

Driving Direction

Drive One

Travel east from Elkins on US-33 for 4 miles. At CR-33 junction turn left and follow to junction with SR-6 (Shavers Fork Rd), turn left. Follow SR-6 to **Stuart Recreation Area**.

From Stuart Recreation Area make a switchback and start Public Road 91, **Stuart Memorial Drive**.

You pass **Otter Creek Wilderness** on the left and continue on to US-33. At US-33 turn left and follow to junction with CR-32. Turn left and follow CR-32 which switches to CR-45. At junction with Flatrock Run Rd at right, turn left and then right onto CR-45 (Jenningston-Lanesville Rd). You will pass **Dolly Sods Wilderness** on your left.

CR-45 becomes Public Road 19, continue to Public Road 75. Continue on Public Road 75 to the **Bear Rocks**.

Wind your way down the mountain on Public Road 75 to CR-28 and turn right. Follow CR-28 till it becomes SR-28, 55, continue on to **Seneca Rocks, Seneca Rocks Discovery Center and Sites Homestead**.

Continue south on US-33, SR-28 to Riverton and **Seneca Caverns**. Continue south on US-33, SR-28 to junction with SR-28, turn right. You will pass **Spruce Knob** on your right. Continue on SR-28 to Thornton where road meets US-250 and becomes US-250, SR-92. Continue past Bartow and Durbin to junction with Public Road 27, turn right. Follow Public Road 27 to top of **Gaudineer Knob**.

Retrace road to Gaudineer Knob and return to US-250, SR-92, turn right. Continue on US-250, SR-92 to Huttonsville. Turn right at US-219&250 and follow road to **Beverly**. From Beverly continue north on US-219&250 to Elkins.

Drive Two

Travel east from Elkins on US-219 (S Randolph Ave) and travel 56 miles to near Edray. Turn right onto SR-150 and begin travel on the **Highland Scenic Highway**. Continue on SR-150 to Public Road 86



AMERICAN DRIVING VACATIONS
PRESENTS:

Heart of West Virginia Driving Tour 5: Special Forest Places

It's easy to consider the Monongahela National Forest the heart of the Heart of West Virginia. Over 900,000 acres of official forest lands are available for a vast variety of outdoor pursuits from pleasure driving to climbing a sheer rock face.

Within the Forest, there are many special places unlike anywhere else in America. A driving tour of the best of the best likely will require more than one day. There's no way to hurry from place to place here! Plan to arrive in Elkins the afternoon before your first "driving" day to get a fresh start in the morning.

Drive One

Leaving Elkins you'll be traveling to one of the strangest environments in North America. Just outside of Elkins, a side trip to the Stuart Recreation area will let you enjoy Stuart Memorial Drive, a 10.7 mile scenic, graveled road.

From there, it's on to the Dolly Sods Scenic area, believed to have been pushed here by the glaciers. Located on a vast, high plateau, which topographically looks like the top of the mountain was cut off, the Dolly Sods Scenic area actually looks as if it could have been dropped in from the moon. Huge boulders are scattered about the huge plateau and vegetation resembles that found in the northern tundra. The best drives through Dolly Sods are on gravel forest roads, so take your time to meander.

From there, it's a short drive to the Seneca Rocks area. A stop at the Seneca Rocks Discovery Center will introduce you to the geology of not only the Rocks, but the region as a whole. Here you'll see that Randolph County is really a series of parallel ridges, where roads have to cross over mountain after mountain. As soon as you see Seneca Rocks themselves, it will be apparent they're unique. Sheer rock cliffs rise straight up out of the earth, nearly 1,000 feet. You can climb if you're up to it!

The region also boasts Spruce Knob, the highest point in West Virginia, and the lowest underneath the ground, in Seneca



(Williams River Road) and turn left. And start on part of the **Williams River Backway**.

Continue to junction with Public Road 216 and continue to right on Public Road 216. Continue on Public Road 216 till it meets SR-150. You have now completed a portion of the Williams River Backway.

Turn left on SR-50 and travel to junction of SR-39, 55, & 150, where the **Cranberry Mountain Nature Center** is located. Take Public Road 107 north to the **Cranberry Glades Botanical Area**.

Return on Public Road 107 to the Nature Center and turn right on SR-39&150. Follow SR-39&150 west to Public Road 223 (Bear Run Road) and turn left to enter **Falls Of Hills Creek Scenic Area**. Return back to SR-39&150 and turn right.

You will be traveling the **Highland Scenic Highway**. Follow the highway back past Cranberry Mountain Nature Center. Stay on SR-150 until it intersects with US-219, SR-55. Along the way you will pass **Cranberry Wilderness** on the left. Upon reaching US-219, SR-55 turn left and return back to Elkins.



Caverns. And, not far away, the Sites Homestead is coming alive to portray a time in its past when pioneers and early settlers established farms in the area.

A bit further south, Gaudineer Scenic Area is located near Gaudineer Knob of Shaver's Mountain, a sister peak to Spruce Knob. About 50 acres is typical of the virgin red spruce that originally covered large portions of the West Virginia mountains. Some individual 300 year old trees range up to 40 inches in diameter. Much of the remainder of the area had had only minimal cutting, mainly salvage of blow down.

Leaving Gaudineer, it likely best to head back up the Staunton Parkersburg Turnpike towards Elkins. Make sure to stop in Beverly, the county seat of Randolph County until 1890. The town boasts 45 historic structures, the Randolph County Museum and the Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation Visitors Center.

Drive Two

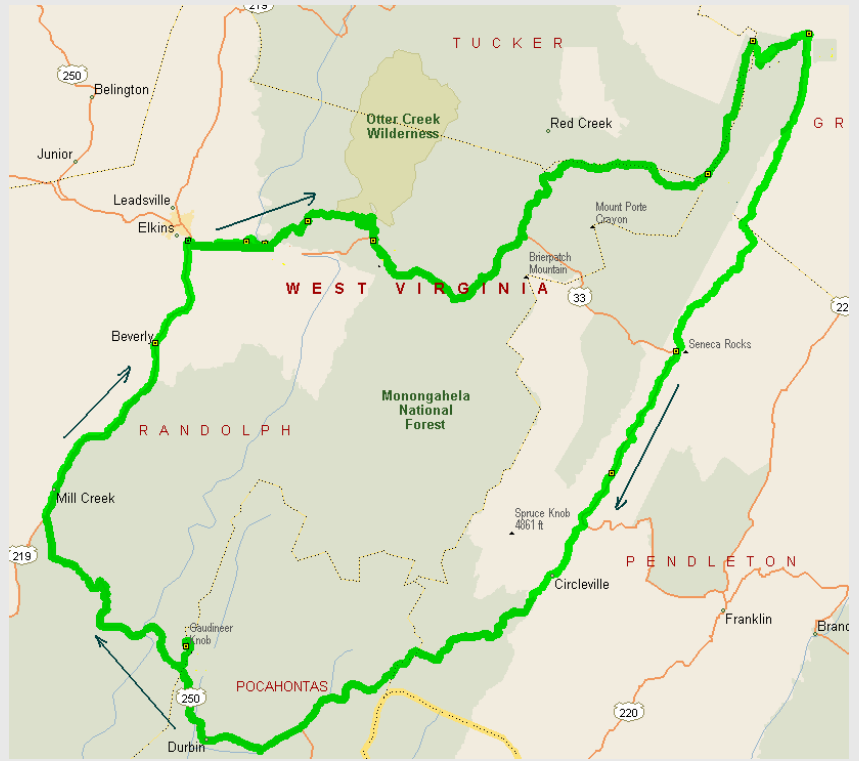
Leaving from Elkins, you'll be headed for another very special area in the Monongahela National Forest, traversed by the Highland Scenic Highway National Scenic Byway. Further up the Highway you can detour on the Williams River Backway, a rural route through, as they say in West Virginia, "the back of the beyond."

On the way to Cranberry Glades, a stop at the Cranberry Mountain Nature Center introduces you to the ecology of the region. Cranberry Glades Botanical Area protects the largest area of bogs in West Virginia. Plant and animal life here also resemble bogs or "muskegs" of northern Canada. For many of the animal life forms in Cranberry Glades, it is the southern most point where the species are found. A boardwalk positioned right above the bog allows you to walk through the area without disturbing the habitat.

A short distance across the road from Cranberry, you'll be again traveling the Highland Scenic Highway. At one location along the Highway, you'll discover the Falls of Hills Creek Scenic area, 114 acres containing three waterfalls.



Drive One



Drive Two

