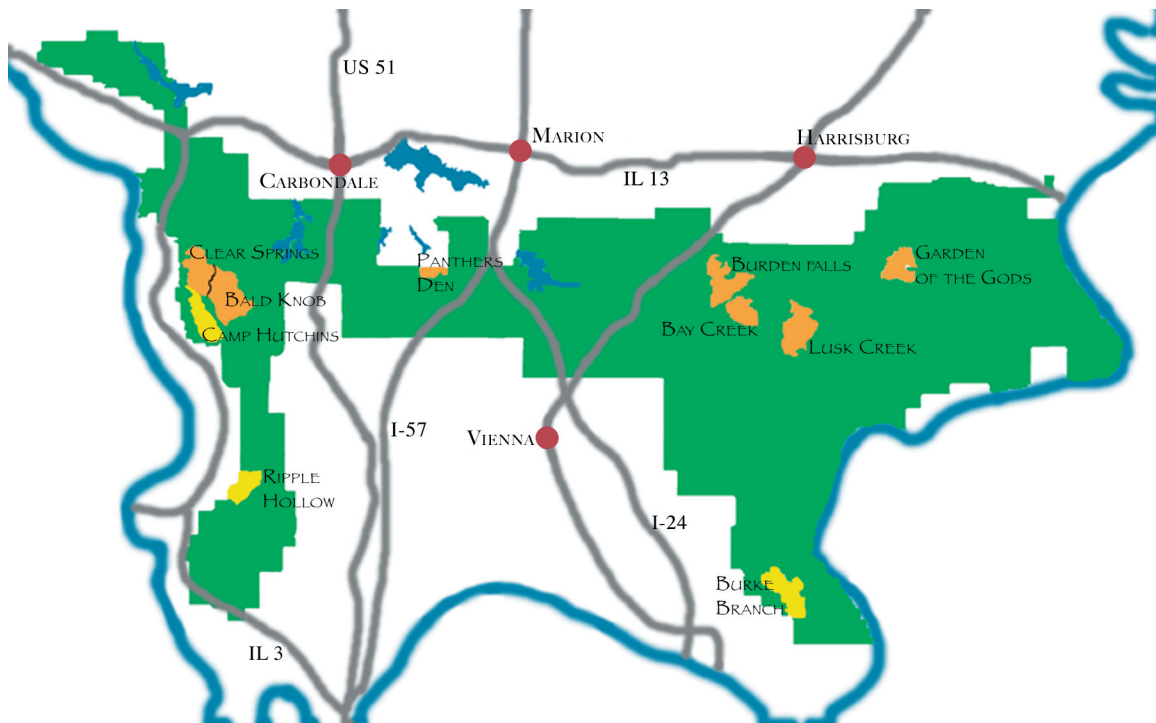
WHAT CAN I DO IN WILDERNESS?

- Hike • Hunt • Camp • Bird watch • Ride Horseback • Fish • Get away from the stresses of life

Camp Hutchins is the smallest proposed wilderness area at 2967 acres. However, it is adjacent to the Bald Knob and Clear Springs Wilderness Areas, the Larue Pine Hills National Natural Landmark, and Trail of Tears State Forest. Camp Hutchins is the link to create a block of over 20,000 acres of protected unfragmented forest.

This large block of unfragmented forest is desperately needed to protect forest interior birds. Populations of these birds have declined across our Nation as forests have been cut down and fragmented into smaller pieces.

Like Bald Knob and Clear Springs Wilderness Areas, Camp Hutchins is known for steep slopes and sheer rock bluffs. There are numerous sheltered valleys with old growth forest.



The Seven Current and Three Proposed Wilderness Areas Amount to ~15% of the Total Area of the Shawnee



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