



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Elk River Trail
(Clay County)**
West Virginia



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Running through Braxton, Clay and Kanawha counties, the trail meanders 57.2 miles along the Elk River. Portions of the trail are still under construction and when finished it will be 73.3 miles with an additional 18-mile section running along Buffalo Creek.

The northern end of the crushed stone trail starts by the intersection of the Route 4 bridge and River Road in southern Gassaway. The trail follows the river south 45.4 miles to trailheads at Frametown, Coastal Lumber, Strange Creek, Duck, Ivydale, Dundon, and Hartland. In Duck, the trailhead doubles as a river access point for kayaks and other water vessels. From Duck, it winds its way down through acres of woodlands along a former railroad bed. While the trail runs alongside the Elk River for its entire length, views are largely obscured by dense

tree cover.

The 22-mile section from Hartland to Queen Shoals is under construction, but another four-mile section is open from the Queen Shoals Trailhead to the Clendenin Trailhead, with a one-mile section paved from the Clendenin Trailhead north.

The very flat (1/2% grade) trail runs alongside the Elk River for its entire length through otherwise mountainous, rugged, beautiful terrain, with trail users often spotting an abundant range of wildlife ranging from deer and bears to bobcats, foxes, rabbits and squirrels, and birds, including eagles, wild turkeys, and several varieties of owls, ducks and hawks. Many of the trailheads double as a river access point for kayaks and other water vessels.

The Elk River Trail is open for use by walkers, hikers, runners, cyclists and horseback riders. Class 1 e-bikes are also allowed. There are exercise stations along the three-mile section trail downstream from Dundon for an extra work out for trail users.

An additional 18-mile trail runs parallel to a rail track along Buffalo Creek in Clay County from the Dundon Trailhead to Widen. The section is expected to reopen its rail rides in the spring of 2023, featuring a jitney pulling open-air carts.



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States: West Virginia

Counties: Clay

Length: 57.2miles

Trail end points: Route 4 & River Rd by Kenton Meadows Field (Gassaway) to State Route 16 (Hartland)

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Horseback Riding, Walking, Cross Country Skiing

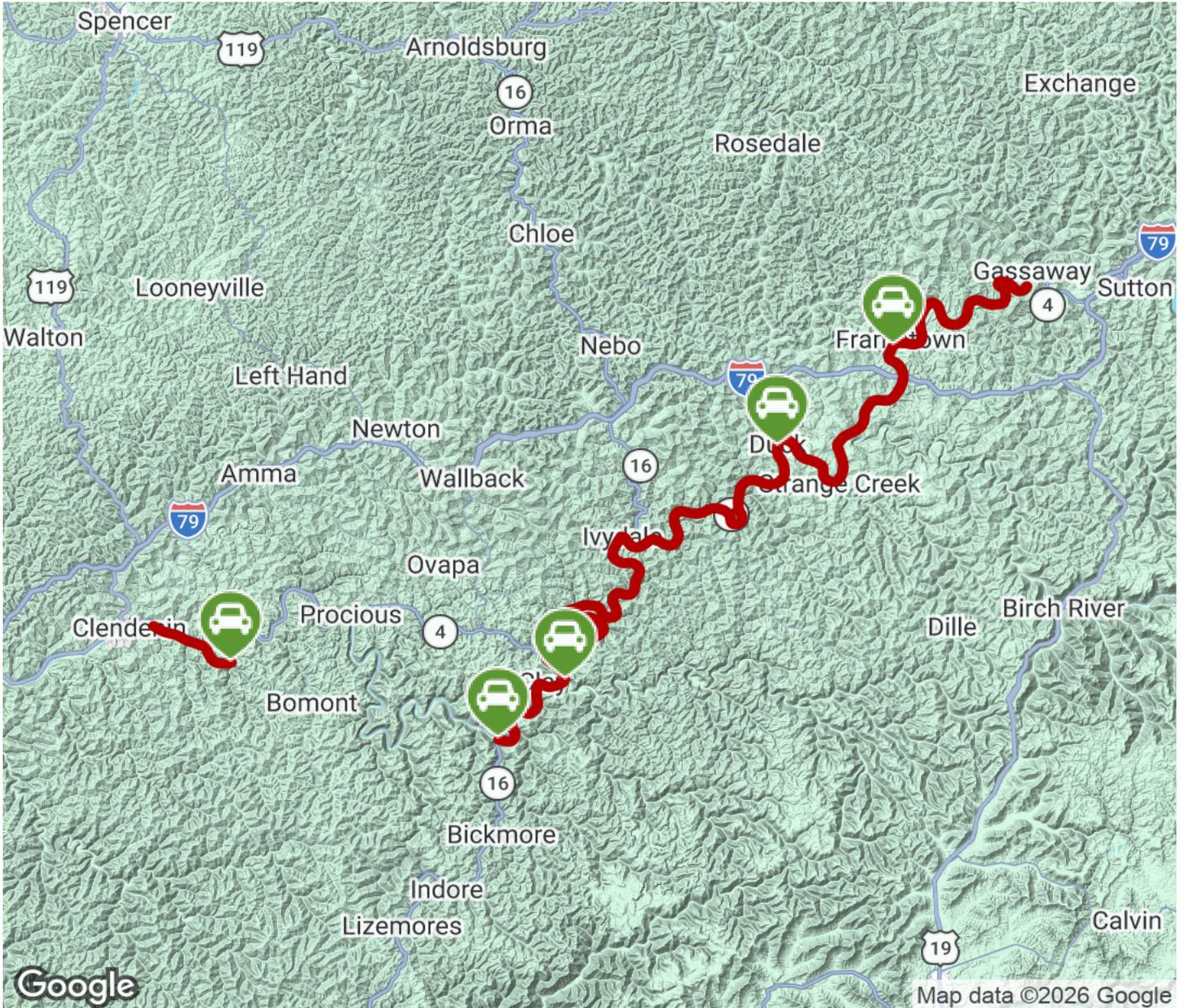
Parking & Trail Access

Parking is available at a number of points along the trail. Locations include a parking lot at the intersection of Bridge Rd and Frametown-Herold Rd (Frametown), the Duck Public Access Point on Villanova Ridge Road (Duck) where there are 15 spots on the gravel lot, and the Ivydale Trailhead is located 9.8 miles south of Duck. The Dundon Trailhead is located just south of the Triplett Ridge Way/CR 11 & Buffalo Creek Road. This trailhead has plenty of parking and easy trail access. View the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.



Elk River Trail (Clay County)

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

TrailLink.com