

# Virginia's Mountain Treasures

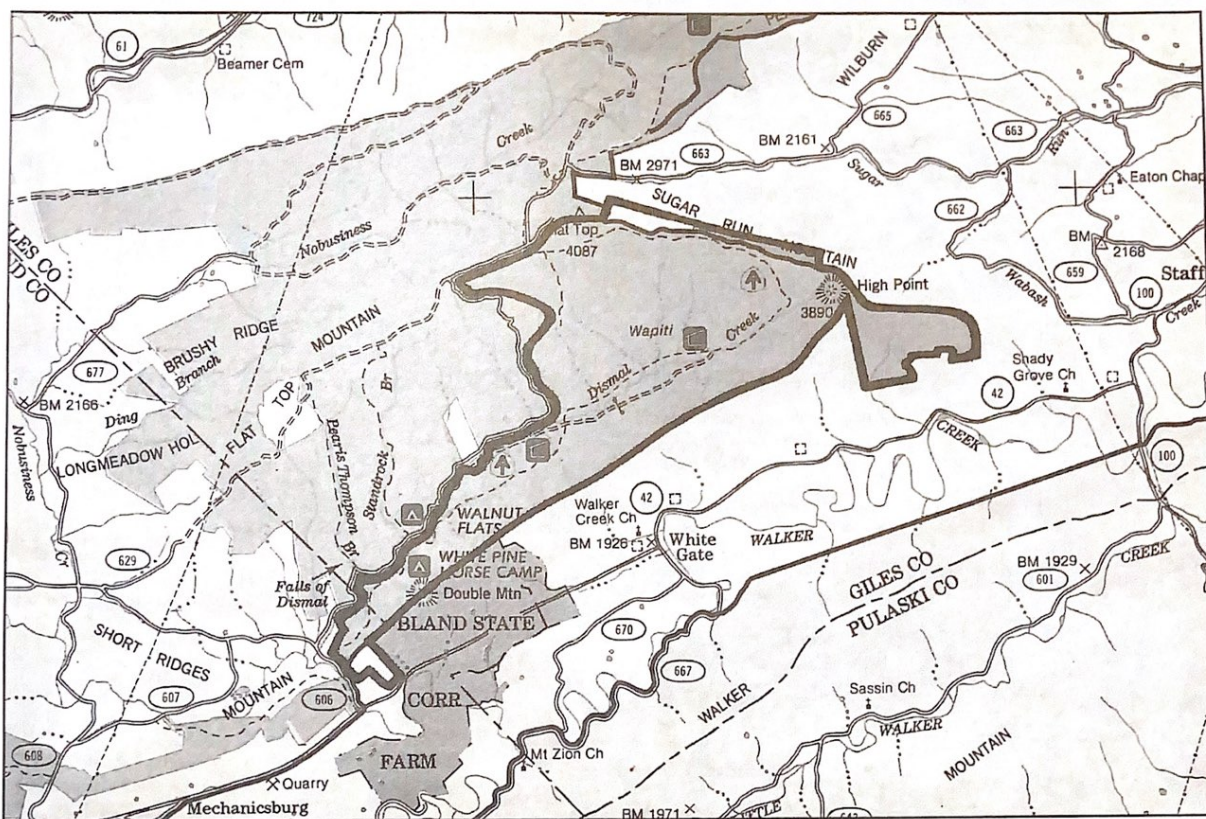


## *The Unprotected Wildlands of the Jefferson National Forest*



A report by The Wilderness Society





## Dismal Creek

This large, wedge-shaped area includes the entire upper watershed of Dismal Creek. It is a mix of high ridges, floodplain forests, hardwoods, and pines. It contains more than 11 miles of the Appalachian Trail, which, with the Ribble Trail, forms an 8.8-mile loop. The area offers fishing, streamside ventures, and rock-hopping along a series of starkly beautiful creeks. The area is also popular with hunters.

The highest points in the area — High Point (3,890 feet), overlooking Walker Creek Valley, and the main peak of Flat Top Mountain (4,087 feet) — afford spectacular views across the valley to Sugar Run Mountain. Dismal Creek is a meandering stream with the remains of old beaver ponds

and occasional wetlands. Near the mouth of the creek is the Falls of Dismal. Dismal Creek is home to several rare calciphytic (calcium-loving) plants. The unusual northern white-cedar also grows in the drainage. The area contains 152 acres of possible old growth.

The Dismal Creek area contains 2,650 acres of semi-primitive recreation land identified by the Forest Service. Such large tracts of unfragmented land contribute to the survival of black bear and benefit many species of migratory birds. The area meets the Forest Service standards for low road density and naturalness; conservationists maintain the area qualifies as roadless.

**Approximate Size:** 7,008 acres

**Location:** Giles and Bland counties, north of VA 42, Blacksburg Ranger District

**Topos:** White Gate, Mechanicsburg