



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



# Virginia Creepers National Recreation Trail

*Virginia*



# Virginia Creeper National Recreation Trail

## Virginia

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Inducted into RTC's Rail-Trail Hall of Fame in 2014, the Virginia Creeper National Recreation Trail offers scenic wonders ranging from dense forests, open fields, and lush waterways to railroad relics and delightful small towns. Visitors and residents alike love the length of the trail, its multiple access points, and the wide range of uses; in addition to walking and biking, horseback riding is permitted on the full length of the trail.

There are so many trestles along the route that each is numbered, with an identifying plaque at either end. Originally, there were more than 100 trestles spanning the region's web of picturesque creeks and rivers; 47 remain on the rail-trail today.

Many bike shops in Abingdon (the western terminus) and

Damascus (roughly halfway through the trail) offer bike rentals and shuttles to the eastern terminus at the Whitetop Station trailhead (elevation 3,500') at the Virginia-North Carolina border. Most trail users opt for a shuttle from Abingdon or Damascus up to Whitetop Station and then hike or ride back down. Riders can also head to Abingdon directly from Damascus or, for a more challenging route, bike up from Abingdon or Damascus to Whitetop Station.

The first 17-mile stretch heading west from Whitetop to Damascus travels downhill through terrific scenery, from Christmas tree farms and grazing cattle to river views and deep forestland. It includes four access points, some of which are housed in restored railroad depots. Green Cove Station, the oldest station on the trail, was once a post office, general store, and cargo location. Today, it serves as a museum with artifacts on display—including original mailboxes—and frequently features photography exhibits and live music from local groups. The Appalachian Trail weaves on and off the Creeper as well.

Around the midpoint of the Creeper Trail, you'll reach Damascus. If you're continuing to Abingdon, you can enjoy this charming town's restaurants and shops before tackling the rest of the trail. From Damascus to trail's end in Abingdon, the constant downhill is exchanged for a flat grade with gentle rises and descents. It's not strenuous, but it is a change from the first section. This stretch also includes some of the trail's most beautiful river and farmland views.

On a ridgeline high above the South Fork of the Holston River, you'll emerge onto a bridge offering invigorating views of South Holston Lake below. As you continue toward Abingdon, you'll pass through cattle gates marking your entrance to the Creeper's expansive grazing meadows.

About half a mile from Abingdon is a public park with restrooms, picnic areas, and a water fountain. Just across the last bridge, you'll reach the Abingdon trailhead and the



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**States:** Virginia

**Counties:** Grayson, Washington

Length: 34miles

**Trail end points:** Green Spring Rd & Gibson St (Abingdon) to Dolinger Rd (Whitetop)

**Trail surfaces:** Gravel

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Fishing, Horseback Riding, Mountain Biking, Walking, Cross Country Skiing

## Parking & Trail Access

In Damascus, parking is available at Green Cove Station (41259 Green Cove Rd) and Taylor's Valley Trailhead (Waccamaw Ln & Taylor Valley Rd).

In Abingdon, parking is available at Alvarado Station (21198 Alvarado Rd), Watauga Trailhead on Watauga Rd, by the Abingdon Terminus (300 Green Spring Rd).

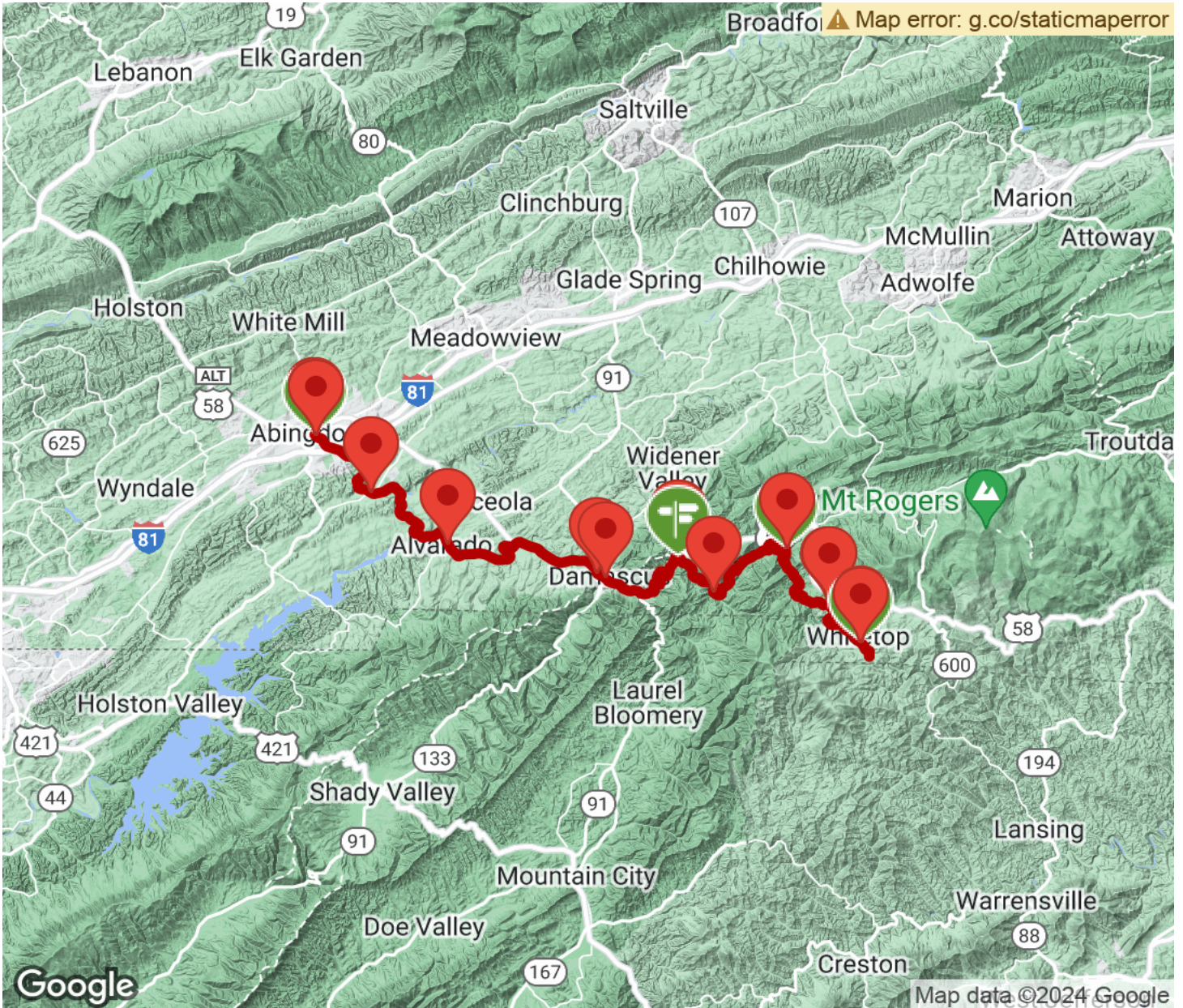
To get to the Whitetop Station trailhead, follow US 58 east from Abingdon into Grayson County. Turn right on State Route 726 and head south toward the North Carolina border. You will see the parking area off of 726.

To get to the Abingdon trailhead, head south on Main Street/ US 11 in Abingdon and turn left onto Pecan Street. There is a large locomotive engine on display by the trailhead, which you can see to the left of the parking lot.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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