Since trails may be closed for maintenance or inclement weather, check with the Park Office to ensure availability.

Criminal trespass charges and search & rescue costs can be charged to parties guilty of negligence or failure to get user permits.
**Mystery of Fort Mountain**

High atop Fort Mountain are the rocky ruins of an ancient “stone wall” with prehistoric origins steeped in legend. Generations of archaeologists and historians have unsuccessfully sought to unravel the riddle of this wall, one of several stone assemblages scattered throughout the Southeast. More than 150 years after its discovery, answers still evade us as to who built the wall, when and for what purpose.

Theories abound, and one of the more realistic explanations is that the wall was built around 500 AD by a tribe of Native Americans for defense. Welsh Prince Madoc has been credited with that the wall was built by the “Moon Eyes,” a race of light-skinned people who could see in the dark because of their larger or paler eyes.

Since no artifacts have been found to support these theories, no one knows who built the “wall of stones” zigzagging across the southern face of the Coosa mountain range’s most prominent peak. This part of the southern Appalachian Mountains rises above the Piedmont Plain and offers 80-mile views, making it an ideal location for ceremonial practices or defensive needs.

The stone wall runs east and west for 855 feet, and its height varies from two to six feet. Archaeologists believe it was made high before exploration and plunder by previous scientists and treasure hunters. Adding to the mystery are 30 “pits” built into the wall. Were these gun emplacements or symbolic to some ceremonial practice of earlier inhabitants? Will the secrets contained within these stones remain a mystery?

**Trail Safety & Etiquette**

- **Tell someone your itinerary and expected return time.**
- **Be prepared for unexpected weather changes by dressing in layers and carrying rain gear.**
- **Take a map, water, snacks, first aid kit, flashlight and whistle.**
- **Three short blasts on a whistle are known as a call for help.**
- **Do not stray from trails. If you become lost, stay in one location and wait for help.** This will make it easier for rescuers to find you.
- **Pack out all trash.**
- **Keep pets on a leash.**
- **Do not pick flowers or disturb wildlife.**
- **Protect the landscape by staying on trails.**

**Mountain Biking Safety & Etiquette**

- **Wear a helmet.**
- **Bikers yield to hikers and horses.**
- **Announce your presence to others. When passing, a polite “On your left or On your right” is suggested.**
- **Carry maintenance tools and replacement inner tubes.**
- **Prevent erosion by staying on trails and not skidding.**

**ACCESSIBILITY FOR SELECTED TRAILS**

**0.5-Mile Loop**
- **Avg. Travel Time:** 1 Hour
- **Foot Travel Only.**
- **Compacted Natural Soil Surface**
- **Avg. Grade:** 14%; **Max:** 30%/200LF
- **Min. Width:** 30 inches
- **Avg. X-slope:** 12%; **Max:** 30%/200LF
- **Compacted by Perm. Only.**

**Cool Springs Overlook Trail**

- **100% accessible by 2002 standards.**

**0.9-Mile Loop**
- **Avg. Travel Time:** 1 Hour
- **Foot Travel Only.**
- **Compacted Natural Soil Surface**
- **Avg. Grade:** 14%; **Max:** 20%/200LF
- **Min. Width:** 36 inches
- **Avg. X-slope:** 12%; **Max:** 15%/45LF
- **Stone Steps on East Part of Loop**

**8.8 Mile Loop**
- **Avg. Travel Time:** 5 Hours
- **Compacted Natural Soil Surface**
- **Avg. Grade:** 10%; **Max:** 25%/500LF
- **Min. Width:** 18 inches
- **Avg. X-slope:** 12%; **Max:** 30%/500LF
- **Compacted by Perm. Only.**

**1.2-Mile Loop**
- **Avg. Travel Time:** 1 Hour
- **Open to Biking & Foot Travel.**
- **Starts and ends at picnic shelter #5**
- **Compacted Natural Soil Surface**
- **Avg. Grade:** 4%; **Max:** 20%/75LF
- **Min. Width:** 30 inches
- **Avg. X-slope:** 12%; **Max:** 25%/60FL

**14.6-Mile Loop**
- **Avg. Travel Time:** 4 Hours/Bike
- **Open to Biking & Foot Travel.**
- **Compacted Natural Soil Surface**
- **Avg. Grade:** 10%; **Max:** 20%/250LF
- **Min. Width:** 86 inches
- **Avg. X-slope:** 12%; **Max:** 15%/45LF

**Horse Trails**

More than 25 miles of horse trails offer loop rides varying from 3 to 16 miles. Riders must bring their own horses and register at the stables. First-time riders must attach a photocopy proof of a negative Coggins test. Parking is at the stables access (west side of the park). Check the website or call ahead for trail closings during bad weather. The horse trails pass through varied environments, from lush forest coves to wind-swept ridge tops. Wildflowers catch the eye in early spring, green foliage is bountiful during summer, changing leaf colors welcome fall, and spectacular vistas arrive with winter. Cliff, waterfalls, old mines (some that provide natural “air-conditioning” during summer and warm air during winter), and abandoned mining equipment add interest to the trails. Horse watering stations are at approximately two-mile intervals. The shorter loops, which begin at the stables and go past waterfalls, are the easier trails, with most at a 20% or less grade. Basic rules apply: riders must stay on marked trails, no trail riding between sunset and sunrise; no reckless or fast riding; and horses should not be left unattended or unbridled. Anyone found in violation of these rules will face criminal prosecution (OCCA 12–3–10) and be banned from use of horse trails at all state parks.