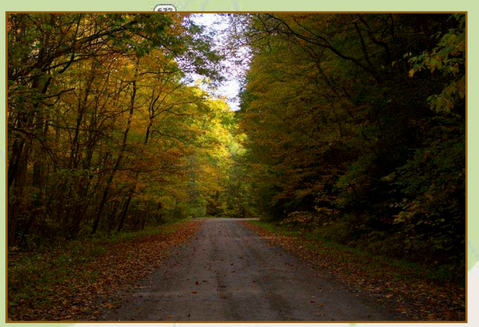
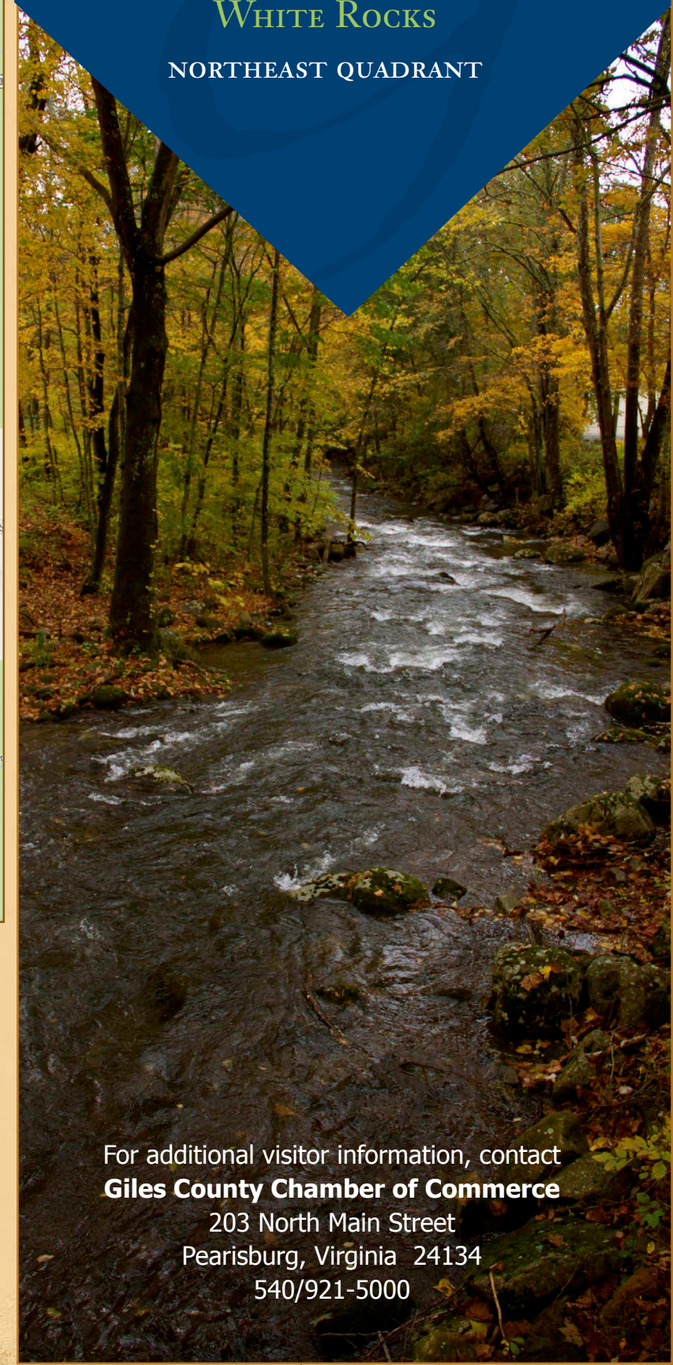


1 FIRST RIVERVIEW BAPTIST CHURCH
2 BIG STONY METHODIST CHURCH
3 DEER COUNTRY RESTAURANT
4 MOSER CEMETARY
5 CHEMICAL LIME PLANT
6 OLEAN CHURCH
7 PINE SWAMP TRAILHEAD
8 APPALACHAIN NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL
9 INTERIOR WHISTLE STOP
10 CHEROKEE FLATS
11 GLEN ALTON FARM
12 WHITE ROCKS CAMPGROUND

GILES COUNTY
Driving Tours
Big Stony Creek - Glen Alton
White Rocks

NORTHEAST QUADRANT



For additional visitor information, contact
Giles County Chamber of Commerce
203 North Main Street
Pearisburg, Virginia 24134
540/921-5000

NE QUADRANT

Big Stony Creek, Glen Alton and White Rocks

A drive along Big Stony Road is a real treat for nature lovers and history buffs alike. Stony Creek rushes alongside and crosses under Big Stony Road (VA 635) multiple times, providing breath-taking views of the creek's sparkling water tumbling over large boulders. Stony Creek flows downstream from the mountains, through national forest and rural communities, past a world-renowned hiking trail and eventually ending in the New River. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries stocks the creek with rainbow trout and there are a many easy fishing access points along the road.

Portions of Big Stony Road follow the old route of the Big Stony Railroad, which traveled through the valley during the late 19th century. Remnants of the railroad and links to its history can be seen at several of the stops along the way.

Begin your tour at the junction of US 460 and VA 635 (Big Stony Road) just east of the New River Bridge.

1. Travel just .2 miles and the **1 First Riverview Baptist Church** will be on your right. This congregation was organized in 1906 and built its first church on the west side of the New River at Ripplemead. This new church was built in 1984.
2. Continue 3.3 miles to Norcross Road (SR 684). Turn left and travel .5 miles to the **2 Big Stony Methodist Church** on the right side. This church was built in 1891 as one of the structures constructed to create a village for the employees of the limestone quarry. This area was discovered by hunters who happened upon an outcropping of limestone, resulting in one of the purest deposits of limestone in the United States. An elevated conveyor connected this quarry with a second quarry opened during World War 1. Chemical Lime Company continues to operate this quarry.
3. Return to SR 635, turning left. Just up the road .5 miles on the right, is **3 Elwood's Country Store and Deer Country Restaurant. Stop** and enjoy ham, country vegetables, biscuits and a homemade dessert of the day. Elwood's, previously, was Horton's Store. Also known as Goldbond, this strip of buildings housed the early post office for this area.
4. On the right just .4 miles further, marking the location of the old Manning Grocery Store, now closed once Raines, Amelong and Hagy. Behind the Manning Grocery Store is the **4 Moser Cemetary** within sight of the Kimballton Methodist Church. Family names buried here include the many descendents of Tyree I. Moser. His great grandfather, Francis Moser, brought his family to Giles County in the early 1800's, settling on land that would be owned by the Rangier Lime Company. Other names include Albert, Buchanan, Britts, Morris, Wells, and Osbourne.
5. Ahead .2 miles, are the white encrusted plant offices and processing plant for **5 Chemical Lime Company of Virginia, Inc**. A major employer for this area, the train tracks are still active here with train cars and trucks hauling the processed lime. This quarry, originally Standard Lime and Stone Company, was purchased by National Gypsum and then Chemical Lime Company.
6. Approximately 1 mile further, to the right will be Olean Road and .4 miles will be the **6 Olean Church of the Brethren**
7. Continue on SR 635 for another 1.5 miles to enter the Jefferson National Forest. The national forest continues for about 10 miles although it is interspersed with some sections of private land. The scenery is especially beautiful in this area--the creek flows adjacent to the road and the forest greenery provides a stunning backdrop. In spring, rhododendrons are blooming and in fall, the hardwood trees are aflame with color.
8. Continue 3.8 miles to the **7 Pine Swamp Trailhead** on your left. From here, you can access the Peters Mountain Wilderness and the **8 Appalachian National Scenic Trail**. Hikers from around the world pass through here each year as they attempt to make the 2179-mile hike from Maine to Georgia
9. Travel 1.1 miles to the **9 Interior Whistle Stop** on the left. With picnic tables, grills and restroom facilities, it is a great place for a Sunday roadside picnic. A kid-sized wooden train and depot station, complete with ringing bell, provide hands-on fun for the little ones. Easy access to Stony Creek makes it a fine fishing spot as well as a good place to dip your toes in the creek.

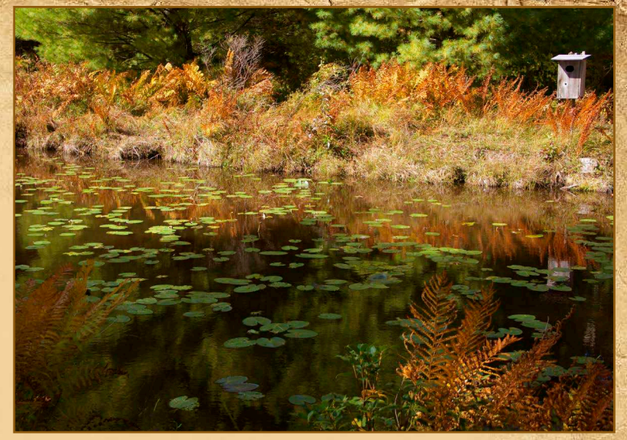
   The name of this site refers to the historic link with the Big Stony Railroad, which was built in 1892 to haul lumber from the New River to the town of Interior.

An excerpt from *Up on Big Stony Creek* by Curtis Caldwell tells it this way. *"During that time, the whiskey business was profitable. If a stranger was on the train that the crew didn't know, they had a whistle they used to alert the still operators so they could cut off the smoke at the stills and not come forward with their product to sell."*

9. Just 0.6 miles ahead, also on the left, **10 Cherokee Flats** provides another roadside spot for fishing. The parking area, trail and fishing areas here are fully accessible for strollers and wheel-chairs. This area also includes a fully accessible in-creek fishing platform.

   The Appalachian Trail crosses SR 635 here. Hikers wishing to experience a short section of the A.T. can follow the white blazes for 2 miles from Cherokee Flats back to Pine Swamp Trailhead.
10. Continue 2 miles up the road and turn left on VA 722. Follow the signs another 1/2 mile to beautiful **11 Glen Alton Farm**. This 304-acre property was once the vacation retreat of C.A. Lucas, a banker in Pearisburg. Wandering through the fields, orchards and forests of Glen Alton, it is easy to imagine yourself in a simpler time. Take time to explore the wetlands, ponds and canals, see the original lodge and caretaker house or walk the Virginia Birding and Wildlife trails.
11. From Glen Alton, return to the main road and turn left. After about 2.3 miles, you'll pass the site of the old town of Kire. This was one of the many small communities that sprang up along the Big Stony railroad although little remains there now other than farms and homes.
12. Just after passing through Kire, you'll reach the junction with VA 613. Take a right here and follow the signs for about two miles to **12 White Rocks Campground**. White Rocks is open from April 1st until December 7th and has 35 camping sites, some large enough for RVs. Restrooms and drinking water are available, but there are no showers. There is a nominal fee to camp and reservations are not taken.

    The campground is in a typical Appalachian forest setting and features a unique nature trail-- the Virginias Walk. Although it's an easy, 1½-mile loop trail, hikers can boast that they hiked to West Virginia and back, since the trail begins so close to the boundary line, it passes between the two states.
13. Return to the campground entrance and then to the main road, turning left on VA 635 to return to US 460. From White Rocks Campground, it is approximately 17 miles to your starting point on 460.



Special thanks to Curtis Caldwell, author of *Up on Big Stony Creek*