

Featuring a Virginia Trail Area

Dry River Ranger District

George Washington National Forest

by

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The **Dry River Ranger District** is located in Augusta and Rockingham Counties, Virginia and Pendleton County, West Virginia. The horse trailhead/camping areas are West of Bridgewater via Virginia Route 257. The Ranger District Office folks were very helpful during our first trip to the area. Trail maps are available at the District Ranger Office, in Bridgewater, for a fee of \$3.00. The map of the area is very complete and accurate.

There are four trailhead/camping areas to accommodate you and your horses: 1) North River Area; 2) Hone Quarry Run; 3) Slate Lick; and 4) Tillman Road. The latter two have limited parking space. Camping sites are not designated and are wooded. Picket lines or electric fences are the best means to over night your horse. **Please, Do Not Tie to Trees.** Water, for your horse, is abundant within the Forest, but if camping, bring water for yourself.

My wife and trail riding companion, Debbie, and I camped at Hone Quarry Run which is at the end of Forest Service Road (FSR) 62 just off Virginia Route 257. People water and a sanitary dump station was available at the Hone Quarry Picnic Area on FSR 62 located about a mile before the horse camping area.

Well, all this just gets you there, what about the riding? In a word, **GREAT!** The elevation at camp is 2200 feet and everything else is up from there. At

Flagpole Knob, 4000 feet, you can see the many lakes in that area, the Shenandoah Valley, and into West Virginia. You can see by the elevation change that some of the trails are steep and rocky. Most of the riding is wooded and is cool during summer. Many portions of trails parallel dry creek beds of rock. However, we did not encounter any trails that were dangerously steep or rough.

Some of the trails were marked, some were not. The trails on the map match nicely with the ones on the ground. We never felt lost, however, to quote Daniel Boone when asked if he had ever been lost, "**No, but once was a might bewildered**". We encountered a couple in a pickup on a forest road in one of these bewildering times and asked directions. To our surprise, they did not know where they were either. Back-Tracking in unfamiliar territory when dark is near, is neither a **dirty word** nor a **dumb idea!**

Contact the Dry River Ranger District, 112 North River Road, Bridgewater, VA 22812. Telephone 540-828-2591. The District is knowledgeable of the trails, interested in trails and camping development, and supportive of horsemen within the George Washington National Forest. **Please exercise trail etiquette, protect the land, and PACK-IT-IN/PACK-IT-OUT.**

