Plan your route ahead of time. Please report violations or suspicious activity to park authorities.

Bicycles, e-bikes, and other mechanical devices are allowed on all park trails. However, Native American artifacts and structures, including those of historic and prehistoric periods, are protected by federal laws and regulations. If you find anything of interest, take a photo, note the location, and report it to park staff.

Pets must remain on a leash that is six-feet or less. Know your limits, including physical condition, skill level, and knowledge of the park trail system. Bring the Ten Essentials with you (see below).

**TRAIL DIFFICULTY RATINGS**

**EASY** These trails tend to be shorter and are usually simple to navigate; minor obstacles are still possible, such as tripping hazards and slick sections.

**MODERATE** Trails may be hard to follow in some areas; mud and standing water are possible along low-lying sections; hikers will likely encounter downed trees; emergency response can take a couple hours or more.

**DIFFICULT** Wayfinding skills are necessary to navigate these longer backcountry trails; major obstacles may be encountered (flooded waterways, large downed trees, etc.); hikers need to be completely self-reliant; emergency response may take many hours.

**VITAL TIPS**

- **Tell someone your plans and let them know your expected return time.**
- **Don’t rely on electronic devices for navigation and communication.** Service in the park is often limited.
- **Know your limits, including physical condition, skill level, and knowledge of the park trail system.**
- **Bring the Ten Essentials with you (see below).**

**THE TEN ESSENTIALS**

1. Map & Compass
2. Flashlight or Headlamp
3. Proper Footwear
4. First-aid Kit
5. High-energy Snacks
6. Water
7. Multi-tool/Tape
8. Appropriate Outerwear
9. Lighter/Matches
10. Emergency Shelter

**TRAIL DESCRIPTIONS**

The trail distances listed below are roundtrip from the Harry Hampton Visitor Center. Distances for trails marked with * are roundtrip from trailhead parking lots.

- **Bluff Trail (#1) - 1.8 Miles**
  - **Easy**
  - Elevation sections offer access to the forest during floods, while lower sections offer closeup views in drier times.

- **Sims Trail (#2) - 3.2 Miles**
  - **Easy**
  - Follow a former hunting club road used by conservationist Harry Hampton to Cedar Creek. A short spur trail leads to Wise Lake, one of the park’s many oxbow lakes.

- **Weston Lake Trail (#3) - 4.5 Miles**
  - **Moderate**
  - This popular trail traverses an old-growth cypress-tupelo forest along the edges of Weston Lake and Cedar Creek.

- **Oakridge Trail (#4) - 7.1 Miles**
  - **Difficult**
  - Passing through a rich stretch of old-growth forest, hikers pass towering oaks and cross several guts (small creeks).

- **River Trail (#5) - 11.1 Miles**
  - **Difficult**
  - This remote trail leads to the Congaree River, the lifeblood of the park. A large sandbar is present at low water levels.

- **Kingsnake Trail (#6) - 12.0 Miles**
  - **Difficult**
  - This trail passes through cypress-tupelo sloughs and meanders near the south bank of Cedar Creek.

- **Bates Ferry Trail (#7) - 2.2 Miles**
  - **Easy**
  - Follows an historic colonial road and is a great option for hikers looking for a shorter hike to the Congaree River.

- **Longleaf Trail (#8) - 1.3 Miles**
  - **Easy**
  - This trail connects Longleaf Campground to the Harry Hampton Visitor Center, the Boardwalk, and other trails.

- **Fork Swamp Trail (#9) - 0.6 Miles**
  - **Moderate**
  - The trail runs alongside the southern channel of Bates Old River, an oxbow lake created by a hurricane in 1852.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Call the Harry Hampton Visitor Center during normal operating hours (803-776-4396); visit the park’s official website (www.nps.gov/cong); download the NPS App, which is available through the App Store and Google Play.

**IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911**

**IMPORTANT REMINDERS**

As one of America’s national parks, all of the natural and cultural resources in Congaree National Park are protected by federal laws and regulations, including:

- **Wildlife, trees, plants, flowers, insects, etc.** Do not cut down, carve, or graffit trees, pick flowers, or approach, feed, capture or harass wildlife. See the Superintendent’s Compendium on the park’s website for specific rules and restrictions regarding fishing and gathering of nuts, berries, fruit, and mushrooms.

- **Historic and prehistoric artifacts and structures.** If you find something, take a photo, note the location, and contact park staff. Do not remove any cultural objects or artifacts.

**Congaree National Park** is a unit of the National Park System and part of the National Wilderness System. Visitors should remember the following when visiting:

- **All visitors must follow Leave No Trace Ethics.** Pack out all trash, including pet waste, and dispose of it properly.

- **Pets must remain on a leash that is six-feet or less.**

- **Bicycles, e-bikes, and other mechanical devices are not allowed on any of the park’s trails.**

- **Wheelchairs as defined in Title V Section 507(c) of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may be used by persons with disabilities in wilderness areas.**

- **Please report violations or suspicious activity to park staff immediately.**