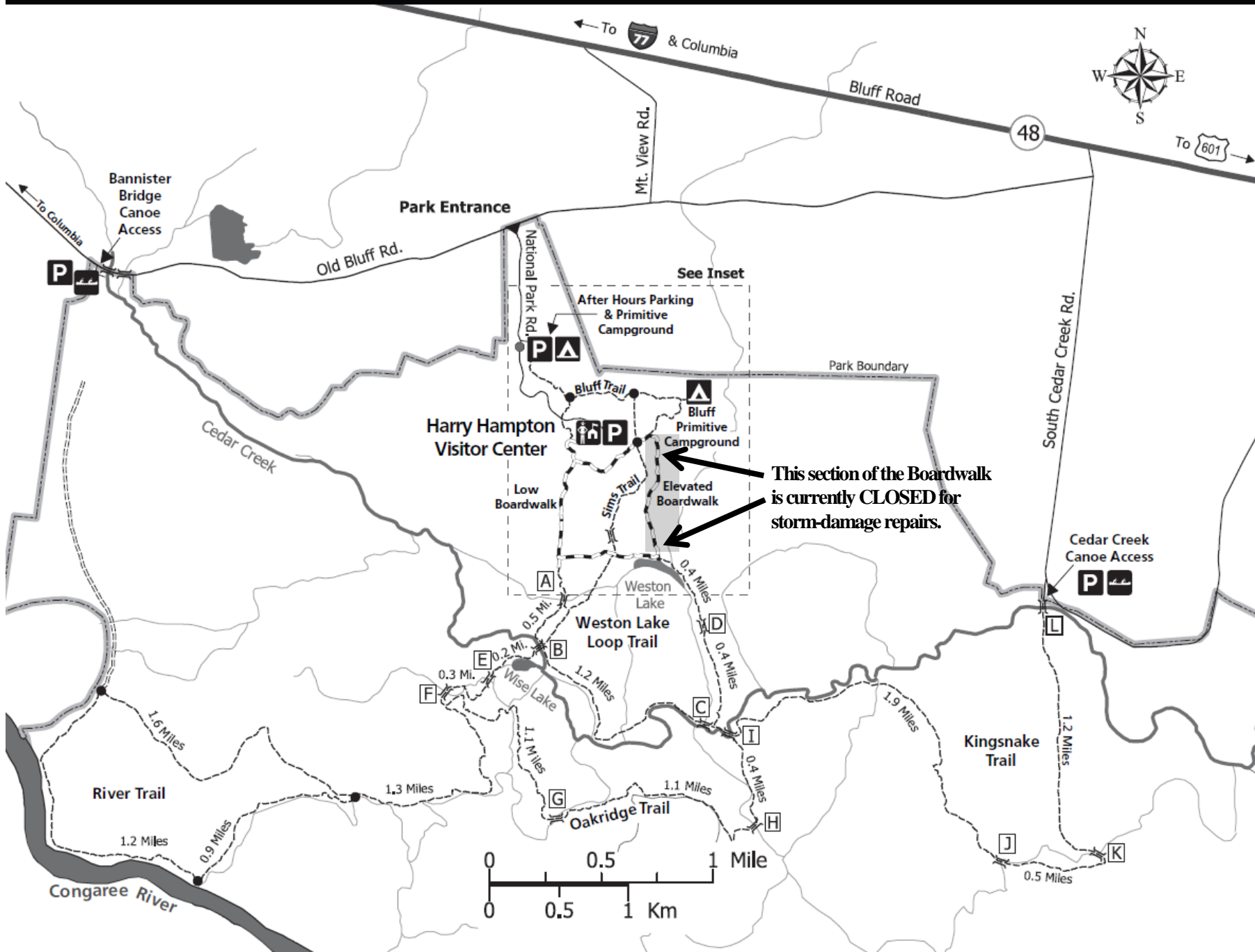
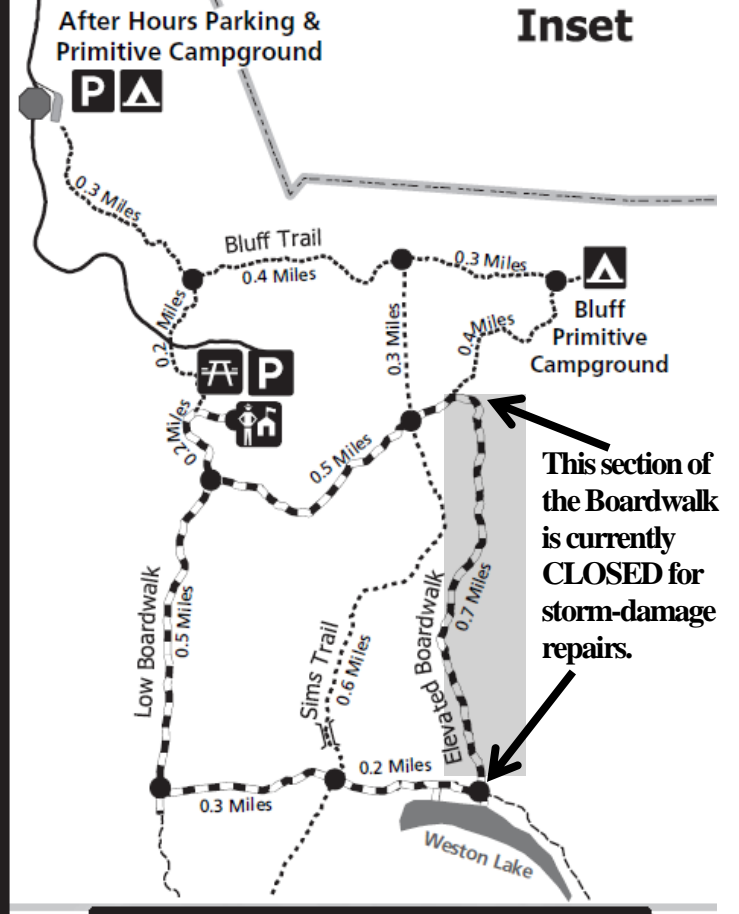




Congaree National Park Trail Guide



This section of the Boardwalk is currently CLOSED for storm-damage repairs.



Inset

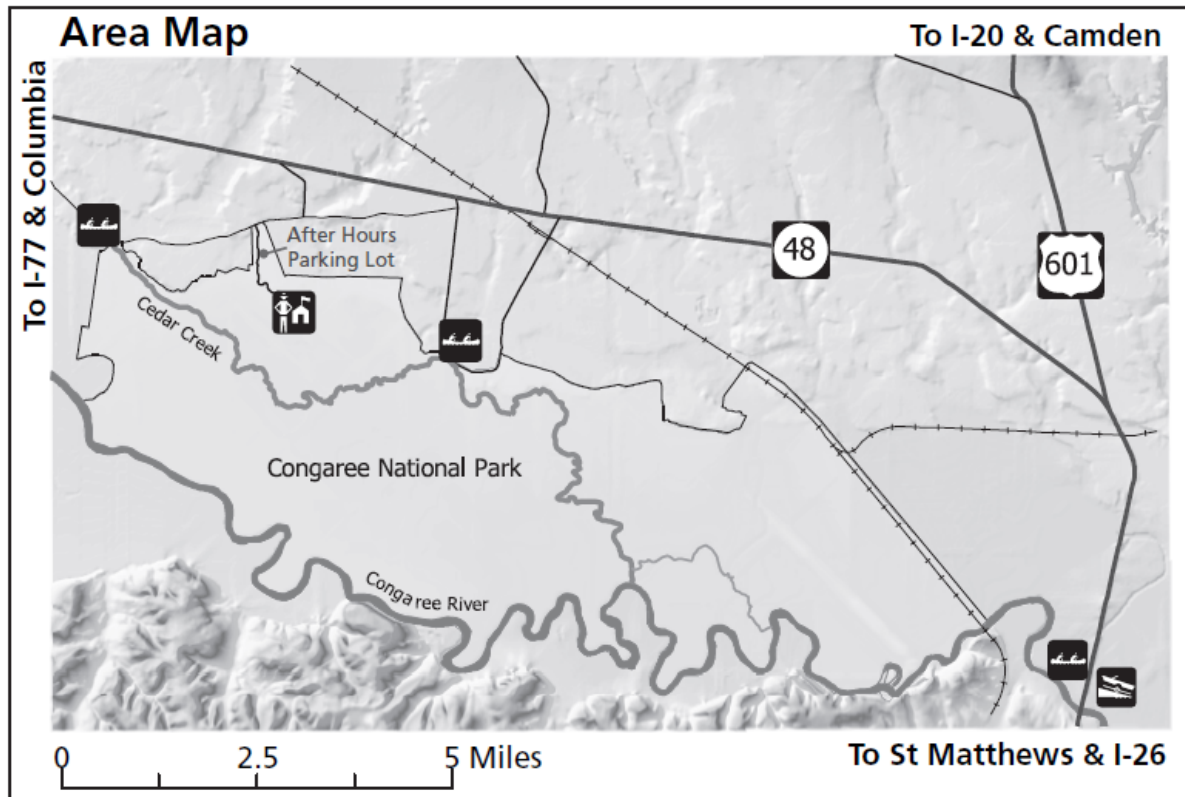
After Hours Parking & Primitive Campground

This section of the Boardwalk is currently CLOSED for storm-damage repairs.

Legend

- Boardwalks
- Trails
- Streams
- Trail Bridges
- Park Boundary
- Cedar Creek Canoe Trail
- Trail Distances

Primary Trail Bridges are Marked with the Letters **A - L**



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Congaree National Park is a natural sanctuary and ALL PLANTS AND ANIMALS ARE protected. Help preserve the park for future generations by not disturbing or removing the native inhabitants.

Visitor Center hours are normally 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Tuesday through Saturday. The Visitor Center is closed Sunday, Monday and on all Federal Holidays.

Pets must be on a leash and are permitted on all trails. Bicycles are NOT allowed on the boardwalk or any trails.

Fishing is permitted anywhere in the park except from the Weston Lake Overlook. A valid South Carolina fishing license is required.

We want your experience at Congaree National Park to be safe and enjoyable. During your visit, please be alert for: biting and stinging insects, such as fire ants, yellow jackets, wasps, biting flies, and ticks; snakes and other animals, such as wild hogs and bobcats; and poisonous plants such as poison ivy. Storms can occur with little warning and trails can become impassible due to downed trees. In the backcountry, take drinking water with you or plan to boil, filter, or chemically treat any water taken from the park's lakes and creeks.

Additional visitor and safety information may be obtained at the Visitor Center or by calling (803) 776-4396.

TRAIL DESCRIPTIONS

Boardwalk Loop Trail – 2.4 Miles

The Boardwalk Loop Trail allows easy access for all visitors to see what Congaree has to offer. This self-guided interpretive trail passes through several different habitats common throughout the park. You can see stands of bald cypress and water tupelo, where cypress "knees" protrude from the ground like stalagmites, as well as massive loblolly pine trees mixed with bottomland hardwood trees. Weston Lake is an old river bend that was cut off from the Congaree River over 2000 years ago, and today offers opportunities to see turtles, wading birds, and a variety of fish. During times of high water, the lower section of the boardwalk is regularly covered in water, while elevated portions allow you to see the floodplain in action.

Trail #1 (Bluff Trail) – 1.7 Miles

This upland trail forms a large half circle north of the Visitor Center. A spur provides access from the after-hours parking lot to the Visitor Center and boardwalks. The Bluff passes through a young forest of loblolly pines and mixed hardwoods.

Trail #2 (Sims Trail) – 1.2 Miles

This trail follows an old dirt and gravel hunting road that connects the Boardwalk Loop Trail with Trail #3 (Weston Lake Loop Trail).

Trail #3 (Weston Lake Loop Trail) – 4.4 Miles

This loop traverses an old-growth forest as it skirts the edge of Weston Lake, runs alongside a cypress-tupelo slough, and follows the northern bank of Cedar Creek before connecting to the Boardwalk Loop Trail. Cedar Creek is the largest channel in the floodplain and wildlife is often spotted along its banks. Look for river otters and beaver swimming in the dark creek waters.

Trail #4 (Oakridge Trail) – 6.6 Miles

Passing through a rich stretch of old-growth forest, the Oakridge Trail is a moderate 3 to 4 hour hike. Along the way, the trail crosses a number of "guts," or small creeks, that carry floodwaters into and out of the park's floodplain as the level of the Congaree River rises and falls.

Trail #5 (River Trail) – 10.0 Miles

This trail leads to the Congaree River, the lifeblood of the park's great natural diversity. Approximately ten times a year, floodwaters from the river cover nearly 80% of the park. When the river is low, a large sandbar may be visible. Much of the forest along the river was logged prior to the park's establishment and vegetation here is notably denser than that of other trails.

Trail #6 (Kingsnake Trail) – 11.7 Miles

The Kingsnake Trail explores a more remote part of the park. It offers excellent bird watching. Hikers may spot deer, raccoons, opossums, and bobcat tracks. About midway, the trail passes a large cypress-tupelo slough. Giant cherrybark oak trees stand near the trail.