



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Rend Trail**  
*West Virginia*



## Rend Trail

West Virginia

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Five old railroad trestles serve as scenic attractions on this dirt trail in the New River Gorge National Park, although two of those trestles have been closed for safety concerns, splitting the trail into two shorter segments of 1.2 miles and less than a mile.

Structural engineers determined that the supports were rotting and that the bridges could fall at any time. The second bridge from the Minden end (1.27 miles from the Minden trailhead, or 1.96 miles from the Thurmond trailhead) and the first bridge from the Thurmond end are closed due to structural damage. The affected bridges will remain closed for the foreseeable future. Visitors can travel 1.27 miles from the Minden trailhead or less than a mile in from the Thurmond trailhead.

The Rend Trail (formerly the Thurmond-Minden Trail) traces the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway's Arbuckle Branch, which, beginning in 1906, served the coal mines that dotted the now-forested landscape in southern West Virginia. Although the railroad pulled out years ago, you can still see evidence of tracks in the forest, as well as remains of coal mines and coke ovens along the route.

To visit the northern segment of the trail, use the trailhead at Minden, itself an old coal mining town where several old coal camp houses are still inhabited. Heading south, the trail crosses one trestle and then ends before the second one in about 1.2 miles.

To visit the southern section, start at the Thurmond trailhead on Thurmond Road/County Route 25 near Dunloup Creek and head north along the trail. You can find remains of the Newlyn coal mine in the vicinity as well as overgrown foundations of South Boyd. The trail's southern segment comes to a dead end at a trestle.

In about a mile from the Thurmond trailhead, find an overlook with views across the New River to the old railroad boomtown of Thurmond. Created along with the railroad in the 1870s, the old railroad boomtown of Thurmond flourished in the early 1900s with two hotels, two banks, a movie theater, and other businesses, as well as a depot and other structures to serve steam trains. Its decline started with the Great Depression in the 1930s, when the population numbered nearly 500 residents.

Today, the National Park Service owns most of the town, which recorded just seven residents in the latest census. The park restored the depot, which is open as a visitor center during the summer, and has stabilized other buildings. It is still served by Amtrak and is reachable via County Route 25/Thurmond Road.



## Rend Trail

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**States:** West Virginia

**Counties:** Fayette

Length: 3.4miles

**Trail end points:** Minden Ave & Thurmond Rd  
(Minden) to CR 25/Thurmond Rd (Thurmond)

**Trail surfaces:** Dirt,Gravel

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

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

## Parking & Trail Access

For the southern segment, parking is available at the Thurmond Trailhead on Thurmond Rd/CR 25 (1.1 mile west of McKendree Rd/CR 25). For the northern segment, parking is available in Minden at the intersection of Minden Avenue and Thurmond Road.



# Rend Trail

West Virginia



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



**TrailLink**  
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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