

# Highland Scenic Highway

Travel through a wild and undeveloped portion of the Monongahela National Forest. Hardwood forests cover rolling, mountainous terrain capped by dark spruce at high elevations. Traverse a narrow and steep-walled valley with views of clear mountain streams. Sights include Cranberry Glades Botanical Area, Summit Lake, and Falls of Hills Creek.



Length: 43 miles / 68.8 km

Time Take two hours to drive or to four hours to enjoy this

Allow: byway.

## Local Information

### Gauley Ranger District

932 North Fork Cherry Rd.  
Richwood, WV 26261  
(304) 846-2695

### Marlinton Ranger District

PO Box 210  
Marlinton WV 24954  
(304)799-4334

## Visitor Services

### Fees



There are no fees for driving the highway. Fees for campground use vary by site.

### Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities



The Route 39 portion of the byway is used by coal trucks. Cyclists are encouraged to use caution along the route. Also, mountain biking is permitted on most of the trails located outside of the Cranberry Wilderness.

### Camping



There are three main campgrounds along the Highland Scenic Highway. \* Summit Lake Campground \* Tea Creek Campground \* Day Run Campground Also, each campground is located in a place where there are plenty of things to do and plenty of places to see. Two of the campgrounds are situated next to the Williams River, and one is on Summit Lake. Campers will find trailheads, fishing spots, and biking roads. For nearby campground reservations: [Recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov)

### Food



Visitors will find food at Richwood and the surrounding communities. Refreshments are offered at the Cranberry Nature Center.



### **Gasoline**

Richwood is the only place on the byway where travelers will find gas. However, gas can also be found in Webster Springs and Marlinton, which lie relatively near the byway.



### **Information**

The Cranberry Mountain Nature Center offers programs and tours for visitors. Also, information on businesses, motels, restaurants, and service stations is available at the Chambers of Commerce or Tourism Commissions in Richwood, Marlinton, and Webster Springs.



### **Lodging**

Lodging can be found in Richwood, Marlinton, and Webster Springs.



### **Retail**

Souvenirs can be purchased at the Cranberry Nature Center.

## **Special Considerations**

There are no services along the route, and there is no snow removal during the winter. Also, be aware that some of the road is used by large coal trucks.

## **Restrictions**

The highway is not maintained for winter travel, and commercial trucks are not allowed on the parkway.

## **Seasons**

### **Best Time to Drive**

During October, visitors will see long vistas of bright oak and maple leaves contrasted with the dark green of the conifers. A clear day of spectacular foliage on the byway is not to be missed. Early spring is the best time for fishing the mountain streams.

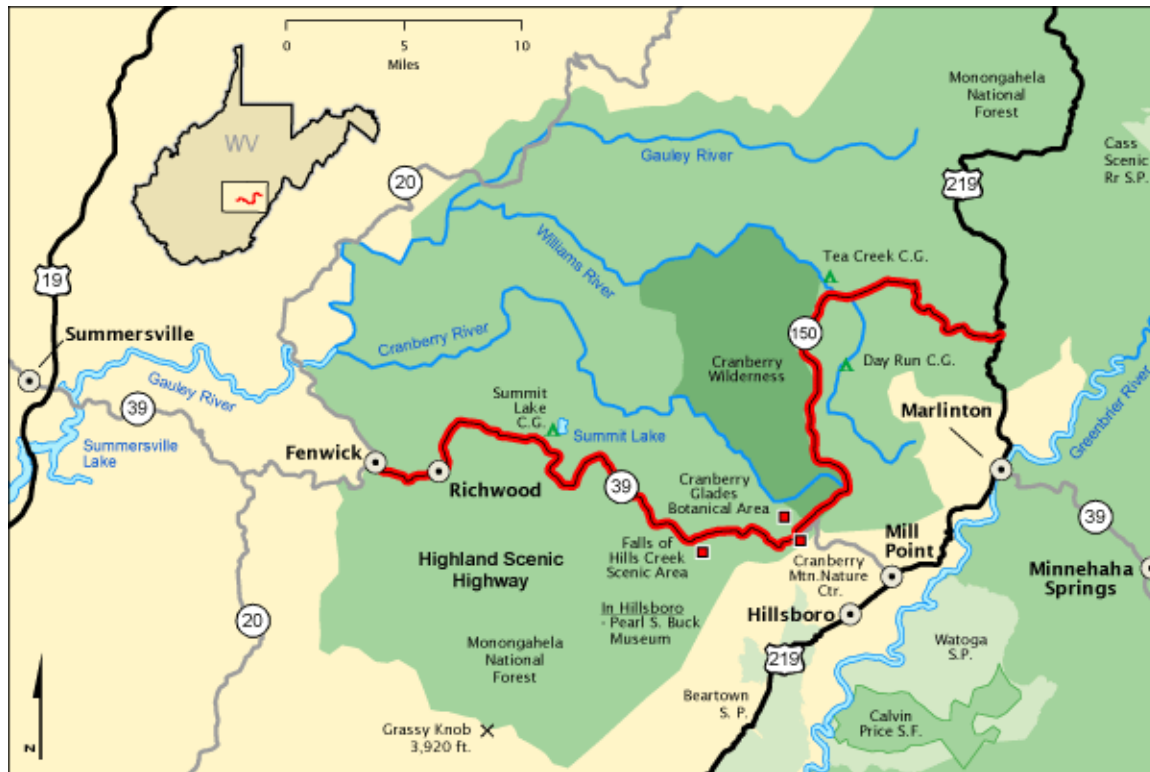
### **High Season**

The byway has no busy season.

### **Off Season**

The byway is not maintained for winter travel from early December to March.

## Map and Directions



### Legend:

Point of Interest	Campground	Featured Byway	Water	State Border
Park	Picnic/Rest Area	America's Byways	Wildlife Refuge	Urban Area
Mountain	Interstate	Other Byway	Wilderness Area	Tribal Nation
City	U.S. Highway	Other Road	Other Federal Lands	Military Base
Capital	State Highway	Trail	Other State Lands	

### Driving Directions


- Between Richwood, West Virginia, and US 219 north of Marlington, WV the route includes WV 55, 39, and 150.
- The byway starts at the city of Richwood on SR 55.
- Take SR 55 east until the Highway become SR 150.
- Take SR 150 east until the route ends at the edge of the Monogahela National Forest, at the junction of SR 150 and US 219.
- This is the end of the byway.

## Getting to the Byway




### Nearby cities

**Charleston, WV** (104 miles / 167.37 km, 1 hour 48 minutes)

**Start:**  Charleston I-77/79 Junction Charleston, WV  
N 38.378° W 81.604° [?]

**Directions:**

- Take I-79 northeast to US-19 junction.
- Follow US-19 south to Summersville.
- Get on WV-39/55 and drive east into Richwood where the byway begins.

**Junction with byway:**  Intersection of WV-20 and WV-39  
N 38.229° W 80.582° [?]



## Road Trip: Highland Scenic Tour

**Departure:** Richwood, West Virginia

**Destination:** Cranberry Wilderness, West Virginia

**Time to allow:** 1 day

This tour leads you through many of the major attractions found along the Highland Scenic Highway.

### Day 1

- **Start: Richwood**

This community, a gateway to the Monogahela Forest, is the only community on the byway. The town sits in a bowl starting at an elevation of 2,250 feet above sea level, surrounded by the woodlands of the Monongahela National Forest and mountains that rise to an elevation of 4,800 feet. Within this high mountain setting, recreational opportunities abound throughout the year.

- **Stop 2: Summit Lake**



**From previous stop:** 16 minutes / 9.93 mi (15.9 km)

**Directions:** Start out going east on CR-39 toward Oakford Ave., go .1 miles before turning left onto Oakford Ave. After .1 miles, turn right onto WV-39 and go .3 miles, then turn left onto WV-39 and continue to follow the road for 7.3 miles.

Turn left onto Summit Lake Road, and go straight for 2.2 miles before ending at Summit Lake.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 1 hour

A nearby campground will provide a comfortable stay while you enjoy fishing for trout, bass and panfish at this small mountain lake.

- **Stop 3: Falls of Hill Creek Scenic Area**



**From previous stop:** 19 minutes / 11.8 mi (18.9 km)

**Directions:** Start out going south on Summit Lake Rd toward Coats Run Rd, travel for 2.2 miles before turning left onto WV-39. After 9.3 miles, turn right to end at Falls of Hill Creek.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 20 minutes

Hike along a three-quarter mile trail to access the falls and gorge, all while traveling through a ground carpeted with wildflowers. Enjoy three separate waterfalls that cascade over layers of sandstone and shale.

- **Stop 4: Cranberry Mountain Nature Center**



**From previous stop:** 4 minutes / 1.64 mi (2.6 km)

**Directions:** Start out going northeast on WV-39 toward Highland Scenic Highway. Travel for .3 miles before making a left onto Highland Scenic Highway. Continue for .1 miles before turning left onto Thomas Reserve Trail.

Drive for .7 miles, then make a slight left onto Thomas Reserve Trail. End at the Cranberry Mountain Nature Center after .5 miles.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 45 minutes

Learn about the Monongahela National Forest and other nearby attractions at the visitor center, as well as taking a look at the audio visual program that will give you a better understanding of forest ecosystems and the local history of the area.

- **Stop 5: Cranberry Glades Botanical Area**



**From previous stop:** 32 minutes / 15.89 mi (25.4 km)

**Directions:** Start out going southeast on Thomas Reserve Trail toward Public Road; travel for .5 miles before making a slight right onto Public Road 107. After .7 miles, turn left onto Highland Scenic Highway.

After 10 miles, take a left onto Public Road 76 to end at the Cranberry Glades Botanical Center.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 1 hour

Take a guided tour along a half-mile barrier-free boardwalk through this 750 acre National Natural Landmark.

- **End: Cranberry Wilderness**

**From previous stop:** same location

Highway 150 traverses the eastern boundary of the 35,846-acre Cranberry Wilderness. This special area is managed for its wilderness attributes of solitude and natural conditions. Special regulations prohibit the use of bicycles and other mechanical transport in this wilderness area. Only minimally labeled and maintained, the trails offer a natural challenge.

### Totals for Day 1

**Total Distance Traveled:** 39.26 miles / 62.8 km

**Total Travel Time:** 1 hour 11 minutes

**Total Stopping Time:** 3 hours 5 minutes