

Cumberlands Corridor General Overview

DESCRIPTION:

By its very name, the Cumberlands Corridor conjures up visions of vast waterways with wild and dramatic scenery. And visitors aren't disappointed when they first encounter this fabled territory. The corridor includes the magnificent Lake Cumberland and Dale Hollow Lake, the beautiful Cumberland Falls State Resort Park and the renowned Cumberland Falls, called the Niagara of the South with its famous moonbow. To the north lies Lake Cumberland. Clinton, Pulaski, Russell, McCreary and Wayne counties make up this Corridor. Visitors are drawn to the Cumberlands Corridor for some of the most scenic vistas in the state, as well as for a wealth of outdoor activities along with rich historical and cultural traditions.

The discovery of the Cumberland Gap opened the door for settlers to pour into Kentucky seeking a better life. Although they came from different walks of life and varied backgrounds, many of them seemed to carry the same traits – a strong streak of independence, belief in family ties and traditions, unwavering determination and a willingness to work hard to obtain their goals. That legacy survives. Today, the simple values of their forefathers are still carried forth by the people of the Cumberlands Corridor. They stand firm in their ancestors' ability to make do, then do better. Most of all, the tie that binds is an abiding sense of place, of a knowledge of where they came from and what brought them to where they are today.

After World War II, Lake Cumberland was created by constructing the Wolf Creek Dam across the Cumberland River south of Russell Springs and Jamestown. The lake covers parts of seven counties and extends upstream more than 100 miles from the dam at the west end to the vicinity of Somerset and Burnside at the east end.

Lake Cumberland brought new possibilities to this region. Recreation and tourism became major draws as a result of the popular lake. With more than 60,000 acres of water and 1,255 miles of shoreline, Lake Cumberland is considered to be one of the finest fishing and pleasure boating areas in the Eastern United States. Docks, marinas and resorts blossomed along the lake shores, and Kentucky became known as the houseboat capital of the world. More houseboats are built here than anywhere else. Most are made in Wayne and Pulaski counties within a few miles of Lake Cumberland's south shore, and many of the manufacturers welcome visitors to their showrooms.

Dale Hollow Lake, formed by backing up the Obey River in 1943, has 620 miles of shoreline. There are plenty of shoals, small tributaries and clean, clear water. Winding through mountains and valleys of the Cumberland foothills, Dale Hollow Lake covers 32,000 acres and straddles the Kentucky and Tennessee border. The other big playground in the Cumberlands Corridor is at the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, situated in a rugged gorge area of the Cumberland Plateau.

In addition to resources for outdoor recreation, this region has a rich cultural heritage. Dotting the area are historical sites and museums dedicated to preserving what came before. These include the Mill Springs Battlefield in Nancy, the Wayne County Historical Society Museum in Monticello, Barthell Coal Mining Camp, and Blue Heron Coal Mining Town. Skills once needed for survival are now showcased in arts and crafts studios, galleries, cooperatives and shops, such as the Falls 4-H Mountain Craft Center in McCreary County and Knot-Head in Somerset. Whatever visitors choose to do, they'll find that the Cumberlands Corridor has a wonderful way of clearing away the stress of modern life with some of the most enchanting attractions likely to be found anywhere.

COUNTIES:

CLINTON

Formed in 1835, Clinton County is said to be named for New York's Gov. DeWitt Clinton. The county seat is Albany. Bordering Tennessee, Clinton County is located in the south-central portion of the state. The terrain is hilly with fertile bottomland used for farming. Poplar Mountain has the highest elevation at 1,700

feet. Outdoor enthusiasts will enjoy Grider Hill Dock and Indian Creek Lodge on Lake Cumberland. All facilities (lodge, restaurant, cottages and dock) are within walking distance of each other. Wisdom and Wolfe River Marinas are located on Dale Hollow. An interesting bit of Clinton County trivia: In 1819 Adam Beaty hit oil while drilling for salt on the Little South Fork of the Cumberland River. On Sept. 10, 1945, the Lether Hay No. 1 well on Ill Creek came in as a gusher at 1,055 feet. Flames leaped 300 feet into the sky. In 1989, the county's crude oil production was 7,952 gallons.

MCCREARY

McCreary County formed in 1912, was the last county formed in the state and is located in the Eastern Coal Field region of the state. The county seat is Whitley City. McCreary County is entirely within the Daniel Boone National Forest and it includes the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area offering wonderful scenery and outdoor adventures. The county has some of the best preserved coal heritage sites in Kentucky. The Big South Fork Scenic Railway, which begins in the National Register Historic District of downtown Stearns, takes visitors on a ride into the gorge of the Big South Fork, a major tributary of the Cumberland River, to the former mining camps of Barthell and Blue Heron, now interpreted with unique exhibits that explain coal mining and life in a coal camp .

PULASKI

Located in south-central Kentucky, Pulaski County was formed in 1798. The county seat is Somerset. Since many of the early settlers were veterans, they chose to name their county after a famous Revolutionary War figure – the Polish-American patriot Casimir Pulaski who was killed in Savannah in 1779. The county is roughly diamond shaped and contains a wide variety of terrains, including rugged hills to the east and south and rolling farmland to the west. The dominant geographical feature is Lake Cumberland, which meanders across the southern part of the county. Not surprisingly, Pulaski County is a leader in the manufacture of houseboats. Visitors will enjoy Burnside Marina with luxury houseboats and Lee's Ford Marina, newly redeveloped.

RUSSELL

Russell County was formed in 1825 and named in honor of Colonel William Russell, a Revolutionary War officer who fought in the Battle of Kings Mountain. The county seat is Jamestown. Located in south-central Kentucky, Russell County's topography is hilly with fertile level bottomland along the Cumberland River and along Alligator, Carrey, Goose and Greasy creeks. Russell County had the resources to be an early manufacturing county manufacturing of what. It also had a number of resorts, including the Big Boiling Springs Health Spa established in 1850. A large frame hotel and 12 log cabins accommodated guests who came to take the mineral water and escape the summer heat. Today, resorts such as Jamestown Marina, Indian Hills and Lake Cumberland State Resort Park have taken over the job of welcoming guests.

WAYNE

Located in south-central Kentucky along the Tennessee border, Wayne County was created in 1800 and named for Revolutionary War hero Gen. Anthony Wayne. The county seat is Monticello, which means "little mountain." The county is divided into three distinct physical regions – Cumberland Plateau, the level plain on the southeastern part of the county, the Knobs, rolling plains that run through the center of the county and the Mississippi Plateau in the northwestern part of the county. Conley Bottom and Beaver Creek Resorts on Lake Cumberland in Monticello are popular family retreats with their combination of woods and water.

Time Zone:

Eastern

CONSUMER CONTACT INFORMATION:

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